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by Tim Wohlforth

Introduction

Today the Trotskyist world movement is in a deep political crisis. Our political tendency has maintained that the cause of this crisis is to be found in Pabloism, a revisionist trend which seeks to turn our cadres away from a revolutionary proletarian outlook. Our analysis of Pabloism can be found in such documents as the SLL resolution "The World Prospects for Socialism," our basic statement issued to the last Plenum "In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective," our current statement on the problems of the world movement "The Rebuilding of the Fourth International" and our document on the American question "The Decline of American Imperialism and the Tasks of the SWP." The purpose of this article is not to duplicate this material but rather to supplement it.

Important as it is to reach an understanding of Pabloism in the past and its evolution to the present juncture, there is another, harder task of even greater importance. We must analyze the basic method of Pabloism as it is applied to the current world reality and put forward an alternative Marxist analysis of these events. Revolutionary Marxism can only survive through its creative application to the new events in a constantly changing reality. To the extent that "orthodoxy" signifies simply the defense of past formulae it is sterile, in itself a form of revisionism. Let us not forget Stalin's "orthodox" battle against Trotsky's permanent revolution. To the extent that "orthodoxy" signifies the creative application of the orthodox Marxist method to a new empirical reality, to that extent we consider ourselves proudly to be orthodox Marxists in the traditions of Lenin and Trotsky.

The primary purpose of this article is thus to defend Trotskyism itself through the application of the Marxist method to that aspect of the "new world reality" which is so central to the theories of the revisionists today - Cuba. We feel this will clearly show that it is the revisionists, the empiricists, the impressionists, who have no real understanding of the very facts of life around them, who are blind to what is really new in the world today. A proper understanding of current developments will lead to a further deepening and strengthening of Marxist theory and the utter repudiation of all forms of revisionism.

The Method of Impressionism - I. Stalinist Expansionism

Impressionism as a method has found a personification in our

world movement in the personage of Michel Pablo. Pabloism derives its name from him not simply because of any post he may have held in the International or any organization influence he may have had. The modern revisionist trend is rightly named after Pablo because it is he who has provided the underlying theoretical framework for a political trend whose constituents have not always expressed clearly nor even been consciously aware of the theoretical implications of the positions they have maintained. Thus, when one wants to get to the very roots, to the essence of Pabloism, it is always necessary to turn to Pablo himself. Therefore we will now turn to an examination of the way in which Pablo reacted to new developments in the postwar world in order to get at the very essence of Pabloite revisionism as a method.

The whole post-war period has been shaped by the temporary stabilization of capitalism, though in a shrinking sector of the world. The defeat of the post World War II revolutionary upsurge was largely due to the counter-revolutionary policies of the Stalinist parties. The proletariat is only now beginning to recover from the effects of this betrayal which was followed by the postwar capitalist boom.

However, capitalism was able to restabilize itself with far greater difficulty than in any preceding period and revolutionary social change was not totally thwarted -- it was rather distorted, deformed. This circumstance has produced two new, highly complicated phenomena which have presented a very serious theoretical and practical challenge to the Marxist movement. The first was the defensive expansionism of the USSR through the process of structural assimilation into the border, buffer areas surrounding the Soviet Union. The second was the upsurge of the colonial revolution in a distorted form under the leadership of petty bourgeois formations, with the peasantry as the main revolutionary factor, and under conditions of the prostration of the national bourgeoisie and the relative quiescence of the proletariat in both the colonial and metropolitan countries. These are the two fundamental distorted revolutionary factors in what should be accurately described as the old "new reality" of the post war years.

The Soviet Union, in the aftermath of World War II, sought to defend itself from capitalist encirclement by a dual policy of seeking a co-existence deal with the capitalists and maintaining its hegemony over a vast buffer area in Eastern Europe and in parts of Asia (North Korea, China). It sacrificed the proletarian revolution in Europe and elsewhere in order to achieve its aim. The result was that as soon as capitalism was able to re-establish its equilibrium (with the help of the USSR) it instituted its cold, and at times hot, war against the USSR. In turn the USSR carried through

the structural assimilation of the whole East European region into the newly formed Soviet Bloc in order to consolidate its control over the buffer. In Asia this process combined in a unique way with the upsurge of the colonial revolution with the end result of the transformation of China also into a deformed workers state. Unable to force Chiang Kai-Shek to accept a coalition government with the CCP, which he hoped would turn all of China into a neutral buffer region on Russia's vast Eastern border, Stalin supported the CCP's leadership of the Chinese revolution to its ultimate victorious conclusion. After consolidation of the Revolution at the bourgeois democratic stage, China was transformed into a deformed workers state by the identical process that took place in Eastern Europe, the process we call structural assimilation.

Li Fu-jen expressed well the essential nature of the Chinese Revolution as a merging of these two processes in an article written in the Fourth International in February 1949:

"Having long since abandoned Lenin's concept of the defense of the Soviet Union through the extension of the socialist revolution, Stalin is replying to the American threat in kind. Between America's Far Eastern bases and the Soviet borders he plans to interpose a Stalinist dominated China. The conjuncture of the Kremlin's strategic plans and the internal dynamics of the Chinese political development furnishes the basic explanation for the current Stalinist policy in China, for the shift from People's Frontism to renewed class struggle." (emphasis in original)

The preservation of this vast buffer as a region independent of imperialist domination soon necessitated, as it did in Eastern Europe, the structural transformation of China in the manner of the transformation of Eastern Europe, but carried out more directly by indigenous Stalinist forces as was also the case earlier with Yugoslavia.

The theory of structural assimilation, first formulated as such by Ernest Germain following World War II, has its origins in Trotsky's analysis of the USSR's expansion into Eastern Poland and temporarily into Finland in the 1939-1940 period (see: In Defense of Marxism). It essentially views the formation of deformed workers states as a result of a process of the extension of the original workers state into new buffer areas. The USSR carried through a process of social overturn from on top primarily by military and bureaucratic means. In this process a combination of direct Soviet intervention with the actions of an indigenous Stalinist bureaucratic strata, which was essentially an extension of the Soviet bureaucracy itself, carried through this transformation. Contrary

to the expectation of our movement in the early postwar period the process of structural assimilation was completed without the eradication of national boundaries and with greater reliance on internal forces than was the case in the 1939-40 events analyzed by Trotsky. The theory, however, is based on this pioneer work of Trotsky's much as Trotsky's own theory of the permanent revolution is based on Marx's analysis of the German Revolution of 1848 and its aftermath. Stalin, in his own crude empirical way, summed up the essentials of this theory in his remarks to Djilas at the closing of the war showing that he had learned something from his own experiences in Eastern Poland, Finland, and later the Baltic states: "This war is not as in the past; whoever occupies a territory also imposes on it his own social system. Everyone imposes his own social system as far as his army can reach. It cannot be otherwise." (Conversations with Stalin, p. 114) We need only add that events were to show that this is as true of the armies of the agents of the Soviet bureaucracy in buffer regions as it is of the Soviet army itself.

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Thus the expansion of Stalinism in the postwar period was essentially a defensive transformation from on top of a large buffer area surrounding the USSR carried out by both bureaucratic and military means through a combination of direct USSR intervention and the internal action of bureaucratic Stalinist parties in the respective countries. When contrasted to the internationalist process of conscious proletarian revolution, which structural assimilation was worked out as a substitute for, this process must be seen as a conservative, reactionary method of defending the USSR. The expansion of Stalinism in the immediate postwar period neither proved an effective defense of the USSR, which is as threatened by capitalist encirclement now as at any other time in postwar history, nor has it provided the Stalinist bureaucracy with any real stability, as witness the Polish and Hungarian events.

Reacting in an impressionistic manner to the defensive expansionism of Stalinism in this period Pablo evolved his famous theory of "centuries of deformed workers states." He saw this process of deformation as a necessary stage for the revolution to pass through for a whole long epoch, for centuries. The revolutionary movement itself, that is the conscious proletariat, would have no role in history while the revolution was pushed forward in a deformed manner by the Stalinist type forces.

The most fundamental of all Marxist concepts -- the necessity for the proletariat under conscious Marxist leadership to seize power and rule in its own name through democratic forms -- was tossed out as meaningless for an epoch, to be a "norm" to be honored only in its breach. Many, many of our precious but small world cadres,

seeing no role for our party in Pablo's thesis, drew the logical conclusion and left the movement in this period. Thus the organizational disintegration of our forces in that period was not only a response to unfavorable objective conditions -- it was also, in part, caused by Pablo's liquidationist theory.

Events were soon to show that Pablo had no real understanding of these very important new events in the buffer regions. It turned out that what he saw as the beginning of a process which would dominate a whole epoch turned out to be the end of a process which had pretty much reached its outer limits at the very moment when Pablo was formulating his "new thoughts". Not only did the victory of the Chinese Revolution mark the reaching of the general outer limits of defensive expansionism but soon within the Stalinist monolith the beginnings of the political revolution itself were to manifest themselves in the East German Uprising, the great Vorkuta strikes in the heart of the USSR, the Polish Revolution, the Hungarian Revolution. Stalinism thus showed itself to be a transitory phenomenon already in deep crisis, and counterrevolutionary to the core.

So the first important period of Pabloite revisionism came to a close as the actions of the East German and Hungarian workers routed the impressionists of the International Secretariat, and the limitation of the deformed workers states to the buffer vindicated the theory of structural assimilation. Those who cannot tell the head of a horse from the tail should steer clear of horseback riding altogether. But, as we shall see, Michel Pablo, unruffled by his former failures, is once again sitting on his horse backwards and yelling "Giddy-yap". This time the party majority is trying out the same school of horsemanship.

The Method of Impressionism -- II. Colonial Upsurge

It is not quite accurate to look upon the upsurge of the colonial revolution as a purely post World War II phenomenon. The main features of this "new reality" can be noted in the evolution of the Mexican Revolution in the pre-war period and even earlier. The Mexican Revolution was one of the first and one of the greatest revolutionary developments in a backward country where the peasantry played a very vital, central and progressive role and where proletarian leadership of the peasantry was never really established. That the Mexican peasantry proved incapable of completing its revolution without proletarian leadership was a confirmation of the central thesis of our theory of permanent revolution. The challenge of postwar developments is whether or not this thesis still holds. If we find that the thesis is incorrect it is our responsibility as Marxists to say so and to thoroughly and openly modify the whole

theory of the permanent revolution accordingly.

Perhaps it is best to state this central thesis at the very beginning so that we fully understand the magnitude of the problem. Trotsky summarizes it as follows:

"With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their task of achieving democracy and national emancipation is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all its peasant masses... Without an alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry the tasks of the democratic revolution cannot be solved, nor even seriously posed... No matter what the first episodic stages of the revolution may be in the individual countries, the realization of the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry is conceivable only under the political leadership of the proletarian vanguard, organized in the Communist Party." (The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects by Leon Trotsky, New Park Publications, 1962, pp. 152-153.)

Thus the very central core of the theory of the permanent revolution is the concept of the necessity of proletarian leadership of the colonial revolution because of the incapacity of the peasantry to carry through the revolution on its own.

The postwar period has seen a number of distorted revolutionary processes in the colonial sector which, as a rule, have not even led to the completion of the democratic revolution in those countries, not to mention the passing over into a socialist revolution. Certainly this is the case with India, Indonesia, Egypt, Bolivia, Guinea, Ghana, Iraq, etc., etc. A number of new nations have been formed but these have revealed themselves to be basically subservient to imperialism despite their "neutralist" veneer and they have not made any serious progress towards the solution of the problems of the democratic revolution.

But there are what appear to be exceptions to this rule. These exceptions must be examined in order to see if the rule, that is the concept of the necessity for conscious proletarian

leadership of the colonial upsurge, still holds, or if the exception on the other hand points to a whole new pattern of development for the future.

One large "exception" is, of course, China, with the concomitant developments in North Korea and North Vietnam. China, as we have pointed out, is a very particular phenomenon. The revolutionary peasantry, under the leadership of the predominantly petty bourgeois Communist Party, was able to defeat Chiang Kai-Shek and establish a transitional but still essentially capitalist state. Its transformation into a deformed workers state, which partially solved the problems of the democratic revolution (while creating new "problems" for the proletariat to solve through political revolution), took place through the same manner as the transformation of Eastern Europe -- that is through a process of structural assimilation of a buffer region adjacent to the USSR.

In order for China to be shown to be more than an "exception", that is to be a pattern to be followed in sections of the world that are not buffer regions of the USSR, it must be shown that a workers state can be created in another area of the world and by another method than the method of structural assimilation or Lenin's and Trotsky's method of conscious proletarian revolution. This is the extreme theoretical challenge of the Cuban revolution. In this sense Cuba is really an "acid test".

Pablo has his own theoretical answer to these developments and it is of the same fundamental character as his theory of "centuries of deformed workers states." Once again he responds superficially and impressionistically to the appearance of current reality and then projects this appearance as the pattern for all future developments in the next general period.

He sees the temporary stabilization of capitalism in the postwar period as something of greater permanency, as in fact a "new organic expansion" as he stated in a memorandum on the economic text presented to the Sixth World Congress of the IS. More recently, in a critically important article "Colonials and 'Europeans'" (Fourth International, May-July, 1962), he expands on this concept. "The post war world is essentially quite different from former Marxist analysis and understanding" and we must "explain more particularly the profound reasons which determine the present economic conjuncture of capitalism and its long term tendencies", because "...the capitalism of the advanced countries has experienced a consolidation and economic expansion..."

What follows from this outlook? "For all these classic writers of Revolutionary Marxism (Marx, Engels, Luxemburg, Lenin, Trotsky), the main arena of this revolution...was Europe, bastion of the revolutionary proletariat and of advanced industrial capitalism..." "The practical importance of the European Revolution as an immediate perspective of the World Socialist Revolution remained predominant until the second world war," Pablo goes on to note. The postwar world is different, and now, Pablo states, it is the colonial revolution which is the center of the revolutionary struggle. With no hope of any struggle internally within the advanced capitalist countries, Pablo, like so many other "New Left" intellectuals, sees rather a sort of clash between the underdeveloped sector and the overdeveloped sector of capitalism as the basic contradiction within the system as a whole.

Pablo begins, as the party majority does, with the assumption that Cuba is a workers state. He then projects, as the party majority also does, "The Cuban Way" as a pattern for the creation of workers states in the colonial areas for the whole next period. Flowing from this outlook, of course, he wishes to orient the whole international around this task with the European sections playing essentially a subordinate role as supporters and helpers of the revolutionary forces in the colonial sector. In part, his differences within the IS with Germain-Frank-Livio flow from this outlook.

