



INTERNATIONAL

WORKERS OF THE WORLD — UNITE !

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By ERNEST GERMAIN

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UNILATERAL ATOMIC DISARMAMENT ; THE CONTINUING FRENCH CRISIS
THE JUGOSLAV COMMUNIST CONGRESS ; THE BOLIVIAN REVOLUTION

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By MICHEL PABLO

TEXTS ON : ALGERIA, ARGENTINA, INDIA
AN OPEN LETTER TO *THE MILITANT*

Report to the XXth Plenum of the IEC

BOOK REVIEW

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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Editorial

THE DEPRESSION OF THE CAPITALIST ECONOMY

The "recession" in the United States is now a fact. Eisenhower, having lost the initial optimism which led him to minimize the economic slide backward observed since 1957 and to predict the reversal of the conjuncture in March, has even used already the graver term "depression."

The official hopes set on the March statistics have not been confirmed.

The "recession" continues to deepen, though to a less serious extent than in the previous months (January 1958 and December 1957). Since August 1957 industrial production has dropped 10%, or more than in the two preceding postwar "recessions," those of 1948-1949 and 1953-1954. For several months already industries have been working in reality at an average of 70% of their capacity. The steel industry is working at only about 50% of capacity.

Total official unemployment, which was 5,200,000 in February, increased again in March, by about 25,000, representing a net between 200,000 further unemployed in industry, and 175,000 less in other sectors. But both the trade unions and Democratic Senators like Douglas already estimate it at more than 10% of wage-earners, ie, already more than six million unemployed. The trade unions in particular raise the figure to about seven million already. There must furthermore be taken into account the partial unemployment that arises from the reduction of working hours in the plants, the weekly average having dropped from 41 hours before the recession to 38 hours at present.

Other indices are characteristic both of the extent of the "recession" and of its prospects. It is now confirmed that the investment expenditures of business enterprises for the present year will be on

the average at least 13% less than last year, ie, by a figure of more than \$6,000 million. To this figure there must be added that arising from the decrease in wages as a result of total or partial unemployment, which is estimated at an average of \$1,100 million a month since August, ie, another sum of more than \$6,000 million already.

Taking into account a part of the wages lost or reduced that are covered by social security payments (2/5ths), we reach an approximate figure of at least \$15,000 million, illustrating the losses of the American economy since August 1957 as a result of the diminution of production, investments, and salaries.

In face of these losses, what are the measures already adopted or under consideration in order to catch up again and inject a new stimulant into the American economy, which is obviously running out of wind?

The general line of the reactions of the American administration, seconded by the Democratic majorities in the House of Representatives and the Senate, is sketched out in the direction of "Keynesian" or "New Deal" remedies, even though the Republican administration protests pro forma against such an "accusation": increased budgetary expenditure, elasticity of credit (the interest rate is reduced to 2¼%), decrease in taxes, budget deficit.

The new budgetary expenditure concerns above all the military field and that of public works. After the increase of the 1958-1959 budget by \$2,100 million destined for the speeding-up of the programme for the manufacture of guided rockets, the Pentagon is on the point of obtaining another \$1,700 million, ie, a total of new military expenditures of about \$4,000 million.

To this there must be added about as much so far this year for different public works (buildings and roads); or a total of \$8,000 to \$9,000 million.

It is thus easy to observe that even this already very important figure is far from equaling that of the approximately \$15,000 million of losses of the American economy run up since August 1957.

Whence the clamor for new stimulants necessary first to stop the to-date continuous deepening of the recession on a "plateau," and then to bring about the reversal of the conjuncture, toward a new boom. These stimulants, which the Democratic opposition demands (for political reasons obvious in an election year) with noisy zeal, must be either new budgetary expenditures in arms and public works or a reduction in taxes, or a combination of the two.

For the moment it is possible that both Republicans and Democrats are heading for a tax reduction. It remains, however, to settle on the amount and the methods of this reduction. The AFL-CIO unions call for a cut of at least \$6,000 to \$8,000 million affecting especially incomes of under \$5,000 a year.

