

Archive: The Left and Korea

Susan Green

Editor's Note: Susan Green's article was published as 'Summing up the discussion on the Korean Statement' in Forum, the internal bulletin of The Independent Socialist League, in 1950. [1] The ISL (called the Workers Party from 1940-49) was a small American democratic socialist organisation. It published the weekly newspaper Labour Action, edited by Hal Draper (and, before him, Irving Howe, the founder of Dissent), and the magazine The New International, edited for much of the 1950s by Julius Jacobson (Julius Falk), who went on to found and edit New Politics with his wife Phyllis Jacobson. Stanley Aronowitz has justly called the WP-ISL 'the most intellectually vital of all the radical formations [in the United States] in the 1940s and 1950s.'

Republishing Susan Green's article is no exercise in antiquarianism. With due alteration of details, the issues at stake in 1950 are at stake again in 2006. Should democratic socialists extend critical support to capitalist democracies in their wars against totalitarian threats, while continuing the fight for socialism, as Susan Green thought? Or should democratic socialists refuse support of any kind to capitalist democracies – 'Neither Washington Nor Moscow' – as the ISL Political Committee thought?

Susan Green embraced lesser-evilmism without apology. 'Stalinism must be defeated. Therefore, critical military support of the United States is in order.' She refused to accept that capitalist democracy and totalitarianism were equals. 'Under the one democratic and Socialist progress is doomed for an historic era. Under the other progressive forces may continue their fight.' With Nazism, as well as Stalinism, in mind, she argued that 'there are some junctures in human affairs of national or international scope, when everything depends on defeating the immediate menace.' Green denied that her position entailed giving up the fight for socialism. She insisted it was the only politically viable and morally defensible way to continue the fight for democratic socialism while preventing 'the darkness of Stalinism...from settling upon the world.'

When Irving Howe, Stanley Plastrik and Emanuel Geltman resigned from the ISL in 1952, to found Dissent – the USA's most important journal of democratic

socialism for the last half century – they repeated many of the arguments made two years earlier by Susan Green.

I have corrected a few typing errors, added sub-headings and provided explanatory footnotes. Otherwise, the article has not been altered.

Introduction

The PC statement on Korea interpreted the Korean affair as the first step in World War III. [2] That was the starting point for the opposition, namely, war being upon us, the world working people being unable to prevent it, a revolutionary solution of world conflict being nowhere in sight, can the ISL take the position that the peoples vital interests are not concerned with which side wins? The PC statement declares that they are not. My position is that they are. I contend that if this is the war, Stalinism must be defeated. Therefore, critical military support of the United States is in order.

This article is by way of a summary of the discussion. First I will take up the points made against those who have my position.

Seven Charges Answered

1. We are accused of drifting with the patriotic current or of jumping on the bandwagon of patriotism created by the Korean affair.

For me there has been no jumping on any bandwagon. Before the 1948 convention, when the cold war was still cold, I wrote for the bulletin on the possibility of having to support the military efforts of capitalist democracy in a major war with Stalinism. At the convention most of one of the reports was devoted to an attack on my article. There has been no jumping, but thinking over a period of time.

Neither has there been any unprincipled drifting with the patriotic current. It was difficult to adopt an attitude of critical military support for capitalist democracy, especially because of the terrible devastation of modern war, the horrifying human slaughter, and the atomic threat to all civilization. My emotional attachments and traditional thinking made it much easier to adhere to the policy of the ISL, or to become a pacifist, than to decide that, if civilized life continues after World War III, for human liberty to continue also, Stalinism must not have been victorious.

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2. With many variations and in several disguises, comrades say my position is pro-war.

The war and its heartbreaking horrors is not of our making.

It is here, or may be here, and ipso facto we are vitally interested in the outcome. In another century, when the problems of politics and of war were less complicated than today, Marx and Engels saw the advisability of the German Socialists supporting the arms of the German government against France. And again they saw the possibility of such support against Russia in a war between Germany and Russia. They were trying to evaluate the military results in terms of Socialist progress. They may have been wrong in their evaluation, but were they pro-war?

