

# The CAMPAIGNER

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Lessons of the  
STRIKE WAVE

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'Women's Liberation':  
Fact & Ideology

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## Editorial

# Lessons of the strike wave

Beginning with the fifteen-week General Electric strike, re-enforced by the postal workers' walkouts, demonstrated further by extensive teamster wildcats, with new manifestations of militancy "busting out all over," it has been made absolutely clear to all but the most stubborn labor-haters of the "left" that the U.S. working class is again showing its potential for mass struggle. During a mere few recent months, the "unscholarly" labor movement rank and file has totally discredited the political epitaph written for it by a whole decade of New Left "scholars." Most of the "left" is now prepared to orient to the strike wave in one way or another.

Unfortunately, in this turn there is so far little "left" agreement beyond simple worship of the accomplished fact. Most of the residue of the New Left, accustomed to those habits of thought used to deny the political potential of the labor movement for so long, has reacted to the recent change by approaching the labor movement on the basis of the same method previously employed to deny its political existence. Among those organized groups which call themselves Communist or Trotskyist, recent developments inspire the members to do no more than simplistically repeat the slogans and tactics (including tactical blunders) of the late 'thirties and early 'forties.

Typified by the rudderless (former) Guardian columnist, Stanley Aronowitz, the forces which denied the significance of the working class as a class (advocates of the "new working class" and "post industrial society") now recommend approaching the labor movement with the same sort of anarcho-syndicalist recipes by which they proposed to eliminate the labor movement's role only yesterday. The SWP, Workers' League and other self-styled "Trotskyist" groupings dredge up the 1938 slogan of a "labor party based on the unions" as if 1970 were 1938. The CP and kindred formations repeat the "popular front" idiocies of the Browder period, almost without a hint of shame.

As the single issue anti-war groups either formally disband or evaporate immediately after gathering to briefly celebrate some new Nixon atrocity, the hundreds of nominal and actual revolutionary socialists, who represent the organized core and organizing-catalysts of tens of thousands across the nation, have in general demonstrated (thus far) the lack of sufficient common perspective and political nerve to intervene as a force in the emerging all-out political fight between labor, on the one hand, and the government and management on the other. On the emotional level, good intentions of the vaguer sort abound. The difficulty, apart from the customary quotient of factional gall among various groups, is not a lack of noble sentiments. Their problem is mainly one of abysmal ignorance of real politics. They are capable of recognizing a labor upsurge as a "fact," they are sufficient-

ly this side of the grave to be encouraged by that "fact," but they mostly lack any understanding of why the upsurge either occurred or should persist, and have no insight into what must be done about it. They can not "get together" for a serious task, because they have, in general, not the slightest conception of what ought to be done.

The reasons for this general disorientation and ignorance may be summed up as follows. Most left-radicals are either ignorant or grossly misinformed of both the actual history of the labor movement in this country and abroad, and lack the intellectual tools with which to interpret that history were they exposed to it. At the same time, these same left-radicals, treating Marx's economic theories and methods as esoteric occupations mainly for "non-activists," are, as a result, capable of neither thinking nor effective "activism." They have none of the essential equipment, in knowledge or in ways of thinking, to understand the processes governing the ebb and flow of labor militancy and political class consciousness.

Failing to understand the past, they stand in impotent rage, oscillating between co-optation and "running in the streets," thus acting out their total incomprehension of even the immediate future. Like a poorly-designed automatic control device, they respond to the first impulses from a resurgent labor movement in a state of "positive-feedback" wild, groping activity.

It is these deficiencies which must be quickly corrected if the necessary lessons of the strike wave are to be assimilated, and if, by that essential means, the present deepening economic and social crisis of imperialism is not to inaugurate a new descent into barbarism.

### Understanding Labor History

The history of the labor movement can be analyzed in many ways. But, it can be competently understood only if one attempts to interpret it as a process of transforming the capitalist form of organization of the working class (the class in itself form) into the form of the political class for itself. It was never militancy by local groups of workers at the point of production which won labor's serious battles or produced socialists. It has always been a form of organization of the struggle involving workers, students and especially the oppressed layers of the working class in common organizations for political mass strikes which has qualitatively transformed (at least, briefly) the philosophic world-outlook of the individual participants, and qualitatively transformed the labor movement into a potentially revolutionary-socialist force.

The highest spontaneous expression of such progress is found twice in the past century of U.S. labor history. The first is the 1877-1886 period of mass political strikes, in which the District Council organizations of the Knights of Labor played the most conspicuous role. The second is the period 1933-37, concluding with the auto sit-downs and punctuated by the 1938 recession. In between these two highest points of development of the U.S. working class, we have the living connection between the Knights and the rise of the CIO exemplified in the Pullman Strike of the 'nineties, the I.W.W., the left-wing of the Socialist Party, and the raw, semi-political cadres who formed the Communist Party and provided the basis for the Trotskyist movement of the 'thirties.

The same principles encountered in the political sociology of the U.S. labor movement are also the key to the history of the labor movement in Europe. It is pure myth to report

that the labor movement progresses through a stage of "trade union" organization and "consciousness" toward a possible political stage. In fact, trade union forms and organizations have come into existence only as the aftermath of previous mass political struggles. In a certain sense, trade union organization can be likened to the roving bands from Wallenstein's camp during the Thirty Years' War. To say that the great struggles of the 1870's and 1880's in the U.S., for example, were struggles to produce trade-union organization is like arguing that the Thirty Years' War was fought for the purpose of establishing the roving bands of Wallenstein's dispersed encampment. Rosa Luxemburg showed the same point in the enduring arguments of her The Mass Strike.

The growth of the AFL during the late 1880's is an illustration of that point. Prior to that period, the AFL was a tiny sect-union led by two renegades from the socialist movement, Strasser and Gompers. These eminent gentlemen were best known for their conniving with government and employers against the most-oppressed layers of workers in the industries in which they were active. What made the AFL grow was the Knights of Labor, the march of industrially-organized unions formed out of the Knights (miners, brewers, etc.) into the AFL away from the treachery of Knights' national leader, Terence Powderley. The same is true of the rise of the CIO. It was by no means Lewis and Roosevelt, et al., that built the CIO, but the revolutionary-socialist leaders involved in the Trotskyist movement and organizations like the Trade Union Unity League. From 1933 to 1937, the industrial labor movement so-called was a raw revolutionary movement, led by revolutionaries and inclined to the sort of revolutionary methods which modern CIO bureaucrats despise and fear. The successful struggles of the 1933-37 period were not fought along trade-union lines, but as mass political strikes allying workers from many industries, unemployed and students in regional struggles which if conducted concurrently on a national scale would have been a socialist revolution. After the mass political strike movement threatened to seize hegemony over the entire working class and its allies, Roosevelt, John L. Lewis, et al., with the aid of the "Popular Front" ("Roosevelt, Friend of Labor") sell-out by the Communist leadership, moved in to co-opt the movement, to turn it from a political movement into a pure-and-simple industrial labor movement.

In sum, the trade union form of organization and consciousness occurs in labor history during the past century as the new forms left on the beach when the tide of the revolutionary movement has run out. They exist as apolitical forms of rear-guard organization, whose function is to defend the principled gains previously obtained for labor by mass political strikes.

To this date, it must be granted, no organized revolutionary formation of any size in the U.S. has understood the actual nature of labor history. That is, they have not pursued a conscious policy based on an actual understanding of the political sociology of the labor movement. The highest level of understanding has been more or less spontaneous. For example, the founding statement of the IWW, which sees itself as a union (which it never was; it was a political cadre party oriented to building political mass strikes) yet which understands what is reactionary and rotten in trade-unionism. It denounces forms of union organization which divide workers by industry, craft, and which separate the struggles of the skilled and better-organized from the unorganized most-oppressed. Learning consciously on the experience of the Knights of Labor, the founders of the IWW expressed the same systematic hostility to both craft unionism and mere industrial unionism (as it is understood today) that was the genius of the Knights. The Wobblies understood the political class for itself only in the crudest way: "One Big Union."

## U.S. Labor Movement: 1789 to the Present

In that perspective, U.S. labor history can be summarized as follows. From 1789 to the Civil War, the labor movement and its occasional political forms (early labor parties) were oriented to small-scale forms of craft-like production, and thus easily co-opted by such agencies as Jackson's political organizer, Martin Van Buren. It was Joseph Wedemeyer, Marx's collaborator arriving in the U.S. in the 'fifties, who immediately foresaw and began to work for the inevitable next form of struggle of the labor movement. With the development of mass industry and mass immigration to make it possible, the craft-oriented struggles of the first half of the nineteenth century would be replaced by mass struggles.

Wedemeyer's foresight was realized in the wave of mass political strikes in the 1870's, continuing through Haymarket in 1886. It happened that the leadership of the Knights sold out the District Council strikes at every turn and that but for a handful of Marx's collaborators, who played a role in establishing the eight-hour day struggle, none of the leaders on the scene had the political sense to know what to do with a potential socialist revolution in that period. The U.S. government and employers exploited the idiocies of the anarchists to the full, causing a temporary demoralization of the movement that was bringing the U.S. in that period to the point of ripeness for socialist revolution.

It was this raw tradition, established during the 1870's and 1880's, with all its virtues and weaknesses, its revolutionary tradition and political ignorance, which ultimately produced the Communist party in the U.S. History is absolutely contrary to the "findings" of those pseudo-scholars and others who explain the founding of the Communist Party as an unfortunate product of intervention by foreign influences. Despite the numerous blunders of the Bolsheviks, (who otherwise demonstrated in Germany that they did not understand the ABCs of revolutionary struggle in an advanced capitalist country with established trade-union organizations) the Bolshevik contribution to American Communism during the earliest years was positive. The Bolsheviks lifted the native U.S. revolutionaries at least one notch above the level of dismal anti-intellectual primitivism which continues to be the movement's most crippling fault.

If the history of the labor movement is thus understood, our course of action becomes generally clear. Our objective is to transform the disorganized or fragmented mass of organized workers, unorganized, oppressed minorities, radical youth into "One Big Union", so to speak. To work to bring about through common-interest struggle-alliances the organizational forms of the mass political strike. Not to replace trade-union organization with some silly anarcho-syndicalist recipes (a la Andre Gorz), but to defend existing trade-unions only as the rear-guard form of organization of working people, which must be preserved until they can be superceded by a political mass organization of working people and their allies.

Virtually everyone in the socialist movement, recognizes--at least on paper--that it is necessary to intervene in today's labor struggles for the purpose of bringing forth some sort of mass political organization. Everyone with the slightest bit of sense, including most supporters of the Communist Party, agrees that a transitional approach to this work is the key to victory. That is, some method of intervening in the labor movement as it is today with the result of transforming the labor movement into something that can establish socialist government. What we have to consider, therefore, are those two variations on a transitional approach most likely to become popular, therefore virtually guaranteeing the

victory of fascism in the U.S. during the coming period.

Blunder #1: "The Labor Party Based on the Unions"

We mention the Trotskyist tactic first, because it is the most systematically developed blunder. That is, the slogan of the "labor party based on the unions."

When Trotsky proposed this tactic, in 1938, it was undeniably correct. The labor movement of the 1933-37 period was indubitably a mass political strike movement. The issue of the day was whether this movement would realize its political form of self-organization or would be successfully de-politicized by Roosevelt, Lewis, Reuther, and the CP into apolitical pure-and-simple trade-unionism under FDR's political thumb. To propose a labor party based on the existing unions then was to address oneself to the political temper of rank-and-file unionists who had recently conducted mass revolutionary strikes on a local scale in San Francisco, Minneapolis, Toledo, in the Rubber industry, in Auto, etc. The union movement up to 1938 was a raw class-for-itself movement, oriented to the unemployed and unorganized as well as to merely the "guys in my shop or industry." To create a labor party then was to realize and foster the revolutionary political potential of the working-class and its social allies as a whole.

Existing trade unions today have conspicuously the opposite political qualifications. One must, of course, realize the political potential in especially the young and oppressed rank-and-file layers, but this will not be accomplished by lending political credence to the bureaucratic machinery of the existing unions. Nor does the union movement represent the interests of the overwhelming majority of working people; it does not represent the interests above all, of the masses of unemployed and misemployed working-class poor.

The social base for a political self-organization of the working class must be representative directly of the interests of the working-class and its allies as a whole. Thus, the only acceptable political form of class organization in this period is not one based on the existing unions, but one based on combat mass-strike-type alliances which bring together in common-interest programs both the most-skilled and most-oppressed working people as well as radical youth. The political potential of the working class is not expressed in its trade-union organization, but in the need of the rank-and-file to go outside their union into mass-strike alliances as the only effective way to fight trade-union issues and to clean out the nests of bureaucrats on their backs. The need of GE strikers for allies, the need of postal workers, teamster wildcats, rubber workers, auto workers, for allies among other unions, the unorganized, and radical youth is the only link within the unions to the political form of class organization required.

So, the "Trotskyist" movement, which seldom tolerated thinking people in its leadership, resorts to mindlessly appropriating Trotsky's slogan from 1938, thus transforming an insightful political tactic for 1938 into a political abortion for 1970.

Blunder #2: Members Only, No Trespassing!

The second sort of tragic blunder likely to win popularity is endemic to both the Communist and Trotskyist organizations and their peripheries. That is the business of forming organizations which consist only of trade-unionists. This is the endemic expression of the sort of disease analysed in "Centrism as a Social Phenomenon" (Campaigner, Jan.-Feb., 1970). It is likely to gain significant hegemony now because the same nonsense has



gained hegemony in the past. This was the fatal flaw in the IWW (sociologically), and is the origin of the decay of the old German Social-Democracy, the various Communist Parties and the Socialist Workers Party. The socialist movement must be dialectical, which means that we struggle in every case to oppose the restriction of caucus membership to one fragment of the potential political class-for-itself. A political caucus limited to trade-union members is a rotten political caucus, because it bases the political consciousness of a narrow section of the working class into antagonism to the interests expressed in the rest of the potential class-for-itself.

It must be conceded that revolutionaries are often compelled to make organizational concessions to the backward mentality, the parochialist nastiness of militant workers' groups. We do not refuse to work with or support militant workers' groups simply because they put restrictions of a reactionary sort on membership in caucuses, etc. However, we constantly struggle to supercede such narrow caucus formations with less-reactionary social alignments. We respond to the formation of exclusionist shop and industry or "trade-union members only" caucuses by recruiting the least backward workers in those formations also into caucuses which are capable of functioning in a competent and serious political way, caucuses which include serious trade-unionists, black oppressed, serious revolutionary youth, etc. No organization limited to trade-union members only ever won a serious political fight in labor history: in fact, any organization restricted to trade-union-members-only is, by its nature, incapable of producing a program for victory in a really serious fight.

Both sort of blunderers overlook (thus consoling themselves with their ignorance) the German Social-Democracy of 1899-1914, the role of the French CGT, and the large number of similar examples of the folly of basing one's social orientation to the socialist struggle on existing trade-union and similar parochialist formations.

Two recent cases illustrate the points made in terms of the present labor situation.

In the GE strike, the workers suffered a net loss in real wages. Mainly because, despite the militancy of many workers, those rank-and-file militants lacked the outside allies needed to really close down GE operations and to conduct a further struggle over the backs of their own union leaders. Perhaps some PLP madman would have instructed the militants to continue the strike and refuse to accept the package anyway. The GE militants were not such fools.

In the postal strike, George Meany was able to sell the strikers down the river because the massive sympathy for postal workers was prevented from being turned into active support -- as by the New York Central Labor Council, which has seldom in recent years permitted itself to blemish the scurvyness of its record. The SWP and CP, rather than responding to the task before us all, of mobilizing support for the postal workers despite the treacherous labor bureaucracy, opted out of a demonstration organized by the Labor Committee, International Socialists and others, mainly on the pretext that they had been advised against such action by unnamed "union officials".

The conspicuous vulnerability of the socialist organizations on this matter has been, ever since the late 'thirties, despite loud noises about the rank-and-file, to play "practical" trade union politics, to maneuver correctly according to the trade-union rules of the game, etc. Of course, to conduct a fight within a union when one is relatively isolated, one has to have a modicum of tactical judgment about the rules most of the members continue to accept and uphold. However, the instant the task becomes one of going beyond the union,

the task of preparing the organization of mass political strikes, the socialist fool who continues to subordinate himself to trade-union rules is nothing but a traitor to his class, headed in the same direction as Legien and Ebert before him.

### The Present Economic Situation

The reason for the wave of mass strikes about to break is simplistically identified as the decline in real wages caused by inflation and rising taxation. The real cause is the presently accelerating breakdown of the capitalist world monetary system.

Capitalism maintains the market value of its stocks and other property by what is commonly called the "price-earnings ratio". That is, by multiplying the amount of profit collected by a number. So we are able to speak, for example, in stocks of a stock being "worth" some multiple of its earnings.

The earnings on capital are generally partly real and partly "paper", which, in the realm of the stock market, means paid-out dividends, some part of reinvested capital and pure fictitious "capital gains."

Thus, during every capitalist boom, there is a much more rapid general rise in the market value of "paper" than there is a rise in actual production of new wealth. Or, in other words, the amount of profit demanded to prop up the value of stocks, mortgages, bonds, and so forth is growing more rapidly than the amount of profit being produced in the form of real produced new wealth. So, in every boom, the mass of paper wealth grows much more rapidly than real wealth, up to a point that the mass of fictitious value in capitalists' property-titles is very large by comparison with the level of useful wealth's contribution to profits. This is the general nature of the boom-bust cycle: that when the mass of fictitious capital becomes relatively very large, there is an apparent-increasingly apparent--shortage of profit in real-wealth terms. There then exists a potential rush for capitalists to attempt to convert their paper profits into hard profits, with not enough real wealth as profit to go all the way around.

Now, while there is no upper or lower limit to the possible price-earnings ratio on anything, a rise in the ratio has one kind of significance, and any considerable and widespread drop in that ratio can have catastrophic effects on a capitalist monetary system. For many reason beyond the scope of this editorial.

The only way to postpone a depression at that point is to increase the "liquidity" of earnings on capital by reducing real wages. That is, to convert a part of production otherwise consumed by wage-earners into profit. This method of postponing a depression immediately depresses the level of commodity production, reducing the mass of profit being "earned" by capitalists through production. To compensate for that, the capitalists resort to reducing real wages still further ...and so on, until something gives. That is a depression.

The policy of the U.S. government and employers since 1964-65 has been to reduce real wages by keeping wage increases rising more slowly than the combined effects of inflation and taxation. Under these circumstances, should the working-class defeat this policy, the capitalist system would go bust. Thus, we have some rough sense of the energies actually and potentially engaged on both sides of the strike wave.

## Wage Controls Now in Effect

The Nixon and Rockefeller factions of the Republican Party have both officially opposed direct governmental administration of wages and prices at this time, despite clamor for such controls by the world's leading central bankers, most liberal Democrats, some liberal Republicans (and Good Old George Meany!). Actually, most of the apparatus of wage freeze is already in effect.

There is an enormous superstructure of anti-labor law against effective strikes. In addition to the Landrum-Griffin "slave labor" law, in addition to the Federal railway labor laws, there is a vast encrustation of similar repressive legislation on the books at the state levels.

