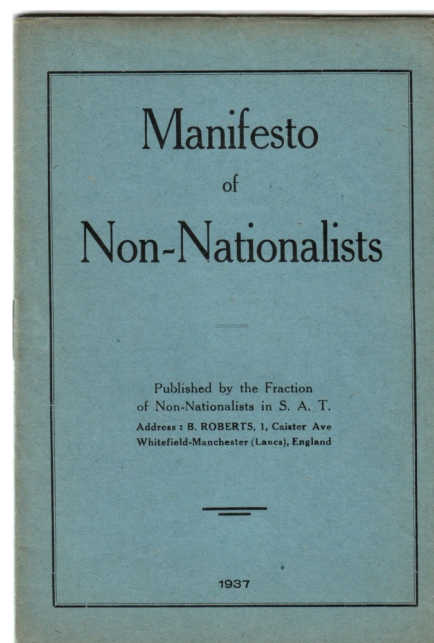


Eŭgeno Lanti:

MANIFESTO OF NON-NATIONALISTS

The original version of this work (*Manifesto de la Sennaciistoj*) was published anonymously in Esperanto in 1931. The first English edition was translated by Howard Stay and published by B. Roberts for the Anationalist Faction of SAT in Whitefield-Manchester (Lancs), England, 1937. The preamble and the first chapter of this document are drawn from a transcription of Stay's translation available on the web. The second and third chapters were scanned and transcribed by G. Mickle. The specimen of Lanti's handwriting was copied from the 1951 Esperanto edition of the *Manifesto*.



PREFACE

The social or philosophic doctrine which no longer elicits controversy or objection has ceased to live. A thousand recent facts and the whole of the history of ideas furnish a striking proof. But the partisans to a rigid orthodoxy prefer silence or a passive adhesion, to reasoned criticism. In him whom they contradict, they always see an adversary to be lustily hit, never a searcher enamoured of the light and worthy of sympathy, such as he frequently is.

Those who will bow to nothing but reason consider it a duty to give a contrar«y example, believing rightly that free discussion is an indispensable condition of progress. For «what is of vital importance,» as the author of this essay affirms so rightly, «is the work of the pioneers who invent, anticipate and hew a track through the forest of prejudice and tradition; who drain the morass of routine, thus preparing a path along which the crowd will follow later.»

It is from a work of this kind that *non-nationalism* has emerged. Diversity pleases some; others believe it to be inevitable without having any very strong preference for it. Inversely the non-nationalists consider the unification of the peoples and the disappearance of everything which is national, both desirable and possible. In the plan based on the individual, they declare that profound differences will continue to exist: «World economy is preparing the soil for a world culture, a culture of which the essential part shall be reason. That does not mean that men will become all of one pattern. There will, indeed, be created a kind of uniformity in the mental outlook and character of men. National distinctions will pass away, but there will always be individual differences.» And as technical progress, linked with the suppression of social injustice, will permit of the daily devotion of long hours to culture, by everyone, «one may reasonably suppose that from all this there will emerge strong personalities, with original thoughts and feelings, which will find expression in various forms of art capable of being understood and appreciated throughout the entire world.» Let us thank the author for having thrown a light on such a difficult problem as the value of unit and the possibility of its practical realisation.

Be the conclusion what it may, these pages of marvellous logic and clarity in which are set the arguments in favour of all-world unification, should be read. How interesting, too, are the remarks

relating to reason, science, technology and the universal language which will enable the workers to be in direct relation with their brothers in the five divisions of the world. This language exists, but the leaders of the labour movement have not encouraged its diffusion. They conjecture «that their rôle in the leadership of the masses would be belittled if all workers could understand one another; if congresses could be held without translators and interpreters; if the workers could enter into direct relations throughout the world. As a matter of fact, there has arisen in society a new class of men, the workers' leaders, whose personal interests might be adversely affected, in some degree, by a world language. Non-nationalists do not hesitate to denounce uncompromisingly such parasitism on the part of leaders.» Such reflections as these show a splendid independence of thought. Those to whom servility in all its forms is repugnant, who refuse to burn incense to even the most famous idols and who accept no directive but that of reason, will certainly applaud.

It is an eminently useful task to oblige the reader to put to the test opinions usually accepted and to dig deep into conceptions frequently misunderstood, to direct his attention to new points of view. This essay does indeed belong to the category of writings, alas, too rare, which procure this result. It is richer in ideas than many bulky works, as any sincere person will admit, it neglects vain adornment, empty words and sonorous phrases and owes its force and beauty to the idea alone. I recommend it especially to independent searchers and spirits desirous not of following an orthodoxy, but of seeing clearly.

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Manifesto of Non-nationalists

PREAMBLE

For ten years, now, the spirit of non-nationalism has been abroad in the ranks of the Workers' Esperanto movement. Throughout the world, thousands of workers are using the same language, either in groups among themselves, or for their correspondence with comrades in far distant lands. This fact has begotten the idea of the possibility of the working class organising itself in an original manner and of considering new methods in the struggle between the classes.

So far non-nationalism has often been discussed in the organs of the Workers' Esperanto Association, **Sennacieca Asocio Tutmonda**, and there was never any very considerable opposition to this new idea. But it was to be expected that some day orthodox internationalists would oppose such heresy. And as a matter of fact for some time already a vast agitation has been methodically undertaken in order to resist the new theory.

Consequently, comrades who are sympathetic towards the idea, but have not a very clear conception of it, may waver. Many, without sufficient consideration, have even identified non-nationalism with a «working-class internationalism». It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to put forward our point of view clearly and to defend it against the attacks of orthodox internationalists.

This has become all the more necessary because if we do not, vigorously oppose our arguments to the sophisms and clichés spread abroad by internationalists, the latter, in the confusion, will succeed in persuading Esperantists that they represent the only evolutionary tendency. Yet, it is easy to show that their internationalism is only a species of opportunism admissible for party leaders who ignore the language problem, but unpardonable among worker Esperantists.