Comrades have asked why war should not be advocated outright if the military defeat of Stalinism is desirable. The answer is that a Socialist does not advocate the destruction of peoples, their homes, their means of life in barbaric international war. However, if this is World War III – here in spite of us – a military solution one way or the other will be sought by the contestants. Is the outcome of no importance to the people?

Comrades also speak as if the advocates of critical military support for the United States consider World War III a progressive war – so why don't the latter militantly participate on the progressive side? This is a gross misinterpretation. World War III is not between a progressive force and a reactionary force. None of us claim that. Nor would any but idiots claim that atom warfare can be progressive.

However, that does not mean that the working class has no choice between the two unprogressive forces. Under the one democratic and Socialist progress is doomed for an historic era. Under the other progressive forces may continue their fight.

3. It is claimed that my position overlooks the fact that Stalinism is a social problem for which there is no military solution.

The ISL statement on Korea took the Korean War as the grand opening of World War III. Therefore, the contest between the two systems has become a military one. I do not therefore negate the facts of the roots of Stalinism, and that it can be countered in the contest of social systems only by one better than both Stalinism and capitalism. I merely contend that a Stalinist military victory will end the

struggle for that better system – and that is paramount *now*. Why does the ISL choose not to acknowledge the importance of military decisions in history?

Comrade Shachtman [3] belabors the point that the roots of Stalinism are in capitalism and the source of Stalinism's power in working class failure. True, of course. But does that knowledge eliminate the certainty that a Stalinist victory will end the struggle for Socialism? Does it alter that fact that a Stalinist victory will put an end to the free labor movement; will institute monolithic politics? Does that knowledge soften or divert the Stalinist bullets that will pierce the bodies of labor leaders, Socialists, and any and all opponents? Does it lessen the terror that victorious Stalinism will visit on more millions?

Nazism was also rooted in capitalism and could seek power for itself because the working class had failed to take power for itself. Yet Trotsky was for the defeat of Hitlerism by the Noskes, Welses, Hilferdings, by the Bruning government, all inimical to the working class, whose overthrow was necessary to clean up the social swamp out of which Nazism emerged. [4] The differences between the circumstance of Hitler's contest for power in Germany and the international situation today are very well known and nobody needs waste words explaining it. There is, however, a similarity that is important – a historic common denominator. *There are some junctures in human affairs of national or international scope, when everything depends on defeating the immediate menace.*

Comrade Shachtman points out that Stalinism does not grow where the people themselves have taken their problems into their own hands. He gives as examples England, where a labor solution is in process, [5] and India, where the national revolution was accomplished. This point is incontestable. *But it applies to the rise of native Stalinism. What happens when a military victory puts these countries under the domination of Stalinism?* That is what we are talking about – what happens if Stalin wins a world war?

4. Many words have been used to describe the Rhee regime and to imply, if not state, that critical military support for the United States means support of Rhee. [6]

This implication is altogether unwarranted. There is no disagreement about the Rhee regime. The 'critical' factor in the 'military support' covers, of course, criticism and opposition to such regimes as Rhee's. This is not, however, the issue raised either by the ISL statement or by its opponents. Both agree that Korea is either to be the

slave satellite of the Kremlin or to be occupied by the United States for a time. The writer contends, not for Rhee, but that United States occupation permits the Koreans to overthrow Rhee, while a Stalinist dictatorship ends all people's rights.

5. I am told that by my policy I would have to seek to unite the workers of the world behind United States imperialism.

This is not the task of the Socialist who comes out for critical military support. Any uniting that the Socialist does is towards independent labor unity. Socialist education as to war, as to Stalinism, continues. Socialist criticism of the government continues. However, the overwhelming importance of the outcome of the war is part of policy, and military objectives are not hampered.

