

In its character of world crisis, the world war represents the specific form of a structural crisis. The new productive forces are not compatible with the liberal system of a competitive capitalism nor can they be mastered by monopoly capitalism so long as the application of its forms is restricted and kept within the limits of a liberal system.

The victory of the new productive forces can be summed up under the name of the Second Industrial Revolution. From this Second Industrial Revolution, which burst forth with destructive violence in the mechanized battles of the world war, there emerged a new form of division of labor—the shock-troop. The emergence of the shock-troops during the second half of the war coincided with the transition from trench warfare, which had deadlocked the liberal war machines and their traditional procedures, to the “war in motion,” based on new weapons and new forms of action. Modern material warfare develops a peculiar materialism in contrast to the formalism of liberal mass-battles. The tirailleur-tactics of skirmishing infantry, which had been developed since 1789, and the mass-armies, which had been controlled in a bureaucratic manner by the general-staffs, were increasingly replaced by that new and more highly qualified type of fighter which had been molded by the objective conditions of machine battles in the latter part of the World War. This type of fighter is compelled to develop a spontaneity that defies bureaucratic calculation. The abstract and “equalitarian” system of compulsory service is gradually replaced by the first steps of total mobilization.

This new and up-to-now unsurpassed principle engendered the original and long-forgotten contents of the world-revolutionary movement inaugurated by the revolution of October and openly proclaimed in the slogan “All Power to the Soviets.” It finally declared that the worker is the exclusive form of social existence. The greatness of Lenin is shown in his attempt to apply, in a utopian manner, this new principle of action to a country just on the point of liquidating illiteracy and in his dream to abolish the rule of bureaucracy at the same time that a general-staff of professional revolutionaries was in fact building up a totally monopolistic state-bureaucracy on a national scale. This principle proclaimed by the October Revolution reached the ears of all workers and alarmed the whole bourgeois world because, along with the democratic liberal war aims, it jeopardized the whole system of capitalist rule. In the contrast between the German Spartacus Councils and the old “General Commission” of the German Labor Unions, constructed according to Moltke’s pattern,

there appears the social consequence of a contrast already foreshadowed in the conflict between the shock-troops and the liberal methods of the general-staffs.

[2] In the system of the League of Nations established at Versailles the victors tried to cling to the liberal-democratic starting point of their World War. They tried to apply the principle of democracy to international affairs and took care to isolate this system by a cordon sanitaire from the threat of bolshevism. They proceeded with an admirable lack of insight and experienced uncommon misfortune. They willed peace and got Manchuria, Ethiopia, Spain, China, and Poland. They wanted disarmament and unleashed a race of armaments. They willed Parliamentarianism and got castor oil, Gestapo, GPU. They wanted self-determination of nationalities and the outcome was Munich 1938 and Moscow 1939. They succeeded in nothing. Up to now they have utterly failed in everything.

It could not have been otherwise. The tasks set by the Second Industrial Revolution could not be mastered on the level of liberalism. These tasks bore a revolutionary character. And revolutions are not called forth unless imminent danger threatens. The superiority of the fascists over the liberals is based on the fact that they proceed from the specific results of the Second Industrial Revolution, both positively by using them as a new starting point, and negatively by curtailing their dangerous implications. They reduce the shock-troops to the form of an order, whose members are drilled in all existing kinds of arms and sports. They transform total mobilization into a totalitarian state. They preserve wage-slavery, chaining capital and wage-labor together by the handcuffs of their total state power. They reduce the world-wide scope of the proletarian world revolution to the level of ultra-imperialism. They monopolize the microphone, the unlimited application of which ultimately obviates political coercion. They control the market through political cartels, the labor-market through nationalized unions. They set up state-corporations. The antibolshevists adopt the doctrines of bolshevism and restrict them to the level dictated by the requirements of monopolistic control.