We feel certain, that the practical application of Esperanto for several years on the part of class conscious workers must inevitably lead them, first, to the beginnings of a non nationalist state of mind, and later, to a clear presentation of problems from a non nationalist point of view. We have no doubt that many comrades will find in the following pages the explanation and the confirmation of what they have more or less vaguely felt and thought for a considerable time.

They will no doubt agree with us that a real revolutionary must be capable of thinking ahead. Otherwise he is only narrowly conservative. Worker Esperantists must therefore draw all the logical conclusions which would follow from the general application of an artificial universal language.

We are well aware that our point of view is at present Utopian, since up to the present, Esperanto has not very widely spread. But in the eyes of many who will regard non nationalism as something fantastic, a universal language is also considered Utopian. And yet we Esperantists know, from our own experience, that it is an object capable of realisation, that it is even now a fact, a living fact.

We therefore advance fearlessly with our Manifesto into the ideological arena.

January 1931

I

INTERNATIONALISM

In a famous Manifesto which appeared 83 years ago the workers of all countries were called upon to unite. With that object in view, several Internationals have already been set up, whose leaders have more or less frequent relations with one another either by correspondence or during congresses; most often through the medium of translators and interpreters. Generally speaking, however, the rank and file, in actual fact, still remain completely separated in national territories, and have no contact whatever with one another except on the battlefields during terrible wars.

Within these national confines the minds of men are so worked upon by the school, the press, and all the other resources of the State, that with the passing of several generations these nationals form, mentally, a real race. It is true that, according to the admission of the specialists themselves, real races, in the biological sense of the word, have not existed, in the so-called civilised countries for several centuries.

According to Frederick Lefevre, one finds, for example, in the short-headed inhabitants of France, descended from ancient stocks, evidence of Mongolian race. And Professor Johann Brunhes has proved that the present day Jews of Bessarabia, of the Ukraine and of Poland are to a great extent Slavs and Tatars, who, a thousand years ago, were converted to Judaism by the political and military influence of the Chazars. Further, these latter were themselves Tatars who had become Jews. The surprising result of this is that the Jews of today in Cracow and Warsaw look more Jewish than those of Jerusalem!

But philosophers and psychologists can rightly speak of «historic races» and of the «souls of peoples». Such «races» and such «souls», are artificial. They do not constitute anything essentially incapable of variation, of modification. They have, as it were, been kneaded by history. Yet there are people, even among those who call themselves revolutionaries, who consider, that the actuality, which is called a nation, is something quite natural, sacred, and worthy of preservation.

Marx and Engels, by saying that «the workers have no country» were only stating a fact. Since the workers do not own their right share of the country, it can be argued that they are without a country. But one must not ignore the fact that the authors of the Manifesto immediately went on to add:

«since the working class must first attain political power, must become the national ruling class and itself constitute the nation the national ruling, it is itself so far still national, though not at all in the bourgeois sense»

and a little later in the same work one may read:

«To the extent that the exploitation of one individual by another is abolished, so the exploitation of one nation by another is abolished. With the end of antagonism between the classes within the nation will also end the antagonistic attitude of the nations toward one another.»

We agree entirely with Jaurès that in these words no condemnation of the existence of nations is to be found.

Marx and Engels, therefore, did not help forward their disappearance, and took up a purely internationalist point of view. They were not, then, non nationalists. Jaurès further argued, that even in the capitalist system, the workers have a country. And that, too, is, in a sense, true. Within a national territory a member of the ruling classes and a worker are influenced in much the same way by the same resources of the state. Speaking the same language, through that powerful bond they feel themselves to belong to the same great family. People confined within national frontiers thus acquire a similarity of mind and character; they feel that there is some kind of kinship between them, especially at historic periods as, for example, during wars.

It is in this way that such forms of mental sickness as that which we experienced in 1914 at the outbreak of the war, can come into being. Class combativeness was swept away and forgotten and for the first few months a kind of «holy alliance» prevailed between the classes. Patriotic enthusiasm easily overruled all other feelings, and paralysed the remnants of reason.

Nations are realities; they are facts. To recognise a fact, however, is not to justify it. Religions and epidemics are facts, but their existence is not justified on that account. But it is also a fact that Jaurès and with him Bebel, Lenin¹ and other less famous leaders of the Working-Class Movement, looked upon the nation as something natural and worthy of being defended. Paraphrasing a saying of Francis Bacon, «a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion,» Jaurès concluded his argument as follows: «A little internationalism weakens patriotism; much internationalism strengthens it.»

«A little patriotism weakens internationalism, much patriotism strengthens it.» That very clearly means that internationalism in no way aims at the abolition of nationality in the world. Further, all congresses of the various Internationals have declared themselves for the independence of nations, for the autonomy of all countries.

Internationalism, therefore, is only a system which aims at the setting up of a juridical organisation among the nations in order to avoid conflicts and wars, but which in no way pretends to abolish the national peculiarities constituted by languages, customs, tradition, and so forth.

Internationalists, not all of them,² admit the possibility and the desirability of adopting an artificial auxiliary language, such as Esperanto. But they do not agree that national languages, national

1 In a really national war, the words: «defence of the Fatherland» are not a deception and we in no way oppose them. *Complete Works of Lenin*, vol. xiii p. 342, of the French edition.

cultures, and other national sanctities should disappear, or, at least, become archaic, dead things, like the ancient Greek and Roman languages and cultures.

They consider it quite Utopian and undesirable that an artificial language should become the sole instrument for the propagation of a universal culture. With regard to this problem, however, Karl Kautsky occupies a distinct position. In his book, *The Liberation of the Nations* (1917) he opposes the view of Otto Bauer, who like Jaures, regards the nation as something sacred which must be preserved. Among other things this is what he says: «Individual states are becoming mere separate administrative districts with self-administration. This in its turn facilitates the adjustment of boundaries in such a way that each of them may embrace the territory covered by one language. Only in a socialist society will the possibility arise of realising the national state to the full extent that the condition of affairs permits. But that would occur only at the same time as the individual sovereign state ceases to exist. Not national sovereignty, but only national self-administration would be the goal of this evolution.»