In view of the large proportion of the U.S. labor force now on Federal, State and Local governmental payrolls, laws against public employees' strikes constitute a major part of anti-labor wage-freeze machinery for the labor movement as a whole.

Equally important is the machinery of the U.S. Labor Department and similar state agencies. These executive agencies have actually de facto powers to by-pass legislatures and make "rulings" which have the force of law.

Anti-labor law is also written by the court system through injunctions. Connivance among employers, government executive agencies and judges is, in fact, the main day-to-day instrument for strike-breaking.

Of course, years later, the union might "win its case on appeal" in the Federal Court system long after the strike has been broken. Meanwhile, National Guardsmen and police may "legally" shoot down strikers in the course of enforcing a strike-breaking law or injunction later ruled to be "unconstitutional". That is what is actually meant by "law and order" and "due process".

One of the most important new anti-labor laws is the Federal "Rap Brown" law used to prosecute Bobby Seale, David Dellinger, *et al.* in the famous Chicago case. If this law is upheld in the court test of the Dellinger case, that opens up the whole rats' nest of anti-labor "English conspiracy laws" used to legalize shooting-down of strikers during the period from the 1870's to mid-1930's. The government has exploited the general contempt of working people for a couple of Yippie clowns (Rubin and Hoffman) to induce the majority of working people to support a law which is really aimed at hanging the labor movement itself.

In addition to this general strike-breaking machinery, the government and employers already have in effect a complicated system of economic controls of real wages.

The first weapon of government anti-labor policy in this connection is the general inflation itself, supported by those labor fakers who refused to keep effective "escalator clauses" in union contracts.

The second weapon of this sort is rising Federal, State and Local taxation on wage-earners' wages, housing, and essential services. Through direct taxation and through outright swindles called "public authorities" (like the New York Metropolitan Transit Authority, Rockefeller's New York Urban Development Corporation, the New York Port Authority, and similar gimmicks across the nation), increasing proportions of wage-earners' income are

siphoned off to subsidize large corporations and financiers gorging themselves at the public trough. The wage-earner takes less and less of his gross pay home.

A second feature of this tax system cuts real wages still further. The present income tax system means that every wage increase gained by unions at the bargaining table throws the union members into a new higher tax-bracket. Government officials' double-talk calls this "the fiscal dividend". That means that if workers get a 7% wage rise to make up for a 7% inflation, they absolutely do not make up for the lost purchasing power; the 7% increase in wages is taxed at a higher rate than the same pre-inflation buying power.

The result is that wage-earners in recent years have required 12% to 15% increases in wages each year simply to keep even with the buying power of their take-home pay after taxes, a condition which enables employers and government to attack break-even demands as "outrageously inflationary" simply because the demand seems so large by comparison with past contractual increases. This condition also enables labor fakery to conceal the extent of the sell-out at the bargaining table.

Now, we have the recent rapid increase in lay-offs, weakening the combat strength of the strongest and potentially most militant unions, like the United Auto Workers' Union. Conditions of recession impel corporations to opt for lockouts and prolonged strikes, under conditions in which large sections of union membership tend to be more concerned with simply keeping a weekly paycheck than even defending their take-home purchasing power. Furthermore, since long labor strikes in the past quarter century have depended significantly on the ability of union members to pick up part-time jobs during the period of the strike, recession employment conditions weaken the combat strength of unions in this aspect of the matter.

Nixon and Rockefeller may say that they are against wage-price controls. A very effective set of wage controls is already being used. What the leading sponsors of wage controls are then saying is that the existing anti-labor "tools" of wage control are not gouging enough out of wages.

Nixon's contrary opinion in the matter has no scientific merit. His immediate political base happens to be mainly a collection of stone-age mentalities from the lower orders of the business and professional classes (The so-called "Southern Strategy"). It need not be proven here (As Casey Stengel would say, "You could look it up") that his base is made up of right-wing anarchists of the sort who are against "Big Government Regulation" on principle. Also, the crisis facing that regime compels it to hold together a so-called "Silent Majority" including a significant minority of the more grizzled wage-earners and their wives. It would be tactically inadvisable for used-car salesman Nixon to reveal the naked anti-labor defects of the political product he is attempting to peddle.

The opinion of David Rockefeller, head of Chase Manhattan Bank, has more weight. In a TV debate with Robert Roosa, leading exponent of wage-price controls, Rockefeller's tame economist explained: if the government attempted to directly administer wages and if a major strike broke through the government ceiling, the ability of the government to administer the economy in any way would be called into doubt. Rockefeller prefers to continue to use existing anti-labor tools, to keep wages as low as possible, but to keep himself with as much tactical maneuvering-room as possible.

The third faction, led by Roosa, Galbraith, most liberal Democrats, New York's

Mayor Lindsay, and good old labor faker George Meany, is for outright controls now. On their side (from their pro-capitalist standpoint), they have the point against Rockefeller. If controls are not imposed, the economy is going to blow up anyway, "So what's the sense of trying to save the government's "credibility" by methods that aren't going to work?" Even pragmatist Governor Nelson Rockefeller will eventually agree (perhaps after the Fall, 1970 New York gubernatorial election) --if the depression does not come first.

### The Outer Limits of Trade Unionism

The labor movement thus faces two devastating problems. It cannot defend wages and working conditions by pure-and-simple militant trade union methods in a period when government and employers are ganging up against labor's wages, and in a period in which the main attack on wages occurs away from the bargaining-table in the dimension of political issues of inflation, credit and taxation. If labor uses the methods available to it to crush both employers and government repression over this issue, labor's victory will certainly bring about the collapse of a U.S. economy already threatened with a new world depression. Unless labor is prepared to go way beyond trade-unionism, to assume the responsibilities of both government and economic management, labor will be defeated. We are rapidly approaching the outer limits of simple trade union methods of resistance.

### The Task Before Us

In response to the inevitable rise in labor ferment the post-1967 period of economic crisis has brought forth in the U.S.A., sections of the left labor bureaucracy and the Communist Party have begun moving decidedly to the left of the Socialist Workers' Party and most other socialist groups to the extent of attempting to organize a semi-political alliance of "rank and file" labor forces and certain of their allies (e.g. June Chicago Conference). Unfortunately, as we have said above, the CP seems to have learned absolutely nothing from the experience of the late 1930's and early to middle 1940's; the CP has, essentially, revived "Browderism". Their response takes the form of attempting to build a labor bloc within the Democratic and Republican liberal factions (Humphrey, McGovern, Lindsay, et al.) and playing up to trade-union chauvinism in the way that all of the "old left" groups did during the 1938-1948 period. That is, to building "rank and file" organization within the existing labor movement, with the ostensible objectives of capturing union leadership and somewhat "reforming" the liberal factions of the capitalist parties ---In sum, the worst features of Popular Frontism. The SWP-YSA is too deeply enmired in its own non-labor Popular Front tactics in the anti-war movement to respond to the new reality but rising labor ferment will impel it too to finally rediscover the existence of the working class struggle in the U.S.A., at which point it, like most "left" organizations, will join the CP in re-enacting the foolish mistakes of the past.

In this period to focus on "rank and file" base-building within the unions, the labor tactic of the CP, SWP, PLP, IS, Workers League, et al., is like diving in to turn off the faucet in a house that is already sinking beneath the floodwaters of the Mississippi.

It is admittedly urgent to participate in and encourage the development of rank and file caucuses within unions, and to critically support what are in themselves often foolish tactics for winning power fights within those unions. Admittedly, the majority of militant working men and women are still politically backward, are still hostile to the idea of forming common programmatic political caucuses with such "outsiders" as unemployed

workers, oppressed minority layers, and socialist youth. One will not cure workers of these backward mental traits by petulantly insisting that they mend their ways before we "consent" to work with them. We must intervene for the purpose of attempting to win these workers to less chauvinistic outlooks through collaboration in common struggles. The question is whether one is actually working to win these workers over now or postponing the struggle against trade-union chauvinism to some future date (after one has built one's local trade union base).

We must approach this situation with an understanding of the concentric circles of organization which bring a potential majority government force into being. Our most critical work in this process is creating cross-union caucuses which simultaneously represent the common political class interests of trade unionists, unorganized wage-earners, oppressed minorities, socialist youth and their political allies. These cross-union caucuses must become the organic leadership within the more politically-backward militant rank-and-file strata within unions, the oppressed minority movement, etc. This arrangement provides the indispensable form of organization through which the most politically-advanced strata (members of the cross-union caucuses) is able in the heat of crises to bring together the larger forces in which they are embedded as rank-and-file leaders.

In principle, such a cross-union caucus formation has the essential form of a working-class political party. However, it is unlikely in the extreme that a homogeneous single working-class political party can be formed now. The economic and social crisis leading toward a socialist transformation develops too rapidly (in all accounts of socialist history to date) to permit issues of party affiliation to be thoroughly sorted out in time to do the job required. The socialist transformation can occur only as cross-union caucuses are created through united-front efforts of the best layers from virtually all socialist organizations together with larger numbers of workers, black militants, and others who may not yet have decided on any particular party affiliation.

The second major error to be exposed and eliminated is that of those tailists who argue that such cross-union caucuses can spontaneously develop their own programs. This tailist view is nonsensical on two main premises.

Firstly, the sorts of ideas which various sections of the potential majority bring to united efforts are the kind of ideas developed under decades of the habit of thinking in pro-capitalist terms. These are the sorts of ideas, notions of demands, and so forth, which represent the parochialist self-interest of one section against the interests of other sections. In order to bring these forces together in the first place, it is essential to provide "from the outside" the sort of program which replaces parochialist demands with programs in the common class self-interest of all the forces involved.

Secondly, the labor movement and its allies are not spontaneously qualified to govern the nation and its economy. In practice, the programs spontaneously developed by such layers would lead to national disaster, defeats and the victory of counter-revolution (even fascism) as a result of those failures. A competent program can be developed only by a revolutionary intelligentsia, which then propagates, explains and proves the validity of its proposals to the majority of working people and their allies.

Without program based on mastery of Marx's economics there can be no competent organization of cross-union caucuses, no united front, no working class party, and absolutely no acceptable solution to the social and economic disaster now confronting the popu-

lation.

Our job is then twofold. We must concentrate on creating cross-union caucuses (alliances of unionists, unorganized, oppressed minorities, socialist youth) in terms of the issues of struggle emerging before us now. These caucuses must be viewed as cadre-forces themselves embedded in the larger strata of rank-and-file caucuses of politically less developed militant forces of unions, minorities, students. This work demands the development and propagation of the necessary programs, programs essential both for the assumption of government and economic management by the political working class, and programs essential for the struggles leading toward the assumption of power.

The key to this situation is the U.S. war-economy. Respecting the fact that the military-aerospace sector represents more than 25% of our capital-goods producing potential, now going into social waste, the conversion of this sector to useful capital goods production (productive job creation), and similar efforts of reconstruction in connection with other gross waste in the economy means an immediately available potential for a 20% to 25% annual rate of real economic growth in the U.S. economy under the government and economic management of a political working-class majority.

It is time to end the reformist nonsense of a "single-issue anti-war movement", and the sort of "base-building" Popular Frontism being pushed by the CP, PLP, and others. There is one very simple key from which the necessary program flows: socialist reindustrialization centering about immediate and total conversion of the military-aerospace sector of the economy. Anything else is worthless crap.

The lesson of the strike wave ought to be, therefore, the following conception of program: a set of proposals for reorganizing the economy where capitalism has failed (socialist reindustrialization) together with the social content of those proposals, how to set about organizing the cadre and other broader forces which must be organized through a process of political mass strikes, to create the social form of organization of the majority capable of actually carrying out these fine deeds of reconstruction.

# The Fact & Ideology of 'Women's Liberation'

by Carol LaRouche

A revolutionary who does not confront and oppose the oppression of women in this society deserves the failure which his or her efforts must necessarily encounter. The male-female relationship is a touchstone of social change, as Marx wrote in The Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1884:

The relation of man to woman is the most natural relation of human being to human being. It therefore reveals the extent to which the human essence in him has become a natural essence--the extent to which his human nature has become nature to him... the extent to which he in his individual existence is at the same time a social being.

The deterioration of family life today mirrors the pervasive estrangement of human relationships in bourgeois society. The estrangement of women within the socialist movement exactly reflects the degree to which bourgeois ideology still dominates the movement. In the same measure, the response of women to their oppression, which leads them to organize "women's liberation groups", is also a reflection of bourgeois ideology in such groups, albeit in a "revolutionary" guise.

The alienation of human relationships in class society objectively assigns individuals the tasks of fulfilling given social roles. The objective situation thus confronting the individual instills consciousness of his or her role interests, distinct from his or her actual human, social interests.

The white construction worker narrowly defines his self-interest as one of opposition to the interests of black unemployed. The clerical worker in an office recognizes no common interest with those "lower status" strata (who, incidentally, frequently earn higher wages) who work in the adjoining plant. The same prejudice led skilled workers in the past to fail to understand the need to organize skilled and unskilled (and unemployed) workers in common organizations for their own self-preservation.

Such alienated conceptions of self-interest led to the practices which nearly destroyed the organized labor movement with one AFL union fighting another in petty jurisdictional disputes, or crossing the picket lines of other unionists. The same process is exhibited within the corporate bureaucracies: the sales department will be at loggerheads with production management, and accounting will be fighting both. We see the same alienation,



leading to the corruption of human knowledge, in the jealously-guarded academic fiefdoms.

The primary role assignment in society is that of male and female. Integral as sexual identification is to the socialization of the new social individual, the child, it is the most "deeply imprinted" of all. Unlike other roles which can be interchanged with more-or-less fluidity, male-female roles are biologically assigned. Even a homosexual is clearly a man or woman and must relate as such. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Women's Liberation movement defines itself in bourgeois-ideological terms, for the purpose of emancipation of woman. Nevertheless, however urgent the liberation of women may be, as long as women situate the problem within the confines of their assigned roles as women, what they have to say and propose is inevitably distorted.

### Man The Oppressor

It is not accidental that the sobriquet, "women's liberation", tends to be equated to "black liberation". The term, "sexism", has been created and widely circulated in these "lib" circles in efforts to equate the problem to that of racism.

Racism is one of the most vicious expressions of bourgeois ideology, consciously exploited by the capitalist class against black and white workers alike, as a tactic of divide and rule. Yet, failing to understand the actual nature of this phenomenon, most radicals and black militants fall prey to the bourgeois-ideological formulations of "Fight racism!". Mistakenly identifying the enemy as the white worker one step up on the hierarchy, thus demonstrating that they are, themselves, victims of the same ideology whose particular expression they oppose. Who symbolizes the "oppressor" in such arguments? Who symbolizes "whitey"? The white worker. How has the white worker been widely characterized? As "honkey", a term originally circulated to express the most vicious chauvinism of skilled workers against unskilled slavic immigrants (for whom "honkey" or "hunky" was an abbreviation of Hungarian.) Thus, the "fight against racism" has often been ironically proposed in racist terms.

For the Women's Liberation movement men are the "honkies". In their ideology, men are the beneficiaries of the oppression of women. Men's exploitative privileges must be wrested from them. Family life becomes the arena for politics. Starting from such premises, with unassailable "logic", the Radical Feminists, the most extreme tendency within the movement, restricts its membership so that no more than one-third of the membership at any given time may be engaging in sexual relationships with men.

The movement is, of course, made up of diverse tendencies, so that the particular position of no group can be held as representative. In fact, at two extremes, NOW and Gay Liberation, men are participating members. Nonetheless, whatever differences exist among various tendencies on various particular issues, they all seek the "emancipation of women from the oppression by men". In this way, many otherwise invaluable insights from these sources are profoundly distorted.

In capitalist society today, the male role is defined in terms of accomplishment, the female by relationship to the male. The woman's major task in life is generally to make herself acceptable to some man who will marry and care for her. She in return for goods and services will cater to him and raise his children. The business of being a woman involves maintaining an attractive appearance and a pleasing personality. The function of women as agents of "conspicuous consumption" is not less viciously true today than

when Veblen coined the expression. A man desires a wife who will advertise his success. A woman is raised to the expectation that she will "marry and live happily ever after". She is enculturated to establish her identity in terms of her mate, with the inevitable result that the tendency of women is to parasitize on their husbands and children: Philip Wylie's "Mom".

To the extent that the Movement tries to make women aware of this process, to stimulate and encourage their search for independent identity, it is constructive. Distortion occurs because of the Movement's refusal (in general) to locate the problems of women where they actually occur, in social relationships. This demands that women understand their relationships in terms of the identity-crises also facing men. Reisman, in describing the "other-directed man", and Fromm speaking of the "market personality", situate the problem in its broader social context. Boys as well as girls are trained to be affable, to display team-spirit. The teenager who does not submit to peer-group dictates--even pure "fads"--is ostracized. The job applicant must sell his personality as well as his competence. There is little demand for the "prickly" individual who will fight for principle. The male is enculturated to find his identity through his ability to become socially-acceptable. A woman mediates her existence largely through her ability to win acceptance from a particular man. She seeks to realize for herself his ability to win acceptance in his job situation, etc. A man who seeks to maintain his human identity at the risk of social and financial security is frequently most viciously attacked at home.

Through what is called "consciousness raising" the Movement attempts to help women escape from the confines of a "female" identity, but without posing an alternative to man and woman for the "market personality" which is the present pervasive norm. Rarely does the Movement's literature comprehend the reality of the existence of the average male.

The following quotation from the article, "Toward a Female Liberation Movement", by Beverly Jones and Judith Brown, is revealing:

If a secretary has a criticism of the firm she works for and a money-making idea of improvement for the company, she doesn't express her view publicly at the board meeting of the firm, though she may be taking minutes... She is expected, rather, to broach it in private, in a self-effacing manner, indicating that she probably doesn't really know what she is talking about, but it seems to her...

Men simply refuse to talk to women publicly about anything but the most trivial affairs... This kind of desperate attempt by men to defend their power by refusing to participate in open public discussion with women would be amusing if it were not so effective... Take, for instance, the ploy of keeping women from recognizing their intelligence by not talking to them in public, which we mentioned earlier. After marriage this technique is extended and used on a woman in her home.

It is perfectly true that women with education and competence are unfairly forced to take low-paid, relatively menial secretarial jobs while less qualified men get executive placements. However, the corporate structure is such that decision-making is reserved to the few top executives who are members of the board, etc. Male personnel, even on the lower executive levels, are tacitly forbidden to present suggestions at such meetings in precisely the same terms Jones and Brown attribute to women. Men are bound, too, by the hierarchical chain of command, and if they wish to retain their jobs, they are constrained to exhibit a deferential manner to their superiors.

Undeniably, conversation between man and woman publicly or privately reflects the sterility of most people's existence. But why suppose that men speaking by themselves are doing anything more creative than sharing a few tasteless dirty jokes? Widespread alcoholism among men and women testifies that most people are being driven to one or another form of escapism. The banality, the misery of everyday existence, must be attacked, but surely not from the point of view that it is a conspiratorial practice of man designed to destroy woman.

### The Home

The social division of labor assigns the main responsibility for rearing children to women. Particularly when children are young, much of the labor attached to caring for them is drudgery. Worst of all, there are few breaks in the routine for the average woman in this situation. Furthermore, the average mother spends a major part of her time alone with her children, isolated from the stimulation of adult company. Her main hope for relief comes from the contributions which her husband makes materially, by doing the dishes, shopping, watching the children, or psychologically, by companionship.