[3] Dissipating the world-revolutionary action of the workers into a series of national revolutions and counter-revolutions was a preliminary historical condition of fascism. Thus at the same time the character of the October Revolution was fundamentally changed. From being the hidden archetype of fascism—its closest enemy—the Russian revolution was transformed into a monopolistic model-

revolution. With the Russian state's inauguration of the "New Economic Policy," the utopia of direct organization of the Workers' World was finally abandoned for political economy, i. e., the maintenance of capital and wage-labor, class rule and exploitation. The Hitler-Stalin pact represents the logical conclusion of the liquidation of the proletarian, world-revolutionary contents of the October Revolution—the liquidation of the Comintern.

#### 6. *From the World War to the Present War.*

The present war is not comparable to the World War in any of its aspects. It takes place on a fundamentally changed basis. To grasp its peculiar character we must regard the series of specific modern wars in which it is placed—the Manchurian, Ethiopian, Spanish, and Chinese wars. Up to now, it is the most advanced, most distinct, and most unambiguous war of this newly developed type.

None of these wars has displayed at its outbreak the cataclysm of July and August, 1914. In these wars there has been a gradual transition. In each case the belligerent action has been more or less prepared in advance on a material, military, and propagandistic plan. Methodically it has been directed to a definite aim. In few of these wars has there been a formal declaration of war. The judicial fiction of an "incident" has been maintained and the very term "war" avoided. Intervention has been called non-intervention. Thus Russia's invasion of Poland, her participation in its occupation and annexation, has been termed neutrality, and this label accepted by the other belligerents. As far as possible military action has been localized to a small and distinctly delimited area. At the same time the diplomatic war has proceeded in high gear. Economic warfare, sanctions and blockades, as well as the war of propaganda, have tended to spread rapidly. If by the term "monopolistic war-of-siege" we understand localized military action and generalization of commercial warfare, this term adequately describes the present first stage of the German-English-French war. Between Luxembourg and Switzerland, on the smallest possible front, entrenched behind the Siegfried and Maginot lines, there is being staged a demonstration of artillery combat with a comparatively small expenditure of ammunition. At the same time every effort is being concentrated on blockade and counter-blockade, on control of commerce, on a war of mines and submarines, supplemented by a war of leaflets and radio, of propaganda, of diplomatic intrigues aimed at soliciting trade-agreements, securing trade-routes for themselves and barring them to others. Thus the economic war has already grown into a world war whereas the military war has not yet started.

The gradual, not sharply defined transition from a so-called peace to a not-so-called war indicates, in contrast to 1914, a further stage in the process of transition to a new era. This process has been going on from 1914 to the present day—a period characterized by the replacement of liberal democratic concepts by bolshevistic, fascistic, and antifascistic concepts. An indication of the difference between then and now was August 4th, 1914, which saw the collapse of the Second International, or more precisely, of the abstract illusions of internationalism attached to it. That collapse had appeared as a major catastrophe to all the people participating in it. The world of Kautsky, Bernstein, Jules Guesde, Jaures, Martov, and of the pre-war Lenin, had gone to pieces. Nobody experiences today, as Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin did in 1914, a breakdown of his whole previous conception of the labor movement. There was no August 4th at the start of the present war. All the consequences of that single historical event have been fully worked out, in the meantime, by the monopolists of workers' organizations, by the apparatuses of the labor unions, the Parliamentary groups, and the entire bureaucratic machinery of a totalitarian state [Russia].

Today there is no International—no Second International, no Third International. There will never be a Fourth International. There never was a 4th of August of the Comintern, just as there has never been an unmistakable Ninth of Thermidor of the Russian Revolution. Instead of the impressive drama in which Robespierre, St. Just, Danton and Bonaparte acted their parts, we were shown a horrible performance of disgusting stage-trials produced by the agents of the GPU.

The monopolistic revolution and its archetype, the national Russian revolution, differ from the liberal one in that the monopolistic party, its acting agent and its most characteristic outcome, produced the monopolistic unity of Jacobinism, Thermidorism, and Bonapartism. It wiped out not only the liberal division—the executive, legislative and judiciary powers—but also the participation of several parties competing in furthering political progress. Stalin not only possesses all power, but his name stands for every event from October to the division of Poland. Trotsky, whose name has been crossed out of all bolshevist history books, searches in vain for the 9th Thermidor and shifts it at least once every year to some other date. Nor does he succeed any better in his search for August 4th of the Comintern.