«But finally the boundaries of administrative districts on a national basis would lose their significance, owing to the fact that the higher educational standards of the people would make it possible for everybody to acquire a world language in addition to his mother tongue, so that everyone would be able to get his bearings, make himself understood, and feel at home anywhere in the world.»

«It is not the differentiation, but the assimilation of national characteristics, not the attainment of national culture on the part of the masses, but the attainment of a European culture that is coming more and more to mean the same thing as a universal culture, which is the goal of socialist evolution.» Kautsky's argument tries to show that the assimilation of national characteristics is something that is inevitable, and that this must not be prevented. May we conclude from this that the famous Social Democratic thinker was a non nationalist? Certainly not! He, like all other socialists, communists, and even anarchists³ saw the socialist order of society functioning within national boundaries. He talks of a world language as an auxiliary language side by side with the mother tongue. And which is to be that auxiliary language? That he does not tell us. Perhaps he was thinking of French or English, if not of German. We shall show, later on, that non nationalists have a quite different understanding of the problem.

Internationalists, do, indeed, generally agree that the absolute sovereignty of states or nations, as it has existed up to the present, must be limited. More or less explicitly they recommend the establishment of a super-national organisation, which should legislate for all nations. Those who defend this point of view sometimes call themselves super-nationalists. But their system of organisation also preserves national divisions and consequently it is essentially different from non nationalism.

2 Lenin was an opponent of Esperanto and consequently all orthodox Leninists who have already learned Esperanto, ought to unlearn it. In the Russian gazette *Raboce Krestdjynsij Korespondent*, # 21, Nov. 1928, Comrade M. J. Uljanova, the sister of Lenin, among other things, said: «Lenin several times spoke about Esperanto and very unfavourably, considering it to be too artificial, simplified and lifeless...» And in *Sennaciulo*, # 278, 30 Jan. 1930, there appeared the following information from Karl Lindhagen, Mayor of Stockholm, who once during a conversation tried to interest Lenin in Esperanto. The famous leader of the Comintern said: «We have already three world languages and Russian will become the fourth.» He argued that an artificial language is an impossibility.

3 Cp. article in *Sennaciulo*, # 297, «Anarchism and Non-Nationalism». Without doubt anarchists oppose the idea of nationality. But it must be pointed out that they identify the «fatherland» with the state. Trying to destroy the state does not mean that they also aim at destroying national appurtenances as constituted by languages and cultures. In the article referred to, Sebastian Faure while describing how the anarchist society would function preserves the national framework. It could not be otherwise with this author, for he does not take into consideration the language problem, which Esperantists have solved.

It is certainly true that not all internationalists have agreed with the view that workers should go to the defence of their nation when a war breaks out. The Bolsheviks, for example, think that, in the imperialist state of capitalism, the workers must not support a war in defence of their native land. They explain, that in such an event it is not the question of defending the country, but a matter of war between rival imperialisms for a new division of the markets of the world, or for colonies. Everybody knows Lenin's slogan: «Turn the imperialist War into a civil war.»

But that does not mean at all that the great leader of the Third International agreed that the peoples should give up fighting for their «national rights» when these were in jeopardy. The passage already quoted is very clear in this connection. Furthermore in the most recent Programme (1928) of the Communist International there is this paragraph: «Recognition of the right of all nations, irrespective of the race to which they belong, to complete self-determination, that is, to the extent of setting up a separate state.»

A similar point of view is also accepted by the Second International. It is the internationalist point of view, and is, moreover, the only one applicable in present conditions. As is well-known, Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg engaged in a controversy on the national problem, but it would be a great mistake to think that Rosa assented to the non-nationalising of the peoples. In the «Junius» Pamphlet which appeared in 1915, in reproach of the German Social Democratic Party, she put forward the thesis that in time of war, the workers must not cease to wage the class struggle, because: «As the centuries testify, it is not the state of siege, but the uncompromising class struggle, which awakens that self-respect, that self-sacrifice and that moral strength among the people, which is the best shield and best defence of the country against external enemies.» And Rosa Luxemburg, at the end of this little work, concludes as follows:

«... German Social Democracy could act as a light house if it would remain consistent... The German working class would be the keeper of the light house of socialism and of the liberation of mankind, and that would be decidedly a patriotic work, not unworthy of the disciples of Marx, Engels, and Lasalle.»

That is not how a non-nationalist would talk. Let us quote further the opinion of one of the most authoritative of contemporary Marxists, Otto Bauer. In his book entitled *The Problem of Nationalities and Social Democracy*, he argues that socialism is, as it were, the apex of nationalism: «Only a socialist society will make national culture the possession of the whole people and by so doing, make of the whole people a nation. Therefore every evolutionary national policy is, of necessity, a socialistic policy. (Page 164).. The fact that socialism makes the nation autonomous, its destiny the product of its conscious will, has as its effect an increasing differentiation of the nations in a socialist society, a sharper distinction between their peculiarities, and a sharper cleavage of their characters one from the other (Page 105)... The bringing of the whole people to one national community of culture, the acquisition of complete self-administration by the nation, and increasing differentiation between the nations , that means socialism.» (Page 108).

We could multiply instances to prove that internationalism and non-nationalism are not synonymous terms. That is unnecessary. Let us add, however, one other remark on this point. Everyone will agree with us that the past and present leaders of the various Internationals were and are men of sufficient education to know that there is, in all the principal Languages, the word cosmopolitanism, which etymologically has approximately the same meaning as that which we give to the Esperanto word «sennaciismo» (non-nationalism). If these men had wanted to put into the programmes of their respective Internationals, that their aim was the non-nationalising of the world, they would certainly not have talked of internationalism but of cosmopolitanism. They did not do so, and that is the best proof that nations are regarded by them as something worth preserving and defending.