But Pablo does something which the party majority has yet to do -- he spells out clearly what exactly the "Cuban Way" is. Pablo first dispenses with the proletariat in the colonial countries. He quotes Fanon, of whose book his article is ostensibly a review, as saying that the colonial proletariat is a "protected", "privileged" stratum which "constitute the 'bourgeois' fraction of the colonized people." Then Pablo himself states: "The analysis which Fanon makes of the role of the urban proletariat can appear exaggerated to a European Marxist; however with qualifications it 'fits' well enough those countries with a weak industrial development."

With the proletariat, the very driving force of the permanent revolution, neatly out of the way, Pablo then presents his new thesis: "Thus the outbreak of the revolution in a number of countries of colonial and semi-colonial structure can be visualized by the union of a jacobin leadership sui generis, like the July 26 Movement or the Algerian leadership or the Angolan revolutionaries, with the masses impatient enough to be disposed to the direct armed action of the revolutionary peasantry." And Pablo continues: "What is new

for Revolutionary Marxism in relation to this experience is this: that we pass from the appreciation of the revolutionary role of the peasantry and the necessity of the workers and peasants alliance to the understanding of the possibility of beginning and carrying through for a whole period, the Revolution in a number of colonial and semi-colonial countries by the armed struggle of the revolutionary peasantry." (emphasis mine). The "demoralized" urban proletariat will be "reactivated" at a later date after the peasantry has carried through the revolution "for a whole period." What is our role in this whole process? We can "do as much or more." Since the proletariat has already been written off as "bourgeois," this simply means that Trotskyists as radical intellectuals can play the same role as these other sui generis jacobins if only we are in the right place at the right time. Pablo's personal solution: he now has a position in one of the ministries of the Algerian government.

What is involved here is something fundamentally new, a basic revision of the most essential point in our theory of the permanent revolution -- the ROLE OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE COLONIAL COUNTRIES AS THE LEADER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE AND THE ROLE OF OUR PARTY AS THE LEADER OF THE PROLETARIAT. This is but a restatement, in terms of the colonial revolution, of the basic revision of Marxism which Pablo deduced from Stalinist defensive expansionism in the previous period -- that is a repudiation of the necessity for the proletariat under conscious Marxist leadership to seize power and rule in its own name through democratic forms. That Pablo's present theory is not applicable for advanced countries is not much of a consolation as he sees no revolutionary role for any class there!

Pablo carries through this revision quite consciously and openly. As quoted above he states we "pass from" the theory of the permanent revolution as we have known it, "the necessity of the workers and peasants alliance," over "to" a new theory which places the peasantry, under jacobin leadership, into the vanguard spot. Also Pablo sees the peasantry playing this role "for a whole period" and in "a number of colonial and semi-colonial countries" while on the other hand in the advanced capitalist countries all he sees is the "organic expansion" of capitalism. Just as in 1949 he saw the whole next period dominated by bureaucratically led deformed workers states with no revolutionary role for our forces (unless, of course, we become a part of these bureaucracies, the real meaning of "entrism sui generis"), so today he sees the whole next period dominated by jacobin-led peasant uprisings in the colonial area producing workers states sui generis, and again there is no revolutionary role for our forces (unless, of course, we too

become jacobins.)

Ah, but we are told that Pabloism has changed. Yes, Pablo has picked a new horse but he rides it in the same manner. As we shall see he does not even know what direction this horse is headed. And most important of all the one horse he never chooses to ride is the working class. We expect he rightly fears it would throw him.

On a Half Theory of the State

We must turn briefly to the party majority's theory of the nature of the Cuban state because, as we shall see, it is intimately linked with Pablo's new revisionist theory and cannot be logically separated from it.

Joe Hansen states time and time again in his lengthy "Cuba - the Acid Test" that the party majority is simply utilizing the criteria for determining workers states developed in 1948 and applying it to Cuba today. This is a terrible oversimplification of what actually transpired in the highly important buffer state discussion held in our movement at that time. The whole truth is that the party majority today is utilizing a method for determining workers states rejected by the party majority at the February, 1950 Plenum over the objections of Pablo, Cochran and Hansen at the time. Hansen is thus confusing his own personal political history with that of the party. The two have not always been identical.

It was Michel Pablo who first introduced into our international movement the now famous method of determining workers states by the simple procedure of finding out whether the basic industry is nationalized, the economy is under the direction of a planning commission, and there is a state monopoly of foreign trade. From the very beginning Pablo met strong resistance to this method of determining workers states from Germain and also from the majority of our party's national committee. Some of the best comments on the essential method involved in Pablo's approach were made by the late John G. Wright and by Comrade Stein for the National Committee. It is necessary to quote rather extensively from these comrades so that one can get an impression of their method, of the way in which they sought to approach this question of "criteria". Comrade Wright writes, in an attack on Cochran:

"This sociological approach amounts to the following: we set down two parallel columns and in one column we jot down the outstanding characteristics of the Soviet Union as it is today, in

1950; and in this connection we may, if we so desire, take note of its historical origin in what Comrade E.R. Frank labels as the revolution of a 'Classic Type.'

"In an adjoining column we set down all the buffer states, including Yugoslavia and see what similarities can be found with the USSR under Stalin -- this time without paying any regard whatever to the historical origin of what happened in each of these countries, ignoring who carried out certain measures, why and under what circumstances, ignoring just how they were carried out, who benefitted thereby and so on.

"And at the end, without weighing any of these diverse factors or evaluating them from the class standpoint and ignoring all the dissimilarities -- especially that of origin -- you conclude that all these similarities constitute an identity. And therefore, in Eastern Europe what you have are revolutions of a 'new and special type.' What has this in common with our dialectical method? Very little.

"...We are told that we are poor Marxists unless we apply a sociological method with unmistakable academic whiskers on it. It happens to be the formalistic method of comparative sociology which lays stress on dazzling similarities or 'common formulas,' regardless of time and place, class and origin.

"...Up to now our Trotskyist school of thought has rejected as false the notion of approaching economic factors, singly or collectively, as if they led an independent existence; as if they could be weighed and evaluated at any time and any circumstances, separate and apart from their class roots and class content, independently of the methods of economic leadership and finally -- what is most important! -- independently of the political program and leadership involved. Yet all this appears to fall away in the thinking and argumentation of the 'workers-statists.' We are presented with bare facts and statistics of nationalizations. The course of events leading up to them, the entire Kremlin policy with all its twists and turns from Potsdam to 1950, not to mention the wartime policies, evaporate into thin air. All this seems to be without apparent importance compared to the decisive 'reality' of nationalizations. Assuredly, this bears little resemblance to our method of thinking.

"Thus far in the discussion there has been considerable reference to the 1930-40 dispute with the petty-bourgeois opposition inside the SWP. This is only to be welcomed. But from the standpoint of method the following must be borne in mind.

"In evaluating the class nature of the USSR, our opponents of 1939-40 denied completely the role of the economic foundation. The polemic, of necessity, stressed this aspect; the subjective factors, their role and importance, appeared to fall into a subordinate position. But, in reality, that was not at all the case. Because all of us, and in the first instance Trotsky, never dealt with Soviet nationalized economy 'as such', but invariably stressed its origins in the proletarian revolution and its subsequent evolution. We took into account all the changes introduced by the Kremlin and concluded that the qualitative stage of reversion to capitalism had not yet occurred in their remaining conquests of October." ("The Importance of Method in the Discussion on the Kremlin-Dominated Buffer Zone", Discussion Bulletin, No. 2, April, 1950. Emphasis mine.)

Comrade Wright then goes on to discuss "objectivism" as an alien method to Marxism tracing its origins to the position of Preobrazensky and Radek in the disputes within the Left Opposition in the 1920s. His analysis is identical with the analysis we have made in our "In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective" and which the British have made in their writings on the basic method of the majority and the Pabloites. Comrade Stein, in a report devoted largely to a polemic directed against Hansen adds some interesting comments of his own:

"It seems to me that it is Comrade Hansen and not Germain who needs enlightenment...on the difference between a workers state arising from a proletarian revolution and this process of structural assimilation, or incorporation of countries which the Stalinist bureaucracy is now trying to carry through as a substitute for proletarian revolution...The minority will be wasting its shots if it continues to fire away at planning as a criterion for a workers state; or at dependence on the world market; or at the capitalist nature of agriculture in the buffer countries, and so on. We readily grant all these points and even go a step further and say that the immediate nationalization is not necessarily a criterion for a workers state either -- provided the regime in the country is that of workers' power arising from a proletarian revolution." ("The Class Nature of the Buffer Countries in Eastern Europe", Discussion Bulletin, No. 3, June, 1950. Emphasis mine.)

Thus we see Pablo's new method of determining workers states was repudiated by our party when it first appeared within our international movement because it was a false, non-dialectical method. In reality it was no theory of the state at all -- it was a half theory of the state, and interestingly the second half. As the comrades at the time noted, a real Marxist theory of the class nature of the state must begin with an analysis of the process which produced the resultant institutions existing in the state, like nationalized industry, state planning, etc. Obviously the nationalization of the coal industry by agents of the bourgeoisie in England is not the same thing as nationalization of the coal industry in Russia by agents of the revolutionary proletariat -- and the difference is more than quantitative.

The theory of structural assimilation explained a process of the creation of deformed workers states through the extension of the degenerated workers state. That is it answered the question of origins without in any sense undermining the revolutionary role of the proletariat. This is especially the case if one realizes that the theory of structural assimilation sees this transformation taking place only in the buffer regions surrounding the USSR, and as the result of defensive steps taken by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Pablo in reality had a rounded theory of the creation of workers states which also accounted for the question of origins. His theory of "centuries of deformed workers states" was logically and intimately connected with his theory of the state as a whole. He saw deformed workers states being created as a general, universal phenomenon, as a new stage for all proletarian revolutions for centuries. The price of centrist, petty-bourgeois leadership of revolutionary struggle was no longer failure to seize power; now it was a certain deformation of the state following the seizure of power. The conscious proletariat, then, would not be able to rule in its own name for an epoch. That this theory of Pablo's is still with us is testified to by Hansen's article "Cuba -- the Acid Test". In it he simply restates this thesis as follows: "Experience has demonstrated that forces which are socialist-minded but not Bolshevik can come to power and undertake a series of measures that in certain circumstances go so far as to transcend private capitalism, providing the base for a workers state. Such a state, however, testifies to its specific origins by deviating from the Leninist norms." But the need for revolutionary parties has not been eliminated. They are found to be necessary years after the founding of the workers state (for what purpose, Hansen does not enlighten us).

This theory was so repugnant to our movement when it was

first introduced that, in order to get it adopted, Pablo put forward the second half of his theory first and independent of the first half -- that is his so-called "three criteria." This combined his political revisions in his "centuries" theory with a methodological revision which has confused our cadres ever since. Hansen's "Cuba -- The Acid Test" is in reality nothing more than a 52 page compounding of this basic methodological error -- it has no other content.

So today we face the same sort of situation. Pablo, and his supporters in our party, (above all, Comrade Hansen once again) are once again putting forward the second half of their theory and demanding that one and all "label" the Cuban state by means of their "three criteria" first and discuss all other questions later. Well, we simply reject this method completely and refuse to recognize such a position as a theory at all.

The real theory of the Pabloites today has been formulated by Pablo in his previously referred to article on "Colonials and 'Europeans.'" These comrades now view it as possible for a non-proletarian class, the peasantry, under non-proletarian leadership, petty-bourgeois jacobins, to create a proletarian state. The absolute necessity for a revolutionary socialist party is then "confirmed" because this petty bourgeois leadership sees the need for such a party -- two years after the workers state has been created (and the party hasn't been formally set up to this date)! This must be their theory or else they will have to distort the facts of the actual evolution of Cuba. (We certainly don't want to see people distorting facts to fit preconceived theories, now, do we?) It is natural that these comrades would proceed to present their theory in this fashion for, looking at the theory as a whole, it simply falls of its own weight as an absurdity. At least the "centuries" theory had a little logic to it -- this theory defies all logic -- formal and dialectical! That the party majority is beginning to see the necessary connection between its "three criteria" and Pablo's new theory of origins can be seen by reading the recent PC Statement For Early Reunification of the Fourth International. Point 13 restates Pablo's new thesis quite clearly:

Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial or semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the second world war. It

must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries.

There is no mention at all in this basic statement of view, upon which the majority hopes to reunite the International, of the role of the proletariat itself in the colonial sector!

It is not our contention that we must deny that Cuba is a workers state simply because if it is then we must fundamentally revise the very essentials of the theory of the permanent revolution. If this is the reality then we must openly and consciously carry through the revision. But we cannot tolerate the throwing out of the theory of the permanent revolution on the basis of a superficial and simplistic impression of reality. Yes, we must turn to the facts but they must be the real facts and we must go into them deeply and with a Marxist method.

Cuba: An Acid Test

Cuba is of course an "acid test" of the correctness of our fundamental theory of the permanent revolution and this is its essential theoretical importance. We will not try to trace Cuban developments in any detail as this has been done at great length by numbers of persons holding diverse theories of Cuba. The basic outline of facts is well known. The problem is to put them into order, to understand them.

We intend to go beyond the simplistic level of the majority's "three criteria" and attempt to seriously analyze the actual revolutionary process that has been going on in Cuba. These events are highly contradictory and complex and our theory must seek to take all these contradictory elements fully into account. The result will not be a simple theory, nor a neat, pat one and many may therefore find it disturbing, unacceptable. It will, in our opinion, get pretty close to an understanding of reality and that is what we are striving for.

If Cuba is today a workers state then our theory must explain the process by which the working class has achieved an essential dominance over the state. If this cannot be done then we must seek to determine what other class the state directly or indirectly represents. This is not a simple task for Trotsky has shown us in his analysis of the USSR that working class power can be preserved in the property forms thrown up by the October revolution even when the working class no longer directly controls the state apparatus. Our postwar analysis also shows how workers power, once established in the USSR, can be extended into other areas which

fall under the dominance of the USSR or its agents through a very complicated process we have called structural assimilation. If the working class has achieved dominance over the Cuban state in some third way this also will have to be shown through an understanding of the process of the Cuban revolution and its theoretical implications for Marxism. But for this third way to be accepted as a theory we must be told something more than that the basic industry in Cuba is nationalized. We must be shown how this nationalized property came under the dominance of the proletariat.

The early evolution of the Cuban Revolution is easily understood and the basic facts are readily available to all. The Cuban Revolution was led by a petty-bourgeois stratum which based itself on the peasantry (1) and which limited itself to democratic demands. The new regime inherited a weakened, largely decomposed capitalist state, 700,000 unemployed, and what can only be called an economy in the throes of a deep depression. The first period of the revolution was marked by a coalition government with the traditional parties of the national bourgeoisie. Certainly, therefore in its first period the Cuban Revolution kept well within the bounds of capitalism and the state which existed in this first period must be considered a capitalist state though seriously weakened, eroded. (The destruction of the old Batista army was perhaps a more significant factor in this erosion than the partial collapse of the actual state apparatus.)

