



INTERNATIONAL

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From the Archives of Marxism

TWO RARE WRITINGS OF LEON TROTSKY

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AUTUMN 1958

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Editorial

TWO CRISES

Since July the international situation has been marked by two not yet resolved crises : in the Middle East and in the Straits of Formosa. In both cases, the world has been brought once more "to the brink of the abyss" — a situation which apparently is finding other fanciers beside Foster Dulles.

Khrushchev and Mao also seem to have got a taste for vertigo.

Dangerous games, these, that for days and weeks on end had everyone holding his breath, with peace visibly at the mercy of a single miscalculated step, of an initiative taken by any commander whatsoever of a squadron of planes or of a battery of artillery with "tactical-atomic" ammunition.

Both the crisis of the Middle East and that of the Straits of Formosa have taken on a more explosive character than ever, whose meaning should be grasped.

The new crisis in the Middle East burst out as a result of the Iraq revolution that overthrew the regime of Nouri Sa'id, "the Englishman," as the Arabs called this peerless prison-warder of imperialism in that region. It occurred right in the middle of the civil war in Lebanon, which was threatening imperialism with the loss of that other Middle-Eastern bulwark, and which was already producing the gravest worries in Washington, as well as in London and Paris.

Plans already drawn up for imperialist intervention in Lebanon were, as a result of the Iraq revolution, hastily put into application in an atmosphere of visible nervousness if not of just plain panic.

It seemed as if all the imperialist positions in the Middle East were about to be swept away by the hurricane of the Arab revolution. The movements of the US Sixth Fleet, and the landing in Lebanon of marines armed with tactical atomic weapons demonstrated American imperialism's intention of fighting, including by outright war, against such a development.

Next came the Kremlin's warning, in the form of an ultimatum, that any intervention in Iraq or any attack against the United Arab Republic would unleash a counter-attack by the USSR — which caused the marines to remain within Lebanon and the English parachutists within Jordan, and all idea of intervention in Iraq to be abandoned.

Thus finally imperialism's intervention in the Middle East was kept within limits by the establishment of a de facto united front between the forces of the workers' states and the forces of the Arab revolution.

Imperialism has found a partial compensation for its blighted hopes in the fact that the leadership of the Arab revolution still remains in the hands of the bourgeoisie, which is handling the economic positions of imperialism gingerly, and which by its very nature cannot push very far its alliance with the Kremlin, whose influence over the Arab peasant and worker masses it fears.

It remains none the less true that when the trial-balance of this new Middle-Eastern crisis is struck as of today, it shows : the removal of Iraq from imperialism's control and a blow given to the Baghdad Pact ; the neutralization of Lebanon ; the extreme weakening of Jordan (whose Bedouin king hangs on thanks only to a protective cordon of British parachutists around his palace) ; and a new and important stimulus given to the process of unification of the Arab world, perceptible even in the super-rich protectorates of the Persian Gulf.

Such a balance-sheet foreshadows new explosions in the Middle East resulting from the withdrawal of the Anglo-American troops forced upon imperialism, from the precarious nature of the Lebanese and even more so of the Jordanian regimes, from the repercussions that their fall would cause, and from the development of the Iraq revolution.

In addition, to the extent that a new relationship of forces is after all established between imperialism and the national bourgeoisies of these countries, this relationship will sooner or later find its expression, including in a transformation of the terms of the contracts regulating the exploitation of oil, to the increasing disadvantage of imperialism.

On the other hand, the internal difficulties of the Arab revolution can operate in the direction either of facilitating these explosions or of delaying them for a certain time. These difficulties arise from the fact that the present bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaderships of the Arab revolution are more and more involved in the social and political problems raised by the very victories of the revolution. Outstanding among these problems at the present stage are : the structure and viability of a federative Arab Republic ; agrarian reform ; the industrialization and economic development of the Arab countries formally liberating themselves from imperialism.

The U A R, which already has difficulties with its Syrian province, seems to be handicapped in including other countries, such as Iraq for example, which is more inclined than itself to social reforms, and which is rich as a result of its oil.

Only a strong authority capable of expropriating the feudalists, of breaking the centrifugal tendencies that here and there defend individual interests and privileges, of developing in this way the internal market, of stimulating industrialization, and, on this basis, of rallying the broad masses around itself, would be able to consolidate and enlarge a unifying federative framework for the Arab countries. The Bonapartist power of Nasser does not have this scope, and his failure would provide the proof of the failure of the general bourgeois leadership of the Arab revolution.



The crisis in the Far East followed closely upon the Khrushchev-Mao meeting, which leads one to suppose that it was foreseen there in all its present developments. It began by a military blockade, combining intervention by the coastal batteries and the aviation of Quemoy and the other neighboring islands, the bases for the constant provocations of the Chiang Kai-Shek clique, protected by Yankee imperialism, against the popular power in China.

The conflict quickly became so far-reaching as to raise the questions both of Chiang Kai-Shek's regime itself and of American presence in the neighborhood of Formosa. It degenerated into a major test of strength between Peking, backed by the Kremlin, and American imperialism, which among other things afforded an opportunity to test a series of new weapons and the performances of the aviation of both sides.

This time Mao seemed to want to force the issue and to recuperate at least the coastal islands as a first stage. The imperialist allies of the United States were

really afraid lest war burst out over Quemoy, and did not fail to bring pressure on Washington to avoid the worst. In the United States itself public opinion, alarmed by the prospect of a major conflict with China, and in that case inevitably with the U S S R as well, hesitated to approve the "hard" line adopted by the Republican administration.

And yet this line seems this time to have obtained at least partial results. Washington assembled in the Straits of Formosa the most formidable armada in history, provided with atomic arms, and endowed Chiang Kai-Shek with a whole range of abundant modern weapons.

Mao's military blockade of Quemoy proved partly ineffective. By being continued, it threatened to cause the collapse of the islands' garrison unless there were a more decisive intervention by the Americans to reduce the coastal batteries to silence. Then Mao suddenly ordered a cease-fire, first for one week, then for two more. It is true, in the meantime the Americans had agreed to renew the Chinese-American talks at Warsaw.

The balance-sheet of this test of strength, which at moments reached a dramatic and explosive pitch, is not yet entirely clear. Exactly what was Mao after ? To cause the collapse of the Quemoy garrison before the Americans intervened ? Did he underestimate the scope and decisiveness of that intervention ? Did he simply want to remind international public opinion about the Chinese question and obtain limited diplomatic advantages ? Or was this campaign aimed mainly at backing the unheard-of effort now being made within China for colossal objectives and results in the fields of agriculture and industry ?

Perhaps there was simultaneously a little of all that in the motives that triggered off the Quemoy conflict.

The trial-balance of this also not resolved crisis shows a different result from that of the Middle East. As against the still limited advantages for Mao — possible partial military neutralization of the coastal islands, renewal of negotiations with the United States, success in making the Chinese question timely again — Washington has demonstrated great determination in the defense of Formosa and its Chinese "ally."

The risky policy of the State Department is justified in reality, not by the importance per se of the coastal islands for the defense of Formosa, but by their being a touchstone for the real dispositions and possibilities of American imperialism in face of a possible drive by the new China.

With their hearts in their mouths, the Asiatic allies of Washington — the Philippines, Siam, South Vietnam, Japan, etc — wanted to see whether Mao's guns were already powerful enough to drive the Sixth Fleet away from the Straits of Formosa and to cause his U S protectors to abandon Chiang Kai-Shek.

Dulles's attitude means that the margin of possible retreat for Washington has henceforth become quite

narrow, and that, from this viewpoint, in each new test of strength, it will be still more difficult than in the past for the United States to draw back without running the risk of thus losing face and control over all the repercussions of such a retreat.

But on the other hand the Kremlin and Peking, fortified by the growing power of their countries, conscious of the weaknesses of imperialism and of the fact that an atmosphere of international tension is favorable to their struggle against "revisionism" on the home front, are now led to take major risks, going forward in their turn right up to "the brink of the abyss."



Under these conditions, how will the international situation develop in the coming months ?

In the Arab countries, imperialism will devote its efforts to getting Lebanon back by making it slip imperceptibly from a position of neutrality to a renewed pro-Western position, and to form a "Bourguibist" Maghreb that checks the current of Arab unification and opposes Nasserism. These attempts, however, have but little chance of success.

In the Far East it will give up neither its protection of the "allied" Formosa regime nor the build-up of its military potential. The threat represented by the after all gigantic economic strengthening of China will weigh so increasingly heavily on the destinies of the neighboring Asian countries, even Japan, that imperialism cannot permit itself any exhibitions of obvious weakness. Yet the situation in the majority of those countries, including India, will be aggravated by the fact that their production will remain insufficient compared to their needs and the growth of their populations, by the fact that in reality those countries will for these reasons become *poorer* compared to the expansive example of China.

It will not be long before a new storm bursts over Asia, in which the hurricane of the new China will blow with an unheard-of devastating force on the present social structures. Consequently the revolutionary perspectives in these regions remain good, with all that that implies of explosiveness in the international situation.

On the other hand, the situation in the metropolitan countries, and particularly in Western Europe, continues to evolve toward the right, whether in France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Holland, or even, lately, in Britain. The recent elections in these countries, as well as other manifestations, make clearly visible this slide to the right.

Apart from the influence on the masses of the economic boom of late years, the wretched reformist economic policy of the Socialists and Communists is responsible for the European masses pulling away from these parties.

Under the conditions of capitalism as now existent in these countries, it is obvious that the programme of the workers' parties can present a better and more attractive alternative to the masses only in case it aims at profound political and economic achievements that justify the striking superiority of socialism on these two planes.

Furthermore, it is not enough to have a radical socialist programme ; it is necessary also to convince the masses in practice over a whole period that the parties that claim to have such a programme are really fighting, in a consistent and decisive way, for its application.

The recession that is now spreading in Europe may under certain conditions improve the prospects of the workers' movement. While in the United States the economic conjuncture has since April experienced a slight improvement — an increase in production, a pick-up in the steel industry, a lessening of unemployment — in Western Europe the falling-off in the rate of expansion is general, unemployment greater than in 1957, the saturation of the coal and steel markets striking, as well as the decrease in exports toward the underdeveloped countries.

The evolution of the slight pick-up in the United States is still quite uncertain and runs the risk of being blocked by the European recession, — which would in its turn aggravate the latter.

It is in any case sure that the European economy is for a certain time entering a period of falling off, the results of which may rekindle the class reflex of European wage-earners. But at the same time the bourgeoisie, considerably attracted by the relatively easy success of de Gaulle's "strong state," will begin to give form to their reactionary enterprises.

There is needed a great effort of ideological — and probably in certain cases organizational — renewal of the European workers' movement if it is to be capable of forging the weapons enabling it to face effectively the offensive of the bourgeoisie and to bridge the gap which at present separates the level of the European revolution from that of the colonial revolution.

20 October 1958

Editorial Notes

THE ALGERIAN REVOLUTION AT A CROSS-ROAD

The Algerian revolution has reached a cross-roads. It is currently subjected to the joint pressure of French imperialism, of the pro-Western "Bourguibist" bourgeoisie of Tunisia and even of Morocco, and of the pro-bourgeois elements of the Ferhat Abbas sort in the F L N. In addition, the defeat suffered by the proletarian movement in France will also lie heavy on its evolution.

The coming to power of de Gaulle — his overtures, initiatives, and promises in the colonial field — have unquestionably sown a certain confusion in the Algerian ranks and strengthened the "Bourguibist" wing of the present leadership of the Algerian revolution. The new constitution, with its concessions to Negro Africa and its promises of an evolution toward independence, then the example of Guinea, the Constantine speeches, and finally the measures taken in regard to the committees of the "ultras" in Algeria — all these lure some people on with the glittering possibility of a "negotiated solution" in Algeria.

Bourguiba, who has just ostentatiously broken his last Cairo ties, and backed up — there can be no doubt — by the King of Morocco, will play all his strong cards in order to aid a compromise solution between the F L N and France.

Under these conditions, the "Bourguibist" — i.e., the pro-bourgeois, pro-imperialist — elements of the F L N will themselves be encouraged to propose "moderation" and "negotiation" with a minimum of pre-conditions. They will make the most of their "diplomatic" skill to put forward a "negotiated solution" in view of the fact that on the military field, properly so called, and to a certain extent also on the international field, things are marking time, if they are not indeed in an impasse.

Ferhat Abbas, premier of the Algerian provisional government, has hastened in this connection to make declarations of a "diplomatic flexibility" that is at least odd if indeed not frankly scandalous, among other things throwing the responsibility for the actions recently carried out in France by the F L N on its federation in the metropolis. What strangely rapid forgetfulness of his own quite recent declarations about "transferring the war to France"! Ferhat Abbas, however, would do well to remember that he is not the skilful diplomat of just any government but a member of the leadership of a revolution in full combat, whose admirable plebeian base of poor peasants and workers has so far had 600,000 victims from the barbarous imperialist repression. As for the praises that Ferhat Abbas addresses to de Gaulle, they now join with those that Messali Hadj never stops lavishing on that "noble" "great soldier," etc., with whom he already visualizes himself as seated at a Round Table, as a "valid interlocutor" for a "solution" in Algeria.

But what "negotiated solution"?

It is sure that there exists at present no important

sector of the French bourgeoisie that foresees the slightest real independence for Algeria, and that de Gaulle himself, even supposing that he can impose his will, is not in favor of such a solution, either. The most in the way of a solution would be a semblance of Algerian self-determination within the framework of the French Community, Algeria remaining in fact under the control of the metropolis. This control is needed both for the present interests of France in Algeria and for maintaining a grip on the wealth of the Sahara and the guarantee of the investments of the Constantine Plan.

The French bourgeoisie is too involved, has too many interests, in Algeria to be able to visualize the slightest real independence. The policy of the French bourgeoisie is centred around a stepped-up economic integration of Algeria and the Sahara into the metropolitan economy. All de Gaulle's guile will be used to promote a "Bourguibist" wing among the "Algerian élites" satisfied with a solution that will not be even formal independence.

The Tunisian and Moroccan bourgeoisies, licking their chops at the smell of Sahara oil, are dreaming only of coöperation with a "pacified" Algeria in a pro-Western Maghreb front, able to offset the influence of the Nasserist U A R. The prospects of the exploitation of the Sahara are currently playing a dominant role both in France's Algerian plans and in Tunisia's and Morocco's foreign orientation.

It is obvious that French capitalism needs "peace" in Algeria to bring the Sahara to fruition, a precondition furthermore for any plan of investments in Algeria. For not only does the continuation of the war compromise the chances of exploitation, but also, by its economic load, it makes it impossible to carry out the Constantine Plan (which would require a minimum of 400,000 million francs [about \$ 952,400,000] of annual grants by the metropolis).

It is now a matter of seeing whether one wing of the F L N, similarly tempted by the prospects of a certain association in the administration and especially in the pillage of Algeria and the Sahara, will not take the path of negotiated compromise sought by de Gaulle and his allies in the field of the Maghreb.

Nevertheless, the Algerian revolution is still strong on the military plane and unquestionably enjoys a deep sympathy among the Arab and colonial masses of the world. Its real weakness lies in the political orientation and structure of the leadership. To keep up the morale of its valiant combattants and of the Algerian population which, despite unheard-of sufferings and losses, backs the struggle as best it can, it is now more than urgent to define a daring social programme of the revolution, to deepen its social sense, to open up widely and clearly perspectives of deep-going social transformations which will accompany its victory over imperialism and

the settlers, beginning with a minimum : *land to the peasants who work it ; emancipation of women ; industrialization and a planned economy for the country ; adherence to a Maghrebian Federal Republic.*

Such a programme is all the more necessary because imperialism is putting forward its own economic plans of capitalist exploitation of Algeria and the Sahara, through which it is making an appeal to the pro-bourgeois elements of the revolution, and because it has indulged in giving the vote to Algerian women.

It is furthermore not sufficient to define clearly the political and social objectives of the revolution. Still more urgent is the real democratization of the F L N, of its army, of its political organization, of its administration, in order steadily to increase the politicization of the masses and consciously to associate them in the conduct of the revolution at every level. Its present monolithic and bureaucratic structure, beyond the fact that it prevents real efficiency in action and wastes an enormous part of the revolutionary energy of the masses, and that it is responsible for flagrant lacunæ in propaganda, logistics, armament, and adequate military training of the revolutionary forces, politically favors the pro-bourgeois elements of the revolution inclined to a compromise with imperialism.

It is not only the Algerian revolution that currently runs the risk of marking time and even of falling back ; it is the Arab revolution as a whole, still led by staffs

of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements. The limits of such a leadership are now appearing clearly in the light of their inability to proceed to a genuine agrarian reform and harmonious unification in an Arab federative republic.

The bourgeoisie is still too weak and too bound up with the native feudalists to be able to expropriate them without indemnization, to satisfy the peasants, and give an impulse to large-scale industrialization of the Arab countries. It is also too timorous and too tied up with imperialism to be able really to expropriate and to use the country's wealth for the development of the national economy. It also shows itself in its national fractions to be too weak and in each country too antagonistic to be able to direct a genuine unification on the inter-Arab plane.

The difficulties within the U A R between Egypt and Syria, Nasser's fear to extend the unification to include Iraq, Bourguiba's betrayal, class conflicts in Morocco — these are so many recent indications of the limits of the bourgeois leadership of the Arab revolution.

For both the Algerian revolution and the Arab revolution in general, it is urgent that, out of the mass movement, a new revolutionary socialist leadership should arise and organize itself, one that bases itself on the proletariat and the poor peasants in order to urge on the revolution and complete it.

CONCERNING THE NEW PROGRAMME OF THE AUSTRIAN SOCIALIST PARTY

The reasons why the Austrian Socialist Party has provided itself with a new programme at what might be called vertiginous speed are nowise to be sought in a need that has suddenly arisen for theoretical clarity concerning the party's future path. The real reasons are located several storeys lower down, at a very different level, and have their roots in the shock which the disappointing outcome of the last elections to the National Council gave the Austrian S P's leading stratum. The 13 May 1956 results were, not at all the expected permanent parliamentary guarantee for the coalition, but a bourgeois Austria in which the possibility of governing without and against the S P began to be sketched out. A year later, for the elections to the federal presidency, a bourgeois united front was achieved. Now despite its failure, despite the success represented by the election of Schärf, the S P leaders did not recover from their shock. Instead of saying clearly that the bourgeoisie does not have a parliamentary majority at its disposal in Austria when the working class takes a firm stand, they interpreted Schärf's success as a confirmation of the desire of the majority of the Austrian people to see the coalition maintained : instead of standing up all the more strongly against the Austrian Völkspartei, they followed the line of increased adaptation to the bourgeoisie.

The new slide to the right of the S P leaders finds its personal expression in the designation of Pittermann as the new president of the party. With Pittermann there has stepped forward that breed of political administrators who see unprincipled manoeuvres as the supreme

art in politics. The S P then also made the self-contradictory attempt at an agreement with the Catholic Church and simultaneous advances toward the liberal bourgeoisie of a traditionally anticlerical orientation, i e, the progeniture of the Nazis. By the attempt to separate the Church from the Oe V P at the cost of ideological and political concessions, it was a question of bringing pressure on the latter and keeping it favorably disposed toward coalition ; by the offers to the "liberal bourgeoisie," the F P O was to be excluded as a possible coalition partner of the Oe V P. Within the framework of this unprincipled policy, the decision to work up a new party programme was conceived only as a supplementary manoeuvre. *It was a question of showing the bourgeoisie that the S P's "socialism" did not transgress the limits of capitalism.* The open break with Marxism was to deprive the Oe V P of its argument about the "red cat." The new programme was to say to the marginal strata perpetually oscillating between the classes : "You may vote S P" even if you remain Catholic or "national." But to the extent that the new programme was to express something concrete, that was to be the *real* line of the present leading stratum of the S P. It is indeed to these tasks that the answer was given by the "draft for a new programme for the S P" which was presented to the party's Salzburg Congress in the Autumn of 1958.

In the course of the discussion, the party leadership — an unheard-of thing — ran up against an almost unanimous rejection. The draft, as a result of its wordiness, its length, and its lack of clarity, was a badly edited document even from a purely formal viewpoint, and this

circumstance contributed to its rejection; but the criticism to which it was subjected was nonetheless of a predominantly political nature. For the most rightist representatives of those "bourgeoisified" strata who in recent years have come forward in the S P and who aim the most noisily at breaking with Marxism and demanding the abolition of the old traditions and symbols, those who want to change the S P from a workers' party into a peoples' party — for these representatives the draft did not go far enough. It turns out that the hullabaloo raised by these "ballast-heavers" was greater than their weight. For the criticism of those who still base themselves consciously on the working class and who represent the potential left within the S P, carried more weight. That had to be taken into account, especially in drawing up the text of the definitive programme. The result is a document which maintains, it is true, the basic conception of the draft, but which avoids the draft's open repudiation of Marxism, which formulates the delicate passages with more caution and skill, and which has even made a complete turn concerning the attitude to take toward the revolution of the colonial peoples. The fact remains, nevertheless, that its difference from the spirit of the Linz Programme of 1926 is striking.

The Linz Programme — leaving aside its weaknesses on the question of the conquest of power by the working class — was a Marxist programme. We cannot really say as much for the new programme. In its economic goals and in its political and social demands, it does not go outside the field not only of the capitalist social order, but even of the bourgeois state, with all the attributes which that possesses in Austria, such as the break-up into provinces, the Economic Chambers, etc., which come out at every moment in the programme as facts established so to speak once for all. What was determinant for the authors of the programme was not the "vision of future society," but the text of the Federal Constitution that they had beside them.

And what now of socialism in the new programme? It is a question of a combination of a "public economy" and a "private economy" in which, side-by-side with a state "dirigism" described as planning, free competition and private entrepreneurial initiative must continue to operate.

That is why the S P calls for a more just system of property and a better functioning economic system, in which the full disposal of the decisive factors of production shall belong to the public economy. This implies that the initiative of the entrepreneur, competition, and the price mechanism will be able to operate broadly within the framework of an economy exclusively at the service of the community.

In this "socialism," they have not forgotten to introduce paritary commissions. For the workers and clerical employees the pillars of economic democracy are the trade unions and the labor exchanges, factory councils and employees' delegates; for the entrepreneurs and independent workers, they are the chambers and the free representations of interests. The pillars of economic democracy are to form economic commissions which will aid the government as well as the legislative bodies in economic problems.

To the extent that orientation and planning are in question here, they must be limited to investment and

finance policies, i e, to Keynes's well known recipes for guaranteeing full employment. In other words, the "socialism" of the new programme is nothing but a sort of transposition of the coalition system into the economic field. But such phrases as those where it is said that enterprises "whose situation of power endangers the general economic and political interest" must be socialized, are words that commit to nothing, compared to a policy which is ever more in retreat before the attacks of the Oe V P against nationalized industry. After all, it was necessary to call these enterprises by their names, i e, certain institutions and industries, e g, the banks, raw-material firms, etc. Of course, that would have been too binding!

The programme having been thus laid out in its fundamental part in such a way that it could be accepted also by the bourgeoisie, it might have been expected that at least in its immediate demands it would have defended specifically workers' interests. That is not the case, either. The Linz Programme had included in its immediate part a large number of suitably deepened and strongly emphasized demands. But the new programme scarcely goes beyond generalities and phrases that do not commit to anything. In important fields, it remains far behind the Linz Programme that was considered to have been outstripped. There is a lot about democracy, but it chooses for example the field of the particularism of the provinces, which was imposed on the working class in 1920 under extreme reactionary pressure, whereas the first political demand of the Linz Programme was "the unitary Republic on the basis of a democratic local administration instead of the Federal State." The new programme thus helps to perpetuate the domination of reactionary cliques in the majority of the federal states. It abandons the demand for the total separation of Church and State, which is in itself a specific demand not of socialism but of bourgeois democracy, and in Austria, where, despite all the assertions of pious Socialist cabinet-ministers, the Catholic Church constitutes one of the main supports of the power of the bourgeoisie, that is of the highest importance. But the new programme capitulates in ideology and in practice before the Church.

The true axis of the new programme is the interests of the bourgeoisified workers' bureaucracy, precisely that stratum that holds the leadership of the S P. This line found its open expression in the draft. The definitive text is a concession made to those forces in the S P that continue to base themselves on the workers' rank and file in the party. In this connection it must not be lost sight of that this workers' base had on the whole a passive attitude during the discussion; the discussion, properly so called, took place within a stratum of members limited in number compared to the membership as a whole. The criticism of the potential left wing, weak and unorganized, did not endanger the draft's basic line, the policy of coalition raised to the height of a party dogma; it scarcely dared even to attack it. But it was strong enough to prevent an open break with Marxism, and to oblige the programme commission to formulate certain passages more skilfully. And on one point the commission even had to make a complete turn.

The draft had found the means of reducing to the same common denominator of dictatorship: fascism, that sanguinary tool of big capital; the regime of bureaucra-

tically degenerated or deformed workers' states; and the regimes that arose from the anti-imperialist liberation struggle of "backward" and oppressed peoples! Democratic socialism, the draft said peremptorily, is the "mortal enemy" of all these regimes!

The definitive text of the programme dodged taking a position on the problem of the workers' states, by shoving them under the table. But concerning the liberation struggle of the colonies, it now says:

[. . .] the Oe S P rejects the imperialist policy of the old capitalist powers, as well as the policy of imperialist expansion of Soviet Communism. It calls for the rapid liquidation of the vestiges of colonialism, and salutes the liberation movement of all peoples.

The Oe S P considers indispensable a collaboration on a basis of equality of rights and free consent between the highly developed industrial states

and the countries in a condition of economic (under-) development. Only a substantial raising of the standard of living of these peoples creates the conditions for the development of democracy. Any economic aid must be granted without political conditions [. . .].

Leaving aside the "policy of imperialist expansion of Soviet Communism," we have here the best phrases of the whole programme. Even though the criticism of the left had something to do with it, this change of opinion also reflects the modification in the relationship of forces on a world scale, to the disadvantage of imperialism which has occurred and which continues thanks to the advances of the colonial revolution. And it is therein that lies — despite the camouflaged break with its own past — the hope of a development favorable to the proletarian-socialist forces within the Austrian Socialist Party.

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

The Scarborough Conference of the Labour Party took place in the shadow of growing discontent within the ranks at the ineffectiveness of the Labour Opposition. A recent Gallup Poll revealed that the mass of the voters do not see a fundamental difference between the policies of the Labour and Tory Parties. At the same time, four-fifths of Labour supporters, and even many Tory voters, wished for a more left-wing policy on the part of the Labour Party in order to distinguish it more clearly from the Conservatives. Had an election been held this year it has been seriously suggested that the Tory Government could have won for the third consecutive time (something unknown in Britain for generations).

Before the Conference, the leadership was worried about a possible reflection of this mood in a revolt of the rank and file against the tame policies developed by the leadership in recent years. They decided, therefore, to take no chances, and in effect "rigged" the Conference. Arrangements were in the control of the well-oiled party machine and its boss, General Secretary Morgan Philips. This was very clear in the debate on the main document, "Plan for Progress." Cousins, who had permitted himself the luxury of opposition on the education question, in this decisive debate came out squarely in support of the platform. In the debate, hardly an oppositional voice was raised.

Gaitskell made a whole series of far-reaching promises as to the policy of the next Labour Government: full employment, advancing production, higher wages, lower prices, health, housing, pensions, schools. He left one detail out of account — how all this could be achieved within the framework of a capitalist economy, and a capitalist economy, moreover, spinning rapidly towards a deepening slump. It is true that he (Gaitskell) succeeded in mentioning socialism. But how this can be a substitute for a socialist programme he did not indicate.

Bevan defended the orthodox foreign-policy line at Conference, continuing the retreat that had begun with his sell-out last year. It remained true, as last year, that the

"Left" failed completely to develop any alternative lead.

The leadership succeeded in its attempt to run the Conference as an election rally, with "unity to beat" the Tories as the keynote theme. The rank and file, who want a socialist policy, accepted what the platform put forward in the belief that, with steel and road transport renationalized and the promised reforms effected, things would not be too bad.

Following the Conference, Gaitskell made a tour of the areas most affected by unemployment, and repeated to the unemployed many of the promises which he made at the Conference. All this is in preparation for the next election, which could be held next year. If unemployment reaches a million this winter, which is quite likely, it is virtually certain that Labour will win.

Under conditions of economic crisis, then will come the reckoning; in an effort to rally support, Gaitskell and the right wing have placed a noose round their necks in advance. The masses do not learn from theory, but from experience. This applies especially to the organized masses in the British Labour Movement, with its empirical tradition.

Symptomatic of the state of affairs in the Labour Party was the bureaucratic way in which a resolution on France, incorporating a demand for the expulsion of the Mollet Socialists from the International, was removed from the agenda. It is clear, moreover, that after over three decades of fighting Stalinist "infiltration," and a decade of combating small Marxist groups, Labour's bureaucratic machine is highly skilled in crushing all opposition. Each year it has become more and more perfect. But what the highly skilled manoeuvrers do not understand is that the will of the working class to change society is unbreakable. When the eyes of the rank and file are opened to the inadequacies of the Transport House programme to bring socialism, or to defend, alone improve, the gains of the working class, this smooth and highly efficient machine will crack.

Meanwhile the small forces of Marxism within the Party are making progress, small and unspectacular, but sure. Events will come to their assistance.

RACE RIOTS IN BRITAIN

The racial clashes in London and the English Midlands achieved headline treatment in the world press. Nottingham and Notting Hill were the scenes of brutal attacks on the Negro minority in Britain.

Colored immigration into Britain has assumed importance only since the Second World War. People from the West Indies, Pakistan, Ghana, and Nigeria — the bulk being from

the West Indies — have emigrated to the main industrial areas in Britain: London, Nottingham, Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Newcastle. Yet even now there are only 190,000 of such immigrants in a population of over 50 million.

This migration since the war has been based on the prolonged boom which, until the last few years, meant a

chronic shortage of labor in the metropolitan country. Colored workers, among others (Irish, Poles, Italians), filled jobs which British workers were leaving for less hazardous or more lucrative work. Thus employers in the building industry, the mines, the buses, and factories where a large amount of unskilled work was required, took the opportunity to use this new supply of labor power. Especially in Jamaica, where chronic unemployment affected one-third of the workers, Britain seemed a new Mecca of hope. For one-third unemployment in Jamaica meant what six million unemployed would mean in Britain.

In the last 20 years, one and a half million Irish workers have entered Britain, to take up largely unskilled jobs; and there has been an immigration of half a million workers from Europe — Poles, Hungarians, and so on, since the Second World War. At the same time, one and a half million British workers have emigrated to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the colonies. Two hundred thousand, more than the total of colored immigrants, left Britain in one year alone — 1957. There have been twice as many white immigrants into Britain from the Dominions as there have been colored immigrants. The fact is, of course, that whereas immigrants from such places as Australia and even Ireland have been quickly absorbed into the white population, the Asians, Africans, and West Indians are conspicuous by their appearance. There are in fact only four colored to every thousand white inhabitants, concentrated mainly in the large industrial areas in England.

The roots of the problem underlying the riots lie in 300 years of colonialist propaganda, which has resulted in ignorance and prejudice against the Negro people. In addition, there has been a chronic housing shortage in Britain, as elsewhere, since the war, and a contraction of the labor market, wherein unskilled jobs are less readily available than before. Another point has been that, debarred from residence in the "better" areas, the Negro immigrants have tended to become concentrated in ghettos in the larger cities. Only in Birmingham has the progressive policy of the Labour municipal authority ensured the widespread distribution of the colored population throughout the city.

The prejudices resultant from all these causes are so deep-rooted as even to have affected more backward layers of the trade-union movement. As a whole, however, the Labour movement has stood firm, especially as British colonial policy has for generations been "free access to the 'Mother' country."

In the first attack, in Nottingham, the assaults were by hooligans and lumpenproletarians, and all took place in one area where many colored residents are concentrated. This outburst, a "spontaneous" one, was evidently unplanned, but had been building up in a series of attacks on colored people in the previous months. The Notting Hill attack, by contrast, showed clear evidence of detailed fascist pre-planning, and is the terminal point of years of fascist activity and propaganda in the area. Notting Hill is a district partly lumpen, partly criminal, and partly Bohemian — a locality particularly susceptible, under these conditions, to fascist poison. It is noteworthy that in such areas as Brixton, Islington and Hackney, all places overwhelmingly working-class in composition, all efforts at racist incitement have thus far met failure. With the growth of mass unemployment, however, the situation would become far more dangerous.

Only now is the Labour movement beginning to awaken to the dangers of the situation, though the Labour Party and trade unions have waged no real campaign on the question. In the areas affected, there has been the disgraceful spectacle of Labour MPs bending to reactionary pressure. Rogers in London and Harrison of Nottingham actually came out for a disguised form of restriction of immigration.

Yet the problem of immigration and the integration of immigrants is not a new one in Britain. Two generations ago there were riots against Irish immigrants in Lancashire and other areas, arising directly from competition for unskilled jobs. At that time the trade-union movement was far weaker

than at present, and the danger of the living standards of those already employed being depressed by unorganized labor was correspondingly far greater. At many of the cotton mills, notices advertising work on the factory gates carried the words: "No Irish need apply." The last remnants of this struggle linger in the muted conflict between Roman Catholics and Orangemen in Liverpool, Edinburgh, and Glasgow.

After the initial outbursts, the ruling class decided on drastic measures to stop the hooligan attacks on the colored people and their property. They had allowed the immigration to proceed so far precisely because of the contradictory world situation in which they find themselves. The situation since the Second World War is entirely different from that of the past. Churchill could wage a campaign against a grant of limited rights to India on the grounds that the people were not sufficiently capable of governing themselves; now, with the awakening of the Asian and African peoples, it is no longer possible to contain the movement for national independence in this way or to preserve the fiction of British and white supremacy.

Equally important is the fact that the struggle between the USSR and the Western imperialisms has as one of its main expressions the fight for the allegiance of the colonial and semi-colonial ruling classes — a factor which, among others, has contributed to the loosening of the bonds of the Negro people in the USA since the end of the war. Under these conditions, the ruling class in Britain had more to lose than to gain from such activities. Draconian sentences were imposed, even on first offenders.

It would be wrong to think that there is a deeply rooted and ingrained racial prejudice. Two-thirds of those interviewed in a Gallup poll said that they had no prejudice, and of the balance most were wavering and only a small percentage admitted to prejudice all the way. This is of course not decisive. They can be swayed one way or the other by a strong lead.

In this connection, a good campaign has been waged by the Labour MPs, Brockway and Baird, for acts of parliament to prohibit all discrimination. Where flagrant discrimination has been in operation the Labour movement locally has taken the initiative in opposing it. On a national scale, moreover, the musicians' union has banned its members in dance bands from playing in dance halls which carry on a discriminatory policy, and has not hesitated to expel certain musicians who contravened this ban.

Facing up to the situation, the Afro-West Indian Union, an organization formed in Nottingham some three years ago, put out a pamphlet, *Don't Blame the Blacks — for Unemployment*, even before the riots, in anticipation of "difficulties." This organization has developed the only programme which can carry forward the struggle — that is, the integration of the Negro workers in Britain into the trade unions and Labour Party. The bus strike in London, and other strikes, have demonstrated that in common struggle real links between white and colored workers can and will be forged.

The Labour leadership, as usual, has awakened only after the issue could no longer be avoided. They have issued a firm and uncompromising statement condemning all forms of discrimination, and have pledged the next Labour Government to legislate against every manifestation of the color bar. At the same time, the statement has not been used as the basis for a campaign throughout the movement and in the country at large.

The most disturbing symptom of these outbreaks has been the participation of youths who have been indiscriminately labelled as "Teddy boys." The crisis of capitalism and of the Labour Movement is reflected in the emptiness of existence and lack of purpose for youth. In spite of higher living standards than before the war, the lives of the young are narrow, empty, and meaningless. The ageing Labour Party has no point of attraction with its right-wing policy. Youth

requires audacity and a programme "to storm heaven." If already, at a time when unemployment is still small, there have been these manifestations among the youth, what may happen when the youth, leaving the schools, will find no jobs, and many of those holding jobs will be thrown out of work? The youth can be won for socialism, but only by a bold campaign for the transformation of society, at the same

time explaining the interdependent rôle of the colonial areas and Britain.