The situation lends itself to misunderstanding, bitterness and estrangement. From the male point of view, woman's lot is not that hard. She is not bound by a rigid schedule. She does not have a boss directing her every move. Her work as it involves children is inherently more emotionally rewarding than is offered by the majority of routinizing jobs which men perform. As the mother's children grow older, her work-load is decreased. Most women have not faced the job-tensions which are the lot of the average man, whether the man is tied to the killing pace of the assembly line or the rat race of an advertising office. The fact that women live significantly longer than men suggests that man's work experience is at least physically more destructive than that of women at home.

Few Movement groups show much knowledge of the actual conditions of life of working-class families. Many working-class men are forced to work killing overtime hours or moonlight merely to maintain a minimal standard of living for their families. At the same time, these working-class men devote a significant part of their leisure time to household maintenance tasks to save the costs of outside help -- painting, plumbing, and so forth. It is usual for the husband to do the major family shopping, especially in one-car families, since the man must use the car for transport to his job and economical shopping areas are rarely within walking distance of the home.

In middle and upper income families, men are usually able and willing to purchase outside household help to ameliorate the housekeeping burdens of the wife, and to thus give woman leisure time they themselves do not enjoy. The irony is, as the Movement literature rightly emphasizes, that domestic servitude, whether performed by wife or maid, remains "women's work". Unrewarding and where hired, underpaid.

While the sexual division of labor assigns to the male the role of material support for the family, over one-third of the work force is made up of women, of whom the majority are married. Most of these women work because their income is necessary for the support of their family. It is here that sexual role-assumption becomes truly oppressive, since, in most families, the major responsibility for household tasks and child-rearing still falls to the woman. The crux of the matter is not, however, the exploitation of women by men, but the higher rate of exploitation of the working-class as a class by the class (men and women) of capitalists. Women must work because capitalism does not pay men sufficient

incomes to maintain their families, that is to say, the cost of reproducing a new generation of productive workers through a decent homelife, education, and so forth. Now, more and more women are forced onto the labor market, whether to directly contribute to the simple maintenance of the family, or to pay the costs of education necessary to prepare their children as workers. Man and woman both suffer in the ensuing deterioration of family life.

### Children

Free twenty-four-hour child-care facilities, legalized abortions, fairer divorce laws; these are leading concrete demands by women's liberation groups. Like all reformist demands, as solutions in themselves, their value is dubious. Day-care facilities, like most public and private schools, are repressive toward children. They concentrate on inculcating habits of obedience and conformity at an early age. The Movement justly criticizes the sexualization of education, which hinders girls from getting technical training and tracks them into "women's work", but it has so far failed to take on the drill-and-grill system of learning by which the mental potential of both men and women is so systematically destroyed. (The fragmentation and false abstractions produced by the departmentalization of curricula. The lack of relevance of most courses to the tasks necessary if society is to be humanized. Propaganda by which children are "brainwashed" in the name of learning history...etc.)

In a similar way, legalized abortion can become a coercive weapon against the poor forced to seek welfare. Divorce laws which place the burden of child support on one or another partner in a marriage continue to privatize the burden of child-rearing, when it is in essence a social function and should be borne as a social cost.

Yet, despite many such limitations, the reformist aspect of the Movement is perhaps its most viable side. On the other hand, radical proposals suggest the abolition of the family as the institution for child-raising. Thus, the demand that all mothers receive a salary from the state. On first glance, such a salary would free a woman from financial dependence upon a man and from the need to take unsatisfactory jobs. The assumption is that the most alienated distortion of socially-productive activity, the wages-system, is what give life dignity! To suggest that raising children be looked upon as simply another wage-job only exacerbates the existing degradation of human relationships. Are children a mere commodity produced by women!?

The question ignored by such "radical" tendencies is: How can the privatized family, to which children are a burden as well as a pleasure, be socialized? How can children be raised to become human beings in possession of a valid sense of identity? How may we remodel society so that individuals become self-consciously social, and therefore human?

### Sex

Inevitably, an extreme wing of the Movement is drawn to the consideration of lesbianism as an alternative life-style. Since, they argue, men are "programmed" to oppress women, and since a solitary existence is empty, lesbianism is mooted as the viable alternative. Yet, the lesbians themselves point out how disastrously their own relationships mirror the distortions of ordinary family life.

To the extent that the family remains a market-place for the 'exchange' of goods and services, it acts out the worst features of bourgeois social relationships in pitiless intimacy. Yet, it is this most vicious feature of male-female marital relationships, the 'equitable exchange of goods and services,' that some Movement groups propose for the new form of the family composed of women.

To quote Ti-Grace Atkinson in Radical Feminism and Love, a recent manifesto published by the Feminists:

I propose that the phenomenon of love is the psychological pivot in the persecution of women. Because the internalization of coercion must play such a key functional role in the oppression of women, due to their numbers alone, and because of the striking grotesqueness of the one-to-one political units 'pairing' the oppressor and the oppressed...it is not difficult to conclude that women by definition must exist in a special psycho-pathological state of fantasy both in reference to themselves and to their manner of relating to their counter-class...I distinguish between friendship and love. Friendship is a rational relationship which requires the participation of two parties to the mutual satisfaction of both parties. Love can be felt only by one party; it is unilateral in nature, and, combined with its relational character, it is thus rendered contradictory and irrational.

The same author, relying upon the work of Masters and Johnson (which suggests that women lack vaginal sense receptors and therefore experience pleasure through external rather than internal stimulation) suggests that the myth of the vaginal orgasm is simply another device used by men to lure women into heterosexual relationships. Atkinson makes the unwarranted assumption shared by Anne Koedt, in The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm (New England Free Press), that clitoral stimulation is the only basis of sexual satisfaction for women, overlooking the social-psychological importance of the degree of physical intimacy (involving areas of indisputable sensitivity) attained through vaginal penetration!

Projecting for the future, she writes:

Since our society has never known a time when sex in all its aspects was not exploitative, and relations based on sex, e.g. male-female relationships, were not extremely hostile, it is difficult to understand how sexual intercourse can even be salvaged as a practice, that is, assuming that our society would desire positive relationships between individuals.

Suggesting that pregnancies would be extra-uterine, she raises the question, why not simply masturbate? She argues her point:

The most difficult component to define in this projected, seemingly gratuitous, cooperative act is the psychological attitude of the participants to one another. What is it about this psychological attitude, the two attitudes together transmitted through various physical contacts being the relationship, that could render a two-party experience (1) relevant to what is essentially an independent experience, and (2) an improvement upon such an independent experience? ...The agent is present to convey certain feelings. Assuming a healthy relationship, it's probably safe to say that these feelings would be positive toward the recipient. But what would "positive" mean? It would have to satisfy the recipient, since the gesture would be received by

that person and simultaneously interpreted . . . It must be that this mime has a symbolic aspect, and that in this essentially private act the outside participant expresses by its presence an identification with the recipient's feeling for itself. This could serve as a reinforcement to the ego and to a generalization from the attitude of the agent towards the recipient to the attitude of the public as a whole towards the recipient.

Gone is the celebration of love. Why, indeed, waste one's time by sharing inter-tactile sensations.

The barrenness of such a projection as Atkinson's reflects the author's tacit assumption that the future will be much like the present, excepting that women and men will live separate lives. It is not even a fair reflection of the present! Bad as heterosexual relationships may be, the family remains one of the few repositories of human existence in which a person can be loved and cherished and sheltered.

There is considerable truth in the protest against the way in which sex is used against women. There is, for example, the vicious lie that a woman who cannot pop into bed with a man and have an immediate orgasm is frigid. This lie is, of course, used by unscrupulous men to cow women into what amounts to miserable submission. Promiscuous relationships rarely satisfy women; it is less appreciated that they also degrade men and reflect male self-degradation. Admittedly, it is during intercourse that the contradiction between estrangement and identity is most poignantly felt.

Promiscuity is a "sell". It is being sold to the American people everyday by all the mass media as an escape from frustration, from boredom, from a sense of personal failure. Sexuality, rather than politics, is offered as a means to obtain an illusion of freedom and control over one's existence.

### Jobs

If sex is not the answer, authors such as Betty Friedan urge women to find satisfaction in a career. Here the Movement is at its sharpest in pointing out the actual discrimination practised against women. Women are systematically excluded from the upper executive levels, from the faculties of better colleges, from the ranks of skilled workers. The token entry of a few women into any one field does not obscure the basically dismal picture. Where women are doing the same work as men, they are usually paid less for it. Last hired and first fired, their median annual income is only 30% that of men. When only women holding full-time employment are considered, the relative median income is 60%. For those women whose incomes are the sole or major support of their families, such wage discrimination is a serious handicap.

Rationalizations exist to the effect that women are unreliable employees because of their child-bearing proclivities. Such evasions are easily refuted. Men and women should share equally, for example, in the burdens of supervising a sick child, and adequate visiting-nurse and child-care services could be made available to families. Furthermore, if our industrial potential were allocated rationally, it would be possible to reduce the hours of labor for men and women to obviate the intensity of present causes for conflict in roles.

Fewer women work in industry than in clerical work -- they are about 2 % of the factory labor force -- and as part-time or temporary labor, they are mostly either unorganized or under-organized by unions. Because many see their income as supplementary rather than primary, they will be less militant than men facing similar conditions of employment. In typically bureaucratic fashion, the organized labor movement has rarely sought to represent women's interests and has often enough tried to protect a "male job trust" in the more skilled classifications from any encroachment by women.

Such tactics are justified sometimes by the explanation that women will be paid less for the same work, causing the bargaining-position of men to be weakened. This is precisely the same vicious "explanation" which chauvinistic skilled workers and craftsmen used to justify their treachery against immigrant workers. This is the sort of argument, used against immigrants, blacks or women, which can spell the death knell for the union movement. Such reasoning by Gompers & Company led to the virtual destruction of the AFL in the early part of this century and could lead to the victory of fascism in its latter decades.

With unemployment presently increasing, coupled with rising costs of living, more and more women will be forced onto the job market at a time when fewer jobs will be available. If women and men are not to be played off against each other, the union movement must defend the rights of women. Yet, in a declining economy, even the most scrupulous regard for women's rights becomes an empty gesture unless the working class as a whole develops an effective political movement capable of proposing and implementing a full-employment program.

It is in this connection that we discover the major fallacy in the present Women's Liberation Movement as such. This Movement is a composite of many small groups recruited predominantly from among middle-income social strata. As the developing social-economic crisis sharpens, it will be reflected in increasing political-social polarization within the Movement. Do upper-middle income women have more in common with their working-class sisters or with their executive husbands? The question will not be so decided in each individual instance, but it is a statistical certainty that a significant section of the "middle class" women, particularly those past their early twenties, will opt to the right rather than the left when the issue is posed in terms of "wage-price controls", or as the need to maintain "law and order".

At present, the division between "radical" and "reformist" groups in the Movement is not based on class but sexual criteria. The following quotation from a manifesto of the Redstockings, a "radical" group illustrates this point:

Women are an oppressed class... We identify the agents of our oppression as man... Male supremacy is the oldest, most basic form of domination. All other forms of exploitation and oppression (racism, capitalism, imperialism, etc.) are extensions of male supremacy: men dominate women, a few men dominate the rest... All men receive economic, sexual and psychological benefits from male supremacy. All men have oppressed women.

Such confusion, which suggests that poor Jacqueline Onassis is not directly receiving benefits from the vicious oppression of millions of Greek men and women, ultimately should be gratefully received as support by the oppressing capitalist ruling strata. It is not an anomaly that "Women's Liberation" has become popular in the press. So long as the Movement continues to divert the energies of men and women into bitter sexual struggles a-

round real issues posed in a distorted way, the Movement will receive the same favorable treatment which the black movement enjoyed in the liberal press until the Black Panther Party introduced class issues.

### Class

With the exception of NOW (National Organization of Women), women participating in the Movement have organized themselves into small, local groups. All of the groups -- from the avowedly-liberal NOW to the "radical" Feminists -- are predominantly middle-income in composition and bourgeois in their ideology of method and outlook.

Women's fractions from the Communist, Socialist Workers', Freedom Socialist, and International Socialist parties do seek to correct the dominant bourgeois-ideological outlook of the Movement, calling attention to the "working-class woman". However, the average level of consciousness in the movement is better represented in an article, "American Women", co-authored by Vivien Leone and Marlene Nadle, which appeared in the May 2, 1970 issue of the New York Feminist:

When I began this investigation into the domestic workers' plight, I had no idea the research would lead me logically and irrevocably toward supporting this very program, for as long as housewives are the scabs who do this job for free, domestic work must remain degrading. The rallying call of Women, Unite! never had more urgent objective than to solve the Servant Problem, Because The Servants are US. All of us!

Prostitution is as American as cherry pie. From one end of the country to the other women have been taught that their only power is horizontal... Since there were so few alternatives and so much pressure against taking them, most women settle for the respectable career of selling themselves as sexual objects to the highest bidder... Yet it is only the liberated women and the professionals who are honest enough to admit that almost all women are prostitutes.

Thus the above authors attempt, correctly, to break down the isolation of middle-income women, to reject the gift of semi-freedom gained through the enslavement of their less fortunate sisters. They are attempting to set themselves apart from those women, particularly from NOW, who have allowed themselves to become "spokesmen" for the movement in the same way that trade-union bureaucrats and Uncle Toms have used the unions and black struggle for their own professional status (or, that of their professional strata.) The majority are seeking to build a movement which will represent the interests of all women. But they remain limited by their lack of understanding of the social dynamic of this period. Thus they seek to identify with domestic servants and prostitutes rather than with working class women whose life situation they fail to comprehend.

The May 1968 French general strike and the near-general strikes now occurring in Italy, foreshadow the reality of the coming period in this country. The decision within which all other questions must be subsumed is the choice of either fascism or socialism. Thus, those socialists who point to the need for the movement to address itself to working-class women are on the right track. But only 20% of the labor force are women. Most working-class women belong to that class as wives or daughters of working-class men. The weakness of these women is that they lack the social situation which in a mass-strike period



leads the men to an almost-instinctive acceptance of class-for-itself world-outlooks. In France, when the men called the general strike, they did not receive the support of their wives! The revolutionary opportunity was lost because of the mis leadership of the Communist Party and the failure of the radical students to offer a programmatic alternative. However, they still would have been handicapped in a more positive situation by the attitude of their wives, whose social isolation in the home left them most vulnerable to bourgeois propaganda.

The family is the primary institution through which children are trained to accept bourgeois norms, respect for authority, habits of discipline, and so forth. It is women who are assigned the major responsibility for child-rearing and are expected to be the social arbiters for the family. It is women who are the bulwark of organized religion, and so on. From early girlhood, a standard of "proper behavior" is demanded of them (in preparation for their repressive role in the family) which is not expected of boys. It is not surprising that they tend to be more conservative, to cling stubbornly to reactionary ideals longer than their husbands.

Militant unions have recognized this fact by ~~forming~~ women's auxiliaries during strikes. While such groups may ostensibly function as no more than 'welfare groups' which distribute strike benefits and run soup kitchens, their real purpose is to take women out of the alienation of isolation in the home and bring them together as a group in a situation where they are active participants in the struggle. During the 'thirties, women manned the picket lines while their husbands occupied the factories, and played otherwise a frequently vital role in those struggles.

It is urgent for socialists to understand the need for women at home to become actively involved in strike (and other labor) actions, so that when the occasion arises, they are not overlooked. More immediately, these same women can be actively involved now in their special role as managers of household consumption, in struggles of the working-class at the point of consumption. In this lies the special significance of "community movements" such as those around housing, schools, health care. It is thus essential that a program of socialist re-industrialization be counterposed in each of these struggles to the reactionary bourgeois-ideological forms of parochialist "community control" propaganda, to emphasize the class-wide aspect of the struggle and divert struggles from the self-defeating dead-end of "special pleading".

#### Method

The fallacy of separatist organization for women's liberation is exposed in the special position of black women. Is their real interest as women or members of an oppressed black minority? Should black women organize their own separate movement, separate from white women and black men? Into how many atoms should the working class forces be ultimately divided, each to regard all others as the "oppressor", to divert and fragment the energies of working-class forces in the face of the enemy class?

Women in the Movement have, in general, adopted a methodology which reflects (and thus perpetuates in only a new disguise) their oppression, rather than a methodology which aims to supercede those conditions. Thus, the following proposal, Forms For Our Organization, proposed by the New York Women's Liberation Center:

We want to develop new forms that break down our isolation but are non-bureaucratic and non-authoritarian -- where we can develop our personal strength, as well as group solidarity and collectivity. We want forms that combat elitism. All tasks necessary for the functioning of the organization and membership on the work group committee will be on a rotating basis so that all of us take responsibility for the growth and direction of our organization and movement.

This proposal accurately reflects the present state of the movement, excepting the case of NOW. By their composition and function, the activity of these groups makes them most suited to undertake "consciousness-raising". In these sessions women share their common experience within the family and at work in an effort to sharpen their awareness of the ways in which they as females have been "oppressed". As soon as members seek to go beyond this point and undertake outside political action, the process within the groups breaks down.

Barbara Susan, a member of the Redstockings, describes the process: Consciousness raising is a way of forming a political analysis on information we can trust is true. That information is our experience. It is difficult to understand how our oppression is political (organized) unless we first remove it from the area of personal problems. Unless we talk to each other about our so-called personal problems, and see how many of our problems are shared by other people, we won't be able to see how these problems are rooted in politics. When we talk about politics we don't mean in the limited sense of political parties such as the Democratic or Republican or economic systems like capitalism and socialism...

The Politics of Housework, by Pat Mainardi, illustrates the kind of analysis intended. Statements abound in the Movement literature that because women are oppressed they are therefore specially equipped for building a better society. They are more sensitive than men, it is argued. They are naturally anti-imperialist, since what woman wishes to send her son to war? (One wonders if the men who have to die are not more "naturally" anti-imperialist?)

Movement groups generally refuse to think through the fact that they are most oppressed by the forces which tend to trivialize their lives. A methodology which suggests that trivia is the highest form of politics actually ennobles the enslavement it imagines it aims to remove. Male supremacy is in fact both insidious and vicious, and every woman must become aware of how it operates upon her and other women, especially to compel them to think only in trivial ways about trivial things and leave "serious" questions to the men. Such awareness is necessary to a woman who wishes to become an effective revolutionary (where triviality leads to tragedy), or, for the matter, simply a functioning, whole human being. Recognition itself is merely a necessary beginning. Women must overcome their aversion to those musty "male" issues of economics and political science if they wish to actually change the real conditions of their lives.

It is a condition of their oppression that they have been degraded as human beings to focus their whole energy and attention on the petty issues of daily life. To seek to make a "women's movement" which places such petty issues above politics in actuality, is to make a "virtue" of the very degradation which has to be removed. It is simply a demonstration of their unwillingness to recognize the actual nature of their oppression as women that compels them to find a "comfortable" form of organizational life in small groups

where "everyone has her say" and "aggressive" struggles over ideas are frowned upon as "elitism".