William Appleman Williams, in his very thought-provoking book The United States, Cuba and Castro (Monthly Review Press, 1962) places the turning point of the Cuban Revolution very early within the first six months of its existence. After coming to power, as we have noted, the Cuban revolutionaries

(1) Since the "Theses" passed at the last Convention tended rather to see the 26th of July movement as based primarily on the rural proletariat it is best to clear up this point once and for all by referring to Che Guevara himself ("Cuba: Exceptional Case"? July, August, 1961, Monthly Review). "Those who claim to see in the insurrectional period of our struggle the effects of proletarianization of the countryside should remember that, however greatly this proletarianization of the countryside served later to accelerate the stage of forming cooperatives following the take-over of power and the Agrarian Reform, in the first fighting stage the campesino, center and marrow of the Rebel Army, was the same person that today is back in the Sierra Maestra, the proud owner of his plot and intensely individualist." With this understanding Che Guevara looks precisely to the peasantry and not the rural proletariat as the revolutionary driving force in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

inherited a weakened, largely decomposed capitalist state, 700,000 unemployed, and what can only be called an economy in the throes of a deep depression. Under such conditions Castro, like many a revolutionary leader before him, came to the U. S. and requested economic aid. The U. S. answered in the same manner it always answered such requests, in the manner it still answers such requests. Yes, we will give you the economic aid you request if you carry through the appropriate steps to stabilize your economy -- that is to stabilize it on a capitalist basis. However, Castro explained to the U. S. that if he tried to stabilize the economy that way he would have to sell out the aims of the revolution which is a kind of dangerous thing to do with 700,000 unemployed and many of them armed to boot. The decision of the State Department, according to Edwin Kenworthy of the New York Times, was to let Castro "go through the wringer." The net result would be, the State Department felt, that Castro would change his mind on stabilization or be forced out of power and the U. S. would have a more amenable government to work with. Well, it didn't quite work out that way.

It was this decisive breakdown in relations between the U. S. and Castro which laid the basis for the future developments. Left to his own resources and under tremendous pressure of the masses Castro moved to the left, adopted the radical land reform law, broke with the coalition regime. These actions in turn were followed by the U. S. withdrawal of the sugar quota, which in turn led to the reprisal of wholesale nationalizations, etc. These developments, in the absence of a general revolutionary upsurge and a conscious internationalist policy, would have undoubtedly led to the collapse of the Castro regime as the U. S. State Department had expected, if it were not for the entering of a new factor in the picture, the USSR.

Thus Cuba entered into its second major stage, a profound radical stage in which the national bourgeoisie was largely expropriated and in which Cuba swung out of the capitalist economic orbit into close relations with the Soviet Bloc. Was this radical swing accompanied by a social process whereby the working class gained dominance over the state? It is clear to all, but the most impressionistic, that this did not occur in any direct sense. The working class gained considerably in influence in this period. This influence was expressed on a local level in the factories, in the militias, in the local defense committees that were set up. Further the Castro government was responsive to the working class, relied in part upon the support of the working class in this difficult period of direct conflict with world imperialism and its domestic agents. In that sense the working class had influence in the

Cuban government. However it did not control the state apparatus. The state apparatus remained in the hands of the more radical section of the petty bourgeois strata which made up the government upon the coming to power of the Castro regime in 1959. There was no change in the class composition of the government nor were any forms instituted whereby the working class could control this government directly, and certainly there was no breaking up in the Leninist sense of the state apparatus which had administered the capitalist state during the first period of the revolution. Thus we must rule out direct rule by the working class as being part of the social process which took place during this second, radical stage of the Cuban Revolution.

But this, as we have noted earlier, is not the end of the question. We now must see if the Cuban state, during this second, radical stage, came under the dominance of the proletariat in the manner of the buffer areas in the postwar period, through a process of structural assimilation.

The situation in Cuba by late 1961 and early 1962 had reached a point where it appeared as if the country was going through the same structural assimilationist process as did Eastern Europe and China. Nationalizations had been carried through, the national bourgeoisie was pretty much routed from the country, economic ties with the Soviet bloc were extremely close, and in addition Stalinism seemed to be on the march throughout Cuba. It seemed as if it would be only a short time before the completion of a formation of a Stalinist type party and the subordination of the state apparatus to this party would be evident. Some minority comrades, reacting to this appearance of reality, declared Cuba to be a deformed workers state at that time.

The Escalante Affair was soon to show that this was a superficial analysis of the processes going on in Cuba. This was not only because the Stalinists failed to consummate their control of the Cuban state apparatus but also because of a misunderstanding as to the political role of Stalinism within Cuba. It is a great mistake to identify Stalinist influence within a state as automatically meaning the structural assimilation of that state. While this turned out to be the case in Eastern Europe and China the role of Stalinism in Spain was quite different. There, in the latter days of the Spanish Republic, the Stalinists gained considerable control over the state apparatus -- especially its repressive arms. The Stalinists utilized this control to facilitate the international interests of the Kremlin which in that period had not the slightest interest in the structural assimilation of Spain. Rather it utilized its control of the Spanish state to facilitate the

the crushing of the Spanish Revolution as it frantically sought alliances with first one bloc of capitalist countries and then another.

An understanding of the role of the PSP within Cuba from the first days of the Revolution makes it crystal clear that the role of Stalinism in Cuba was like its role in Spain, not its role in East Europe or China. From the very beginning the Stalinists have tailed Castro in every progressive step he has taken and they have utilized their influence to hold back revolutionary developments. They opposed nationalizations at first favoring them only after the fact; they favored the most conservative approach towards land reform; they have been the most adamant in opposition to any attempt to extend the Cuban Revolution into Latin America. Thus their record makes it perfectly clear that they would have utilized control of the Cuban state apparatus to facilitate counterrevolution, not structural transformation of Cuban society.

Any serious study of Castro's speech on "Bureaucracy and Sectarianism" reveals that the struggle in the Spring of 1962 was not a struggle against the individual, Escalante, nor a struggle against a "faction" of the PSP but rather a struggle against the PSP itself. This is the way Castro himself describes the situation: "We speak here of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations. It was an organization composed of the militants of the Partido Socialista Popular...Then how were the nuclei (units of the Integrated Revolutionary Organization (ORI) formed? I'm going to tell you how. In every province the general secretary of the PSP was made general secretary of the ORI; in all the nuclei the general secretary of the PSP was made the general secretary of the ORI; in every municipality, the general secretary of the PSP was made the general secretary of the ORI; in every nucleus the general secretary -- the member of the PSP -- was made general secretary of the nucleus. Is that what you would call integration? Companero Anibal Escalante is responsible for that policy." We have no doubt that he was one of those responsible for that policy but a process whereby all throughout the whole island the PSP becomes in effect the ORI -- such a policy could not be that of a small "group" -- it could only be that of a whole party. The decision to blame Escalante for it rather than the whole PSP, which is closely identified with the USSR, was obviously done as a facesaving gesture to the Kremlin upon whom the economy of Cuba is largely dependent.

It was the attempt of the PSP to seek to control the state apparatus which led to Castro's move against them. He states: "In Cuba, as a result of this chaos, of this irregularity, of this monstrosity, no minister, no official, no administrator

had power. He had to go to the nucleus to discuss it." Castro however insisted on the independence of the state apparatus from control by the Stalinists or by the masses. He states: "Today an official must have authority. A minister must have authority, an administrator must have authority. He must be able to discuss whatever is necessary with the Technical Advisory Council. He must be able to discuss with the masses of workers; with the nucleus. But the administrator must decide; the responsibility must be his." (Emphasis mine).

Thus we see that the process which has been going on in Cuba differs radically from the process which transformed the buffer areas into deformed workers states. The erosion of the former capitalist state apparatus, the destruction of the internal power of the national bourgeoisie, the swing from the international capitalist orbit -- all these events had occurred in Cuba just as they have occurred in the buffer areas. But the consummation of this process through the creation of a monolithic Stalinist party and the fusion of this party with the state apparatus has not taken place nor is it likely to take place in the near future. Thus Cuba is more like these states before the structural process was completed -- that is like Eastern Europe between 1947-1949 and China between 1949 and 1953.

Has the Cuban state been transformed into a workers state by some third, new process? This is not to be excluded but the process must be shown, must be described. It is not enough to reach an a priori conclusion that Cuba is a workers state because it looks like one and then simply assert that it has become a workers state in its own, unique way. That way must be described, explained.

We cannot accept as a Marxist theory that Cuba has become a workers state because its petty bourgeois leadership accedes to the mass pressure of the working class. Obviously the Castro regime accedes to other pressures as well. Vitale reports that some 70% of agriculture is in private hands and since acreage holdings can be as high as 1,000 acres some of this land is held by some pretty sizable "middle farmers." Certainly the regime is under pressure from this quarter. While the Escalante Affair shows the ability of Castro to move against the Stalinists, this struggle was partially compromised. Castro today remains partially independent of the Kremlin but the Kremlin also exerts pressure on Castro through the complete dependence of the Cuban economy on the USSR. Castro partially "accedes" to this pressure as well. Castro does not represent the rule of Stalinism in Cuba, nor does he represent the rule of the peasantry, nor we are sad to say, does he represent the rule of the working class. The state apparatus remains indep-

endent of the direct control of any of these three major social forces in Cuba today and under the indirect influence of all three forces. In fact, the Castro regime plays an essentially bonapartist role balancing between these forces and their international allies seeking all the time to maintain its independence from them all. It is capable of doing this primarily because of the lack of independent class consciousness of the proletariat in Cuba. A conscious proletariat speaking out in its own name through its own representatives would have a deep polarizing effect on Cuban politics and the regime would no longer be capable of balancing one social force off against the other as it presently does.

What then is the class character of the Cuban state? We can perhaps get an indication of how we should methodologically approach an answer to this question by referring once again to Trotsky's pioneering work on the USSR. Trotsky did not develop his theory of the Russian state by simply seeking to understand how the USSR looked at the moment. He readily granted that it looked as if it were a new class society. It was Shachtman who built his whole theory around this false empirical method. Trotsky sought to understand the Soviet state in evolution. He noted that this state was created by the working class in the greatest revolution of all times. He further noted that, isolated in a capitalist sea, the state had been subjected to a deep going counterrevolutionary process of degeneration. He then asked if this degenerative process had reached the point where it had destroyed all the conquests of October and he had to answer no. Thus it must be a degenerated workers state.

We will approach the process going on in Cuba in the same method noting of course that here we are studying a revolutionary rather than a counterrevolutionary process. Thus the movement of the process is in an opposite direction though its motion must be understood with a common Marxist method. The Cuban Revolution had in its first stage a capitalist state apparatus, weakened, yes, but still capitalist. All agree to this. This state apparatus has under-gone a deep process of erosion under the impact of profound revolutionary developments. So profound has this process been that Cuba today certainly looks as if it were a workers state. But, has the Cuban state been changed qualitatively during this period? No, our study reveals profound social and political changes but no qualitative change either by the method of the transformations of the buffer nor by the method of October itself. Thus we must characterize this state as a decomposed, partially eroded capitalist state susceptible to the pressure of the working class as well as other social forces but not under the control directly or indirectly of the working class. (Or as the French have characterized it "un etat bourgeois, delabre,

decompose, fantomatique"). By the way of analogy we would say the Cuban state has the same essential class character as the Eastern European states between 1947-49 and the Chinese state between 1949-52. Those who consider such a designation as "revisionist" or absurd had better first tell us how they would characterize the East European and Chinese states during the period in which they were being transformed into deformed workers states.

Cuba and the World:

In the previous section we have concentrated primarily on an analysis of the internal dynamics of the Cuban Revolution. However, these dynamics are very closely connected with important international forces and to a great extent the very future of the Cuban Revolution is in the hands of forces outside of Cuba.

This can be clearly seen if we refer once again to that critical turning point in the history of the Cuban Revolution when it moved from its first stage of coalition government into its second deeply radical stage. It was precisely the interrelation between the internal dynamic of the Cuban Revolution and the two major world powers, the United States and the USSR, which played the critical part in this turn. As we have noted Castro felt that if he accepted the terms offered by the United States for financial aid in the middle of 1959 it would mean he would have to turn his back on the Revolution he was leading and come into conflict with the aspirations of the masses. He refused to take this course and by so doing illustrated his most positive side, his deep revolutionary convictions and integrity. But this turn towards the masses would not have been enough to save the Revolution in the face of the opposition of the United States. Something else was needed. The reasons for this should be fairly obvious. Cuba not only needed outside aid to make possible even a moderate development of its economy. In addition, the very life of the economy itself was dependent on an outside market for its major exportable product -- sugar. In this sense Cuba, like almost all colonial and semi-colonial countries, was doubly dependent on advanced industrial countries. Thus if the USSR and other Soviet Bloc countries had not given it aid in the form of long term credits and agreed to purchase the bulk of Cuba's sugar production the Cuban economy would have completely collapsed and the Castro government along with it. This situation led to the most fundamental contradiction of the Cuban Revolution: **THE PROGRESSIVE REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT OF CUBA WAS DEPENDENT UPON AID FROM COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY STALINISM.**

The internal role of Stalinism in Cuba, which we have

chronicled, was but a reflection of the interests of the bureaucracy of the USSR. This has always been the case with Stalinist parties and never has it been clearer than in the case of Cuba. While the structural assimilation of the East European Buffer region and China were of considerable strategic value to the Soviet Union, the structural assimilation of Cuba is of no value whatsoever to the Soviet Union.

No amount of verbal bombast from the Khrushchevites can hide the fact that the withdrawal of missiles from Cuba is a recognition by the USSR of U. S. hegemony over the Western Hemisphere including Cuba. The comrades of the IC have come up with the only meaningful explanation of the whole missiles operation. Why did the USSR place missiles there in the first place if it was so willing to remove them? It is obvious that the defense of Cuba was the farthest from their minds. (This Castro himself makes clear in his interview with Julien.) What they wished to do was to use Cuba as a pawn to force the U. S. to negotiate a deal with the USSR on favorable terms. Certainly if they had succeeded in completing the placement of the missiles and arming them with nuclear weapons aimed at Washington, D. C., they would have been in a pretty good bargaining position. Thus the missiles were placed in Cuba with the aim of withdrawing them -- at a price.

But there is an even bigger question involved here. Why did the USSR support Cuba and arm it for the last two years if, when push came to shove, it indicated its unwillingness to go to war to defend it? The answer is identical to the answer to the question on the withdrawal of missiles. Cuba was from the very beginning propped up by the USSR for one purpose only -- to be used as a pawn in an immense chess game to force a deal with the West. Thus we see the full, terrible meaning for the Cuban Revolution of its dependence on a counterrevolutionary force -- Stalinism.