They may be right. That is another question, and so far we have only tried to refute the groundless assertion of a few people, who want to make Esperantists believe that the word «internaciismo» (internationalism), is synonymous with «sennaciismo» (non nationalism), which has begun to germinate in the Workers' Esperanto Association, S.A.T.. Such people are either politically illiterate or deliberate deceivers. They make us think of the monk who christened a rabbit with the name «carp» so that he could eat it without sin on a holy Friday. But we refuse to allow «sennaciismo» (non nationalism), to be identified with «internaciismo» (internationalism) in order that it may become the orthodoxy of a political party. The truth is, that neither etymologically nor historically, can one identify these twoisms or theories.

The fact remains that the most authoritative men in the working class movement esteem and revere their national culture and advocate its perpetuation. And are we to wonder at the above mentioned facts? Not at all. Generally speaking political parties are out to secure power in their respective countries. Every party therefore, must utilise in its propaganda the human material to which it directs its appeal. Since this material has been made what it is by centuries of education given in a national language through a national literature, art and so forth, it is quite natural that political agitators⁴ have no inclination to confront the prejudices of the masses, and to recommend the pursuit of the class struggle by methods which ignore national characteristics. Usually they only follow, or at best, keep abreast of progress. Their task is to bring existing conditions into order, to adapt themselves to existing circumstances and to discover some sort of equilibrium among many diverse social forces, but in no way, to perform pioneer work. The above assertion is well substantiated by the nationalist policy of Soviet Russia. There, those in power are not trying to abolish national differences; on the contrary, they are helping small peoples to acquire a separate national culture. That is a purely internationalist policy.

Non-nationalists would introduce the teaching of Esperanto into all schools, and so promote a universal non-nationalist culture. Further, since a common language is necessary to the intercourse of all the nations which are contained within the vast territory of the Soviets, it is the Russian language which is becoming, more and more, the official auxiliary language. We do not, of course criticise this linguistic imperialism. On the contrary, we prefer to see one language supreme over a huge territory rather than the awakening of patriotic sentiment in the Ukraine, White Russia and elsewhere.

One sees such typical examples of patriotism even among Esperantists, which goes to prove, that the wide-spread idea of a national culture, of the right of peoples to separation and self-determination, is, at best, only opportunism, but is capable of becoming even a reactionary, dangerous, subjective force. Many facts prove the existence of this danger. We will quote only the opinion of a Comrade in the Ukraine: «... In U.S.S.R. nationalism is advanced under the aegis of the official national policy, which favours nationalism. There are very few Communists who raise their voices against the nationalism which is being encouraged, and they are not listened to.

For example, not long ago there appeared a very interesting book *On National Culture*, by a well known Communist Vaganjan, which was attacked by the official press, in which the author bitterly attacks the position and action of the supporters of national culture and puts forward the thesis that all national culture is advantageous only to the bourgeoisie and that a national culture cannot be the culture of the working class. Yet even this author does not quite arrive at non-nationalism, but hesitates half way and says that the working-class must create an international culture in national languages!

4 In using the word «agitator» we wish to express the difference between rank-and-file party members and others who, as it were, make a business of politics and are principally desirous of becoming M.P.'s. or of attaining other positions.

The orthodox leaders of the Communist Party (Stalin etc.) favour a renaissance, an artificial resuscitation, re-creation of national cultures. Krupskaja, the widow of Lenin, for instance, recently made a speech on national and international culture in which she attacked non nationalism, pleading for national culture. It is noteworthy that she associated non nationalism with Esperanto and directed her attack simultaneously against both.

Here is a striking illustration of this national policy in practice: The Kharkov Wireless Station arranged the broadcasting of talks on Esperanto and an Esperanto Course to be given in Ukrainian. This did not please some of the Ukrainian nationalists who control the station, because their aim is to make good Ukrainians, not Esperantists. Pretexts were sought to prevent the undesirable series of talks and this is the one they found.

The lecturer said in one of his talks that «a time will come when, on the basis of a universal economic system, a universal culture will take shape and, little by little, national languages will die out.» That was enough: the next talk was not given!...(2, 12. 271).

We do not say, however, that political propaganda is entirely unnecessary, or useless. But it is not enough. What is of vital importance is the work of the pioneers, who invent, anticipate and hew a track through the forest of prejudice and tradition; who drain the morass of routine, thus preparing a road along which the crowd will follow later.

II

SENNACIISMO (NON-NATIONALISM.)

That which is actually changing the world is science and technology, the offspring of reason, which produces things by art and skill. It invents, builds, alters the conditions in which they live by the application of new modes of production. These changes react upon the minds of men. Science cannot be national like art. Reason is the same in all latitudes. Two and two make four in London as in Pekin. In order to construct a machine the same calculations have to be made whether in Moscow or in New York. Here, as it were, we touch gropingly the foundation on which a universal culture can be raised.

Metal workers producing the same part of a motorcar whether in Paris or in Tokio, are obliged to perform the same manipulations, and so are placed in the same artificial environment. This fact is bringing about the condition which is necessary, — but not sufficient — in order that the minds of all metal-workers throughout the world may become uniform.

The process is impeded by the heavy tradition of many centuries, different languages, and a different education.

These workers are also often exploited by the same master, i.e. **finance-capital**, which, through the share system, is made up of the investments of moneyed people throughout the world. On the Stock Exchanges in the great cities anyone with money can buy the labour-power of men whom he does not know, whom he will never see, and of whose existence he never even thinks. And if there are failures of big banks in New York, their effect is felt in the economic life of Tokio and Berlin. No one denies that.

It is hardly necessary to talk about world trade routes, wireless telephony, and other similar means of communication. The world is shrinking more and more. But the ideology of the masses remains,

for the most part, such as it was a century ago, when it was possible for national economic systems and, consequently, national independence to exist. Such a state of the nations is now a veritable myth. In reality there remain on the face of the earth very few peoples who have preserved till to-day a feudal state of society and who could in any way justify their right to independence and: the right to ignore the rest of the world. Moreover, such rights are based upon sentimental considerations.