We can characterize the period that began with the World War and the 4th of August of the old labor movement as follows:

The World War produced the beginnings of total mobilization. Total mobilization called forth monopolistic revolutions. The monopolistic revolutions transformed total mobilization into totalitarian states.

Each stage of the period from 1914 until today can be characterized more precisely a further step in this historical development.

1913-1917: The specific World War crisis of the liberal system of competition.

1917-1921: The specific bolshevistic period of civil war, the results of which are the USSR and the Versailles System.

1921-1925: The first post-war crisis overcome by the Fascist counter-revolution. Transition to NEP. Transition from inflation to deflation.

1925-1929: Prosperity of the League of Nations; Dawes, Young; Bucharin-Stalin anti-Trotskyite Neonep—"Enrich Yourselves!"

1929-1932: Second post-war crisis. Fighting period of the National Socialist Party. "Second Period." Liquidation of the Neonep by the landslide of the Collectivisation.

1932-1939: Culmination of the National-Socialist revolution. Specific period of the monopolistic wars.

With the Manchurian war in 1932 there was inaugurated—on the basis of the now fully-developed monopolistic conditions—that more comprehensive military process of which the English-French-German war represents only the last phase.

Since September 1st a new stage in this process has been reached. The totalitarian war has assumed a universal character. In this war, inasmuch as it is a trade war, there have been no neutral states from the outset [cf., repeal of the arms embargo by the U. S.; total trade control by England; impossibility of the small nations maintaining neutrality].

From another angle, the historical development since the World War can be summed up as follows:

1913-1921: *The World War* changed into the world revolution. The world revolution in its first phase was wholly bolshevistic. The final social consequences of total mobilization appeared, in a Utopian form, on the horizon.

The disintegration into a series of monopolistic revolutions of the bolshevist world revolution was completed in three phases:

1921-1925: Culmination of the first post-war crisis. Italian Fascism.

1925-1929: Post-war prosperity; Chinese Fascism [Chiang Kai Shek].

1929-1932: Second post-war crisis; German Fascism.

These phases are at the same time phases in the formation of the monopolistic character of the national Russian Revolution.

1932-1939: The series of monopolistic revolutions turns into a series of monopolistic wars.

*The present war* completes this series of monopolistic wars. It replaces economic warfare-without-war, or with only partial war, with universal economic warfare and extinction of the regular world trade. If the fascist state can be described as a fully matured and completely self-realized capitalistic state, the perfect state of wage-

slavery, and the capitalistic system raised to the form of a State, then the fascist war can be described as a fully matured and completely capitalistic war. The revolutionary process has turned fascist in the monopolistic revolution, and to the proletariat appears as an anti-proletarian counter-revolution. At the same time the slogan of world revolution has been turned into an ultra-imperialistic slogan. Lenin's prognosis that in 1914 the world was entering into a period of wars and revolutions has proved to be true, but its results have turned out to be exactly contrary to expectations. If we want to apply the term "world revolution" in a definite sense, we have to say that we find ourselves today in the midst of a fascist world revolution. There exist today few remains of the bolshevistic action toward world revolution which could serve as a basis for new revolutionary action.

#### **7. Further Growth of the Contrast Between Principles of the Workers' Order and the Monopolistic Rule of the World Produced by the War.**

The present war, though localized, is essentially a world war in its opening phase as a monopolistic war-of-siege. There seem to be only three belligerents in the midst of a neutral world, but there is really no neutrality. The more England succeeds in disturbing the world market, the more striking will appear the world-wide unity of the World of Labor.

It is true that there was a continuous transition from the so-called peace to the not-so-called war, but this whole process proceeded by necessity from 1914. On both sides the outbreak of the war resulted from a miscalculation. Chamberlain did not anticipate that Stalin would really march with Hitler. Ribbentrop did not anticipate that this time Chamberlain would really make war. From the outset, irrationality interrupted the rational continuity of the monopolistically-controlled course of events. Admittedly the war had been planned and prepared on both sides more methodically than ever before. But that very planning may assume a catastrophic character. The more the destruction of the world of trade makes way for unity in the world of productive labor, and the nearer the final catastrophic efforts at planning approximate the cataclysmic result not reached between 1913 and 1921, the more distinctly apparent will be the fact that a world-wide planning that holds in check all violent collapse has not yet been devised.