The working class can be won to a programme demanding a socialist Britain whose economy is linked with those of the newly liberated colonies on a basis of free and equal partnership and cooperation.

MASSIVE LEFTWARD GROUNDSWELL IN CHILE

In the recent presidential elections in Chile, Alessandri, candidate of the consolidated right, squeezed out a victory over Allende, representing a coalition of the Socialist and Communist Parties plus other small popular forces, by about 383,000 to 354,000, i.e., less than 30,000 votes. Had the leftward-moving middle-class vote not been split by the Radical candidacy of Frei (250,000) and the "Social" candidacy of Bossay (190,000), Allende would have been swept up into power.

From the Santiago *Mercurio* to the *New York Times*, the conservative bourgeois press, though thankful for Alessandri's election, showed itself thoroughly alarmed by the strength behind Allende. And well it might be. The vote for the socialist candidate, rallying almost the entire working class, newly large sectors of the peasantry, and the more advanced strata of the urban middle class, constituted the greatest leftist concentration in the history of Chilean politics, and gave a resounding demonstration of the polarization of class forces in Chile. Particularly significant was the fact that in farming regions such as Talca, Chillán, and Molina, once bastions of the right, a very large number of poor peasants and rural proletarians swung over to back Allende.

The degree and speed of the politicization of the Chilean masses is shown by a simple confrontation of figures: only one-and-a-half years ago, the combined vote of the C P and the S P was only 160,000, less than half Allende's 354,000. The principal factor in this rapid and widespread trend was that Allende ran on an openly socialist ticket, with a programme which, though reformist rather than revolutionary in nature, was a progressive and a class one. As has been seen recently time and again all over the world, the vacillating middle class, seeking a new way out of its hopeless and confusing difficulties, is never won over by wishy-washy watered-down programmes; it seeks and will follow only a clear strong lead. And the lead that Allende gave was a stronger one than had been given in late years by the workers' parties, which had aroused distrust among the urban middle class by their failure to drive hard on a consistent and decisive anti-capitalist anti-imperialist programme.

The factor of next importance to the programme was the extraordinary drive and energy displayed by the workers in the campaign. Throughout the country there were created thousands of Allendist united-front committees, a high proportion of which did not dissolve after the elections. In the heartening groundswell that gave renewed confidence to the forces of the left, thousands of former members rejoined the workers' parties; and, what is more important, an eager and enthusiastic youth made its entrance on the political scene. Perhaps most important of all was the considerable swing of the rural regions toward the Workers' Front, showing that the awakening peasantry is beginning to realize that its natural allies are the urban workers with their socialist programme.

It must not be forgotten that these Chilean developments are taking place, not in a vacuum, but on a continent in increasing ferment, where in the limitrophe country of Bolivia the revolutionary situation has reached an explosive pitch at which, if the workers still lack the organizations to lead them to the seizure of power, the capitalist state is in a condition of such chaos and weakness that it cannot even crush the organs of virtual dual power which have spontaneously arisen in several large areas.

The next period in Chile will be a critical one. Alessandri,

with a mere 30% of the votes, has obviously only a weak and shaky base, and faces a majority of the Chilean people who are determined to fight against unemployment, rising prices, hunger, and poverty, who clamor for decent housing, and who will not swallow any more of imperialism's Klein-Sachs Plans. As Alessandri tries to apply the Klein-Sachs Plan with ever greater rigor, to narrow down democratic rights, and even to reintroduce the outrageous Ley de Defensa de la Democracia outlawing various workers' parties, he will run up against strong spontaneous resistance.

The question is whether that resistance will be, as in the past, scattered and ill-organized by a left whose leadership is wholly occupied in internecine conflicts, class collaborationism, and various kinds of shady deals, or whether the Workers' United Front established for the elections will be continued, strengthened, and extended, with a continuance of the existing committees on a national scale, and the adoption of a more revolutionary class programme.

In the former case, the immensely encouraging leftward groundswell shown in these elections can spend its force ineffectively, with little gained. To realize how real this danger is, it suffices to recall how, after the March 1957 elections, with their 160,000 votes, the sole reaction of the bureaucratic C P and S P leaderships was to try to make opportunistic deals with the Radicals, Christian-Democrats, and others of that ilk, in order, they alleged, to extend the movement to broader popular sectors; or to see that already this time the C P leadership's first reaction was to complain that it had been criticized for trying to make a deal with the Radicals and Christian-Democrats for a coalition (and of course class-collaborationist) government, while within the S Ps also right-wing voices are increasingly heard calling for various opportunist tricks.

But if the second course is followed, a new and promising period opens in Chile. As a first stage, it is necessary for the workers' parties to show the masses that they were not appealed to on a mere temporary electioneering basis, that programmes are not just talk but action, and that the workers' parties are capable in practice of waging the struggle for: completing the unionization of the urban and rural workers to make the C U T into a genuine mass labor federation on a basis of nationwide and vertical unionism; nationalizing the giant imperialist corporations without indemnization and under workers' control; establishing a real monopoly of foreign trade; joining in a Latin-American raw-materials pool in defense against imperialism's rigged market; breaking down customs barriers among the Latin-American countries; establishing the sliding scale of wages and hours; expropriating without indemnization the great landed estates and distributing them to the landless peasants; drawing up and putting into effect a plan for workers' housing to be financed by special taxes on the rich; annulling constitutional provisions which deny voting rights to those who have never had the chance to learn to read and write, and lowering the voting age to 18; and driving for the constitution of a C P - S P - C U T government. Such a programme, combining immediate and transitional demands, neither tepidly timid nor impractically adventurous, would rally the vacillating urban middle class and the awakening peasantry to the side of the ever more self-confident workers.

It is such a programme, as a first step, that the Chilean Trotskyists fought for during the Allende campaign, and that they propose to continue and extend in the period ahead.

REMARKS ON THE NEW PROGRAMME OF THE JUGOSLAV COMMUNISTS

By MICHEL PABLO

We now have the final text of the programme of the League of Yugoslav Communists adopted at their VIIth National Congress. This enables us to form more exact, more overall, and more objective views of this remarkable theoretical document. A reading of it immediately reveals the deeper reasons for the frantic campaign launched by the Kremlin and Peking against "Yugoslav revisionism."

What is in question is, among other things, a thorough criticism of Stalinist revisionism, its doctrines and its practices. This revision of Stalinism is the indirect result of the Yugoslav Communists' efforts to think the questions of socialism through theoretically in the light of their own experience.

What is immediately striking about their document is the spontaneity and freshness of a thinking that has rid itself of clichés and schemata, trying to grasp problems with the help of the creative method of revolutionary Marxism.

The Yugoslav document, far from "theorizing a posteriori the opportunist practices of a bureaucracy that has set itself up as a dominant privileged caste, as is the case with Stalinist political and "theoretical" literature, demonstrates a real and very serious effort at theoretical construction, broadly free, so to speak. Naturally, shortcomings in this construction, reflecting the incidence of the historical formation, the situation, and the present role of the Yugoslav leadership, are not lacking, and we shall point them out. But, by comparison with Stalinist productions, the Yugoslav document is unquestionably a remarkable contribution by a communist political current operating with a great freedom of thought. By this fact alone the document would have a "subversive," "explosive" character if it were known and acknowledged as a platform by a "brother" party in the U S S R, in China, and in the other "people's democracies."

It would introduce there a method of anti-dogmatic thinking, while yet clearly bringing out the "present questions of socialism" and the general way of tackling them. That is to say, it would introduce there a method of thinking, ideas, and problems, that are flatly opposed to official "thinking." It would at the same time strikingly demonstrate the unquestionable ideological superiority of the Yugoslav Communists both over the "theoretical" improvisations of the XXth Congress and the "reports" and "theses" of Comrade Khrushchev, and over the rudimentary pragmatism, often neo-Stalinist in essence, of the Chinese leaders.

The Yugoslav document furthermore contains a devastating and scarcely camouflaged criticism of Sta-

linism both as theory and as practice. It was therefore necessary to cast absolute discredit on this "heretical" document and exclude any idea of causing it to be made known and discussed in even the most slightly amicable and objective manner. The articles thenceforward devoted regularly in each number of *La Nouvelle Revue Internationale* — on the model of the late *For a Lasting Peace*... during the 1948-1953 period — to attacking "Yugoslav revisionism" are significant of the way in which the Kremlin and Peking conceive of "objective" information and discussion. We shall later on give some examples. As for our movement, we can only be enormously pleased that a Communist current is trying by its thinking to reaffiliate itself to the creative method and ideas of revolutionary Marxism and has been led to a critical revision of the monstrous deviation represented by Stalinism in the field of theory and practice.

★

The new programme of the Yugoslavs ends with a fine sentence that summarizes the critical and creative spirit that animates their thought :

[...] we must remain critical of ourselves and our work, be uncompromising toward all kinds of dogmatism, and stay faithful to the revolutionary creative spirit of Marxism. Nothing that has been created should be so sacred to us that it cannot be transcended and superceded by something still freer, more progressive, and more human.

The Yugoslavs like to stress that Marxism is not a congealed teaching or a system of dogmas, but that it proceeds by the "bold and impartial search for truth" — which leads them quite properly to consider the "dogmatization" of Marxism — a term by which they mean its Stalinist deformation — as the most harmful "revisionist" aspect of Marxism at the present time.

The Yugoslavs in their thinking try to grasp reality not only in a merely critical but in a dialectical way, i e, to grasp it in its contradictions in perpetual struggle. Such an approach to reality and "truth" is, furthermore, inconceivable without the free struggle of ideas.

In theory at least, the Yugoslavs seem to be perfectly conscious both of the contradictions of the period of transition from capitalism to socialism and of the need of finding the "path to socialism" through the free struggle of ideas :

Naturally these processes often go through diffi-

cult periods of struggle, convulsion, error, groping, and temporary setback. [. . .]

The construction of socialism in the transition period, therefore, cannot be left to peaceful, smooth and uniform operation by the leading forces of socialist society ; it is an organic social progress developing through its own internal contradictions. In the course of this process socialist society gradually eliminates the vestiges of the exploitation systems and their ideologies, and at the same time it eliminates its own transitional and obsolete relations and forms — its own errors and conservatism.

The contradictions and conflicts of the transitional period cannot be solved administratively, by the intervention of an authoritative and all-powerful state, but only

gradually, through long evolutionary processes and *the conflict of opinion*, in line with the development of the material foundations of socialist society and with the formation of socialist social consciousness. [Our italics.]

The theoretical developments contained in the programme of the Yugoslav Communists can be schematically classified in four main heads, concerning : state capitalism, state bureaucratism, theory of the transitional proletarian state, and role of the communist party. We shall also stress elsewhere their conceptions concerning foreign and cultural policies.

“STATE CAPITALISM”

AND THE TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM

Comrade Ernest Germain, in the article he devoted to the draft of the Yugoslav programme in the Summer issue of *Fourth International*, cast critical light on the Yugoslav conceptions about state capitalism. I must add the following remarks thereto.

The criticisms that the Kremlin apologists make of the Yugoslavs' conception of “state capitalism” are, naturally, inexact and completely deform both the letter and the spirit of their writings. It is completely false that the programme of the Yugoslavs states that the capitalist regime “has ceased to be capitalist” or that the state “seems to be setting itself above the classes,” or is “balancing between the classes,” or that a “transformation by an evolutionary path from capitalism to socialism might be possible,” as Y Ostrovitianov and V Tchepakov write in the October 1958 number of the *Nouvelle Revue Internationale*. There are whole sentences in the programme, as well as in the final report of Kardelj, which textually contradict these lying affirmations.

But what is true, and what Comrade Germain already pointed out, is a certain obscurity still existing in the text between very clear statements concerning the control of the capitalist state by monopolies and the distinguishing of a “state capitalist bureaucracy,” to which an autonomous role seems sometimes to be attributed. Now this “state capitalist bureaucracy” is

composed of capitalists, i e, elements themselves owning capitalist property, agglomerated with a majority of elements at the service of the *bourgeoisie*. That is to say that it is a question rather of a capitalist “state bureaucracy,” namely of a layer ensuring the functioning of the capitalist state controlled by the monopolies and the big bourgeoisie, than of a “state capitalist bureaucracy” to some extent distinct from such a role.

The question is important for the following reasons :

The term “state bureaucracy” covers different social contents and different functions, even though they have deep characteristics in common, depending on whether it is a capitalist state, the state of an underdeveloped country, or a workers' state, that is in question. In the first case we have a bureaucracy that ensures the functioning of the capitalist state controlled by the big bourgeoisie ; in the second, it partly takes on the role of stimulating the development of a national bourgeois class ; in the third, the “state bureaucracy” deforms and hinders the socialist development of the new society, while being dependent on its economic and social foundations.

In the first two cases the “state bureaucracy” serves the development of capitalism. In the third case, it deforms and blocks the development of socialism.

Hence when speaking of a “state bureaucracy,” it is right to take into account the *social nature* of the state in question. But this is important also in connection with the transition to socialism.

If the “state capitalist bureaucracy” in the case of capitalist states is of a profoundly capitalist nature, and if at the same time the grip of monopoly capital thereon grows stronger, with evolution, instead of weaker, as the Yugoslavs admit in their programme, all equivocal allusions to a possible greater participation or association of the working class in the power in these countries must in reality be excluded.

Extensions of “state capitalism” by “nationalizations” and other interventionist measures, though *economically* they approach socialism, *politically* — as assumed by a state of a profoundly capitalist nature which, from this viewpoint, grows *stronger* — only render more imperious the working class's need, not to associate itself with this mechanism, not to appropriate it gradually, *but to break it and to reconstruct it*.

Now in the Yugoslav programme and the explanations of such leaders as Kardelj, there are several unquestionable ambiguities and contradictions about the so-called “peaceful,” “evolutionary” path toward socialism. Let us take for example the section — a very interesting one, incidentally — of the programme subtitled “The People's Government as a Form of Dictatorship of the Proletariat.” It states there :

The steady growth of the forces of socialism on a world-wide scale, and the increase of their influence on the general development of society, will cause *an even greater abundance of diverse political forms of dictatorship of the proletariat* to appear in the future — *from revolutionary*

dictatorship to parliamentary government in which the working class and its social and economic interests wield decisive influence. It is possible for the class struggle, while developing toward a dictatorship of the proletariat, to increase this diversity even further *with various transitional forms of specific dual rule* and compromise in which the growing influence of working class interests will be in evidence — until that influence becomes predominant in the political form which results from the concrete conditions of the class struggle. [Our italics.]

Is a "parliamentary government in which the working class and its social and economic interests wield decisive influence" a form of "dictatorship of the proletariat," or rather a yet further transitional form of "dual rule" evolving toward the "dictatorship of the proletariat"?

The question is raised both because in practice a "parliamentary government" that is not exclusively proletarian has not yet been seen to be in fact a form of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" and because by its very nature the dictatorship of the proletariat, according to the programme itself, is "the social substance of a government and political system in which *the leading role of the working class is undisputed.*" (Our italics.)

Now the programme correctly adds :

In that sense the undisputed leading role of the working class means not merely the simple presence of a workers' party in the government, but such relationships between class and political forces in the country whereby the working class and its leading socialist forces [...] are in a position to change social relationships, in accordance with their social and economic interests, and really do change them.

Consequently, a distinction must be made between *transitional government toward the dictatorship of the proletariat, including "workers' and peasants' government," and dictatorship of the proletariat,* in which the working class is *socially and politically dominant.*

Can that final form be reached by the "evolutionary" path, "gradually," the working class gradually increasing its influence over the economic and political apparatus of the capitalist state by its growing role in for example the "nationalizations" and "parliament," as the programme here and there intimates?

The clarification brought to this question by Kardelj is also not satisfactory, in our opinion. Kardelj says :

The programme starts out from the idea that the peaceful path in reality constitutes only one form of the revolution.

Essentially evolution constitutes a quantitative accumulation of factors in social development, and these factors, having reached a given degree, inevitably require a jump from quantity into a higher quality.

This is in fact the substance of the revolution. In this sense, evolution and revolution represent two sides of a single process. The jump itself, however, may be made by means of a violent revolutionary conflict or by a series of such conflicts, *but it can equally well be made by means of a relatively peaceful process, during which the working class and the vanguard socialist forces gradually win a leading role in the power and in social life, and gradually bring about a socialist transformation by a series of measures abolishing exploitation, nationalizing the means of production, and assuming the incontestable leading role of the social and economic interests of the working class in overall social developments, i e, by a series of measures of an essentially revolutionary nature.*

Can the jump itself be broken down into a series of economic and political measures taken "gradually"? In this case, would it not be a question rather of a prolongation of the evolution, causing the revolution, which constitutes the "jump," to disappear?

The revolution consists, not in the "revolutionary" nature of the measures, of "reforms" "gradually" applied, but in the complete seizure at a given moment of the *political power* of the bourgeoisie, which enables the revolution to *break* the old state machinery, *to remake it*, and only thus, under the new political regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat, with new state machinery, to be able radically to transform the former society economically and socially. Whether this revolutionary act can be performed in a "relatively peaceful" way depends on the resistance of the bourgeoisie. But any illusion about a gradual and peaceful penetration of the working class in the economic and political management of the capitalist state can only prove fatal to the proletariat. The recent example of France is there to show once more that this "new path to socialism" is in practice excluded for the proletariat of capitalist countries. ¹

On the other hand, one cannot fail to be completely in agreement with the Yugoslavs on the various forms that will be taken by "dual rule," the last step before the dictatorship of the proletariat, as well as the latter. One can also only be completely in agreement with them about the possibility that a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat will be assumed not

¹ Kardelj's explanation seems to us to be close to that which Mikoyan gave on the same question at the XXth Congress. Khrushchev, for his part, has jumped with both feet into what may be called "revolution by evolution". As for the Communist Parties, they immediately interpreted this conception as a theoretical justification for their opportunist practice of class collaboration and the "popular front." It is consequently comic, to say the least, to see the theoreticians of the *Nouvelle Revue Internationale* now reproaching the Yugoslavs for their "evolutionary revisionism" and drawing themselves up as the stern defenders of the revolutionary struggle "to break the old machine of the capitalist state and create a new socialist state"! (Article of Y Ostrovitranov and V Tcheppravkov in the October number of the *Nouvelle Revue Internationale*.)

exclusively by the revolutionary Marxist party alone but in alliance with other soviet parties, i e, parties that accept the constitutional legality of the proletarian state.

And that is a new and important progressive development in the thinking of the Yugoslav Communists.

Their programme states :

The League of Yugoslav Communists is also of the opinion that the proclamation of absolute monopoly by the Communist Party of political power as a universal and "perpetual" principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of socialist development is an untenable dogma.

This idea is the result of the conception that neither the revolution nor socialism are the exclusive work of the revolutionary Marxist vanguard but of the initiative and the action of *the democratically organized class as a whole.*

The Yugoslavs are thus engaged in abandoning the Stalinist bureaucratic conception that substituted the party for the class (and in reality, the leadership for the party)² and in theoretically considering, for the moment at least, the *system of several parties* as a possibility in "socialist democracy."

In the chapter titled "The Political System of Government of the Working People," the programme says :

² The theoreticians of the *Nouvelle Revue Internationale* recall for us the N° 1 article of faith for all good Stalinists: "The Communist Party is the supreme form of organization of the working class, and *the dictatorship* [of the proletariat] *can be ensured only by the vanguard that has concentrated in itself the revolutionary energy of that class.*" (Our italics.) (Vide *Nouvelle Revue Internationale*, September 1958: article by Glaeserman and B Oukraintsev.)

Hence, the Communists are not faced with the alternative of a multi-party or a one-party system. Both alternatives may be valid during a particular period in socialist development in different countries. They are faced with the problem of deciding what new forms of democracy should be brought into being by socialist development ; what new forms are required by social relations based on social ownership over the means of production ? When referring to the multi or one-party systems as initial forms of socialist democracy, *one should not lose sight of the fact that socialist democracy does not exclude, but rather presupposes a variety and versatility of concrete forms of democracy in different countries, [...] during various phases of socialist development.* [Our italics.]

This very important idea is completed by the affirmation that "Socialist democracy does not involve the abolition of political organizations in general," which are on the contrary indispensable, among other things as "a platform for the airing of divergent points of view, thus giving expression to objective social contradictions."

It is another question whether the application of these ideas in the Yugoslav case is still summed up in the existence of organisms of "direct democracy" and the political organizations of the League of Communists and the Socialist Alliance of the Working People, *without the existence as yet of the right to create other political parties operating within the Yugoslav constitutional framework.*

We shall speak of these questions again when we examine the Yugoslavs' theory of the proletarian state.

[In the next issue : *State Bureaucratism, Theory of the Proletarian State in Transition, and the Role of the Communist Party.*]

THE INDUSTRIALIZATION OF BACKWARD COUNTRIES

By ERNEST GERMAIN

1. THE THEORETICAL SETTING OF THE PROBLEM

"Poverty breeds poverty": this simple formula which has become a platitude still summarizes all the wisdom of most economists on the subject, bourgeois and Marxist alike. What they mean, in Marxist terms, goes more or less like this. Backwardness means a low level of productivity, a low level of productivity stems in the last resort from a low level of fixed capital equipment and of industrialization. But industrialization means (under capitalism) capital accumulation, and in any case a larger social surplus product. The poorer a country, the greater the part of its current production that is necessary (and barely sufficient) to maintain the mass of the producers at a low level of subsistence. Hence, the poorer a country, the lower its rate of capital accumulation, the lower its social surplus product. Hence, the poorer a country, the slower its industrialization: poverty breeds poverty.

We shall return in a moment to one of the main links in this chain of reasoning: "the poorer a country, the smaller its surplus product." This formula is correct only as a most sweeping historical generalization, i e, if for example a purely feudal society is compared to modern industrial capitalism. It ceases to be true if one compares the *relative* poverty of present-day societies, which are all more or less products of *combined development*. But in any case, the traditional emphasis of the reasoning lies on the *supply side* of fixed capital equipment, not on the *demand* side.

It has been the merit of Professor Nurkse,¹ whatever mistakes he also makes in the assumption of a low social surplus product in backward countries, decisively to change this emphasis, and to rediscover a truth long known to Marxists (e g, Lenin and Trotsky in their writings on Russia before 1914), i e, that the real vicious circle of poverty works the other way round.

It is not because a country is poor that it lacks financial resources for industrialization; it is because a country is poor that it lacks *a market which makes industrialization a profitable business from the capitalist point of view*. Because of the absence of this market, capital (the social surplus product) is invested in other fields than industry (trade, buying and speculation in real estate, hoarding, or, paradoxically, capital export). Therefore, the level of industrialization remains low, the level of productivity of labor remains

low, and the country remains poor, which means that there is no stimulus for private industrial enterprise. "Poverty breeds poverty."

In his recently published and to a large extent very valuable book, Paul A Baran, who is one of the rare American Marxists to teach at a university (Stanford) draws an impressive picture of the social surplus product in backward countries.² He mentions the huge part of the agricultural product appropriated by landlords and money-lenders (usually up to 50% of the national agricultural product in many backward countries, and as agricultural production itself represents more than 50% of the national product of such countries, this reveals the existence of a social surplus product on the order of 25-30% of the total product!). He further mentions the income of the great number of intermediaries between the countryside and the city, and inside the city itself, whom he aptly describes as *lumpenbourgeoisie*, a group so numerous that, even if it is not composed of individually prosperous persons, it absorbs quite a fraction of the national product. He finally mentions government income and native capitalist income, as well as income of foreign-owned plantations, mines, and other enterprises, which in some countries (e g, Rhodesia), represents a huge fraction of the national income.

We may therefore say that the central problem is not that of *creating* resources which make industrialization possible, but one of *reallocating* existing resources in order to industrialize the country. Or more correctly, the problem is that of creating social and economic conditions which make such a reallocation possible. Such conditions require the suppression of colonial rule, the expropriation of foreign capital (at least in cases where such capital already occupies an important place in the economy), and a radical agrarian revolution, which suppresses the income and even the very class of landowners - money-lenders - compradors. As a general historical rule, one may add that the existing weak native industrial class also becomes an obstacle on the road to industrialization, and has to be disposed of.

Once however this social revolution has been accomplished (as for example by the October Revolution in Russia, by the Yugoslav revolution of 1941-1946, or by bureaucratic-military means, with a limited mobilization of the masses, in the "people's democracies" from 1945-48), the problem of reallocating national

¹ Ragnar Nurkse: *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries*, pp 163, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1953.

² Paul A Baran: *The Political Economy of Growth*, pp 308, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1957.

resources to further rapid industrialization is still not solved at all. On the contrary, the obstacle now seems even more formidable than before.

For the revolution itself carries through a reallocation of resources of its own, and in a most peculiar manner. As a backward country is a predominantly agrarian country, the fate of the revolution depends on the willingness of the peasant to accept the new order. The peasant, who, to quote Khrushchev, knows how to count, will accept the new order only if he is better off than before. He will be better off only if he has to give, to the state and the city in the form of taxes and costs of industrial goods purchased, a smaller part of his income than he gave before to the landlord, the money-lender, and the merchant. In other words: the first economic result of the successful colonial revolution is to diminish the social surplus product, or to hand part of it over to the agricultural petty commodity producers.

This fact has been empirically proved both in Russia under the NEP and in the "people's democracies" under various policies of slow collectivization. Everywhere, the peasantry appears as the main if not the only class of society which substantially increased its standard of living after the revolution. This increase in its standard of living now creates of course a market sufficiently large to make rapid industrialization possible. But at the same moment that the problem seems to be solved on the demand side, it pops up again on the supply side. Although the general standard of living of the peasantry (up to 80 % of the population of a backward country!) has only been moderately increased, this increase is enough to absorb not only the greater part of the former surplus product, but also the greater part of the new potential surplus which results from a first substantial increase in the general level of production and productivity.

This is of course no paradox: as the social product is composed of the income of the producers plus the surplus product, any increase in the former has for result a decrease of the latter.

For that reason, traditionally, bourgeois and Marxist economists alike thought there were only two solutions to this problem: either massive foreign aid or "primitive socialist accumulation" (the phrase was coined by the Soviet economist Preobashensky, who was temporarily associated with the Left Opposition). Either an advanced industrial country would give the backward country an important part of the resources necessary for industrialization (in the form of massive cheap credit, or more directly in the form of capital equipment, railways, ships, airplanes, prefabricated houses, and, not to be forgotten, technicians and scientific personnel); or the backward country would have to cut back extensively the standard of living of its population, above all its peasant population, in order to free the resources necessary for industrialization. Apologists of the tragic Stalinist experience with industrialization of this kind

even added the theorem: "The more backward the country and the quicker the industrialization, the greater must be the setback in general consumption, and the harsher must be the dictatorship which has to force people to work under those circumstances."

Of course, Trotsky and the main economic specialists of the Left Opposition (e.g., Rakovsky and Piatakov) never accepted these theorems. They always pointed out that a *parallel and harmonious increase* in production and popular consumption was a necessary condition for socialist industrialization. Today their concept is widely accepted. Tito has made it his own. Polish economists like Lange have stated it in unmistakable terms. We have still, however, to try to find a theoretical foundation for this political advice. This is what we shall attempt, as a first tentative sketch, in this article.

2. THE THEORETICAL SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

In the framework of a workers' state, the problem of industrializing a backward country involves solutions for every element of the reproduction process: supply (production and import) of the fixed capital equipment necessary; supply of a regular flow of raw materials; increase of the number and qualifications of industrial workers; adequate distribution of the social product between industry and agriculture, and the two sectors of industry, in order to prevent disequilibria, shortages, and bottlenecks, e.g., in the food supply, in the supply of agricultural raw materials, etc. All these problems are interrelated. Inadequate supply of industrial consumer goods to the village, for example, could become one of the main reasons for a slower rate of development of agricultural production, especially of agricultural raw materials for industry, and thereby reduce the general rate of growth of industrial production.

We shall not go into all these problems here, but concentrate on the main field, that of the adequate distribution of social product (or income), i.e., that of the rate of accumulation.

The mistake committed by the Stalinist planners during the first Five-Year Plans, and even more — and with less excuse — by the apologists who try today to justify the wrong course followed, is a confusion between *maximum* and *optimum* rate of accumulation. Or rather: these planners started from the wrong assumption that the maximum rate of accumulation is also the optimum rate, at least in the short run.

Even if we define the optimum rate of accumulation from a purely economic point of view, i.e., as the rate which enables the *maximum increase in the social product* (or income) in a given period, this identification is completely wrong. It is all the more wrong because no Marxist can give such a purely economic definition to that central notion. He cannot leave out *living class forces*. He can never forget that.

any rate of accumulation which creates demoralization of the proletariat through hunger, political apathy, tendency to flee from the factories and the city, etc, cannot be called "optimum" from the point of view of working-class revolutionists.

It is interesting however to beat the apologists of a maximum rate of accumulation even on their own field, i.e., the purely economic result, in tons of steel, cement, coal, and cotton goods. The mistake made has its roots in the *absurd assumption that the productivity of labor is independent of the level of consumption* of the producer. We say that this assumption is absurd not only in the long run, but even and especially in the short run. The whole history of modern industry has shown that any sharp decrease of the standard of consumption of the workers results in a decrease of per capita productivity. And the poorer the country and the lower its initial level of consumption, the stronger this interrelation will be.

One could of course point out that this decrease will translate itself into a decrease of *production* only if one assumes that the fixed capital on which the producers operate remains unchanged. It is evident that the goal of a maximized rate of accumulation is precisely to increase the supply and quality of fixed equipment of industry. If the workers tend to make less efforts, because they eat less and live under worse conditions, then, so the argument will continue, this decrease of per capita productivity will be ten times overcome by the increased productivity resulting from the introduction of better machinery.

It is at this point that our concept of *optimum rate of accumulation* becomes all-important. Let us assume that with a given quantity of fixed machinery, 1,000 workers produce over a given period a value of \$ 1,000,000, when their real wage is \$ 500 a year (we should not forget that we are concerned with workers in backward countries!). If we double the value of capital equipment in the course of three years, the product of these workers could, for example, treble and be worth \$ 3,000,000 (first hypothesis) on condition that their real wage is not changed or even that it increases.³ If, however, in order to double the value of the capital equipment, we first cut the real wages of the workers to \$ 250 a year, we might find that the final product will not be \$ 3,000,000, but only \$ 1,500,000 (second hypothesis). Production has, of course, still increased. But we have caused a terrible waste of wealth. For had we increased the value of capital equipment only by 50 %,

³ In order to leave out complicated calculations of value production, we may assume that these workers produce some very rare industrial equipment, for which the social need remains unsatisfied even if production increases ten-fold, so that a tripling of production means a tripling of value produced, social *average* productivity of labor remaining unchanged outside this sector. The assumption is only apparently unreal; in fact, in the initial stages of industrialization, most heavy industrial plants operate precisely under such conditions.

instead of by 100 %, in order to leave real wages where they were before, or to increase them even by a given percentage, then the total final product would have been say \$ 2,000,000, instead of \$ 1,500,000 (third hypothesis).

The first hypothesis is the ideal one; it presupposes more or less unlimited resources freed for the given project. The second and the third hypothesis are both trying to divide *limited* resources in a given way. The second hypothesis, the one of the maximum rate of accumulation, does not lead to maximum expansion of production. The third hypothesis, with a lower rate of accumulation than the second one, leads to a bigger expansion of production under given conditions, and is therefore the *optimum* rate of accumulation (or the optimum division of the social product, of the social income, etc).

In real fact, it is of course not very easy to determine this optimum rate. It can be discovered only by trial and error. But what we should understand from the start is the fact that in a backward country, with a generally low standard of living of the workers, the maximum rate will *never* be the optimum rate, i.e., will always result in a level of productivity of labor *below* the level rendered possible by a given set of machinery and a given level of qualification and cultural background of a working class.

We may add that we have *understated* our point. For a "purely economic" solution leaves out a serious social consideration, with important economic repercussions. Any attempt to impose a maximum rate of accumulation results in a lowering of an already low standard of living. As the workers do not accept this without resistance — even be it passive — it is necessary to drive them back to the production line by force and keep them there by constant supervision. In order to achieve this result, a huge army of gendarmes, bureaucrats, and supervisors of all sorts must be built up and kept supported, generally at far above the subsistence level down to which the producers have been forced.

But this in turn means a large increase of unproductive consumption in society, lowering thereby the fraction of the social product ready to be used for productive accumulation.

A "maximum rate of accumulation" is "maximum" only if we "forget" the huge waste it involves; in fact, it may be lower, after a decade, than a level which would have allowed an increase in workers' consumption, would thereby have much more quickly increased the social average productivity, and would have enabled society greatly to reduce the funds for unproductive consumption of policemen, uniformed or not.

Just to show the reader that all these considerations are not purely theoretical, we shall limit ourselves to a single example, but a *decisively* revealing one. There were in 1928 3.1 million workers and employees (technicians and engineers with university degrees

not included) in Soviet industry. In order to achieve the First Five-Year Plan, figures worked out at that moment estimated the manpower necessary for attaining the production goals at 4.1 million workers and employees (i.e., an increase of 1 million, or 33%). In fact, in 1932-3, *without* all the goals of the First Five-Year Plan having been achieved, 6.7 million workers and employees were working in Soviet factories, an increase of more than 110% over the figure of 1928, and of 65% over the planned number of workers! What should have been produced by 4 million workers needed 6.7 millions to be manufactured, i.e., *per capita* productivity was *more than 50% below the planned level*. The maximum rate of accumulation was far from being the optimum rate, far from maximizing the social product.

We now understand how wrong are those who excuse the Stalinist variant of industrialization by the argument that, anyway, as the war danger was growing, as the country was weak and surrounded by enemies, it was necessary to industrialize as quickly as possible.⁴ In reality, what we are trying to prove is that a "maximum" rate of accumulation produces a *slower* overall rate of growth of the economy than the "optimum" rate. It was that point that Trotsky, Rakovsky, and other Marxist critics of Stalin's economic policy did not cease to make between 1928 and 1940, and the now existing factual material completely confirms the accuracy of their criticism.

It is interesting to note that Professor Baran is carried by his theoretical élan to a thesis quite similar to ours when he writes:

While the maximization of the rates of growth — if such be the requirement of the concrete situation — is tantamount to a minimization [?] of current consumption (or, conversely, maximization of the economic surplus), it would be erroneous to equate such minimization of consumption conducive to speediest growth with its reduction to some rock-bottom levels. In view of the obvious relation *between consumption standards and the ability and willingness* to work on the part of the population, minimum consumption compatible with maximum output (and growth) may, and in most underdeveloped countries will, require a more or less *substantial increase* of the existing consumption standard. Given a small initial output and accordingly limited possibilities for such an increase, it will have to be differentiated. [...] Accordingly, while it might be thought at first that maximization of

the rates of growth calls for plowing back into the economy all increments in output resulting from current investment, in actual fact some splitting of these increments so as to increase *both* investment and consumption may be a more effective, or even the only possible, method of attaining the *largest possible increase in production*. [Op cit, p 270.]

However, in a passage describing concretely the Stalinist industrialization policy of the period 1928-1937, Professor Baran cannot shake off his old apologetic hide, and we are confronted with various platitudes like the "war danger" which made necessary a "rapid rhythm" of industrialization etc. Professor Baran even tries to make us believe that the "inconvenience" caused by the desperate attempt of maximization of the rate of accumulation was only of short duration. He therefore conveniently quotes the crop figures of 1937, without adding that those figures remain exceptional, not only for the period 1928-1940, but even for the period 1928-1953, if we take into consideration the increased territory and population of the USSR! He also forgets to add that Soviet livestock for 25 years fell below the 1928 level, and that we had to wait till 1956 (!) in order to find a number of milch-cows equal to that of 1928 (which does not mean equal *per capita* of Soviet population, given the important increase during this quarter of a century). It is impossible to cover up the tremendous price Soviet economy had to pay for Stalin's attempt to "maximize" the rate of accumulation by brutally lowering the consumption levels of workers and peasants.