Business circles, on the contrary, such as for example the Committee for Economic Development, which calls for a sum of \$7,500 million, would like a 20% cut in taxes irrespective of the income level—which would not fail to favor especially very big incomes.

Thus the road is being taken toward the creation of a serious budget deficit, the result of both new expenditures and the reduction of receipts, which will be in the best of cases higher than \$10 million.

It is this obvious inflationary prospect, as well as skepticism as to the value, as a stimulant for a weakening economy, of public works or even of tax cuts, which explains the administration's hesitation about going further along such a road.

Indeed, a quite special characteristic of the present recession is the *continuous rise in prices* (apart from those of some durable consumer items).

The explanation of this phenomenon—which in its turn undermines the masses' purchasing power, and from that viewpoint aggravates the recession and delays the moment of a new upsurge—must be sought in the monopoly structure of the American economy and the very great importance of the service sector and luxury production.

The monopolies have much to do with the relative rigidity of prices.

Furthermore, the prices of the service sector and luxury production can for a whole period follow a distinct course, fed among other things by the inflationary revenues unproductively distributed by the state budget to a whole social stratum of "consumers" (arms makers, state bureaucracy, holders of government bonds, etc.).

The inflation that characterizes this recession is in the last analysis due, to a considerable extent,

to the extraordinary scope of budgetary expenditures.

Expenditures for public works, apart from building, are considered to be a stimulant that has only a long-term effect. As for the reduction in taxes, this could in theory act immediately as a stimulant for new investments and greater consumption. In the present climate of *caution*, however, which has got hold of both businessmen and ordinary consumers, faced by the uncertain prospects of the American economy, nobody is sure that the reduction would not serve to strengthen *savings* rather than *spending*.

What conclusions are to be deduced from these data on the American economy?

First of all, that the present recession is more serious than previous ones experienced since the end of the war, from the viewpoint of both *extent* and probable *duration*. It is in fact evident that this recession, even if stabilized at the March level, or slightly improved, threatens to last the whole of 1958 and beyond. Some even are saying that its effects will be felt all through next year and up into the beginning of 1960.

Next, that this recession, the result of a classic boom in capital goods, and in part even of durable consumers' goods (autos, television sets, electric household appliances, etc.), has demonstrated better than the recessions of the past the organic ailment of the American economy as a capitalist economy: the still not overcome disproportion between productive capacity and the masses' purchasing capacity.

In fact, the present crisis is a classic crisis of overproduction which was announced by a series of signs in this field which are well-known to Marxists: accumulation of industrial and commercial inventories, fall in the prices of raw materials, reduction in the number of orders, a sharp drop in stock-market prices.

Private economists and the American government's economic advisers had in these last years boasted about their ability to foresee the evolution of the capitalist economy and about the means which the capitalist state supposedly had at its disposal from then on to avoid major crises. It can currently be brought up against them that their own empirical indices, interpreted from a Marxist viewpoint, were already sufficient to have enabled them already a year ago to foresee the present slump, but that they generally abstained from drawing such a conclusion, being imbued with conservatism and a smug optimism about the possibilities of the American "miracle."

And as for the "regulatory" means of the capitalist state, without their being negligible, they are not always able to intervene in time, in view of the anarchic and unplanned structure of the capi-

talist economy; and especially when the crisis of overproduction has been ripening in the depths, these means are, in spite of everything, incapable of just simply eliminating it. They can in the best of cases only prevent the recession from spreading in an abrupt and catastrophic way.

By casting a retrospective glance over the evolution of the American economy since the great 1929-1933 crisis, the following instructive observations can be made:

That crisis was genuinely overcome in reality only in and by the war. There was a new relapse in 1937-1938 that lasted until 1941, the United States in 1940 still numbering more than 10 million unemployed.

Thanks to the enormous needs and destructions caused by the war, the American economy, stimulated by the extraordinary wartime budgetary expenditures, could make an upsurge that lasted till about 1948.