A pattern of events which have occurred following the missiles crisis serves to make the threat facing the Cuban Revolution all the clearer. There can be no question now that during the missiles crisis Khrushchev and Kennedy came to agreement on at least the tentative outlines of a deal over the Cuban question, a deal about which we are sure neither side consulted Castro or the Cuban people. These are the events which have occurred since the crisis:

1. In what was obviously a tit for tat gesture the U. S. dismantled some bases it didn't really need in Turkey.

2. The Soviet Union has begun the withdrawal of its troops and military personnel from Cuba. This action simply underlines

all the more the recognition by the USSR of U. S. hegemony in the region.

3. The recent breaking into the public view of the feud between Miro Cardona and the State Department makes clear that the U. S. following the Cuba crisis had gone through a serious shift in policy towards Cuba. Cardona accuses the U. S. of abandoning previously worked out plans for a new invasion of Cuba and that this is the reason for the action against counter-revolutionary raiding parties. The N. Y. Times reports as follows: "The Cuban exile leader charged that American policy toward Cuba underwent a complete turnabout as of last October 24, when President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev began to negotiate over the withdrawal of Russian rockets and planes from the island."

4. Coming on the heels of this revelation is the announcement that Castro is to make a trip to the USSR to consult with Khrushchev. It is not too difficult to imagine the type of matters Khrushchev will seek to consult with Castro about.

It now seems clear that Kennedy has abandoned, at least for the moment, any attempt to "settle" the Cuban question by force and instead has decided upon a course of collaboration with the Kremlin to achieve his basic aims. Considering the extreme economic dependence of Cuba upon the Soviet Bloc and the counterrevolutionary role Stalinism has played in relation to other revolutions, one would be guilty of criminal light-mindedness to view this situation as anything but of the most serious nature. What is it that Kennedy wants to accomplish in relation to Cuba? First and foremost he is concerned with the rest of Latin America and in fact imperialist holdings throughout the world. It is this concern, rather than imperialism's not inconsiderable losses within Cuba, which is his main concern. Thus Kennedy must obtain in one fashion or another assurance that the Cuban pattern will not be "exported" to other areas either through the direct efforts of the Castro Regime, or of the Stalinists, or even by way of the example of Cuba's internal successes. Thus he wants Cuba neutralized, isolated, deformed.

This could be accomplished by one very simple act -- the acceptance on the part of the U. S. of Castro's offer, made repeatedly since 1959, to pay compensation for seized American property if the U. S. restored the Sugar Quota and the acceptance on Castro's part of terms of payment that are in line with the U. S.'s concept of "economic stabilization." (William A. Williams makes the basic mistake of thinking it is possible for American imperialism to grant economic aid or agree to compensation payments on terms that will permit fundamental social

transformation in Latin America. We cannot expect the imperialists to agree to subsidize their own overthrow. They cannot do so just in Cuba without setting a pattern for all of Latin America and the rest of the colonial sector of the world) Even if not a single industry was denationalized such an arrangement would subordinate Cuba to the capitalist world market and allow the imperialists to extract surplus value from the country through the form of compensation payments much as the U. S. does today with the nationalized tin mines in Boliva.

It is not to be excluded that the essential isolation and deformation of the Cuban Revolution could be accomplished also by the method of structural assimilation. However, this would be a high price for Kennedy to have to pay for Cuba. Cuba would remain, though in a distorted way, as an example of survival despite defiance of the U. S. and as a potential base of operations for the USSR against the U. S. But there can be little doubt that the capitalists would prefer to see Cuba permanently bureaucratized than to see it continue long in its present unstable state which opens up the possibility of genuine proletarian revolution at any point, a revolution which would spread like wildfire through Latin America. Above all the imperialists want the Cuban Revolution controlled, isolated, deformed.

If they fail to achieve this desired goal in collaboration with the Kremlin, it is also possible that the U. S. will resort to the "hot" method of armed invasion even though this will be very costly politically. Under such conditions the Kremlin's actions recently show that it will play the role it played during the Spanish Civil War, perhaps offering token aid, while it stands by and watches the Cuban people destroyed in a blood bath.

Is there a way out of this situation -- is there a solution to the contradiction of the dependence of the Cuban Revolution upon counterrevolutionary Stalinism? The majority, seeking to resolve this contradiction, has done so by eating away at the Trotskyist analysis of Stalinism itself. Thus right at the beginning of the Cuban discussion in the party Comrade Stein stated: "...The Soviet Union is compelled today, instead of playing a counter-revolutionary role -- to place itself on the side of revolution." This was no isolated episodic statement of an individual. It was the expression of a line, an approach towards Stalinism which has dominated our treatment of the subject in our press ever since. During the whole period of the rising power of Stalinism within Cuba, the party did not raise a warning in our press. Only after Castro attacked Escalante did we comment -- and then to repeat Castro's remarks about this as an attack against an "individual."

Never have we clearly warned in our press that the very dependence of the Cuban Revolution economically upon the counterrevolutionary Stalinists endangered the future development of the Cuban Revolution and thus the development of an independent line of support to Cuba through independent class action was essential to the very survival of the Revolution. The role of the USSR during the missile affair has shown the real nature of this "ally of revolution." Beware, comrades, your "ally" carries a hangman's noose in his hand!

There are of course countervailing revolutionary forces both within Cuba and without which can be brought to bear to save Cuba. Most important of all is the strength and vitality of the revolutionary masses themselves within Cuba. Castro, in his partial reliance on these masses as against the Stalinists has made an extremely important contribution to the development of the revolution throughout Latin America and elsewhere. His actions during the missiles crisis deserved the strong support of every true revolutionist.

But the situation requires more than this. What is essential to the very life of the Cuban Revolution is a clear internationalist policy of reliance of the working class struggle in the advanced countries and elsewhere and a turn away from sole dependence on the Soviet Bloc countries. In the long run only the victory of the proletariat in an advanced capitalist country or the victory of the political revolution in a Stalinist country can save the Cuban Revolution.

The development within Cuba of such an internationalist proletarian line will require proletarian leadership. What we mean by "proletarian leadership" is not "sui generis jacobins" who claim to be "Marxists." Rather we are speaking of the real leadership of a social class. For this there must be created in Cuba a party controlled by the advanced workers themselves and this party must control the state apparatus through working class forms of rule. Again we repeat: proletarian leadership means the leadership of the advanced section of the class itself organized to rule.

How has the theoretical outlook of Pabloism stood up under an analysis of the real facts of the Cuban development? Not very well we are afraid. The peasantry under petty bourgeois leadership has certainly sparked a deep revolutionary process within Cuba. But the completion of that process in the form of a workers state will require the leadership of another class. The development of the Cuban Revolution, even as far as it has gone, has been dependent upon a counterrevolutionary force, Stalinism, and that dependence is today threatening the very existence of the Cuban Revolution itself. The only way out for the Cuban people is to seek an ally in that one force Pablo and his friends have so little faith in -- the international proletariat.

Algeria: The Acid Test of an Acid Test

Algeria and Cuba stand side by side as the two most profound revolutionary upheavals in the colonial sector since the Chinese Revolution. A knowledge and understanding of the evolution of the Algerian Revolution is as important to a general understanding of the colonial revolution in the postwar period as is an understanding of the Cuban Revolution.

In addition to its importance in its own right, Algeria has a very special importance for the theoretical development of the Trotskyist world movement. The Algerian Revolution is the "acid test", so to speak, of the lessons learned from the Cuban experience by the two political tendencies in the world movement today. Michel Pablo made this clear in his letter to the FLN leadership, "The Decisive Hour of the Algerian Revolution" (Winter 1961-1962 Fourth International): "In brief Algeria at the hour of victorious revolution has the choice between a solution a la Tunisia or a la Cuba." Of the two alternatives before Algeria, the thrust of Pablo's letter is that the "Cuban Way" will win out because "the international revolutionary context, the new balance of forces established already on a world scale for many years has not ceased to evolve against Imperialism, enormously favoring the victory of the Algerian Revolution."

The party majority took, of course, the same approach. The editorial in the April 2, 1962 Militant declared, like Pablo, that these two roads were before the Algerian Revolution and optimism was expressed that Algeria would follow the Cuban pattern. This issue was introduced into the 1962 Plenum as a major point in the majority resolution, "Problems of the Fourth International -- and the Next Steps." Here ~~are~~ the differences between the Majority and the Pabloites on the one hand and the British and French sections on the other were posed as being essentially over different interpretations of the Evian Accords and the consequent political independence granted to Algeria. The real difference between these two tendencies was not whether or not the actual granting of even nominal independence was a victory for the Algerian masses but what was the significance of the Evian Accords; that is, the agreement reached between the FLN leadership and the French government which was to set the pattern for future developments in Algeria.

The British and French comrades felt that these Accords amounted to a sell-out of the true interests of the Algerian masses because they provided, in essence, for the maintenance of French imperialist domination over Algeria. The majority comrades considered the compromises at Evian relatively unimportant because the objective conditions in Algeria would soon force the Algerian leadership, like the Cuban leadership, down the road to socialist revolution

under the pressure of the armed peasantry. Thus the British and French comrades were attacked for taking a "pessimistic" and "subjective" attitude by concerning themselves with "the character of the official leadership" of the revolution. In summary the majority document stated: "Between them Cuba and Algeria encompass most of the basic problems confronting Marxists in the present stage of colonial revolution. This disorientation displayed by the SLL in regard to these two revolutions flows from their wrong method of approach to the fundamental processes at work." (emphasis mine)

This outlook of the majority's of course makes sense, granted their evaluation of Cuba. All the elements were present in the Algerian situation at the moment of Castro's coming to power in 1959. The revolution had been conducted by an armed peasant mass and had been very fundamental in nature. The leadership of this armed peasantry was, as Pablo notes, "jacobins sui generis", that is a petty bourgeois strata with an empirical but radical outlook. Ben Bella, in fact, had suffered many years in jail for his convictions and had conducted himself while in prison with a heroism comparable to that of Castro. The Algerians even felt a very real solidarity with the 26th of July movement. With the flight of the French, power rested in the hands of this armed peasant mass, almost all capitalists had fled, and the old state apparatus had pretty much disintegrated. Certainly if the "Cuban Way" is the pattern for future revolutionary developments in the colonial sector, the stage was set for Algeria to follow Cuba. With such an outlook, the underestimation of the importance of the Evian compromises is understandable.

Upon reaching Paris, Comrade Hansen wrote a series of articles on the evolution of the Algerian Revolution which applied this basic outlook of the majority. On August 19 Comrade Hansen wrote his first article declaring that the revolution is moving "to the left" and that the situation "is strikingly similar to that in Cuba immediately after Batista fled." "Ben Bella's first appeal," Hansen notes approvingly, "is to the Algerian peasantry."

His next dispatch, that of September 3, takes a different approach. "Ben Bella's course in Algiers," Hansen tells us surprisingly, "thus stands in contrast to Fidel Castro's actions at a similar period in the Cuban Revolution." The development which occurred between these two dispatches to change so sharply Hansen's analysis was the armed rebellion of Willaya IV against the Political Bureau leadership. Comrade Hansen was not too sure who would win out. But he was not really worried who would win because of "the already evident tendency of the revolution to develop in the socialist direction."

The situation was still unclear by the time of Hansen's September 15 dispatch. This time another new factor emerged in the situation -- the working class. Conspicuous by its absence from previous

dispatches of Hansen's, the Algerian workers moved decisively during this period under the leadership of the Algerian Trade Union movement, the UGTA. The workers mobilized masses of people to stand between the contending armies in the developing civil war situation and demanded an end to the power struggle from which they felt deeply alienated. This development so disturbed Hansen's whole analysis that he felt it was high time he opened up a veiled polemic against the SLL and French for fear some misguided Militant readers would sympathize with their outlook. He attacks "a current, dominated by an ultra-left mood, which holds that all present leaders have 'betrayed' and that there is no hope since a Leninist-type party was not organized before the revolution broke out." Events, he felt, were still moving "to the left" and he concludes: "Naturally, no guarantee can be given that Algeria will go the way of Cuba, but the inherent possibilities are strongly in this direction."

By his September 21 dispatch, Joe Hansen has recovered from his momentary doubts as to who in Algeria may be the developing Fidel Castro. We arrive back with Ben Bella, who incidentally survived the power struggle and was starting a process of consolidation of power. Ben Bella is now a "leadership which intends to move in a socialist direction, but which lacks Leninist clarity." The working class is conveniently dropped despite its highly progressive role mentioned only a week earlier. The "pessimists" are again attacked and great emphasis is put on the revolutionary potentiality of the armed peasantry organized in the ADN.

But, by now Ben Bella is pretty firmly in power and already is showing his true nature. In this period he offered to "shake hands and turn over a new leaf" as far as relations with the capitalists were concerned and urged the French exploiters to return to the country. Hansen, because of his deep worry over the "pessimists", decides to apologize in part for Ben Bella by noting "that not even Lenin was against making concessions to capitalists." Another dispatch, of the same date, is devoted to praise of the revolutionary implications of the Tripoli program of the FLN.

Hansen than drops writing about Algeria and nothing much appears in the Militant on the subject until the December 17 issue. In this issue a dispatch from Algiers comments on the action of Ben Bella banning the Communist Party. It warns: "Some quarters have interpreted it as indicating that Algeria has turned away from the direction of socialism. This is not the case although it was a step backward." A short dispatch, in fact, is printed actually quoting an Algerian minister apologizing for the ban.

After this last report the Militant conveniently abandoned, for a long period, any attempt to analyze what was becoming

an increasingly embarrassing turn of developments in Algeria for them. So we turn to the Christian Science Monitor, whose able correspondent, John Cooley, sums up the developments in December and early January as follows: "Though Algeria may still conduct some minor flirtations with Communist countries, its economic cooperation with France now looks like a solid and durable marriage which has the firm blessing of the United States." He reports that in addition to reaching agreements with France on economic aid and industrial development, it has reached an "agreement in principle" with France even on agrarian reform. "It has been agreed," Cooley comments, "that the final arrangements would infringe neither the private property rights of the French owners nor the principle of collective administration of them by Committees of workers and peasants." That is a trick if you can do it.

The basic turn to the right taken by Ben Bella's administration, immediately following his consolidation of power in late September, can be seen most clearly in the developments around the Congress of the UGTA held in the middle of January. In fact the basic class issues that are posed in the colonial sector as a whole find their expression at this fateful congress (which has not been reported in the Militant). As mentioned earlier it was the UGTA which had played such a progressive role in the struggle for power in September and which was shown to have deep support among the masses of Algerian people. The UGTA was desirous of maintaining its own independence and it was this issue of the independence of the trade union movement of Algeria which dominated the congress. Prior to the congress, the UGTA leadership under great pressure from the Ben Bella leadership, came to an agreement with Ben Bella to recognize the political leadership of the FLN if the FLN government in turn would guarantee the internal democratic rights of the UGTA.