### The Socialist Movement

None of the foregoing is intended to imply that the internal life of the social movement represents a solution to the oppression of women! It is the unhappy norm of every existing socialist group that bourgeois ideology on the women question is the standard of social practice. Women in the movement perform the most menial functions; they type, do other "office work", and anything which any ordinary man in society (or woman) would naturally associate with "woman's work". They rarely speak at meetings, and when they do, their observations are almost never "theoretical", except as some small, personalized aspect of their own immediate experience is offered as collateral opinion on a debated subject. They are not chosen as spokesmen, except when some political organization self-consciously considers the political mileage that can be exacted by pushing a woman forward as a figure (as most political groups energetically assembled its women as indispensable cannon-fodder for intervention in the recent emergence of the Women's Liberation Movement).

They do not teach classes or write articles, except on "women's subjects". They are more likely to become the "breadwinner", financially supporting the male political "activist" -- almost never the other way around -- since it is obviously less of a "sacrifice" for the "movement" for the women to sacrifice the opportunity for her theoretical and general political development. Those few women who constitute significant exceptions to this are regarded almost as lesbians or "promiscuous types" by men and women in the movement. No Rosa Luxemburgs wanted, if you please!

The reason for this state of affairs is two-fold. Women's training creates enormous "censoring" anxieties within them whenever they attempt to engage in "aggressive" political life. When they venture into that domain, they feel "unfeminine" and therefore uncomfortable. Under pressure of theoretical exchange, they revert to "feminine" defenses against masculine "aggression", defending themselves on grounds of small personal experiences, personal "feelings", and may become incoherent, shrill, etc. Everything has been done through mother-daughter, childhood, teen-age peer-group relations to prevent the woman from venturing into the male domain of serious theory. A thousand pains and penalties afflict her internally whenever she attempts to escape the bounds of that thus-internalized oppression.

Men in the movement are accustomed to submissive roles by women. It is a threat to their conception of their innate intellectual powers that a woman might seem competent to tread in this domain. The presence of an intellectual woman seems to threaten to emasculate them. Rather than encouraging a woman to develop her intellectual powers, by seriously criticizing her ideas, verbal postures and evasion are employed to indicate that since she is a woman, it is not possible that she has said much of importance. How men in the movement "relate" to women is revealed by the way women's votes are solicited in factional struggles; men reveal by the kinds of arguments they address to women how trivial the intellectual life they have assigned to those women.

This is by no means merely a "woman question". The problem which women face in trying to function as equals, as responsible revolutionaries, is especially important be-

cause it is symptomatic of the predicaments which workers find in integrating themselves productively into organizations which are necessarily, at this stage, predominately composed of college-educated youth.

This is by no means the limit of the problem. The treatment which women receive is also the lot of the average young male recruit. Instead of viewing the new recruit as an important human individual, whose development is essential to the progress of the movement, he is regarded, unless he comes in as a "celebrity", as a mere active number, mere organizational "cannon fodder", a mere "party-liner" Jimmy-Higgins-worker, who does the dog-work for those who consider themselves the "leaders". Thus, the problem confronting women in the movement reflects the same bourgeois-ideological social practice by which the organized movement has stunted, and in many cases demoralized and destroyed or reduced to "party hacks" those potential cadres on which its political effectiveness depends.

It is possible that many women within the socialist movement will have to circumvent these problems by forming special study groups. It would be a grave mistake, however, to suppose that these women's study groups should devote themselves to studying "women's problems" or developing "special programs" for women. What is sorely needed is a transitional socialist program which expresses the common class needs of men and women, black and white, employed and unemployed, skilled and unskilled. These women's groups must concentrate not on the women's question per se, but deal with the desperate need to develop women who are liberating themselves from the confines of feminist triviality, developing women as theoretically-qualified revolutionary leaders.

The socialist movement today is small and isolated. It is not unnatural, especially under these conditions, that the bureaucratic tendencies rampant in the broader society find social expression within socialist organizations. These tendencies have been, and could be again, the death of the movement. Therefore, it is essential that women fight every expression of male chauvinism within the movement, not only to preserve their self-esteem but to preserve the revolutionary potential of the movement itself.

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# The Trade Unions, Strike Waves, and Revolution

by Debbie and Eric Lerner

The United States is entering a period of revolutionary crisis. This is a period in which a ruling class whose survival depends on attacking the living standards of workers, will battle a working class determined to fight to hold on to what it has. This period has been preceded, since 1964-65, by a preparatory time of declining real wages, production, and social services, accompanied by increasing unrest--more strikes, black and student militance, and the discrediting of the two-party system. The present stage differs from the preceding years in that the basic economic and political issues which have been disguised up until now are beginning to come to the fore; and the ruling class will be in open conflict with the working class's presently most-powerful organizations--the industrial trade unions.

In this strike wave, starting last October at General Electric and intensifying with the postal and teamster strikes, the immediate aims of the workers--maintaining their standard of living--and employment--are incompatible with the continued existence of capitalism. The experiences gained in these struggles will in a large measure determine the attitudes of the workers to the possibility and desirability of a revolutionary solution. It will be in these battles that the workers will determine if they are to win, or face severe cuts in wages and employment.

The present crisis is the most recent in a series of similar crises occurring since capitalism ceased to expand around 1910. These crises, coming after World War I, in the Depression, and after World War II, mark a series of defeats for the workers involved. In each case, workers were unsuccessful in solving the basic economic problems which confronted them (although in some cases they won partial victories as the organization of the CIO). Why was this so?

It is not enough to say "They had bad leadership;" but we must further ask "Why did no better leadership arise, and why did the workers follow such rotten leadership?" In short, how is social control maintained over the workers so they are led to accept deteriorating conditions?

The purpose of this article is to study past revolutionary periods and to derive from them answers useful to us in formulating strategy for dealing with the complex problems which now face workers in the U.S. Specifically, we seek to answer the questions: "What conditions are favorable to the growth of fascism?" We will then seek to apply what we have found to the problems of the current developing strike wave and the developing revolutionary period.\*

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\*In studying these periods, we have tried to avoid contemporary interpretive sources. The men who write these comments on economic and social events are generally inti-

### Trade Unions vs. Mass Strike

In a liberal capitalist regime, the basic institution that controls the workers and insures the workability of capitalism is the trade union. The trade union organizes the most advanced workers in such a way that their demands will not, in general, endanger the system. Unionism fragments a potentially-united class into thousands of jealous units each under conservative leadership. On the other hand, trade-union-protected freedoms--specifically the right to strike--preserves for the workers their ability to fight against the capitalist class. The trade union is the bulwark of liberal society both against revolution and fascism. The task of the socialist is to convince workers that unions must be superceded by broader, more powerful, class-wide organizations. The task of the capitalists, at times when even union demands are incompatible with the needs of capitalism to lower the standard of living of the working class, is to smash the unions and replace their control with the far stricter control of fascism.

In periods such as the present, when simple trade union methods are ineffective, the only way workers as a whole can win real gains is by fighting in a unified fashion for the common interests of the whole class. If each group of workers fights only for its own wages, each separate group can be picked off one by one. Any gains made can be passed on to other workers (higher prices or taxes, for example). Workers will thus frequently view others' interests as antagonistic to their own interests.

But what is a program which is in the common interests of all workers? Basically, the problem faced during periods such as our own and the after the first World War is that the capitalist system is incapable of maintaining and expanding production. In order to support the value of their outstanding paper--property titles--huge amounts of man-power and machines are wasted or idled. Only if these are used to make things people need--housing, hospitals, schools, transportation, etc.--will everyone have a higher standard of living. The common-interest program--most simply--is to demand increases in real production by fully utilizing now-wasted resources at capitalist expense. Such a program benefits the whole of the working class and its allies; only the capitalists will suffer.

But it is not enough merely to enunciate a common interest program, it is necessary to organize a mass movement which accepts this program and is powerful enough to win it. This sociological problem is made difficult by the tendency of capitalist society towards interest-group fragmentation. Each group of workers tends to reflect this

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mately involved in them and tend to have rather biased views. Instead, we based our conclusions on objective records--statistical information on strikes and wages, and the equally objective record of what government was in power. Such statistics also have their disadvantages and limitations, but are the best indicators available. The working class's standard of living is indicated by unemployment and real wages (wages after deductions for taxes and inflation). Since the strike is generally the only real weapon in the hands of the working class, strike statistics have been used to indicate the state of the workers--their general unrest (percent of work force on strike), their unity (size of strikes). That is, a larger strike indicates that larger units of workers--a factory rather than a shop, or an industry rather than a factory--consider their fight to be a single one. The number of strikes is an inverse measure of the same thing. For maximum effectiveness, the proletariat should strike as one man. The greater the number of strikes, the further off is that idea.

fragmentation in their parochialist viewpoint. They see their battle to protect their interests not as the struggle of an entire class, but as a matter between themselves and "their" individual capitalist. Trade union organization is the natural expression of this outlook. This fragmentation tends to become self-perpetuating; parochial practice reinforces parochial consciousness and ideas, as workers observe the competition among the groups they are organized into (such as battles between unemployed blacks and unionized whites). Parochial organization, personified by trade union bureaucrats, also opposes any tendency to break out of these limited forms, since any such attempts threaten the position of the bureaucrats, who would become superfluous when the class organizes as a whole.

During a period of capitalist crisis, when capitalists are forced to oppose all working class demands, this triangular relationship--practice, consciousness, and organization--starts to break down. Workers find that their organizations are too weak to defend them and seek broader alliances, such as industry-wide rather than local strikes. They also see how their union leadership's tactics of compromise are working less and less well. At the same time, the potentiality of fragmentation increases as some groups fight harder against each other for shares of a shrinking pie. The first tendency is dominant during the rise of a revolutionary period, the second during its decline.

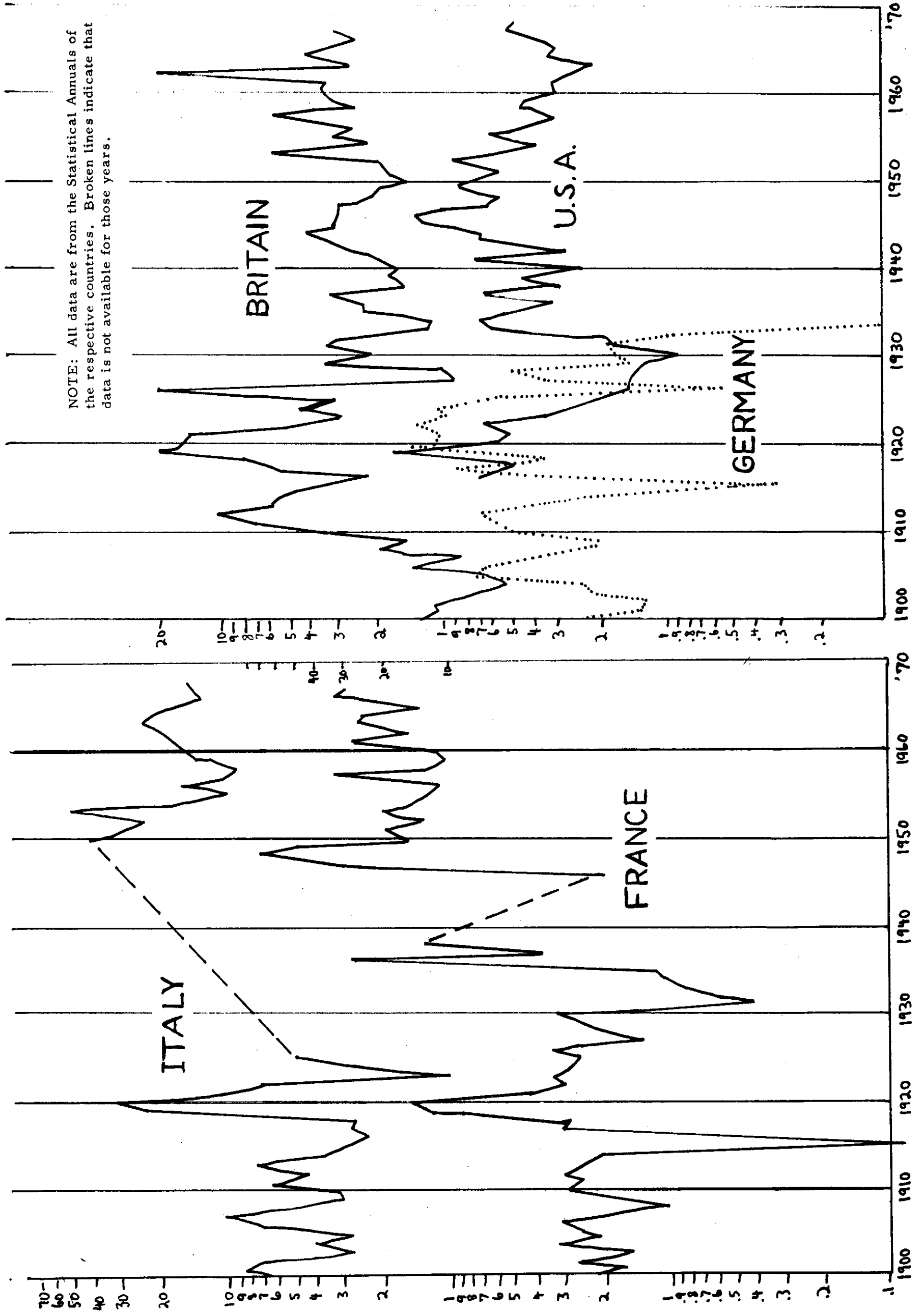
Out of the first tendency towards broader alliances comes the phenomenon of the mass strike. A mass strike is a withdrawal from work of a broad alliance of different sectors of the working class. It breaks the bounds of regular trade union practice, and constitutes a first step to further political action. Such a strike may start as a sympathy strike or a general strike. But it differs from one-day general strikes in its open-endedness of aims, membership and duration. By putting into united motion a large section of the entire working class, a mass strike provides the potential for breaking the cycle of fragmented action, consciousness and organization which preserves the present capitalist rule.

But it is only a potential. In order for this mass of workers to be really fighting for their own interests, they must have demands which relate to the program of expanded production outlined above. Only in this way will it really unite them and strengthen the entire working class. It is the role of revolutionary organizations to intervene in mass strikes to formulate demands that represent in the particular situation the program of reindustrialization. By showing how masses of workers can **combine** to act in their own interests, such demands can change the parochial consciousness of many of the participants in a mass strike. By concretizing the basis for unity, such demands make it clear that those in action are acting in the interests of broader masses and thus serve to involve these masses, spreading the movement. This spread leads to the granting of concessions as the capitalists seek to cut their losses. Concession in turn lead workers to see the advantages of class-for-itself action.

Furthermore, the consciousness of a community of interest expressed in the demands leads to the realization of the necessity for unified organization. This means more than just trade unions getting together; it means a workers' assembly or strike committee that organizationally represents the class as a whole. Finally, the unity in action, aims and organization lead to the formation in embryo of an alternative government, capable of running the economy and the country.

# Percent of Workers on Strike

Percentage of employed work force involved in strikes





The critical link between the revolutionary intelligentsia and the working class is the natural leadership which exists in the trade unions. These rank and file leaders (who have resisted the union bureaucracy and who are looked to by their fellows for militant leadership), the "trouble makers" so hated by bosses and piecards, are present in all revolutionary situations. We shall mention them often in explaining what happened in these periods.

Left to themselves, these militants will generally fight for militant trade-unionism or syndicalism, and will come to a class-for-itself outlook slowly or not at all. They fight for greater unity, but spontaneously they will not come to the program which alone can cement such unity. It is the central task of a revolutionary leadership to win these militants to a class-for-itself outlook and program.

### Italy: The Pattern of Fascist Victory

We shall discuss first the events in Italy immediately before and after World War I, where unionism was relatively weak and fragmented. Comparing the strike waves in 1907 in Italy and 1912 in Britain, (in both years about 10% of the work force was out on strike), we see that the Italians were relatively five times as split up as the workers in the United Kingdom. Also, the size of strikes did not even increase as the number of strikers grew, but strikes were piled on strikes like potatoes in a sack. The unions were themselves fragmented--the average local was 80-100 men as compared with 1000-2000 men in Great Britain.

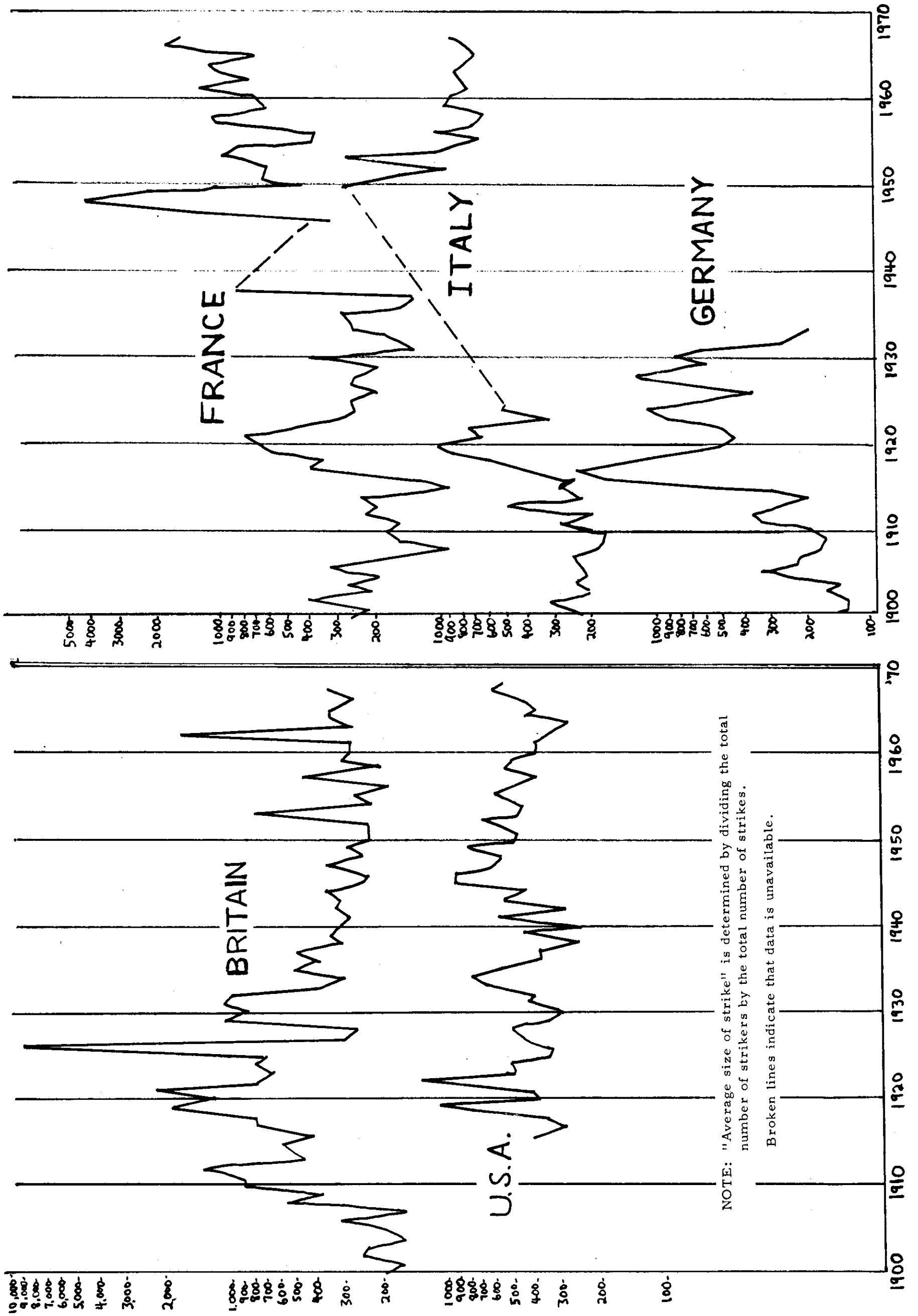
The beginning of the capitalist crisis in 1912-1913 brought the emergence of a more unified labor movement. The size of strikes were twice in 1913 what they were in 1907, despite an absolutely smaller strike wave. Union membership changed little between the two years. Essentially the same workers were involved. But in 1913 they had gained considerable experience with their leadership and were beginning to counterpose rank-and-file pressure to the narrowmindedness of the bureaucrats. This led them to go beyond, in a very preliminary sort of way, the shop-by-shop, craft-by-craft strikes which had previously been the rule.