3. AN INTERESTING THEORETICAL SIDELINE

Up till now, we have always considered economic growth and industrialization as a result of the increase in the real supply of fixed capital equipment, machinery, buildings, power works, etc. Professor Nurkse, however, has made another and interesting contribution to the theory of industrialization of backward countries, by concentrating attention on one of the most striking characteristics of backwardness: *rural overpopulation*.

This phenomenon has, of course, long been known to economists and especially to Marxists. More than half a century ago, Lenin and Trotsky made of that rural overpopulation, and the pressure it exercises on land and land rent, one of the main links in the chain of arguments explaining backwardness: the preference given by capitalists to the buying of land over industrial investment, the land rent allowing a higher average return than industrial profits.

But whereas the problem of rural overpopulation has always been considered from the point of view of an easy supply of manpower for *urban industry*, once the industrialization process got into motion, Professor Nurkse now has stressed a new and strik-

⁴ These apologists of course also "forget" that Stalin opposed a quick increase in the rate of accumulation between 1924 and 1927; that thereby four years had been lost; and that the division of the accumulation fund of the First Five Year plan over the timespan 1924-1932, instead of being concentrated in 4 years, would have enabled to realize exactly the same projects at a considerably lower expense of hardship, sacrifice and... loss of productivity of the workers and peasants.

ingly important aspect of the problem. Economic growth, he says, is essentially an increase in the average productivity of labor. No Marxist will quarrel with that definition. But in a country with a huge population of underemployed peasants (it would be more correct to say: village inhabitants), it is not necessary to start with huge capital investment in order to achieve a substantial increase in the average productivity of labor.

For what else is underemployment if not the fact that in such backward countries half or two-thirds of the population, living in the village, are only really working 150 or 200 days a year!⁵ The rest of the year, they do nothing. Now if it were possible to give them something to do during the rest of the year, some productive purpose which does not need huge fixed equipment, their annual production, and thus their annual productivity, would tremendously increase. In fact, while doing nothing, they continue to eat. It would be sufficient to give them a little bit more to eat, while getting them to work, in order to treat the largest part, if not the whole, of their increased production as social surplus product, as a social investment fund. And once this surplus product has been created, the basis is laid for large-scale industrialization, not by lowering but by increasing the standard of living of the working population, at least in real terms.⁶

At first sight, there seem to be different "catches" in this line of reasoning, but Professor Nurkse deftly does away with them, one by one. How is it possible, we may ask, to give a huge amount of new jobs to the overpopulated countryside, if the land is already fully occupied? To this there are different answers. First of all there is no underdeveloped country in the world, not even Indonesia, in which the land is "fully occupied" from an economic point of view. Possibilities of increasing agricultural production by fertilization and irrigation operated with relative low-cost methods (from shoveling the mud out of river beds for use as fertilizers to the digging of thousands of small canals, the drilling of thousands of cemented water pits, etc) are everywhere present.⁷

Professor Nurkse does not add, but this we may do in his place, that these jobs are not limited by *natural* but by *social* conditions, as long as landlordism and capitalism are not overcome. For opening up these tremendous and relatively "cheap" opportunities for the big mass of unemployed peasants

means must be found — means of concentrating the marketable food supplies in the hands of central authorities and/or of peasant coöperatives, means of concentrating the peasants themselves, either by appeal or by coercion, means of *planning* these thousands of local projects in a way that their results are split up between the producers themselves and the community, and not siphoned away by landlords, money-lenders, usurers, black-marketeers, compradores, or capitalists.

We shall see further on that these social pre-conditions are all-important for the success of these experiments.

A second question which crops up is the question of equipment. Professor Nurkse of course knows very well that millions of underfed underemployed peasants cannot start to "produce" a social surplus product with their bare hands. His solution is: a) to import a large mass of cheap simple tools, and b) to have them produce these tools themselves:

The investment workers, before they start building a piece of fixed capital such as a road, could, after all, sit down and make the most necessary primitive tools with their own hands, starting if need be from scratch. They could make their own shovels, wheelbarrows, carts, hoists, and other things to help them build the road.

[p 44]

As we shall see, this is precisely the way the Chinese Communists have conceived the "acceleration" of their "uninterrupted revolution" in 1957-8!

But there remains a third, and formidable, difficulty. An underdeveloped country is characterized by very low standards of living, especially of food supply, in the countryside. Underemployment means that the working peasants have to share their meagre pittance with practically unemployed sons, nephews, and uncles living with them. Now the whole theory of the "accumulation fund hidden in underemployment" hinges on the *stability* of peasant consumption. If the working peasants increase their food consumption from the moment their nephews, sons, and uncles are mobilized to build irrigation trenches, water pits, and roads, then of course the problem of *feeding these newly occupied workers* will appear. There will be a deficit of the food balance of the country, and the increase in real wealth created by the products of these workers might be wiped out entirely by the need to import supplementary food.

Professor Nurkse states the problem admirably. But he does not solve it adequately, for somewhat sinister formulæ like "the saving *has to be made*" are not solutions. He tries to introduce a difference between densely and sparsely occupied countries. In fact the solution he indicates for sparsely occupied countries only, applies for all of them: the supplementary amount of workers must be occupied in such a way as to make possible, among other things, a *substantial increase in agricultural production*. Any other solution would *impose* the process of growth on the

⁵ The First Five-Year Plan of India estimated the number of underemployed adult males in Indian agriculture at the staggering figure of 70 million people!

⁶ In money terms, of course, increased agricultural production could mean, under conditions of stable currency, lower agricultural prices, and even lower money income of the peasants. This would be of no consequence, if at the same time a constant flow of industrial consumer goods, at falling prices, would be directed towards the villages.

⁷ In India, only 15% of the arable land is irrigated; in China only 45%.

peasantry through various forms of "forced savings," and then we should again be up against the old problem of estimating the negative results of such a decline in the standard of living.

Is it possible substantially to increase agricultural production in the backward countries? Of course it is. And it is at this point that Professor Nurkse makes his most substantial mistake, when he minimizes or even excludes this possibility in the densely populated countries. As a matter of fact, two of the most densely populated backward countries of the world, India and China, are most susceptible of mobilizing the biggest "accumulation fund" from a heavy increase of agricultural production.

For if we look closer at those various "low-cost local investment projects," made possible by drawing on the underemployed village populations, we find that nearly all of them tend to increase agricultural productivity. Irrigation, regulation of local rivers, flood control, road building, local iron foundries, manufacture of agricultural implements of a more modern though still simple type, local building industries helping the peasants to build better houses for themselves and stables, or better stables, for their livestock — all these projects tend to prepare larger harvests. What is more, they permit almost immediate results in elevating living standards in the countryside. Thereby they enable the mobilization of a big — and growing — part of the increased surplus product for purposes of national economic growth. If they are better fed, better clothed, and better housed, the sons, nephews, and uncles of the toiling peasants will work without resistance the second year on provincial and national roads, and not just local ones. They will without resistance build local foundries in order to manufacture not just agricultural implements but machinery of various sorts, i e, means of production. The initial impetus will have been given. By "building" Professor Nurkse's conception into our general theoretical solution, and correcting it in that sense, we get a clearer picture of the possibilities of initially industrializing a backward country, without (sufficient) foreign help and without pushing down the standard of living of the working population.

We should like to emphasize a warning: the setting to work of the village unemployed on local investment projects is no panacæa for solving the industrialization of backward countries. It is only a relatively cheap means of giving that industrialization an *initial push*. If a correct balance between the local "low-cost" investment projects and the "high-cost" "modern" industrialization projects is not struck, the economy will rapidly run into the classic difficulties of Soviet Russia during the NEP.

Local industries, built with ancient technology and locally manufactured equipment, are of low productivity. As long as they are an absolute addition to national wealth, and a school of industrial technique and habits which makes the transition of the peasant

towards the modern factory easier, they are of tremendous importance. But from the moment productivity in agriculture starts to rise rapidly, the well-known phenomenon of the scissors will appear. Agricultural prices will fall in comparison with the prices of (scarce) industrial consumer goods and means of production. At the same time, the peasantry will accumulate money and cry for cheaper industrial goods. There will be a political risk of alienating the peasantry from the workers' regime; there will be the economic danger of an artificial withdrawal or even decrease of the agricultural surplus. The investment fund mobilized through the voluntary mobilization of the rural unemployed has to be transformed into modern fixed equipment, ready to deliver cheap industrial goods to the countryside. Modern steel works will progressively take over from the local foundries. Both processes, intertwined in the beginning, will become unraveled: the local low-productivity projects will wither away.

4. THE PRAGMATIC APPROACH: INDIA

Did the authors of India's First Five-Year Plan know and understand Professor Nurkse's theory? If they did, they did not show any sign of it. But it is a fact that, following a theory of long standing, very dear to bourgeois economists, they concentrated the effort of their plan on agriculture, and introduced the novel feature of thousands of "local community-development" projects. Dr D K Rangnekar, in a recently published general appraisal of the problems of India's economic growth, writes on the subject:

"Community project" is a comprehensive description for several aspects of rural development with the broad objective of transforming the agriculturist and initiating a social revolution [?] in the 560,000 villages. With the help of a Rural Extension Service of trained village workers, the community projects seek to bring new methods, new ideas, and new knowledge to almost every aspect of the peasant's life. The impact of the programme is expected to be felt in road communications, school education, housing and sanitation, community recreation and entertainment, farming methods and techniques, supplementary or fuller employment (in village crafts and other commercial and professional services). The villagers themselves are to build and construct, change and improve, as a community. The object is to galvanize the whole of the rural population into activity on a voluntary basis under state guidance and assistance [p 70].⁸

Our Indian comrades will soon show us their final estimate of the First Five-Year Plan. But there is no doubt that it was a complete failure. On the industrial field, development was very slow, in fact slower than in colonial countries like Rhodesia or the Belgian

⁸ D. K. Rangnekar: *Poverty and Capital Development in India*, pp 316, Oxford University Press, 1958.

Congo. The problem of rural unemployment was not even scratched. As for agriculture, although there was a certain increase in the production of food-grains, it barely kept up with the population increase. Per capita food production fell, from a prewar average index-figure of 100, to 87 in 1947-8, 85 in 1948-9, 84 in 1950-1 and 82 in 1951-2, and remained at approximately these levels in 1954. With regard to average yields per acre and agricultural productivity, the low prewar level was barely maintained, notwithstanding huge and extremely costly multiple-purpose irrigation schemes. As for the "social revolution" in the village, it is sufficient to state that the planned expenditure on social services

worked out at less than 1 rupee [! a rupee is worth something like 1 sh 6d or 20 US cents] per head [and per five years!] of the population. And this incredibly meagre sum of less than 1 rupee per head was expected to provide for education, hospitals, dispensaries, community services, etc., all of which were woefully lacking. In the base year of the Plan, 1950-1, there was, for example, 1 rural dispensary for about 105 villages and 56,400 persons; at the end of the Plan there would be only a slight change: 1 dispensary will serve about 95 villages and 54,000 persons [id, pp 82-3].

What are the reasons for this dismal failure? They should not be sought in the fact that a large part of the accumulation fund went into agriculture, although the balance for a healthy development seems to have been upset at the expense of industry in that First Plan (the Second Plan upsets the balance at the expense of agriculture; but that is another story). The real keys for the failure are twofold: an inadequate accumulation fund on the one hand; social conditions in town and especially countryside which make an adequate use of even that inadequate accumulation fund impossible.

During the First Five-Year Plan, "investment" (in the bourgeois economic sense of the word, i.e. including stock formation) was only 7% of the national income, and fixed capital formation only between 4 and 5.5% of the national income (op cit, p 231). As Dr Rangnekar himself states, a net domestic capital formation rate of 15-16% of the national income is considered the necessary minimum for a rapid economic development (op cit, p 281). Not only was this rate not approached, but the relatively small increase in the national income over the five-year period, which he estimates at 18% (or 3.5% per annum), was wiped out by population growth and increase of consumption (of the better-off social classes, we should add). There was no perceptible increase of the rate of accumulation during the five-year period itself.

This low level of accumulation has, of course, essentially social roots. It is not so much a question of lacking resources, as of lacking mobilization and

reallocation of existing resources. Dr Rangnekar carefully avoids making this point, but he himself gives all the facts which point in that direction. He indicates for instance (p 224) that at least 500 million rupees a year are spent for importing and hoarding gold. This, he says, is "only" 0.5% of the national income, which gives the percentage by which investment would increase if social control would do away with that habit. The true figure, however, should be that of the total private gold hoard of India, which is estimated at 50 or 60 times that figure. It would have enabled thereby at least doubling the accumulation fund (total net investment during the five year period being estimated at 30 billion rupees). And China's quick economic growth was made possible precisely by a rate of accumulation double that of India.

Gold hoards are only one example. The skimming off the increased cream of agricultural productivity by landlords and money-lenders is another.

The same class of agriculturists which has benefited from the recent turn in prices appears to have started or increased money-lending operations, presumably as a sequel to the new legislative curbs on professional money-lenders. [...] The yield from such operations is known to be incredibly high, probably ranging from 12 to 40%, and in some cases perhaps 100% or more [id, p 55].

It is difficult to evaluate the part of the agricultural product which is appropriated by the landlord-money-lender class, and siphoned away from the accumulation fund. But this percentage can be considered very high.

Cash rents were not very common, but where the practice existed the rents were extremely high. Division of crop was the most common practice, and the landowner would get about half of the yield for providing land and seed, and sometimes even more. [...] Where the landlord provided cattle and implements as well as land and seed, the landowners would receive 40-60% and even 80% [!] of the yield [id, p 59]. And there is no doubt in our mind that this problem of the scarcely initiated agrarian reform is the key to the deficiency of both the accumulation fund and of agricultural productivity:

The unsatisfactory forms of agrarian structure, reflected in maldistribution of land ownership, insecurity of tenure and high rents, uneconomic size of farms and fragmentation of holdings, tend in a variety of ways to impede investment. The existing system reduces living standards below the level which might be attained even with prevailing farm methods. It holds back investment both by reducing farmers' funds for investment and by reducing incentives to develop production [ibid].

Needless to say, this "vicious circle of poverty" is

closed by stating that this extreme misery of the great mass of the peasants removes any incentive for the development of a strong class of industrial capitalists, catering to a broad internal market for mass production goods. Poverty not only breeds poverty ; it also breeds backwardness !

The problem can be reduced to a single formula : the First Five-Year Plan failed not because priority was given to agricultural development but because the landlord - money-lender - compradore system makes the mobilization of a great accumulation fund and the voluntary mobilization of the rural under-employed (conditioned by a quick increase in their standard of living) impossible. India is losing its struggle for industrialization because it has not yet accomplished its basic social revolution. And when the Second Five-Year Plan tried to increase substantially the rate of accumulation, this became completely dependent on foreign credits, led to a rapid exhaustion of sterling reserves built up during the war, and made the Indian government scale down its ambitious objectives as soon as it became evident that foreign assistance would be less than expected.

5. THE PRAGMATIC APPROACH : CHINA

In a comparison between India's and China's industrialization, Wilfred Malenbaum, writing in *The Journal of Political Economy* (February 1956), stated that China's accumulation fund was more or less double that of India (\$ 14,000 million for the First Five-Year Plan in China, against \$ 7,000 million for the Indian First Five-Year Plan). The two figures are not completely comparable, but they give a rough idea of the difference. Malenbaum immediately adds that the *per capita* fiscal charge in China is also double that of India. Quite an impressive difference, says the author ; he just forgets a trifle : the fact that more than 70 % of the Indian population is composed of peasants, that a huge proportion of these is composed of *tenants*, and that these tenants pay a tremendous average land rent of nearly 50 % of their crops. It is this percentage that must be compared with the fiscal charge of 15-20 % in the net product of Chinese agriculture, quoted by Malenbaum, and not, of course, the barely 1 % of the net agrarian product of the average Indian peasant "taxed."

The lowness of Indian taxes is of no benefit to the peasants, living at subsistence level. They are of benefit to the landowners - money-lenders who are the only large property-owning class in the world which pays practically no income tax. This again explains why the accumulation fund in China can be double what it is in India.

It is the thorough social revolution accomplished in China which creates the favorable conditions for a rapid economic growth and industrialization. But in China as in India, the Stalinist leaders approached the problem in a pragmatic way. And pragmatism, in China, was largely determined by the Soviet

example. The First Five-Year Plan, in its first version, with its strong stress on "priority to heavy industry," unquestionably imposed serious sacrifices on the working masses. Official Chinese statistics (*Peking Review*, no 6, April 8, 1958) states that per capita consumption rose by 18 % from 1952 to 1956, i.e., by 4.4 % per year. This is, however, in money, not in real terms, and the increase is unevenly divided among different regions and different social layers in that great country. The total accumulation fund was rapidly increased, and rose (in official Chinese calculation) from 18.2 % to 22.5 % of the national income (this includes unproductive accumulation).

The crucial year 1956, under the burden of this mistaken attempt at "maximization" of the accumulation fund and under the influence of floods and a very bad harvest, led to well-known phenomena of economic distortion.⁹ In order to achieve the goals of the plan, no less than 2.2 million supplementary wage-earners had to be employed by industry. The nominal wage fund rose by 29 %, creating inflationary tendencies and actual reductions in the purchasing power of the workers. The outbreak of criticism of the government's economic policy, during the short "hundred flowers" period of Autumn 1956, was general.

The regime then made a turn. It clamped the lid down politically, but made the year 1957 a transitional year of slowed-down accumulation. The rate of increase in accumulation was sharply checked ; in fact, total investment in 1957 was less than in 1956. At the same time, the first big industrial projects started to give results. Attention was concentrated on agriculture. At this point, and in a pragmatic way, the Mao Tse-Tung regime started to draw heavily on the "reserve accumulation fund hidden in rural underemployment." It mobilized the peasantry during the Winter of 1957-58 in thousands of local and provincial irrigation projects. In all, no less than 11 million hectares of dry land were opened up to wet agriculture. From 1957 till 1962, the percentage of irrigated land in China should climb from 46 to 66 %.

Some authors have valued the importance of this irrigation work — "financed" nearly exclusively by the food the peasants were fed with — at 6,000 million yuan, i.e., an increase of 35 % on an estimated productive accumulation fund of 18 billion yuan for 1958. But of course the productive results of that investment, directly through constant increased agricultural production, and indirectly through the Chinese peasant's increased living standards, productivity, and willingness to work, will be tremendous.

In the Spring of 1958, this first mobilization of rural underemployed was followed by a new and gigantic application of Professor Nurkse's theory : the "acceleration" movement of the Chinese revolution.

⁹ The exhaustion of Russian credits may also have something to do with this.

In thousands of villages, small local industries were built up almost without cost to the central accumulation fund. The peasants "sat down and made their tools with their own hands." This tremendous movement was accompanied by the creation of the so-called "people's communes." The results seem to have been staggering: doubling of steel production within one year; even doubling of the food-grain harvest in a like time.

The results of this movement are subjected to a critical appraisal elsewhere in this issue. It is a monstrously criminal distortion to call this equal sharing-out of poverty "communism"; it is, of course, nearer to war-communism than to the final commune, the goal Marx and Engels gave to the final stage of the socialist society, amidst plenty and by the disappearance of the "administration of men." The "people's commune," on the contrary, pushes the "administration of men" to the highest conceivable level: it establishes a complete militarization of labor.¹⁰ The workers and intellectuals of the towns included in the people's communes, who now have to share their lodgings and even some of their durable consumer goods (like bicycles, sewing machines, etc) with the population of the countryside, will not show great enthusiasm for this movement.

But on the other hand, it would be completely wrong to compare this "acceleration movement" to Stalin's forced collectivization. There is a tremendous difference between the two. When going into the kolkhoz, the Russian peasant of 1932-3 *was worse off than before*; when adhering to the "people's commune" the Chinese peasant *immediately reaps the dividend* (or at least part of it) *of the huge "low cost" investment projects of the last 12 months in the form of more and better food, more and better clothes, and more and better lodgings.* The "acceleration" movement was possible only because it

¹⁰ Victor Zorza has seen fit to state in the *Manchester Guardian* that "Mao takes the mantle of Trotsky" by militarizing labor. We have already explained at length the historical distortion of facts concerning Trotsky's labor conceptions in 1920-21, in a polemic with Isaac Deutscher that appeared in *Quatrième Internationale*.

included a big and immediate increase in agricultural production, an immediate albeit moderate increase in the standard of living of the peasantry. Where Stalin experienced his biggest failure, Mao seems to be winning success, moderate or sensational according to the credit one gives to the current harvest figures.¹¹

Will this success last? All will depend on the rate of growth of productivity in agricultural labor. Already today, complaints are appearing in the Chinese press that peasants are deserting the fields in order to work in the local industrial projects. The irrigation and land-reclamation projects must yield such an increase in labor productivity as to free a considerable part of the village population for the "investment projects." Otherwise, the underemployed peasantry could become overemployed, i.e., crushed by a dangerous lengthening of the working day. Already today, one hears stories that only one Sunday a month (!) is a rest day in the new "accelerated" factories. The negative results of such practices on the productivity of labor would be terrible, especially if they are "normalized" and last for several years. And any decline in agricultural production would have disastrous effects on overall economic growth, as was the case in Russia during the First and part of the Second Five-Year Plan.

It will be necessary for the Chinese planners to restrain themselves after the big feat of 1958. Will they be able to do this, and to listen to the grumblings of discontent among the workers? We shall soon know. But whatever may be the distasteful aspects of the "accelerated" revolution in China, the comparison between China and India shows the decisive influence which the *social* revolution in city and countryside has upon the *possibilities* of a quick rate of growth of industry, without supplementary hardships for the mass of the people.

20 October 1958

¹¹ It is probable that the real increase in agricultural production has not been 100%, but only 50-60%. But even this increase is staggering.

ERRATUM

A misunderstanding in editing the text of Comrade Ernest Germain's article, "The New Programme of the Yugoslav Communists," in our last issue, caused him to seem to be saying the exact opposite of what he meant. On page 25, 2nd column, 3rd paragraph, the sentence beginning "We are opposed to the opinion that Lenin's formula remains as true..." etc, should have read, "We are on the contrary of the opinion that Lenin's formula remains as true..." etc.

“UNINTERRUPTED” REVOLUTION IN CHINA

By JEAN-PAUL MARTIN

China is at present in a state of “uninterrupted” revolution that condenses “twenty years in a day,” according to the formulæ which the Chinese leaders themselves are currently employing — borrowing them, they remind us, from Marx and Lenin. Thus Liou Shao-Chi, in the report he made to the second session of the VIIIth National Congress last May, did not hesitate to affirm that the Chinese Revolution has always been led by the Chinese C P and Mao Tse-Tung in the spirit of the “uninterrupted” revolution.

The Chinese leaders are now using this term in the sense of the “permanent revolution” which stipulates that the seizure of power in a country does not finish the revolution but opens a whole period of revolutionary transformations, marking so many stages in the “steady development of the revolution.”

The years 1955-1956 were those of the total collectivization of agriculture and the “socialization” of industry, handicrafts, and trade. The year 1957 was above all that of the campaign of “rectification,” which having begun with the keynote of “liberalization” by taking into account the “contradictions in the people,” soon turned into a furious campaign of extermination of the “rightists.” The year 1958 will be above all that of the “people’s communes.”

This last transformation is far-and-away the most radical that has hitherto been undertaken by the Chinese leadership on the economic, social, cultural, and administrative planes simultaneously.

But before treating this subject, we must get a better grasp of what may be called the “uninterrupted” and “stormy” revolution which has been taking form in China since May, and whose frantic character has never been matched in the history of any revolution, including in the Soviet Union at the time of the 1928-1933 turn, of the First Five-Year Plan, and of forced collectivization.

To understand these events, we must set up some relatively arbitrary guide-marks, and take as starting-point for example the balance-sheet and prospects of the situation such as they were drawn up at the second session of the VIIIth National Congress in April-May. At that moment, the Chinese leaders appear to have been struck already by the scope of the results attained in the field of “socialist construction” and by “the heroic communist spirit of self-sacrifice of the masses, with the slogan ‘Hard work for a few years; happiness for centuries.’” (Speech of Liou Shao-Chi.)

Spring 1958 marked the beginning of a phenomenal

jump in all fields of production. It was estimated at that period (end of April 1958) that industrial production had shown a spurt of 26% compared to the corresponding period of 1957; that steel production would reach 7,100,000 tons in 1958, coal production 180 million tons, machine-tool production 60,000 units. In agriculture the most important progress had been accomplished in irrigation, by adding 350 million mou¹ of irrigated land, i e, 80 million mou more than the total of irrigated land in the previous eight years, and 110 million mou more than the total of irrigated land during the thousands of years prior to liberation. This caused record results to be predicted for this year.

On the basis of these facts and prospects, the Central Committee of the party proposed in May to push the “technological revolution” still further in order to increase the expansion of productive forces by a whole series of measures, of which the most important was the “transformation of all the big and medium-sized cities into industrial centres” and

to build up new industrial bases in those places where the necessary conditions exist, to enable all the country towns and many townships to develop their own industries, and to increase the value of industrial output of all the provinces and autonomous regions and even most of the provincial administrative counties so that it exceeds that of their agricultural output.

Between August 17th and 30th there was held an extended Plenum of the Political Bureau of the Chinese C P, which took the decision to raise steel production for 1958 from 7,100,000 to 10,700,000 tons, i e, double that of 1957. The Political Bureau furthermore estimated agricultural production in foodstuffs this year as between 300 and 350 million tons, i e, an increase of from 60 to 90% over 1957, and cotton production at 3,500,000 tons, i e, double that of 1957.

On the basis of these results, the Political Bureau pointed out that 1959 would be a decisive year in the 3 years’ hard battle by the people of the whole country. 1959 demands that China’s industry and agriculture continue to forge ahead *at the 1958 speed or at a still higher speed.* [Our italics.]

But the most important decision of this meeting was unquestionably “the establishment of people’s communes in the rural regions throughout the country.”

¹ Approximately 6 mou equal 1 acre. Note also that the ton used in these statistics is the metric ton, 10 % more than the British and U S ton.

Since these decisions an enormous press campaign has never stopped glorifying both the surprising new results achieved in the economic field and the "irresistible" movement that is sweeping the peasant masses toward the creation of "people's communes."

THE ECONOMIC BALANCE-SHEET AND PERSPECTIVES AT THE PRESENT TIME

In October, on the eve of the ninth anniversary of the liberation, the Chinese press was full of statistics illustrating the "phenomenal" spring forward in production, which was developing at a rhythm never previously equaled in history by any country, including the U S S R. The goal of 10,700,000 tons of steel will be achieved this year, thanks to a fantastic multitude (116,000 in September 1958) of little blast furnaces throughout the country, functioning by local methods.

Electric power this year will reach 27,500 million kilowatt-hours, i e, 42% more than in 1957; production of machine-tools will increase 4 1/2 times over 1957; coal production (210 million tons), 60% more than in 1957.

Agricultural production will reach 350 million tons of foodstuffs (of which rice is the principal one), i e, double last year. The production of wheat alone has this year reached 40 million tons, exceeding that of the United States and making China the second-largest wheat-producing country in the world.

Cotton production has also doubled, reaching 3.5 million tons, making China the world's largest cotton-producing country.

Irrigation has made colossal progress, extending to more than 79 million additional acres, i e, the total arable land of Great Britain and France combined. It is in fact the "fantastic" development of agriculture which in its turn is currently pulling along with it the development of industry, with a particular stress on heavy industry.

Thus the party line about an "equilibrated" development of agriculture and industry is preserved, one steadily backing up the extension of the other.

Tasks which would normally require "20 to 30 years, and, in certain cases, 60 to 70 years," have been accomplished, according to the Chinese press, in 1958, in a single year.

"Production has been rocketing in almost every branch of industry, agriculture, and other fields of activity." "Miracles have been created by the extraordinarily diligent and daring efforts of China's 650 million people." "It will not take long to overtake Britain," the Chinese press concludes, foreseeing even more surprising productive results in 1959, "the decisive year."

These "miracles" have been all the more astounding in that they have been performed on a most rudimentary material and technological foundation. Let us take agriculture, for example.

China's stupendous achievements in agriculture

this year have exploded and rendered out-of-date the theory that a high rate of development can only be achieved in agriculture by way of mechanisation. China's agricultural advance this year, made without many tractors or big amounts of chemical fertiliser, have relied mainly on the initiative and creativeness of peasants, and on water conservancy, farmyard fertiliser, deep ploughing, soil improvement, the popularisation of selected seed, close planting, pest and plant disease control, careful tending of the land, and tool improvement.²

As for developments in industry, the Chinese press attributes them to the fact, among others, that "the mysteries surrounding industrial technique" have been dissipated, and that "the whole party and the whole people" were directly involved in the construction and functioning of every sort of industry. Also involved in the development, according to the party line, were both national and local industry and large medium and small enterprises simultaneously, with centralized leadership, over-all planning, proper division of labour, and coordination in accordance with the concrete situation of the country.

Thus in summary the advances in production are explained by a certain rationalization of human labor, mobilized on a super-Pharaonic scale throughout all China, under the urging of the Communist Party, and, to say things plainly, under the indirect, and if necessary direct, coercion of the state apparatus which the Party controls.

But the basis of a sincere enthusiasm of the broad masses for the gigantic constructive effort at the present stage must not be minimized, either. The "miracles" of China are those of strenuous work by the country's uncountable people, work better rationalized than in the past, which, applied at a very low production level, cannot fail to produce for a whole period returns that are relatively "miraculous" indeed. China, infinitely faster than the U S S R, has experienced, as it were, its "Stakhanovist" period, i e, a certain rationalization of work, freed from routinary hindrances, but with the difference that Chinese Stakhanovism has already taken on the aspect of a colossal mass movement and is trying to make the best advantage of working methods and material possibilities locally, rather than of mechanized means of production.

THE "PEOPLE'S COMMUNES"

"The people's commune," stipulates the ordinance published last September in the party's theoretical organ, the *Red Flag*, concerning the Weising-type commune in Honan province,

is a basic unit of society in which the working people unite of their own free will under the leadership of the Communist Party and the

² Bulletin of the Hsin Hua News Agency, 24 September 1958.

People's Government. Its task is to manage all industrial and agricultural production, exchange, cultural and educational work and political affairs within its own sphere.

This new form of organization in the countryside, considered by the Chinese press to be the "inevitable trend in the development of Chinese history," and "the best form for accelerating socialist construction and transition to communism in China," has started to spread irresistibly, especially beginning with September 1958.

The "people's communes" first sprang up "spontaneously, then were noticed by the Chinese Communist Party and encouraged and developed under its leadership." Following on the great victories won in agricultural production during the Summer and Autumn of this year, small agricultural coöperatives began to amalgamate into larger ones and to transform themselves into "people's communes"

where the township and the commune become one entity and industry (the worker), agriculture (the peasant), exchange (the trader), culture and education (the student), and military affairs (the militiaman) merge into one.

One of the main characteristics of the "communes" is that they are constructed on a large scale, owning much land and comprising thousands of persons.

They can develop agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, fishery and subsidiary production simultaneously. [...] The people's communes so far established generally embrace some 10,000 members, or even 10,000 households, and their area is equal to townships.

By the fact that the "communes" undertake vaster and more complicated productive tasks, they also need all available labor power — all the more so in that everywhere in China now this constitutes at the present stage by far the most important if not the only productive force; hence the need of a quite different social organization so as to free "the full use of labour power," including that of women, children, and the aged, and to avoid their "waste."

For this reason, the "communes" not only [...] have to collectivize labour further, but also to organize the collective way of life. On the basis of this urgent need, public canteens, nurseries, kindergartens, tailoring teams, etc. have been formed in large numbers.

The form of property in the "communes" is "collective," while waiting to become the "property of all the people," i e, state property (which is already the case in some advanced "communes").

The administrative committees of the communes are in reality "the people's councils of townships," soviets.

There is also the tendency for a federation of people's communes in a county to become one with the people's council of that county. This facilitates unified leadership, closely combines the

collective economy of co-operatives with the state owned economy of townships and counties, and helps transition from collective ownership to ownership by the people as a whole. [*People's Daily*, 3 October 1958.]

The Chinese leaders estimate that the transformation of "collective" property into property "of all the people" will require from three to four years, if not from five to six, to be completed in the countryside. Some years later, after this period of transition (property of "all the people"), thanks to an unheard-of development of its productive forces, China will enter into the phase of communism properly so called.

"The present people's commune," the Chinese C P's theoretical organ, the *Red Flag*, writes, at the end of September,

offers our country a good form of organization to accelerate socialist construction and the transition to communism. *It will not only be the primary unit of society at the present stage but will grow and become the primary unit of the future communist society.* [Our italics.]

For the moment, however, one must not have any illusions. The "people's commune" is an organization of agricultural labor "along military lines." That does not mean, however, the aforementioned party theoretical organ hastens to emphasize, that the peasants are organized in barracks, or that they are granted the titles of generals, colonels, and captains.

It simply means that the swift expansion of agriculture demands that they should greatly strengthen their organization, act more quickly and with greater discipline and efficiency, so that like factory workers and armymen they can be deployed with greater freedom and on a large scale.

For the moment this military organization is destined "for waging battles against nature." But in case of need, if an outside enemy attacks "them, the entire armed population will be mobilised to wipe out the enemies resolutely, thoroughly, and completely."

Just as at present in the factories, schools, and other organizations, so also in the "people's communes" there exists a militia comprising all men and women from 17 to 40, which engages in military training while working. The militia, according to Mao, is "a military, labor, educational, and athletic organization" beside the regular armed forces. The tension in the Straits of Formosa gave an enormous push to this organization which, under the slogan of "everyone a soldier," has now become more than 72,000,000 strong.

The "people's communes," lastly, also combine educational work with productive work by generalizing compulsory education in different stages and forms for all its members, outside their working hours, reduced precisely to permit these studies.

This in addition ties up with the general directive for educational work in China, which involves a close

association with productive manual labor³ at all echelons of schooling.⁴

According to this directive, besides the formation of schools directly attached to the factories, to the other enterprises, and to the "people's communes," attended by workers and peasants at times outside their working hours, permanent full-time schools will include a manual training course with an obligatory period of instruction in manual labor for all pupils and at all echelons of schooling. That is a reform that already goes far beyond Khrushchev's educational reforms that are currently under discussion in the U S S R.

The members of the "people's communes" receive part of their needs in food and other services free, in addition to a basic wage, and bonuses according to the "intensity" of their labor. The situation varies from one commune to another in terms of how many needs are already satisfied free. Some communes give free food, clothing, housing, education, medical care, etc. Certain others have already extended this system to baths, theatres, cinemas, domestic heating, etc.

Thus, say the Chinese leaders, the income of the members of the "communes" is already divided in two parts: one given according to "the communist principle of to each according to his needs, the other according to the socialist principle of to each according to his labor."

In reality this distribution system, which was practised before the liberation in the regions occupied by Mao's armies, has as its goal the transformation of peasants into agricultural workers, with a fixed income, while for the moment favoring the poorest among them, for example large families having a limited capacity for labor, who formerly — according to the Chinese press itself — often had a hard time to keep alive.

The creation of the "people's communes" has taken on a more rapid and irresistible extension than the 1956 campaign for the collectivization of agriculture, the Chinese press assures us. As of the end of September, more than 90% of all the families of the 500 million Chinese peasants had joined the "communes." There are at present (October 1958) more than 23,384 "communes" in China, composed on an average of 4,797 families each (as against 750,000 previously existing coöperatives). Organized "along military lines, to do things the way battle duties are carried out," they live in a "collective" way. According to recent statistics concerning eleven provinces and autonomous regions, 1,400,000 public restaurants and 1,200,000 crèches have been created, besides other "collective" services.

³ According to a decision of the party and the government dated 25 October 1958, all functionaries are from now on obliged to do their share of manual labor in industry for one month each year.

⁴ Decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese C P, dated 20 October 1958.



Thus China is currently launched on a gigantic enterprise which, on the basis of a Spartan "collectivism," is trying to give the maximum valorization to its main capital: the labor power of 650 million human beings.