Ben Bella opened the congress on January 17 with a speech insisting that the trade unions must be subordinated to the Algerian government. But he went even further than this. "We must guard ourselves against certain tendencies which exist in Africa," he warns, "which go by the name of 'workerism' (l'ouvrierisme). The Congress can attain its goal if in the coming sessions, 80% of the delegates 'wear the turban', that is to say that they are peasants." So Ben Bella, holding the same evaluation of the working class in the colonial countries as Comrade Pablo, urges the trade union organization to be composed of -- peasants. The next period of the convention was taken up with the usual "fraternal" speeches of representatives of various countries and foreign unions. Then the delegates got down to serious work discussing the problems of the organized Algerian workers. This was to be their last opportunity for such a discussion.

On January 19 at 6 a.m. the partisans of Ben Bella entered the congress hall and simply seized control of the presidium. When the legitimate delegates arrived they faced a fait accompli. The morning passed in a bitter verbal struggle against this take-over of a workers organization by the agents of the government. Then the congress recessed for lunch. When the delegates returned from lunch they found that Ben Bella's agents had brought in a lumpen mob from the street and simply taken over most of the seats in the hall in order to give backing to Ben Bella. So this is the way Ben Bella saw to it that "le turbans" (in reality a lumpen proletariat mob) controlled the trade union organization. During the melee that followed, Ben Bella's forces attacked the workers as -- you guessed it -- "bourgeois" and "leftists who act like counter-revolutionaries."

After seizing control of the UGTA the meeting then proceeded to a round of further governmental pronouncements which urged "total socialism" as a goal to be sought in Algeria but only after a 'transitional period' of cooperation with capitalism." Following these events, the Monitor on February 21 reported two incidents which also give us an insight into the policy of the Algerian leadership: "At Djidjelli, members of an anti-FLN faction of the Algerian Trade Union Federation (UGTA) demonstrated in protest against the Political Bureau's decision at the UGTA congress in January to subordinate labor policy to FLN directives.....In Tablet, security forces reportedly acting on FLN orders fired on a demonstration of unemployed persons who were demanding food and jobs."

The reaction of the Pabloites to these developments is also significant. Their French journal L'International proceeded to attack the UGTA leaders for really being only on the fringe of the Revolution anyway. Also these workers are considered to be guilty of the sin of "underestimation of the peasantry", a charge which should be familiar to anyone in our movement who knows the history of the struggle within the Bolshevik Party in the 1920's. They stated: "In accenting the necessity of transforming the UGTA by rooting it in the class of the revolutionary peasantry which alone can make it an organization truly representative of the Algerian workers, Ben Bella in fact emphasized a real necessity for the Algerian union organization."

Comrade Hansen and the Militant judiciously refrained from any comment on Algerian events during this critical period following the suppression of all parties but the FLN. Then on April 15, we are treated to two full pages eulogistically reporting the moves of the Ben Bella government against vacated European holdings and against a few holdings of reactionary Algerians who were political opponents of the FLN. The Militant also reported in detail the establishment of local workers councils and management committees which are to administer this seized property along with an administrator appointed by the government but subject to the approval of

the local committee. Comrade Hansen comments: "The tendency of the Algerian Revolution to develop in the socialist direction has grown stronger."

Comrade Hansen makes no attempt to relate these new developments with the happenings of the previous period: 1) growing economic collaboration between Algeria and the U.S. and France; 2) the suppression of all working class parties; and 3) the suppression of independent trade unionism in Algeria. Secondly, no sooner had the Militant of April 15 rolled off the press with its headline "Ben Bella Extends Algerian Working Class Rule" than the New York Times of April 14 reported that Ben Bella had pushed through the National Assembly a new budget which increased appropriations for the army and police forces. This was done "despite a dozen Deputies' effort to cut the police payroll in favor of teachers' salaries." It was also reported in the same article that the Algerian army with the aid "of newly installed French-trained gendarmes and police" had succeeded in "neutralizing rural Algeria's roving postwar bands of former guerillas."

Certainly local workers councils will have little meaning under conditions where any independent political working class trends in Algeria are suppressed and only one party, the party of Ben Bella, is allowed to exist. This is especially the case under conditions of a growing army and police apparatus. Land seizures and nationalizations in and of themselves are no sign that Algeria is a socialist country or will become one. So far Algeria has not proceeded anywhere near as far along this line as Nasser's Egypt. Further the Ben Bella government has made it very plain that it intends to take these measures while at the same time collaborating economically with French and American Imperialism. Thus Algeria shows no sign of taking the kind of step Castro took in relation to American imperialism which was partly responsible for the deep radical course the Cuban Revolution has taken.

Contrary to the impression created by Hansen's article the French were not particularly disturbed by these seizures of the Algerians. In fact, the New York Times has reported the Algerians were favorably impressed with the mildness of the reaction to their steps in France. The imperialists expect this sort of development. As long ago as last summer the Wall Street Journal reported: "But these public statements which have through the process of journalistic shorthand convinced a large portion of average Americans that Mr. Ben Bella is a dangerous Red menace, do not particularly worry the men whose job is to gauge the Algerian situation for the West.

"'We don't have many illusions about him,' one North African expert declares. 'We don't imagine that we're going to be able to control him. But on the other hand Khrushchev is probably going to

find him just as hard a man to do business with. And that's really about all we can hope for. We have always predicted Algeria would be a tough, one-party state with such socialistic features as nationalization of many industries and drastic land reform. '"

Thus the actual events that have transpired in Algeria (Brief mention must be made in passing of Guinea which has passed through an evolution not too dissimilar to Cuba though not as profound. Following its break with France, the French pulled out all their personnel, hoping that the small nation would collapse. Instead Guinea appealed for aid and got it primarily from the USSR and underwent a development which partially pulled it into the Soviet orbit. Pablo, observing this, wrote in July, 1961: "In these countries which have secured their independence, the state apparatus is in many cases still embryonic and their social destiny remains undetermined. Everything still depends on the state power. Their social basis, largely composed of poor peasants and detribalized elements who have entered the use to which these politically limited elites will put the towns, plus the revolutionary impulses from the present international context impell these elites towards a nationalized, planified, socialist economy." (sic) Thus Pablo envisions "Guinea, Mali and even in part Ghana" evolving into workers states in the "Cuban Way" under the leadership of these governmental "elites." In our party Frances James also views Guinea in this fashion. Late in November of the same year the teachers' union went out on strike demanding higher pay and many students struck also. Toure responded by arresting the union leaders which was in turn followed by violent clashes with the strikers during which at least three persons were killed. Toure then launched a tirade against "Marxist disruptors" and expelled the Soviet ambassador. Since that time Guinea has reversed its trade relations which are now predominantly with the West and is considered among the most promising countries for the imperialists. Around the same time Ghana took similar action against striking unionists, jailing all the strike leaders. The evolution of Cheddi Jagan in British Guiana was along similar lines. This "progressive" nationalist, a great friend of the National Guardian, called in British troops last year to quell riots made up primarily by the Negro working class of the country. Today Jagan is actively seeking to get new legislation passed which will give the Government greater control over the trade unions. The one thing none of these "sui generis jacobins" can tolerate is an independent proletariat.) -- stand as a dramatic and complete confirmation of the line of analysis of the SLL, the French comrades and the American minority and a total repudiation of the analysis of the majority. This is the way these analyses stood up to the actual test of the blessed "facts". The real significance of the Evian Accords was that they showed the readiness of the Algerian leadership as a

whole to subordinate a future Algeria to the essential interests of French and U.S. imperialism. In all the subsequent events this "jacobin" leadership remained true to the terms of the Accords and is presently engaged in seeking to consolidate the control of the bourgeois state over the masses and subordinating Algerian developments to this goal. During the whole period since the end of September when the Algerian leadership was actually moving to the right Hansen continued to maintain it was moving to the left and thus defying the actual facts that were before his eyes. Economic cooperation with France and the U.S. has been followed by the suppression of the CP and of the new radical Revolutionary Socialist Party, and the suppression of independent trade unionism in Algeria.

The differences between the two tendencies over Algeria were not a matter of "optimism" or "pessimism" about the revolution itself. Yes, we were "pessimistic" about the Algerian leadership and this proved to be a correct analysis. But there are genuine grounds for revolutionary optimism in the Algerian events. The working class emerged as an important factor in the events of September. The UGTA leadership was bureaucratically crushed by Ben Bella because he recognized the potential power of these "bourgeois" workers in Algeria. He has won the first round of the battle but there is much reason to be optimistic about the role of the working class in the next round. In order to play this role the workers must first learn not to trust those petty bourgeois leaders the party majority puts its trust in. The workers must learn themselves that they can and must lead the colonial revolution to its ultimate conclusion in alliance with the peasantry. It is in this specific sense that we are optimistic about the creation of a revolutionary proletarian party "in the very process of revolution itself."

The majority's whole analysis has failed the test of events so miserably in Algeria because its basic method is erroneous -- that is it is based on a superficial impression of momentary reality and lacks any real understanding of the underlying motive forces in the modern world. This can be seen by asking one simple question: WHY DIDN'T ALGERIA FOLLOW THE CUBAN EXAMPLE? By all possible objective criteria Algeria appears as a carbon copy of Cuba's early developments: guerrilla warfare, empirical but dedicated leadership, collapse of capitalist state and economy upon coming to power, etc. The only answer the majority can give to this question is that the Algerian leaders didn't choose to follow the Cuban example. This, comrades, is complete subjectivism and in fact an admission that the majority has no answer at all. The creation of a workers state then becomes reduced to an existentialist "moment" when the leader on top decides whether or not to follow the advice Comrade Pablo has so decently taken the trouble to write to him in a letter. Then all the talk of the objective forces which are compelling empirical leaderships down the road of the permanent revolution must be dropped and

and the majority must instead devote itself to personality analysis. (Objectivism and subjectivism are in fact but two sides of the same coin as they are the result of the same empirical method. The dialectical Marxist method always shows the proper interrelation between these two factors in all social developments.)

The Algerian developments can only be explained by the analysis of the minority and serve as a dramatic confirmation of the theoretical evaluation of Cuban developments expressed earlier in this document. Ben Bella has not and will not follow the "Cuban Way" because the "Cuban Way" could only be open to Ben Bella if the USSR allowed it -- that is if the USSR would be willing to allow Algeria to swing into its economic orbit as it did with Cuba. Thus the future revolutionary course of Algeria would be dependent on the counterrevolutionary Stalinist bureaucrats. That this is an impossible contradiction can be seen if one seriously considers the consequences for the Kremlin of a policy of subsidizing such revolutionary developments. Such a policy would fly in the face of its policy to seek an accommodation with imperialism at the expense of revolution. For the Kremlin to utilize Cuba in this manner as a pawn to pressure the West into a deal is one thing but for it to attempt to subsidize a pattern of such developments is quite another -- would in fact mean a breaking from its whole peaceful coexistence outlook. Thus it is highly doubtful if the alternative of the "Cuban Way" was even open to Ben Bella.

Secondly, even if the USSR had been willing to allow such a development as Algeria following Cuba into the Soviet Bloc even temporarily -- no leadership in its right mind would seriously consider such a course after the Kremlin's backing down over the missiles affair. If the USSR is willing to recognize capitalist hegemony in the Caribbean it will certainly extend the same courtesy to the imperialists in the Mediterranean.

Hasn't the peasantry in Algeria, under petty bourgeois leadership, carried through a profound revolutionary struggle against France? Of course it has. Will not possibly Ben Bella in the future nationalize more industry and carry through some type of agrarian reform? He certainly must. The bourgeoisie realizes this too.

But Algeria is limited in how far it can really go in carrying out even its bourgeois democratic revolution by its dependence on the advanced capitalist countries for economic aid and a market for its goods. To extend that Algeria, or any other colonial country frees itself from this dependence (as did Cuba) without aligning itself with the international proletariat it becomes dependent in turn on Stalinism. But Stalinism seeks to maintain itself through peaceful relations with the capitalists, not through revolution which will undercut its own rule at home. An occasional utilization of a Cuba as a way of pressurizing the U.S. into a deal, yes.

Cuba as a pattern, no, no, never! (Unless, of course, one expects Stalinism to turn into its opposite, from a hangman of revolutions into an ally of revolution.) Once again comrades have mistaken the tail for the head of the horse. No sooner have they projected into the whole future period their concept of the development and spread of socialist revolution by peasant masses under sui generis jacobins, than the events show that this is no more the way of the future than was the Stalinist expansionism that Pablo reacted to earlier. THE FUTURE LIES WITH THE CONSCIOUS ORGANIZED PROLETARIAT ITSELF!

The New New World Reality:

One of the major characteristics of impressionism as a method is that while the impressionist quickly reacts to surface developments, he misses entirely deeper, more fundamental processes at work. The problem is that the future developments are shaped by deep processes within current reality rather than being a simple extension of surface developments. Thus the impressionist is always surprised by the turn the future takes and he must quickly adjust to the new reality with another empirically arrived at impression. In the course of this political stumbling around the cadres of the movement get profoundly disoriented and at times the very existence of the movement is threatened.

The major importance of the SLL International Resolution has largely gone unnoticed in our party. The significance of this resolution is that the great bulk of it is devoted to a serious attempt to grapple with the most significant new development of the modern period -- the growing internal crisis of the capitalist system as a whole. The capitalist system is presently entering the most serious crisis of its whole existence and the growth of this crisis marks the very character of the period we are presently going through.

World capitalism is today going through a period of transition from the period of temporary stabilization which dominated the postwar world to a new period of revolutionary upsurge of the world proletariat. Thus the "postwar period" as we have known it is coming to an end and the new period of revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat lies before us. This intermediary period is dominated by the growing crisis of stagnation which is deeply affecting both advanced and underdeveloped capitalist countries and is itself creating the conditions for renewed class struggle activity on the part of the working class.

This is the essential meaning of the economic analysis which makes up the bulk of the SLL International Resolution and this is its very heart. At bottom it can be said that the whole

outlook of the international tendency grouped around this resolution flows from this analysis of current reality. It is this deep process of growing contradictions internal to the capitalist system itself which is of fundamental importance while the temporary dominance of petty bourgeois trends in the colonial sector is essentially a surface manifestation of processes which are being brought to an end precisely by the deeper changes in the capitalist system itself.