It is true that this war is only another phase of the war-like process started in 1932, but all characteristics of the epoch that began in 1914 are called into play by total mobilization. From the Far East,

over Africa, Spain, and into the heart of the old European continent, the monopolistic war has fully outfitted its arsenal. All positions are now clearly defined. Nowhere today will a Saul be caught napping and be obliged to convert himself into a Paul. And there will be no 4th of August. At the same time, in the background, from Verdun and Versailles, and the red October; from Tokio via Mukden, Hong-Kong, Addis Ababa, Madrid, Barcelona to London, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, returning to the Far East, and incidentally nullifying the neutrality of the American continent—total mobilization has come to contradict the total states and the totalitarian war, which has been started by them. It contradicts the whole monopolistic system of the world. Bolshevism, that set out to organize a Workers' World, has been transformed into a mere cog in the monopolistic world system, yet all the elements of a wholesale anti-fascism have been set into motion by total mobilization. While the old vocabulary rots in the mouths of the Muenzenbergs, Rauschnings, and Schwarzschilds, the youngsters have the new grammar on the tips of their tongues. All Jacobinism today is fascism. Terrorism has come to be the monopoly of the Gestapo, of the GPU, of the Intelligence Service. But the youngsters—the Komsomol, the Balila, etc.—no longer cherish the ambition of becoming good Jacobins and terrorists. "World Revolution" has become an ultra-imperialistic slogan, but the new phase into which the monopolistic war has entered presents an advanced stage in the contrast between the principles of the new workers' order and the old monopolistic system of the world.

### 8. Implications for Working Class Action.

If we examine the general aspect of the present war and its inherent tendency, we get a clear idea of how those who remember the World War and the World Revolution of the past regard today's events. Today there is no new Zimmerwald movement [2] that has to deal with a new Fourth of August of a third "International." August 4th, 1914, was indeed far more than the mere breakdown of a No. 2 International. Today the abstract "Internationalism" of the old workers' movement as well as the liberal "self-determination of nationalities" are things of the past. When the world revolutionary action of 1917 to 1921 was dispersed into a series of monopolistic revolutions, the Comintern, which was originally intended to be the instrument of that world revolution, was transformed into a monopolistic instrument, controlled by the bureaucratic power of a totalitarian state.

[2] The international conference at Zimmerwald served to rally the forces of the new revolutionary movement which emerged from the August 4th, 1914, breakdown of the Socialist International.

The more distinctly the new principles of the workers' order contrast with the existing monopolistic system of the world, the more the slogan of the World Revolution itself is transformed into an ultra-imperialistic slogan, i. e., the enemy's slogan. The movement towards a "World Revolution" was the last aim which, in spite of an apparent and transitory opposition, the working class and the bourgeoisie had held in common. Insofar as our action still has any political character, it will be negative action that results in smashing the state apparatus. Insofar as it is a *revolution*, it will be a revolution *against* the fascist "World Revolution."

The fascist counter-revolutions have revolutionized the October revolution. Stalin demonstrably benefitted by every one of those counter-revolutions. The internal policies of Russia were the logical conclusion of the international counter-revolution. The more distinctly our anti-fascist action develops its own anti-terroristic and anti-Jacobinistic character, the more superior it will be to the fascist revolution.

The catastrophe of August 4th and the succeeding events have given abundant proof that there is at present no independent action of the working class, as far as it still moves in the wornout formations of its old activities. They have also shown the reasons for the total eclipse of the labor movement's traditional forms. "Marxism" is dead. Parties are dead. It is comforting that nobody wants to talk any longer about the "People's Front."