Non-nationalists, then, look upon the world as a unit, as a whole belonging to all the people on earth. If, in any region, there are raw materials which are not being utilised by the people who live there, we think that these latter have no right to prevent other peoples from making use of such natural resources.

When we say «right», it is possible that not every reader will attach the same meaning to the term. In order to make ourselves understood, without giving a scholastic definition, let us state that capitalists have no right to seize these resources, because they do not aim at exploiting them for the benefit of the world's peoples but for themselves or their own class. But, if somewhere in the world there was no exploitation, and in another place backward peoples who would not agree to supply the raw materials which they themselves were not using, we consider that the latter would be acting somewhat in the same way as capitalists do now. If the earth is considered as belonging to all the people on it, it is evident that the pretention of some that a certain part is their property, on which no one must trespass, is not just.

We are well aware that right does not exist in itself, any more than a circle or a square. Right is some ideal law which would hold sway in a society of rationally thinking people, a society consisting of wise men and women, for whom arguments are valid and not blows. Men have long ago succeeded in making circles and squares more or less ideally accurate; they will also succeed in making right ultimately supreme among men. Then there will be a society free from exploitation and socialism will have been built.

Meanwhile the consciousness of right scarcely exists in many people, especially the workers; that is why the latter too easily allow themselves to be exploited and don't revolt. To fight for right can therefore be a very good slogan.

So far, capitalism has grabbed the natural resources of the colonies through its cruel policy of imperialism. Capitalism, indeed, has in view only gain for the benefit of one class, and not the prosperity of all, At present capitalism is behaving towards the peoples in the colonies in the same way as it behaved toward its own citizens immediately after its victory over feudalism. It is robbing and exploiting them without meeting with resistance. The workers in the colonies are not organised on a class basis as are the workers in those countries which have long since been industrialised, consequently the exploitation is greater and more cruel.

That is inevitable in our capitalist era. Of course, we disapprove and oppose⁵ the infamous methods adopted by capitalist imperialism in the colonies, because they do not really aim at civilising or raising the standard of culture of the peoples whose social condition is backward, but only at

⁵ If we were asked «How do you oppose them?» we should reply: «In the same way as the «anti-imperialists» — by words.» When the fight of the Nicaraguan patriot Sandino against American imperialism was applauded in the revolutionary press throughout the world, the editors did not volunteer in his army to take part in the fight with weapons.

When in the colonies the natives revolt and fight their exploiters, of course we approve; but we prophesy that they will not attain real emancipation by securing «national independence»; we recommend them to wage the **class** war, to unite their forces with those of the universal working class and so abolish all forms of exploitation. If the workers in any metropolis were to strike in order to stop cruel exploitation in the colonies, we too, of course, would take part.

exploiting human beings and raw materials for the profit of the capitalist class. But that does not alter the fact, that the necessity of utilising the natural resources of the entire earth for the benefit of all its inhabitants, postulates the disappearance of sovereign nationalities, the abandonment of racial distinctions, and the submission of all human beings to the dictates of reason. We therefore regard as thoroughly reactionary the policy which consists in preaching the independence of nations, the autonomy of peoples, and the preservation of national customs, culture, and languages.

Nevertheless non-nationalists offer no opposition to those who strive sincerely and devotedly in order that nations should attain their independence, but merely refuse to take any part in such struggles themselves, knowing well that national independence does not in fact free the workers, and that it can profit only the bourgeois class; and because they know too, that with the means of production at their present stage, complete national independence is impossible and, consequently, to support it is fantastic.

Non-nationalists try to convince workers who are ready to fight for nationalism that they are mistaken and vainly expending their energy in a wrong direction, and that only the class war can emancipate them; that only the abandonment of every kind of national or state sovereignty and the disappearance of all exploitation of man by man can produce the conditions necessary to guarantee a permanent state of peace in the world.

The attitude of non-nationalists towards the agitation for national independence resembles that of a doctor who sees an ignorant rustic treating a disease with ridiculously absurd means. If such a doctor is charitable he feels compassion for the patient who is being so dealt with, but he cannot assist in such treatment. He then suggests suitable medicines and is grieved if the attendant will not accept his advice.

The agitation which is carried on by anarchists, communists and socialists for the independence of peoples is, indeed, essentially reactionary, is opposed to that unification of the world which is so desirable, and causes an enormous loss of energy, time, and blood.

It even happens that such a policy operates in favour of one imperialist state as against another; for example: the fight of General Sandino in Nicaragua against the United States of America. In many of the «revolutionary» periodicals throughout the world one read a passionate summons to support the «heroic» fight of the great Nicaraguan patriot against American imperialism. Yet Sandino had no intention whatever of setting up a socialist régime in that part of the world, And even if he had so intended, he would have had no chance of succeeding in that small country. As regards Soviet Russia, which represents one sixth of the land surface of the earth, many eminent revolutionaries entertain doubts even as to the possibility of establishing socialism there. It is well-known that Trotsky, for example, holds the view that it is impossible to establish socialism in one country alone. Furthermore, Sandino's fight against the imperialism of the United States only helped British, or European imperialism⁶.

If one considers the fight of Abd-el-Krim in Morocco against French imperialism, one can make similar observations. And we repeat insistently, everywhere in the world struggles for national independence are **essentially** reactionary. We say «**essentially**» since from tactical considerations,

⁶ To avoid any misunderstanding it must be noted here that, as regards Soviet Russia, the case is quite different. If capitalist states were to attack Russia, the workers there would not be defending any «fatherland», but the Revolution, Socialism. Furthermore it would be the duty of the workers of the 'world to take part in its defence in every possible way. But, to keep back nothing that is in our minds, let us add that if decades should pass without the overthrow of capitalism in other countries, if a socialist economy in Soviet Russia and a capitalist one in other countries could exist side by side — which to us appears to be very doubtful — it seems very likely that a kind of dangerous «patriotism» might arise in Russia.

during a time of revolution, when the movement is seething in any given imperialist country, struggles for independence in the colonies may **temporarily** be useful, in the sense that they weaken the power of the capitalist class in the country concerned. If, for example, revolutionary conditions existed in the United States and a fierce struggle was going on between the capitalist and the working class, it is evident that the activity of a Sandino in Nicaragua, by compelling the United States Government to send troops there, might be of some assistance to the revolutionary movement in the United States themselves. But such conditions were not present at all when the «revolutionary» Press throughout the world agitated in favour of the patriot Sandino.