The major characteristic of Pabloism in all its manifestations is its failure to grasp the full significance of this change that is taking place and to seek to concretely orient its forces in the direction of the class itself. We have noted this weakness in our own party and it is much, much worse with the Pabloite forces in Europe. Not only has Pabloism so far neglected this essential task, it has actually acted as a disorienting factor turning the attention of the cadres away from the class and towards petty bourgeois formations. In this document we are concentrating on how they have done this in regard to the colonial sector. But they have acted in the same fashion in the advanced countries where their major orientation is towards centrist circles and sections of the social democratic and Stalinist bureaucracies in the mass parties of Europe.

The deep significance of this crisis of stagnation in the advanced countries has been dealt with at length in the SLL International Resolution and in our "Decline of American Imperialism and the Tasks of the SWP." However, considering the extent to which Pabloism today has developed a revisionist theory of the colonial revolution it is necessary in this document to treat the impact this crisis is having and can have in the future, on the colonial sector as well.

The Pabloites tend to view the colonial sector as if it were almost totally external to the capitalist system as a whole. In fact much of their objectionist analysis of the colonial revolution depends on a concept of increasing conflict between the advanced and underdeveloped sectors which interact upon each other as if they were virtually separate, independent sectors. It is in this fashion also that the majority's International Resolution deals with the "Interacting Processes."

This conception is false to its core. The underdeveloped or "peripheral" sector of the world capitalist system is an integral part of the system as a whole. It does not exist as a separate entity, as is largely the case of the Soviet Bloc, nor does it stand in clear opposition to the advanced sector in any unified way. Rather the contradictions within the system as a whole are manifested in all capitalist countries, whether they are underdeveloped or not. The major distinction is that in the underdeveloped countries the contradictions are felt

more deeply, and the capitalists have less resources with which to cope with these contradictions.

In the post war period the relative quiescence of the working class, due to both the betrayals of the working class leadership and to the temporary stabilization of capitalism, was characteristic of the working class in underdeveloped as well as advanced countries. The stabilization was, of course, even more superficial in the areas of the world with less developed capitalist structures. The peasantry, however, was not as deeply affected by this stabilization, as the peasantry is largely outside the economic system in most of these countries as it exists on a subsistence farming level. This in part explains why the peasantry has reached such heights of revolutionary activity in the post war world while the proletariat has lagged behind.

The present worldwide crisis of stagnation in the capitalist system is laying the objective basis for the resurgence of the proletariat on a worldwide basis. This means that we can expect to see the proletariat in the colonial sector emerging as an independent factor of considerable significance in colonial politics as well as see the growing of class struggle activity in the advanced countries. Certainly signs of this new activity on the part of the colonial proletariat can already be seen. In areas as far apart as Latin America, West Africa and India there have been strike actions brought about primarily by the eating away of the real wages of the working class through inflation, itself a reflection of this worldwide crisis of stagnation. Strikes for as much as 100% or even 200% wage increases are not uncommon; a sign of the fantastic impact of inflation.

Thus as we can see, the objective basis is being laid for the resurgence of the proletariat in the colonial countries and thereby for the alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry which is essential for the carrying through of the democratic revolution and its going over into the socialist revolution. Our international movement must assist our cadres in the colonial countries to develop a strong base in the urban proletariat and to begin work among the peasantry where they will appear as representatives of the urban proletariat. Pabloism represents today a deep disorientating factor especially to our cadres in the colonial countries. Unless combatted, Pabloism could lead to our cadres in the colonial countries neglecting the development of a proletarian base and thus preventing our movement from carrying through its essential revolutionary tasks in the next period of upsurge.

The Pabolites have falsely posed the problem of the development of the revolution by arguing about whether or not the next breakthrough will come in the "periphery" or the "center." This is not a critical question and it may very well be that the proletariat, with the peasantry behind it, will be able to break through earlier in Chile or Peru than in France or Germany. However, it will be the proletariat that does the breaking through and its success in maintaining its rule will depend on the strength of the revolutionary movement in the "center."

In fact the struggles in each area are very closely inter-linked. The development of the class struggle in the advanced countries will have a deep influence on the consciousness of the proletariat in the colonial sector and the coming to power of the proletariat in any country will have a tremendous revolutionary impact on workers all over the world. The difficulty with the Pabloites' formula is that they do not see any hope for the proletariat in the advanced countries and in the colonial countries and are rather counterposing to the proletarian revolution the myth of the independent viability of a petty bourgeois led armed peasantry in the colonial sector.

It is our opinion that a solid understanding of the real processes at work in the world today confirms the whole approach of the permanent revolution defended by both Lenin and Trotsky. Lenin stated it thus unequivocally:

"We know from our own experience -- and we see confirmation of it in the development of all revolutions, if we take the modern epoch, a hundred and fifty years, say, all over the world -- that the result has been the same everywhere: every attempt on the part of the petty bourgeoisie in general, and of the peasants in particular, to realize their strength, to direct economics and politics in their own way has failed. Either under the leadership of the proletariat, or under the leadership of the capitalists -- there is no middle course. All those who hanker after this middle course are empty dreamers, fantasts..."(As quoted in "Colonial Revolution and National Bourgeoisie" by Ernest Germain, Fourth International, Autumn 1959. Germain's emphasis).

Pabloite revisionism stands revealed in all its nakedness before us. Whether we look at Pabloism as expressed through the theory of "centuries of deformed workers states," or through its new theory of jacobin-led peasant revolution, or again as expressed through its actual functioning in Europe especially during the Belgian General Strike, (See: "In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective"), its essential nature is the same. Pabloism is the abandonment of proletarian revolution itself

and that is the long and short of it. The deep crisis now going on within the Pabloite ranks is but a reflection of the instability of a petty bourgeois formation which has abandoned the working class for a "middle course."

The division between Trotskyism and Pabloism is thus clearly a class division. This division cannot be bridged; it can only be deepened. The international cadres of Trotskyism can only be reassembled, strengthened, rebuilt, around a proletarian line. There is no "middle course."

April 17, 1963

THE WOHLFORTH WAY: A METHODOLOGICAL MUTATION!

by Tom Kerry

It was a forgone conclusion that the fall-out from the methodological pyrotechnics of the Slaughter-Healy faction would produce some startling theoretical mutations among their offspring in the SWP. Not one to dally on the launching pad, Comrade Tim Wohlforth has gone into orbit with a novel variation of a concept that figured in the discussion on the class character of the East European states among all sections of the world Trotskyist movement in the period 1945 - 51: Structural Assimilation.

A Model Discussion

The discussion on the evolution of the East European states, which concluded with the adoption in 1951 of the Third World Congress resolution on the "Class Nature of Eastern Europe," was one of the most fruitful and rewarding in our history. Comrades can learn a great deal from a study of that discussion. Conducted over a span of six years -- the discussion on China, although an extension of the East Europe discussion, came later -- the discussion was distinguished by its high theoretical level, the absence of factionalism and the virtual unanimous agreement reached at its conclusion.

It was a model discussion. It demonstrated the capacity of the Trotskyist movement to apply its collective thought through the process of democratic discussion and arrive at a correct solution to what was, admittedly, a new historical phenomenon of an exceedingly complicated character. I strongly urge the comrades to study the material of that discussion. Some of it is still available in discussion bulletins and some is scattered through the various issues of the magazine, Fourth International, covering the period in question. For an excellent historical outline of the development of the dispute I strongly recommend the report to the Third World Congress on the Evolution of Eastern Europe by Comrade Pierre Frank in the special 64 page issue of Fourth International, November - December, 1951.

Search for Factional Club!

Unfortunately, in his perusal of the material, Comrade Wohlforth wasn't interested in learning -- his sole concern was to search for a factional stick with which to beat Pablo over the head and, by association, the "Pabloite" SWP majority. To Wohlforth and his "co-thinkers," at home and abroad, "Pabloism" is synonymous with original sin. And one cannot be too choosy about one's methods in fighting the devil! In his anxiety to tweak the devil's tail, Wohlforth accords his "Satanic Majesty" credit where no credit is due.

The criteria established by the Trotskyist movement to define the class character of the state, according to Wohlforth, originated with Pablo and was smuggled into our movement in a typically sneaky and underhanded way, fooling everybody including Healy and Lambert. Everyone else, that is, except Wohlforth! He was taken in for a time, but no more, my friends, no more! Let's hear him out.

Half Theory or Half Theoretician?

In his "Cuban Way" document Wohlforth has a section which he entitles, with inimitable style, "On a Half Theory of the State." "We must turn briefly," he says, "to the party majority's theory of the nature of the Cuban state because, as we shall see, it is intimately linked with Pablo's new revisionist theory and cannot be logically separated from it. Joe Hansen states time and again in his lengthy 'Cuba-the Acid Test' that the party majority is simply utilizing the criteria for determining workers' states developed in 1948 and applying it to Cuba today. This is a terrible oversimplification of what actually

transpired in the highly important buffer state discussion held in our movement at the time." After this "brief turn," in the course of which Wohlforth disposes of Hansen's "oversimplification," he proceeds to give us the real score. Here it is:

"The whole truth is that the party majority today is utilizing a method for determining workers' states rejected by the party majority at the February, 1950, plenum over the objections of Pablo, Cochran and Hansen at the time. Hansen is thus confusing his own personal political history with that of the party. The two have not always been identical.

"It was Michel Pablo," Wohlforth contends, "who first introduced into our international movement the now famous method of determining workers' states by the simple procedure of finding out whether the basic industry is nationalized, the economy is under the direction of a planning commission, and there is a state monopoly of foreign trade. From the very beginning Pablo met strong resistance to this method of determining workers' states from Germain and also from the majority of our party's national committee. Some of the best comments on the essential method involved in Pablo's approach were made by the late John G. Wright and by Comrade Stein for the National Committee." (All emphasis in the original.)

The Wohlforth School of History!

Such is party history a la Wohlforth. His perfervid loyalty to the "majority of our Party's national committee" -- of 1950 -- is really touching. But has it ever occurred to Wohlforth that the 1950 N. C. majority might have been wrong and later corrected its position? Or did party history stop for Wohlforth with the February 1950 plenum?

Before I go any further, I want to state that Wohlforth's assertion that the decision of that plenum was taken over the "objections of Pablo" is pure fabrication. What were the actual sequence of events and the real, not fictionalized, positions of the comrades directly involved?

The dispute in the SWP over the class character of the buffer states broke out with the adoption of a resolution on the "Evolution of the Buffer Countries," at the April 1949 plenum of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International -- "Pablo's" IEC, as Wohlforth and Company keep insisting. It was published in the International Information Bulletin by the SWP under date of June, 1949.

The resolution elaborated an analysis of the actual development in the buffer countries which was essentially correct in describing the transformations that had taken place since the outbreak of the "cold war" in 1946. However, the resolution stopped short of the logical conclusion of its analysis that these were "deformed" workers' states. Yet the authors of the resolution felt compelled to take cognizance of the fact that the previous position adopted stating that these states were "capitalist states on the road to structural assimilation" with the Soviet Union, lacked precision and required amendment.

This the resolution attempted to do by qualifying the position previously held by the international movement as follows: "The social difference between the USSR and the buffer zone, enumerated above, are of a qualitative nature even though from the quantitative point of view society in the buffer zone approaches more closely Soviet society rather than that of 'normal' capitalist countries, in the same sense in which the USSR is quantitatively closer to capitalism than to socialism. Only in this sense can we continue to define the buffer countries as capitalist countries on the road toward structural assimilation with the USSR." (Emphasis in original.)

Contradictory Position Challenged

The amendment was admittedly "awkward" and highly unsatisfactory. It resolved none of the contradictions in the position. This was the position supported by the SWP N. C. majority. In his report to the February 1950 plenum, Comrade Stein stated: "Our preliminary discussions in the Political Committee have revealed two positions: (1) that of the majority of the Political Committee which bases itself in general on the analysis and conclusions of the (2nd) World Congress theses and the IEC resolution; (cited above) and; (2) that of the minority which considers that the buffer countries have ceased to be capitalist states and must now be considered as workers states (deformed or degenerated)." (D. B. No. 3, June 1950).

The comrades who first challenged the position of the IEC-SWP majority were Joe Hansen and -- to give another devil his due -- Bert Cochran. (See: "Memorandum on Resolution on 'The Evolution of the Buffer Countries,'" by E. R. Frank (Cochran) in Internal Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. 5, October 1949. Also: "The Problem of Eastern Europe," by Joseph Hansen, Vol. XII, No. 2, February 1950 and "The Kremlin Satellite States in Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia, Marxist Theory and Our Perspective," by E. R. Frank, Discussion Bulletin, No. 1, April 1950).

The Search for "Origins!"

If Wohlforth is seeking for the "origin" of our "three criteria" as he calls it, he will find it there and not in his own version of Grimm's Fairy Tales.

It's hard to make head or tail of what Wohlforth is after. For example, he now claims John G. Wright for his very own and strings together bits and pieces of quotations from Comrade Wright's article, which he presents as one continuous quotation, to prove that "his (Wright's) analysis is identical with the analysis we have made in our 'In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective' and which the British have made in their writings on the basic method of the majority and the Pabloites."

Poor Usick! Those who knew and loved him can well imagine with what contempt and scorn he would have rejected Wohlforth's embrace. Comrade Wright never claimed to be infallible and was the first to admit an error when proven wrong. What is the point? In the article referred to, Comrade Wright endorsed the view that the buffer states were "degenerated capitalist states." Does Wohlforth now support that view? Presumably not. But, you see, he supports the "method" by which such a conclusion was reached. Just as he supports and extols the "method" of Slaughter-Healy, who conclude that: "On all decisive and fundamental questions which impinge upon the power and wealth of the national bourgeoisie as a whole, however, the (Cuban) regime comes down on the side of capitalism." Wohlforth supports the method but not the conclusions that are derived by the application of the method. Just as he supports the February 1950 majority but not the 1963 majority. Why? Is it his opinion that the 1950 majority was correct as against Hansen? Let's pursue the subject, however distasteful, a little further.

Wohlforth Sums Up

After praising Comrade Stein for straightening Hansen out at the February 1950 plenum Wohlforth sums up:

"Thus we see Pablo's new method of determining workers' states was repudiated by our party when it first appeared within our international movement because it was a false, non-dialectical method. In reality it was no theory of the state at all -- it was a half-theory of the state, and interestingly enough the second half. As the comrades at the time noted, a real Marxist theory of the class nature of the state must begin with an analysis of the process which produced the resultant institutions

existing in the state, like nationalized industry, state planning, etc. Obviously the nationalization of the coal industry by agents of the bourgeoisie in England is not the same thing as nationalization of the coal industry in Russia by agents of the revolutionary proletariat -- and the difference is more than quantitative." How profound! How utterly profound! It just takes your breath away!

