

# OF THE RECORD

By Dwight Macdonald

At long last, after many delays and false alarms, Daniel Guerin's *Fascism and Big Business* is off the press. I am informed by persons whose testimony I believe to be reliable that they have seen with their own eyes a large number of copies neatly piled up in the offices of Pioneer Publishers. Considering that I wrote the introduction and helped get out the book, it is perhaps unnecessary to say that I consider it a most important work. We have had a flood of books on fascism, which in liberal circles has become the new demology, but *Fascism and Big Business* stands out both as to form and content. Simply written, clearly organized, it should be of great use in workers' educational and discussion groups.

Guerin analyzes the phenomenon of fascism in Marxist terms. That is, he deals not in backstairs gossip nor in Freudian psychology, but in basic economic factors. His primary question is always: who profits? He helps explode a myth which has become a platitude in certain liberal quarters: that fascism is a form of state socialism, that Hitler and Mussolini are middle class revolutionists, that the iron hand of the fascist state rests as heavily on business as on labor, etc. These propositions Guerin buries under a landslide of data as to the essentially capitalist nature of fascism. An especially interesting chapter he devotes to the struggle for power between the fascist "plebeians" and their big business masters. He shows that even though the plebeians seem to control entirely the State power, in fact when the real showdown comes (the Party "reorganizations" of 1923, 1925, and 1928 in Italy; the 1934 "Blood Purge" in Germany) the plebeians always knuckle under, and he shows why this must necessarily be the case. Above all, Guerin makes clear in copious detail that fascism can be fought only by the united, militant power of the workers. After reading his account of how the "progressive" governments of Giolitti and Brauning handed over the power to the fascists without a murmur, it takes an airtight closed mind to continue to believe in reformist political action. Guerin's Marxist economic analysis leads him straight to the conclusion that the fascist drive to power can be smashed only by its natural enemy: the working class.

### It Has Happened Here

Guerin writes of Italy and Germany, but our own experience bears out his points. There was the recent Nazi Bund meeting in Madison Square Garden, for instance. What could express better the policy of the Stalinists and the other reformist and "liberal" groups towards this incipient fascist threat than these words of Guerin: "Let us be careful not to reply to fascist violence, the reformist leaders said in both Italy and Germany; we should arouse 'public opinion' against us. Above all, let us avoid forming combat groups and semi-military bodies, for we should risk antagonizing the public authorities, who, we are confident, will dissolve the semi-military groups of fascism." And what could be more

closely applicable to the Madison Square Garden affair, where the 50,000 workers and other antifascists who demonstrated under S.W.P. leadership against the Bund were attacked and dispersed again and again by LaGuardia's police—what could be more pat than this quotation from Guerin: "They counted, not on the militancy of the masses but on the Prussian police. . . . But the forces of 'Law and Order' backed up the Brown Shirts." For "Berlin Sportsplatz, 1932" read "Madison Square Garden, 1939."

### Patching Up the Barrel

Radek once wrote: "Fascism is the iron hoop with which the bourgeoisie tries to patch up the broken barrel of capitalism." A great many people these days waste much time in demonstrating that an iron hoop is not the most comfortable thing in the world. They reason that since the business man under fascism suffers from all sorts of bureaucratic restrictions, he is sorry he ever heard of Adolf Hitler. Therefore, fascism is not a class phenomenon. Q.E.D. One more article along this line appears in the current issue of *Harpers*: "Doing Business in Germany" by Gunther Reimann. The interesting thing about Reimann's article is that, although he thinks he is proving that the business man gets it in the neck under Hitler, the actual data he brings up tends to confirm Guerin's analysis of the class nature of fascism. Thus Guerin writes that heavy industry (steel, iron, coal, etc.) for good economic reasons backs the fascist drive for power, while light industry (textiles, foods, and other consumer goods) in general opposes fascism—until it grows too strong to be peacefully suppressed, at which point light and heavy industrialists unite to place the fascists in power. Reimann's article tells how the heavy industrialists, due largely to the rearmament program, are prospering as never before, while by comparison "the manufacturer of consumer goods appears as an unhappy Cinderella." Guerin shows how the fascists hand back to private ownership many enterprises formerly operated by the State.