In fact everything is driving toward production by manpower such as has never been undertaken in history, with truly surprising results. Beside the labor of the workers in the cities and of the peasants in agriculture, China is now mobilizing on a gigantic scale the supplementary labor of peasants in local industries, as well as that of women freed from domestic labor, and of children and the aged.

This directed and at least elementarily rationalized mobilization is causing such an opening up of productive forces in a China sunk in sleep for several millenia that, compared to the low level from which that country set out on the morrow of its liberation, it is naturally astounding.

In addition, also in an absolute way, the product of the strenuous labor of 650 million people, consuming in a Spartan way, can in any case not fail to be impressive.

There remains to be seen what is in fact the quality of this labor and how long the present high pressure can continue on the basis of a more than elementary distribution. Criticisms in this connection are not lacking, including within the ranks of the Communist Party, as can be deduced from the speeches of several officials, beginning with Mao himself and Liou Shao-Chi.

The criticisms concern precisely the extreme "pressure" imposed on labor, its "speeds," as well as its "peasant style," "the guerilla way to do things," etc. But the Chinese leaders reject these criticisms as unfounded, defeatist, and timorous, and as not taking into account the creative potentialities of the masses and the immense possibilities of the country.⁵

That is the same language that Stalin also used at the time of the "extravagances of the First Five-Year Plan and forced collectivization in the '30s.

It would be a mistake, however, to minimize the real creative enthusiasm at present existing in China, on which the Chinese leaders are deeply drawing. It would also be a mistake to minimize the gigantic upsurge in which the country is engaged, and the revolutionary fervor reigning there, which is reflected in the Chinese masses as a whole and in the policy of the Chinese C P.

The Chinese giant is getting to his feet and observing to his own surprise and pride the immensity of his own stature in the face of the XXth-century world. He feels limitless forces awakening in him. His view of the world is quite different from that of any other power whatsoever, with an admixture of

⁵ China's potential iron is currently estimated at 100,000 million tons; coal, at 1,500,000 million tons; phosphates, at 30,000 million tons.

the childish — normal in a country that was yesterday still asleep in the past and is arriving with such fire and passion at the atomic age — and of the really gigantic.

It all constitutes an extraordinary revolutionary mixture, explosive in matters not only of internal policy, but also — inevitably — of foreign policy.

The Chinese like to repeat that imperialism is in fact a “cardboard tiger,” a regime which is virtually finished, engaging only in desperate rear-guard actions, and that already “the East wind prevails over the West wind.” Even the bomb and atomic war will destroy only “capitalism,” not “socialism,” which is already in fact the winner of the historic stakes.

All that is not merely hypocritical or childish

bravado ; it is the reflection of real self-confidence on the part of a China that is becoming conscious of its strength and its enormous possibilities, of its immensely increased role in the world of today, and even more in that of tomorrow.

The problem is to “civilize,” so to speak, this gigantic force by avoiding its passing through a stage of super-Stalinist orgies against mankind — to “civilize” it thanks to the material and ideological aid of the world socialist revolution — which is, after all, compared to the Chinese revolution and the colonial revolution in general, historically behind time.

10 October 1958

FIRST FRUITS OF GAULLISM

By PIERRE FRANK

The two most important events so far under the de Gaulle regime have been : the September 28th referendum, with its landslide vote ; and his manoeuvre in Algeria with a view to the coming legislative elections.

1 : THE SLUMP IN C P VOTES

That the referendum of September 28th would produce a "yes" majority had been generally foreseen, it only confirmed the success of the May 13th coup and de Gaulle's coming to power. But that the majority of the "yes"-votes in France amounted to 80 % constituted a general surprise both for the government and for all formations, from the right to the left. Such a result could be explained neither by the extent of the official propaganda nor by measures of police pressure — after all, this was not Algeria.

What caused this 80 % vote is the fact that, to the general surprise, a very large number of traditional electors of the Communist Party voted "yes." This is a fact recognized by all, including the leadership of that party. In the report he presented to the Central Committee in the name of the Political Bureau, Servin admitted that

not just a million Communist electors voted yes, but more, [...] it concerned not only electors recently won over in January 1956, but often electors who had long voted Communist, [...] it is the first time since the Liberation that such a phenomenon has occurred, [...] the Communist electors who voted "yes" do not always belong to the middle classes — far from it, [and that there must be noted] noticeable losses in workers' areas and often in the most wretched areas of all.

All these statements are correct and it can even be said that the "more" than one million losses is of the order of one and a half million votes.

But with Servin it is a long way from these correct observations to explanations thereof. More exactly, he gives various more or less superficial explanations, but he does not go to the bottom of the problem, while here and there letting some truths slip out.

THE "YES" AND THE "NO" OF IT

Servin examines why people of different opinions — electors of the left, Communist electors — voted "yes." At no moment does he ask himself who the "no"-voters are. Now only by beginning there, is it possible to understand the intensity of the shift which took place.

The "no" votes comprised — apart from a very small number of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democrats — essentially that part of the French population — workers, intellectuals, and members of the middle classes — who *are for Socialism* : Communists, Socialists, trade-unionists, organized by or gravitating around the workers' organizations, politicized elements

who do not follow the big organizations just because of their immediate slogans but because they see in them centres of organization, bulwarks, for the extension of the struggle for socialism. This whole politicized part of the population had understood the great danger constituted by the new regime, and that is why it demonstrated in some force, as in Paris on September 4th. Those 4,600,000 "no" votes represent the part of the population which does not float as a consequence of this or that political pressure or circumstance.

On the contrary, those (especially Socialists and Communists) who have voted left since the Liberation and who said "yes" to de Gaulle on September 28th, are those who have been carried along by circumstances, by immediate aspirations or slogans of the parties, but who have not been won over by them to the cause of socialism, and who now have been thrown by similar aspirations and past disillusiones into the arms of the reaction and dictatorship.

"HUMILATED IN THEIR NATIONAL PRIDE . . ."

In his own way Servin, wanting to defend the policy of his party, made a striking exposé of it.

Significant [...] is the result of the plebiscite in departments like the Meuse and others, where the party made considerable gains in 1956 thanks to its fight against the CED and revengeful German rearming.

Servin insisted, just as the Communist Party has not ceased doing for many years, upon the "national character" of his party's policy, in opposition to a "policy of unconditionally lining up with the desires of the State Department" which has compromised "national independence and grandeur." Then he observed that "for millions of Frenchmen humiliated in their national pride by the servility of preceding governments, de Gaulle has appeared as the guarantor of national grandeur and independence." But he did not ask himself why, among those millions of Frenchmen, almost one and a half millions, after placing their trust in the French C P, are turning toward de Gaulle.

In reality, into the vote of September 28th there enters much less humiliated "national pride" than Thorez thinks, and — as we shall see further on — a great desire for a change in all the conditions of existence. To the degree, however, to which a petty-bourgeois part of the population had been won over to the French C P by means of patriotic chauvinist arguments about national grandeur, and as this party has done nothing — quite the contrary — to educate these people in the direction of socialism, it is completely normal that at a given moment they saw in de Gaulle a better champion of "national pride" than Thorez and Duclos.

IMPERIALIST CONTAMINATION

This "national" propaganda has served Gaullism all the more in that the leadership of the French C P also has a "national" attitude towards the struggle of the colonial peoples. It never stops talking about the "national interests" to be defended in the countries colonized by French imperialism. At this juncture, the "national interests" in Algeria and elsewhere are, as Marx and Lenin have taught, the interests of the ruling class, i e, French capitalism. The only interests of the French working class in these regions of the globe lie in the victory of the colonized peoples and in the defeat of French imperialism. In order to defend the "national interests" in Algeria and elsewhere, electors won over to the French C P by its chauvinist propaganda in the past have finally given their preference to de Gaulle.

Thorez devoted a considerable part of his speech in the Central Committee to condemning the methods that the F L N has used in France, implying that they were responsible for a large number of "yes" votes. Thorez was trying to keep as far away from the F L N as possible, as if that would prevent the bourgeoisie from setting up provocations or manufacturing counterfeits as it may need them at the proper moment. But Thorez's speech was a new blow that will weaken the already slight enough sense of solidarity of the French working class with the Algerian revolution. Thorez gave great lessons in Marxism to the revolutionary Algerians, and reminded them of the Bolsheviks' condemnation of the Social-Revolutionaries ; but he forgot to make a far more valid comparison, that with the Resistance under the German occupation. In his speech Thorez permitted himself to say that part of the working class is "contaminated" by imperialist ideology — which is true enough, but... *he* contributed to it and is still doing so. Concerning the past policy of the French C P, we refer our readers to the declaration made by the French Federation of the F L N on this subject.¹ Concerning the present, what else does this attack of Thorez mean if not that the Algerians do not have the right to attack French imperialism on its own territory ? Is that not a contamination by imperialist ideology, simply by a capitulation to the opinion of French petty-bourgeois who have not been disturbed by the tortures committed in Algeria against the Algerian people, but who get indignant about anything in France itself that might upset their digestion ?

THE DESIRE FOR A CHANGE

The most important of the reasons furnished by Servin for the extent of the "yes" votes is "the will among our people for a real change," to which is added "the unquestionable discredit of a parliamentarism which appears in the eyes of the great masses to be the cause of the miseries of the country and of the people." We completely agree on this point. The masses were disgusted with the Fourth Republic.

¹ See "The French Communist Party and the Algerian Revolution" in *Fourth International* no 2, Spring 1958.

But Servin does not ask himself why, under those conditions, masses who previously put their trust in the P C F no longer trusted in it to ensure this change.

It might indeed seem to be surprising that the masses' desire for a change did not show itself in a way that profited a party which calls itself communist, i e whose basic programme is that of the greatest and most profound change that can be brought to humanity ; a party which swears only by the Soviet Union where gigantic changes have been accomplished in the course of the 40 years since the October Revolution. How explain that the masses' desire for a change was not demonstrated in favor of this party, and even turned away from it in favor of a general who sees France in the world as she was two or three centuries ago ?

"TO SLANT FRENCH POLICY . . ."

The explanation is rather simple. The French Communist Party hailed the Five-Year Plans and the Sputnik, but the policy it proposed for France was at most a *reformist policy*. There could be no question for this party, at least since the Liberation, of fighting for socialism in France ; one had to be satisfied with petitions, parliamentary proceedings, and pressures — the whole constituting "a line which had chosen as its goal the slanting of French policy," as Servin himself defined it. And lastly, it is perhaps useful to recall that at the Central Committee session following de Gaulle's coming to power, in June of this year, the leadership of the French Communist Party limited the slogans just to the "defense of the Republic" and condemned proposals to put forward the idea of a Constituent Assembly, of a programme, as proposals likely to "divide the left."

Thus we reach one of the profound reasons for the loss of numerous workers' votes, including — as Servin recognized — "in the most wretched areas." A very large number of poor people, of wretched people, have in fact for many years expressed their dissatisfaction with their lot and their aspirations for a better life by voting for the French C P, which appeared to them as the party capable of bringing about great changes, great transformations, as in the U S S R. And then, as the years went by, they perceived that this party talked a lot but that instead of trying to bring about a great social change, it wanted only to "slant" French policy : those masses, not highly educated politically, have certainly not used this term of Servin's, but they have understood very well the substance of what it is expressing. "To slant" means to modify slightly *within the framework of the regime*, not to overthrow it. And so it is not surprising that after all, at the moment of a great social clash, hundreds of thousands of non-politicized people abandoned this party and let themselves be taken in by a general who was not talking about "slanting" policy, but about sweeping away the whole "system." For these masses the French C P no longer appeared as a factor of change, while de Gaulle ap-

peared to them as capable of bringing about the change they were looking for.

IT'S THE FAULT OF THE OTHERS !

If we leave aside some incidental reasons furnished by Servin, such as the Hungarian events (it was not far from being Rajk's and Nagy's fault that the French C P lost so many votes), another reason alleged as major was the "division of the left." Servin attributed this to the anti-communist propaganda of the bourgeoisie and to the persistence of anti-communism on the part of the other formations that appealed to vote "no."

Once more, for the leadership of the French C P, everything bad that happens is the fault of others. This is at best a simplistic argument. Does Servin believe that some day capital will renounce its anti-communism? Does he also think that capital will not find any more Guy Mollets at its disposal? Does he even think that the sincere reformists — and there are such people — will abjure their reformism? In this case, the role of the Communist Party would be very simple indeed. The value of a genuine communist leadership must show itself precisely in its capacity to promote a genuine united-front policy which brings the masses into action and thus to force at least a part of the Social-Democratic leadership to follow the current of the masses. Now the leadership of the French C P was more and more incapable of ensuring such a policy. The leadership of the French C P had lost the confidence of a considerable proportion of the Communist voters; how can it be supposed that at the same time it could exercise an attraction on those who previously were more or less hostile towards it? The leadership of the French C P must lay the fault at its own door if the manoeuvres of the bourgeoisie and of its agents such as Guy Mollet succeeded.

Immediately after September 28th, Servin wanted to justify once more the March 12th 1956 vote for the special powers, under the pretext of driving the Socialists into a corner, to see whether Guy Mollet would respect his January 2nd 1956 contract with the voters. Worse confusion cannot be imagined. The contract of January 2nd was for peace in Algeria. The project voted on March 12th was "pacification," i.e. war in Algeria. On March 12th there was not "division" but "union" of the left, Communists included, *on the parliamentary plane*, to give the army a free hand in Algeria. The united front on the contrary would have required at that moment a policy in the direction of the masses, calling them boldly to action against the war of Algeria. It would especially have required unreserved support to those demonstrations of draftees which were occurring over the whole territory of France. But at that moment the leadership of the French C P — perhaps in order to permit Guy Mollet to respect his contract? — denounced the demonstrations as the work of provocateurs. So what was then the contract of the leadership of the French C P with

the voters and how was it kept? It would not be surprising if, among the "yes" voters, there are alas not a few young men who participated in those draftees' demonstrations and who were in this way left to themselves or rather abandoned to the propaganda of the general staff.

THE CORRECT LINE AND BAD CONTACTS

Servin went ahead nevertheless with a certain self-criticism, a very cautious one, in the following terms:

It is an unquestionable fact that almost one and a half million Communist electors voted "yes" and we had not felt it coming — not to mention the sentiments animating non-Communist layers. In a word, that means that our contacts with the masses sometimes are not what might be desired, and that this was the case during the campaign of the plebiscite. It seems that we do not always know how to listen to what is going on among the masses.

Starting from there, Servin went on to give good advice to the members of the party — to make the trade unions, the Peace Movement, the Tenants' Federation, etc etc... function — as if the defeat of September 28th were due just to incapacity in this field.

But first of all, what allows Servin to say that relations with the masses are only *sometimes* not what might be desired, as during the referendum campaign? Servin dared say: "We do not always know how to listen to what is going on among the masses." But if the members of the Political Bureau and of the Central Committee knew how to listen even just to the rank-and-file militants of their own party instead of bludgeoning them up and down and sideways with the "always correct line," they would have known for quite a while that the contacts of their party with the masses are even less than might be desired. For several years already, while the number of votes of the French C P still remained steady, the party was incapable of mobilizing the masses for an action on its own slogans — not to speak of the no-longer successful petitions, the skeletal public meetings, the absenteeism from cell meetings, and diminishing membership.

Contacts with the masses had deteriorated a long time ago; that is a fact which every serious militant of the French C P has observed. But that raises the question for a party which, like the French C P, has had the confidence of the majority of the working class since the end of the war: just what is the difference between its line and its relations with the masses? We confess that we are unable to figure out just where this difference might be found. A party already possessing the confidence of the masses must find the slogans capable of mobilizing them: that is what a correct line is.

Given the differences between a referendum and elections, it is not excluded that the candidates of the French C P win back votes in the November elections; but we can be sure that, in the best of cases, the recovery will be slight. In reality, September showed

that the contacts of the French C P with the masses were bad, and not only at that moment ; it produced with the force of the figures, the result, the final up-shot, of the whole policy of the French C P since the Liberation, i e, the condemnation of this "always correct line."

THE RELATIONSHIP OF FORCES

Servin's account began with a picture of the steady worsening of the situation since the Communists were eliminated from the government in 1947. If Servin is asked how this could happen, he answers that there was a big plot fomented by the Americans and carried out by Auriol and Ramadier. But in January 1946, it was de Gaulle who had to withdraw from the government ; and this fact Servin explains by the strength of the workers. He even stated that at the Liberation there was "a relationship of forces favorable to the working class." (It was not exactly that which was brought up in 1952 for fighting Marty and expelling him from the French C P.) But Servin forgot to say what contributed to a deterioration in the relationship of forces. The bourgeoisie, the Socialist leaders such as Ramadier ? Once more, they were only playing their part. A mass party cannot attribute its setbacks and defeats as above all due to others, to enemies. The servants of the bourgeoisie were able to play their roles more easily because they were helped by the leadership of the French C P : was it not Thorez who, at Ivry in 1945, made an appeal to the workers to turn in their arms, to dissolve their committees, because there should be "only one police, only one army, only one state" ? The army of Salan and Massu, the police of Soustelle and Dides, the state of de Gaulle...

SIC THE OPPOSITIONALS !

The keynote of the whole report of Servin was defensive — the C C resolution even feels the need of justifying, and what is more, in pitiable terms, "the existence and the activity" of a Communist Party ! — except when he began to speak of the oppositionals inside the party. The "inefficiency" of the party should not be brought into question, because this was a "convenient theme, both for absolving the Socialist Party from its responsibilities and sometimes also for putting one's feet in one's slippers." Why ? Nobody knows. On the contrary, everyone can easily understand that, if someone starts by becoming aware of the party's inefficiency, he can, without any intellectual subtlety, go on to examine the value of the party's policy and the value of its leadership.

It is probable that the leadership of the French C P still has a sufficiently strong apparatus to keep control of the party, but at what a cost. We repeat : the defeat of September 28th is not episodic ; it is not only a defeat of the C P's policy ; it is also a defeat of the toiling masses. And a continuation of the policy followed by the French C P, if it does not run up against a strong opposition from its rank-and-file militants, can only lead the French C P, and under the present cir-

cumstances the working class as well, to new defeats and even to a catastrophe.

"NEW PERSPECTIVES"

"The result of the plebiscite," Servin declared, "cannot fail to produce a shock, which might be negative if we do not give legitimate reasons for confidence, if we do not show new perspectives."

New perspectives ? But would that not be a new line ? Don't worry — or, on the contrary, worry more than ever : the new perspectives differ from the old ones in very few things, just a pinch more of opportunism.

It is obviously easy for Servin to say that de Gaulle will run up against great difficulties in Algeria, in Negro Africa, and in the economic field : everybody knows that, from one end to the other of the French and international political chess-board. The changes which he will introduce will not be to the liking of the toiling masses who voted for him on September 28th. But that does not mean that the masses will easily turn against him and that, after they said "yes," it will be enough for them to be simply requested to say "no" to make de Gaulle and the dictatorship go away. There will have to be a policy — that is to say, slogans, a perspective, means for fighting, and organizational forms to rally the discontent of the masses and at the given moment to transform it into action.

Slogans ? Obviously there are in the programme of the French C P slogans for the defense of the masses' standard of living and of democratic liberties. But already there is a retreat on the question of Algeria and Negro Africa : the "right to independence" is scarcely mentioned, what is particularly emphasized is the "new relationship" between France and those countries which are not yet independent. On the international plane there is the eternal jawing about relaxation of tension, disarmament, and other things that are illusions in the present world.

But it is above all on the plane of political prospects that the new perspectives resemble the old ones. The masses want a change. The French C P promises them, as in the past, "the renewal of democracy," "a strong and stable republican government." To justify the continuation of a policy of class collaboration with the Mendès-France wing of the bourgeoisie, the C C resolution claims that

the loyal support given by the Communists to the People's Front government in 1936, the participation of the Communists in the government until 1947, brought the people their greatest social conquests in a quarter of a century.

This is putting things really upside down. All the social conquests were obtained by the action of the masses (the occupation of the factories in 1936, the Resistance and the movements at the Liberation). In both cases the bourgeoisie used the workers' leaderships (Socialist and Communist) to dam up the movement of the masses, to prevent them from flooding beyond the limits.

of the capitalist regime, and to reestablish capitalist order. After that, the capitalists drove out of the government the ministers of the workers' parties who had finished their chores; they even liquidated bourgeois democracy in 1939 and in 1958 because it does not permit the capitalists to direct the country as suits their convenience.

The leadership of the French C P proposes quite simply to recommence the operation a third time in the future, by coming to an agreement from now on with the bourgeois candidate assigned for this purpose. Mendès-France says openly that the administration of de Gaulle contains the greatest dangers for the capitalist regime and he is presenting himself as a reserve bourgeois leadership.

We are here touching on the crucial problem. It is evident that the loss of bourgeois democracy will sooner or later awaken in the masses a nostalgia for democratic liberties, and it is indispensable to put forward democratic slogans. But within what context should this be done? The experiences of France since 1934 are merely added to all the other experiences between the two wars (Germany, Austria, Spain, Italy). When, in the era of declining capitalism, the old bourgeois democracies cannot continue, the capitalists turn to the "strong state." As for the non-politicized masses, their disappointment with bourgeois democracy makes them turn — for lack of a socialist solution boldly put forward by the workers' parties — towards "providential men" who are at the service of capital and who practise dictatorial and reactionary policies. This question of perspectives will serve as a touchstone both for those in the French C P who are opposed to its leadership, and to the militants of the new Autonomous Socialist Party (S F I O).

The 4,600,000 "no" votes represent, as we said above, that part of the toiling population that has been won for socialism, independently of the different conceptions and tactics which might divide them. It is a quite considerable force, on condition that it be really placed at the service of socialism. The only perspective which today can stimulate those opposed to the regime and permit them to get back the ear of the masses as the regime of de Gaulle gradually shows all its aspects, is precisely to say that the mistakes of the past will not be repeated, that the leadership of the state and of the economy will not be given back to other capitalist groupings, that capitalism will be expropriated, and that the construction of a socialist society will be begun — a society which will, naturally, not be in the Stalinist image where liberties and rights are concerned.

HOW TO FIGHT DE GAULLE ?

The defeat of September 28th has rendered the leaders of the French C P more timorous than ever. "The popular masses, taught by their own experience and enlightened by the French Communist Party [...] will soon discover the real character of this Gaullist policy and will know how to find the means to fulfill their

aspirations by democratic paths," declares the resolution of the Political Bureau approved by the C C. So it is not the French C P that is showing them these ways; it is the masses themselves who are finding them? Well, we did not know that the leadership of the French C P had such confidence in the spontaneity of the masses. But let us pass over this point and see a little what these "democratic ways" will be. Thorez, in his speech in the Central Committee, specified:

We shall not let ourselves be turned away from our 1946 theses, confirmed ten years later by our XIVth Congress, on the possibility of peaceful roads to pass over to socialism, and on the role that can be played by a genuine parliament, as the expression of popular sovereignty and based on the masses.

The French parliament has shown only that it was an excellent instrument for passing "legally" from bourgeois democracy to military dictatorship. Is it on the future puppet parliament of the Fifth Republic that the Thorez leadership is relying for reestablishing bourgeois democracy? Is it by petitions that it hopes to settle accounts with the paratroopers, the police clubs, the concentration camps established as a sort of housewarming for the new constitution?

The old-time democrats of the bourgeoisie's revolutionary period had audacity quite other than that of Thorez and Servin. They did not hesitate to say that the revolutionary struggle, the insurrection, was the *supreme democratic means*, the means of a people against tyranny. But from the Jacobins to the present workers' leaders, what a long way it is! And from Marx, who saw in force "the great midwife of society," those so-called Bolsheviks have gone over to Bernstein who, at the beginning of the century, claimed already to have found "painless childbirth" of societies by parliamentary ways.

If one wants really to fight against de Gaulle, it is necessary to begin by educating the militants and the masses in a spirit of revolutionary struggle for power.

FOR A NEW REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP

The September 28th referendum is the sharpest condemnation of a leadership which twelve years ago had won the confidence of the majority of the working class and which through its opportunist policy has repelled one and a half million of its voters towards a Bonapartism of a most grotesque form. Just when part of the Socialist leaders are breaking with Guy Mollet, when there is thus being manifested the very beginning of a renewal of the workers' movement, the leadership of the French C P demonstrates more than ever its inability to engage in self-criticism, to grasp even to a slight extent the responsibilities it bears in the defeat. It sinks still more into lining up with the bourgeois politicians who are getting ready to be the Newfoundlands of capitalism when the Fifth Republic goes down. This policy is fatal for the workers' movement. Before possibly being able to bring about a precarious

“renewal of democracy,” it will permit the Gaullist regime to beat down the workers’ movement all the more brutally, to decimate the organizations, to destroy a great number of workers’ cadres, precisely by still more disorienting the militants and failing to give them any realistic policy for fighting against this regime.

Whatever the leadership of the French C P may do, this defeat will produce a crisis among the Communist militants. In the report of Servin there is not the slightest reply to the numerous agonizing questions they are asking themselves. This crisis is necessary and will be salutary if the Communist militants make the indispensable effort to return to the policy of Lenin, to eliminate a bankrupt leadership, and to create the conditions for democratic discussion in the workers’ movement necessary for the renaissance of a new leadership to ensure the counter-attack.

2. DE GAULLE’S ELECTORAL MANŒUVRES

The September 28th referendum strengthened de Gaulle’s position in France, but it did not settle anything whatever in Algeria; while in Negro Africa the position taken by Sekou Touré and the vote of French Guinea upset de Gaulle’s plans and created a situation that is still far from being unraveled.

In the first place, de Gaulle wants to use his success for the coming legislative elections, set for November 23rd and 30th, and for reaching a solution in Algeria. The danger for him here was a big victory for the profascist right that claims to represent him, for this would shift the coming Assembly (however unimportant its place in things may be) too far to the right. In order to be the “arbiter,” he must arbitrate between people of opposed viewpoints: he wants to keep in his government Pflimlin and Guy Mollet as well as Soustelle and Pinay. The danger took a double form: in France itself an election in which the consolidated right would eliminate not only a large number of Communist deputies (which was also de Gaulle’s aim) but also many of Guy Mollet’s candidates; in Algeria an election under the control of the Public Safety Committees which would produce 70 “ultra” deputies, the men of Soustelle - de Serigny, and even still more “ultra” ones.

To obviate these dangers, the solution in France was quite simple: it was enough to institute a single-name ballot with two ballotings, which would favor what are called the “notables,” i.e., men having local positions, who have been elected for years on end, and would keep big political shifts extremely limited. To make the operation even surer, a gerrymandering of election districts was undertaken.

For Algeria, something quite different was needed. At the beginning of October de Gaulle made a speech at Constantine announcing a “five-year programme” for Algeria. In it the most dazzling promises were made about everything except land questions; financially, the war in Algeria should not be continued and the

metropolis should devote to Algeria the capital normally invested at home. Even if a sight-draft were written against the future profits of Sahara oil, the demagoguery was a bit thick, and could not make people forget that for Algerians there is first of all a *political* problem, that of their independence, and that it was not going to be solved by electing 70 ultras and “beni-oui-ouis” [equivalents of “Uncle Toms”].

And so de Gaulle decided to break up the Public Safety Committee which, created on May 13th, had continued, since his accession to power on June 1st, to exercise a sort of dual power in Algeria. To do this, he ordered the army officers to leave this committee. General Salan, who holds power in Algeria, was trying to get de Gaulle to modify his decision, but de Gaulle forestalled him by publishing it. The army officers yielded. In the Public Safety Committee, one part of the ultras tried to organize manifestations (general strike, demonstration in the Forum), but it all fizzled out like a damp squib. Thus once more it was shown that the May 13th coup could not have succeeded had it not been for the participation of the army.

De Gaulle also decided that the elections in Algeria should be “free” and that the army should stand aside from the election campaign. It is probable that de Gaulle means this decision seriously, for he would like, through the elections, to find “valid interlocutors”; for that purpose, it is rather more than likely that he has had indirect contacts with the provisional Algerian government so that the latter would permit certain Algerians to run. Even admitting that no obstacles were put in the way of de Gaulle’s intentions by the Algerian government (which is not at all certain), there are obstacles on the French side. De Gaulle has obtained from the French command the withdrawal of the officers from the Public Safety Committee. But bonds continue to exist, bonds which, albeit less official, are none the less real — all the more so in that it is not the members of the little fascist groups who are the real political brains. The men who count are Soustelle and de Serigny. They immediately understood that politically de Gaulle must not be publicly opposed; but they have plenty of means of intervening in the elections to cross up de Gaulle’s plans, and the principal means at their disposal is an important part of the army chiefs in Algeria.

It remains to be seen what de Gaulle’s manoeuvre will produce in the coming elections in Algeria; meanwhile, it had a considerable political effect in France: it dumbfounded everybody. The right is falling into step, while the aggressive democrats who voted “no” on September 28th now present the spectacle of saluting de Gaulle as the man who is going to make peace in Algeria. Even *L’Humanité* said that the whole country approves de Gaulle’s decisions. There can be no doubt that under these conditions political apathy is going to spread even further among the broad masses — which will free de Gaulle’s hands even more. The defeat of May 13th has not yet borne all its fruits.

THE MEANING OF THE AMBIGUITY OF GAULLISM

By JEAN-PAUL MARTIN

The ambiguity of Gaullism has given rise to a series of observations and studies in "left" circles in France which are worthy of attention. They are evidence of a serious effort to understand on a deep level the political meaning of Gaullism and of its future development.

In general there is a consciousness that de Gaulle is supported by bourgeois forces which are to a certain extent antagonistic: that, as super-arbiter of these forces, he plays a Bonapartist role, and that his present regime is a provisional stage on the way to a clearer, less equivocal form.

On the man himself, the commentators mostly agree: a military man of monarchical and reactionary character, curiously combining an essentially religious mystique of "grandeur" with incontestable Machiavellism, brought up in a quite aristocratic mistrust of the "common people." Thus the man of the "noble" speech at Constantine, pathetically exhorting the "rebels" to cease their "fratricidal" struggle and participate in a work of splendid construction, is at the same time the author of the letter to Salan ordering him to speed up and complete the "pacification"!

The essential characteristics of the new Bonaparte have been clearly delineated by the pens of Edgar Morin, Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, and others. It only needs to be added that the political intelligence of de Gaulle is confined to his skill in equivocation, and, when all is said and done, his Machiavellism is the simultaneous expression of the Bonapartist role he is attempting to play, and of the only role which present circumstances allow him, placed as he is at the cross-roads of contradictory forces and currents. But at the same time the game of equivocation, the sybilline phrases and expressions, the silences, the shilly-shallying, the waiting, which some want to interpret as the consummate art of wisdom, perspicacity, and shrewd intelligence, are only the clear expression of the man's limits and of the unreality in which he moves in solitary grandeur, mystified himself, in a national atmosphere which, at this historic cross-roads, is also mystified.

The appearance of Messianic types is the certain sign of a society in decay fleeing from reality because it is unable to grapple with it successfully. But all the observers of the Gaullist phenomenon agree in dissociating the individual attributes of the man from his objective political significance. Whatever de Gaulle may be as an individual, he actually represents a political regime in which definite social forces are at work,

moulding it towards its final form and evolution. What are these forces?

Some see only the one which effectively carried de Gaulle to power and which still essentially determines his policy: the army. For example, this is the opinion of J-J Servan-Schreiber who, in the series of courageous and lucid articles published in *l'Express* before the referendum, showed clearly the highly important role of the army and the clique of military brass hats who control it.

Of course it is incontestable that the army, in alliance with the big "agrarian" settlers of Algeria, played a leading role in the crisis which resulted in the coming of de Gaulle to power, and that it continues to influence the regime to an enormous extent. Nevertheless this analysis errs by envisaging the army as an autonomous force, fails to emphasize its bourgeois class character, and at the same time ignores the intra-capitalist contradictions.

It is true that in the special circumstances of the waging of the Algerian war and the evolution of the political situation in France, the brass hats, generals and colonels, raised themselves up to a certain degree as an *autonomous Bonapartist force*, the force of the army, to impose a political solution. This solution was aimed at the refusal of independence to Algeria and the Sahara, and the guarantee of real control over both by the French bourgeoisie. To this extent, the army met with and still receives the unanimous approval of the French bourgeoisie without differentiation of strata, for at the present time there is no important part of the bourgeoisie that considers losing Algeria, which would result in losing effective control of the Sahara.

Later on we shall further clarify this question. Let us, for the moment, bear in mind the fact that the Bonapartist action of the army was based, in the final analysis, on the generally accepted interests of the whole of the bourgeoisie. But as soon as a political regime of Bonapartism was installed, each of the bourgeois forces naturally tried to bend this regime also toward the satisfaction of its own particular interests.

Bonapartism or fascism, as capitalist political regimes, take power in the beginning through forces which escape from the exclusive control of the monopolist big bourgeoisie. But once these regimes are installed, the intra-capitalist struggle begins, to determine which bourgeois fraction will completely tame the still Bonapartist, i e, partially autonomous, character of the state, in its own exclusive interest. Experience shows that the palm of victory always goes in the end to the fraction

of the monopolist bourgeoisie, of big industry and finance, which normally always controls the bourgeois state.

From this point of view, a deeper sociological analysis of de Gaulle's *Bonapartist regime* must show the role not only of the army and the colons, but equally of the other forces of the metropolitan bourgeoisie which will naturally try to domesticate this regime exclusively in their own favor.

Even the present alliance between the army and the settlers, moreover, is not so complete, since for example the army (especially its subaltern cadres) envisages "integration" as necessarily ending up in the economic, social and even political "equality" of the Algerians with the Europeans, while the big settlers are not at all disposed to equalize wages and social services, or to countenance an administration in which Moslems have real preponderance.

But by far the most important question is that of the opposition between the big metropolitan bourgeoisie and the other economically backward sections of the bourgeoisie. Several observers have correctly stressed this opposition, each with his own nuances.

Since the end of the war, especially during the last few years, France has been passing through a process of fundamental restructuration of its economic and social foundations, which demands a corresponding re-adaptation, a "reform," of its political institutions. It is here that must be sought, not the conjunctural cause (the coup of May 13th), but the deeper cause of the crisis which led to the coming of Gaullism to power as an attempt to solve the problems raised by the restructuration of the country's foundations.

Under the pressure of the postwar international and especially European conjuncture, France became involved in a process of "modernization" and economic expansion which by its last few years of accelerated growth has overturned the previous conservative economic, social, and political structures of the country. Whence flow the political fragmentations in a plethora of parties and extreme instability of governments, which in the last analysis reflect the "revolutionary" condition of French society. All the classes and strata are struggling one against another with a view to accelerating, retarding, or reversing this process.

Naturally under such conditions the more dynamic and conscious sectors of the bourgeoisie have felt an urgent need to establish a state which will firmly canalize the process in the direction most likely above all to enhance their own interests. The conjunctural crisis of May 13th gave birth to the Bonapartist regime of de Gaulle, imposed by the army and the settlers. The big metropolitan bourgeoisie, already entrenched in the governmental circles of Paris, will quite naturally attempt to domesticate it exclusively in its own interests.

This is the general picture on which the different political observers of the Gaullist phenomenon are trying to elaborate. Edgar Morin has made several discerning observations on the tendency of France "to be-

come a European nation and even a simple nationality inside a European super-nation."¹ It should be added that this tendency is primarily economic, presupposing and reflecting the modernization of French economic structures and their adjustment from above to the European economy.

The political fraction of "Europeans" essentially represented by the Pflimlins, the Schumanns, the Reynauds, the Gaillards, is fighting precisely for such an orientation, without exaggerated illusions about the international position and possibilities of France. A variation of this tendency, however, has been represented by Mendès-France, who, while stressing the importance of the modernization of the French economy, sees the future of the country in a "Eurafrican" perspective, at the head of a French "Commonwealth."

In any case, as Edgar Morin has remarked, this tendency is strongly opposed by the heterogeneous resistance of national and colonial economic interests, by the resistance en bloc of the army which refuses to submerge itself as such in an international army, and by the resistance of the Communist Party. But in reality the situation is not one of stalemate because the game has not yet reached the final stage: "European integration or neo-nationalist crystallization are still two possible alternatives."

It would have been better expressed as: European integration, with a Eurafrican, liberal (Mendès-France), opening, or neo-nationalist and neo-colonialist crystallization are still two possible alternatives.