It's All Done With Mirrors

Wohlforth too has his method. He quotes Stein against Hansen and with a quick flick of the wrist substitutes Pablo for Hansen in order to bolster his fictionalized version of party history. Isn't it amazing? Pablo's name isn't once mentioned in the whole of Comrade Stein's report. Stein is not one to resort to subterfuge in political polemics. The difference at that time between Pablo and Germain was over the Yugoslav development, not over the other buffer countries. Both supported the resolution of the 7th plenum of the IEC which was the position supported by Stein and the NC majority. So it could not have been "Pablo's new method of determining workers' states" that "was repudiated by our party, etc., etc."

There was a change, however, in the basic position of "Pablo's" International Secretariat which was codified in resolution form for submission to the Third World Congress. The resolution was published by the SWP in its International Information Bulletin of July, 1951. Entitled: Draft Resolution on the Class Character of the European Countries in the Soviet Buffer Zone, it was adopted by the Third World Congress in 1951 and subsequently its line was approved by a convention of the SWP. It embodied the position of the party -- and, I might add the world Trotskyist movement -- on the class character of the buffer states. It was a confirmation of the correctness of the February, 1950 minority in the party. It is worth quoting at length, not only for the position it sets forth, but because it contains a key to the "new" Wholforth theory of structural assimilation:

Modified Position of World Movement

"Taking account of all the modifications effected since 1949 in the economy as well as in the state apparatus of the buffer zone countries, within the framework of a new international evolution, it is necessary to state that the structural assimilation of these countries into the USSR has now become essentially accomplished and these countries have ceased to be basically capitalist countries. (Emphasis in original)

"The taking into tow of all these countries after the last war by the Soviet bureaucracy, the influence and decisive control it exercises over these countries, contained the possibility and even in the long run the inevitability of their structural assimilation into the USSR, by virtue of a certain relationship of forces at home and abroad, between the Soviet bureaucracy, the native bourgeoisie, imperialism and the masses.

"For a long period which by and large extended from 1945 to about 1948, the Soviet bureaucracy maintained these countries in an intermediate status of varying degrees because it was not yet ready to consider its break with imperialism as final and because of the necessity arising from its own nature of eliminating the native bourgeoisie by cold methods, without genuine revolutionary action by the masses over which it tried at the same time to impose a rigorous control.

"This intermediate status corresponded sociologically more and more to a regime of dual power both on the economic and the political planes, the economic structure remaining fundamentally capitalist. Beginning with 1949 this duality manifestly gave way to regimes which stabilized a structure essentially characterized by property and productive relations qualitatively assimilable to the USSR, that is to say, characteristic of an essentially statized and planned economy (except for the Soviet zone in Austria and Albania, where a regime of dual power still exists).

"Parallel with this process, the political power, which for a long time had been assumed by different combinations between the Stalinist leaderships and the representatives of the former bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties, now passed exclusively into the hands of the Stalinists and was thus transformed in its form as well as in its social composition.

"The form of political power still remains marked by important differences from one country to another and in their entirety with that of the USSR, as is likewise the case so far as the form of political power in a capitalist regime is concerned. But it is above all by virtue of their economic base, of the structure essentially common to all the countries of the buffer zone, characterized by new production and property relations belonging to a statized and planned economy, essentially like those of the USSR, that we have to consider these states as now being deformed workers' states."

Since 1951 the above position, as elaborated in the resolution adopted by the Third World Congress, has been the methodology of the world Trotskyist movement.

It is the method we applied to our analysis of the Cuban state. But it was not until the unfolding of the Cuban events that we were confronted with a concerted attempt to alter or abandon our criteria and substitute for it the "dialectic" of the Slaughter-Lambert-Wohlforth faction. Slaughter-Healy have attacked our basic criteria without, however, substituting criteria of their own. The French have put a question mark over our criteria by announcing a "reexamination" of the whole buffer state discussion. But Wohlforth is not one to dally -- he has plunged in, right over his head, and come up with his own criteria: "structural assimilation."

Half-and-Half Jargon

Before proceeding to an examination of Wohlforth's latest brainstorm, let's finish with his "half-theory-of-the-state" hogwash. Wohlforth lays the foundation for his "half-theory" structure by falsifying party history in order to make it appear as though Pablo put over a package deal on the party and the international movement. In the Wohlforth schema there were two parts to "Pablo's" theory of the state. One, the "three criteria", constituted the "second half" and Pablo's theory of "centuries of deformed workers' states," the first half.

"Pablo," he asserts, "in reality had a rounded theory of the creation of workers' states which also accounted for the question of origins. His theory of 'centuries of deformed workers' states was logically and intimately connected with his theory of the state as a whole. He saw deformed workers' states being created as a general, universal phenomenon, as a new stage for all proletarian revolutions for centuries."

With all due apologies to our latter-day theoretician he is mixing up two different things. One involves the criteria for determining the class character of a state in being and the other, a projection of an historical perspective of revolutionary development. Along with the entire world movement we arrived at a common agreement on criteria by the application of the methodology of Marxism. We rejected the perspective of "centuries of deformed" states, primarily because it excluded the perspective of the American revolution; a perspective which was codified in the line of the American Theses adopted by our 1946 convention. Now what did Machiavelli Pablo do to circumvent our opposition?

"This theory," Wohlforth informs us, "was so repugnant to our movement when it was first introduced that, in order to get it adopted, Pablo put forward the second half of his theory first and independent of the first half--that is his so-called 'three criteria.' This combined his political revisions in his 'centuries' theory with a methodological revision which has confused our cadres since. Hansen's 'Cuba--The Acid Test' is in reality nothing more than a 52 page compounding of this basic methodological error -- it has no other content." A damn clever fellow, this Pablo, don't you think? But he's not pulling the wool over Wohlforth's eyes, no sir!

For Whom Does Wohlforth Speak?

"So, today," Wohlforth warns, "we face the same sort of situation. Pablo, and his supporters in our party, (above all, Comrade Hansen once again) are once again putting forward the second half of their theory and demanding that one and all 'label' the Cuban state by means of their 'three criteria' first and discuss all other questions later. Well, we simply reject this method completely and refuse to recognize such a position as a theory at all." And that's that!

Who is the "we" Wohlforth continually refers to? His new theory is presented presumably in his own name. Does it include the co-leader of his faction, Albert Philips, together with his state capitalist position, as "reevaluated" and stashed away in his briefcase? We'll find out eventually, I suppose. In the meantime, having summarily disposed of Pablo and Hansen and their supporters, and having jettisoned our "three criteria" in the process, let's examine Wohlforth's double-barrelled "dialectical" criteria for defining the class character of the state.

"Theory" of "Structural Assimilation!"

Unlike Pablo, he lets us have both barrels at once. According to the Wohlforth theory there can only be two ways in which a workers' state can be established. One, by the method of the classic revolutionary overturn exemplified by the Russian October, or (2) by "structural assimilation."

Wohlforth invests the concept "structural assimilation" with a meaning it has never had in our movement. From the way he applies it I gather he means structural assimilation in reverse. "The theory of structural assimilation," he says, "explained a process of the creation of deformed workers' states through the extension of the degenerated workers' state. That is it answered the question of origins without in any sense undermining the revolutionary role of the proletariat. This is especially the case if one realizes that the theory of structural assimilation sees this transformation taking place only in the buffer regions surrounding the USSR, and as a result of defensive steps taken by the Stalinist bureaucracy."

Because it is "defensive" it can only take place in geographical areas contiguous to the Soviet Union. That would rule out the process of structural assimilation for more remote areas like Algeria and Cuba --although, according to Wohlforth, in the case of Cuba it could apply only under exceptional circumstances. What he considers the vital question of "origins" I presume refers to the origin of the Soviet Union in a classic proletarian revolution which, though degenerated, still retained the basic economic conquests of the October revolution.

Ineluctable Conclusion

If all of this is true, then we are confronted with the following equation -- Stalinism in power in any area bordering the Soviet Union equals structural assimilation equals workers' state. From our starting point of structural assimilation in reverse we arrive at the Marcyite theory of the "global class camp" Although I must say the Marcyites had more justification for their "theory" that Stalinism in power equals workers' state than does the Wohlforth theory.

It is a wholly schematic, anti-Marxist theory which has no basis in reality, either in the fact of the establishment of the buffer states nor in their subsequent evolution. The concept of structural assimilation had its origin in the dispute with the Shachtmanites in 1939-40. At one point in the discussion the Shachtmanite pundits characterized the wartime Soviet expansionism as "imperialist exploitation."

Trotskyist Methodology

"Let us for a moment concede," argues Trotsky, "that in accordance with the

treaty with Hitler, the Moscow government leaves untouched the rights of private property in the occupied areas and limits itself to 'control' after the fascist pattern. Such a concession would have a deep-going principled character and might become a starting point for a new chapter in the Soviet regime; and consequently a starting point for a new appraisal on our part of the nature of the Soviet state.

"It is more likely, however," Trotsky affirmed, "that in the territories scheduled to become a part of the USSR, the Moscow government will carry through the expropriation of the large landowners and statification of the means of production. This variant is most probable not because the bureaucracy remains true to the socialist program but because it is neither desirous or capable of sharing the power, and the privileges the latter entails, with the old ruling classes in the occupied territories. (My emphasis)

"Here," added Trotsky, "an analogy literally offers itself. The first Bonaparte halted the revolution by means of a military dictatorship. However, when the French troops invaded Poland, Napoleon signed a decree: 'Serfdom is abolished.' This measure was dictated not by Napoleon's sympathies for the peasants, nor by democratic principles, but rather by the fact that the Bonapartist dictatorship based itself not on feudal, but on bourgeois property relations. Inasmuch as Stalin's Bonapartist dictatorship bases itself not on private but on state property, the invasion of Poland by the Red Army should, in the nature of the case, result in the abolition of private capitalist property, so as thus to bring the regime of the occupied territories into accord with the regime of the USSR." (In Defense of Marxism, Page. 18)

Implicit in this analysis of Trotsky's are the much maligned "three criteria" for determining the class character of the state. And thus it transpired with those territories "scheduled to become part of the USSR." Bits and pieces of real estate together with the three Baltic states, Latvia, Lithuania and Esthonia, were assimilated into the structure of the USSR. But Stalin pursued an altogether different course with the East European buffer countries at the close of the Second World War.

The Stalin Line

In the latter countries Stalin first used his military-bureaucratic power to install coalition governments in which representatives of the native bourgeoisie shared the political power with Stalin's hand-picked henchmen on the basis of the existing capitalist property relations. He followed a policy of pillage and plunder, exacting huge reparations, dismantling plant and equipment for shipment to the Soviet Union, setting up joint stock corporations to exploit the resources of the buffer zone countries, etc., etc. Obviously Stalin did not consider these territories "scheduled to become part of the USSR."

"Structural assimilation" was the furthest from his thoughts. This was indicated by the "peoples front" label applied to these countries which were designated "peoples democracies." With the launching of the cold war in 1946 and especially with the promulgation of the Marshall Plan for Europe, with Poland and Czechoslovakia making a bid for inclusion, Stalin recoiled in alarm. The order went out from Moscow -- sharp turn to the left. The bourgeois ministers were unceremoniously booted out of office and there began the process of expropriating bourgeois property and transforming basic property relations.

The Process of Evolution

At the beginning, the comrades in the world movement characterized these states as capitalist for the very obvious reason that capitalist property forms and property

relations were left virtually intact. With the turn to the left, bringing in its wake the gradual transformation of all social relations and taking cognizance of the dual character of Stalinism, the comrades cautiously advanced the formula: "capitalist states on the road toward structural assimilation." This was more an inherent tendency than an actual fact. The fact of Stalin's determination was highlighted by the break with Tito.

The Yugoslavs, who occupied a more independent position in relation to the Kremlin because of the mass upsurge that led to the capture of power under the leadership of the native Stalinist cadre, sought to break out of the narrow national framework imposed by the Balkanized buffer countries. Each of the countries standing alone was completely dependent on the Kremlin for its economic existence. That was the way Stalin wanted it. When the Yugoslavs began advancing the idea of a Balkan-Danube federation Stalin reacted with savage ferocity. Tito was read out of the buffer zone family and unable to overcome his Stalinist background, failed to advance a revolutionary line, turning instead to western imperialism for economic aid.

A Stalinist purge swept the buffer states. This was Stalin's answer to anyone attempting to toy with the idea of federation. At the same time he barred the door to structural assimilation of the buffer countries. In retrospect, I believe, that the "structural assimilation" concept was a fuzzy hypothesis employed to bridge the theoretical gap in the thinking of the SWP majority and the world movement. Our thinking lagged behind the development. This was not surprising considering the scope and complexity of the new phenomena under consideration. Instead of heaping opprobrium on the heads of those comrades who took the lead in prodding the movement toward a correct solution we should be grateful to them for their persistence in advancing their views in the discussion.

Something "New" Has Been Added

But I repeat, no one during the whole course of the discussion, ever conceived the idea of "structural assimilation" in reverse. That is Wohlforth's own unique contribution to the theory and practice of Marxism. Although Wohlforth's document is honeycombed with copious arguments borrowed freely from comrades on the wrong side of the buffer state dispute, reverse assimilation is his very own. Let's probe this concept a bit further.

The Bolsheviks viewed the October revolution as the beginning of the European and world revolution. The program called for the establishment of the Socialist United States of Europe as the prelude to the world revolution. In line with this view they designated the first workers' state as the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The extension of the revolution, especially to one of the advanced capitalist states, would bring powerful economic and political reinforcement through "structural assimilation" based on division of labor under one integrated master plan. That was the programmatic norm of Bolshevism. Historical development proved to be much more complex.

With the victory of Stalinism, the basic policy of the bureaucratic caste was summed up in the theory of building socialism in a single country. This meant subordinating the interests of the world revolution to the fantasy of carving out of the capitalist world a "socialist" utopia in one country. It was from the basic standpoint of building socialism in the Soviet Union that Stalin approached the territorial conquests of World War II. The buffer states were plundered and bled to begin again the process of "building socialism" in the USSR. When Stalin was forced to execute his left turn he did so without any thought of abandoning his basic policy. While the exigencies of the cold war compelled some degree of economic integration and joint planning, it was at the expense of the economic development in the buffer states.

Criteria Projected by Germain

Each of the Balkanized buffer states elaborated its own "plan." It was precisely this aspect of the problem that Germain focused attention on in his article in the September 1949 Fourth International entitled: Whither Eastern Europe: Economic Trends in Stalin's Buffer Zone. Germain took as his point of departure the hopelessness of "socialist planning" on the basis of these atomized states.