At that period already it appeared to be winded. And since then a cyclical depression-boom-depression rhythm has been set up, which is characterized by the tendency of the depressions to get deeper and last longer, and the periods of boom to get shorter. This permits us to conclude that the present depression, once *stabilized* at whatever level, and then *surmounted*, would be followed, after a relatively briefer lapse of time than in the past, by a new economic falling-off.

Another conclusion, under these conditions, is that the advance, at an uninterrupted rhythm, of the economic development of the USSR and the other workers' states has in fact become irreversible and that the gap between the Soviet economy and the American economy will be bridged in the coming years, and faster than had been thought.

Now let us examine the probable repercussions of the American recession on the rest of capitalist economy.

For the moment, these repercussions are particularly felt in raw-material producing countries whose dollar reserves are already low. But soon, in case of a diminution of American imports, all industrial countries which in these last years have seen their exports to the United States increase might be affected by the aggravation of the dollar deficit. There might thus be an interaction among the three exchange zones, raw-material producing countries, the United States, and European industrial countries and Japan, operating in the direction of a contraction in world trade, an aggravation of the dollar deficit, an exhaustion of reserves, and a still greater slowing down of the growth of production.

Then the recession reaching Europe and Japan would have repercussions on the United States, aggravating its own recession.

This process is already under way.

The underdeveloped countries of Latin America

and Asia are experiencing grave financial difficulties which are causing a restriction of their imports of industrial products. The growth of production in European countries, with the exception of France, is continuing to slow down, while their deficits in both dollars and marks are increasing. Japan, closely dependent on trade with the United States and the countries of Southeast Asia, has already been affected by the recession. This threatens to be the case soon in Europe, first in England—where the signs of recession are already apparent—later in Germany, as well as in France, Italy, and other industrial countries.

It can be foreseen that the rebound of the situation created by the development already reached by the recession in the United States will inevitably be felt, in varying degrees, toward the end of the present year, by all European countries and by world trade as a whole.

The United States has two ways of facing up to this situation, whose political consequences, disastrous for capitalism in general, cannot be minimized: either to try, as it were, to export its own crisis by limiting its imports and concentrating all its efforts on an increase in its exports (at present in a notable slump for several months already), or else to promote a vast "Marshall Plan" on the international scale in order to support world trade, threatened with asphyxiation for lack of dollars.

In reality, both for internal reasons which depend on the proof that the US market is at present relatively saturated (compared to the productive capacity of American industries) and for reasons of the survival of capitalism, the only real means the United States has at its disposal for getting out of the present crisis without definitively resorting to war, is such a "Marshall Plan."

The hour of choice for the United States must not be put off very much longer.

The present recession which threatens to involve the whole of the capitalist world is taking place under exceptional historical conditions, in the face of an important sector of the globe where a stultified and planified economy is being built.

The decisive test between the two systems, including on the economic plane, has already begun. It is plain that if the recession reached the whole of the capitalist world and deepened, it would create a revolutionary situation, including in the European industrial countries, which would threaten to complete the final defeat of capitalism without a battle, as it were.

This recession is already an important psychological defeat for capitalism because it destroys the illusions, created by the boom, of a capitalism which from then on would supposedly flourish and had overcome the crises of the past. And because it also forces comparisons, disastrous for capitalism, with the uninterrupted development of the USSR and the

workers' states, and their spectacular achievements in certain fields of vanguard industry such as inter-planetary rockets.

It is difficult to admit that capitalism, and in the first place U S capitalism, would stand passively by at such an ordeal. For the moment its reactions are not in the direction of promoting such a "Marshall Plan" but rather of an increased preparation of atomic war by generalizing the atomic armament of the NATO nations and Japan. Other measures, such as the unification of military command in the United States, as the recommendations of the Rockefeller Commission sketched out, lead in the same direction.

But at the same time the positions of capitalism become daily more vulnerable, thanks to the diplomatic initiatives of the USSR, to the extension of the colonial revolution, and to the reactions of the masses in several important countries like England and Germany.