Finally, Guerin demonstrates that the condition of the small shopkeepers and petty bourgeois who flocked to Hitler's banner became worse, not better, after their Fuehrer took power. Reimann calls the small retailer "the most depressed and the most restricted business man in Germany." This is his major argument, in fact, to support his thesis that Nazism is not "the shield of private property." But it is, to say the least, misleading to lump small shopkeepers and steel magnates under one head as "capitalists." In fascist Germany, as Guerin abundantly demonstrates and as Reimann himself indicates, those who control the very heart of modern capitalism, the big industrial magnates, are still firmly in the saddle. "What is really happening in German business," writes Reimann, "is a gradual fusion between private enterprise and State bureaucracy." Or, to put it another way, the capitalist magnates retain their class supremacy by taking over the State.

### MEN AND WOMEN OF LABOR

# Out of the Past

By EMANUEL GARRETT

### LOUIS AUGUSTE BLANQUI (Feb. 1, 1805 — Jan. 1, 1881)

"For the realization of this emancipation of the workers, this abolition of the classes, aim of the social revolution it is necessary that the bourgeoisie be deprived of its political privilege by which it maintains all its others. It is necessary during a period of revolutionary dictatorship for the proletariat to employ for its freeing the power till then used against it, to turn against its adversary the very weapons that till then have held it down in oppression."

Nineteenth century France was chock full of people who had worked up beautiful schemes for the betterment of society. Some of them added to their pictures of a future perfect world a really vivid and potent criticism of contemporary society, thus answering in part the demands of the masses. Virtually all of these schemes, Utopians were found wanting when events, the successive series of revolutions which culminated in the Paris Commune, actually required leadership and program.

The truth was that "organizers" of a future world had no real idea of how their own world operated, or what to do about it; they were not, in short, revolutionists. All, that is, except a few, and of these few, one in particular. That one was Louis Auguste Blanqui who was in every sense of the word a real revolutionist, and who paid for his convictions and activities with forty years imprisonment.

### Masters Held Him Prisoner

Blanqui was born into a family whose members had been active participants in the great French Revolution of 1789. Before he was twenty, he joined a conspirative insurrectionist society as a member of which he participated in the Revolution of 1830. From then on, he was a prominent and leading figure in every revolutionary action of the French masses up to the day of his death.

Sentenced to death after an abortive attempt at insurrection in 1839, his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. Released shortly before the Revolution of 1848 (because his jailers expected him to die), he advocated a more socialist policy in the conduct of the revolution, and criticized the coalition government that was then established. Arrested again, he was interned until 1859. Released, he began to organize secretly, and built up a secret armed force of 4,000 men.

On the eve of the Paris Commune, on March 17, Thiers who was preparing to seize the arms of the Paris National Guard, had him arrested. Though kept under lock and key by Thiers, who knew his enemy well, Blanqui was elected to a

seat in the Commune. Again sentenced to a life term, he was freed in 1879 after a great agitation for his release which ended in his election as a deputy. For the remaining two years of his life, he edited a journal, "Neither God, Nor Master!"

### Advocated Proletarian Dictatorship

There was more however to Blanqui than singleness of purpose, loyalty and self-sacrifice. Few men have ever been more resolutely devoted to the cause of the oppressed than was Blanqui who never for a moment wavered despite persecution and hounding. But Blanqui contributed more to the working-class than an incorruptible spirit and a body wrecked by revolutionary labors. Blanqui brought to French socialism the life-blood of the class struggle. In that respect he may be said to have built the bridge between the Utopian philosophers ("political reactionaries," he called them) and the fighting Marxists.

Most important, however, is that he was among the first to advocate in action the dictatorship of the proletariat. Unfortunately, a stigma has been attached to his theories which belittles the tremendous value they had in the middle of the last century. It was his view that the workers and declassing bourgeoisie had to band together, arm themselves, seize power, disarm the bourgeoisie and establish a working class dictatorship. Inasmuch as communism cannot be introduced by decree (he overlooked his own warning on this score), it would be the duty of the new government to educate the masses to communism. The actual seizure of power need not involve the bulk of the masses; it would be accomplished by a conscious minority that would win over the majority after the transfer of power had been accomplished.

### Lifted Utopian Fog

It is possible to explain at great length the flaws in this theory. Today we know that the great majority of the working class must be won over to revolutionary action by a well-conceived plan of action. Without the support of the masses, the revolution cannot possibly succeed, or defend itself from attack.