For that reason we think that such agitation was reactionary not only in essence, but also in fact. We would, indeed, regard it as a step forward on the road of historical evolution, if American imperialism were to construct a canal in Nicaragua in order to link up the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.

Another instance of what is, objectively, a reactionary policy, is that of the Communist International in China. It advised Chinese communists to support the struggle of Kuo-min-tang against European imperialism. And what was the result? The leaders of the Chinese national movement welcomed the assistance of the communists, and afterwards, when they thought that they were strong enough no longer to need their help, they murdered the communists. Thousands and thousands of comrades fell in a national struggle, and to that extent the strength of the workers in the class struggle was reduced.

The real significance of the national struggles in China and India is, that the capitalist class in those countries want to exploit the workers themselves, without the competition of foreign capitalists, with whom they have to share the surplus value.

The interest of the Chinese and Indian workers lies in the class struggle, in organising to that end, and in linking up their activity with that of the workers in the imperialist countries lies in giving support in every way to the fight being waged by their brothers in the colonies, because when the latter agree to work for a lower wage that reacts upon their own wages. That is a fact which nobody denies. The national struggle is essentially reactionary; the class struggle is indubitably revolutionary. The more importunate the exploited workers are in their demands, the more will the exploiters be compelled to organise production better and to install new machines, and so on. And the result of that will be to create conditions which will compel the workers, in their turn, to demand a shorter working day in order to avoid unemployment.

The class struggle, furthermore, makes the exploited recognise the necessity for universal solidarity, whereas the national struggle perpetuates in the masses those patriotic feelings which are a very strong subjective barrier impeding the union of the workers of different countries.

National struggles may have had some justifiable significance many years ago, when autonomous national economic systems existed. That era has passed away. The present problem of the emancipation of the working class is very simple though of vast extent; it is to overthrow the capitalist class, and to organise and direct an economic control of the world. The objective conditions for this are already in existence. What are in the way and obstruct this emancipation are the subjective forces, traditions, different cultures and languages. Those who desire, consciously and purposefully to work for the unification of the world, the non-nationalising of the peoples, must wage a ceaseless, uncompromising fight against all kinds of national superstitions, whether linguistic, or other; it is their concern to support everything which assists in that direction.

Non-nationalists quite consciously dedicate themselves to that task; they refuse to support the opportunist endeavours of those parties whose chief aim is to capture power in one country or

another. In order to accomplish that object, political agitators even **rely** upon the prejudices of the masses. They generally carry on their propaganda by demagogic methods which do not destroy the roots of what must, of necessity, be destroyed, if a non-nationalist society is to be established.

The German Communist Party has recently supplied us with a case in point, during the general election for the Reichstag. Nationalism played a very important part in its programme, which in some respects even resembled that of the national-socialists (the fascists or Hitlerites). That the latter were able to gain great successes, and the communists were also successful in taking away a relatively large number of votes from the Social Democratic Party was chiefly due to the fact that their programme very adroitly exploited the nationalism of the mass of the people. The result is that at the present time in Germany a wave of nationalism is threatening to engulf everything.

A no less noteworthy case may now be observed in Alsace Lorraine, where the communists sometimes join forces with the most reactionary elements, with priests and similar persons.

The agitation for national liberty has even a quite unforeseen result; that of reviving in provinces which have long been assimilated, the desire for separation. One must remember that nations did not always constitute a unit. That unit has been artificially made in the course of history. And the fact that the agitation for national liberty tends to reverse the direction of the wheel of history is the best proof of the reactionary quality of such a policy.

The policy of those parties which advocate the nationalist struggle has also other unlooked for consequences. When conflict occurred in Manchuria between Soviet Russia and China, the consistent supporters of the right to self-determination bitterly reproached Stalin for his «imperialism». Formally their criticism was correct; Stalin did act in a manner inconsistent with his own policy, but we think that he acted rightly in the interests of the Revolution.

For the reasons just mentioned the present political parties cannot carry out an educational task well, nor work effectively for the destruction of those subjective forces which obstruct and retard the historical process⁷, which is, inevitably, leading mankind towards world union through the ceaseless process of evolution and the increasing range of the powers of production.

Non-nationalists therefore declare hardily and quite openly that they are unwilling to take part in any agitation or fight for national freedom. They warn the workers that that can in no way free them.

Recent history teaches us plainly that the national struggle is a delusion and a snare for the workers. If we examine the conditions of life of the workers in the «liberated» countries, such as Czechoslovakia, Esthonia, Finland, Ireland or Poland, we find that they are in no way better than they were before.

The only advantageous fight for the workers is, therefore, the **class struggle**, not the **national** struggle. When the workers have secured a shorter working day and better conditions of labour, then they will actually have taken a step forward towards final emancipation.

But experience shows daily that the class struggle can be successful only if it is organised on a world scale. The existing international method of organising the workers is no longer the most

⁷ It is necessary to point out here that we do not look upon this process as a kind of divinity which consciously directs human affairs. In order that the reader may correctly understand our use of this expression let him compare it with our explanation on pp. 16 and 29.

suitable for bringing the class struggle to victory. Only non-nationalism offers a rational and appropriate system of organisation. Under this system the workers would not be organised nationally and internationally, but universally, according to industries. For example, the mine workers throughout the world would belong to one and the same union, and when that organisation decided on a strike, the decision would hold good for all its members. And when capitalism had been finally overthrown, that union would organise the mining industry according to the needs and requirements of all mankind.