The USSR's decision for unilateral suspension of atomic arms tests strengthens everywhere the mass movements begun in England and Germany for *unilateral atomic disarmament*.

Beginning with that, a more effective fight can be engaged in against the manufacture of atomic weapons, for the destruction of present stocks thereof, against atomic bases and launching ramps, under international workers' control.

The colonial revolution, on its side, continues to advance. In Indonesia, imperialism must soon decide on a more serious intervention on the side of the rebels if it wants to avoid a defeat that would bring about a new upsurge of the Indonesian revolution. Such an intervention is, naturally, not wholly excluded, but in that case it would surely provoke a parallel intervention on the part of China, backed up by the USSR.

The economic situation in the United States may push Washington, in the absence of a major war, into

looking for a new "War of Korea," and in this case the Indonesian archipelago is naturally quite indicated.

American imperialism, based on Bourgiba and the King of Morocco, is at present trying, in alliance with the fraction of the French bourgeoisie that has been won over to the idea of a Franco-African Federation, to force the F L N to agree to such a solution, with Algeria winning only autonomy within the framework of such a structure. This would offer imperialism the advantage of avoiding contamination by "Nasserism" of at least part of the Arab world.

The sealing-off of the Tunisi-Algerian frontier by UNO troops, toward which the "good offices" are heading, would be obviously only a measure aiming at breaking down the present "intransigence" of the F L N, a major obstacle for "a solution" in Algeria.

In Latin America, finally, after the victory of Frondizi in Argentina, after the failure of the Siles offensive against the miners in Bolivia, and after the popular victories brought off in Colombia and Venezuela, it is the turn for the Cuban Batista, Washington's straw-man, to yield to the growing popular revolution.

In Europe itself, another bastion of Washington is once more showing signs of a crisis which may not take too long to bring, in one form or another, the end of the dictatorship : Franco Spain.

Thus there are being created, amid the recession which little by little is enveloping the capitalist world, conditions and situations that are eminently favorable for new victories capable of further isolating and weakening American imperialism.

In the United States itself a prolonged recession threatens to create a new situation in the labor movement, and not only in its trade unions. Propaganda for a third party, a labor party based on the trade unions, may in this new conjuncture reach this time a victorious conclusion.

Editorial Notes

AGAINST ATOMIC WEAPONS ; FOR UNILATERAL ATOMIC DISARMAMENT

Important advances in public opinion have taken place in England and are also beginning in Germany. Pronouncements have been made against the manufacture and stocking of atomic weapons, against tests thereof, against the building of launching ramps, and against flights of planes carrying atomic arms.

Their logical conclusion is *unilateral and unconditional atomic disarmament*, ie, disarmament independently of the policy of other nations in this field,

independently of a coming "summit" conference and its possible results.

That is the meaning —eminently progressive, moreover— of these movements, which there is a tendency to qualify as "pacifist."

But this "pacifist" defeatism, under present conditions, when what is in question is the preparation of a war by imperialism against the workers' states and against revolution in all its forms, has a progressive

content to which it is necessary unhesitatingly to give *critical support*. In two directions: if these movements are to come to something, they must be given a backbone, constituted by the organized labor movement, both political and trade-unionist, raising the struggle to the level of continuous mass actions, constantly broader and more determined; these struggles must be lighted by the perspective of a *workers' and peasants' government*, the only one able both to guarantee the victory of the movement and effectively to face up to the "danger" of a "Soviet occupation" resulting from "atomic" non-resistance to an eventual "aggression" of the USSR.

Let us explain these points further:

In both England and Germany, the spearhead of the movement consists, not of the official leaderships of the workers' parties and the trade unions, but of sectors of the rank and file, of public opinion, and of figures who represent genuine "integral pacifism" in the face of atomic weapons: *unilateral atomic disarmament*.

On the other hand the leaderships, whether of the Labour Party or of the SPD, subjected to the pressure of "pacifist" opinion among their rank and file, have been forced to put themselves at the head of the movement, while trying to castrate it by considerations of a disarmament postponed till after, and conditional upon the results of, the "summit conference," etc. They moreover want to channel the movement into harmless forms of "pacifist" struggle, referenda, meetings, signature campaigns, which take the edge off the masses' fighting spirit and threaten them with an ordeal of attrition and lassitude.