But his views in the context of their generation helped lift the fog of utopian hopes from the working class movement. Like Marx he was primarily concerned with the world around him, and how to destroy it, and not with the world to be.

And if today with the greater precision and understanding of Marxism, we can give a more complete and adequate answer to the problem of how to seize power, it is nevertheless well-worth pausing for a moment to pay tribute to the contributions and devotion of a truly great proletarian leader, Auguste Blanqui.

# Hitler Seizes Slovakia; March Eastward Threatens the Ukraine

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shocked by the swift, sudden coup of his axis partner. And because Mussolini wants it, Hitler may permit that common frontier to stand for a brief time. If, however, his plans call for immediate advance toward the oil fields of Rumania and thence toward the granaries of the Ukraine, we may be sure it will not stand for long. Harried map-makers would be well advised to wait before rushing new gazetteers to the presses.

Mussolini has been left holding a pretty empty bag. He had succeeded in keying up London and Paris to the expectation of early demands for a Mediterranean Munich, but he was retarded by Hitler's seeming passivity. Hitler, with an eye on British and American rearmament, did not regard a Mediterranean offensive, at the moment, as offering him sufficient advantages, so he thrust eastward on his own and won enormous strategic gains without firing a shot.

Not the least of the loot was the arms and equipment for 40 divisions, brought with the voted approval of the Czech Communist Party and paid for mostly with funds provided by the French government with the voted support of the French Communist Party. Hitler also got the great Skoda munitions plants, ore and coal mines, gold stocks, foreign exchange reserves—and an open road into Hungary, Rumania and Poland.

### Next on Program

Thus in less than three years, by a policy of open power politics, Hitler has destroyed the Versailles structure created by the World War victors over the corpses of 20,000,000 dead. He re-occupied the Rhineland, took back the Saar, recreated Germany's armed forces, absorbed Austria, the Sudetenland, and now has gone beyond to swallow the countries carved out of the defunct Austro-Hungarian Empire. Next on his program—and there will be no lengthy intermission—will be Memel, the Polish Corridor, Rumania and the Ukraine.

Add to this Nazi program of expansion the "natural aspirations" of Italy in the Mediterranean, the development of acute tension between the Soviet Union and Japan—likely to flower into a full-blown crisis next month—and one realizes how hopelessly enmeshed the world has become in imperialist rivalries and how close it is to a new imperialist war.

Accepting this now as an inevitability and knowing no way of averting it, the "liberal" pacifists and democrats in the "democratic" countries have become the most rabid partisans of preparing for and embarking upon a war that will assure Anglo-Franco-American domination in the world in preference to German-Italian-Japanese domination.

### Clean Out Swamp!

We say the workers of the world have nothing in common with the greeds and appetites of either of these bands of capitalist gangsters—the one that will fight to protect its swag, or the other that want to hijack that swag for itself. Our job in this country is to make it impossible for our bosses to drag us into another war to "save the world for democracy." The last one produced Fascism, starvation, unemployment, and a new war is upon us. This way and this way alone will enable us to cut across the foul national and race rivalries nourished on the greeds of the masters, to join hands with the workers of all lands and with them abolish war by cleaning out the swamp in which it breeds—the swamp of the capitalist system.

# PLAN SUBMITTED TO SLASH W.P.A.

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it necessary. They suggested calling in state and local relief administrators in order to question them. They wished to learn from first hand sources how the unemployed would react to a slash as large as they hope to obtain.

### The Only Answer

For all those on relief there is only one way of safeguarding their checks, that is by militant mass demonstrations of protest at all relief headquarters on April 1, the day the first cuts are scheduled.

Demand all war funds to the unemployed! W. P. A. jobs at union wages for all unemployed; a blanket \$30 minimum; \$2,000,000,000 public works program; opening of all idle factories to be operated with government subsidies under workers' control.

And no cuts whatever—not a single worker taken from the rolls!

### NAZI THUGS HAVE DOOMED CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S JEWS TO THIS!



### PEACE OVERTURES TO MIAJA JUNTA BY SPANISH C. P.

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points: 1. The Communist party did not make a decision to revolt against Miaja. Party units, attacked by the Junta, merely defended themselves.

2. As soon as possible, they cut short the fighting, having no intention or perspective of continuing the struggle to the point of overthrowing Miaja. The main forces under Communist military leaders were not brought into the fighting.