"Economic planning," he pointed out, "requires not only nationalization of all means of production and exchange (of which the land remains the most important element in agricultural countries). It also requires the abolition of national frontiers which, along with the private ownership of the means of production, constitutes an absolute brake on any growth of the productive forces. This is not only a Marxist axiom, a general and abstract point of view opposed to the absurd theory of 'socialism in one country.' It is also an absolutely basic consideration for the purpose of defining the character and possibility of a given economy. Construction of a socialist economy is possible only on an international plane. With the exception of a few ultra-lefts, no one in the communist wing of the movement has ever disputed the possibility of making a start in this construction during a transitional period within that concrete national framework established by the victory of the proletarian revolution.

"It was the Left Opposition itself which, toward this end, drafted the first plan in the U.S.S.R. against the violent resistance of the bureaucracy and of the Stalinist faction. But, it does not at all follow from this that any national framework whatever lends itself to planning on the mere condition that the proletariat had conquered power. It is obvious that a minimum material base is indispensable even to the preparatory work of socialist planning. To make a start to the building of socialism in Rumania, in Luxemburg or in Paraguay is an even more patent absurdity than to pretend that this construction is being completed in the U.S.S.R."

The I. S. Modifies Stand

These were cogent arguments. But they did not stand up in the discussion. Germain was compelled to abandon "socialist planning" and the "abolition of national frontiers" as criteria in the determination of the class character of the buffer states. It was this concept, I believe, that led, first to the formula of "capitalist states on the road toward structural assimilation" and then later to the erroneous conclusion of the IS Draft Resolution submitted to the Third World Congress which asserted:

"Taking account of all the modifications effected since 1949 in the economy as well as in the state apparatus of the buffer zone countries, within the framework of a new international evolution, it is necessary to state that the structural assimilation of these (buffer) countries into the USSR has now become essentially accomplished and these countries have ceased to be basically capitalist countries."

Recognizing the obvious contradiction between theory and fact, the resolution did add: "It has turned out on the other hand that in the same conditions and on the basis of an effective statization of the means of production, it is possible to initiate the process of a planned economy without formal incorporation into the USSR, without formal abolition of the frontiers and despite the special forms of exploitation that the bureaucracy still maintains in these countries and which remains an ever-present obstacle to the planning and free development of their country."

Even a cursory examination of the buffer zone discussion material, should make it obvious to all but the factionally blind, that the formula "structural assimilation" meant incorporation within the structure of the USSR under a single integrated economic plan. While the "tendency toward structural assimilation" holds true in the historic sense, the fact is that the process has not been completed--far from it--even though some halting steps toward integrated economic planning have taken place with a limited number of the buffer states through Comecon

(Council for Mutual Economic Aid) --the Soviet counter-part to the European Economic Community and the Common Market.

Some Pertinent Questions

But is it true of Yugoslavia, whose economy is more "integrated" with the west than with the east? Is it true of China, which from the beginning has had its "own" economic plan and today has been cut off from all significant Soviet economic aid. And what of Albania, which has been entirely cut off from Soviet economic aid and with whom Moscow has even broken diplomatic relations? Are these still to be considered "workers' states" under the new Wohlforth dispensation of reverse structural assimilation. If so, on the basis of what criteria? We shall see when we come to Wohlforth's application of his theory to the question of Cuba.

Cuba--The Acid Test!

Here the Wohlforth theory is revealed in all its glory. Cuba again provides the "acid test!"

"Thus we see that the process which has been going on in Cuba," says Wohlforth, "differs radically from the process which transformed the buffer areas into deformed workers' states. The erosion of the former capitalist state apparatus, the destruction of the internal power of the national bourgeoisie, the swing from the international capitalist orbit--all these events had occurred in Cuba just as they have occurred in the buffer areas. But the consummation of this process through the creation of a monolithic Stalinist party and the fusion of this party with the state apparatus has not taken place nor is it likely to take place in the near future. Thus Cuba is more like these states before the structural process was completed -- that is like Eastern Europe between 1947-49 and China between 1949 and 1953."

The Circle is Squared!

Now if this means anything at all, it means that there is just one ingredient lacking for Cuba to earn the right to be designated a workers' state and that is -- Stalinism in power! Here we have Wohlforth's "criteria" in all its pristine purity.

To remove all question about what Wohlforth means he elaborates for us on this theme. "The situation in Cuba by late 1961 and early 1962," he says, "had reached a point where it appeared as if the country was going through the same structural assimilationist process as did Eastern Europe and China. Nationalizations had been carried through, the national bourgeoisie was pretty much routed from the country, economic ties with the Soviet bloc were extremely close, and in addition Stalinism seemed to be on the march throughout Cuba. It seemed as if it would be only a short time before the completion of a formation of a Stalinist type party and the subordination of the state apparatus to this party would be evident. Some of the minority comrades, reacting to this appearance of reality, declared Cuba to be a deformed workers state at that time."

Caught Off Base

Presumably these "minority comrades" have now reversed their position. If, instead of purging Escalante, Castro had been purged by the Stalinists, then the "minority comrades" would have bestowed upon Cuba the accolade of "deformed workers' state." Shouldn't we then have ranged ourselves on the side of Escalantism against Castroism? I know that the British are much disturbed about Escalante being deprived of his "democratic rights," but I never dreamed it had gone this far!

Wohlforth goes to great pains to point out where some of his "minority comrades" went off base. In the process he rendered the confusion worse confounded. "The Escalante Affair," he says, "was soon to show that this was a superficial analysis of the processes going on in Cuba. This was not only because the Stalinists failed to consummate their control of the Cuban state apparatus but also because of a misunderstanding as to the political role of Stalinism within Cuba. It is a great mistake to identify Stalinist influence within a state as automatically meaning the structural assimilation of that state. While this turned out to be the case in Eastern Europe and China (My emphasis!!!) the role of Stalinism in Spain was quite different."

So...while Stalinist influence in Eastern Europe and China "automatically" meant "structural assimilation" of those states it does not "automatically" follow that such would be the case in Cuba -- where they follow the Spanish pattern. How can anyone make sense out of this drivel? The Stalinists in Spain, says Wohlforth, were not interested in "structural assimilation" so they used their "considerable control" to prop up the capitalist system, crush the revolutionary forces, murdering thousands of militants in the process, in the name of peoples frontism and peaceful co-existence with world imperialism.

Doing the Wohlforth Twist

But, Comrade Wohlforth, if I understand the whole thrust of your argument, based on your "two criteria," there can be no such thing as "structural assimilation" for areas remote from the borders of the Soviet Union. Cuba is ruled out and is placed in the same category as Spain in the 1930's and Algeria today. Therefore, Stalinism in power in Cuba, following the Spanish example, would lead, not to "structural assimilation" or the establishment of a "deformed workers" state", but to the crushing of the revolution and the reestablishment of capitalist property forms and property relations. But this would mean the end of Stalinism in Cuba even if -- I should say especially if -- they succeeded in carrying through such a counter-revolution.

Do you really believe that the Kremlin, even in its maddest moments, would or could countenance such a role for their agents in Cuba? And if they tried it, what do you think the reaction would be in Latin America and China, not to speak of the rest of the world--including the masses in the Soviet Union itself. Cuba is not Spain. And we live in the year 1963 not 1936-37 when the Soviet Union was isolated after the defeat of the Chinese revolution in 1927, the victories of fascism in Europe, etc., etc. Wohlforth seems to be playing around with some new concept of Stalinism which imparts an infantile fuzziness to all of the ideas which he tries to pass off as some new and unique contribution to Marxist theory.

Something "New" in Sociology

Aside from the question of criteria for the determination of the class character of the state, Wohlforth offers something "new" in the realm of "Marxist" sociology that defies understanding.

Again -- The Imperial "We!"

Wohlforth is notably lacking in one trait--a sense of modesty. In his approach to the "class character of the Cuban state," he avers that his is the exact methodological approach used in "Trotsky's pioneering work on the USSR." And here it is:

"We," Wohlforth declares, "will approach the process going on in Cuba in the same method (as that of Trotsky, T. K.) noting of course that here we are studying a revolutionary rather than a counter-revolutionary process. Thus the movement

of the process is in an opposite direction though its motion must be understood with a common Marxist method. The Cuban revolution had in its first stage a capitalist apparatus, weakened, yes, but still capitalist. All agree to this. This state apparatus has undergone a deep process of erosion under the impact of profound revolutionary developments. So profound has this process been that Cuba today certainly looks as if it were a workers state. But has the Cuban state changed qualitatively during this period? No, our study reveals profound social and political changes but no qualitative change either by the method of the transformations of the buffer nor by the method of October itself. (Wohlforth's two criteria! T.K.) Thus we must characterize this state as a decomposed, partially eroded capitalist state susceptible to the pressure of the working class as well as other social forces but not under the control directly or indirectly of the working class (or as the French have characterized it 'un etat bourgeois, delabre, decompos, fantomatique.' By the way of analogy we would say that the Cuban state has the same essential class character as the East European states between 1947-1949 and the Chinese state between 1949-52."

Our Modern-Day Thor

Then Wohlforth hurls his challenging thunderbolt: "Those who consider such a designation as 'revisionist' or absurd had better tell us first how they would characterize the East European and Chinese states during the period in which they were being transformed into deformed workers' states."

Wohlforth imagines he is the first to pose that question. It was posed and answered, not once, but many times during the whole course of the discussion of the buffer states. It was answered, for example, in the section of the IS Draft Resolution submitted to the Third World Congress, cited in the early part of this article. Briefly, before they carried through their basic social transformations, the buffer states and China were characterized as regimes of dual power, unstable, temporary and transitional, based upon an "economic structure remaining fundamentally capitalist." In our view they became deformed workers' states when they carried out a fundamental change in the previously existing capitalist property forms and capitalist property relations.

Cuba also went through a stage of dual power which was terminated with the ousting of Urrutia and the expropriations of capitalist property in the fundamental sectors of the economy, followed by nationalization, economic planning and the monopoly of foreign trade. Does Wohlforth contend that a dual power regime exists today in Cuba? And if it does upon what property forms is it based.

Wohlforth has a little explaining to do about how he arrives at the bizarre conclusion that Cuba today is analogous to the East European buffer states of 1947-49 and the Chinese state between 1949-52. He has already informed us that in China and the buffer countries "Stalinist influence" had "automatically" meant "structural assimilation?" But Stalinist influence in those states was very much present prior to 1947 in the buffer zone and prior to 1952 in China. What has happened to the "automatic" conversion theory. It seems Wohlforth forgets, between one paragraph and another, not only what he has said but what in the blazes he is driving at!

Acrobatic Display of Ignorance

Wohlforth's display of ignorance of Marxist theory is astounding. He speaks of the Cuban "state apparatus" which has "undergone a deep process of erosion, etc." Then, he adds, "so profound has this process been that Cuba today certainly looks" like a workers' state. He constantly confuses basic economic structure with political super-structure. The "state apparatus" can apply only to the regime, the

administrative apparatus, the government. How can a "deep process of erosion" in the state apparatus make Cuba look like a workers' state?

You never know what he's talking about. For he follows this profound observation with the assertion that no qualitative change has taken place in the Cuban state. Is he referring to the "state apparatus" or the statized economy? He's wrong, of course, on both counts.

Methodology of a Trapeze Artist

Just one more joust with Wohlforth's sociology before I conclude. "Castro," he says, "today remains partially independent of the Kremlin but the Kremlin also exerts pressure on Castro through the complete dependence of the Cuban economy on the USSR. Castro partially 'acceeds' (sic) to this pressure as well. Castro does not represent the rule of Stalinism in Cuba, nor does he represent the rule of the peasantry, nor we are sad to say does he represent the rule of the working class. The state apparatus remains independent of the direct control of any of these three major social forces in Cuba today and under the direct influence of all three forces. (My emphasis. T. K.) In fact, the Castro regime plays an essentially bonapartist role balancing between these forces and their international allies seeking all the time to maintain its independence from all."

How about a little of that Trotsky methodology, Comrade Wohlforth? Earlier in this article I cited Trotsky's reply to the Shachtmanites in which he took up the question of bonapartism. What property forms and property relations does "bonaparte" Castro defend? Upon what social foundations does his "bonapartism" rest? Wohlforth advances his "three major social forces" as the tripod upon which Castro is "independently" perched. It is a basic tenet of Marxism that there can be no fundamental social transformation unless the means by which capitalist exploitation exist are radically altered. The nationalization of the means of production and exchange issuing out of a social revolution completely transforms the basic property forms and property relations. This is the basic foundation, without which there can be no talk of socialism. This is what we mean when we speak of economic structure. It is from this basic principle that we derive our criteria for the determination of the class character of the state.

Wohlforth abandons this basic Marxist approach by seeking constantly for his criteria in the super-structure. Thus he has Castro suspended in mid-air with no visible means of social support. Some trick if you can do it!

Having been deprived of their means of exploitation the bourgeoisie, as a class, has disappeared in Cuba,-- by Wohlforth's own admission. As a substitute we have "Stalinism." But not Stalinism of the Cuban variety. That could scarcely be considered any kind of a "force" in Cuba. No, Stalinism in the form of the Kremlin upon whom the "Cuban economy" is completely dependent.

So we have the following theoretical conclusion: Castro is a "bonaparte" independent of the "direct or indirect" control of the workers and peasants of Cuba, and completely dependent on the Kremlin to survive. Doesn't that make Castro a pawn of the Moscow bureaucracy and Cuba therefore eligible for the title of a "structurally assimilated deformed workers' state?" Make sense of it those who can! Trying to grapple with Wohlforth's theoretical lucubrations is like trying to wrestle a greased eel!

In Conclusion

I want to conclude by taking up the note upon which Wohlforth ends his document. "Pabloism," Wohlforth declares, "is the abandonment of proletarian revolution itself and that is the long and short of it. The deep crisis now going on within the Pabloite

ranks is but a reflection of the instability of a petty bourgeois formation which has abandoned the working class for a 'middle course'. The division between Trotskyism and Pabloism is thus clearly a class division. This division cannot be bridged; it can only be deepened. The international cadres of Trotskyism can only be reassembled, strengthened, rebuilt, around a proletarian line. There is no 'middle course.' "

In line with the "method" of the Slaughter-Healy faction, now so deftly applied by our own minority, the SWP has "capitulated" to "Pabloism" as defined in the purple prose of Wohlforth cited above. If you mean what you say, Comrade Wohlforth, we find ourselves on opposite sides of the barricades, divided by an unbridgeable gulf. Are we to understand your implied threat as an "either/or" declaration of intent? You might as well know right now that we cannot be intimidated into changing a course we consider correct and necessary. We have heard that kind of talk before. It hasn't fazed us a bit. Others have tried it before you -- to no avail. Whether you stay with the party or take your departure for parts unknown is a matter which cannot influence us one bit. The door swings both ways -- the decision is yours!

End