Just as the ISL official policy has many ramifications, and the supporters of that policy take the privilege of abstention from the slogan of withdrawal of United States troops from Korea, which to some appears a logical consequence of that policy, *so opponents must be given elbow-room in the working out of details in the application of their policy.*

Most important, an attitude on strikes would have to be developed. Opposition to an across-the-board anti-strike pledge would stand. But the Socialist, who supports the military victory of the United States, would advocate a tactic other than strike in instances where the war effort would be directly affected. In such cases other militant action would have to be taken. Possibilities are perhaps labor demonstrations or picketing Congress and government agencies.

6. I have been asked: Since many European workers and many Asiatic people do not consider American capitalism the lesser evil, how can the ISL follow this lesser-evil policy?

The answer is that there must be an objective evaluation of the two systems. Is our basic analysis of Stalinism correct? Is the ISL statement on Korea correct in that a Stalinist victory would be a disaster to Korea, to Asia, to democracy, to Socialism? This is what policy must be based upon, not on whether or not there are people in Europe and Asia who support Stalinism.

Ben Hall [7] argues that if we support the victory of the United States over Stalinism, why should not those who believe in Stalinism support its victory over the United

States? This is perverting the issue. The advocates of critical military of the United States do *not* believe in it. Loyalty of a Socialist is not to the capitalist system, as the Stalinist's loyalty is to Stalinism. The former's loyalty is to the age-long struggle for freedom. It is from that angle that the disaster of a Stalinist victory is to be viewed.

It is our job to help disillusion those deluded by Stalinism. Contrary to Ben Hall's contention, Stalinism no longer has its pristine dynamism in Europe, and not even in Asia. In Europe word gets around about conditions in the Soviet paradise – word carried by those who have fled from it. Also European workers tire of being the pawns of Kremlin foreign policy. In Asia it somehow gets known that Stalinist land reforms give with the left hand and take away with the right.

The policy of critical military support for the western camp must be explained to all workers for what it is, namely, made necessary because the working people of the world have not effected their own international settlements, made necessary because the victory of Stalinism will end the struggle for that social system which will be better than both Stalinism and capitalism.

7. Comrades have stated that my policy means the abandonment of Socialism.

This is a mistaken notion of the implications of critical military support. A page of Russian history is pertinent here.

The Bolsheviks fought Kerensky, but they were for the defeat of the Kornilov insurrection by Kerensky. A well-known quotation from Lenin on 'abandoning socialism' is in order: 'Without diminishing our hostility to him even by one single note, without taking back one word from what we have said against him, without giving up the task of overthrowing Kerensky, we say: We must calculate the moment. We will not overthrow Kerensky at present. We approach the question of the struggle against him differently: by explaining the weaknesses and vacillations of Kerensky to the people (who are fighting against Kornilov).'

Again, the historic circumstances are vastly different, but the historic common denominator exists: *Critical military support does not mean the abandonment of the longer range struggle-but merely the use of different means.*

The ISL falsely assumes that people want black or white patterns. Either you are fighting the pure and simple fight against capitalism every minute of the time, or

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you are a traitor to Socialism. However, people are prone to understand, taught by their own lives, that overpowering circumstances can compel a modification in conduct without a change in principle.

As it is, however, there is no reason why general Socialist education cannot continue with the policy of critical military support. Mary Bell feels that this education would cease. I don't see why. Such fundamentals as the cause of wars, the cause of Stalinism and its cure, the independent role of labor, could continue to be explained.

In the daily struggle, what could not be done, if the ISL had the policy of critical military support, that it did during the last war? Could it not expose inequalities of sacrifice, profiteering and black-marketeering, the injustices of age ceilings vis-à-vis war profits, the snare of incentive pay? Opposition to the no-strike pledge would also be the policy. However, as pointed out above, every strike situation would have to be evaluated for its direct military effect, and other methods of struggle used where called for.

Where does the abandonment of Socialism come in?

J'accuse!

Up to this point I have dealt with the arguments levelled against my position. Now the theme will be 'j'accuse.' The discussion has revealed certain factual and other mistakes on which the PC position is based.