3. The Communist party was in fundamental agreement with the Miaja Junta for making peace with Franco, but speaking of an "honorable" peace. Only after they were assaulted, did the Communist party leaders discover a tactical difference on how to secure the best peace.

Stalinist press claims that they and Negrin were for a last-ditch fight are thus blasted by the testimony of their own Spanish leaders. They had no principled difference with the "Trotskyist-fascist" Miaja Junta, and the United Press was probably correct in reporting, the day after the Junta took power, that the Communist party had declared its support to the Junta. But Miaja rejected their support, and launched an attack upon them, for one of the primary purposes of establishing the Junta was to throw the Stalinists to the wolves in the hope of thereby securing better concessions from Franco.

Threaten Resistance Franco's continued insistence on unconditional surrender and preparations for an offensive against Madrid may be the cause of the compromise between the Junta and the Stalinists. The reappearance of the Spanish Stalinist press may be noticed by the Miaja Junta to Franco that if he does not grant their request for amnesty, they will reunite with the Stalinists for a show of resistance.

That tomorrow Miaja will again throw the Stalinists to the wolves in return for minor concessions from Franco must be obvious to the Stalinists. But their main preoccupation now is not the lives of their Spanish party members, but the preservation of the Popular Front myth.

If they can patch things up with Miaja, they will brazen out afterward the peace with Franco. Whereas to fight Miaja would mean to admit publicly that the Spanish Popular Front has betrayed the fight against fascism.

### REMAINDERS

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### MANUILSKY EXPANDS ON STALIN; WINS DEFEATS THROUGH SILENCE

The second big feature of the 18th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was the lengthy speech of D. Z. Manuilsky, on March 11, published in the *Daily Worker*, March 13.

It followed slavishly, of course, the line laid down in Stalin's speech (analyzed in the last issue of the *Appeal*) but deserves separate commentary on a number of points:

Where is Dimitroff? 1. The totalitarian regime existing in the Communist International is revealed by the appearance at the Russian party congress of Manuilsky as "Secretary of the Communist International." Who elected him? When? Titles come and go in the Comintern without even the pretence of democratic elections. This is Manuilsky's first appearance under this title. Where is Dimitroff, "holmsman of the Comintern?"

2. The Secretary of the Communist International, making a report to a Party congress on the work of Communist parties, one week after the seizure of power by the Casado-Miaja Popular Front Junta and while it was in the midst of shooting down protesting Loyalists, including particularly Communist Party members, has not a word to say about this event which demonstrated the hopeless bankruptcy of Peoples Frontism.

Congresses, in the Stalinist system, are a time for self-congratulation. How possibly congratulate themselves on the Spanish debacle? By the simple expedient of saying nothing about the Miaja Junta, nothing about its assault on the Communist party of Spain! Instead, Manuilsky has the effrontery to report that the "miracle of holding out" in Spain is because "the masses of the people in Spain have been united into the anti-fascist Peoples Front, that this front has been cemented together by the Communist Party, which has grown into a major political force."

At the moment when the Spanish section of the Comintern is being hounded by its "loyal allies," its best militants shot down or executed, Manuilsky boasts about its 300,000 members, "a party which has mastered in full seriousness Comrade Stalin's wise advice. . . ." Satire stands defenseless against such brazen smugness.

### A Few Perfunctory Words

3. Even in the days when Stalin and his henchmen were covering up their criminal policies resulting in such disasters as the defeat of the Chinese Revolution (1927), the memory of the original methods of Lenin and Trotsky in the Comintern were still so prevalent, that the Stalinists went through the motions of drawing a balance sheet of events as they occurred. By today, however, the most terrible defeats are passed over with a few perfunctory words, with no pretence at estimating the causes and the lesson of the future.

The Stalinists, through the medium of the Peoples Front, delivered the French masses into the hands of Deladier. From June, 1936, until the Munich pact, the Stalinists supported continuously

a series of Popular Front governments. Manuilsky finds no need to analyze these events. Instead, he blames the reactionary bourgeoisie of France and England, i. e., precisely those whom the Popular Front policy was supposed to render impotent! These reactionaries "prepared the capitulation of the government which enjoyed the support of the People's Front." Was that capitulation not to be foreseen, was it not actually foreseen by all real Marxists, did not the Fourth Internationalists predict that Deladier and the "progressive" bourgeoisie would inevitably betray? And did not the Stalinists denounce us, and in no way warn the masses of what was to come? Manuilsky blandly goes on to pleasant subjects.