The same reasoning may be applied to all industries. A statistical office would calculate all the wealth of the world, and would determine the amount to which every human being was entitled. The whole of production would be rationalised, and it would be sufficient to work a few hours a day — perhaps 3 or 4 — in order that every man might enjoy prosperity and comfort. In such an economic arrangement of the world there could be no question of national territories which internationalists are so anxious to perpetuate.

Doubtless the whole matter now appears Utopian and will bring a compassionate smile to the lips of presentday revolutionaries. Of course, we do not imagine that non-nationalism will be accepted tomorrow by the classeconscious workers. But Marx and Engels must also have appeared as Utopians when 83 years ago they wrote the **Communist Manifesto**. After all those years the society which they imagined as one that must inevitably be established is not yet in existence. In Soviet Russia they are, indeed, «building socialism», but that proves precisely that even there, it is not yet established. We will not go into the question whether, as a matter of fact, they are building up socialism, or whether the economic system there is tending towards state capitalism with a huge bureaucratic oligarchy. The same monetary system rules in Soviet Russia as in capitalist countries, and there are great differences in salaries. A bricklayer, for example, does not get the same wages as an architect. That statement is not intended as a reproach; we only wish to show that it is permissible to anticipate without the risk of being regarded as a fool, for after a century of propaganda for socialism it is not yet anywhere in existence.

The point of view of non-nationalists does not therefore quite coincide with the present policies of the various workers' Internationals. We even believe that their policies are, in some respects, reactionary, or at least narrowly opportunist.

When Marx and Engels wrote their famous **Communist Manifesto** there was no universal language in existence. But at the present time there is Esperanto. Already some tens of thousands of workers know it, and thousands of them make daily use of it. Already at ten universal congresses some hundreds of workers have been able to discuss their affairs with earnestness and passion, using only this artificial language. And in spite of these evident **facts**, the leaders of the working-class movement ignore this rational means of universal understanding. For that matter, they are acting, consistently. Consciously or otherwise, they feel that the general application of Esperanto in the workers' movement would lead them to a revision of their policy, of their guiding principles. They feel, more or less vaguely that their rôle in the leadership of the masses would be belittled if all workers could understand one another; if congresses could be held without translators and interpreters; if the workers could enter into direct relations throughout the world. As a matter of fact, there has arisen in society a new class of men, the workers' leaders, whose personal interests might be adversely affected, in some degree, by a world language.

Non-nationalists do not hesitate to denounce uncompromisingly such parasitism on the part of leaders. They turn to the rank and file and appeal to the reason of men who are capable of understanding, to urge them to utilise and spread abroad everything that is rational; everything that represents technical progress and helps to destroy the obstacles which impede the advance of the workers. Non-nationalists fight against everything nationalist; against national languages, national

culture, national habits and traditions. For them Esperanto is their principal language and the national languages merely auxiliary. They refuse to participate in any national fight, and recognise only the class struggle as necessary and profitable for the exploited workers, with the object of abolishing classes, national characteristics and all kinds of exploitation. They support everything which helps to annihilate differences between the peoples and which leads towards a rational economic organisation of the earth. They think that everything which mixes and welds the peoples together is good for humanity.

Non-nationalists base their conviction on the accepted fact that reason, which invents and builds, is the only suitable foundation on which a universal culture can be raised. They do not believe, however, that all men will be able in a short time to acquire a mind swayed entirely by reason. They know that feeling is a great force, a very efficacious stimulus; that mythical beliefs have played a very important rôle in History. If men can think of non-nationalism, the unification of the world, only as a new myth, like a «fatherland», that does not matter very much. Conscious non-nationalists, therefore, do not repulse people who are chiefly seized with enthusiasm for a great, a noble ideal. Reason has too often been subordinated to the service of mysticism; in requital let us subordinate mysticism to the service of reason.

But let there be no misunderstanding; we hold the firm conviction that only the exploited class, the workers, can be the historical force, which shall establish a society in which there shall be no nationalities and no exploitation. Not because the workers are essentially different in themselves from the members of other classes, but because their class struggle for emancipation urges them towards union on a world scale, and at the same time compels the exploiters unceasingly to perfect and rationalise the means of production. Where wages are low, where the workers consent to live in miserable conditions, there the bosses have no incentive to install machines and to rationalise production. For this reason, for instance, in Shanghai, which is in importance the third or fourth port in the world, thirty or forty thousand coolies provide the carrying power and there is not a single crane. The «rice-motors» (the coolies living almost exclusively on rice) cost less.

World economy is preparing the soil for a world culture, a culture of which the essential part shall be reason.

That does not mean that men will become all of one pattern. There will, indeed, be created a kind of uniformity in the mental outlook and character of men. National distinctions will pass away, but there will always be individual differences. And men, being able to come into contact with all parts of the world, having several hours free every day and the opportunity of devoting them to personal work and individual culture, one may reasonably suppose that from all this there will emerge strong personalities with original thoughts and feelings, which will find expression in various forms of art capable of being understood and appreciated throughout the entire world.

III

THE POSITION OF NON-NATIONALISTS WITH REGARD TO THE ESPERANTO MOVEMENT

a) With Relation to the Bourgeois Movement

The outstanding characteristic of non-nationalism is its recognition of the very important part that artificiality plays in the world. The ability to make things by art has made man king over all other animals. Man adapts nature to himself while animals must adapt themselves to nature. Consequently non-nationalists do not deny the great force which lies in the human will. They certainly know that

a man cannot free himself of his own weight or fly from his own shadow. Nevertheless the limited space within which man has his activity is relatively wide. His will can therefore accomplish great things. For this reason we believe that the «inevitable laws» of history are only relative.

One of the most beautiful and epoch-making inventions of man is the artificial language. Esperanto is a marvelous instrument the full use of which no man has yet completely made. Even the author himself did not know how to turn all its latent riches to account. Zamenhof was a pioneer. The general application of his work will have incalculable consequences.