When World War I started the Italian working class, like the American and to a lesser extent the British, was not so caught up in the nationalist fervor as happened in France and Germany. The Socialist Party, political arm of the trade-union leadership, remained pro-neutral and Italy did not enter the war until 1915. Nonetheless, once war was declared, the union leaders were patriotic and did not resist with strikes the rapid erosion of workers' wages by inflation. Between 1914 and 1916, real wages dropped 30%, while strikers constituted only 2% of the work force as compared with 8% in 1913. Disillusionment with the unions grew and they lost nearly a third of their members.

After the disastrous battles of 1916 (Verdun and Caporetto) a wave of revolt swept Europe. In Italy, the strikers, while not increasing in numbers, again enlarged their strikes, increasing their unity and likelihood of success. They increasingly broke away from their reformist leaders who attempted to keep them in a divided condition.

The Italian bourgeoisie was fearful that this small minority, no longer controlled by the reformists, might provide a spark for the much more numerous remaining workers--both organized and unorganized--who were still docile. It conceded to the strikers certain gains: percentage of strikes broken dropped to its lowest level and the decline in

# Size of Strikes



NOTE: "Average size of strike" is determined by dividing the total number of strikers by the total number of strikes.

Broken lines indicate that data is unavailable.

real wages, while not halted, was slowed. These concessions, while not preventing the militancy in 1917 and 1918 among the minority, did prevent the spread of this militancy.

At the end of the war, Italian workers, whether in or out of unions, struck to gain the losses they had suffered during the war and to keep up with the continuing inflation. For the bourgeoisie to resist these demands would have risked discrediting the union leadership. The Italian capitalists had the example of the Russian Revolution to show that workers had other, more united ways of fighting for their goals. Instead, the capitalists yielded to trade union strikes and the socialist parties' unions boomed. Strike-breaking almost ceased and real wages returned to their prewar level.

This strategy worked: the quarter of the working class that was on strike was divided into thousands of strikes, on the average not much larger than those of the previous year. Yet these tiny strikes were successful. The Italian working class drew the lesson that this sort of fragmented, every-group-for-itself sort of fight was effective. The militants who sought unity were isolated and ignored, while the prestige of the socialist parties rose.

The effect of the rapid unionization was to isolate the newly-organized and less skilled workers into small unions, away from those who had been previously organized. This enabled the bourgeoisie, as we shall see, to crush the proletariat piecemeal. It also led the most militant portion of the proletariat (including those in the Communist Party) to ignore the programmatic methods and solutions that alone could have saved them, for the reason that they ran counter to the workers' practical experience.

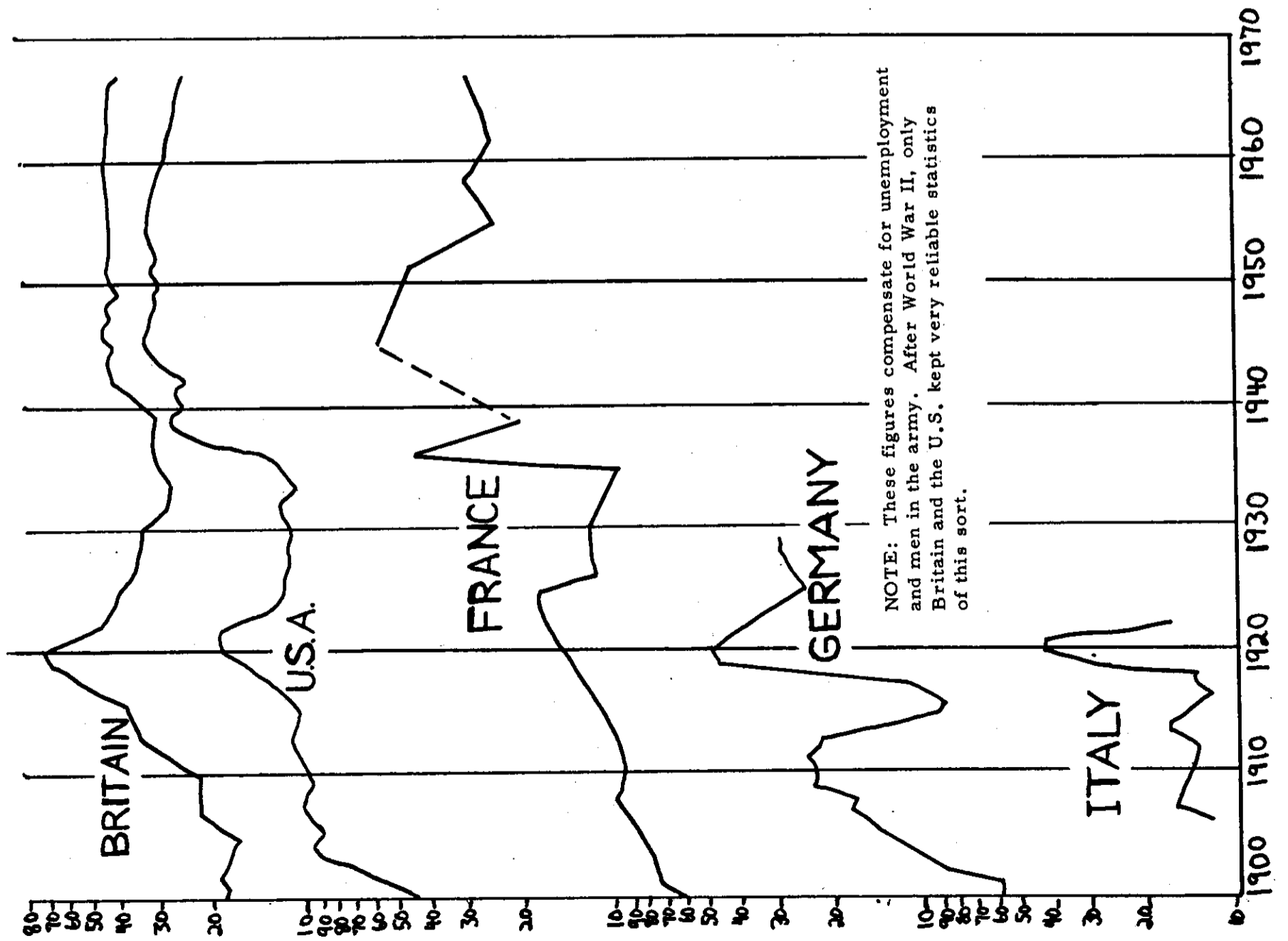
As soon as the Socialist party was in control of the masses, the bourgeoisie moved against the most advanced proletarians in the centralized industries. While wages, and unionization, continued to rise among the lower paid sectors, the wages and employment of the most advanced workers began to drop precipitously. During 1920, strikebreaking began to rise as capitalists resisted wage gains. The unemployed were used increasingly to break strikes. Capitalists who could no longer produce at full scale profitably, but who had been fearful that layoffs would only spark further militancy in 1919, began massive layoffs. This created a mass of unemployed workers disillusioned with unionism and desperate for jobs.

Workers in the central industries started to turn to more militant leadership (although the bulk of the proletariat stuck by the same trade union officials). In November 1920, responding to the rising unemployment and plummeting wages, workers under militant trade-unionist and anarcho-syndicalist leadership occupied factories in several industries, mainly in metalworking. Perhaps 200,000 workers or 5% of all those in Italy were involved. Far from seeking to involve other layer of workers, the leadership itself tended to follow trade unionist patterns of local demands.

The reason for the dominance of such ideology among the most militant leaders is not hard to find, in view of the foregoing. Most of the workers in both the old and newly organized industries, were convinced by the events of 1919 that rapid gains could be made by trade unionism. When these methods failed, they thought the problem was in their "sell-out" leadership and all that was needed was to push trade unionism to a militant extreme. Syndicalism develops naturally out of such extreme trade unionism.

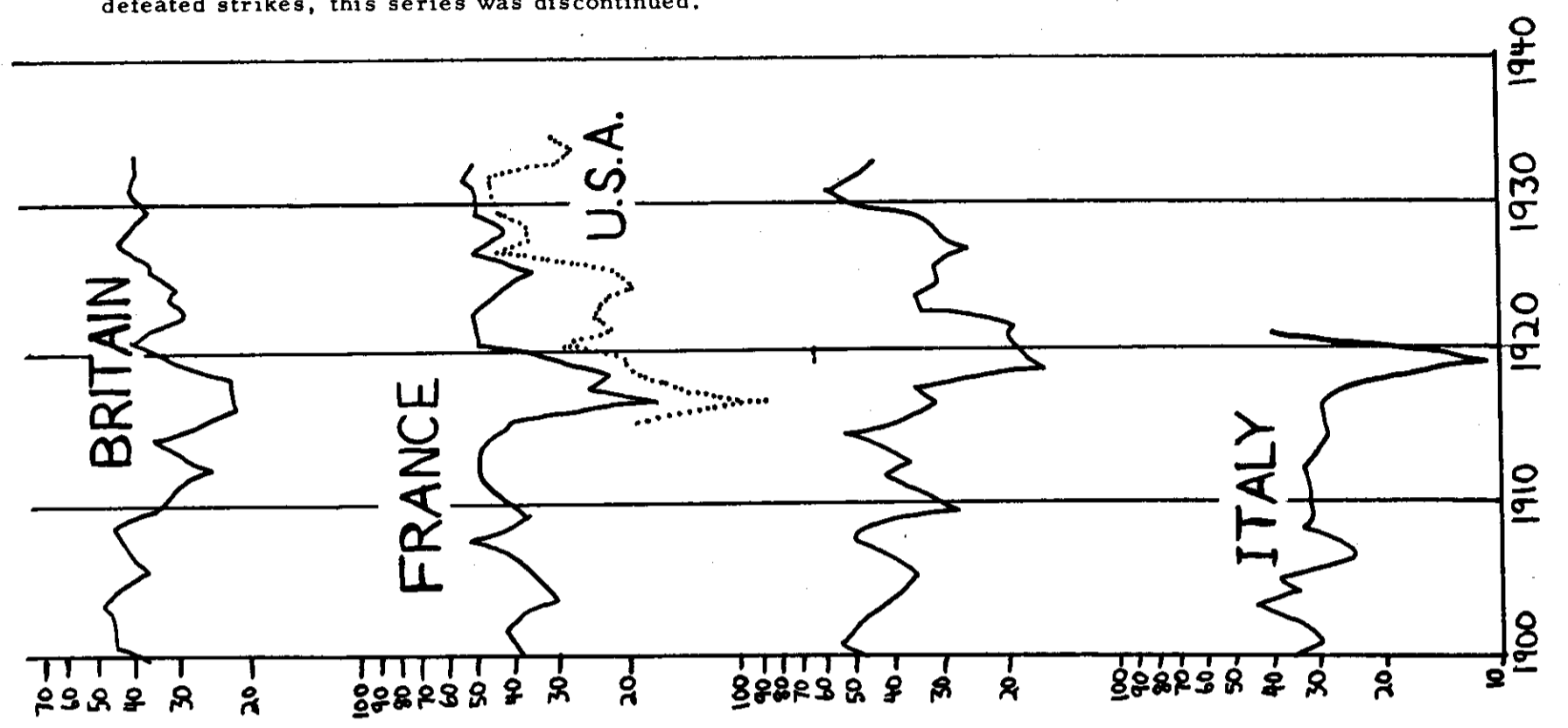
# Trade Union Membership

Percent of employed work force in trade unions



# Percent of Strikes Broken

"Strikes broken" generally means that no improvement in work conditions was achieved when work was resumed. Because this situation became rare after the Depression, as token concessions are almost always used in even defeated strikes, this series was discontinued.



Any who disagreed with this leadership would be discouraged in trying to put forward programs to unite unemployed and low-paid workers with the more advanced workers. For at this time, these low-paid workers were still being organized into unions or had just been organized. These workers were convinced that they needed no allies, and that their leadership was good enough for them.

With such bad leadership, the strikes of November 1920 disintegrated. Once the militants were defeated and discredited, the way was open for the counter-revolution. The workers had no choice but to put their confidence again in the Socialist party leadership since there was no alternative. The now huge army of unemployed, who had no ties to the unions and reaped no benefits from them, were organized into fascist bands under the illusion that by breaking the power of the conservative unions could they make real changes. The socialist leadership, sell-out to the last, retreated before the union-busting of the fascist gangs and the organized proletariat followed them. Without the unemployed, fascists would have been without a group sufficiently desperate to act as a striking force. Without the events of 1919 and 1920 the workers would have rejected the sell-out leadership and met fascist force with force of their own (as they had started to do, before being stopped by their leadership). Both elements were necessary for fascism. Mussolini was able to seize power and physically destroy the unions only on the basis of these two circumstances.

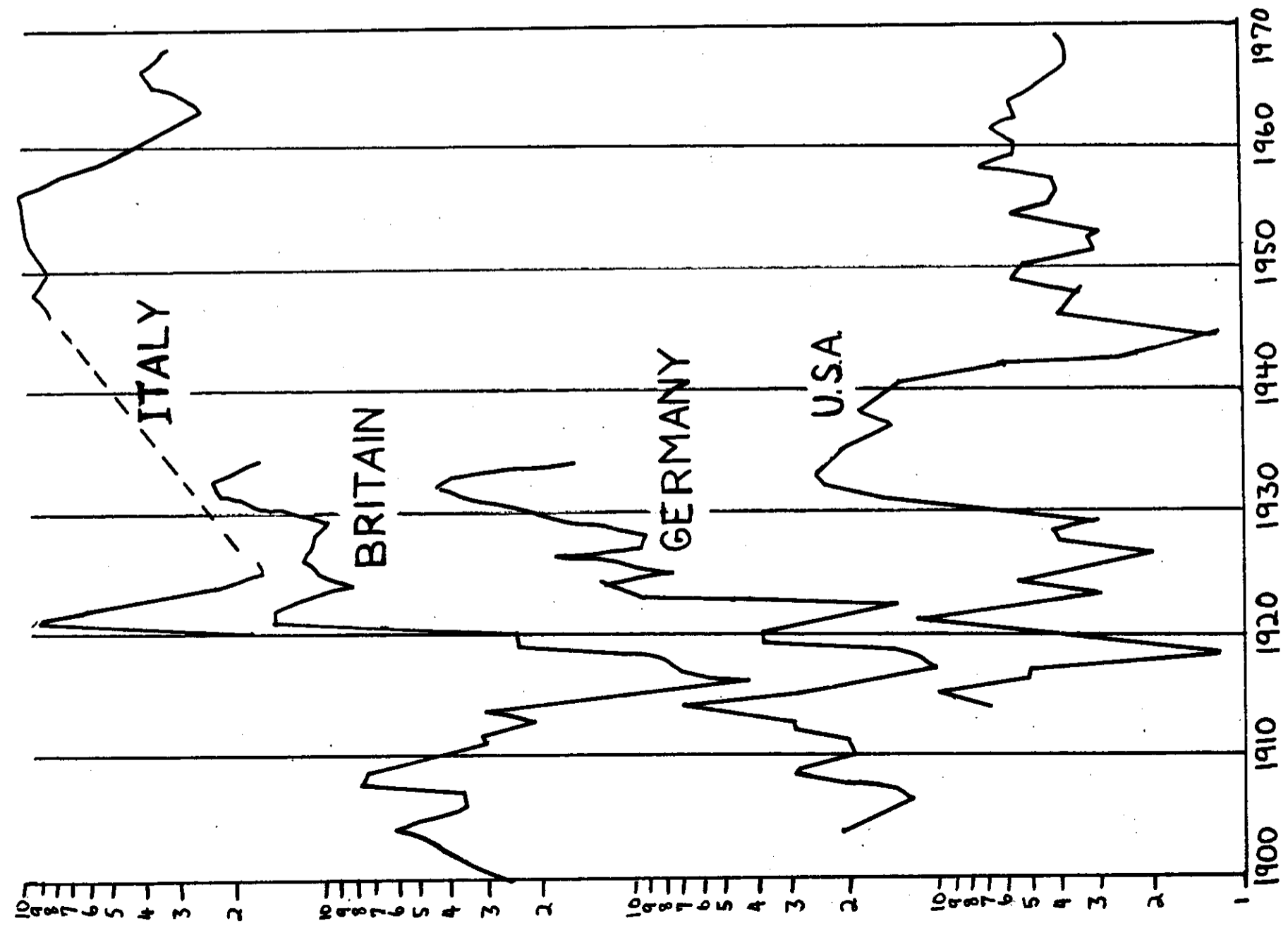
This general pattern of events was repeated again and again, with various modifications, in Europe. It illuminates the reasons why no programmatic revolutionary party ever emerged in Europe and why the advice of the most astute of the Russian revolutionaries, Lenin and Trotsky, was consistently misunderstood. The Russians tended, especially in the early years of 1920-23, to see that battle between the reformist socialists and revolutionary communists in Europe as similar to the one between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks in Russia. These two parties were the result of a split in the Russian Social Democratic party. The Mensheviks said the liberal capitalists would lead the revolution and supported the bourgeois regime which lasted from February to October of 1917. The Bolsheviks said the proletariat would lead the revolution against the Czar and would transform it into a socialist revolution. In talking of the events in 1920 in Italy, Trotsky said that the reformists took the leadership of a revolutionary mass but refused to carry the revolution through in the same way that the Mensheviks led the Russian workers in the months after the February Revolution. In Russia, the question was simply one of the Bolsheviks pushing the Mensheviks to go as far as they would. The Bolsheviks then gained the support of the proletariat when the Mensheviks balked at carrying through the program of peace, land division, etc. that the people desired.

Trotsky realized the the socialists were considerably stronger in Europe than the Mensheviks had been in Russia and he therefore developed a strategy based on the Russian experience in the early months of the revolution, when the Bolsheviks still constituted a small minority. This policy of the united front--joining with reformists to protect the workers, yet continually pointing out the cowardliness of the reformist leadership--was never applied in Europe. The inability of the European communists led to endless criticisms by the Russians of individual leaders and individual decisions.