1. While theoretically acknowledging the difference between Stalinism and capitalist democracy, actually those who support the PC position equate Stalinist imperialism and American imperialism.

Placing the responsibility for war equally on both Washington and the Kremlin as the PC statement does, is the kind of sweeping generalisation that becomes meaningless. Of course, fundamentally imperialism as such is responsible – which however, tells nothing about this specific war. To illustrate, generally speaking some systemic disturbance produces a headache, but what does that reveal about a specific headache? In this particular war or prelude to war, one must be very blind indeed not to see that it is rising and aggressive Russian imperialism that creates the war crisis. The actions of the United States, including its willingness to submit to

international atomic bomb control, indicated a desire to avoid war. Russia, however, was unwilling to forego the opportunity to spread out.

United States democracy is condemned in toto because of the company it keeps: Chiang, Rhee, and Franco in the offing. No Socialist fails to condemn the policy of supporting these reactionaries and fascists. But this is not the whole story. The American political system permits open condemnation of its policies and the struggle to change them. Yes, says Mary Bell, but this applies only here; therefore, she says, my outlook is not international. But this is not so. For not only does United States democracy permit political freedom at home, but in the countries it has occupied it has also furthered certain democratic concepts. Even in Korea it did not bolster Rhee when the popular vote turned against him.

And still this is not the crux of the issue. The crux is that the outcome of the World War III will decide which camp will have domination of the globe. The proposition to be considered is whether the darkness of Stalinism must be prevented from settling upon the world.

None of the supporters of the ISL statement is willing to admit that there is a qualitative difference between Stalinist dismemberment and annihilation of nations, and United States occupation. Ben Hall makes it appear that either camp will bring national extinction and dismemberment. We know this to be true of Stalinism. It will, we know, suck nations into its empire and into its totalitarian police system.

Do we know the same about United States imperialism?

The lesser evil of United States imperialism would, says Comrade Shachtman, 'be the most heartening tidings the German and Japanese have read since the war ended. 'The Germans have, however, already heard these tidings. Comrade Shachtman must also have heard that several political parties function in Western Germany – even the CP – and that within the framework of occupation, life in Western Germany attracts people to flee from the Soviet zone. In Japan, the MacArthur administration is certainly no exemplary democracy, still there is no equation between it and a Stalinist regime.

Those who continue to equate American occupation with Stalinism in satellite countries should study Rudzienski's article in August 21, 1950, LABOR ACTION.

[8] *If Polish Socialists can see no way out of their political prison than the military defeat of Stalinism in a way, that indeed is an affirmation of what happens to the struggle for Socialism under Stalinist total, terroristic suppression.*

In their effort to narrow the difference between capitalist democracy and Stalinism, some comrades engage in wishful thinking. They claim that if the United States wins the third world war, it will become so hopelessly militarized and fascistic that there will be no choice between it and Stalinism. On the other hand, if Russia should win, it is claimed that Russia will over-extend itself and thereby weaken its dictatorship – and then naturally the day would come. This is reminiscent of the Comintern policy toward Hitler. Let him take power; his power will only weaken him – and then the day would come.

2. Likewise, while making certain theoretical admissions as to the different systems, actually the supporters of the PC position equate United States war measures with the all-time totalitarian police system of Stalinism.

An incident from Kravchenko's 'I Chose Justice' – the story of his trial in Paris – is worth relating. [9] A high Russian bureaucrat had been exported from Moscow to testify that there is no police terror in Russia. Whereupon Kravchenko's lawyers produced on the witness stand a woman who had been a close friend of the bureaucrat's wife and of his family. This woman was an NKVD agent, planted in the bureaucrat's family as a spy. So flabbergasted was the worthy at the unexpected picture of himself as the object of police terror that he stammered, in open court, abject thanks to the ex-spy for not having ruined his life. Needless to say, this bureaucrat's life was thus ruined by his own words. But what of the terror that makes a man thank a spy for not ruining his life! This story is worth studying by those who rate as next to nothing the civil rights that are part of capitalist democracy.