That is why it is necessary to organize a movement at the base, both in the so-called workers' parties and in the trade unions, and, in alliance with any "integral pacifist" movement and with any public figure — eg, men like Canon Collins, Bertrand Russell or Stephen King-Hall — to construct a national network of committees for *immediate unilateral atomic disarmament*, which will fight tirelessly and in every form till victory.

Basing themselves on such a broad and combative movement, the left tendencies in the parties and trade unions will have a greater chance of maintaining an increased pressure on the leaderships to make them shift their policy to positions of "integral atomic pacifism," and to struggle effectively to impose these positions.

The immense danger of atomic war hangs over a

humanity ruled by capitalist cliques who are at bay and therefore capable of the worst irresponsibilities, the worst madresses.

Far from being awed by the prospect of such a war, these cliques never stop arming and extending atomic armament. The question of the manufacture of atomic arms, of the installation of launching ramps, of planes carrying atomic bombs, is being raised in country after country of the NATO. In its turn, Adenauer's Germany has just decided in favor of possessing atomic weapons and launching ramps.

To minimize in any way this danger is to blind oneself to the immensely catastrophic fatal outcome of such a race by men who are unrestrained, irresponsible, and devoid of perspectives.

We must base ourselves on the sectors of public opinion which are alert to these dangers in order to build a powerful movement constantly struggling against atomic catastrophe. Naturally, this struggle can have a chance to succeed only if it is more and more carried on by broad and determined forms of mass action — marches, strikes, national mass protests — and ends up with the installation of a workers' government.

Such a government would be a guarantee of both the success of the struggle for *unilateral atomic disarmament* and against a possible "Soviet occupation." For a workers' government, setting up a genuine regime of democratic socialism in an advanced European country, would enormously hasten the crisis of the Soviet bureaucracy and eliminate any danger of seeing Stalinist or neo-Stalinist bureaucratism spread and consolidate itself internationally.

The revolutionary Marxist tendencies integrated in the mass movement have the duty to understand thoroughly the eminently progressive character of this "pacifist defeatism," which, in the face of atomic dangers, is appearing in broad mass currents, and the duty to bring it all possible support by the organized workers' movement, to raise it to higher forms of mass action, to light its path by the perspective of a workers' government applying a democratic socialist programme, and to prevent the movement, as a result of manoeuvres by the opportunist and capitulationist leaderships, from bogging down in formal demonstrations and thus wearing out and disappointing the masses.

This is a combat of capital importance, that it is possible and necessary to win.

CONTINUED CRISIS IN FRANCE

The prolongation of the counter-revolutionary war in Algeria and the policy of the traditional workers' leaderships have brought about a deterioration of the situation in France, which is being exploited by reaction.

This war is costing the French budget some 2,000 million francs [about \$ 4,760,000] a day : it uses half a million drafted men; it has provoked the rupture of diplomatic relations with Tunisia and created problematical relations with Morocco ; it feeds a ferment in

the other French colonies in Africa. And what hopes can French capitalism have?

A victory by means of ferocious repression has proved impossible: in three years the Algerian Army of National Liberation has grown stronger and the Algerian people firmer than ever in its will to independence. The United States and the other Atlantic allies of France, moreover, cannot accept this solution, which would definitively cut off any hopes of influence among the Arab peoples.

There remains a federative solution—still unclear in its modalities—toward which a growing part of French capitalism is turning. But the transition to such a solution offers difficulties. First of all, the FLN [National Liberation Front] is not at present disposed to accept it; and even if it were, it is not sure that it could get the Algerians to accept it. Besides, the Lacoste policy has generated, among the Europeans (civilians or military men) living in Algeria, forces ready for anything to oppose any other solution than "French Algeria."