However, Trotsky's analysis ignored the fundamental difference between the Mensheviks and the European socialists. The distinctive characteristic of the Russian Revolution can be primarily traced to the absence of trade unions in Russia. This

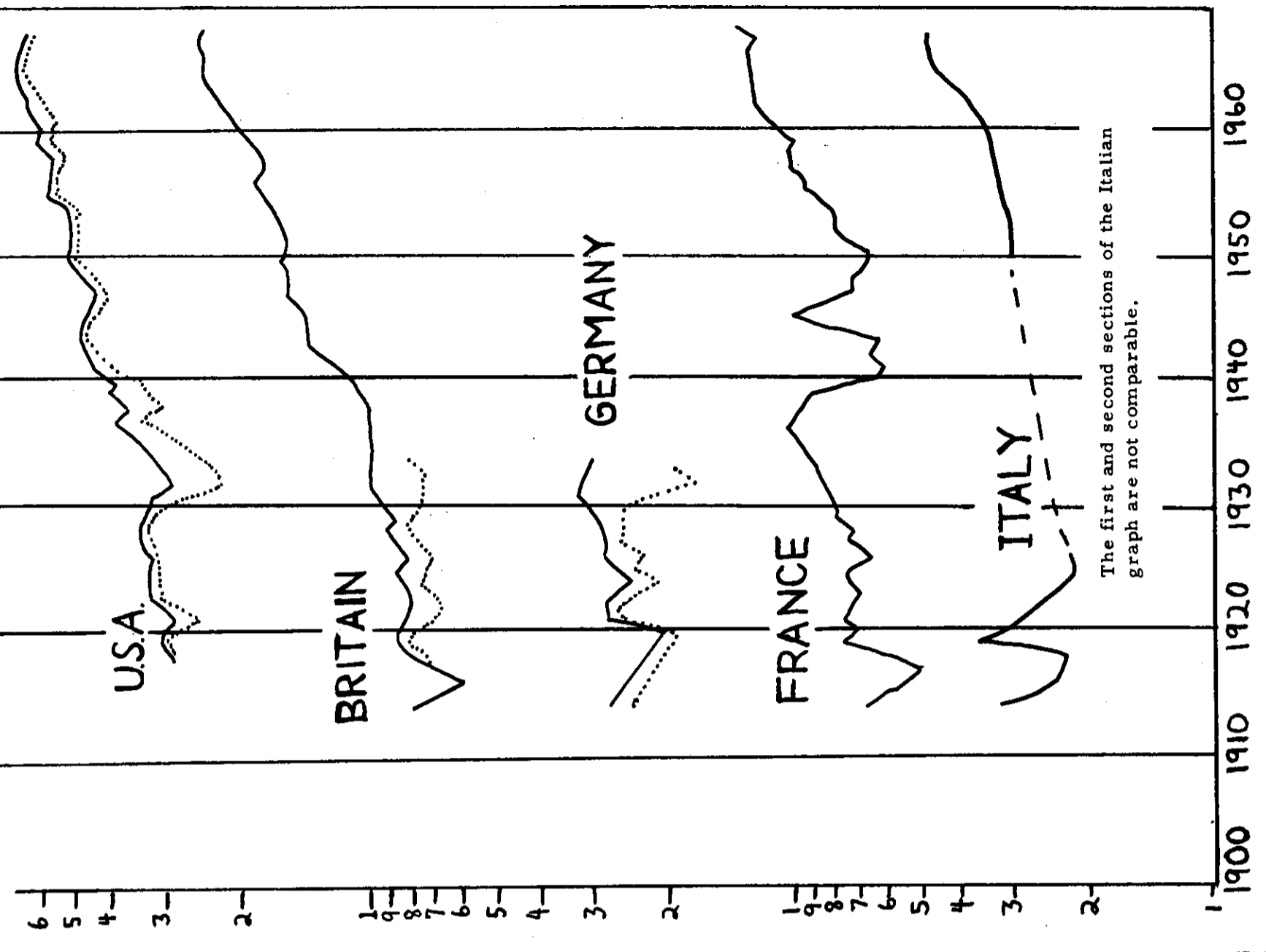
# Unemployment

Percent of Work Force Unemployed



# Real Wages

Real wages are computed by subtracting average taxes from average wages and dividing by the cost of living. The dotted lines include unemployed workers. Since cost of living increases are generally slightly greater than estimated by governments, comparisons over decades will tend to exaggerate the improvement in living standards.



The first and second sections of the Italian graph are not comparable.

absence is, of course, not surprising since none of the other aspects of bourgeois political rule existed in Czarist Russia. But this particular absence caused workers to organize from the start along classwide lines: the revolutionary parties and the soviets. In any liberal country the calling together of a meeting of "workers' delegates" would have resulted in a conference of trade union bureaucrats, not in the St. Petersburg soviet.

The power of the Mensheviks -- their means of gaining and controlling the support of the workers -- rested not on the trade unions but in the soviets. These were organizations of the class as a whole, working for the interests of all workers, not just any particular group. To push this form of organization "as far as possible" meant the assumption of all power by the soviets, that is, by the united working class, an event which constituted the Bolshevik Revolution. In this rested the total weakness of the Mensheviks. The socialist parties of Europe, on the other hand, controlled the trade unions which divided the workers into thousands of competing groups. To push this institution "as far as possible" led to syndicalism not to revolution.

To the European communists, the analogy of the Russian Revolution simply supported their own methods of work. To Trotsky, the bumbling of the Europeans was never fully comprehensible. Naturally, after 1923, the bureaucrats who replaced Trotsky further reinforced the trade unionist approach of the Communist Parties and helped to insure its dominance. But the basis for the attraction of the European communists to these non-revolutionary methods lay in their day-to-day practice in the early years of the revolutionary period, not in Russian moral hegemony.

### Germany

A single example is insufficient to prove that this pattern is not a mere peculiarity of Italy but is instead a consistent strategy which recurs frequently. We shall therefore examine the case of Germany.

As in Italy, the response of the proletariat to the crisis was highly conditioned by its organization in the trade unions. The German trade unions grew in the period of rapid industrial expansion 1900-1910. This expansion enabled large gains to be made without strikes or the threat of strikes. The unions, more than anywhere else, became organizations for negotiations and for unemployment benefits, not for struggle. These unions accumulated vast investments, but had miniscule strike funds. The German unions today have these characteristics in exaggerated form.

Our statistics show this characteristic graphically. Although strike activity in 1900-1914 rose during periods of low unemployment and fell during recessions, as in many countries, the most rapid growth of the unions occurred during low strike periods when workers were attracted by the unemployment benefits. For example, there was rapid growth in 1908-09 with strikes of 2%, while there was no growth in 1910-13 with many more strikers.

When the first real crisis hit Germany and unemployment funds ran out in 1914, union membership collapsed, dropping from 22% to 12%, and contracted further during the war. This meant that the experience of the workers with trade unions was even worse than that of the Italians. The German workers came to expect gains to be made without struggle at all. However it also led to the more rapid development of a revolutionary split. The issue was far more clear cut since the unions in Italy were far less supine. This split was reflected in the socialist leadership by the creation of the Spartacus league.

It is clear that this split was immediately evident in the mass of the proletariat as

well. Although strike size had generally declined during periods of small numbers of strikers, in 1915 strike size rose to a record (430) while strikers declined from 1.5% to .3%. In 1916, 2.5% of the work force were led into strikes whose size averaged 1,750. Here was a real unification of the militant part of the proletariat. Yet when the movement spread in 1917 the size of strikes only increased slightly, showing the centrifugal force was tending to pull apart the proletariat into more and more isolated strikes.

This lay the basis for the defeat of these predominantly anti-war strikes and the decline of the movement in 1918. Why did this huge revolutionary upsurge, nearly as large as those of 1919 and 1923-24, and far more united, fail? It would take more study to give a complete answer, but part of the answer lies in the incomplete break of the top leaders like Liebknecht and Luxemburg with the methods of the pre-war Socialist Party. Spending much time in intra-party maneuvering, they failed to realize the necessity of clandestine organization during the war period.

Whatever the reason, the failure of this profound uprising was all the deeper because the depth of this revolutionary movement of 1916-17 was mostly unappreciated by the German and Russian leadership. Most of the thousands of revolutionary workers who led the massive strikes and demonstrations of 1916 and 1917 were not active in 1919. They were either jailed, killed or demoralized or discredited by the collapse of these efforts in late 1917 and 1918. Those who originally flocked to the Communist banners tended to be "ultra-lefts" and anarchists. This initial fatal composition of the party not only led to the death of its leaders in 1919, but also made it impossible for the KPD to recognize the period for what it was--one in which the proletariat was becoming more and more fragmented.

The German capitalists carried through the same policy as in Italy, but far more thoroughly. From 1919-1921, during which the unions gained and held onto huge memberships, the capitalists gave real concessions and refrained from laying off workers. As the unions more and more gained the confidence of the workers, strike size fell. In the meantime, the Communist Party did its part by yielding to provocations to lead abortive revolts, ensuring its continued isolation from the mass and enabling the capitalists to pick off each new batch of potential militants as they arose. This policy was weakened in 1922, when economic pressures forced the capitalists to hold wages steadier--strike size ceased to decline. Finally, the capitalists went over to the offensive when they were no longer able to pay French reparations. A cynically planned inflation was allowed to develop, pauperizing the middle class. Simultaneously, thousands of workers were laid off and capitalist resistance to wage demands stiffened.

The capitalists' preparations were rewarded. The outburst in response to the rapid increase in unemployment and the wage cuts caused by catastrophic inflation was limited. In number of strikes it was smaller in 1923-24 than in '22 and little larger than in 1917. While in strike size it was only a third as unified as in 1917. The unions' grip was weakened, but not enough to compensate for the years of gains earlier. As in Italy, the swarm of the unemployed was used to break the militant strikes. To them, the unions and the strikes now seemed useless in solving their problems.

The German Communist Party contributed its bit to the failure of the strike wave of '23-24. Far from understanding the need to ally the active part of the proletariat with the unemployed, the party once again vacillated between propaganda and abortive uprisings. Its isolation from the workers during the years of struggle could not be remedied overnight, even though thousands of workers disillusioned with the unions looked to it for help. In this weakened condition, the leadership had no self-confidence and was willing to be subjected to the heavy-handed interference of the Russians (including Trotsky). Even without the bungling of the International, the party would still have been doomed to failure in these years by its previous isolation, and by its



conception that as soon as the workers were fed up with the SPD, the revolution would follow automatically.

The strike wave disappeared to nothing in 1925 and 1926. Why didn't the bourgeoisie turn to Hitler then? Mainly, the reason seems to be that although the Italians had let things get nearly out of hand with 40% of the work force out on strike, the strikes of '23-'24 were only 10% and were not nearly as frightening. The bourgeoisie could afford to wait and see if the proletariat could not grow still weaker.

After the defeats of '23-'24 the militant portion of the working class was able to muster enough strength for new battles only during the short business revival and unemployment decline of 1927-28. Even then they were able to rally behind them only 5% of the work force. The control of the unions over the rest of the workers had strengthened, since now those 10-15% who were led into small strikes in 1919-22 were not striking at all. Unable to fight for more than defensive demands and without programmatic ties to the unemployed or the rest of the working class, the strikes of '28 were again easily defeated as soon as unemployment again rose.

This marked a final turning point in the German workers' losing battle. First, by isolating those workers still willing to fight into an insignificant fraction, it gave the capitalists confidence that the organization of the class would be easily swept aside. Second, by initiating the CP's most violent swing to sectarianism, it insured that the Communists would do their best to preserve this isolation. Third, the world depression starting the next year convinced a growing section of the bourgeoisie that the only solution to Germany's problems lay in a new imperialist policy which they knew would be endangered by even the potential threat of interference organized by the trade unions. Hitler's foreign policy was what made him attractive to the capitalists, but this policy could not be completely safe until his domestic policy--the smashing of the unions--was accomplished.

The massive increase in unemployment provided the bourgeoisie with their striking force, organized into the SA bands. Resistance on a small scale (1-2% of the work force) continued in 1929 and 1930. But in 1931 and especially in 1932 the continued massive defeats led even the militant core to return to the union leadership. Their strikes became much smaller and more fragmented. In view of the preceding, it is no surprise that the CP followed to the end the diametrically wrong policy and that no group came forward with an alternative. By 1931, even the most correct policy of forming alliances to defend the trade unions against the wage cuts and against layoffs would still have had an extremely difficult battle.

In Italy, the lack of organized control over the more militant workers made a fascist victory bloody and uncertain and spurred the bourgeoisie to act swiftly to install fascism. Conversely, this same situation made Mussolini take six years to eliminate the trade unions. In Germany, the more complete control over the trade unions, and the organization of many militants into the incompetent CP enabled the German bourgeoisie to prepare more thoroughly for a fascist victory, secure in the knowledge that no real threat was imminent. As a result, Hitler was able to eliminate the unions in six weeks rather than six years. (In 1922, the last year before Mussolini's takeover, 8% were on strike in Italy and the average strike size was 800. In 1932, the last year before Hitler's takeover, only 1% were out on strike in Germany and the average strike size was 250.)

## Great Britain

We now turn to the countries which escaped fascism and examine some of the factors which prevent the fascist cycle from coming to completion. For brevity, we will pass over the cases of the U.S. and France in the post-WWI era. In neither case was the economic pressure great, as shown by the wage graphs, because each relied on imperial income to balance the books: South America in the case of the United States and Germany in the case of France. As a consequence, there was no real revolutionary situation and the bourgeoisie continued to rely on indiscriminate police repression, e.g., the Palmer Raids.

Britain, however, underwent a prolonged revolutionary crisis and severe economic problems without ever abandoning liberal democracy. Again, as in Germany, let's trace the history of the trade unions in the United Kingdom.

By the turn of the century British unions had already become quite large, in contrast to all the other industrial states. During the period of relative calm (1900-1910), no growth was achieved and internal discipline was far greater than elsewhere with less than 10% of all unionists on strike. This was a period not of rapid imperialist growth as in Germany, but slow growth combined with relatively high unemployment. The strikers were considerably more unified than in Germany. In years of similar percentages on strike, '01-'02 and '08-'09, the British strikes were from 50-200% larger. In fact, as a whole, the trade unions conformed to a pattern which we will later find in the industrial unions of the U.S., a pattern far different from the more divided craft unions of the rest of the industrialized world.

Again in contrast to other capitalist countries, the unions began a rapid growth as soon as the crisis started in 1910. The fastest growth was during the rising strike waves of 1910-12 and 1916-19; and even in between, the unions held their own. Evidently, the British unions were considered by their memberships to be fighting organizations.

The unity of the earlier period was maintained in 1912, when strikes averaged 1500 men, three times larger than in any other country. Because of the large influence of the militants, maintaining large strikes, these union-led strikes scored large successes as strikebreaking dropped from 45% to 25%. The capitalists retreated, as in the other countries, because they had not yet increased unemployment and because they had confidence in the cowardice of the Labor Party union leadership. This policy didn't work so well, because the workers were to remember the successes gained through unity. (This is similar to the situation we shall see in France of '68).

A similar reaction occurred during the war years of 1916-18. When the British proletariat, along with the rest of Europe, awoke from its chauvinist stupor in 1916 and began to defend its livelihood, the capitalists again retreated--strikebreaking fell and wages rose. The result was that no split in the labor movement resulted and the still militant unions gained ground.

Without the assurance that the militants would be misled by a pseudo-revolutionary group, the British switched to the offensive in 1921 when, long before German unemployment rose, British unemployment rose from 2% to 15%. The large size of the strikes made the ruling class realize that it was dangerous to allow concessions to go further. Despite the mildness of the wage cuts (8% in 1921) the outburst was far worse than in 1923 in

Germany and involved even larger strikes than ever before. This was a critical period. The capitalists' strategy worked, in the sense that the strikes were kept within the trade unionist lines which had proved effective before. But the defeat of the 1921 strike wave did not destroy the allegiance of the workers to unionism--the faith in the effectiveness of united union methods was too deep. While union membership declined in the period of early unemployment in Italy and Germany by more than 50%, the decline was only about 25% in the United Kingdom despite the greater unemployment.

The bourgeoisie was to discover that their victory was far from complete. When unemployment again began to decline and a Labor government came to power in 1923, strikes remained at the same level, instead of collapsing as in Germany. The Labor Government was continually pushed around by its left wing. Taking fright at this state of affairs, the bourgeoisie dismissed MacDonald and resumed the offensive. Still in 1925 strikes remained at about 4% of the work force.

In the meantime, social tinder was accumulating as workers, more confident from their successful recovery from 1922, regrouped around their still existent militant nuclei. They had learned the lessons of unified action too well and the explosion of 1926 was inevitable.

In 1926, a coal miners strike brought about a rapidly growing sympathy strike which became a nation-wide general strike. This General Strike, the largest single uprising in Europe until then, was also the most serious revolutionary situation. Those 20% or so of the workers who had been involved in strikes since WWI were now united in a single "sympathy strike" with the coal miners. But in the midst of huge and growing unemployment, only a program linking the interests of various sectors of the working class could have insured that the strike would result in concessions or in a workers' government. The Russians supported the attempts of the trade unions to get the workers back to work. But without even a working CP, these efforts by the Russians had little effect. The main thing that was lacking was a program which could win the support of the rest of the working class.

As after 1921, the victory of the bourgeoisie was not complete after 1926. Strike activity resumed in 1929. The critical test came in 1930-32, when the pressure on workers' wages reached a maximum. A fascist party was organized and the "National Labour" government imposed heavy taxes on top of the inadequate unemployment compensation. Real wages for the class as a whole fell even though the wages of the employed rose.

But during 1931 and 1932, until the economic pressure relaxed in 1933, strikes continued at about 4%, at sizes of around 1000. The trade union leadership was weaker than ever. As a result, the government finally abandoned austerity measures (which reached a peak in 1932) for a feeble "New Deal" including real investment such as new housing. The policies of stabilization at the expense of the colonies and capitalist accumulation made possible by the previous debt liquidation in '30-'32, worked to finally stop labor unrest and led over the next decade to the reestablishment of a more divided unionism.

The point of this description of events in Britain is to show that certain conditions of organization tend to increase the resistance of the workers to the divisive influence of the union leadership which lays a groundwork for fascism. Although no legal unions, as in Russia, proved the best prerequisite for Revolution, united industrial unions are less of an obstacle than the earlier craft unions. Trotsky's "law of uneven development" cannot be blindly applied along the lines of "less developed equals more revolutionary".

Under bourgeois rule, the less developed forms of organization have a more reactionary effect than the more developed ones.

The other point which is clear is the general hesitancy and vacillation of the British bourgeoisie. Part of the reason undoubtedly lies in the fact that the militants were never organized into any sort of predictable CP whose bumbling the capitalists could relay on. This lesson was not lost on the American bourgeoisie, as we shall see.

The preceding raises a question. If the growth of unionism in 1919 resulted in growing disunity, rather than unity, then how were unified, industrial-type unions ever formed in Britain? The answer in the case of the United Kingdom goes beyond the chronological scope of this article, but in the U.S. we have an appropriate example in the depression and the growth of the CIO.