It is false to grade the infringements of civil rights that come with war – some necessary, some purposefully reactionary, others fanatically imposed – with the inherent totalitarianism of the Stalinist system. I oppose with all my might fascistic measures like the McCarran bill, but must admit that any government, in face of war, takes measures to protect its internal front. And any government means any government, including a labor and even a Socialist government. This has nothing to do with the character of a social system.

As Socialists there are aspects of capitalist democracy that we must and want to preserve and develop. Socialism does not start from scratch. Yet the ISL places itself in the same position anent [10] capitalist democracy as do the Stalinists. It is indeed dangerously like the Stalinist approach to see no future for liberty in the United States, but to say nothing about what would become of liberty here if America is Stalinized.

3. The supporters of the PC statement reject the full implications of the ISL analysis of Stalinism.

The ISL analyzes Stalinism as the most reactionary, most counter-revolutionary force on earth. In the statement on Korea we read: ‘The victory of its (Stalinist) arms would mean nothing but the extension of the slave power of Stalinism over the whole territory of Korea, and therefore a disastrous blow to the people of Korea and the cause of democracy and socialism everywhere else.’

Does the ISL stand by this statement or not?

A Stalinist victory in Korea would influence the whole continent of Asia. Stalinist forces everywhere would be emboldened, and anti-Stalinist nationalist elements would receive a severe blow. These small nations understand that they are the pawns of the military victory – not themselves in a position to give military combat of a major order. Even India would find itself engulfed by victorious Stalinism. Such is the compass of modern warfare. Such would be the effects of Stalinist victory.

4. The PC position entirely ignores the problem of the European satellite peoples in hopeless political and economic enslavement...

Not only in Rudzienski’s article, but in many other places, have we read of the desperation of the people in the satellite nations, to such an extent that they look for a military defeat of Russia as their only salvation.

The progressive potentialities of these European countries, freed from the Stalinist yoke, must be taken into account.

The ISL has nothing to say about this point, except Ben Hall who talks of the ‘axiomatic’ thus: ‘The people of Poland, like those of every nation oppressed by imperialism, must persist in its struggles for freedom before, during and after any

and all wars.’ But naturally, only tell the peoples of the satellite countries how to do this under the Stalinist terror. By his facile ‘axiomatic’ Ben Hall shows that, while he has said a great many things about Stalinism, actually he does not understand the extent of its enslavement of the people.

5. The supporters of the PC position refuse to admit that they were wrong about post World War II predictions, and now continue to make their similar predictions for post World War III.

The ISL said during World War II that the barbarization of the war itself leaves no choice as to victors. This was a wrong predication. Yet none of the proponents of the ISL present policy admits the error. Indeed they go right on making it.

It cannot be gainsaid that the military defeat of Hitlerism dealt a solar plexus blow to fascism. Again, instead of the hopeless barbarism predicted, there emerged in England a labor government – impossible with a Hitler victory. In America, instead of the hopeless barbarism predicted, the labor movement has grown stronger and has gained new social demands, the status of minorities has improved, the struggle for freedom and progress can continue.

Yes, a large part of the world has been swallowed by Stalinist Russia. But the victory of Hitlerism could have brought fascism not only to the Stalinized sections of the world but to those parts where today capitalist democracy or labor government exist.

Ben Hall says that if the war results in the victory of either camp and not in the victory of the third camp, ‘humanity will speed down the road to reaction.’ This is a prophecy which has yet to be fulfilled. Policy cannot be based on prophesy. So many prophesies, both of revolution and of reaction, have been wrong.

6. The PC position ignores that historic changes have made the acceptance of the lesser evil policy imperative.

Mary Bell writes of ‘the long and ignoble history’ of the lesser evil, at the same time disclaiming hard-and-fast analogies. But actually she argues for an unbroken sameness of policy in spite of deep-seated differences in historic conditions.