According to Edgar Morin, the Bonapartist regime of de Gaulle retains the ambiguity of the social forces which are now converging in itself and between which it will be forced to choose. But whatever the outcome, Edgar Morin correctly concludes, it will be a matter of consolidating the authoritarian state of the bourgeoisie, which will reject the only true solution for the masses of France and everywhere else: that of "international democratic socialism."

For Claude Lefort,² who insists on the "double identity of Gaullism," "in a certain way de Gaulle is the meeting point of fascism and Mendèsism." Important changes have taken place in French society. "The first of these changes, notes Claude Lefort,

concerns the life of the state. It has seen its role and its activities considerably extended: it directs a huge sector of production, constantly intervenes in general economic life, determines by its behavior that of all the private enterprises. The transformation sector alone affects economic expansion, the new growth of industrialization, and the concomitant rationalization of the sectors of production and distribution.

These two convergent processes are defined by Claude Lefort as

a [political] organization of Anglo-Saxon type,

¹ See the review *Arguments*, June 1958.

² *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, July-August 1958.

where the unification of the political forces [bipartisanship] and the integration of the state bureaucracy with the political and trade-union bureaucracies, much further advanced than in the French model, effectively responds to the needs of a modern society.

Multifarious economic and social vested interests, "agrarian" settlers, the big agricultural producers of the metropolis, big merchants, small tradesmen, and marginal industrial enterprises, have tried to oppose the "modernization" of the French economic and political structure.

But naturally the "European" or "Mendesist" bourgeoisie does not give way. According to Claude Lefort, they will try, before it is too late, to modify the "pro-fascist" tendencies of Gaullism toward which the army-settler alliance and the reactionary parasitic sections in the metropolitan country are driving in order to utilize the "strong power" to impose "silence on the rival factions and advance the general interest of the ruling strata."

In other words, de Gaulle alone presents himself as capable of promoting a social reform of the type urged by Mendèsism. Granted, a paradoxical situation. But if the nature of Gaullism is ambiguous, it is because it expresses an objective ambiguity. The crisis operates on two levels: that of Algiers and that of France.

Because of this, according to Claude Lefort, Gaullism "is not the first stage of a process which necessarily leads to the installation of fascism"; it might well result in a kind of authoritarian Mendèsism.

On the other hand, this is not the opinion of P Chaulieu³, who thinks that "the administrative problems of society are not geometrical problems, and solutions that are 'rational' [from the viewpoint of the dominant class] are worthless unless they are accompanied by the force necessary to impose them." Now the de Gaulle regime, according to Chaulieu, is weak in its present form, which makes "the most probable outcome" that of "the entry of the country into a period of deep social crisis and of open conflict between the classes."

Claude Lefort's analysis is of the same type as the much more complete and profound analysis devoted to Gaullism by Serge Mallet in the July and August-September numbers of *Temps Modernes*. The differentiation of the current social forces, though necessarily a bit schematic, is shrewdly made by Serge Mallet.

Algeria is dominated by an aristocracy of big landed proprietors based on a European middle peasantry attached to the colonial system, and a workers' aristocracy which owes its privileged position solely to racial discrimination and colonial methods of exploitation.

This landed aristocracy has linked its destiny to a whole commercial framework: exporters, steam-

ship companies, agents, wholesale traders, living mainly or exclusively on the trade in the agricultural products of North Africa, i.e., on part of the surplus value abstracted from the Algerian fellahin.

Its class allies in the metropolitan country are the monopolist landed proprietors — the beet-growers of the North and the big wine-producers of the South — protected and subsidized by the state.

This highly organized "mercantile feudalism," very influential in current political formations and in the state administration, has for allies also all the reactionary parasitic strata, produce wholesalers, proprietors of marginal industrial undertakings, colonial army officers, etc. It also tries increasingly to base itself on the innumerable small traders of town and country who are resisting the modernization and expansion of the economy and on the clientèle of the Poujadist and similar movements.

Against these strata, according to Serge Mallet, stands finance capital, in flagrant opposition to their interests.

At the present time French finance capital is indeed the fusion of industrial and banking capital, which, according to Serge Mallet, were still dissociated during the '30s. It was then, Mallet explains, that industrial capital, of the big "captains of industry" like Michelin, Renault, Citroën, were tempted by the fascist solution to "hamstring a working class in full revolutionary ferment," and simultaneously to "get rid of the control of the big banks." Whereas at the present time finance capital is working for economic expansion and modernization in the metropolitan country, the exploitation of Sahara oil, and the expansion and activation of the African market by industrialization.

Hence its need to control a state which will remove from its path the obstacles which, economically speaking, are represented by the existence of the "agrarians" of Algeria and the metropolitan country, and the large and small commercial parasites of the distribution network.

The state desired by finance capital is certainly a "strong" state, but not a fascist one; a state in the image of the American system "where the minor contradictions are fought out inside two or three big class parties, while the Executive, composed of the trusted men of finance capital, carries out the long-term plans."

The attitude of finance capital, according to Serge Mallet, has also changed towards the working class. The policy of high wages, paid holidays, and other economic advantages often granted now without a struggle by management, is a technological and economic necessity for modern capital in order to maintain and increase productivity by the close association of the producers.

The conclusions of such an analysis, intended by Serge Mallet for the working up of a "programme of 'left' opposition to Gaullism," are significant.

³ Ibid.

Modern capitalism cannot do without the worker-consumer. Furthermore, modern production methods make the "coupling" of finance capital and the proletariat even more intimate than in the past. "The assimilation of the workers to the factory" constitutes today — technically — a prime necessity of modern production. Gaullism will of necessity pass under the control of finance capital, which will use its "strong state" and its reforms of institutions in economic alliance with the proletariat, to combat and get rid of the retarding elements of the bourgeoisie.

The present contradictions in the Gaullist regime can be explained by the still remaining influence upon it of the reactionary forces of the "coup of May 13th" and the compromise which finance capital is obliged to make with its (bourgeois) economic adversaries who are at the same time, however, "its sole base." Nevertheless, despite these hazards, finance capital will pursue and achieve its objectives.

The coming of Gaullism will give maximum acceleration to the concentration of capital, bring about the collapse of uneconomic marginal enterprises, precipitate the liquidation of the small and medium traders, bring large-scale trade under the control of finance capital. [...] The working-class movement in a certain way can utilize this development to its profit," [all the more so in that the "Gaullist" regime] will move the main arena of class struggle from the political to the economic field.

And here is Serge Mallet's final conclusion :

The "left" must make alliances not with the petty bourgeoisie in defending its "reactionary" economic demands, or with the "social-chauvinist Guy Mollet," but rather with social forces such as that of the "liberal Mendès-France," or with "the national colonial bourgeoisie," which is not in opposition to the "historically progressive measures which will be taken by the representatives of big capital."

"The Popular Front," under these conditions, "can no longer be a simple tactical operation, on the basis of the new class relationships," it will not appear to be possible except as "the French road to socialism" by way of structural reforms within the framework of the political and economic (the latter "progressive") domination of big finance capital.

Whence flows a "transitional" programme for the "left," which is summarized in "progressive" reforms acceptable if not desired by big finance capital, but which, economically speaking, will lay the later bases of a socialist development of the economy and, in a parallel way, of socialist democracy.

It is naturally easy to point out the shortcomings of a "logical" construction such as that provided by Serge Mallet, too marked by oversimplifying "economism," and by an obviously mechanical conception of the class structure and functioning of the capitalist system.

In reality the opposition between big capital and

the economically backward layers of the bourgeoisie is less acute than Serge Mallet imagines, both because these layers are the *social base* of the political and social domination of big capital, and because of the economic interpenetration which occurs between certain of these layers and big capital.

The latter is unable to engage in a resolute struggle against the big "agrarians" and the "mercantile vested interests," big merchants of the colonies and the metropolitan country, without causing a political crisis which would undermine the social regime itself. Furthermore, these latter layers are often associated under one form or another with the banks and enterprises of big capital. As for the "liberal" designs of big capital in relation to the colonies, which are said to flow from its desire "peacefully" to exploit the wealth of the Sahara, and to broaden the colonial markets by industrialization, they are in fact much more limited for a number of reasons.

Effective control of the Sahara is impossible without *real political* control of Algeria. But this tendency is opposed politically by the present tendency of the Algerian revolution, an integral part of the Arab revolution, which aims not at an *appearance of autonomy* but at a real independence and its integration in a united inter-Arab Maghrebian republic.

The difficulty in finding a solution in Algeria springs not only from the presence of a big European colony which now dominates the country, but equally from the importance of the wealth of the Sahara for French imperialism, which has undergone considerable economic expansion during the last few years. Only the defeat of the Algerian (and Arab) revolution under one form or another, would allow of a "liberal" solution, which might if need be take the form of an apparently autonomous or independent regime, provided that in fact it was effectively controlled by French imperialism.

As for the industrialization of the colonies, this is always hampered by the vastness of the capital required for primary investment, without immediate returns, and by the vested interest represented by the extraction of cheap raw materials for the economic expansion of French imperialism.

The picture drawn by Serge Mallet and other well-intentioned apologists of "Mendesist" big capital, supposedly eager for straightforward economic expansion, "liberal" towards the colonies, "enlightenedly paternalistic" towards the metropolitan proletariat, and pioneering in the direction of "socialism" throughout a whole transitional period, which it is necessary to traverse in a kind of alliance with them under a "Popular Front" formula — this picture could correspond only to a finance capital acting in the context of an "*economically pure*" capitalism in a *state of continuous expansion*. During the last few years, the boom, which ensured full employment and high wages, has created such illusions. But it suffices for the economic conjuncture to turn towards "recession"

for all the "good intentions" of finance capital to be seriously compromised.

A transitional programme for the "left" which takes into account, not the evolution of capitalism as a whole, but only its phase of "upswing," can only land one in the reformist illusions of a Bernstein.

It was a period of apparently infinite capitalist "upswing" which engendered Bernstein. It is a much more limited conjuncture of upswing which has engendered this whole literature on "revolutionary reformism" during the last few years, with the blessing of the present leaders of the Kremlin thrown in.

But Europe is now in the early stages of a "recession." Big capital will be forced, by abandoning the policy of full employment, to abandon also that of high wages, since unemployment provides them with other means for associating their slaves with production.

But economic illusions will not be the only ones to suffer in the new conjuncture. The political illusions about the possibilities of democratic reformist action by the proletariat under the domination of big capital are no less compromised. Gaullism's "strong state," by taking all power away from Parliament, reënforsing the Executive, and plebisciting its autocratic Constitution, has already barred the "new parliamentary road" to "socialism." In the new decorative Assembly which the rigged elections of November are preparing, the representation of the Communist Party will be scandalously reduced to an insignificant quantity.

Thus the means for *political action* by the proletariat are neutralized. Under these conditions, to speak of the "Popular Front" with the "progressive" big bourgeoisie as the "French road to socialism," sounds like a grim joke.

Whether the Bonapartist regime of "Gaullism" evolves towards a fascist form, or towards a more hybrid form combining a parliamentary façade with a de facto army-and-police dictatorship, the proletariat will in any case be excluded from any legal political role whatsoever. To break out of the dictatorial straight-jacket which the bourgeoisie is now manufacturing, it will be necessary for it one day to mobilize itself in extra-parliamentary revolutionary action.

In order to make this action possible one day, it is necessary to have an effective transitional programme. But it must be a transitional programme which links the economic and democratic demands necessary at the present stage *to regroup the class against "Gaullism,"* to more advanced anti-capitalist demands *which will endanger the very structure of capitalism,* with the whole programme set in the *perspective of the taking of political power under the form of a workers' and peasants' government.*

Such a transitional programme should be worked out, starting right now, by the united front of the workers' parties (especially the CP and the autonomous SP) and trade-union organizations, on which the workers' and peasants' government would be based.

And this is the true "French road to socialism," outside of which the "left" and the proletariat are in danger of settling in for a long time under the de facto dictatorship of "Gaullism," just as yesterday, for lack of such a programme, they found themselves defending the anachronistic decadent bourgeois republic, which ended by throwing the broad masses into the arms of the "savior."

15 October 1958.

FORTY YEARS AGO

(On the Nature of the 1918 German Revolution)

By G GERBEL

While the petty-bourgeois democrats want to wind up the revolution as quickly as possible, our interest and task are to make the revolution permanent until all the more or less owning classes are removed from power...

—Karl Marx - Friedrich Engels: *Address to the Bund*, 1850.

In the evaluation of historic developments and events, a distinction must constantly be made between more or less accidental phenomena and occurrences, and the motive forces, the deeper causes and relationships, inherent in these events.

The revolution of November 1918 was the result of the first imperialist World War and the defeat of German imperialism. It was not systematically prepared by a revolutionary party, but developed spontaneously out of the military collapse, the exhaustion of the army, and the refusal of the working masses on the home front to carry the burden of the war any longer.

This spontaneous character of the revolution nowise means that, in the process of the preparation of the revolution, no revolutionary socialist force was operating. On the contrary, socialists who had their training before the war in workers' organizations were to be found in the leadership of a series of pre-revolutionary movements and struggles. The heads of this movement, moreover, were in more or less solid contact with the leftist revolutionary organizations and groups.

The mass general strike against the sentence of Karl Liebknecht in June 1916 was followed in April 1917 by other strikes to obtain additional food and the promise of electoral reform in Prussia. In the navy, in July 1917, there occurred the first sailors' mutinies, centred in Wilhelmshaven, which were repressed by the most brutal measures of military terror. The sailors Reichpietsch and Köbes were condemned to death and executed as the ringleaders. In the movements of 1917 the influence of the Russian Revolution made itself strongly felt. This was clearly reflected both in the demands and in the forms of organization.

On January 14th 1918 a general strike broke out in Vienna. It was the result of the working class's indignation about the scandalous plans of conquest of the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey) at Brest-Litovsk, and was triggered by the sudden and grave worsening of famine among the masses. In this strike there were seen for the first time workers' councils, at the head of which were factory

workers who had hitherto come forward little or not at all. A little over a week later, on January 28th, there broke out a general strike in the Berlin arms plants. It spread rapidly to other factories and over the whole Reich. In all, there were involved a million workers, 500,000 of them in Berlin. Here also workers' councils were formed. It was the Leipzig workers who, in April 1917, had formulated in the most characteristic way the economic and political demands of these movements :

- 1) increased provision of cheap foodstuffs and coal for the population ;
- 2) declaration by the government that it was ready to make peace immediately, without open or secret annexations ;
- 3) abolition of the state of war and of the censorship ;
- 4) immediate abolition of all limitations on rights of coalition, association, and assembly ;
- 5) immediate abolition of the shameful forced-labor law ;
- 6) immediate liberation of all political arrestees and prisoners, suppression of penal proceedings against political activity ;
- 7) full civil liberties ; universal, equal, secret, and direct suffrage for the election of all public institutions in the Reich, its component states, and municipalities.

These points were adopted by the strike of the Berlin munitions workers, who added to them : "participation of workers' representatives in the peace negotiations."

The real leadership of this struggle was in the hands of oppositional representatives of the Berlin metallurgical plants, who later formed themselves into "Revolutionäre Obleute." They were almost all members of the U S P, but they had an independent position toward the party leadership and hence formed the nucleus of the left wing of this centrist party. The special importance of these Obleute lay in the fact that they always reflected the mood of the workers in the factories. They constituted a sort of council-like bodies. But, on the one hand, they did

not have the mass character of the councils, and on the other, the tasks they set themselves went beyond the councils. They "replaced" the communist revolutionary mass party that was lacking. They tried to hold to this task until the January Days in 1918.

The leaderships of the trade unions and the Socialist Party (Majority Socialists), declared themselves "neutral" toward these movements. They did everything possible to prevent them from breaking out, and when this was no longer possible, they put themselves at the head of the strikes in order to strangle them. The president of the Majority Socialists, Ebert, explained the leadership's tactic in an article in the *Hamburger Echo* of February 17th 1918:

The entry of the party leadership in the movement was necessary in order to ensure their orderly development and reasonable conclusion. [...] That we did not unconditionally follow the pressure of our members has already been made clear in the daily press. We rejected in any form the responsibility for the movement, which was quite inopportune and had broken out without any contact having been made with us. We furthermore posed the condition that we would not accept the movement unless we were given an adequate influence in the leadership.

Later, when Ebert, as Reichskanzler in 1924, was attacked by the nationalists for having instigated the January strike, he sued his accusers for slander, and showed in court that he and Braun had entered the leadership of the strike only in order to strangle it. This episode of Social-Democratic policy belongs to one of the lowest points of its moral and political collapse. It also reveals the betrayals of these "socialists" which can no longer be considered accidents or deviations but as going over to the camp of the class enemy. The whole policy of the Majority Socialists in the November revolution was basically nothing other than the practice of strangling this strike transposed to the plane of a political overturn.

The German government immediately repressed the strike with the most brutal measures. On February 2nd an intensified state of siege was decreed. Special tribunals were created, arrests were made, thousands of *Obleute* were imprisoned. By these measures the strike was defeated. On February 3rd the revolutionary *Obleute* called it off in Berlin. In the rest of the country work had been renewed even earlier.

Thus ended the pre-revolutionary cycle of the class struggle, only to reach a new cycle ten months later, with the powerful uprising of the worker and soldier masses, the cycle of the proletarian revolution.

The repression of the January movement was the last great effort of collapsing militarism. After a few limited successes on the western front, there occurred an abrupt turn that showed very clearly that there was no longer hope of a victorious peace and that the war must be ended at any cost.

In order to create the premises for an armistice and peace, the military leadership used political pressure on the government, by means of an internal political transformation, a "revolution from above," to create a government that would be in a position to take on itself the consequences of the military defeat. Prince Max von Baden was the chancellor of this "popular" government, and for the first time two leaders of the Social-Democracy (MSP) entered the cabinet as secretaries of state. For the first time a parliamentary government was "ruling" in Germany. This concession to "democracy" was supposed to save Germany from military catastrophe and the resultant revolution. It was, however, though not by the wish of those who had arranged it, a bridge toward the revolution. Even the last-minute partial concessions (extension of the franchise, political amnesty, etc) and other "measures of democratization" could no longer change anything. The pressure of the discontented, starving, war-sick masses grew steadily and was complemented by the collapse of discipline in the army, especially among the troops who, inside Germany itself, were not subjected to the steady pressure of combat and were in close contact with the ever more strongly radicalized worker masses.

In this atmosphere of political and military decomposition the High Sea Fleet at Kiel received on October 30th the order to sail out to a "big naval action." The order for this "Death-Cruise" of the fleet was the signal for an open mass-mutiny among the sailors. The port workers immediately joined the uprising. Workers' and soldiers' councils were elected, and revolutionary sailors spread out all over Germany as banner-bearers of the revolution.

It is symptomatic that in all revolutions the sailors play an outstanding role. The technical needs of the fleet require that the majority of the sailors be recruited from the ranks of skilled workers. The politically conscious and organized workers' elements thus play a greater role than in other troop formations. At the beginning of the movement the sailors' demands had no socialist content. They were still concerned with an internal reform of disciplinary dispositions: the liberation of arrestees, commissions for domestic matters and complaints, limitation of saluting, etc. The primitive nature of these demands does not reflect, as the historian of *The Weimar Republic*, Arthur Rosenberg, explains, the naiveté of the German people, but characterizes the first steps in every revolution, which, in the first place, still keep within the framework of reform of what exists, and struggle against immediate obstacles. But despite their primitive nature, these demands contained a dynamic force that quickly went beyond the limits of the existing order.

In a period of eight days political power in Germany was broken. The power lay in the hands of the workers' and soldiers' councils. But the political and

class composition of the revolution was here also of great importance. While the workers' councils in the factories were in their great majority composed of politically educated and organized workers, the soldiers' councils were dominated by accidental and petty-bourgeois elements. While the workers' councils, consciously or unconsciously, were the carriers of socialist demands, the soldiers' councils let themselves be used to drive back the councils as political expressions of the will to revolution.

In the territorial army the working class was not represented in proportion to its numerical strength. While large parts of the working class were occupied in the arms industry and in the navy, the petty-bourgeois element of the towns and especially of the countryside predominated in the territorial army. The goal of these petty-bourgeois masses, lacking any political experience, was just the end of the war and the resultant demobilization. From the time that the ruling classes, as a consequence of the military collapse, themselves began to push for peace negotiations, the political development of the soldiers' councils grew limited. For them the goal of the revolution had been reached with the unseating of the military leaders and their visible desire for war. They identified themselves with the Social-Democratic leaders who had been pushed up to power. In these they saw, not traitors to the International, not voters of the war-credits on August 4th, not the politicians of social peace, not the strike-breakers of the January movement, but the antipodes of militarism and Prussianism, the guarantors of their victory and of their wish to return to civilian life.

In his book *From Weimar to Hitler*, Otto Braun, later Prussian premier, explains how the future president of the Social-Democratic Party, Otto Wels, succeeded in pulling the councils of politically uneducated soldiers away from the influence of the revolutionary sections of the working class and in making use of them against the latter :

He had the soldiers' councils elect spokesmen and then marched with them in closed ranks to the Zirkus Busch [to the first conference of the Berlin Workers' and Soldiers' Councils]. It will soon be seen how much these disciplined men were necessary and decisive for the later development of the revolution. The Independents (U S P D) were somewhat hesitant, their left wing in particular leaning strongly toward the Spartakists [the Liebknecht-Luxemburg-Mehring group]. Wels's disciplined soldiers' councils struck the decisive blow.

The meeting in question here, to which we shall several times return, took place on November 10th. It elected the government of people's deputies, a government which set itself the goal of "ending the revolution as quickly as possible." On November 12th this government issued a decree which was sympto-

matic of its attitude and fatal for the revolution :

The prescribed relationships with officers are maintained. The first duty of the soldiers' councils is to prevent disorder and mutiny.

The easy-going acceptance of this decree by the soldiers' councils condemned them to complete impotence, and in a few weeks demobilization rendered them completely insignificant. They had fulfilled their task in the counter-revolutionary sense.

When the 1918 debacle occurred, the Social-Democracy was the last pillar of bourgeois society. The army was in a state of dissolution, the bourgeois state apparatus was no longer functioning. But the leaders of the Social-Democracy did everything to prevent the military collapse and the revolution. Even when it was clear that the departure of Kaiser Wilhelm was inevitable, the Social-Democratic leadership did everything to save the monarchy. General Gröner, during a trial in 1925, testified concerning a conference that he had had with the leadership of the S P D. He stated that he found in his interlocutors a complete understanding of his efforts to save the monarchy :

Nowhere was there a word that might indicate that these gentlemen wanted the revolution. On the contrary, from beginning to end the talk was only about how the monarchy could be saved, and it is revealing that at the end Ebert specified : "The abdication of the Kaiser is inevitable if it is desired to prevent the masses from going over to the revolutionary camp and thus to prevent the revolution."

Ebert proposed that one of the Kaiser's sons be installed as regent. It was only on November 7th that the Social-Democrats publicly demanded the Kaisers' abdication. But the situation was untenable. The revolution, despite the efforts of Noske, whom the S P D leadership had sent to Kiel to dam up the movement, spread from city to city. On November 9th there were powerful mass demonstrations in Berlin. The Max von Baden government resigned, and Ebert took the post of Reichskanzler. He took over from Max von Baden the post of regent of the Reich. It was during this conversation that he made his famous declaration : "I hate the revolution like sin."

An hour later, Scheidemann was forced, under pressure of the mass demonstration, to proclaim the republic from the balcony of the Reichstag. He took this step hastily and without consultation with his party friends, but to the great jubilation of the demonstrating workers, because he had been informed that Karl Liebknecht had proclaimed the "socialist republic" from the Berliner Schloss.

The Social-Democracy had done everything it could to prevent the revolution. Now it was a matter of its putting itself at the head of the revolution in order to prevent it from developing into a socialist revolution. While in October and the first days of November the

Social-Democratic leaders were trying to avoid the collapse of the regime, the revolutionary leadership (Revolutionäre Obleute and the Spartakus-Bund), was preparing the revolutionary uprising of the Berlin proletariat. Discussions about the form and the date of the uprising continued from 25 October to 9 November. The decisions ran up against the irresolution of the centrist leadership of the USP, who had a paralyzing influence on the revolutionary Obleute, on the one hand, and, on the other, a certain ultimatism and adventurism on the part of the Liebknecht group. Liebknecht demanded a call for a mass demonstration as an immediate prelude to the uprising. The representatives of the Bolshevik Party in Germany, during a consultation on November 2nd, recommended the preparation of a general strike on revolutionary slogans and the continuation of the action up to the armed insurrection.

The uprising was set for November 11th. But precipitate events and the first arrests forced the revolutionary leadership already on November 9th to call the Berlin workers to a mass demonstration. How ripe the situation was in the working class was shown by the fact that participation in the demonstration began in the morning just as soon as the appeals for it were distributed in the factories. One factory after another was set in motion. The big plants formed the nucleus of the demonstration and hence the nucleus of the revolution. The barracks at first associated themselves only timidly with the movement.

On the morning of November 9th the leaders of the SPD and the parliamentary fraction were still trying to keep the workers in the factories and off the streets. But the masses answered the call of their revolutionary leadership. In this reply lay the possibility for the movement to take further steps and to block the attempt of the Eberts and Scheidemanns to get hold of the movement. But it is necessary to take as a starting point the fact that the majority of the German working class lacked political understanding and revolutionary experience. Both had to be acquired in the course of the revolutionary struggle.

The desires of the masses for peace and socialism were mingled with illusions about "unity for its own sake." This should have served as the basis for a correct tactic by the revolutionary leadership. What was confusedly moving the masses in their hearts — the elimination of capitalism and militarism, the end of the carnage — had to be formulated in clear conditions for the struggle of the workers' movement. They were the best touchstone for socialist unity. Under such conditions the SPD leadership would have to show its colors. As it would not and could not follow the path of the socialist revolution, it would be forced to isolate itself from the masses. To force it into such a situation was the task of the Spartakus-Bund, as the most advanced part of the revolutionary leadership of the Berlin workers.

The masses who marched in the streets on the morning of November 9th were masters of the situation. There was no government. But a government was demanded, especially by the mass of soldiers in order to carry out the armistice negotiations. The call for a government uniting all political tendencies of the workers' movement became more and more pressing. Liebknecht refused to form a government with the Majority Socialists. The masses did not at all understand this attitude. Under the pressure of innumerable delegations from the factories and barracks, Liebknecht made the following declaration :

I will formulate in six points the conditions on whose acceptance or refusal it depends whether I enter the government. With whosoever accepts the conditions indispensable for a socialist revolution, I will enter unconditionally into a government, whether or not he belongs to the Kaiser-Socialists.

- 1) Germany shall be a socialist republic.
- 2) In this republic, the whole legislative, executive, and judicial power shall be exclusively in the hands of the elected representatives of the whole toiling population and the soldiers.
- 3) Exclusion of bourgeois members from the government.
- 4) Participation of the Independents for only three days in order to create a provisional government able to conclude an armistice.
- 5) The departmental ministers shall be considered as only technical aides to the cabinet proper.
- 6) Equality of the two leaders of the cabinet.

Without going into detail about whether these conditions were in principle defensible and corresponded to the revolutionary situation, here was taken the step that was tactically necessary in view of the fact that the political situation was unripe.

Both Liebknecht's declaration and the sharp rejection of this individually formulated declaration by the leadership of the Spartakus-Bund showed that the vanguard of the German revolutionary movement was lacking in political and organizational cohesion and clarity.

The SPD leadership rejected the six conditions. Instead of exploiting this refusal as the starting-point for broad propaganda in the masses about the counter-revolutionary role of the SPD leadership, this episode was treated just as a bad gaff, that should be covered with a veil of forgetfulness. Disregarding the mood existing especially among the soldiers, the Spartakus-Bund's leadership continued its previous line, which was very clearly shown in a appeal of November 10th :

For four years the Scheidemanns, the government Socialists, have dragged you through the horrors of the war, have told you that the "Fatherland" must be defended, where what was

in question was only the predatory interests of imperialism ; now, when German imperialism is collapsing, they are trying to save for the bourgeoisie anything that can still be saved, and to stifle the revolutionary energy of the masses.

There ought to be no "Scheidemann" in the government ; no socialist should enter the government so long as a Government Socialist has a seat in it. There is nothing in common with those who have betrayed for four years.

When Spartakus saw in the Scheidemanns the grave-diggers of the socialist revolution and thus pitilessly characterized them, it was 100 % right. Past and future have proved it and confirmed it as a genuine historical fact. But it was a mistake to pose the question as Spartakus did in the last paragraph.

That same day in the Busch Zirkus, as has already been mentioned, the Berlin workers' and soldiers' councils met in their first session. Liebknecht was received with an ovation such as had never been heard before. But during his speech the mood changed sharply. The more Liebknecht stressed the well-founded accusations against the SPD leadership and sought thereby to justify that it was not possible to work with them, the more protestations arose in the hall. A large part of the workers, and especially the soldiers, could not understand why Liebknecht took this position : never and under no conditions to act together with the Majority Socialists. In this situation, Ebert had it easy. Adapting himself skilfully to the mood of the assembly, he said in effect : Enough war, enough blood-letting. Now we must, after the defeat, all together, united, build a free (and of course socialist) Germany. Thus Ebert, who feared and fought against the socialist revolution, was the winner of the day.

The SPD leadership would doubtless have had the majority of the politically confused mass of soldiers in this fateful assembly even if Liebknecht had, as on the day before, acted with the right tactical insight and had not disregarded his own correct understanding of the masses, i.e., if he had included in his understanding a comprehension of the masses' backwardness. If Liebknecht, with the full authorization of the leadership of the Spartakus-Bund, had clearly and factually posed the disputed questions before the Berlin workers' and soldiers' councils, had concretely developed the revolutionary tasks, and had in effect declared: If the cruelties of these last four and a half years are not to be in vain, then peace must immediately be made with the Soviet Union and a socialist Germany built. These were the two premises of the conditions posed by the Spartakus-Bund. Seeing that the socialist goal requires carrying out radical measures, we can and will enter only into a government that makes this its programme.

If the Spartakus-Bund had posed the question in this way, it would not have happened that in the

course of the revolution the vanguard was so isolated from the decisive masses.

This mistaken practice in November 1918 is closely tied up with the fundamental error of the Spartakus-Bund : its neglect of the organizational question and overestimation of the spontaneous socialist consciousness of the masses.

When Scheidemann announced on November 9th that the German people "had won all along the line," there was, to the right of the SPD, no political force capable of barring the road to the new bearers of state power, the workers and soldiers. The ruling layers, the big landowners, the military caste, and the bourgeoisie had disappeared from the political scene. They trembled before the expected consequences of the overturn. Two facts soon permitted the bourgeoisie to come back on stage, and, though at first timidly, then day by day more clearly, to lift up its voice : first, the lack of purpose and the hesitations of the revolutionary leadership of the masses, and second and above all, the announcement of bourgeois-democratic reforms that the right-wing leadership of the workers' movement set as "what was politically possible within the country."

The decisive vital question for the bourgeoisie was the achievement of its demand that the National Assembly be convoked very quickly so as thus to re-establish "law and order." For the bourgeoisie was trembling at "law by revolutionary decision" which the working class had in its hands during the days of the revolution. The bourgeoisie correctly understood that the continuation of the revolution must grow dangerous and tried to bring developments under the control of the National Assembly so as to be able to strangle the revolution by parliamentary means.

The bourgeoisie had no need, immediately after the outbreak of the revolution, to parry the threatening danger by its own counter-revolutionary actions. For demands of the new November 10th government of the people's delegates, with their bourgeois-democratic content, such as, for example, the protection of private property etc, and the November declarations of the people's delegates guaranteeing the salaries, pensions, and rights of functionaries, reassured the bourgeoisie without its having to do anything whatever. It had only to take shelter behind this government, thanks to whom its class interests were broadly protected, and to strengthen this government against forces which, like the workers' and soldiers' councils or the Left, were fighting for a consistent continuance of the revolution. From November 15th on, the bosses succeeded in tying up the trade unions in the central labor commission, thereby obtaining protection against wage increases and breaking the trade unions away from further advances of the revolution. Instead of creating, during the revolutionary days, the basis for socialization, the treasonable policy of the SPD leader-

ship enabled the besieged bosses to sit down at the table with the representatives of the working class and to discuss it. By these endless and fruitless debates, the bourgeoisie managed to get through the revolutionary situation until the National Assembly, and there, by the Socialization Law of March 1919 in this Assembly to provide "suitable indemnization" and thus finally to bury the whole question of socialization.

There had soon come to pass what Engels had prophesied in December 11th 1884 in a letter to Bebel: "In any case, our adversary on the day of the crisis and the day after is the whole reaction rallied round pure democracy." In these days of the November revolution "pure democracy" was represented by those forces that rallied to demand the convocation of the National Assembly. These forces extended from the most extreme right to within the ranks of the Independent Social-Democrats. National Assembly or power to the councils were the two poles: revolution or counter-revolution. The question was settled by the December 16th-20th Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils. The composition of the congress did not correspond to the state of mind of the masses. While 250,000 workers were demonstrating in Berlin on the slogans of the Spartakus-Bund, there were not a dozen delegates from the Spartakus-Bund. The Majority Socialists, however, had 288 out of 485 mandates. These facts are revealing about the German revolution and the great weakness of the Spartakus-Bund. Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, doubtless the most popular leaders of the revolution, had no mandates, and were not even admitted to the congress with voice but without vote.

The second point on the agenda read: National Assembly or system of councils, with a report and a counter-report.

The *Rote Fahne*, organ of the Spartakus-Bund, explained the meaning of this point on the agenda:

Significant in this agenda is [...] the formulation of the central problem of the revolution in the form of an alternative: National Assembly or the setting up of councils. Here at least it is openly admitted that the National Assembly is identical with the destruction of the workers' and soldiers' councils and their political role. The relationship of political forces was evaluated by the same *Rote Fahne* in the following way:

The national conference now finds itself, in its process of self-clarification, under the pressure of two opposed factors. From above, the bourgeois counter-revolution, concentrated in the general headquarters of Ebert-Scheidemann, is bringing the strongest pressure on the national conference to demoralize it, rob it of confidence, to give up acting as an organ of the workers' and soldiers' councils by convoking the National Assembly. That was the meaning of the December 6th putsch (on that day, for the first

time in the revolution, the government of the people's delegates fired on a demonstration), the demonstration on the return of the guard troops, the disarmament of the proletariat and the formation of the "Volunteer People's Army." From below, simultaneously, the far-sighted and resolute masses of the proletariat were bringing pressure on the conference of the councils in order to strengthen its revolutionary will, to get it to take a socialist class point of view, and, out of the chaotic defeat of the November revolution, to forge the sharp weapon of the further development of the socialist revolution.

Right from its first meeting, the Congress of Councils demonstrated that its majority and specifically the leaderships of both Social-Democratic parties had neither the capacity nor the will to make of the councils an instrument for proletarian power. The congress decided on its own castration in a resolution formulated as follows:

The National Congress of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils of Germany, which represents the collective political power, transmits, until a later settlement by the National Assembly, the legislative and executive power to the Council of the People's Delegates.

By this decision the Congress of Councils brought to an end the first phase of the revolution. The counter-revolution began to raise its head.

The conditions, developments, and results of the November revolution have led to serious discussion in the workers' movement concerning the class character of the 1918 revolution. There have been essentially two opposed conceptions. Some have been of the opinion that, by the nature of the motive forces and on the basis of its historic tasks, it was a proletarian revolution, but that it had been crushed by the counter-revolution with the help of the betrayal of the S P D. The others have held the point of view that the November revolution was a bourgeois revolution because the real bourgeois revolution of 1848 in Germany had ended in a compromise and the bourgeoisie had never held sole power in Germany. The results of the revolution would not have completely attained this goal, not to mention the tasks of the socialist revolution. This latter is the conception defended by Stalinist historians (Fred Ölsner, etc). It is also shared by Arthur Rosenberg, who puts forward the immaturity of the German working class and the primitive nature of its demands as proof that it was not a question of a proletarian revolution.