We point today to the contradiction which inevitably arises between total mobilization—anti-fascist in its consequences—and the "total monopolism" represented by the existing system. We are aware that the totalitarian systems, formed during the period since 1914, are but monopolistic restrictions on the first attempts at total mobilization, called forth by the necessities of war, of the productive forces. By comparing the either ruined or fascisized old party and trade union movement with the wholesale anti-fascism of the younger generation we rediscover, in a surprising manner, the original contents of bolshevistic action from 1917 to 1921. In the contrast between the world-wide extent of the tasks of labor and the monopolistic, restricting tendencies illustrated by the present war lies the hidden meaning of the World War and the era inaugurated by it.

### 9. Three Possible Events.

At the beginning we contrasted three possible solutions for the contradictions inherent in the war:

[1] *Fascist localized war-of-siege*—England will be able to continue the war-of-siege only if hunger will eventually lead to a breakdown of the Hitler system. As long as the USSR and Italy remain neutral and consequently lend Germany a certain amount of support it seems improbable that a blockade will result in a collapse, for the three following reasons:

[a] Under the conditions of a continued war-of-siege the shortage of iron, oil, rubber and copper will not result in a major military disaster since no huge material battles will be fought anyway. Nor is it probable that the one remaining vulnerable factor of German supplies, the shortage of fats, will prove disastrous by itself—the less so because there exist certain possibilities for limited imports that may be realized in time.

[b] The fascist apparatus is a specific apparatus of terror and is equipped with entirely different strong-arm measures from those of the past, e. g., those of the Hohenzollern regime. It possesses an incomparably more tenacious will for self-preservation against internal enemies pressing from behind, and it has never for a moment hesitated to use to the full its concentrated implements of coercion.

[c] The emerging new forces have as yet hardly formed ranks, and the pre-fascist remnants of the confused, paralyzed, and crippled forms of the labor movement do not present a serious starting point for new activity.

Even assuming that the war-of-siege would eventually result in the collapse of the Hitler regime, this would not offer any greater revolutionary possibilities. Nationalism today is only a different expression of conflicting imperialistic ends. So-called National Liberations will serve only a particular imperialistic aim. They will moreover be of an entirely fascist nature. The Poles and Czechs suffer most from the Gestapo terror, but their liberation from fascism can no longer be brought about on a national scale. They serve as buffers against fascism in a fight that goes far beyond all national problems and cannot be settled on a national basis by any means whatever.

Taken as a whole, the localized war-of-siege, whether it leads to a collapse of the Hitler regime or to a compromise, appears in its first and immediate effects as a further step towards a world-wide fascization. Any anti-fascist counter-movement will have to start by destroying these narrow bounds.

[2] *Fascist General World War*—The issue of the war will be decided by the entrance of new powers into the war. Essentially

there are three sets of future developments that will turn the scale: the Balkans, the Near East [e. g., the Arab question and the further development of the Turkish policy], and the Far East.

In case the present localized Fascist war should extend into an equally fascist world war the first and immediate result would be the establishment, under a suitable name, of what actually would be a world-wide fascist council. The movement thus begun could hardly stop at the "United States of Europe." It would amount to the establishment of a monopolistic world system. The quotas assigned to each participant would be settled by the outcome of the military and economic warfare.

[3] *Total War*—The incomparably greater and more comprehensive anti-fascist consequences of an unrestricted release of the existing productive forces, unchained by total mobilization, cannot be discussed until the preliminary conditions of their occurrence are actually presented.

#### *10. How Great Is the Precision in the Work of Soldiers! How Great Is the Confusion Resulting From the Exertions of Statesmen!*

Thus it appears that the specific task of the anti-fascist in this war is to oppose the fascist world revolution, which tends to bring about the ultra-imperialistic, international cartel. He opposes every attempt at an imperialistic redistribution of the world by proclaiming the unity of the workers' world. He is opposed to the very existence of all those class, private, and clique interests that are rallied in monopolistic concentration behind imperialistic war aims. He develops the forms, the means, and the contents of the struggle against the total state-machine out of the objective conditions of total mobilization. He will in due time oppose the coming Fascist Council by convening the Revolutionary Workers' Councils of the World. He stands opposed to monopolistic management and to all kinds of hierarchies.