"Applying" the Popular Front 4. Manuilsky says that "application" of the Popular Front tactic "has given rise to certain tendencies of a Right opportunist nature to a tendency to abate the struggle against elements advocating capitulation. The tendency to idealize the role of the so-called 'democratic' states and of glossing over their imperialist character. . . . Communists of the capitalist countries are not sufficiently prepared for abrupt turns in events."

The Browners everywhere are thus chastised for . . . translating Pravda's editorials. Human ingenuity has not yet learned to anticipate what Stalin has not yet thought about. Now that Stalin has made a half-turn away from the democracies, they become "so-called 'democratic' states" and the servile flunkies everywhere must take the blame for having said what he told them to say previously.

In the usual Stalin method of preparing for a turn, Manuilsky digs up a quotation from the *Daily Worker* of 1927 which, had he or any other flunky dared repeat between 1935 and yesterday, would have cost him his head: "British capitalism has always been, and will continue to be, the most vile executioner of popular revolutions." Thus Stalin warns Chamberlain-Daladier that he will not remain passive if they continue their course. What will he do? His poo-pooing of possibilities of German designs on the Ukraine, reiterated by Manuilsky, means, that, once he gives up hope of an alliance with the democracies, he will turn to Hitler.

### Polish Party Dissolved

5. Nearly a year after capitalist press reports on the subject, never denied or confirmed by the Stalinist press, Manuilsky partially confirms the fact that the Polish Communist Party has been dissolved: "The Communist Party of Poland was most affected by enemy elements. Agents of Polish fascism had succeeded in gaining positions of leadership in the Communist party." To justify the dissolution by the external intervention of the Comintern apparatus, Manuilsky says: "And it was the fault of the Communist workers that they allowed themselves to be deceived by class enemies, that they failed to unmask the latter's maneuvers in time. . . ."

### HOLLYWOOD MERRY-GO-ROUND

CRISIS, produced and directed by Herbert Kline, photographed by Alexander Hackenschmied, commentary by Vincent Sheean, presented at the 55th Street Playhouse, New York City.

Herbert Kline and those associated with him have brought back a film "chronicle" of those September days six months ago that marked the first phase of the break-up of Czechoslovakia.

One sees everything within the power of a single cameraman to record, from the beginnings of the crisis in May all the way through to the fateful Four-Power meeting at Munich. The film is a powerful document, evoking all the explosive elements which seemed perilously near bursting six months ago.

But the commentary, written by Vincent Sheean, is quite another matter. It is nothing else than an expression of sterile anger at the policy pursued by the European democracies toward "little Czechoslovakia." Mr. Sheean is pained and disappointed that the struggle was given up without carrying it to the point of—imperialist war.

For at stake was the imperialist partnership of democratic France and her vassal, Czecho-Slovakia. A defense of that partnership meant the defense of the democratic robbers against the Nazi vultures. The liberals of the Sheean stripe are now in a position where, unable to present any program for averting the horror of war, they become its most shameful partisans.

It is of some note that when the film showed a band of refugees stranded in no man's land on the Czech-Polish frontier, a woman in the audience shrieked, "shame." Of admission of refugees into this country, or the Soviet Union, Mr. Sheean, of course, said nothing.

CROSSROADS, produced by B. U. P. Francaise, story by H. Kafka, directed by Kurt Bernhardt, with Charles Vanel, Jules Berry and Suzy Prim. At the Filmarte, New York City.

It may be remarked that while the current feature at the Filmarte is Hollywood stuff, Hollywood would have committed mayhem upon it. As it stands, or runs, "Crossroads" is a highly engrossing motion picture.

Briefly, it is the story of a man who was shell-shocked during the war and after many years is reminded of his pre-war origin. At first unable to believe that he is merely Jean Pelletier, one time common thief, he nevertheless submits himself to a thorough search concerning his real identity.

The chief character is acted with great sincerity and understatement by Charles Vanel. On the whole, it is a worthy two hours spent at the cinema by those who would escape being mangled by the star spangled offerings now showing elsewhere.

—NAT LEVINE

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