The 1848 revolution was, roughly speaking, the bourgeois revolution, whose task was the overthrow of feudalism, i e, the expropriation of the feudal landowners, national unity, abolition of absolutism, separation of church and state, and establishment of bourgeois democracy. The bourgeois revolution is characterized by the transfer of power from the feudal

classes to the bourgeoisie. Since the German revolution of 1848 was not completed — the German bourgeoisie concluded a compromise with absolutism — the transfer of power into the hands of the bourgeoisie became a long and contradictory process that left remains of feudalism up into the time of the bourgeois republic. But that nowise alters the fact that capitalism became the dominant system. Even if a large part of the political power remained in the hands of holdovers from feudalism, it was nonetheless true that this power was employed in the interests of the German bourgeoisie. The task that lay before the German workers' movement was the proletarian revolution, the taking of power from the bourgeoisie, a process in which it would have been necessary, "in passing," as Lenin expressed it, to wind up the unfinished tasks of the bourgeois revolution.

Capitalism had long since created the material bases for the proletarian revolution in Germany: heavy industry and the proletariat. It was on these bases that the German workers' organizations and the socialist movement had grown. In this period the Ger-

man bourgeoisie had completely lost its progressive role and had become out-and-out reactionary. The 1914-1918 World War was precisely a symptom of this development.

The fact that the proletarian revolution was unable to develop itself fully changes nothing in the character of the revolution. It was just because the proletarian revolution was strangled that bourgeois democracy has continued to drag along feudal remnants, from the Weimar Republic up to the present day.

It is similarly false to take the level of consciousness of the masses as the measure of the nature of the revolution. It is only historical necessities which determine a revolution's character. The unfolding of the November revolution showed precisely that the betrayal of the German Social-Democracy consisted, not in that it limited itself to the accomplishment and fulfillment of the bourgeois revolution, but in that it helped decapitate the proletarian revolution and thus had to become the tool of the *bourgeois* counter-revolution.

THE ARAB NATIONAL MOVEMENT AFTER THE REVOLUTION IN IRAQ

By M K

For all those unacquainted with or refusing to understand the situation in the Arab countries, the revolution in Iraq came like a bolt from the blue. In reality it was a natural result of the development of the national movement throughout the whole Arab world. The hirelings of imperialism around King Feisal and Nuri Sa'id were overthrown by this irresistible movement.

But the unresisted overthrow of the former rulers of Iraq was not only a heavy blow to the imperialists. It was simultaneously an important turning point for the national movement in the whole region. The political, economic, and social steps taken by the new leaders, both in the next period and for the long term, as well as the activity of the mass movement, will determine the still not yet settled fate of the new regime.

To understand the turn in the situation of the Arab national movement, we must concern ourselves with the difference between the revolutions in Egypt and Iraq, and also with the events that occurred in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan between those two events.

The overthrow of the feudal-monarchist domination in Egypt in 1952 and the coming to power of Naguib and Nasser, were the results, not of a direct mass action, but of a revolt by predominantly petty-bourgeois young officers. All the old parties were corrupt to the last degree, led by the big landowners, and tied up in one way or another with the royal court. To liquidate this rotten regime and to carry through progressive reforms, the officers' junta had to break up all the political parties. It set up a strong military dictatorship and eliminated the previously existing "parliamentary" forms.

Immediately after the new power was set up, the workers of Cairo and Alexandria tried to better their lot by means of sit-down strikes and other methods of struggle. The new holders of power reacted with death sentences and long prison sentences against the workers' leaders. The Communists and other leftists were not freed from prison; on the contrary, the jails and concentration-camps were filled still more with leftist elements.

To what an extent an organized vanguard of the Egyptian working class was lacking — and is still lacking today — and to what a degree the former political parties and the former "parliamentary" system were — quite justly — hated by the masses, is shown by the following instructive episode. About two years after the Egyptian overturn, the differences between Naguib and Nasser reached their peak. Naguib wanted to introduce a certain parliamentary regime and a

limited legalization of parties. Nasser was opposed. At this moment Nasser could drive Naguib out of power only if he mobilized the masses during the decisive days. The workers of Cairo and Alexandria and their suburbs manifested by monster demonstrations that they were opposed to any concession to the old parties and to the former "parliamentary" system. After his victory over Naguib with the help of the masses, Nasser considered that mass activity was again ended.

In the field of foreign policy several years passed before the regime went over to an anti-imperialist policy. It was only the refusal by the United States to finance the work of the Assuwan Dam, which is of very great importance for Egypt's economic development, that caused the officers' caste to set up economic and political ties with the workers' states.

Almost from the beginning Nasser and his people spoke of the "Arab nation" and the need of unifying the whole Arab East. But, as we said in our recently published¹ article, "The Unity of the Arab East," it was Syria which took the principal initiative in carrying out this idea. The Egyptian regime agreed to the unification of these two countries only on condition that political parties should be dissolved in Syria, i e, that the independent initiative of the masses was not to be allowed.

But reality produced new factors. The Syrian "El-Baath" Party certainly succeeded in stopping the spread of the C P: the Stalinist leaders fled the country and discredited themselves as a result of their negative position toward complete unification (they were for federation). On the other hand, the "National Union," already established in Egypt as the only political organization there and the all-inclusive organ of the Nasser regime, which was now proclaimed also in Syria, did not succeed, either.

In an interview after the revolution in Iraq, Salah Bittar, one of the most important leaders of "El-Baath" and a minister of the "United Arab Republic," declared expressly: it is true that the party is officially dissolved, but it still remains the most important political factor in Syria. He considers that a much looser "national unity" must be installed than in the Egyptian part of the U A R. The task of "socialist humanism" of "El-Baath" is, in his view, "to control worrisome and dangerous elements of Arab nationalism." He does not tell us who these elements are. His state-

¹ In *Fourth International* N° 3, Summer 1958. (We trust that our readers themselves corrected therein, from the context, a linotyper's error on p 44, col 2, para 5, where the date 1916 should of course be 1946.)

ment can very well be aimed against revolutionary-socialist elements. But it also means that this party is not giving in to the absolute dictatorship of Nasser and that in Syria it has not been possible to eliminate all the democratic rights of the masses. In other words, state unity between Egypt and Syria has been established, but Nasser cannot impose his will throughout a very important part of the state. Developments threaten to flood over his head.

The armed uprising against Chamoun's pro-imperialist regime had no unified leadership, for it was extremely heterogeneous both socially and politically, and held together only by its aim of overthrowing President Chamoun and his close collaborators, the Nuri Sa'ids of Lebanon. But the danger for Nasser in this uprising is the fact that the *masses* rose up spontaneously, *masses that he cannot control*.

What is more, his agents can only with difficulty compete with the Lebanese members of "El-Baath" in influencing the masses. True, the insurgents hung up pictures of Nasser; he is still the symbol of the struggle for liberation in all Arab countries of the Middle East. But the spontaneous fight of the masses is alien to his ideal and his regime. On the other hand, the members of "El-Baath," which exists in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Jordan, are, at least theoretically, educated for the fight, and they play an important role within this mass movement. The spontaneous movement of the masses threatens Nasser with becoming only a symbol and finally with losing even this title as the stormy developments continue.

King Hussein of Jordan (leaving aside the backward part of the population, the nomad Bedouins, who alone cannot constitute a serious guarantee for Hussein and his regime) has no real support other than the bayonets of the British Army. The masses of all layers of society in Jordan are more than ever ready to seize the first passing opportunity to throw out Hussein and his clique. It is the calm before the storm. And here again, Nasser does not control these masses who are ready for the fight.

At the time that the Hashemite kingdoms — Iraq and Jordan — agreed to link themselves federatively in order to make a concession to the irresistible necessity and tendency of the Arab states to unify, Nasser appealed to the Iraqi and Jordanians to drive out the imperialist hirelings. The answer soon came back. The terrorist regime of Nuri Sa'id collapsed like a house of cards at the first blow. The most important bastion of imperialism in the Arab East no longer exists. The authority of the "symbol" of the Arab national movement — Nasser — has waxed greater.

But what next? Has Nasser's dictatorial regime been strengthened by the fall of his powerful adversary in Iraq?

Whereas the Nasser regime, right from the beginning, repressed in blood every independent movement and granted not the slightest democratic rights, the

opposite occurred in Iraq. The revolution freed the immense forces of hitherto illegal political parties and organizations. All of them, from the left to the right, began lively activity: the rightist "Istaqlal," the liberal-bourgeois "National Democrats," the petty-bourgeois "El-Baath," and the Communists, who have emerged from their ten-year-long illegality as the best-organized party.

From various parts of the country revolts of the fellahin against the big landowners have been reported. The government did not stand behind these revolts, but told the peasants that they must get on in a peaceful way with the effendis, for soon a decree about agrarian reform would be published. It threatened the big landowners with fines if they broke a law promulgated just after the revolution concerning a limitation of the amount of rents while awaiting the promulgation of a law on agrarian reform. It would be naïve to imagine that, without an active resistance from the peasants themselves, there could come about a real improvement in the lot of the fellahin. But on the other hand, nothing is heard of brutal threats by the regime against the revolting peasants, as was the case in an analogous situation in Egypt after the coming to power of Neguib and Nasser. Vice-President Abdul Salem Arif went to the villages, talked with the peasants, but remained cool toward the effendis.

All the political prisoners were set free. The masses poured jubilantly into the streets. The political refugees came back to their country. The Kurdish minority was invited to cooperate on a basis of equality. The new regime immediately established diplomatic and trade relations with the workers' states.

The government, in which it is true that the army officers played an important role, is not as in Egypt dominated by an officers' caste, but is a coalition of the various political parties. The true character of the new regime still remains unclear. The law of Nuri Sa'id forbidding parties has been annulled, and all have so far been active with impunity. None of them has dared to take openly and clearly the leadership for itself, and nothing is yet known about the future form of the government.

The contrast between the political constellations in Egypt and Iraq is not an idealization of the one and condemnation of the other. That would be to pay no attention to the social reality. Nasser's dictatorship and the "democracy" in Iraq arise from the same social motives: liberation from the chains laid on the capitalist development of these countries by the imperialists and the native big landlords and compradores. The dictatorship in Egypt has destroyed the remnants of feudalism, is seeking to develop industry, and has carried through many reforms in many fields. There is in Egypt, further, the strongest proletariat in the Arab East, both in numbers and in experience in earlier class struggles.

On the other hand, it is still questionable how Iraqi

“democracy” will solve the currently most urgent problem, agrarian reform. In the conditions of Iraq, even a moderate reform can produce great conflicts. Without a mobilization of the fellahin against the big landowners in the southern part of the country, the question can hardly be solved. But there does not yet exist the subjective force to lead the masses into struggle in the present revolutionary situation. What is more, the urban proletariat is numerically very weak because of the lack of industry.

It is not a question of the abstract facts of lack of democracy in Egypt and the “right of parties” in Iraq. The question is: in what direction is the face of the Arab revolution turned under the given conditions?

From this point of view, the freedom existing — at least up till now — for parties and mass organizations in Iraq, unlike Egypt, is of the greatest importance and can potentially bring forward a revolutionary-socialist leadership.

The unity of the Arab countries is, even for the capitalist development of this region, an absolute necessity. But unity under the foregoing conditions is a mortal danger for the Nasser regime. *It is therein that lies the turn in the Arab national movement.* Egypt is the centre, the most important factor in the development of the Arab East. But any independent workers' movement there is suppressed. The freedom of political parties in Iraq, the opposition in Syria within the framework of the U A R, and the spontaneous mass

movements and uprisings in all the Arab countries — these cannot fail to have an effect on the Egyptian proletariat, especially not while there exists a general tendency to unification.

In this situation it is no accident that Nasser has made certain retreats after the revolution in Iraq. The clearest among them are : 1) the very compromising resolution proposed by the Arab countries to the U N O General Assembly, and adopted by it; 2) the seating of Chehab as President of Lebanon after a secret agreement between Nasser and the Americans. (Chehab is only one degree less an imperialist agent than Chamoun.) The American magazine *Newsweek* reports that Nasser, during his secret conversations with Eisenhower's special representative, Robert Murphy, described the new Iraqi leaders as “hot-headed.” Granted, the news in this magazine must always be taken with caution. In any case it is certain that Nasser cannot be very enthusiastic about the current regime in Iraq.

The fate of the Arab revolution depends on whether the Nasser regime can repress the mass movement or whether the action of the masses in recent months in the Arab lands will flood over Nasser's head, and whether there will arise a revolutionary leadership which bases itself on the organized masses.

11 September 1958

LEFT PARTIES IN INDIA

By AN INDIAN MARXIST

The emergence of military regimes in Burma and Pakistan is bound to have an impact with far-reaching effects on the political life of India, where bourgeois democracy in its classical form is sought to be "experimented as a challenge to world communism." The bourgeois politicians of the ruling Congress Party and their petty-bourgeois allies are indeed a bit panicky about the swift developments in the neighboring countries. But a bolder section among them has already begun a campaign against the so-called parliamentary system of democracy. Among the advocates of a "non-party system of government" in India is the erstwhile Socialist leader, Jaiprakash Narayan, now a convert to the Sarvodaya ("good of all") philosophy of (Saint) Acharya Vinoba Bhawe. Fresh from his tour of the Western "democracies" of Europe, he has begun to warn his "compatriots" that parliamentary democracy is not suited to the "genius of the Indian people." His new campaign is getting a big boost in the bourgeois press. A powerful group of Indian industrialists and financiers is known to be supporting his move.

If anything, the installation of army regimes in Burma and Pakistan is a clear indication that the ruling bourgeoisie of the "newly independent" Asian countries is prepared to discard the garb of parliamentary democracy if its existence is threatened by a revolutionary upheaval. It will not hesitate to resort to armed suppression of the growing discontent of the masses. If the transformation in the character of these bourgeois regimes has been "peaceful," it was due primarily to the utter weakness of the working-class movements in those countries. These developments establish that the bourgeoisie of the underdeveloped nations cannot resolve its own internal contradictions by normal "democratic" means. The bourgeoisie of even an "advanced" metropolitan nation like France, once hailed as a "cradle of capitalist democracy," had to resort to a dictatorial regime under de Gaulle to resolve its crisis, thanks to the shameless betrayal of the French proletariat by the Stalinist and Social-Democratic parties. The "newly independent" bourgeoisie of underdeveloped nations of Asia can be expected only to improve upon the de Gaullist technique to safeguard its tottering system by establishing a naked military regime without any democratic pretensions.

The Indian bourgeoisie is the most developed and politically stable among the bourgeoisies of Asian nations, with the exception of Japan. In the Indian National Congress it has a powerful political party with long anti-imperialist traditions. Nevertheless, the

Indian bourgeoisies also reflects all the basic characteristics of a backward and underdeveloped capitalist economy. If the working class of India and its political parties do not effectively intervene in the coming crisis of the Indian economy, there is nothing to prevent the Indian bourgeoisie, despite the democratic pretensions of its leaders, from following in the footsteps of its neighbors in Burma and Pakistan.

There are already indications that the right-wing leadership of the Congress (as opposed to the so-called "liberal" wing under Nehru) is moving in the direction of a more and more authoritarian regime. Open collaboration between the right-wing Congress and the army junta cannot be ruled out. A drift toward such a regime will have the tacit support of the US and British imperialists at the present juncture.

Even in Ceylon, an army coup was reportedly attempted (according to Premier Bandarnayake) by the former UNP premier, John Kottalawala. The attempt might be repeated, this time with the possible connivance of the "Socialist" Bandarnayake, who is equally anxious to "save the system" from a workers' revolution. If anything has prevented the Ceylonese ruling interests from already moving in the direction of a military coup, it is the powerful working-class movement led by the Trotskyist Sama Samaja Party. The "Banda" government cannot be relied upon to resist a coup. After all, did not the "socialist" leaders of the Burmese A F P L, U Nu and U Ba She, despite their recent bitter conflicts, succumb to the pressure from the army? In Ceylon, especially, there is a British naval base, still not evacuated, and the British imperialists would be only too willing to step into the fray.

The army coup in Burma and Pakistan has, however, a positive political aspect. It has exploded the myth of "peaceful transition to socialism" fondly fostered by the Stalinists (Amritsar Thesis of the CPI) and reformist Socialists in India and other Asian countries.

Indeed these developments are bound to have an impact with far-reaching consequences on the ranks of Stalinist parties in Asia. Revolutionary Marxists in India cannot afford to take a complacent view of these developments. The alternative before the exploited masses of Asia is either successful socialist revolution or a bourgeois military dictatorship after some years.

The masses' disillusionment with the Congress regime and their resultant discontent with the present capitalist social order are no doubt manifested in the increasing number of strikes of workers and salaried

employees, the struggles of the rural poor, students' agitations, demonstrations by refugees, democratic struggles of linguistic groups, etc. The capitalist regime is compelled to resort to ruthless suppression of these mass struggles because of its inability to meet the demands of the people. Nevertheless, these struggles — in the absence of a revolutionary leadership which can be provided only by a strong well-knit all-India Marxist-Leninist Party — remain generally at the level of local and often sporadic outbursts. Their weakness lies in the fact that these struggles of the exploited masses are not linked with the basic objective of the working class, namely, the overthrow of the capitalist regime and the establishment of a rule of workers and peasants to usher in a socialist order.

The reasons for this limited development of the mass movement are, among others, the reformist policy of the traditional left parties like the CPI, PSP, SP and the absence of a revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Though the objective situation is favorable and the masses are advancing on the road of struggle, these struggles do not attain higher political levels and transform themselves into a titanic united mass struggle of all exploited sectors for the establishment of socialism.

There is, however, nothing like an absolutely hopeless situation even for an underdeveloped bourgeoisie. If the Indian proletariat fails in its historical mission as the leader of the Indian revolution, the bourgeoisie will not sit with folded hands and wait "peacefully" for its doom. Burma and Pakistan have shown the way for the Indian bourgeoisie. This is the greatest challenge the revolutionary left in India has to face today.

In the context of the rapidly changing conditions in Asia, let us evaluate the role of the various left parties which are functioning in India at present. These parties can be classified into four broad categories :

- 1) Petty-bourgeois reformist Socialist Parties like the P S P and the S P ;
- 2) the Stalinist C P I ;
- 3) revolutionary Marxist parties and groups ;
- 4) centrist groups orienting towards Marxism.

PETTY-BOURGEOIS SOCIALIST PARTIES

The Praja Socialist Party and the recently created Socialist Party of Dr Lohia can be considered as the legitimate representatives of the right and left wing of the reformist socialist movement in India. There is in fact no real economic base for Social Democracy in underdeveloped countries like India, in contrast to metropolitan capitalist countries where Social Democracy could grow as an ideology of the labor aristocracy and middle class, which could be provided with tolerable living standards by their respective bourgeoisies out of the super-profits derived from colonial exploitation. In some Asian countries like Burma, Ceylon, etc, the leaders of the middle-class Social

Democrats themselves have played the role of classical defenders of the weak capitalist classes of those countries. Reformist Socialist Parties with a predominantly petty-bourgeois social base have emerged and survived in India only as a by-product of the sectarian and opportunist political policies of the Stalinist CPI and due to the absence of a powerful Marxist proletarian party.

Neither the P S P nor the S P was an independent outgrowth of the working-class movement ; both had their origin in the Congress Socialist Party which was formed in the early thirties as a radical group inside the bourgeois Congress. The initial leaders of the group were radical nationalists who were disillusioned with the bourgeois Gandhian leadership; though they never completely broke with Gandhism, which sabotaged the anti-imperialist struggles. These elements did not orient to the CPI because they were repelled by that party's ultra-leftist, anti-national policies during the 1930-33 anti-imperialist movement.

The ideology of the C S P was a variety of confused middle-class socialism based on the conception of peaceful transition to socialism to be brought about by the Gandhian methodology of "non-violent" struggle. Its leadership was opposed to the Marxian conception of irreconcilable class struggle. The CSP functioned as a radical petty-bourgeois wing of the Congress, always vacillating between reactionary Gandhism and scientific socialism.

In the 1942 anti-imperialist struggle the CSP leaders found themselves at the head of the nation-wide upheaval mainly due to the treacherous role of the Stalinist CPI which opposed the movement. But instead of developing the movement in the direction of a revolutionary overthrow of imperialism through militant class struggles by the masses, the CSP leaders diverted the energies of those masses toward futile terrorist activities against imperialism.

After the "independence" deal in 1947, the CSP under the pressure of its ranks broke away from the Congress and renamed itself the Socialist Party. The basis of the "new" party was a reformist programme of achieving socialism by gradual and constitutional means, and rejection of Marxism. For a while the SP created the illusion that it could emerge as a major opposition to the capitalist Congress. The results of the first general elections in India, in 1952, however, shattered this illusion of the leadership.

The SP experienced periodical splits and dissensions under the impact of growing mass movements. A group of "left Socialists" broke away from the SP in 1951, protesting against the policies of the right-wing leadership, and later merged with the CPI. Following the 1952 election debacle, the SP leadership tried to consolidate its position by seeking a merger with the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party, a group of dissident Congressmen, and eventually the present Praja Socialist Party was formed.

As a protest against this opportunist merger, the Marxist elements inside the SP split away and tried to consolidate themselves as an independent Marxist party.

A new split in the P S P and the formation of the Socialist Party by the dissidents under the leadership of Dr Lohia three years ago brought to the open once again the basic weakness of the reformist-socialist movement in India. Although seemingly more militant in its approach, the Lohiaite SP also lacks a clear ideological perspective and is torn between conflicting loyalties to bourgeois Gandhism and proletarian Marxism. In the brief period of its existence, an organizational and ideological crisis has already developed inside the Lohia Socialist Party.

The leaderships of both the P S P and the S P are opposed to the Marxian methodology of struggle. They do not recognize the essentially capitalist character of the present Indian state. Further they adulterate such forms of class struggle as strikes and demonstrations with such Gandhian politico-ethical methods as satyagraha, hunger strikes, etc. They utilize the extra-parliamentary struggles of workers and peasants, but only to subordinate them to the objective of the mere winning of electoral success. As the crisis of Indian capitalism deepens, and, as a result, spontaneous mass struggles sharpen, the ranks of these parties are no doubt moving more and more in the direction of authentic class struggles while the leadership is drifting into the camp of capitalist reaction. Further disintegration of these Socialist Parties, therefore, is inevitable.

Revolutionary Marxists should ruthlessly expose the vacillations of the middle-class leadership of these Socialist Parties while at the same time adopting a friendly and sympathetic attitude toward their militant ranks, who can be won over to Marxism by extensive campaigns of political and ideological explanation in the course of the day-to-day struggles of the working class and other toiling masses.

THE CPI AND STALINISM

The Communist Party of India as a political instrument of international Stalinism has been a major obstacle to be successful consummation of a socialist revolution in India. As a result of its Stalinist practices for the last three decades, the CPI has presented to the Indian masses a perverted and distorted picture of Marxism. In the domain of political practice, while subserving the diplomatic needs of the Soviet bureaucracy, it betrayed past national liberation struggles against imperialism and disrupted the working-class movement at crucial periods by sometimes opportunist, sometimes sectarian, policies. In the present phase it is pursuing a policy of supporting and defending weak Indian capitalism against the growing revolutionary struggles of the masses.

The history of the CPI reflects various zig-zags in

the foreign policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union since 1928. The initial nucleus of the party emerged in the twenties and got rooted in the working class on the basis of the militant strike actions of industrial workers which it led. These militants soon came under the influence of Stalinism, the ideology of the Soviet bureaucracy, which triumphed over the genuine Marxist-Leninist wing of the Bolshevik Party in the Soviet Union after the death of Lenin and usurped the leadership of the Communist International.

This resulted in the CPs of all countries being subordinated to the C P S U and being transformed into subservient instruments of the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy. Hence the CPI also, during its existence in the last three decades, evolved and pursued policies which were derived, not from the inner dialectics of the Indian situation and the standpoint of the needs of the national liberation struggle and, after independence, of the socialist revolution, but from the requirements of the foreign policy of the Soviet bureaucracy. The leadership of the CPI explained this unprincipled sequence of shifts in the different policies of the CPI by a system of sophisticated arguments, and in the name of the "strategy" of the world communist movement under changing historical conditions. The Soviet bureaucracy, for its part, impelled by its sectional "caste" interests and having as a result undergone a narrow nationalist degeneration, evolved the anti-Marxist theory of "socialism in a single country." The CPs of other countries were therefore logically assigned the limited and exclusive task of exerting pressure on their respective bourgeoisies to maintain friendly relations with the Soviet Union, rather than the fundamental task of socialist revolution in the capitalist countries. This alone can explain the visibly blatant and abrupt zig-zags of the CPI line.

Thus for example the CPI resorted to the ultra-left adventurist line of opposing the anti-imperialist movement launched by the Congress leadership in 1930-33. This was in pursuance of the international Stalinist strategy of opposing the national bourgeoisie of colonial countries following the collapse of the Stalin-Chiang alliance which had led to the butchery of the Chinese Revolution (1925-28). The correct line for the CPI was to participate in the anti-imperialist movement on the basis of an independent proletarian programme and methods of struggle and to isolate the compromising bourgeois Gandhian leadership from the masses. The sectarian mistake of the CPI during that period completely isolated the party from the militant anti-imperialist masses and discredited it as being an "anti-national" party.

After the triumph of Hitler in Germany, when Stalin began to woo the so called "democratic" capitalist powers in the name of building anti-fascist "people's fronts," the CPI started courting the Gandhian leadership. Overnight the CPI began to advocate a policy

of mass-entry into the Congress, which it now characterized as a "national front" of the Indian people, discarding its earlier characterization of the Congress as a capitalist party. Marxism was distorted by the CPI to suit the needs of the Indian bourgeoisie, led by the Congress, which resorted to pressure tactics by limiting mass actions against imperialism to winning concessions for itself, since it had always feared that any mass revolution against imperialism would threaten its existence as well.

When the war broke out in 1939 between the "democratic" and the "fascist" imperialists, the CPI at first denounced it as an imperialist war, since fascist Germany happened to be in alliance with the Soviet Union at that time. The CPI executed a veritable volte-face a few months after the Soviet Union was attacked by the Nazi forces. The Party characterized the essentially imperialist war as a "people's war" and it became the most ardent supporter of the war efforts of the British imperialists in India.

During the "Quit India" struggle launched by the Congress leadership, which demonstrated tremendous revolutionary possibilities, the CPI played the most treacherous role of an imperialist fifth column by wrecking workers' and peasants' struggles against imperialism.

In the post-war period the CPI followed a class-collaborationist line in relation to the Indian bourgeoisie in pursuance of the worldwide Stalinist strategy of appeasing world capitalism. The CPI supported not only the "independence deal" between the British imperialists and the Indian bourgeoisie but also acclaimed the shameful partition of India on communal lines as a vindication of its false theory of "national self-determination" for the Moslem minorities.

The Zhdanov thesis heralded the period of strained relationships between the Anglo-American imperialists and the Soviet Union and the resultant strategy of "cold war" sponsored by the Stalinist bureaucracy. The CPI line took an ultra-adventurist turn (Randive Thesis of 1948), of all-out "insurrectionary" war against the bourgeois state in India. This was the period when the working class and the peasant masses in India still suffered from the illusion that the newly independent state under the Congress would improve their living conditions and usher in a new social order. The CPI organized workers' strikes and peasant revolts (in Telangana, etc), "without reference," as S A Dange, the Indian Stalinist leader, confessed a few years later, "to the preparedness and mood of the masses." This line resulted in the discrediting of the CPI and its isolation from the toiling people. Dange himself admitted: "These mistakes on the trade-union front, coupled with the violent suppression by the Congress government, led to the disruption of our trade unions and a setback to the working class." (Dange's report to the AITUC, 1952).

Impelled by insane adventurist frenzy, the party called upon members and supporters to hurl themselves into violent clashes with the armed forces of the state, in jails and outside, which resulted in the decimation of a considerable section of party, trade-union, and kisan subha militants.

The bourgeois Congress exploited the confusion in the working-class movement created by the adventurist line of the CPI to disrupt the trade-union struggle and sponsor its own trade-union organization in the form of the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC). The adventurism of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), controlled by the CPI, encouraged other leftist groups in the country also to set up rival central trade-union organizations, such as the Hind Mazdoor Sabha (H M S) and the United Trade Union Congress (U T U C), resulting in the disorganization of the entire working-class movement.

Since 1952 the strategy of international Stalinism has again undergone a change. The Soviet bureaucracy has been trying to win the support of the national bourgeoisie of underdeveloped Afro-Asian countries like India, Indonesia, Egypt, etc, against the imperialist powers. After the Madurai Congress (1952), the CPI switched over to a policy of "critical support" to the national bourgeois government of Nehru and its Five-Year Plans. Today the party is pursuing a policy of extending almost unconditional support to the Nehru regime. It tries to justify the new line on the grounds that the present character of the Indian revolution is "anti-feudal and anti-imperialist" and that its task is merely that of "completing the bourgeois-democratic tasks." The CPI is opposed to the programme of a socialist revolution. In the international field the CPI extends its support to the deceptive theory of "peaceful coexistence" or "Panch Sheel" evolved by the Nehru Government in collaboration with the Stalinist leaders of the Soviet Union and China. Today it advocates a theory of class collaboration between the capitalist exploiters and the working class in India and is advancing the anti-Marxist slogan of "industrial peace" as a means of "strengthening the national economy," ignoring the fact that it is a capitalist economy. The CPI has called for support to the "patriotic capitalists of India," which in effect means a complete surrender to the Indian bourgeoisie.

In Kerala the CPI specifically plays the role of maintaining law and order on behalf of capitalism while creating a dangerous illusion in the minds of the people that their basic problems can be resolved within the matrix of the present capitalist constitution and capitalist social order. The CPI further deceives the masses by using its ineffective parliamentary opposition to the Congress government and the limited mass struggle that, under pressure, it leads outside, to hide its abject surrender to the Indian bourgeoisie.

At its recent Amritsar Congress, the CPI leadership

enacted the farce of adopting a "democratic" constitution for the party. The new CPI constitution, which, to appease the rank and file, makes non-essential modifications in the organizational structure of the party, changed only in form and not in its content, is not based on the Leninist principle of democratic centralism, but perpetuates the bureaucratic stranglehold over the party ranks.

Recent developments in the international Stalinist movement, especially since the XXth Congress of the CPSU and the major ideological rifts in the Communist Parties of the Western capitalist countries following the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian workers' revolution, have had their own repercussions inside the CPI. The Khrushchev "revelations" have shattered moral authority of the bureaucratic Stalinist leadership. There is a great deal of ideological ferment within the CPI, which might result in dissidents deserting the party in search of a real Marxist alternative.

Although the CPI is deliberately pursuing a reformist policy of constitutional opposition to the capitalist regime dictated by present Kremlin line of placating the Indian bourgeoisie, the CPI cannot on that account be characterized as a Social-Democratic party. The CPI leadership will change its line overnight if the Nehru regime goes over to the imperialist camp and as a result the Kremlin strategy changes. The bourgeois leadership of the Congress is fully aware of the advantages it derives from the present line of the CPI but (as indicated by Morarji Desai recently), the bourgeois leadership also knows that the CPI line is only a temporary tactic.

It is the task of the revolutionary Marxists to expose the deceitful tactics of the CPI leadership which, in the service of the Indian bourgeoisie, seek to undermine the revolutionary struggles of the masses, and patiently explain, to all honest elements inside the CPI misled by the present leadership, the fundamental difference between Stalinism and authentic Marxism. There is every possibility of a large section of these honest elements inside the CPI breaking from Stalinism and accepting authentic Marxism-Leninism-Trotskyism.

THE REVOLUTIONARY MARXISTS

The revolutionary Marxist movement in India has remained weak and unorganized for peculiar historical reasons. Some of these reasons are : the overwhelming strength of Stalinism and the Stalinist CPI clothed in the aura of the October Revolution ; the cultural backwardness of the working class ; the pressure of the inherited feudal institutions of castes, etc on the people, retarding the growth of class consciousness ; the strangulating grip of the obscurantist feudal religious ideology over the masses in the absence of even a bourgeois rationalist outlook. The historically determined task confronting the revolutionary Marxists is that of mobilizing all exploited classes of Indian society for the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat and the ushering in of socialism.

The banner of revolutionary Marxism has been held aloft by small isolated groups of Marxists in India for the last three decades under trying conditions and despite formidable obstacles. They had to confront venomous Stalinist hostility and ruthless persecution by the imperialist government. These groups have consistently combated the reformism of the petty-bourgeois Socialist Parties and have exposed the treacherous betrayal of the masses by the Stalinist CPI and its perversion of Marxist ideology. They have endeavored to put before the Indian masses a programme based on authentic Marxism-Leninism-Trotskyism. They could not become effective because of their scattered existence and initially sectarian policies. They failed to close ranks and forge a united all-India Marxist party. Their separate existence was an anomaly in view of their ideological unity and almost identical programmes. The immediate task therefore is to unite these forces into a single all-India party. Several attempts made in the past to unite these elements were not successful. As a result of a new bid made during the last two years, however, three Marxist parties, the Socialist Party (Marxists), the Communist League, and the Mazdoor Communist Party (Trotskyists) have recently decided to merge into a single party, the Revolutionary Workers' Party of India. The RWPI has rallied under its banner ideologically and politically advanced cadres of the revolutionary Marxist i e, Trotskyist movement, steeled in numerous struggles against imperialism and indigenous capitalism.

CENTRIST GROUPS

In between the revolutionary Marxists represented by the Trotskyists on the one hand, and the Stalinist CPI and reformist Socialists on the other, there exist in India a number of left groups and parties torn and vacillating between the two.

Among these centrist groups there are parties like the Peasants and Workers Party in Maharashtra, and the Forward Bloc (Marxists), with a nationalist background but orienting towards Marxism. In the absence of definite Marxist conviction as yet, these groups are in a state of stagnation and have been experiencing periodical splits and disintegration.

There are also parties with a Stalinist past which yet possess the potentiality of moving towards a genuine Marxist position. They include regional groups like the Socialist Unity Centre (Bengal), Democratic Vanguard (Bengal), Communist Unity Centre (Andhra), the Bolshevik Party and the Lal Nishan Group (Maharashtra). The recent crisis in international Stalinism is pushing some of these groups towards the camp of revolutionary Marxism while others are experiencing internal dissensions.

Still other parties like the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the Revolutionary Communist Party, which in general accept a Marxist position, are unable to rally the revolutionary forces in India because of their ideological vacillations and opportunist tactics. The

R S P represents the largest single non-Stalinist Marxist grouping in India while the R C P, which had once emerged as a sizeable group, is today suffering from serious internal dissensions under the impact of recent developments in the international socialist movement.

In relations with the above mentioned parties, the Trotskyists should adopt an attitude of friendly coöperation and close collaboration wherever possible, while

continuing to criticize their political vacillations and confronting them with a genuine Marxist-Leninist alternative. The possibility of either the RWPI, as the nucleus of a broad-based Marxist party, assimilating the best elements among them or of the Trotskyists uniting with some of these groups to form a bigger and stronger Marxist party of the Indian working class cannot ruled out in the near future.

TWENTY YEARS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL (1938-1958)

(A History of Its Ideas and Its Struggles)

By MICHEL PABLO

III

The Fourth International During the Second World War (1940-1944)

The occupation of Europe by Hitler's armies had at first the effect of shaking the young organizations of the Fourth International in various countries. The contacts among them in Europe and with those operating on the other continents were loosened, and soon, for the most part, completely interrupted. Experience later demonstrated, however, that despite this forced isolation of various organizations, they all maintained a substantial community of ideas and of line throughout the whole war, and were convinced of the victorious survival of the International.

Under these conditions, the withdrawal of the international leadership to the American continents, which remained practically outside the storm, was confirmed and stabilized. Beginning with the outbreak of the war, and until just after the end of the conflict, the central international leadership functioned in the United States, in close collaboration with the American organization. But on account of the reduced contacts with the sections, it had only a limited activity. Nevertheless, it noted, commented, and explained all the important events and main turns of the war, in its constant effort to regroup an international vanguard on the basis of effective revolutionary action.