The task of the anti-fascist is essentially a worker's task, political only at its margin. His action, even when apparently terroristic and propagandistic, is essentially anti-terroristic and anti-propagandistic. As to method, he proceeds in the manner peculiar to the work of all shock-troops. A shock-troop is, for instance, invariably equipped with appropriate material implements, its members invariably skilled in a particular kind of work. The principles of organization of a particular shock-troop follow the particular instrument used, for in-

stance, an airplane, a transmitter. The physical conditions of the job determine the kind, the size, the composition and the structure of every shock-troop. They will be compelled to act without leaders. They must function as their own general-staff. And if in a certain phase of their fight they should single out a special "general-staff," this will be an anti-general-staff, itself presenting the character of a shock-troop.

How great is the precision in the work of soldiers! How great is the confusion resulting from the exertions of statesmen!

The statesmen wage this war.

The war produces new totalitarian states of complete wage-slavery. The state-magnates, the diplomats, the political leaders drive us into a monopolistic world system in which, because of its faulty construction, the workers have no share. The task of the worker has outgrown the control of businessmen and politicians.

*Alpha.*

ANTWERP, OCTOBER, 1939



## BOOK REVIEWS

*Death Is Not Enough.* Essays in active Negation. By Michael Fraenkel. C. W. Daniel Comp. London 1939. [170 pp.; 7'6].

For Fraenkel, as for many of us, this period is one of disintegration and death. For us, however, it is a revolutionary process in which the existing society decays and the beginnings of a new one are not yet apparent enough to give courage to those who are likely to fight for a better life. Consequently, despair is everywhere visible; the revolution seems no less like death than the counter-revolution is deathly. Nor is the bourgeois individualistic mind a happy one. Its anarchistic, aristocratic ideals are destroyed by its practical activities and its increasingly collectivistic exploitation methods. To remain "intelligent" means to remove oneself from reality and live like the insane in a world of pure imagination. To maintain an individualistic position today means to be opposed to the present and to the morrow. The escape into a world of words and dreams is here the alternative to sui-

cide. Fraenkel searches for a new mental level on which to escape the consequences of the decay of this society. He excuses his continued existence with the attempt to realize death as an integral part of life, which must be faced and accepted in order to get a new vision of life. However, words fail him in his attempt to make clear to his readers what he actually wants to say. His essays remain a mere play with the concept death, a word used often enough to mar his style in places. Nothing can be learned from this book save the author's capacity to form good sentences. His analysis of the mental state of present-day society is often sharp and revealing, but his suggestions are only incomprehensible subjective moods representing a sort of non-commercial mysticism. His book shows the often brilliant emptiness of consistent individualistic thinking despite the social de-termination of man. M.

*The Marxist Philosophy and the Sciences.* By J. B. S. Haldane. [Random House, New York, 1939. x & 214 pp.; \$2.00.]

At first reading this book seems to be just another illustration of the strange fate which so often befalls a formerly revolutionary theory when it has turned from a relentlessly persecuted heresy into the accepted creed of a ruling group or the canonized ideology of a powerful church or state.

Mr. Haldane confesses frankly that when he published this book in 1939 he had been a Marxist only "for about a year." He compares the part played by the Marxist and Leninist philosophy in Russia today with that of the scholastic philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas which is "still active in guiding the activity of the Roman Catholic Church." He formally revokes the sins of his past wherein he had formulated an "idealistic principle of relativity." In his fifth chapter [Psychology] where he propounds his theory of the nature of mind, he carefully points out in advance that these are his own speculations and "in no sense part of Marxism." Thus he trusts that the statements and doubts contained in that "excrescence of an otherwise useful book" will not be held against his Leninist orthodoxy, though they are "based on scientific advances made during the last thirty years" and at the same time, in his opinion, suggest fairly well "the kind of hypotheses which a Marxist might reasonably investigate." He even tries to redeem his father, the late Professor J. S. Haldane, from the sin and damnation of a non-materialistic creed by pointing out that one of the books written by that eminent scholar "was recommended by a Moscow radio commentator as a very good introduction to dialectical materialism, although far from being Marxist."