The choice of the lesser evil to a Socialist means the decision that the fight for Socialism requires the victory of the lesser evil over the greater at a certain juncture in history. Every war does not create such a juncture.

In World War I, the economic and political systems in both camps were such that the fight for free labor, for human freedom, for Socialism, could have continued whichever side won. The capitalist system had not yet projected fascism and Stalinism came later. In the major countries of both camps certain political freedoms were common. Therefore, when during World War I, Socialists proclaimed that it did not much matter which side won, this was credible.

Furthermore, the ways of imposing defeat change with time. At the time of World War I, the old way still prevailed, namely, the victor nations imposed on the defeated the loss of valued colonies, spheres of influence, reparation moneys. Socialists could say, with reason, that such things made little difference to the working classes of the world. With Hitlerism a new concept of victory emerged.

Also at the time of World War I, international socialist movements were still untried, and above all unharmed by Hitlerism and by Stalinism. These movements could be, and were, an active and acting factor in the war situation.

Hitlerism brought a qualitative difference into World War II. One of the contestants was totalitarian, and aimed to impose its totalitarian system as the prize of victory. Socialists could no longer say it did not matter which side won.

Why then did the present advocates of the lesser evil not choose the lesser evil in World War II? There were, for me, several reasons. First, the hope for a revolutionary solution was present, basing itself on another hope, namely, that Hitler and Stalin had not sufficiently decimated and corrupted the revolutionary elements to bar a revolutionary solution. The melting away of the resistance movements under the heat of Stalinist betrayal put out that hope, and the extent of the debacle of international Socialism became apparent. Second, the meaning of military victory did not emerge fully until the victors began their activities: Stalinist Russia tucking European countries away in its vestpocket, and America imposing its democracy along with dollar aid. Hindsight showed what a Hitler victory would have been like. *It shows what a Stalinist victory is.*

Mary Bell gives an unwarranted twist to what the proponents of the lesser evil hope to accomplish. None of them, it can be safely said, hopes to democratize the war or to influence its prosecution by the government. These proponents merely contend that the ISL's evaluation of the disastrous world-wide effect of a Stalinist victory must honestly and openly be taken into account in its policy – instead of wishing secretly for the military defeat of Stalinism.

7. Comrades have donned rose-coloured glasses and see a third camp where there is none.

Ben Hall admits, as who can do otherwise, that the third camp does not exist as 'an independently organized and united force, conscious of its own interest...' But, according to Ben, it does exist anyway 'in the world proletariat and in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.' It is a long time since this Johnsonian way of reasoning was employed in the ISL. [11] *To treat latent potentialities for revolution in the masses, as if they were actualities is the last stand of desperation.* One might as easily say that the independent labor party exists but is, unfortunately, divided between the Democratic and Republican parties as to say, as does Ben Hall, that the third camp exists but is divided between Stalinism and American capitalism.

We know that a labor party may never develop, though we hope for it. There are other possibilities. Similarly a third camp may never develop, though we hope for it. There are other possibilities.

Mary Bell quotes Trotsky against Rudzienski's idea that Polish Socialists look to the military defeat of Stalinist Russia as their only hope for Socialist revolution: 'The revolution is not an automatic machine. The revolution is made by living people, conducted by certain organizations under certain slogans and so on...'

What is interesting in the quotation from Trotsky is that it can apply also to the third camp policy in this war. If the third camp has actuality, where are the 'certain organizations' to conduct such a struggle? Or do we go back again to the Johnsonite theory of 'spontaneous combustion?' [12]

If one is furthering a program in the face of an imminent danger, then that program must be capable of execution. If the third camp is offered as the solution to the danger of Stalinism winning a military victory which will enable it to dominate the world, then the third camp must be capable of realization. *Otherwise, you may be*

performing long-term socialist education, but you are not offering any program at all in face of the danger.