### United States

The U.S. had escaped a full-blown crisis in the early '20's. As a result the workers were confronted with the Depression not after a period of defeats and high unemployment, but after a period of gradually rising wages and low unemployment. They reacted to the depression with a strike wave, beginning in 1931. At first they were held back by the uncertainty of the rapidly worsening situation. But when the dizzy decline slowed in 1933, with the "peoples' man" in the White House, all hell broke loose.

Throughout '33 and '34 relatively large and violent strikes swept the nation. Union leadership was swept aside and united forms of action -- such as the 1934 general strike in San Francisco -- were adopted. The capitalists, without a strategy, retreated, giving real concessions. Fortunately for them, this period, unlike that of 1919-23, did not correspond to a period of economic collapse, but of revival from the massive liquidation of 1929-32. The whole character of the new Deal was predicated on this. Despite this lack of strategy the concessions were enough to dissipate the force of the strikes, since no alternative socialist leadership had had time to develop and the task of uniting the organized, unorganized and unemployed was formidable. But Roosevelt and some trade unionists like John L. Lewis realized that a total repudiation of union leadership had occurred. Union membership had actually fallen during '32-34, and the union leaders had lagged along behind the movement (much like the FCP of May 1968). If things were just allowed to drift without any real capitalist social control of the workers, the threat existed that socialist class-wide forms would gain ground. It required no great mind to see that the workers might eventually get fed up with so many idled plants and idled men and might simply start the machinery up themselves.

In the respite of 1935-36, Roosevelt and others devised the plan which was to become the CIO. Evidently what was needed was a new, more militant, undiscredited labor bureaucracy. The National Labor Relations Act paved the way by making union organizing easier. Lewis then went with this law to other labor leaders to show how he would preempt possible socialist, non-union forms of organizing... by setting up industrial unions. Craft unions were impossible since that form was already discredited in the eyes of the militant workers, who by now had substantial gains under their belts.

"A new strike wave is coming!", said Lewis in 1936, "and we must prepare for it." Lewis was preparing by establishing himself as a militant advocate of "organizing the unorganized" and industrial unionism. He even managed to establish a degree of public in-

dependence from Roosevelt. He shored up his left flank by mending fences with the CP and making it a firm ally, thus making sure that the more leftist militants would also follow his leadership. CP members became the most avid organizers the CIO had.

His preparations came in handy in 1937, when certain rubber and auto workers followed the example set by French workers the previous year and occupied their factories. The workers involved were not under the orders of Lewis or any union, or even members of a union. Without "responsible" leadership, the workers posed a grave threat to capitalism. In Flint, Michigan, troops were moving in. There were threats that the workers would call on other workers or would resume production on their own... John L. Lewis to the rescue! Most of the embattled workers were no doubt glad to have the famed leader negotiating for them. Few of them could have looked down the barrels of the Army's machine guns without being thankful for any sort of help. And those few who doubted that industrial unionism was the solution could give no firm arguments -- the idea was untried and therefore hard to discredit. As Lewis negotiated union recognition and wage gains for thousands of workers, a new and respected labor bureaucracy was formed and the unlimited spread of the strike wave was prevented. Graph 5 dramatically shows how the 1937 strikes were on the average one-half the size of those in 1934, despite the same total number of strikers.

Roosevelt's and Lewis' policies were further vindicated during the post-war strike wave of 1945-46, when the strikes were contained in a period when concessions were not easy to grant.

However, the organizing of the CIO also created some problems for the capitalists. First, the losses of '44-47 were not as great as the CIO gains of '36-44, and didn't disillusion the workers with unionism (as happened after the defeats of the '20's). The gains were retained and so were the union memberships. Worse yet, the capitalists were now stuck with a far more united and larger movement, due to the fact that craft unionism was already discredited when CIO organizing began. Thus capitalism found itself faced in the social scene with the same contradictions as in economics: each solution only increased the problem when it arose again and reduced the resources available for solving it.

### Post-war France

Our final historical example is France in the period after the liberation in 1944. This post-war crisis presented the world capitalist class with different problems than that of 1919-23. The solution to the crisis was clearly in sight -- namely the Marshall Plan. The liquidation of much of the capitalist debts during the depression, the massive obliteration of real wealth during the war, the subordination of competing capitalism to American capital, and the fascist reduction of wages to subsistence levels, were the initial conditions for making productive investment in Europe possible, and thus ending the 35-year period of capitalist decline -- at least for another decade or two.

The problem in France was that the fascist counter-revolution had just been defeated and capitalist rule was weak. Military power was in the hands of the Maquis -- proletarian fighters led mainly by the CP. The experience of a successful resistance to fascism, in which the proletarian organizations, such as the trade unions, survived underground, could not but encourage the working class and make the capitalists fearful. The result was that, as before, the capitalists sacrificed their economic goals for short-term political stabilization in 1944 and '45. This was the period of coalition government under DeGaulle. This

period of calm ended when the economic pressures, combined with the political stabilization caused by the CP gaining the confidence of the workers, led the capitalists to reduce wages in 1946. During 1946 the social truce was extended as the CP -- eager to stay in the government -- prevented strikes.

With the new year, and new wage cuts, workers went out on strike anyway. Having expended their usefulness, the Communists were unceremoniously booted out of the government. The Communists then proceeded to lead the strikes in normal trade union fashion. 25% of the work force struck and the size of the strikes rose to more than 1300 men. In the meantime cabinet succeeded cabinet, but with one common goal -- to crush the strikes. Finally a long, violent strike of the mineworkers was broken by repeated attacks by the police and army. The CP leadership, in good social-democratic fashion, refused to protect the strike with serious organizing for general strikes, but instead held back the workers, discrediting itself. The capitalists encouraged a split in the union movement, furthering this isolation.

Although the capitalists prepared for a further offensive against wages, they feared to use layoffs since they were afraid that the CP's shaky hold on the workers would be further weakened. As a result, the conditions were not ripe for fascism and DeGaulle's fascist movement was unable to become other than a purely parliamentary force. With no unemployed to bolster his 'body guard' storm troopers, De Gaulle needed constant police protection just to get around. He was far from capable of breaking strikes or having unionists beaten up.

During 1948, the capitalist majority fears were verified by the even larger strikewave. Militant rank and file leadership to the left of the CP led 70% of the work force in short, large strikes. Average size increased even more to 4500 men. These strikes were short (2 days average as compared with 10 in 1947) because the workers no longer had the large union federation treasury behind them and swiftly ran out of food. Years of Nazi rule and inflation had made their reserves negligible. Here, as in Britain in 1926, was a real revolutionary opportunity. Why did it fail? Mainly because the briefness of the strikes and the extreme physical exhaustion of the workers prevented the merging of individual strikes into broader formations. Merely the lack of socialist-minded organizations cannot explain it--the Bolsheviks were not needed to form the Soviets and the vast majority of the workers were behind the strikes.

At any rate, the continued inability of the workers to coalesce finally encouraged the American-backed non-fascist right to impose its policies. Its representative, the pliable Quicille, came to power in September of 1948 and lasted longer than any of the previous ministries since De Gualle. His policy was tax increases and wage freezes, no matter how many workers were on strike. His policies did not bring economic peace, but they did establish sufficient wage controls to induce the massive capital investment from America, which led to stabilization of a sort by 1950.

The events of France 1944-50 point up the limitation of the idea that rapid declines in the standard of living need other police power to enforce them. In the critical years of '48 and '49 with the CP discredited and militant strikes the rule, this was all that held up the government. The rise of new forms of social rule--either fascist or socialist--needs certain preconditions, as has been pointed out repeatedly earlier. Without these preconditions, the old order survives. It becomes more and more likely that either the revolution

or counter-revolution will finally conquer, but a new capitalist equilibrium may be established before this, as it was in France.

### Present-Day Situation

We shall now apply what we've learned from historical strike-wave revolutionary situations to analyzing the situations in Italy, France and the United States, and deriving appropriate responses for revolutionary strategy (especially in the U.S.).

In Italy, the situation is strongly influenced by the long-term boom between 1956 and 1963 in which unemployment fell from 10% to 2%, and unions gained easy victories and membership. The Communist unions led their members in relatively smaller strikes (compare 1956 and 1963), evidence that their obedience to their bureaucracy was increasing. During the period of growing crisis, '64-'67, membership declined somewhat, but as the events of 1968 showed, workers remained fragmented. In that year, the General Strike in France set off echoes in Italy--but these student-worker revolts were at most city-wide. Students in radical organizations are also fragmented along city-by-city lines.

The strike wave starting in the fall of 1969 presented the Italian capitalists with some familiar problems. First, they want to protect the firm control of the Communist unions over their memberships. This means granting certain concessions. Second, when they shift next year to increased unemployment and strike-breaking, they want some assurances that militant workers will be as badly misled as in 1920, when anarchists were leading them. A sign of how they will solve this problem is in the growing split in the CP, probably leading to the establishment of a "militant" left wing, which will co-opt radical students and workers. Under these conditions, the situation is particularly grave and we can expect that Italy will be the first country where fascism will become a real possibility.

A far better situation exists in France. The Communist unions were stagnant during the period of relative calm before 1966. In '66-'67 their weak control over their members was demonstrated by the great increase in strike size in those years. When the revolutionary explosion of May occurred, the bourgeoisie was caught off guard. The CP was in no control and the proletariat was for the first time in the history of Europe all out on strike at once. During the last week in May, from the time the strike became general to the speech of DeGualle offering new elections, the question of revolution hung in the balance. Nothing stood between the capitalists and disaster. In the last few days, groups of Parisian workers began issuing calls for the establishment of assemblies of workers' delegates and for a national strike committee. Unfortunately, DeGualle was able to act in time to preclude this with new elections and very substantive (15%) real wage boosts. The CP then swung into action dividing workers from each other and signing as many different contracts as possible. A Provincial Strike Committee was eventually formed in June in Nantes but by then, most other parts of the country were back at work and the Committee was dispersed by Paratroops.

Although the CP took credit for negotiating the wage gains, workers knew that their united strike was the real reason for the concessions. When the strike wave returned in late 1969, after all the gains had been again eroded, the workers had before them the alternative of the mass strike if CP trade-unionism did not work. The bourgeoisie has again sharply retreated, as witness the rail strike, where workers wildcatted in support of a localized strike, as is shown by the devalued but now again threatened franc.

Certainly any hard-fought strike, even in a period of rising unemployment, will raise the possibility of another May; which will almost certainly lead at the start to the arming of Soviets. (Nor can the bourgeoisie hope for the evolution of new pseudo-revolutionary organizations at least for now, since none is even in the embryonic state.)

### United States: The Present Strike Wave

The present strike wave in the United States has been characterized thus far by a growth of rank-and-file militancy, and the expanded use of anti-strike injunctions.

Having experienced sellout leadership in the past, and four years of declining real wages, workers have become disgusted with their present leaders and formed militant caucuses led by rank-and-filers. The present contract expiration period has given them the opportunity to act in defiance of their leadership. The degree to which the workers have rejected their traditional leadership has varied from union to union. Throughout the midwest, Teamster locals have been striking for more money, and the back-to-work pleas of Fitzsimmons have been totally ignored. Similarly, in the postal strike, Rademacher totally lost influence over the letter carrier rank-and-file. In New York, the members pressed their locals to call a strike, and in other cities, rank-and-file caucuses were formed which attempted to completely bypass local leadership. However, less rank-and-file militancy has been shown thus far in the strikes in the industrial sector, such as Goodyear and General Electric.

The reason behind these variations is the ability of the national union leadership to prevent rank-and-file organizing by leading strikes themselves. In deciding whether or not to strike, national union leadership must take two things into account; first, whether or not the government will hit the industry with anti-strike injunctions if they do call a strike, and second, whether the workers will wildcat if they don't. Thus, militancy has been greatest in those sectors where government pressure has been strongest and where no clear previous indications of rank-and-file organizing has existed.

Despite the widespread use of anti-strike injunctions and coercion outside the primary industrial sector, these injunctions have not always been effective. Their effectiveness has been greatest where rank-and-file militancy has been least. The failures of the air controllers and the railwaymen to win their demands was based on their acceptance of their leaders bowing to anti-strike injunctions. It is clear that the real enforcers of anti-strike injunctions are the union bureaucrats themselves, and where their power is eliminated, so is the power of the injunctions. Without the weapon of the injunctions and without masses of skilled unemployed willing to scab, the capitalists have no choice but to attempt to reinforce the credibility of the national union leadership by granting concessions.

These concessions have only the effect of delaying for a few months the inevitable erosion of workers' living standards by inflation and recession. The strike wave has not yet begun to deal with the basic economic problems facing the country because it is not yet a self-conscious movement of the class as a whole. Even the rank-and-file leadership which is emerging still has the militant trade-unionist consciousness which arises spontaneously at the beginning of every strike-wave. They are not yet aware of the possibility of real solutions to the economic problems of the country, and therefore, they are mainly concerned with the problems of their industry or sector.

With a few rare exceptions, the reactions of the liberals and the left has been in prac-



tice to ignore, or to actively condemn the strikes of the working class. Not one liberal gave any sign of substantial support to the postal strikers. The ALA has not acted in any way differently from the rest of the union bureaucracy, as witnessed by Fitzsimmons' total alienation from his own membership. Neither they nor the "old left", the SWP, and the CP, have offered any aid to rank-and-file insurgents. They have, at most, offered to help "militant" local bureaucrats. The reaction of most of the new left has either been "the workers must ask us for help," or "We're too busy with other things." Only the National Caucus of Labor Committees, IS and the Progressive Labor Party have made any attempt to aid or influence development of the rank-and-file movement. These organizations' intervention has been limited in scope and propagandistic in nature. Progressive Labor is, in fact, advocating the same sort of militant unionism which is arising spontaneously.

### Future Developments and How the Strike-Wave Can Win

In the battle between rank-and-file organizations and trade-union bureaucrats, the bureaucrats will continue to retreat in the immediate future. Whether or not the resultant strengthened rank-and-file movement will be successful in winning real gains depends on whether it becomes a conscious movement of the class as-a-whole or remains fragmented and wedded to militant trade-unionist ideology. To become the former, rank-and-file caucuses must put forward demands that deal with the three basic issues underlying the strike wave: inflation, unemployment and anti-strike laws.

What are such concrete demands? First, there is the demand for no anti-strike laws or injunctions. Secondly, the core of the program will be demands for reindustrialization at capitalists' expense: more housing, more transportation, more schools, hospitals etc., financed by taxes on business income, as well as demands for modernization of industries by reconvertng aerospace-defense plants. Thirdly, the demand that industries not make any layoffs or cutbacks in production. It must be emphasized that this demand, which prevents splits between employed and unemployed workers, can only be made practical in conjunction with a reindustrialization program. Such a demand will make clear to industrial workers the national character of the solutions that are needed. (For example, it is clear that if there are to be no layoffs at Bethlehem Steel, a housing program for Baltimore alone is insufficient; only a national plan will do.)

This demand will become increasingly important as layoffs and pressure from unemployed workers become the principal weapon against workers' struggles. Fourth, minimum wage demands serve to unite high-and low-paid workers.

The organizations which fight for such unifying demands must in their form represent the class as a whole. Cross-union caucuses must be formed with the aim that these caucuses, including unorganized workers and students, develop into representative organizations capable of leading a unified mass movement.

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# The Soul of Andre Gorz

by L. Marcus

Daniel Guerin, Anarchism, Mary Klopper, trans., with Introduction by Noam Chomsky; Monthly Review, New York, 1970; 188 pp., \$6.00.

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It remains to be shown exactly why Monthly Review Press risked its reputation by publishing so degraded a book as Daniel Guerin's Anarchism. We can assure the reader that Harry Braverman, Paul M. Sweezy et al. know the book to be a collection of deliberate falsehoods by an anarchist renegade from the socialist movement. They could not decently argue that Guerin is even sincere in resurrecting poor old Emma Goldman's lies about Kronstadt or in attempting to bestow libertarian sainthood on that bloody-handed kulak bandit, Makhno.<sup>1</sup>

Guerin was, for several decades, a minor literary figure of French "Trotskyist" circles, whose only barely-readable book remains his 1936 Fascism and Big Business. During the early 1960's, Guerin showed a deep anti-communist streak, leading to his total break with socialism and the scandalous incident involved in his public embrace of anarchism in the mid-sixties; the present book is an expanded version of the original 1965 French scandal. The reader familiar with stool-pigeon literature from the McCarthyite period in the U.S. A. will immediately recognize the lower moral categories to which Guerin's public defecation on his former comrades and his own past life belongs.

In any case, the publication of the dirty little book is perversely timely. Apart from his main occupation, lying, Guerin also applies his mediocre mental equipment to an agreeably modest task, showing that the tactic and goal of "local control" is purely anarchist, anti-socialist doctrine, and over a period ranging from recent revivals of the "Dutch disease"<sup>2</sup> to so early an anarchist work as Max Stirner's anti-humanist The Unique and His Property.<sup>3</sup>(sic) In this appropriately wicked setting, Guerin stages a performance by the anarchist soul of Andre Gorz. Since it is past time to tie the can to "local control" in the U.S. radical movement, the stink from Guerin's book recommends it as the appropriate means to scandalize such opportunist occasional traitors to socialism as the Communist and Socialist Workers parties.

## Are All Anarchists Bad People?

Philosophical anarchism is the unconscious philosophy of all non-socialists under capitalist social relations: farmers, trade unionists, students, preachers -- Republicans and Democrats as well as Populists and "Weathermen". What is ordinarily recognized as poli-

tical anarchism is simply the ignorant early phase of political development which appears initially and spontaneously as victims of unconscious anarchist philosophy become radicalized. Political anarchism, in that perspective, could not possibly be good or bad in itself. It is severally the almost inevitable "larval" stage of emergence of actual future socialists, a form of decay of ex-socialists, and also the aroma of political eggs too long past prime time for hatching.

The principal irony of anarchism is that capitalism is the only possible form of anarchist society. The "competitive" rugged individual, the Darwinian sociology of anarchist philosophy, the vicious, anti-humanist delusion of narrow-group self-interest as an independent social factor, are disorders of the human mind and social behaviors which emerge from and can be safely tolerated only in societies held together by the capitalist state, and socialized (despite anarchism) by the process of capitalist accumulation.

Political anarchism is positive exactly to the extent that it actually represents persons in the process of moving away from anarchism toward socialism. It is an inevitable irony of the matter that persons sometimes begin to call themselves anarchists (after actually being committed anarchists all their previous lives) only when they begin to revolt against the only existing form of anarchism, capitalism.

We are compelled to use the term, anarchism, in certain broad and yet scientifically precise ways, as the only term identifying varied social or ideological phenomena which express philosophical anarchism. We therefore use the term to identify political anarchism or the various radical political expressions of philosophical anarchism, even though the term, used in that way, applies equally to anarchist workers supporting socialist struggles and the fascist gangs attacking them. When we wish to speak of political anarchist formations in a more precise way, we define them in terms of their motion relative to socialism, as either conduits toward socialism or toward fascism.

As we now discuss the features of political and philosophical anarchism Guerin poses in his book, we are dealing almost exclusively with reactionary, anti-socialist anarchism. This might be otherwise legitimately identified as either the "French disease" or "police socialism".<sup>4</sup> It belongs to those forms of anarchism which have developed repeatedly into profascism, and actual fascist gangs in the cases of Mussolini's Blackshirts and Hitler's Brownshirts. It is the counterposition of "local control" to mass organizational forms of socialism which represents, in fact, the breaking-point at which radical political anarchism veers sharply away from socialism toward fascism.