Careful study, however, leads to the conclusion that this Marxist confession of a newly converted bourgeois scientist, in spite of its highly ideological and indeed almost reverent character, represents an entirely new and highly interesting phase in the development of Marxist thought. One may explain it as being merely an expression of the so-called People's Front tactics which had been adopted, temporarily and for a definite political purpose, by the headquarters of

the Communist Party. Yet there remains the fact that this enthusiastic and even fanatical English adherent of the Communist faith displays a degree of "freedom of thought" which until recently seemed to be quite impossible within the party-controlled literature. Such freedom is already evidenced by the fact that he does not begin his book with the usual bow to the "great and beloved leader, Stalin." That reticence does not indicate, as an innocent observer might believe, a revolution towards democracy within the development of present day Communism. Rather it reveals a growing disintegration within the national ranks of the so-called "international" Communist Party. Nevertheless it can be regarded as a sign of the weakening grip of the Muscovite usurpers of the true Marxian theory and, in that sense, as a comparative gain in intellectual freedom.

Haldane shows that newly attained "freedom" furthermore by a distinct tendency towards all sorts of theoretical heresies. He flirts with the "admirably dialectical" philosophy of Bishop Berkeley—that archetype for every faithful reader of Lenin's book on "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism" of non-materialistic and reactionary obscurantism in bourgeois philosophy. He equally extols Hume, the forefather of Machism and all modern scientific positivism. He openly admires Bergson, Whitehead, Ed- dington. He even discovers a "serious affinity with the Marxist" in the academic English philosopher Alexander, who "tries to trace the evolution of being from space-time through matter to life and mind, and beyond mind to a hitherto non-existent quality" which he calls "deity."

It is here, by the way, that we can get the deepest insight into the hidden cause of the attraction which a misunderstood and quasi-religious "Marxism" holds today for people like J. B. S. Haldane. For Marxists, he says, just as for Alexander, the mind is still evolving, and still very imperfect. "It has risen from the mud, not fallen from heaven, and it is destined to rise still further" [emphasis

by K. K.]. Such a philosophy "enables Marxists to carry on through defeat, terror, and persecution." "Although it offers no future life for the individual, the belief in better future lives for the human race does give to many Marxists the same energy and confidence that the hope of personal immortality gave to the early Christians." Now we know why Chamberlain and Halifax and other bourgeois politicians in distress tried to get even Stalin's red army as an ally for the redemption of the dividends of the democratic branch of the international capitalist class against the Hitlerian threat of "defeat, terror, and persecution."

Notwithstanding this apparent absence of an unscientific bias, Mr. Haldane's discussion of the relations between Marxism and the scientific problems of our time is not scientific. He criticizes those Russian writers who attempted "to apply dialectical materialism to every kind of activity from portrait painting to fishing" and to embellish their bad scientific papers with "irrelevant quotations from Marx, Engels, Lenin." But in practice, he contents himself in most cases to treat the recent discoveries of the various sciences as so many "examples" of the pet categories of the old dialectic philosophy. This quasi-scientific procedure which, to a certain extent, is typical of all Marxian excursions into the field of the natural sciences [including the philosophical writings of such eminent scholars as Engels, Plekhanov and Lenin] differs from the old idealistic method of Hegel only by a changed metaphysical principle, not by a final dismissal of all metaphysical claims. While Hegel starts from the metaphysical assumption that the world is a mere exemplification of the logical categories, Feuerbach, Engels, Lenin, and Mr. Haldane start from the partly opposite but equally metaphysical assumption that the logical categories "were exemplified in nature before they governed thought."

This underlying metaphysicism of Haldane's scientific attitude is not refuted but rather is confirmed by his report on a controversy concerning a certain biological theory which had been suggested to him by his colleague, Professor R. A. Fisher. He emphatically repudiated that theory, in spite of its "beautifully dialectical"

character, because it appeared to him to "run counter to certain observable facts." We cannot resist the temptation to quote in full the concluding phrases of this report in which the author modestly congratulates himself on that truly scientific achievement:

"I mention this controversy in view of the widely held theory that acceptance of Marxism is an emotional cataclysm which completely ruins one's judgment. If only Fisher were a Marxist and I were not, this theory might perhaps be applicable in the case in question. As a Marxist, I hope that Fisher's general argument may have a wider validity than at present appears likely to me" [p. 137].