If, during World War III, groups form in a mass impulse against both camps, would they not have to be like the resistance movements in Hitler occupied countries? While having an existence and aim of their own, the latter aided, and were indeed part of, the allied forces. They could not say a plague on both your houses, though they had no use for capitalism. Should a third camp movement develop in World War III, though opposed to both capitalism and Stalinism, its first objective – imposed by the war itself – would be the military defeat of Stalinism. It is no longer a question of turning the guns the other way. The overwhelming cataclysm of modern war gives the physical issue top priority. Because of this military factor, the choices for a third camp will be either to give up fighting and be annihilated by the enemy, or to seek the protection of the side of the lesser evil.

8. The ISL position overlooks the lack of working class internationalism in the world today.

The iron curtain divides the west and east. The powerful radio stations of the western governments can penetrate and get a limited hearing beyond the iron curtain. Socialist connections are few and far between. What contact is there between working class and working class, between revolutionary Socialist and revolutionary Socialist! The near-completeness of this international separation of worker from worker must be given its importance in any war policy.

Ben Hall wants to know what the Russian workers should do. Is there something the ISL, small and without means, can do about what the Russian workers should do? And if that iron curtain were smashed, the whole picture would be different, and this whole discussion would never have started.

However, as things are, I would say that the ISL should urge upon the rich, efficient, powerful labor movements that they, independent of the western governments, try to work out ways of contacting the workers behind the iron curtain, to offer help and solidarity to them to break the chains of Stalinism.

Susan Green was a member of the Workers Party / Independent Socialist League.

Notes

- [1] This article is taken from *Independent Socialist Mimeographia: Mimeographed Bulletins, Documents and Educational Materials of the Workers Party / Independent Socialist League, 1940-1958*, Center for Socialist History, Berkeley, 1984, pp. 2446-57. The 1950 dispute over the Korean War was preceded in 1948-9 by a debate on the wider question of how democratic socialists should respond to the threat of war between Stalinism and the west. The Political Committee of the Workers Party submitted a long resolution, authored by Hal Draper (1914-1990) to the 1949 Convention titled 'The Struggle for the World Today: Capitalism, Stalinism, and the Third World War' (Convention Bulletin No. 4, November 23, 1948). Susan Green responded with 'Capitalism, Stalinism and War' (Convention Bulletin No.6, January 14, 1949). Hal Draper spent half his speech at the 1949 Convention criticising Susan Green's position. She responded in 'More About Stalinism, Capitalism and War' (Forum, Volume 1, No. 1 1949). All these documents can be found in *The Independent Socialist Mimeographia*.
- [2] The Political Committee statement on Korea was published in Labor Action, July 10 1950. In 1947 a U.N. Commission supervised free elections in Korea, but was refused permission to enter North Korea. In the south, elections were held to a National Assembly and Syngman Rhee became President of the Republic of South Korea. The Peoples Republic of Korea was declared in the North, with Kim Il Sung (1912-1994) as prime minister. Both claimed jurisdiction over all Korea. The Korean War (1950-53) began when communist-controlled North Korea attacked the south. The U.N. Security Council declared North Korea the aggressor and called on U.N. members to support South Korea. The U.N. Army (with contingents from 15 nations), was commanded by Gen. Douglas MacArthur. After US and Chinese interventions the war stagnated along the 38th Parallel.
- [3] Max Shachtman (1904-72) was expelled from the Communist Party in 1928, along with James P Cannon and Martin Abern, for Trotskyism. He split from Trotsky in 1939 and founded the Workers Party-Independent Socialist League (1940-1958). From 1958, Shachtman was a leading figure in the Socialist Party and played an important role in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. He was the author of *Race and Revolution* (1933 [2003 edition edited and introduced by Christopher Phelps]), *Behind the Moscow Trial* (1936), and *The Bureaucratic Revolution: The Rise of the Stalinist States* (1962). See also Peter Drucker's *Max Shachtman and His Left. A Socialist's Odyssey through the American Century* (1994).
- [4] Gustav Noske (1868-1946) was a German Social Democrat and the first Defence Minister of the Weimar Republic. He took a leading role in the suppression of the left-wing Spartacist Revolution after World War One. Arrested by the Gestapo in 1944 for plotting against Hitler, Noske was released by advancing Allied troops.
- Otto Wels (1873-1939), served as Chairman of the German Social Democratic Party. His name should not be invoked without noting his role on March 23rd 1933. In the German Reichstag Wels 'braved a gauntlet of jeering brownshirts and Nazi delegates as he mounted the podium to make his speech opposing the Enabling Act, which formally took the power of legislation away from the Reichstag and handed it over to the Reich cabinet for a period of four years. He declared: 'At this historic hour, we German Social Democrats pledge ourselves to the principles of humanity and justice, of freedom and Socialism. No Enabling Law can give you the power to destroy ideas which are eternal and indestructible ... From this new persecution too Germany Social Democracy can draw new strength. We send greetings to the persecuted and oppressed. We greet our friends in the Reich. Their steadfastness and loyalty deserve admiration. The courage with which they maintain their convictions and their unbroken confidence guarantee a brighter future. ' Looking directly at Hitler, Wels proclaimed, 'You can take our lives and our freedom, but you cannot take our honour. ' His words: 'Wir sind wehrlos aber nicht ehrlos.'