The Labor Committees made the necessary general points of proof in a practical connection in 1968 issues of the Campaigner. The editorial ("The Politics of Crisis") and main article ("The New Left, Local Control, and Fascism") of the Sept., 1968 Campaigner; the editorial ("SDS's Last Spurt of Growth?") and lead article ("Community Organization: The New Counter-Insurgency") in the Dec. 1968 issue. The thrust of those analyses of the anarchist poison in the U.S. New Left of 1968 was to expose the exact course of developments, actually occurring as we warned, in SDS and its associated groupings. Therefore, after the total empirical vindication of our analysis during June, 1969, we are hardly required the re-prove the vindicated theory all over again here.

#### The Renegade As Philosopher

\* In capitalist society, a lifetime of success as a social predator is the highest recom-

mendation for appointment to a university trusteeship over the morality of the young. Our judges are traditionally selected from those who have destroyed the last shred of their own consciences in years of service to mean ambitions as Democratic or Republican party hacks. Similarly, Guerin, after viewing his own accomplishments as a renegade and liar, esteems himself a philosopher.

His drunken night's travels through philosophy are prompted by one of Bakunin's numerous bad jokes, the argument that Proudhon<sup>5</sup> and Max Stirner could be regarded as virtual collaborators in the establishment of anarchist philosophy. Poor fool Guerin takes Bakunin seriously, with results we shall savor here.

In the final analysis, Proudhon and Stirner both represent different polarities within philosophical anarchism as a general phylum of world-outlook. It would be more exact to describe them as alike as a pair of Kilkenny cats: even Guerin can not present them on the same page without the two attempting to immediately claw one another to death.

The reader may more fully appreciate the quality of mental equipment Guerin brings to bear in marrying Stirner to Proudhon once we have considered some of the bits of "advanced scientific thought" which Guerin himself assembles for such an undertaking.

Guerin the philosopher as biologist: "Stirner exalted the intrinsic value of the unique individual, that is to say, one cast in a single unrepeatable mold (an idea which has been confirmed by recent biological research)."

Guerin the philosopher as literary critic: "He" (Stirner) "wrote in a lively style, crackling with aphorisms: 'Do not seek in self-renunciation a freedom which denies your very selves, but seek your selves... Let each of you be an all-powerful I.'" (We assure the reader that the apparent loss of "crackling" is not in the translation!)

Much worse is Guerin the philosopher as psychoanalyst: "Stirner foreshadowed modern psychoanalysis by observing and denouncing the internalization of parental moral values." and "In the process of rehabilitating the individual, Stirner also discovered the Freudian subconscious". (Lacking immediate access to the original French, we shall not necessarily charge Guerin with the ridicule earned by quacks who use the term "subconscious" for unconscious.) It happens that Freudian psychoanalysis is based on the concept of "psycho-physical parallelism", a concept identical in most leading features with Ludwig Feuerbach's conception of the social determination of individual human consciousness. In view of Stirner's violent attacks on Feuerbach's conception of "species-consciousness" and so forth, only a fool could possibly imagine the slightest connection between Stirner's and modern psychoanalytical views.

Now we are prepared to see how Guerin stages the 1965 honeymoon of Stirner and Proudhon:

Of course, the white heat of imagination in which Stirner wrote sometimes misled him into paradoxical statements. He let slip some antisocial aphorisms and arrived at the position that life in society is impossible: 'We do not aspire to communal life but to a life apart.' 'The people is dead! Good-day, Self!' 'The people's good fortune is my misfortune!' 'If it is right for me, it is right. It is possible that it is wrong for others: let them take care of themselves!'... However these occasional outbursts are probably not a fundamental

part of his thinking, and, in spite of his hermit's bluster, he aspired to communal life." (!!!???)

In the same vein:

...Stirner, presumably through ignorance, made the mistake of including Proudhon among the authoritarian communists who condemn individualist aspirations in the name of 'social duty'. It is true that Proudhon had mocked Stirner-like 'adoration' of the individual, without direct mention of Stirner, whose work he may not, therefore, have read.(!!!)

### Local Control

The low-comedy instincts of the over-ripe political anarchists are not more clearly demonstrated than by anarchism's uncertainty of its own position on "private property." As long as the anarchist is innocently occupied by slinging epithets over the garden walls into capitalists' estates, he (like Makhno) is apparently the bitterest enemy of other people's private property. Instantly the same anarchist spies a socialist, now he clarifies his position; now, he becomes the most zealous defender of the private property of every local philistine narrow-interest group against the "authoritarian" encroachments of the "massy mass." At heart, like the most consistent contemporary anarchist, Ayn Rand, every confirmed political anarchist is a kulak bandit of Makhno's stripe. At bottom, his politics are, with Stirner: "Mine! Mine! I tell you, Mine!"

To be a consistent anarchist it is absolutely essential to be a cretin in political economy. In place of the actual origin of individual consumption in the U.S. (the interdependence of productive processes engaging two billions or more persons) the anarchist "economist" sees wealth as the sum of the productions of individuals, and sees exploitation not as a matter of class appropriation of social surplus but as the theft by one individual of part of the wealth produced entirely by another individual. Let each narrow group of local factory workers "own" their own shop--and damn the unemployed; that is the filthy essence of anarchism. There is absolutely no convergence of anti-humanistic anarchism with socialism.

Nonetheless, Guerin is correct in arguing that "local control" has attained wide popularity among nominally-socialist organizations in contemporary Europe (as in the U.S.A.). There are two main reasons for this, reasons which Guerin could not be expected to recognize.

Firstly, the radicalization of the first portion of the 1960's was concentrated among anarchistic petit-bourgeois youth and petit-bourgeoisified strata of oppressed minorities, without significant accompanying political ferment among working people generally. Secondly, to the extent that Communist and "Trotskyist" groups have continued to maintain the tradition of intervention among workers, they have largely abandoned all semblance of political mass strike perspectives in favor of the "left" militant trade-unionist opportunism which characterized the rise of "Browderism" and Schachtmanism in the U.S.A. during the late 1930's and early 1940's. That is, a "local control" or spontaneist approach to the struggles within the workers' movement.

Under such circumstances, with the most organizational gate-receipts to be had by pandering to the petit-bourgeois mediocrity of the largest number of newer radicals, it is hard-

ly surprising that the counterrevolutionary slogans of "local control" should have become so influential throughout the radical movement in the U.S.A. and Europe. So, in the early 1960's, we had the shocking scandals (in Europe) of Ernest Mandel, titular leader of the "Fourth International," supporting the counterrevolutionary syndicalism of the communalist, Renard (in Belgium) and solidifying his personal relations with such notorious wretches as frequent Lelio Basso's International Socialist Journal (including, of course, Andre Gorz.)

It is only to the extent that former socialists become renegades, and entire socialist organizations degenerate, that undead wretches like Guerin can discover misleading empirical evidence of convergence between anarchism and socialism.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Under the Versailles' secret-codicil conditions bestowed upon post-1917 Russia by Churchill, Wilson and other Grand Democrats, the Soviet population of 1920-21's winter was reduced almost to the point of starvation, by U.S., British, White Guard military looting and imperialist blockades. Growing resistance among some Soviet peasants to sharing their limited food with the starving workers in the cities was reflected by increasing boldness of bandit organizations of the Makhno model, who anarchistically resisted tax payments by looting food shipments to Red Army and cities. The demand of a majority of the Garrison at Kronstadt for privileged extra rations at the expense of the Petrograd workers was the initial issue of the most celebrated of these peasant outbreaks against the Soviets during 1921. Local Petrograd militia units, under the leadership of Tukachevsky, made a bayonet charge against the heavy armament of the Kronstadt fortress, heroically removing the immediate threat of imperialist occupation of Kronstadt.

It is appropriate that the anarchists should claim these reactionaries of Makhno's band and the Kronstadt insurrection for their own cause; one would merely stipulate that the actual character of the Kronstadt and Makhno factions be stated in such claims. In a period of seige, various more swinish factions in the population were prepared to use guns against the Soviet republic in order to gain for themselves a few special material privileges at the expense of the rest of the hungry population.

It is simply an anarchist lie that the Kronstadt sailors of 1921 were the Kronstadt sailors of 1917 fame. The best cadres from the ranks of the Kronstadt sailors were constantly drained away to other units as part of the officer and non-com backbone of the Red Guards and later Red Army, so that the Kronstadt residue group of 1921 was almost the scum of the Soviet uniformed forces.

In any case, in 1938, after his arrival in Mexico, Trotsky exposed completely the whole anarchist fraud of Kronstadt and Makhno, which as Guerin knows very well, and Braverman knows Guerin knows, has survived every effort to refute Trotsky's version since. Anyone who raises the Emma Goldman myths of "Kronstadt and Makhno" once again is simply an ignoramus or a liar.

2. Anton Pannekoek's "Council Communism" buncombe.
3. Cf. Marx-Engels, "Saint Max", The German Ideology, for extended review of Stirner's

book.

4. See the attached appendix to this review by Paul Lafargue.
5. The Moscow edition of Karl Marx's The Poverty of Philosophy includes appended letters setting forth Marx's important evaluation of Proudhon.

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## Appendix:

# The Police and the Anarchists

*By Paul Lafargue*

The capitalist class, incapable of defending its riches as it is incapable of acquiring them by labor, is the first class of the propertied which has made of the police the most solid pillar of its State and society. Without haggling or counting the cost it spends money for that purpose; it covers all the blind and unlawful brutalities of the police with the mantle of Christian charity; indeed it even gives them a certain satisfaction when, now and then, one of their own members is handled rather roughly by the "eyes of the law," because that gives them a foretaste of the treatment meted out to poor devils and Socialists who have the misfortune to fall into the heavy and often unclean hands of the police.

### A Police Prefect Confesses

The police, treated like a pampered, spoiled child, imagine that it is permitted to do almost anything. And it was thus that it took the liberty of introducing anarchism into France in order to set it against Socialism, because it was amusing to put the fear of God in the hearts of the good citizens. A former prefect of police, M. Andrieux, in his memoirs garrulously revealed that the police furnished the money needed for the foundations of the first anarchist paper published in France, which for the information of all and sundry published recipes for the manufacture of explosives and bombs. M. Andrieux revealed, furthermore, that the first anarchist "attentat" (attempt at assassination), the one directed against the Statue of Thiers, was set on foot with the knowledge and aid of the police. But in the eyes of the capitalists the police is so sublime and sacrosanct an institution that whatever it may do can never be bad. Not only did M. Andrieux remain entirely unmolested, although by his own confession he had organized anarchist plots, but no one in the government or the "loyal" press even faintly reproached him for having done so. The most they did was to regret his ruthless revelations. The bourgeois papers have always exhibited a certain fondness, not to say tenderness, for the anarchists, and they always encouraged their attacks upon the Socialists. Only last year the Figaro gloatingly published a long polemic screed of the anarchist Cohen against Bebel, Liebknecht and the entire German Social Democracy. On the side it may be observed that the paper most liberally paid M. Cohen for his slanders.

The police had entertained the comfortable illusion that it could hold the anarchists in

leash at its pleasure. The intention was to use them solely against the Socialists, to hinder their agitation of the latter, disperse their meetings, to invade the editorial offices of Socialist papers arms in hand and to treat their editors with knives and revolvers. So long as the anarchists stuck to that role, working in the service of social reaction, they remained unmolested. The police had orders by no means to interfere when a band of anarchists assaulted a Socialist, even if the latter happened to be a municipal councilor. The present Deputy Rouanet, for instance, who formerly was a municipal councilor in Paris, was attacked by a gang of anarchists under the leadership of the stool pigeon Martinet, and was knocked down and kicked. The policemen who witnessed the scene permitted the assault and went their way, declaring with lofty, philosophic calm that "the gentlemen should settle the matter among themselves."

#### The Anarchists Take Too Much For Granted

This so Christian tolerance of the police made the anarchists bold. They began thereupon to translate their individualistic theories about property into practice, plundered show windows and stores, broke into the houses of rich bourgeois and cleaned them out and, if they met with resistance, resorted to knife and revolver. The capitalists did not want to put up with that kind of theft. It looked rather too barbarous to them. The police was therefore faced by the necessity of arresting its hand-fed anarchist boys and arraigning them in the courts. The judges then had no choice but to sentence them just like common thieves and murderers. But such procedure produced a deep moral indignation among the "comrades"; and they went after the judges as though they had been Social Democrats. The anarchist appetite having been thus stimulated, they aimed higher: Vaillant threw his bomb into the Chamber of Deputies and Caserio assassinated Carnot.

The police, having been encouraged by ministers and politicians to use the anarchists against the Socialists, did not lose its nice equipoise when the knights of the dagger and bomb had robbed private persons, and sent judges and witnesses for the prosecution from this into a better world. But the police found that the joke had been carried too far when the anarchists menaced also the lives of politicians. The Deputies, trembling with fear, demanded anti-anarchist laws and an increase of the police budgets. These gentlemen knew full well that the police, directly or indirectly, is involved as an accomplice in all these attempted murders which so terribly frighten the good bourgeois. Nevertheless, so deeply ingrained in them is the respect for this worthy institution that they dare not utter the slightest censure or ask for an investigation of its actions. They were anxious not to incur its disfavor and, instead, sedulously endowed it with new prerogatives and privileges. With folded hands they supplicated that laudable institution to protect them against the dynamite and daggers of the anarchists.

Politicians and capitalist press organs, arm in arm, applauded the police when it let loose the anarchists in order to hamper Socialist agitation. The bourgeois papers took great pains to depict, in minute detail, the stormy scenes the anarchist "comrades" caused at Socialist meetings. Gleefully they exclaimed: "Here you can see how the Socialists deal with one another." Eagerly they spread among the public the falsehood that between anarchism and Socialism there was no essential difference. Anarchism, they said, is the logical sequence of Socialism, the anarchists are courageous people who have the consistency to translate their theories into practice; the Socialists, however, are hypocritical, mendacious anarchists, who, because of cowardice or ambition, dare not draw all the consequences of their theories. These tactics were not without success, for during a long time



a large part of the public held the Socialists responsible for the idiocies the anarchists uttered and for the crimes they committed.

### Anarchism and Capitalist Individualism Are Alike

The Socialists endeavored to put an end to this ominous confusion, surreptitiously nurtured and maintained by the capitalist press. They proved that the anarchist theories were the result of the economic laissez-faire, laissez-passer, the legitimate offspring of bourgeois individualism; that the anarchists would operate only through individual action, while the Socialists expected success only through the action of the organized proletariat; that the anarchists fulminated against the suffrage, while the Socialists utilized it in order to penetrate legislative and administrative bodies to the great terror of the bourgeois politicians; that the anarchists preached the propaganda of the deed and the murderous action of the autonomous individual, while the Socialists would sanction only the propaganda of the idea and disapproved of bloodthirsty speeches as much as of dynamite-filled cooking pots, because the thievery of the anarchists and their blindly brutal dynamite outrages would not aid in the solution of the social problem but, on the contrary, would retard it for the reason that they excited the indignation of all the efficient members of the proletariat. But the politicians figured with just that indignation so that the Socialists might be compromised in the eyes of public opinion and in the courts be sentenced as common criminals. When, in 1882, Guesde, Dormoy and Lafargue faced the Court of Sessions at Moulins, and were sentenced to six months' imprisonment, the prosecuting attorney of the Republic read to the court articles from an anarchist paper which had been founded with the money of the police.

This confusion of ideas about anarchism and Socialism so hurtful to Socialist agitation, lasted long enough and would have lasted still longer had it not been for later outrages which clarified public opinion as to the true state of affairs. Facts which otherwise would have received no attention were drawn into a glaring light and became generally conspicuous. All the dynamite heroes, who either practised or approved of the propaganda of the deed, professed implacable hatred against the best-known champions of Socialism; they abused them, called them "bellwethers" and "popes", just as the capitalists themselves called the same men "inciters," and even threatened well-known Socialists with death. The books from which the anarchists claim to have derived their hatred of bourgeois society had been written by savants and philosophers who enjoy great renown in the bourgeois world, such as Darwin, Haeckel and Herbert Spencer. Never did an anarchist quote Marx, Engels or any other Socialist writer. The modern theoreticians of anarchism, such as Elisee Reclus and Kropotkin, exhibit the same supreme contempt for the scientific achievements of Karl Marx as do the bourgeois political economists; in their sentimental, bombastic and forced dissertations not even his name is mentioned. If a certain doctrine could be held responsible that anarchism germinated and developed in the embittered minds of people who, in capitalist society, belong to the defeated and downtrodden, then it ought to be the biologic theory of the struggle for existence, which is but the counterpart and complement of the free competition theory of the political economists. The materialist conception of history of Marx and Engels has absolutely no connection with anarchism; it shows how the development of economic conditions, which govern man and society, proceeds and necessarily leads to Communism.

The Anarchists' Friends Were Capitalists, Not Socialists!

The police itself contributed to do away with the confusion of ideas it had so industriously-

ly maintained. On Jan. 1, of the current year (1895), a few weeks after Vaillant had thrown his bomb, the Minister of the Interior, Raynal, caused 2,000 arrests and domiciliary searches to be made. The residences of all the known anarchists were suddenly and thoroughly gone through, and all the documents found were sequestered. The Minister of the Interior had hoped to dig up facts on the strength of which the impression could be created that a giant conspiracy existed in which the Socialists were also implicated. He imagined that among the documents seized there could or would be found letters and other writings of known Socialists, from which might be deduced intimate collaboration and secret connections between anarchists and Socialists.

M. Raynal experienced a cruel disappointment. Not even the most harmless letter of a Socialist was found in possession of the anarchists; but, on the contrary, all the letters of the anarchists were brimming over with abuse of and threats against Socialists. The raids of the police proved, clear and plain, that anarchists and Socialists in neither their private life nor in their public activity were in any way connected; but that, contrariwise, they faced each other as foes in every respect.

However, even if the efforts of the police to hang the anarchists to the coat tails of the Socialists suffered for the failure and which nobody had expected. Among the papers of the best-known anarchists were found letters from priests, stock exchange kings, dukes and other persons as prominent as they were reactionary. These letters contained expressions of thanks and advised of the remittance of money. It appeared that the syndicate of Paris brokers possessed a special fund for the support of the anarchists for the purpose of preventing a repetition of the pistol shot which the anarchist Gallace a few years ago fired in the exchange. Anarchism had become a lucrative business and smart people exploited the terror inspired by the crimes of the fanatics. Sebastian Faure, formerly the clerk of a stockbroker, was the go-between who managed things for the brokers and anarchists. This circumstance explains perhaps the 500 franc notes which Faure so often changed, and which probably came from the "Fund for the Timely Prevention of Dynamite Accidents," because for years past nobody knew how Faure made his living. Thus the police had caught the bankers of the anarchists. Evidently, it gave publicity to its discoveries in order to clear itself of the charge of having supplied Vaillant with the 100 francs he had required for the manufacture of his bomb. At the trial, the judge inquired about the source of that 100 francs so cautiously and so forbearingly that the public did not hesitate to regard the charge as perfectly true. . . .

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