France's passing under Hitler's control in 1940 and the Pétain regime were subject-matter for a manifesto of the Fourth International, issued in November 1940, centred around a demonstration of the historic impossibility for the Nazis to "unify" Europe, and anticipating the inevitable emancipating resistance of the European masses against fascist tyranny:

Hitler has reduced Europe to a vast concentration camp of nations. The struggle for the unity of all Germans has been followed by that of unity of all non-Germans under the Nazi boot. But history is a sure guarantee that there has never been national oppression without national struggle.

Soon Hitler's hope of ending the war by the occupation of Europe vanished. The Battle of Britain, which marked the beginning of 1941, led to neither its occupation nor its surrender, while American imperialism was mobilizing and stepping up its intervention in the conflict.

Faithful to its line of revolutionary opposition to

all imperialisms, the Fourth International took a stand on the American intervention in China on the side of Chiang Kai-Shek against Japan. Naturally the question was complicated by the fact that China was a semi-colonial country attacked by Japan and that inside China there was a masked civil war between the regime of the Chinese bourgeoisie and the peasant armies led by the Communist Party.

In the 31 March 1941 resolution of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, the imperialist aims of American intervention in favor of Chiang Kai-Shek were clearly denounced, while the victory of the Chinese armies over the Japanese invaders was called for, opening up the perspective of the socialist revolution in China:

The growing collaboration between Chiang Kai-Shek and the American imperialists has already had repercussions in the attacks by Chiang Kai-Shek on the Stalinist-controlled peasant armies. While we condemn the class-collaborationist policy of the Chinese Stalinist leaders which facilitates these attacks, the revolutionists proclaim their solidarity with the brave peasant fighters under Stalinist leadership, and their readiness to join with them in resisting the counter-revolutionary moves of Chiang Kai-Shek. [...] The defense of China by American imperialism is in reality preparation for new slavery for that country. [...] Just as the war against Japan has led Chiang Kai-Shek to become a tool of American imperialism, so the masses of China, in alliance with their class brothers in the Japanese empire, will be led to the Social Revolution.

The alliance of American imperialism with Chiang Kai-Shek was consolidated during the war both to serve against Japan and to open up the post-war Chinese market to the Americans.

It can be measured only a posteriori, in the light of present events, how right it was during the war to put the masses constantly on their guard about the real nature of American imperialism and its operations, as opposed to the Stalinist policy which embellished the American "ally" and always went easy on Chiang Kai-Shek.

In June 1941 the war underwent a historic and decisive development: Hitler, despite all the assurances given to Stalin and swallowed by the latter, unexpectedly attacked the Soviet Union. The press of the Fourth International immediately called for *the*

unconditional defense of the first workers' state. The manifesto issued on this occasion by the American organization, the Socialist Workers Party, declared without ambiguity :

Defend the Soviet Union at all costs and under all circumstances against imperialist attack ! Stalin must be overthrown — but only by the working class. The workers' struggle must be subordinated to the struggle against the *main enemy* : the armies of Hitler. Everything that we say or do must have as its primary object the victory of the Red Army. The Soviet Union can be best understood as a great trade union fallen into the hands of corrupt and degenerate leaders. Our struggle against Stalinism is a struggle within the labor movement. Despite imprisonment and repression our comrades in the Soviet Union will prove to the Soviet masses that the Trotskyists are the best fighters against the capitalist enemy.

At the same time the manifesto warned about the capitalist allies of the Soviet Union, calling for irreconcilable opposition toward all imperialists and a revolutionary conduct of the war against Hitler. That is to say, in the capitalist countries allied to the U S S R, not to paint Churchill, Roosevelt, de Gaulle, Chiang Kai-Shek in rosy colors, as the Stalinists were doing, but to maintain revolutionary opposition against them, to call for fraternization with the workers and peasants in uniform of the Nazi armies, to avoid secret diplomacy and the sharing out of zones of influence with the imperialist allies, and constantly to prepare the future of the socialist revolution in Germany itself, in Italy, Japan, and all countries.

The manifesto for the defense of the Soviet Union issued in the name of the Executive Committee of the Fourth International in August 1941 takes essentially the same line :

The Soviet Union is at war ! The Soviet Union is in mortal danger ! In Germany and in European countries occupied by German troops, defense of the Soviet Union means directly the sabotage of the German military machine. German workers and peasants in soldiers' uniforms, the Fourth International calls upon you to pass over with your arms and equipment into the ranks of the Red Army ! German workers and peasants, now in the factories, on railroads, and on the farms, and enslaved peoples of Europe, paralyze in every possible way the march of German militarism !

At the same time the manifesto called for opening up for the German workers the perspective of the German and European socialist revolution. In the Soviet Union, it called on the workers "to be the best soldiers," and concluded by declaring to the workers everywhere : "[...] defend the Soviet Union, and you thereby defend yourselves, you will hasten the hour of your liberation."

The Soviet Union's entry into the war had, however, as foreseen, the result of causing a new turn by

the Kremlin : to come back as it were to the alliance with the "democracies" against fascism, and once more to call for the subordination of the policy of the Communist Parties operating in "allied" countries to that of the bourgeoisie of these countries. We thus had the spectacle of the American Stalinists returning to the adulation they used to give Roosevelt in 1936, the English Stalinists preaching "national union" around Churchill, the French Stalinists building up de Gaulle's prestige, the Chinese Stalinists under the Kremlin's instigation putting the mute once more on their struggle against Chiang Kai-Shek. Everywhere it was the policy of "national union" under bourgeois leadership "against fascism."

The U S S R's entry into the war stimulated resistance against Hitler in occupied Europe. The regroupment of the revolutionary forces was intensified, and contacts were restored on the intra-European scale. But it was necessary to wait till the beginning of 1943 before it was possible to speak of a considerable extension of the mass resistance movement in Europe, and of a more serious reorganization of the revolutionary vanguard.

News about the activity of Trotskyist organizations throughout the world was already growing more frequent beginning with late 1941. In the United States, 18 militants of the S W P and members of the C I O Teamster's Local 544 in Minneapolis were indicted under the Smith Act for the propaganda of revolutionary ideas against the imperialist war being carried on by the United States, and were sentenced to prison terms running from 12 to 16 months.

In France, the reorganized Parti Communiste Internationaliste was bringing out its newspaper, *La Vérité*, regularly each fortnight. In September 1941 it held a conference in which it proclaimed the need of combining a resolute fight against Hitler with a policy of fraternization with the German workers and peasants in uniform, and its opposition to the policy of the "national front" for "the independence of France."

It was also at this period (1941) that the Lanka Sama Samaja Party of Ceylon joined the Fourth International and that there was news of the activity of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, a Trotskyist organization.

The year 1942 opened with agitation spreading in India in quest of its independence, a process speeded up by the Cripps Plan of April 1942.

In March 1942 the Governor of Ceylon, Sir Andrew Caldecott, outlawed the Lanka Sama Samaja Party. On April 9th 1942, the *Times* of London related in the following terms the spectacular escape of Comrades Colvin da Silva, N M Perera, D R R Gunawardene, and Edmund Samarkkody from the prison where they were held, and their passage to India with their own jailer who had followed them : "It is presumed that they left with their gaol guard who is missing. [...] They have been in detention since June 1940." Com-

rade Leslie Gunawardene, for whom a similar warrant had been out since 1940, had also succeeded in reaching India in time.

In May 1942 there was formed in India the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India Burma and Ceylon which published the *Permanent Revolution*.

In August 1942 a very important wave of strikes of the proletariat was sweeping India. The Fourth International, which defended the Soviet Union against Hitler, and China against Japan, also defended India against Great Britain. Far from assimilating the struggle of these countries against their imperialist adversaries with a struggle "of one imperialist camp against the other," as Max Shachtman affirmed at that time, the International practised unconditional defense of these countries against imperialism. In its September 1942 manifesto to the workers and peasants of India, the Fourth International took a position for the immediate independence of India, and, as opposed to the methods of "passive resistance" put forward by the Congress leaders, called for revolutionary methods of struggle and slogans: agrarian reform; democratic committees of struggle; constituent assembly; a programme of industrialization of the country; a workers' and peasants' government.

The British and Hindu Stalinists, on the contrary, anxious not to displeas the British "ally" of the U S S R, were towed along by the Churchill policy toward India and took a position against mass agitation in the country.

The year 1943 was marked by resounding victories of the Soviet army, the dissolution of the Comintern, and the invasion of Italy by the Anglo-Americans. At the same time the consequences — reactionary for the future of the European and world revolution — of the alliance of the Kremlin with the "democratic" imperialists grew more clear — first of all concerning Germany and the German revolution, key to the European revolution.

The American Welles and the Briton Vansittart had already in 1942 put forward the theory of the collective responsibility of the German people, and called for an equally collective punishment. The secret treaties which, beginning with this period, were concluded between the Kremlin and its British and American allies aimed at preventing any possibility of revolution in Europe, in order to guarantee each of the allies an exclusive zone of influence. Thus, for example, the agreements concluded in 1942 by the Kremlin, on the one side with the British, and on the other the Americans, stipulated that the allies pledged themselves to: refusing to make a separate peace with any government in Germany, that is, including a possible revolutionary government; disarmament of all of the future Germany; working together for the "peace, security, and prosperity of Europe."

In June 1943 Stalin decided to dissolve the Comintern, to reassure his allies about his counter-revolutionary intentions and to guarantee the respect

of the conventions that had been concluded. With the pretext that the importance and maturity acquired by the different Communist Parties henceforth rendered superfluous the existence of the International, in reality he merely formalized a practical reality: the Comintern had for many years already ceased to function as an International that was autonomous and alive to any degree.

The Fourth International, in a manifesto of June 1943, noted and explained the event and concluded that

there is only one International now, the World Party of Socialist Revolution, the Fourth International. Enter its ranks and prepare with it to lead the successful struggle for the World Revolution!

The dissolution soon after of the American C P, decreed by Browder at the Kremlin's instigation, was another step in the same direction, of appeasement of its allies by the Kremlin, so that its future conquests might be made through secret agreements about the dividing up of zones of influence among states without any irruption of the autonomous revolution.

A quite other policy was followed by the Fourth International, which aimed at the preparation of the proletarian revolution in Europe and the world and was trying to give the necessary struggle against Hitler a revolutionary orientation and perspectives, i.e., starting out with the mass resistance to Hitlerian occupation and war, to endow it gradually with a proletarian content and guide it toward objectives that were not exclusively "national," but finally anti-capitalist. The difficulty of such a task, resulting from the complex character of the war and from the class collaboration of the Socialist and Stalinist leaderships, was reflected even within the ranks of the Fourth International by the discussions that arose, especially beginning with 1942, about the "national question in Europe," and then about the meaning and perspectives of the Italian events of 1943 and the perspectives of the European revolution in general.

THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The first positions taken on the national question go back as far as 1941. They were so to speak the result of two facts: a certain national oppression to which the subjection of Europe by the Nazis had led, and the beginning of a mass resistance to this oppression.

But by its very nature the question was "indiscutably very tangled up," to use Lenin's expression concerning the same subject during World War I. For it was necessary to take into account both the imperialist character of the war on the side of the big capitalist countries of the Axis, as well as on the side of the big capitalists countries of the "democratic" camp, and the reactions of the masses in the occupied countries.

The temporary occupation of one capitalist country

by another in the imperialist epoch does not automatically wipe out the imperialist character of the conquered country, and gives no right to a "national" mobilization of all its classes against the occupant on a "national" programme. According to Lenin's teachings, the national question in the imperialist epoch is characteristic of colonial and dependent countries, as of countries permanently annexed by capitalist and imperialist countries. Naturally Lenin did not deny the possibility of certain recessions in the imperialist epoch, pulling a capitalist country back to the level of an oppressed country in which the "national question" is again raised, and the question of a "national war."

But in general he reasoned in the following way :

In 1793 and 1848 in France, as in Germany, and as in all Europe, the bourgeois-democratic revolution was on the order of the day. To this historical situation there corresponded a "genuinely national" programme, i.e., the bourgeois national programme of democracy as it then was, which in 1793 was carried out by the most revolutionary elements of the bourgeoisie and by the plebs ; a programme which in 1848 Marx proclaimed in the name of all advanced democracy. To the feudal and dynastic wars there were then opposed, objectively, the democratic revolutionary wars, the wars of national emancipation. At present, for the great states of Europe, the objective situation is different. Progress — apart from certain temporary regressions — can be carried out only by going toward the socialist society. As against the bourgeois imperialist war, the war of a highly developed capitalism, there can be set up in opposition, objectively, from the viewpoint of progress, from the viewpoint of the advanced class, only a war against the bourgeoisie, the war for power, without which there can be no serious movement forward, and later — but only under certain particular conditions — a possible war for the defense of the socialist state against the bourgeois states.

Lenin was opposed even to "those Bolsheviks" or "those revolutionaries" who called for "national defense," who in 1914-1918 wanted to put forward in their respective countries (Russia, Germany, and elsewhere) a "national programme," and to defend "the fatherland" conditionally against "invasion" and "occupation" by "means of the class struggle."

But Lenin, on the other hand, and quite properly too, paid great attention to any mass movement whatever that rose up against "the calamities of imperialism" during the war, and was ready to use it in the "struggle of the proletariat for socialism."

Consequently a distinction had to be made also during the Second World War among the social natures of the temporarily occupied countries, and the mass movements objectively standing up to Hitlerian occupation, despite their subjective "impurities."

The discussions and divergences on the national question that occurred in our movement during the last war concerned in reality the following points : a struggle that was preponderantly if not exclusively "national-democratic," or one that was subordinated to the proletarian struggle for socialism ; the exact coupling of the "national-democratic" slogans with the socialist slogans properly so called, in the sense of a transitional programme ; the practical attitude to be taken toward the resistance movements.

On all these questions clarity was far from being complete and the line adopted from being correct, throughout our movement. Opportunist or leftist deviations developed here and there because of the complexity of the question, under the weight of Nazi oppression, the class collaboration of the Socialist and Stalinist leaderships, and the contradictory character of the resistance movements. As rightist and opportunist deviations there must be listed all tendencies that made each people's right to self-determination an end in itself, separating it from the rest of the socialist, revolutionary, and internationalist programme, that confined themselves to the struggle "by stages," beginning with the "national-democratic" stage allegedly imposed by the war conditions ; that were in favor, in one form or another, of our participating, as a distinct political movement, in the political organizations of the "Resistance," or of thus collaborating with them ; who put "national resistance" on the same level in a defeated big country like France and in oppressed small states like Yugoslavia, Poland, and Greece.

The most extreme illustration of these tendencies was given in the 1941 "Three Theses" worked up on the national question by the emigré comrades of the German section, the I K D. These theses emphasized the "backward evolution" of the situation under the weight of fascism, which had raised to the level of "the most urgent question in Europe the national liberation of the countries enslaved by Germany," which had dissolved all political movements, including the workers' movement, into a sort of "popular movement" without distinction of classes, struggling exclusively for "national liberation," and which rendered "the transition from fascism to socialism a utopia without an intermediate stage basically equivalent to a democratic revolution." "National liberation," according to the authors of these theses, should be the immediate agitational slogan, and "The United States of Europe" a purely propaganda slogan, without a transitional coupling of these two demands.

As leftist sectarian deviations must be considered all tendencies that denied the existence of national oppression, or that did not take a clear stand about each people's right to self-determination ; that failed to organize under our own banner (the banner of the revolutionary party) the struggle against German imperialism (carried out, of course, in an internationalist class sense) ; that minimized the importance of work

in the popular resistance organizations (Jugoslav or Greek partisans, French F T P, etc).

The example of the resistance movements in the "small states," such as Yugoslavia, Poland, and Greece, and the popular resistance movements that soon arose against Nazi oppression in the big capitalist countries, is characteristic of the overall aspects of this question. Unquestionably it was here a matter of authentically popular movements which, despite their subjective "impurities," rose up objectively against the "calamities of the imperialist war," especially against national oppression. But because of their plebeian composition — a majority of poor peasants and nuclei of workers — and in the concrete international and national conditions, these movements had a tendency quickly to overflow the "national" frame properly so called, and to become transformed into forces aspiring to and fighting for the socialist revolution. Such a transformation naturally depended very much on the leadership of these movements.

In the case of Yugoslavia, the conscious line of the leadership soon permitted transforming "the detachments of partisans into proletarian brigades of national liberation,"¹ i e, to combine the struggle for national liberation with that for the socialist revolution. This combination was objectively possible because the aspirations of the masses were simultaneously "democratic and socialist,"² to the contrary of the affirmations of the "Three Theses" concerning the necessity of an exclusively "national-democratic" stage allegedly flowing from the existence of a liberation movement indiscriminately assembling elements of all the classes. Besides, the rapid differentiation in Yugoslavia (as in Greece, Poland, and even France) between partisans of the proletarian tendency and partisans of the reactionary bourgeois tendency is a further confirmation of the interpenetration of the *national* and the *social* in an organic combination whose dynamics more and more brought out the preponderance of the *social* over the *national*.

Better balanced conclusions about the line to be followed in the national question ripened among the cadres of the European leadership of the Fourth International that was formed in 1943. As a result of contacts established in full Nazi occupation of Europe among the different sections and groups of the Fourth International, a provisional European secretariat was formed early in 1943, which undertook the task of coördinating the struggle of the organizations of the Fourth International on the continental European plane, and published the magazine *Quatrième Internationale*.³

In 1944, "somewhere in occupied Europe," there was held a conference of the European sections of the

Fourth International, the first in Europe since the founding of the International and the declaration of the Second World War. This conference brought together representatives of the Trotskyist organizations of France, Belgium, Greece, Spain, and Germany, and its labors lasted six consecutive days. The communiqué of the conference, published in the clandestine February 1944 number of *Quatrième Internationale*, declared with legitimate pride :

That, in a Europe blood-stained by more than four years of total war, crushed under the most hideous yoke of the imperialisms, whose prisons and concentration camps are gorged with the victims of the most savage and most systematic repression, our organization has been able to hold its European assembly, to work out and define its political line of struggle, of itself constitutes the most eloquent manifestation of its vitality, its internationalist spirit, and the revolutionary ardor by which it is animated.

The principal text that emerged from the European Conference was the theses on "The Liquidation of the Second Imperialist War and the Revolutionary Upsurge." It is in this document that, among other matters, the line was established on the national question. The document stated clearly that the European proletariat must not "play craftily with" the bourgeois slogans, but must put forward its own policy and get prepared, not for a "national insurrection," but for the socialist revolution in Europe. It adds, however :

Though the proletariat must refuse the alliance with its own bourgeoisie, it cannot be indifferent to the mass struggle against the oppression of German imperialism. The proletariat supports this struggle in order to help and speed up its transformation into a general fight against capitalism. This attitude implies the most energetic struggle against attempts by the agents of the national bourgeoisie to get hold of the masses and make use of them for rebuilding the capitalist army and state. Everything must be put to work, on the contrary, to develop the embryos of workers' power (militias, committees, etc), while the most energetic fight must be carried on against all forms of nationalism.

The document was centred around the perspective of transforming the liquidation of the war, not in the French style (de Gaulle), or in the Greek style (Papandreou), but in the Yugoslav style, so to speak, i e, not to permit the reconstruction of the bourgeois state, but to take an orientation toward proletarian power.

The question of the popular resistance movements was also broadly treated in this document. It observed that the question of the partisans had undergone an evolution since 1942, a date until which groups of a few franc-tireurs in Belgium, France, and elsewhere were completely taken in tow by the chauvinist policy of the bourgeoisie and of Anglo-American imperial-

¹ Programme of the Yugoslav Communists adopted at their VIIth National Congress.

² Ibid.

³ Which, after a few duplicated issues, appeared near the end of 1943 in printed form.

ism, engaging in individual terrorism against German soldiers. It was now a matter of partly "spontaneous" movements expressing

the open and inevitable revolt of the broad toiling masses against German imperialism and against the order and the state of the native bourgeoisie, which personified in their eyes those responsible for their present poverty and sufferings. The duty of the Fourth International was, consequently,

to take into consideration this will to struggle on the part of the masses, and to try, despite the many dangers resulting from the national forms which this struggle takes on, to guide it toward class goals.

For this reason it was necessary, according to the document, to combine propaganda that was anti-chauvinist and in favor of a class orientation, with practical efforts

to make this propaganda penetrate into the ranks of the partisans, with a view to regrouping the latent revolutionary forces existing therein on a political and organizational class basis.

Thus it was decided to engage in a work of systematic penetration into the popular resistance movements and to give more importance to the revolutionary possibilities of their content than to the chauvinist aspects of their form.

THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN REVOLUTION

The national question was in the last analysis connected with that of the perspectives of the European revolution. In fact, it was a question of knowing whether, with the liquidation of the war, the path led to "national insurrection" and then a "bourgeois-democratic" period, or whether it was necessary to orient toward the socialist revolution, by profiting from the revolutionary crisis created precisely by the war, the defeat of Germany and Italy, the victories of the Soviet army, and the exasperation of the European masses against all persons responsible for the "calamities of imperialism."

The discussion around these perspectives began to grow particularly lively in 1943, with the invasion of Italy and the revolutionary agitation that spread through that country. It was hailed as the beginning of the Italian and European revolution. Little by little, however, it was realized what a weight the counter-revolutionary role of the Socialist and particularly the Stalinist leaderships (both the Kremlin itself and the Communist Parties) and the Anglo-American occupation, threatened to bring to bear on a favorable revolutionary development. The Kremlin contemplated only the continuance of a secret diplomacy with its imperialist "allies" in order to complete the division into zones of influence through the successive conferences at Cairo and Teheran, extended later by those at Yalta and Berlin.

The publication of the memoirs of the various statesmen, like those of Churchill, as well as the correspondence among Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill, and the testimony from the Yugoslavs and from other sources, have by now cast sufficient light on these transactions, which in the majority of cases sealed the fate of Europe by knowingly blocking the autonomous development of the revolution.

The Communist Parties faithful to the Kremlin, with the exception of the de facto position of independence taken by the Yugoslav C P, limited themselves to a strict policy of "national union" with the bourgeoisie, nowise oriented toward the revolution. On the contrary, what mattered for those parties in reality was to guarantee the secret agreements made by the Kremlin with its allies, which provided that countries like Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Greece, etc, belonged to the latter's zone of influence. Hence they must remain under bourgeois regimes. It was further necessary to take into account the fact that to a certain degree this "national" policy of the Communist Parties had created a situation, a certain state of mind, in the mass movements, and that the long Hitlerian oppression would also favor the birth of "democratic illusions."

These considerations naturally were not to alter the correct general orientation toward workers' power in Europe, and all the efforts necessary to transform the revolutionary crisis caused by the war into a victorious revolution. But they were to influence the perspectives about the *rhythm* of revolutionary developments and the *conception of the transitional programme* on which the masses would be mobilized. There were good grounds to fear lest the rhythm be slower, and to take partly into account the democratic illusions of the European masses.

These questions were simultaneously debated in the American organization and in Europe, between 1943 and 1946. Apart from small minorities that had a simplistic vision of the transition from war to "peace" with a possibility of skipping over stages, as it were, and quickly arriving at the power of the "committees," of the soviets, the overwhelming majority of the International took into account the difficulties resulting from the aforementioned factors (policy of the traditional leaderships, democratic illusions of the masses, Anglo-American occupation).

The principal difference within the majority concerned the conception, the structure, of the programme to mobilize the masses: an essentially democratic programme, as some advocated, adapted to the "political consciousness" of masses filled with democratic and parliamentary illusions? or an essentially *transitional* programme centred especially around the objective conditions in which capitalism would find itself after the liquidation of the war?

The majority of the International was resolutely oriented toward this latter conception of the programme, without minimizing the "enormous role"

that democratic slogans might play at certain moments in the struggle. But also without forgetting that for us the formulæ of democracy are only passing and episodic slogans in the independent movement of the proletariat, and not a democratic hangman's noose hung round the neck of the proletariat by the agents of the bourgeoisie (Spain). [The Transitional Programme of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International.]

A mistake in evaluation that was common to the whole International until the end of 1944 was that of the perspective of the German revolution. From the inevitable perspective of the defeat and collapse of the Hitler regime there was derived that of the German revolution, for it was not well realized at that period what would be the consequences of the reactionary policy of the Kremlin in close alliance with the Anglo-Saxon imperialists to occupy Germany jointly, to dismember it, to pillage it, and to deprive it of any possibility of revolutionary revival. This perspective was in reality bound up with the more general one of the European revolution, based on the conception of Europe as the no 1 "epicentre" of the revolutionary crisis that would accompany the liquidation of the war. It required the passage of some time before it was realized that the genuine revolutionary transformations would be situated in the colonial field and in the countries occupied by the Soviet army.

OUR VICTIMS DURING THE WAR

It is not yet possible even to rough out a picture, however incomplete, of the practical activity of the militants of the Fourth International during the Second World War, and of the exact cost of that activity. It is not yet well known, for example, what was the activity of the Trotskyists in the U S S R, in the concentration camps and prisons. From some testimony provided by persons freed from the Soviet camps who have been able to reach the West, we know, however, that the Trotskyist militants who survived the Stalinist terror of the years 1936 to 1938 continued their indomitable resistance, and were among the politically most solid and active elements in these places of desolation.

Nor do we know either all the details about the activity of our militants in the concentration camps and prisons of Nazi Germany, or of Chiang Kai-Shek's China.

What is sure in any case is that everywhere the Trotskyist militants were able to reorganize their forces during the war itself, and that new organizations and contacts arose during this very period, as in India, Ceylon, and in various countries of Latin America.

We know much better, on the contrary, what went on in the countries of Western Europe occupied by the Nazis, as well as in England, the United States, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere. There are even places which have not had much weight on the world's fate, such as Palestine under English mandate

during the war, but where nevertheless the activity of the Trotskyist militants is of great significance for the correctness of the line advocated and the sacrifices accepted for that task. For example, in the light of the present Arab revolution, it would be hard to exaggerate the struggle which the Trotskyists carried on before and during the war in Palestine, against British, French, and American imperialisms, against Zionism, against the creation of a Jewish state to the detriment of the Arabs, for the liberation and unification of the Arab countries, and for an inter-Arab revolutionary socialist workers' movement.

This line was defended by the Palestinian Trotskyists during the war in numerous publications, severely repressed by British imperialism and its Zionist allies, which appeared in Hebrew, Arabic, and English (for the use of British soldiers). It must not be forgotten, on the other hand, what the line of the Stalinists was, for example that followed by the Syrian Communist Party, led by Bakdasch, which stood for absolute coöperation with de Gaulle, which was opposed to any class action against the native feudalists and capitalists, rejected any idea of agrarian reform, and was satisfied to implore the "pity" of the feudalists for the "miserable fellahin."

The only public trials attempted during the war, and the only condemnations to death or to prison of revolutionary leaders and militants accused of opposition to the imperialist war, *in both camps*, had Trotskyists as their victims. It was thus that in Holland the Gestapo assassinated, after a public trial on April 12th 1942, nine well known leaders of the R S A P, Trotskyists and pro-Trotskyists, among them Comrades Sneevliet and Dolleman. In Vienna, Trotskyist militants were executed after a public trial, as well as in Germany. We have already spoken of the trial and imprisonment of the Trotskyist leaders in the United States, and of the Trotskyist leaders imprisoned in Ceylon.

In England, in 1943 and 1944, the Trotskyists played an outstanding role in the wave of strikes that marked the reawakening of political consciousness in the British workers and their opposition to the imperialist war. The capitalist press accused the Trotskyists, bourgeois justice hounded several leaders held to be responsible for the agitation among the workers, unlike the Stalinist Party which was preaching sacred union around the "national" leadership of Churchill.

But it was in the countries of continental Europe occupied by the Nazis that the Fourth International had to pay the heaviest tribute for its consistent and courageous struggle against the imperialist war and against the regime that generated it.⁴ In France, very early, several comrades fell victims to the ferocious Nazi repression. Among the first were Marc Bourhis and Pierre Gueguen, shot on October 22nd 1941

⁴ For more details, see the pamphlet, *La lutte des Trotskyistes sous la terreur nazie*, published by the P C I in France in 1945.

at the camp of Châteaubriant, and dozens of other comrades arrested and deported, most of whom died in the concentration camps. In October 1943, the Gestapo arrested the secretary of the P C I, French Section of the Fourth International, Comrade Marcel Hic, and sent him to Buchenwald, then to Dora, where he died.

Despite this repression, which again and again decimated their ranks, the Trotskyist militants in France reorganized and carried on a tireless activity. For four years the Trotskyist press appeared regularly, most often in printed form. In fact, beside the Stalinist press, the Trotskyist publications were the only ones to appear regularly and in printed form. *La Vérité* appeared in duplicated form in the underground, beginning with August 1940, calling for resistance to the Nazi occupation. The P C I brought out in all 73 clandestine issues of *La Vérité*, of which 19 were duplicated and 54 printed, beside other clandestine Trotskyist publications in France.

Quatrième Internationale, theoretical review of the European Secretariat formed in 1943, after a few duplicated issues also appeared in printed form beginning in late 1943. Special mention must be made of a printed organ in German, *Arbeiter und Soldat*, aimed at propaganda among the German soldiers in France and other countries of Europe. Also a publication of the European Secretariat, it had as editor Comrade Paul Widelin, a German émigré Trotskyist.

Arbeiter und Soldat was the only organ of revolutionary Marxism in German; its daring distribution among German soldiers cost the lives of several German comrades, soldiers and civilians, and of French comrades associated with this work.

Deeds of high heroism and devotion to the revolutionary cause of the International marked the activity of Trotskyists throughout the war, both in France and elsewhere. It is enough to mention the names of comrades such as the Belgian comrades Léon Lesoil, former leader of the Belgian C P and then of the Belgian Trotskyist organization, arrested in 1941, who died in deportation in Germany, and A Léon, a remarkably gifted young leader of the Belgian organization, the author of the only book with a materialist conception on the Jewish question, who was arrested and died in deportation; of the Italian comrade Blasco, former leader of the Italian C P, founder of the Trotskyist Left Opposition in Italy, imprisoned by the Nazis and later assassinated by the Stalinists; of dozens of Greek comrades assassinated by the fascists or by the Stalinists (in December 1944), among them the renowned name of Panteis Pouliopoulos, former secretary of the Greek C P; of several Polish, Chinese, and other comrades.

Not long before the liberation of Paris, at the beginning of the Spring of 1944, the Gestapo arrested four Trotskyist militants, two women and two men, among whom was Comrade Widelin. Taken to police headquarters, each had an extraordinary fate. One of the men comrades succeeded in jumping from the

second storey of the building and escaping, an almost unique exploit in Nazi-occupied Paris. Comrade Widelin was taken to the Bois de Vincennes and left there executed. He was not, however, quite dead. Transported by a passer-by to the Rothschild Hospital, he was able to get word to the comrades outside, who went to work to organize a way to carry him off from the hospital, if necessary by force.

But the day before the plan was to be carried out, the Gestapo, tipped off by a member of the hospital staff, was able to get its hands a second time on the victim and to finish him off.

This year (1958) there died in Belgium, in the most complete anonymity, Comrade Gallois, a mine worker, who was deported during the war to Buchenwald. One day there the S S, laughing, displayed to the assembled deportees, themselves prostrated and scarcely able to stand on their feet, a mass of human beings who were only skeletons, stinking and covered with vermin. They were Jews whom the S S were getting ready to "gas," except in case — they stated — some "charitable soul" would take it on himself to clean them up one by one. Nobody in the camp, Christian or otherwise, stirred to undertake the work, save Comrade Gallois who stepped humbly out of the ranks and offered to accomplish the task, on condition that the S S would respect their promise and spare the lives of these Jews. And for weeks on end Comrade Gallois steadily carried out his mission.

The death of Comrade Pouliopoulos is no less characteristic of the human quality and the mettle of several of our comrades who carried the banner of the Fourth International during the Second World War. Comrade Pouliopoulos, in prison since 1939, was executed with three other Trotskyists in June 1943, chosen among the first victims of fascist repression in Greece. He made a speech to the soldiers of the execution squad in their own tongue, producing a real mutiny among them so that they refused to fire. And it was finally the officers who had to fire, killing Comrade Pouliopoulos and his companions. Our comrades fell, not for the "Fatherland," not for "Democracy," but for the Revolution and for Socialism.

The young militants of the Fourth International will know how to perpetuate the memory of our heroic dead of the Second World War who, under various names, whether they be called Widelin or Léon or Lesoil or Hic or Blasco or Pouliopoulos or Gallois, succeeded in showing the same countenance: that of the revolutionary Marxist militant, intrepid against the stream, intrepid against the class enemy, proud to defend against wind and tide and in every place and circumstance the banner of the Fourth International.

[In the next issue: *The Fourth International Since the War (1945—1958)*]

From the Archives of Marxism

TO THE MEMORY OF SERGEI ESSENIN

By LEON TROTSKY

PREFATORY NOTE

This memorial note on Sergei Essenin, who, with Pasternak and Mayakovsky, was one of the great trio of poetic luminaries of the revolutionary period in Russia, is, though brief, a remarkable document, revealing one of the most rarely glimpsed facets of Leon Trotsky's complex character.

His magisterial Literature and Revolution amply demonstrated Trotsky's intellectual grasp of the manifold problems arising from the impact, on literature and indeed on all the arts, of the gradual transformation of society from bourgeois to socialist bases. The present article, however, reveals in Trotsky not only the intellection always expected of him, but also an emotivity about poetry that many might not have suspected. These lines not only make it evident that Trotsky deeply felt the power of Essenin's poetry, but are themselves suffused with a poetic feeling that curiously charges their style.

We have lost Essenin, that fine poet, so genuine and of so lovely a freshness. He has gone, of his own will, saying farewell, in his own blood, to an unknown friend — perhaps to us all.

His last lines are striking in their tenderness and gentleness ; he left life without crying out that he had been offended, without a "pose" of protest, without slamming doors, but closing them quietly with a hand from which blood was flowing. Because of this gesture, an unforgettable aura of farewell illumines the image of Essenin as a man and as a poet.

Essenin composed the harsh *Songs of a Guttersnipe*, and gave the coarse choruses of the Moscow taverns that melodiousness that was all his own and that cannot be imitated.

He very often liked to boast of a vulgar gesture, of trivial words, but underneath there throbbed the tenderness of a defenseless soul. By means of this half-feigned coarseness, Essenin was seeking refuge from the harsh period into which he had been born — and born, furthermore, in vain, for, beaten by life, on December 27th, without provocation and without complaint, the poet said: "I cannot go on."

It is necessary to emphasize his "mask" of vulgarity, for this was not merely a form chosen by Essenin, but the imprint made on him by the conditions of our period, which is neither gentle nor tender. Protecting himself from life by this mask of insolence, paying to this "attitude" a tribute that was deep and not inci-

In a prefatory note to his translation of this article from the Russian (from which it is now in turn translated) for the French magazine *Clarté* (June 1926), Georges Altman speaks of the "simple tenderness" of these lines of Trotsky. Personal tenderness there certainly is toward Essenin as man and poet, yet there is simultaneously a pitiless objectivity toward him as unfitted for his time. Human tenderness and historical rigor — it is precisely their dialectical interpenetration, from which emerges a new and hopeful synthesis concerning the cultural richness of the socialist future, that gives this note the strange quality of being at once merciless and merciful. It is brilliantly summarized in the line: "The poet is dead ; long live poetry!"

We are glad to be able to offer our readers this remarkable and moving document, published here — to the best of our knowledge — for the first time in English.

dental, Essenin, it seems, never "felt himself to be of this world" — I say this neither to honor him nor to censure him: indeed, it is by that non-adaptation of Essenin to the world that the poet was lost to us; furthermore, can we cast blame on this great lyric poet whom we did not know how to save for ourselves ?

Bitter times, these, perhaps among the bitterest in the history of so-called "civilized" humanity. A revolutionary, born for these decades, is obsessed by a wild "patriotism" for his period, which is his fatherland-in-time. Essenin was not a revolutionary.

The author of *Pugachev* and the *Ballads of the '26* was an inner lyricist. But our period is not lyric: that is the essential reason why Sergei Essenin, of his own will, and so soon, went far away from us and from his times.