- ‘We are defenceless but not honourless.’ – have become famous.’ He died in Paris in 1939. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otto_Wels).
- Rudolf Hilferding (1877-1941) was a Marxist theoretician, author of *Finance Capital*, and an SPD member of parliament. He served as German Minister of Finance in 1923 and 1928-9, committing suicide in the Gestapo dungeon of La Sante on February 11, 1941.
- Dr Heinrich Brüning (1885-1970) was a member of the Center Party and served as Chancellor of Germany from 1930 to 1932.
- [5] The 1945-51 British Labour Government was a vital reference point for discussions within the WP-ISL about ‘the road to socialism’.
- [6] Syngman Rhee (1875-1965) was President of South Korea, 1948 to 1960.
- [7] ‘Ben Hall’ was the party name of Herman Benson. A leading WP-ISL organiser in the United Auto Workers, Benson founded the Association for Union Democracy in 1969. His book *Rebels, Reformers, and Racketeers: How Insurgents Transformed the Labor Movement* (2004) was reviewed by David Moberg in *Dissent*, Fall 2005, pp. 105-8.
- [8] Andrzej Rudziński, who also wrote as Luis Velasco, was a regular contributor to *The New Internationalist* in the 1940s. Available online are ‘Italy: Third Front versus CP: The Revolt of the Masses and the Danger of Stalinism’ (*New Internationalist*, Vol.14 No.7, September 1948, pp. 219-20) and ‘Ukrainian Problem – Past and Present: From Czarism to Stalinism’ (*New Internationalist*, Vol.14 No.5, July 1948, pp. 150-54).
- [9] Victor Kravchenko (1905-1966) was a Soviet Defector. In 1946 he published *I Chose Freedom: The personal and political Life of a Soviet Official*. The French Communist weekly *Les Lettres Françaises* accused Kravchenko of being a liar and Kravchenko sued. ‘The extended 1949 trial featuring hundreds of witnesses was dubbed ‘the Trial of the Century.’ While the Soviet Union flew in former colleagues and Kravchenko’s ex-wife to denounce him, Kravchenko’s lawyers presented survivors of the Soviet prison camps. Among them was Margrete Buber-Neumann, the widow of the purged German Communist leader, Heinz Neumann. She herself had been sent to the gulag.’ *I Chose Justice* was Kravchenko’s book about the trial, which he won. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victor_Kravchenko)
- [10] This is a typing error on Green’s part. It is unclear to the Editor what word she had in mind.
- [11] ‘Johnson’ was the party name of CLR James, a member of the Workers Party from 1940-47.
- [12] During the war years, and after, CLR James had argued that a spontaneous European Revolution was imminent.