Of course, since a language is a tool, it can be utilised for the most diverse purposes. An aeroplane can be used to drop bombs on a town or to supply snowbound outposts. Yet the existence of a large number of airmen, even military ones, is of great importance. In the same way it is in the interests of progress if bourgeois Esperantists become skilful in the use of the language. Non-nationalists are therefore in no way chagrined when they see the bourgeois movement prospering.

But obviously non-nationalists recommend worker Esperantists not to expend their time and money in support of the neutral Esperanto movement, but to devote all their energies to put Esperanto at the service of the working class and in particular to the service of non-nationalism.

b) With Relation to the Worker's Esperanto Movement

The ideas expressed above are not entirely new. They have even been partly applied already for ten years within the framework of **Sennacieca Asocio Tutmonda**. Since that organisation aims at bringing together class-conscious worker Esperantists of all parties, non-nationalists give it their support and in no way desire to compete with it. All that they require in SAT is equal rights with the internationalists. Within this non-party Association of workers, they work for the unity of the Workers' Esperanto Movement, and against all attempts to bring it under the veiled or open control of any party.

Non-nationalists are convinced that the practical application of Esperanto within an organisation such as SAT, the structure of which is non-national, makes it very suitable soil in which to sow the seeds of non-nationalism. They would even oppose, therefore, any attempt to impose their own theory upon SAT officially. The unified organisation of worker Esperantists must be open to all internationalists, so that they may become acquainted with a more rational and logical application of Esperanto in the preparation of the society of the future.

Non-nationalists do not wish to form a closed sect separated from the rest of the working class movement. They want to remain in intimate contact with it, and to participate in its battles, when these are actually class struggles, and, consequently, liberating ones. As long as Esperanto is made use of by only a few tens of thousands — or even hundreds of thousands of people throughout the whole world, non-nationalists have no pretention of forming a party, but only claim to represent a tendency in the working class movement. Consequently they can belong to a party in which it is permissible to discuss and defend the new theory.

Non-nationalists know that there already exists in the Workers' Movement a vague leaning towards non-nationalism. The organisation known as the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) which was founded in the United States, and whose members have suffered much persecution, has in its constitution a premise in favour of non-nationalism. In it reference is made to a universal union, which indicates that in the minds of the founders the conception of nationality was weak. But, of course, since that organization did not concern itself with a solution of the language problem, it is quite natural that this tendency remained only in a state of embryo.

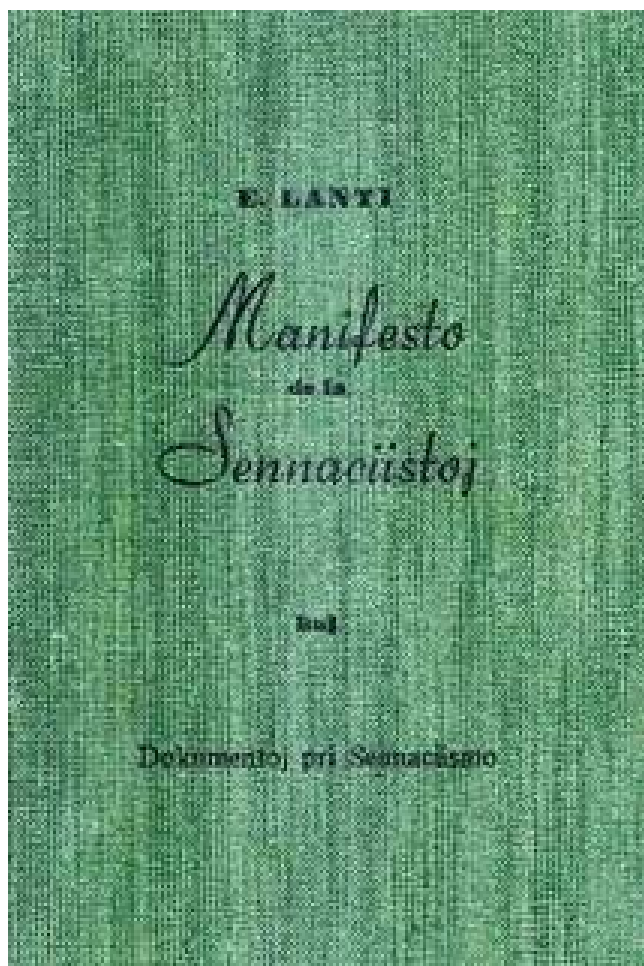
Non-nationalists, therefore, see in the Worker's Esperanto Movement, the most suitable ground for sowing their ideas. They therefore desire its unity, which is a condition of its success.

The non-nationalists call to the workers of the world:

LEARN ESPERANTO! ESPERANTISTS, BECOME NON-NATIONALISTS!

The Non-Nationalist Fraction of Members of Sennacieca Asocio Tutmonda.

Esperanto edition of 1951



Lanti's handwriting

Sed mi ne scias ĉu vi estas nur esp-isto nur
3 AT-ano, ĉe nenio pli Rilata al mi, vi certe scias, ke
mi estas rennaciisto. Nu, se vi bv. ~~rele~~ legi mi
relegi en "La Laborista esp-isto" la 5-an ĉapitron, ĉe pli
la Manifesto de la Rennaciistoj ĉe ĉefe la leterojn 58-an,
59-an ĉe 60-an en "Leteroj de E.L.", vi certe komprenas,
ke via peto pri konto, relate al la forlaso de la esp-a
movado, povas esti ĉe mi nur abreviĝo. Pl. ĉe pli for-
tigas mia konvinko, ke la esp-a afero estas treze grava,
ke ĝi estas stonangula fundamento de la mondo al
al kiu mi aspiras. ĉe kiam mi konstatas, ke ~~la~~ ^(konstruenda) ~~movado~~
ne rapide kreskas, nun mi ne plu estas mirigata. Kio
mirigas min, tio estas, ke ĝi ne mortis. La alprenu ĉe prak-
tikado de mondlingvo estas tia revolucio, ke estas tute
normale, ke la registoj ĉe regaspirantoj ne volas helpi
al tia entreprenu...