Essenin's roots are deeply popular, and like everything about him, his background of "the people" is not artificial: the proof of this lies, not in his poems on rioting, but, once more, in his lyricism: *In the bay thickets, near the hillside slopes, it is soft Autumn . . . a russet mare tosses her mane.*

This image of autumn, as well as many others, surprised at first ; they were considered unjustifiably daring ; but, forced by the poet to feel the peasant origin of his images, we felt them penetrate deeply into us.

Obviously Fet would not have written so, and Tiuchev even less.

Essenin passed the inspiration coming to him from his peasant origins through the prism of his creative gift and thus made it finer; solidly rooted in him, this peasant background's very solidity was what explains the poet's special weakness: he was uprooted from the past, and had not been able to sink his roots into the new times. His trips abroad, to Europe and across the ocean, had not been able to "pull him up again." He assimilated Teheran much more deeply than New York, and the wholly inner lyricism of this child of Riazan found in Persia far more points in common with his peasant origins than he could find in the civilized capitals of Europe and America.

Essenin was no enemy of the Revolution, and it was never even alien to him; on the contrary, he turned constantly toward it, writing in 1918:

O my country. Bolshevik, yes, I am.

He still was saying, in his last years:
*And now, in the land of the soviets,
 Here am I, one of your most ardent traveling
 companions.*

Violently the Revolution broke into the structure of his verses and his images, which, at first confused, later grew clearer. In the collapse of the past, Essenin lost nothing, missed nothing. Alien to the Revolution? No indeed; but it and he were not of the same nature: Essenin was an inward being, tender and lyrical; the Revolution was "public," epic, full of disasters; and so it was a disaster that snapped off the poet's brief life.

It has been said that every being bears within him the spring of his destiny, unwound to the end by life. In this case, that is only partially true. The creative spring of Essenin was unwinding when the period, with its sharp angles, knocked against it — the spring was broken.

There are, however, with Essenin, many priceless strophes, wholly suffused by his times, yet Essenin "was not of this world"; he was not the poet of the Revolution.

I accept everything; everything, as it is, I accept.

I am ready to walk in paths already traced.

*I will give my whole soul for our October, our May,
 But I will not give my lyre, my beloved lyre.*

His lyric spring could have unwound to the end only under conditions where life was harmonious, happy, full of songs, a period when there ruled as master, not rough combat, but friendship, love, and tenderness. This time will come; in our own there are still many implacable and salutary combats of men against men; but after it, there will come other times which the present struggles are preparing; then the individual can blossom into genuine flower, just as then

the poetry of each being will bloom. *The Revolution, above all, will in lofty struggle win for every individual the right not only to bread but to poetry.*

In his last hour, to whom was Essenin writing his letter in blood? P perchance he was calling from afar to a friend who is not yet born, to the man of the future, whom some are preparing by their struggles and Essenin by his songs? The poet is dead, because he was not of the same nature as the Revolution, but, in the name of the future, the Revolution will adopt him for ever.

From the very first years of his poetic work, Essenin, realizing his inherent inability to defend himself, had a tendency toward death. In one of his last songs, he said farewell to the flowers:

Well then, my friends, well, well . . .

I have seen you, and I have seen the earth . . .

And your funereal trembling

I shall take as a last caress.

Those who scarcely knew Essenin, those who did not know him at all, can *only now*, after December 27th, understand completely the intimate sincerity of his poetry, almost every verse of which was written in blood from a wounded vein; our bitterness is all the harsher.

Without emerging from his inner domain, Essenin found in the premonition of his coming end a melancholy and moving consolation:

. . . listening to a song in silence,

my beloved, with another friend,

will perhaps be reminded of me,

as a flower — never to be repeated . . .

In our consciences, one thought softens the acute and still fresh pain: this great, this inimitable poet did, according to his temperament, reflect his period and enriched it with his songs, telling, in a new way, of love, of the blue sky fallen in the river, of the moon which, like a lamb, pastures in the sky, and of the never-to-be-repeated flower — himself.

Let there be nothing, in this memory we bring to the poet, that may beat us down or make us lose courage. Our period has a spring stronger than that of each of us, and the spiral of history will unwind till the end; let us not oppose it, but help it, by our conscious efforts of thought and will. Let us prepare the future, let us win for every being the right to bread and song.

The poet is dead, long live poetry!

Defenseless, a child of man has rolled into the abyss. But long live the creative life where, till his last moment, Sergei Essenin braided the priceless threads of his poetry!

January 1926

A LETTER

("Closer to the Proletarians of the Colored Races")

By LEON TROTSKY

NOTE

At a stage when the centre of gravity of the world revolution has been for a time displaced from the metropolitan countries to the colonies and semi-colonies, we believe that our readers will be interested by the

following little-known letter of Leon Trotsky on the particular importance of winning over those workers who suffer from both national and social exploitation.

*To the International Secretariat :
(Copy to the National Committee of the American League)*

I have received a copy of the letter dated April 26, 1932, sent by an organization of Negro comrades from Johannesburg. This letter, it seems to me, is of great symptomatic significance. The Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) can and must become the banner for the most oppressed sections of the world proletariat, and consequently, first and foremost, for the Negro workers. Upon what do I base this proposition ?

The Left Opposition represents at present the most consistent and most revolutionary tendency in the world. Its sharply critical attitude to any and all varieties of bureaucratic haughtiness in the labor movement makes it possible for it to pay particular attention to the voice of the most oppressed sections of the working class and the toilers as a whole.

The Left Opposition is the target for the blows not only of the Stalinist apparatus but also of all the bourgeois governments of the world. This fact, which, despite all the slanders, is entering gradually into the consciousness of the masses, is bound increasingly to attract towards the Left Opposition the warm sympathies of the most oppressed sections of the international working class. From this point of view, the communication addressed to us by the South African comrades seems to me not at all accidental, but profoundly symptomatic.

In their letter, to which 24 signatures are appended (with the notation "and others"), the South African comrades expressed particular interest in the questions of the Chinese Revolution. This interest, it ought to be acknowledged, is wholly justified. The working masses of the oppressed peoples who have to carry on the struggle for elementary national rights and for human dignity, are precisely those who incur the greatest risk of suffering the penalties for the muddled teachings of the Stalinist bureaucracy on the subject of the "democratic dictatorship." Under this false banner, the policy à la Kuomintang, that is, the vile deception and the unpunished crushing of the toiling masses by their own "national" bourgeoisie, may still do the greatest harm to the liberating cause of the toilers. The programme of the permanent revolution based on the incontestable historic experience of a

number of countries can and must assume primary significance for the liberation movement of the Negro proletariat.

The Johannesburg comrades may not as yet have had the opportunity to acquaint themselves more closely with the views of the Left Opposition on all the most important questions. But this cannot be an obstacle in our getting together with them as closely as possible at this very moment, and helping them fraternally to come into the orbit of our programme and our tactics.

When ten intellectuals, whether in Paris, Berlin, or New York, who have already been members of various organizations, address themselves to us with a request to be taken into our midst, I would offer the following advice : Put them through a series of tests on all the programmatic questions ; wet them in the rain, dry them in the sun, and then after a new and careful examination accept maybe one or two.

The case is radically altered when ten workers connected with the masses turn to us. The difference in our attitude to a petty-bourgeois group and to the proletarian group does not require any explanation. But if a proletarian group functions in an area where there are workers of different races, and in spite of this remains composed solely of workers of a privileged nationality, then I am inclined to view them with suspicion. Are we not dealing perhaps with the labor aristocracy ? Isn't the group infected with slave-holding prejudices, active or passive ?

It is an entirely different matter when we are approached by a group of Negro workers. Here I am prepared to take it for granted in advance that we shall achieve agreement with them, even if such an agreement is not actual as yet. Because the Negro workers, by virtue of their whole position, do not and cannot strive to degrade anybody, oppress anybody, or deprive anybody of his rights. They do not seek privileges and cannot rise to the top except on the road of the international revolution.

We can and we must find a way to the consciousness of the Negro workers, the Chinese workers, the Indian workers, and all the oppressed in the human ocean of the colored races to whom belongs the decisive word in the development of mankind.

Prinkipo, 13 June 1932

News of the World Workers' Movement and of the International

Bolivia

CONTINUATION OF THE STATE OF CRISIS

Bolivia remains in political, economic, and social crisis — a crisis so profound that it seems impossible that it could continue another week without a violent solution one way or the other, but which nevertheless lurches convulsively along month after month. The economy is in chaos, inflation nearly out of control, and in entire areas of the country there exist elements of dual power that the central government has not the strength to suppress. Latent civil war broods implicitly in the confused disorder.

On July 8th the long-awaited IXth National Congress of the Miners' Union met at Colquiri. The Siles government, fearing its resolutions, which it was certain would be of a revolutionary nature, sent hundreds of troops, elements of the "Control Político," and the thuggish MNR comandos, to besiege it. Recognizing the danger, the unarmed delegates sent messages for help up to the mine. But before it could arrive, the congress was attacked; and though the progress of the relieving miners as they worked their way down the mountainside from the mine-mouth could be followed by the blasts of dynamite-cartridges they hurled in the air to hearten the congress, it was too late: the government forces, at their third attack, succeeded in breaking up the delegates and scattering them up over the mountainside. The sadistic comandos beat any stragglers to death — the number of dead is still not known. In the town of Colquiri a reign of terror was unleashed and workers had to flee to the hills.

Following the guidance of the miners' radio at San José, the bulk of the delegates managed to reach that mine, where it was decided to continue the congress. Lechín immediately called to the miners by radio to appeal for calm, serenity, etc, and to urge the militias not to leave their own mines. But, having heard over the San José radio of the outrage at Colquiri, the men of the other mines had not waited: even as Lechín was speaking, 30 militiamen arrived from Caracoles; later came 70 from Pulacayo, with heavy machine-guns; then more, from Machacamarca, Morococala, etc. At the other mines the militias mobilized and awaited developments.

The government now did not dare to attack, and the congress reconvened at San José. The outrage perpetrated at Colquiri by Siles and C° boomeranged, for the miners had learned a bitter lesson from it, and one of the congress's first actions was to vote for the establishment of a General Staff of all the miners' militias, which had theretofore each operated only on the basis of its own mine, in order to coordinate them into a militia on a national scale.

It was not long before the shaky government was engaged on the opposite front: the fascist Falange Socialista Boliviana attempted a coup d'état to overthrow it. Siles and C° managed to put it down.

Further cabinet reorganizations proved to solve nothing. The government was gnawed by the need to crush the resistance of the masses, but simply had not the forces to do so. It has kept up, through the radio and press, an all-out campaign of slander against the workers; tried to whip up a lynch spirit, particularly against the peasants of Northern Potosí and the railwaymen; risked some limited repressive actions, such as the attack on the Miners' Congress, and sending "Control Político" agents to burn down such revolutionary "nests" as the Potosí railway station and Radio Córdor; demanded an end to workers' control in the Comibol (administrative committee of the nationalized mines); but nowhere has it felt strong enough to dare launch an all-out attack on the workers and peasants in those areas so wholly under their control that any government officials operate there only on sufferance.

But on the other hand the worker and peasant masses are not organized on a nation-wide basis or ready as yet to pass over to the offensive. Any attack by the government at any given point meets a resistance that sends it reeling back again, and solidarity is immediately forthcoming from the nearest worker and peasant centres. But there, so far, the matter remains, and there is a genuine danger that the revolutionary ardor of the masses will be frittered away in partial and merely defensive actions.

In sum, the Siles government is no longer undisputed master in Bolivia. It has completely lost any popular support it ever had. Yet it manages to exist because the masses are not yet organized to topple over its weakened structure. It could almost be said that the power lies in the streets but that the masses do not yet realize that they have only to reach for it and it is theirs. Better phrased, the situation is ripe, and over-ripe, in its objective revolutionary factors; but the subjective factor, a mass revolutionary party, is lacking.

Working tirelessly to build such a party, the comrades of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario, Bolivian Section of the Fourth International, recently launched an appeal, in the form of an Open Letter, to the Lechín Fraction, to the Communist Party, and to the Confederations, Federations, and individual Trade Unions of Bolivia, for the formation of a United Workers' Front, to defend the gains already won by the worker and peasant masses, and to prepare an Extraordinary Workers' Congress which will reorganize the C O B, coordinate the now dispersed workers' and peasants' struggles on a national plane, and drive for the constitution of a workers' and peasants' government. Only the adoption of such a policy, and its determined implementation, will provide a progressive way out of Bolivia's present chaotic state.



Brazil

ONE MORE SPLIT IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The recurrent crisis in the Brazilian Communist Party recently hit a new high with the resignation of 17 top leaders. Five were São Paulo Central Committee members; the remaining 12, youth leaders. The head of the dissident

group is Taibo Cadorniga, hitherto the main liaison between the Brazilian and the other Latin American Communist Parties. Among the others are: Vitorio Martorelli, a newspaperman who lately interviewed Khrushchev in Moscow;

Argileu Gonçalves, head of the Commercial Clerks' Union of São Paulo ; Dante Placani, president of the National Printers' Union ; and another trade-union leader, Orlando Piott.

In a manifesto explaining the reasons for their break, the 17 protested against the party's bureaucratization, sharply criticized it for its opportunistic and unprincipled support of the capitalist candidate Adhemar de Barros for governor of the State of São Paulo, and, most importantly, stated that in

view of the accusations launched by Khrushchev against Stalin, all the 1930-1940 Stalinist purges must be completely reexamined. It added that men like Trotsky, Kamenov, and others can no longer be considered "abortions of the human species," as Stalin called them in his history of the Russian Communist Party. They termed the 1955 Soviet intervention in Hungary "incredible," and condemned the execution of Imre Nagy.



Ceylon

DEEPENING CRISIS AND THE PERSPECTIVE OF POWER

The state of emergency, imposed by the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna government of Premier S W R D Bandaranaike on the occasion of the communal riots, as described in our last issue, continues, and its use has now been extended from the communal to the class sphere. Not that the danger of further communal outbursts is past : the Sinhalese communalists are recklessly playing with fire by attempting to launch another attack, this time on the Indian workers, a particularly concentrated and key ethnic grouping. But in a more fundamental way, the centre of gravity is shifting from the communal to the social plane.

This is because the "socialist" M E P government (supported by the Stalinists in return for diplomatic recognition of the Soviet bloc and Peiping) has its back to the wall. It has proved incapable of carrying out any of its electoral promises. Nationalization of the foreign-owned plantations it has now openly postponed to the Greek kalends. In such fields as investment, employment, education, and public health, its failures have been complete and fully recognized. Most important of all, the basic situation of the Ceylonese economy is rapidly worsening. The steady and uncontrollable rise in food prices is producing more and more widespread indignation among the masses. Unemployment — whose increase to 70,000 (official figures, for the reality is infinitely greater) was one of the main causes of its victory over the United National Party in the 1956 elections — far from being reabsorbed, has risen further to 113,000 (official figures), and continues to rise. The budget deficit is at least 750 million rupees, and the state finances are so confused that it is questionable whether even the government itself knows the exact amount. The Ceylonese rupee has become so shaky that, despite all government denials, devaluation will probably have to be resorted to. Foreign loans are reportedly being sought, to date unsuccessfully — even though the guarantees offered to foreign capital are such as

to make it clear that the M E P government can no longer even pretend to any anti-imperialism whatsoever. By its Trade Disputes Act and its anti-working-class actions in strikes in both the public and private sectors, it has exposed itself as fundamentally anti-labor.

In the union field, the Stalinists, by their support of this increasingly unpopular government, are more and more forfeiting any trust the workers had in them, and in union after union those workers are turning from their class-colaborationist tendency to the tendency following the class-struggle line of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, Ceylonese Section of the Fourth International, which now has become the greatest single influence in the whole Ceylonese trade-union movement.

The entire situation is rapidly sharpening. The Ceylonese masses have, by tradition and instinct, a tendency to direct action. But any action at all now runs up against the state-of-emergency regulations. Pressure is thus being built up toward an explosion.

In their profound disillusion and discontent with the M E P government, a very small sector of the masses tends to drift back to the U N P. But far more numerous and active sectors are turning toward the L S S P, which is fighting the emergency regulations and demanding restoration of all civil liberties. It is still too early to permit detailed prediction of the rhythm or the exact forms that the continuing struggle will take ; but, barring armed intervention by imperialism, the tide has now set steadily in toward the eventual perspective of the L S S P in power.

That party, on October 11th and 12th, held its annual Conference, and, after exhaustive democratic debate, hammered out a particularly important political resolution, *Forward to an L S S P Government* — which we propose to publish in our next issue.



Greece

PUBLICATION OF THE LAST WRITINGS OF POULIOPOULOS

Our Greek comrades have just brought out an important publication : a volume in which are collected many of the last writings of Pantelis Pouliopoulos, one of our best theoreticians.

Comrade Pouliopoulos, one of the founders of the Greek Communist Party and its general secretary, then (in 1927) founder of the Left Opposition in Greece and one of the main leaders of the Greek Trotskyist movement, was executed in June 1943 by the fascist occupying troops. His heroic death is described elsewhere in this number in the article "Twenty Years of the Fourth International."

The writings in the present volume date from the period when Comrade Pouliopoulos was either underground and

actively hunted by the police of the Metaxas dictatorship or in the Acronauplia prison.

Among these writings, running from 1937 to 1941, are :

"Popular Fronts and Proletarian Policy" ;

"The Coming War and the Tasks of the Communists in Greece" ;

"The Present Moment in the War and Our Tasks" ;

"Report Made to the Collective of the Trotskyist Militiamen in the Acronauplia Fortress on the Character of the Dictatorship in Greece and the Tasks of the Proletariat."

It is hoped soon to make some of these writings available in French.

India

KERALA UNDER A "COMMUNIST" GOVERNMENT

Eleven years ago the British imperialists turned over the power in India to the Indian National Congress, which had won a majority in the previous year's elections. Ministries were formed in the various "states" composing India. But the Congress, representing the weak native bourgeoisie of a backward country, lost ground in the 1952 and 1957 elections.

This defeat was most severe in Kerala. In 1949 the Congress had won the majority in Travancore-Cochin State. In 1952, however, having lost the majority, it had to form a coalition government there with rightist groups. The State of Kerala was formed from this Travancore-Cochin State and the region of Malabar, where the Congress was particularly weak.

The Communist Party of Kerala, next strongest to the Congress in this state, had hundreds of paid full-timers, three daily newspapers (other, bourgeois, papers also supported it), a certain number of weeklies, and considerable funds. In its election manifesto it promised wage increases of 25 %, bonuses of 12.5 %, job security, the elimination of unemployment and poverty, the land to those who tilled it, and a reduction in rents. It added also the nationalization of forests and foreign-owned estates.

In the 1957 elections 162 seats were at stake. Of the 100 that it contested, the C P won 60, with 2,059,548 votes (about 34 % of the total). The Congress, which ran 124 candidates, elected only 43. The Praja Socialist Party and the Moslem League each won nine. The Revolutionary Socialist Party, which had had nine seats in the previous Assembly and which put forward a more revolutionary programme than the C P's, lost all its seats in the C P sweep.

With the aid of five of the six independents elected, the C P formed a government on April 5th 1957.

To understand its subsequent behavior, it is perhaps useful to point out the social composition of the Indian C P, as reflected by the announcement of the Mandates Commission of its Amritsar Conference in April 1958, which indicated that of the 474 delegates, 58 only were industrial or agricultural workers, the remainder being small peasant proprietors or small businessmen.

The new Kerala government carried on in a completely bourgeois fashion. The budgets it presented resembled those of the other Indian states. The laws it introduced were timid and not seriously fought for. A draft law concerning education, for example, was mildly progressive (job-security for teachers, payment of their salaries directly to them, a lessening of the powers of the directors of educational institutions, the possibility for the government to take over private schools, and to improve the level of teaching). But the Catholic reaction, which possessed about one-third of the educational institutions in Kerala, carried out a furious campaign against the draft law, and the "Communist"

government agreed to amend it in accordance with the Catholics' objections. Still not satisfied, the reaction attacked the law, once voted, in the Indian Supreme Court, which rejected it as unconstitutional.

In agriculture, which accounts for the livelihood of about 80 % of Malayalees, the Kerala "Communist" government has an equally poor record. It put through an Anti-Eviction Ordinance of a somewhat more progressive nature than those of previous governments. But the application has been disgraceful. Communist landlords have been able to evict tenants with impunity. Communist and fellow-traveler land-owners sell their lands to the government at inflated prices. The government settled the important province-wide Kuttanad dispute between rural labor and the landlords so scandalously in favor of the latter that even Stalinist trade-unionist leaders protested, while the reactionary Catholic and Hindu press congratulated the government.

Concerning the nationalization of the forests, for which two million rupees had already been provided, the government dishonored its election pledges, and instead legislated to rent them from the private owners for a thumping sum. The idea of nationalizing foreign-owned estates has simply been abandoned.

In industry, the government's desire to bring new industries to Kerala caused it to make a deal with the giant Birlas interests for setting up a rayon pulp factory at Nilambur the terms of which are a terrible blow to the Kerala trade unions. The officers of those Communist-led unions have already been putting the strongest pressure on the rank and file not to strike under any circumstances; and in many union struggles the Communist-led unions have acted as strikebreakers.

Even worse is the behavior of the government itself in strike situations. There have been 27 cases of the notorious police "lathi-charges," and many cases of the use of tear-gas. But the peak was reached on July 26th at a locked-out cashew-processing factory near Quillon, when pickets trying to prevent trucks from carrying away finished products were fired on by the "Communist" government's police, killing several workers and wounding many.

So reactionary has the policy of the Kerala "Communist" government toward the workers become that even SA Dange, the Indian Stalinist national trade-union top, and some other national Stalinist leaders, raised protests against it. But they treat the situation as exceptional, and fail to draw the conclusion that the actions of the Kerala "Communist" government flow with inevitability from the Indian Communist Party's overall policy of class collaboration. Nevertheless, what these leaders carefully refrain from admitting is being learned, the hard and bitter way, by the rank and file of the Kerala workers in their own flesh-and-blood experience. That lesson will not easily be forgotten.



Indonesia

THE PARTAI ACOMA

In the stormy and confused developments since Indonesia fought through to independence from Dutch imperialism, Indonesian Stalinism has played its usual zigzagging role, engaging in diametrical shifts in accordance with each change in Kremlin foreign policy. Strong in the usurped prestige of the October Revolution, dealing with human material which, in its vast majority, was politically inexperienced and hence ready to accept the Stalinist spellbinders' conflicting statements as revealed truth, the Kremlinite leadership soon had in the PKI a mass party that

seemed ready to follow blindly its shifting directives.

But in real life-and-death struggles, like those in Indonesia during the stormy days of the war of liberation and the hardly less stormy period that has succeeded it, the most advanced sectors of the masses learn fast from their own experience. Instinctively, contrasting the political and social reality with the Stalinist "theory," various groups and currents have formed, seeking with sound class instinct a true revolutionary line.

One of these currents was the "Communist Youth Army,

CYL (Acoma),” founded June 10th 1946. In a recent document, it recalls :

With astonishing rapidity the names of Marx and Lenin conquered their place in the thoughts of the people of this country and suddenly became very popular in the struggle. [...]

[But] the enemies of Marxism and Leninism also began to cry : “Long live Marx and Lenin.” Thus Marxism and Leninism were used [...] in order to cheat and distort the thoughts of the vanguard.

As watchmen of imperialism these bandits and usurpers of the August Revolution, who offered themselves in all kinds of ways to the colonial oppressors, boasted at the same time of being the only group entitled to use the names of Marx and Lenin. Under the brand “Marx and Lenin” they succeeded in corrupting the mass of the people, in disarming the movement of the people, in order to make them give back all the factories, mines, and plantations to the colonial capitalists, through the November proclamation, Lingardjati, Renville, preceding the KMB, MSA, and other agreements which injured the freedom of the republic and the people.

In view of the need of the worker and farmer masses

for a genuine revolutionary leadership which would hold to the original direction of the popular revolution during the terror of imperialist agents who camouflaged themselves with the names of Marx and Lenin as socialists and communists, but who despicably and cruelly persecuted, kidnapped, and killed their revolutionary opponents, the CYL, Communist Youth Army (Acoma) was created on June 10th 1946.

After many developments and vicissitudes, the CYL on August 8th 1952 published a founding resolution and constituted itself as a party, the Angkatan Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Group of Struggle), firmly adding to it the old and honored abbreviation “ACOMA.”

Learning from its day-by-day struggles, the Angkatan Komunis Indonesia has pulled farther and farther away from such false Stalinist theories as revolution by class stages and the “peaceful” “parliamentary” paths to socialism, and fought ever more strongly against bureaucratism. Some weeks ago its Comite Purat (Central Committee) sent its programme and other important documents, for fraternal evaluation and orientation, to the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, where they are now under study.



Negro Africa

THE GATHERING STORM

Since the French crisis of May-June, events in Negro Africa have been developing at ever greater speed. The insoluble difficulties of French imperialism in Algeria have on the one hand been an encouraging example to the peoples of Central Africa and on the other forced de Gaulle to demagogic concessions over which he runs an increasing risk of losing all control. Overnight the territory of Guinea has won complete independence and stands as a beacon to the other territories which, each in its own way, are following tumultuously after.

In the traditional Rassemblement Démocratique Africain, the long-dominant conservative right wing under Houphouët-Boigny can no longer impose itself as formerly, and is seriously challenged by the left under the leadership of Sékou Touré. It is further being outflanked on the left by the Parti du Regroupement Africain. At the stormy meeting at Cotonou on July 26th the PRA called for nothing short of full independence, a constituent assembly to form an All-African federation, and an “African socialism.” This heterogeneous grouping, in which however the left dominates, is led by the ex-RDA sections of Senegal and Nigeria ; Djibo Bakary, Nigerian leftist and trade-union leader, won election as general secretary.

Cotonou expressed total solidarity with the struggle of “our Algerian brothers,” and opposed the use of Negro troops in the French Army’s operations in Algeria. Even if, under behind-the-scenes pressure by Houphouët-Boigny, the final resolution was a compromise, Cotonou marked an indisputable advance over Bamako.

All eyes are, naturally, on French Guinea, which French

imperialism hopes to reduce by economic strangulation, but which, with its rich bauxite deposits, has a strong bargaining position. The degree to which the Houphouët-Boigny wing of the RDA is sold out to French imperialism is indicated by its proposing the expulsion of Sékou Touré and the Guinea section, a boycott of Guinea, and the establishment by France of a cordon sanitaire around the new independent state. But Guinea nevertheless stands fast in its independence, in which it will be joined in a year by Togoland and Nigeria, with the Camerons to follow.

Meanwhile there has been summoned for December at Accra, in Ghana, an “All-African Peoples’ Conference,” gathering together at a non-governmental level the most nearly universal representation of African lands ever assembled. Its announced slogan is : “Peoples of Africa, unite ! You have nothing to lose but your chains ! You have a continent to win ! You must attain human freedom and dignity !” The sponsoring committee surprisingly proposes “Gandhian non-violent” methods for attaining the goal of a United States of Africa ; it remains to be seen to what extent Gandhianism will be swallowed by delegates of peoples already deeply involved in militant struggle.

For in a confused but turbulent and ever more irresistible tide, the colonial revolution is sweeping Negro Africa. One more vast area, in process of liberating itself, is sapping the economic foundations of an imperialism already badly harried elsewhere. Revolutionary Marxists must devote to this new sector of the colonial revolution the attention and the aid that it deserves.



USA

DEMOCRATIC PARTY SWEEP IN OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS

The crushing victory of the Democrats reflects the profound discontent of the masses of the country toward the Republican administration, responsible in their eyes for the recession and for a policy of war “for Quemoy.” The Republicans will bitterly feel the loss of such traditional fiefs as Indiana, as well as the important state of California. (On

the other hand, they had the pleasant surprise of seeing Rockefeller beat his less fortunate colleague Harriman in New York.) Obviously the Republican slogan “Peace and Prosperity,” aimed at combatting this current, did not go down with the masses.

Despite sure signs of improvement in the economic situ-

ation, unemployment remains very extensive, and the haunting fear of recession is still very much alive.

The American masses, furthermore, do not seem to have liked very much Dulles's perilous excursions to "the brink of the abyss," recently renewed in connection with the Quemoy crisis.

The scandals of the Republican administration, including those in the immediate entourage of the President (the Sherman Adams case), also helped to tarnish almost wholly the administration's high polish.

It is now obviously the end of the Eisenhower Era.

Nixon, who carried on the Republican campaign to the best of his abilities, finds himself handicapped in the race for the presidency both because of the general result of the elections and because of the victory in New York of the "liberal" young Rockefeller, who has thereby become the political rival n° 1 of the present vice-president, and the new supreme hope of the Republicans for the presidency in 1960. The general character of the election results reflects a victory for the "liberal" tendency within both capitalist parties who still dominate the political scene in the United States.

The sweeping nature of the Democrats' victory, which heralds a victory for Stevenson in the 1960 presidential elections, will give birth once more to illusions about a possible transformation of this party, breaking with the "ultras" of the Solid South, into a Labor Party based on the trade unions, the Negroes, and the farmers. But these are at present pious hopes with no future in them.

There is no doubt that the Democratic Party enjoys broad

support by labor. This support plays an important part in elections, including these last ones.

At least six states have been directly affected by the controversy over the "right-to-work" legislation, bitterly fought by the trade unions. In California the Republican Party split over this question, thus aiding the victory of the Democratic candidate.

The Democratic Party, however, remains solidly in the hands of an eminently big-capitalist apparatus.

The mutation of such a party into a party of the wage-earning class is in practice impossible. The Democratic victory, far from absolving the American masses from the task of building such a party of its own, renders its need even more imperious.

The Independent Socialist ticket, reported on in our last issue, despite having collected far more than the signatures necessary to get on the ballot under New York State's reactionary election laws, was simply ruled off it at the last minute by Carmine De Sapio, Secretary of State and also head of the notorious Tammany Hall Democratic Party organization. State Supreme Court Justice Kenneth McAffer overruled De Sapio's decision. The determined De Sapio forces then appealed the Supreme Court Justice's decision to the Appellate Court, which in a last-minute ruling upheld the right of the Independent Socialist ticket to appear on the ballot. As we go to press, we have not yet received word of the vote obtained by this ticket in the election. In our next issue we shall report on this and comment on the S W P's experiment in giving the ticket its all-out support.

SHACHTMAN : THE END OF THE ROAD

The September 22nd issue of *Labor Action*, organ of the Shachtmanite Independent Socialist League, announced cessation of publication and the dissolution of the organization. It invited the members of the defunct ISL to join, individually, the not-yet-quite defunct Socialist Party - Social Democratic Federation, perhaps the most right-wing Social-Democratic organization in the world. Thus has the once brilliant and promising Max Shachtman reached the shabby end of a long and strange trajectory. And with him there disappears that curious and chameleon-like doctrine, Shachtmanism.

One of the earliest Americans to break with Stalinism and help form the first organization of Trotskyism in the U S A, Shachtman for many years was one of its principal leaders, noted for his coruscating qualities as a speaker and writer.

The announcement of the Stalin-Hitler Pact, however, and the resultant wave of frantic anti-Soviet sentiment in New York intellectual circles, shook Shachtman badly. In a bloc with Martin Abern, another old-timer, and Professor James Burnham, a more recent acquisition, he raised what has always proved to be the fundamental question, the defense of the Soviet Union. Burnham was already denying that the U S S R was a workers' state; Shachtman did not reach that position till later, but restudy of his subsequent development shows that he was already logically tending toward it.

The resultant internal discussion, that ran from 5 September 1939 to 9 April 1940, carried on from one side by Shachtman and Burnham and from the other almost exclusively by Leon Trotsky himself, was one of the most deep-going and extensive since the Trotskyist movement had taken form. Both Shachtman and Burnham were brilliant polemicists, and repeatedly scored debating points, but Trotsky, unimpressed by all their sparkle, bored steadily in on the Marxist essence of the question, and in the process produced some of his finest theoretical work, which, assembled in the volume, *In Defense of Marxism*, remains today a source-book of inestimable value on the nature of the Soviet Union.

Besides his contributions on political theory, Trotsky during this discussion also taught important organizational

lessons to both sides in the S W P, fought any impatient tendency on the part of the anti-Shachtmanists to "throw the rascals out," and went to the extreme limit of concessions to prevent a split. Always applying class criteria to all germane data, Trotsky finally defined the Shachtman tendency as "petty bourgeois" and emphasized that this was demonstrated in practice by its refusal, despite all concessions, to accept the organizational essence of Bolshevism, democratic centralism.

In spite of all Trotsky's efforts, Shachtman broke with the Fourth International, left the S W P, and formed his own Workers Party. This was a crime for which Shachtman cannot be forgiven. For not only did he lead out of the movement many valuable elements who slowly were lost entirely to the revolution, but in the split itself very numerous comrades of value, confused and discouraged, "fell through the space in between" the two parties and went into inactivity. There is logical plausibility in the hard-boiled attitude that, since they did so, that is *prima facie* evidence that they "didn't have what it takes," and good riddance to them; and it is true that some were just "tired radicals" glad of an excuse. But there were others who were a real loss, as any responsible and unsectarian leader who has had genuine experience in molecularly building a movement with human material can well imagine; and the grave blame for such losses lies also at Shachtman's door. Furthermore, for several years the existence of two parties claiming to be Trotskyist was a source of great confusion to workers turning away from Stalinism and toward revolutionary Marxism.

Shachtman, as is usually the case with people who break with the Fourth International, had megalomaniacal illusions that he could bring the bulk of the national sections along with him; but world tours by two Shachtmanites, one a member of the International Executive Committee who had broken away to follow him, soon revealed that the International as a whole stood solid, politically and organizationally, on its positions, and would have none of him.

Another and more immediate blow to Shachtman was the announcement, a month after the split, by his co-theoretician James Burnham, that he no longer believed in Marxism at all, and that he was leaving the Workers Party as well.

Beginning with his notorious book, *The Managerial Revolution*, Burnham underwent a rapid degeneration that brought him finally into the same camp with McCarthyism.

But Shachtman persisted, with his Workers Party, and with the theories of "bureaucratic collectivism" and "the third camp." He abandoned the defense of the Soviet Union, supported such dubious figures as Mikolaiczic, and limped along, his policies slowly but steadily pulling away from revolutionary Marxism. He had a momentary accession of strength when the Morrow-Goldman-Loris tendency left the S W P and joined him, but it was short-lived. Playing a kind of Bonapartist role in his party, straddling on the shoulders of a left and a right wing, he was, by the removal of his left-wing support when the Johnsonites left to rejoin the S W P, toppled down into his own right wing — since when it has been only a question of time till he disappeared as an independent political force of even the most minimal significance. Yet it is food for thought how long such a tendency — which, lying somewhere in between revolutionary Marxism and pro-capitalist Social-Democracy, has theoretically no class *raison d'être* to justify its independent political existence — can nevertheless creak rachitically along before it draws the logical conclusion and gives up the ghost.

But now, finally, Shachtman has reached safe haven in that American Social-Democracy that J P Cannon once neatly

characterized as "The Old Folks' Home for Tired Radicals."

Even some loyal members of the S W P, back in 1940, thought that Leon Trotsky was perhaps a little too harsh in his class characterization of Shachtman and his tendency, and too sweeping, on the basis of the then scant symptoms, in his prognosis of ultimate total degeneration. Now, at the end of the long proces, it is clear that Trotsky's analysis and prediction were all too true and accurate.

At the height of the 1940 discussion, characterizing a petty-bourgeois-minority document, "If this is Trotskyism, then I," wrote Trotsky, "am no Trotskyist." It has required nearly 20 years, but the confirmation of who was the Trotskyist has now been unmistakably recorded in black and white in words of few syllables: "We do not subscribe to any creed known as Trotskyism or defined as such," writes Shachtman in the groveling declaration the petty-minded leaders of the S P - S D F required of him before they would allow him into the Home to sit in one of their rocking-chairs and meditate on his revolutionary youth.

The end of the road. R I P. But all the accompanying tragic waste, the at any given moment scarce perceptible but always steadily irreversible degeneration, will not have been in vain if they lead to serious reflections about the inevitable end-results of breaking with the policy and organization of the Fourth International.

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