We cannot refer here in detail to the many cases in which Mr. Haldane toys, as it were, with the other "beautiful examples" offered for the intricate dialectical concepts of "negation" and "negation of negation" on the fields of modern mathematics, cosmology, quantum mechanics, etc.; nor can we quote the numerous other passages where he strives to prove that the most important discoveries of modern science, in one way or another, had been anticipated by Engels more than fifty years ago. There seems little hope that he will thereby succeed in convincing those "scientific workers and students" to whom his book is primarily addressed, that "Marxism" as here expounded "will prove valuable to them in their scientific work" as it has to him in his own. More likely the scientists will go on to say that Marxism, in spite of its admirable power of prediction in the field of socio-economic developments, has so far not delivered the goods which have been so often and so loudly advertised by the "dialectical materialists" in the field of the natural sciences.

Even less satisfactory is Mr. Haldane's achievement from the point of view of that "somewhat wider audience" to which the book is also addressed. The interested layman will find some valuable information on recent problems and discoveries, e. g., on the growing influence of industrial practice on the very methods applied in so-called "pure" mathematics [50-57]; on the various successive phases of Milne's theory of cosmological relativity [64-78]; on the recent developments of the theories of heredity

and mutation [119ff]; and on the relationship between mind and brain [162ff]. The chief objection from the layman's point of view against these and many other sections of the book is their lack of adequate popularization. Haldane often conveys his information on a complicated subject in a highly technical and fragmentary manner. Thus the book is fully comprehensible only to the expert scientist, who perhaps does not need it at all.

An even more fatal objection arises from the already mentioned fact that the book as written does not really break with that traditional orthodoxy which has handicapped the development of Marxism almost from the beginning and most certainly since its formal reception and canonization by the Russian Marxists. Paradoxically, there is no necessary link between an orthodox method and the definite and invariable contents of a theory. From a historical viewpoint we might rather say that every "orthodoxy," and most certainly the orthodoxy of a political creed, is bound to vary its contents according to the varying conditions and the changing aims of the growing political movement. This was shown many years ago by the development of the foremost "orthodox" Marxists in Germany and Austria, and, in a later period, by the many rapid changes of the "orthodox" Bolshevik theory before, during, and after the revolution of 1917. In some extreme cases, classically represented by the latest phase of the "orthodox" Marxist theory of the German socialist, Karl Kautsky, and by every phase of the development of the political theory of Soviet-Marxism after the death of Lenin, the deviations from the original contents of a revolutionary theory become so numerous and obvious that its faithful adherents need a tremendous amount of what they now begin to call "dialectics" to

reconcile "ideas" with facts or a "revolutionary" theory with counter-revolutionary practice. Thus the creed of the German socialists, which had been for half a century a revolutionary theory of the working class, was ultimately transformed into a quasi-socialist theory for the benefit of the bourgeoisie. Thus again, and in a much shorter interval, the "international" Bolshevism of Stalin was merged into a mere Russian counter-part of the national socialism of Hitler.

History repeats itself, and while the first phase of the historical drama is often a major tragedy, its last phase invariably takes on the style of a farce. We concede that historical significance to the performance of Mr. Haldane who after his conversion to Marxism in 1938 started out, in 1939, to renew the task that had been accomplished in the field of philosophy by Engels fifty years ago and by Lenin in 1908. He certainly does not shrink from the self-appointed task of demonstrating to his readers "the kind of speculations into which Marxism leads a scientist." He does not stick to the comparative rigidity of the old Marxist philosophy, but displays to the full the increased amount of elasticity attained by the Marxist creed today. Whilst Lenin fought an otherwise quite harmless philosophy of his time [Machism], because of its possible obscurantist implications, Haldane, after thirty years of further scientific development, offers a thinly disguised defense of an unmistakably obscurantist creed because of an alleged analogy between the mind-reader's aim of abolishing the "privacy of mental images" and the socialist's aim of abolishing private property. "I do not see," states Haldane on page 169, "why a dialectical materialist should reject a priori the possibility of such alleged phenomena as telepathy and clairvoyance."

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