Several bye-elections in France have shown that the Algerian war is in the forefront of people's worries, and that a polarization is taking place in the country. But while on the left that is translated only by an increase in votes for the Communist Party, on the right it is being shown by increased agitation, a greater arrogance on the part of reaction, and demonstrations by fascist gangs. For all these people, if the situation in Algeria is not solved, it is because of "traitors" in France.

They are aided by the government, which is using repression against those who show opposition to the war in Algeria or who are merely rendered indignant by the methods of torture employed therein. After that, it was no surprise to see a fascisizing and antiparliamentary demonstration by part of the Paris police.

Parliament reflects current impotence; the government is completely immobilized. And so currents for setting up a «strong state» are being reënforced. More and more there are to be heard appeals to a providential man, de Gaulle—who remains more silent than the Sphinx, thus feeding the hopes in him felt by both the advocates of war to the bitter end and the advocates of a negotiated federative solution.

But this recourse to a strong-man runs up against considerable resistance in parliamentary circles, both on the right from the Independents and on the left from the Socialists—the Guy Mollet leadership fearing that such an eventuality would be, once more in French history, the whip-crack from the right which would awaken the popular masses and bring about a revolutionary situation. For the moment, both sides are seeking solutions in parliamentary tricks.

The result is that the present situation is marked by a growing decomposition. How long this can go on, it is difficult to estimate.

The working class has been bewildered on the political plane by the attitude of the workers' leaderships after the 2 January 1956 elections. And on this plane, apathy continues to hold sway. But on the economic plane, the situation is not quite the same. Many categories of workers are demanding wage raises, all the more so in that the rise in the cost of living has been much felt, especially since the summer of 1957. But these movements are still limited. That results from two facts. On the one hand, certain categories of the working class (including vanguard sectors like the metal-workers) have experienced a certain improvement during the years of prosperity—and France is not yet feeling the effects of the recession in the United States. On the other hand, the trade-union organizations are putting forward only mediocre demands which cannot build up any drive.

This general situation is not unfavorable for the development of a spirit of criticism in the workers' organizations—indeed, quite the contrary.

In the Socialist Party, that is expressed in the form of a politically timorous opposition that Guy Mollet is terrorizing. It suffices to say that most of its leaders formerly belonged to Blum's staff. It is not excluded that, at a given moment, Guy Mollet himself may make a turn, for example by sacrificing a Lacoste.

Greater shirking of issues by the CP leadership has rarely been seen. On the question of the war in Algeria, it does not do anything, it does not want to do anything, it leaves things in the hands of the Peace Movement, which is careful not to go beyond verbal protests and systematically eliminates the slogan of Independence for Algeria. The French CP leadership during these past months has always defended its March 1956 vote in favor of the special powers, powers which put in the saddle the present regime in Algeria. This leadership has made a lot more noise against the "German" General Speidel than against the French General Massu, commander of the parachutists. It also gives more importance to the question of the launching ramps, without however dreaming of doing anything more than getting petitions signed—a campaign that no longer finds an echo, as was the case with the Stockholm Appeal.

The general policy of the French CP leadership has been carried out with the keynote of bringing about a "compromise on the left." The very latest session of the Central Committee (March) even put forward again the slogan of the Popular Front. The French CP leadership is trying to use the growing worry about the demonstrations by reactionary groups to win over a wing of the bourgeoisie to this idea. But since there is no wing of the bourgeoisie that is now disposed to go along with this policy, the CC reporter addressed this bourgeois left in a cynical way. You are afraid because we are stronger than in 1936, he said to them, and you perhaps require guarantees that we should not profit by the situation in order to make a "Popu-

lar Democracy"? As for guarantees, haven't you the best of them in our past? It is not we who, in 1936 and 1946, broke the contract. On the contrary, we were the ones who put an end to the strikes, who persuaded the workers to give up their militias... And we will act in the future as we have done in the past.

Despite such promises, the left bourgeois are not at all disposed to answer favorably, and the SP leadership has erected the strictest barrier against any idea of CP-SP joint action. These gentlemen are well aware that the Thorez leadership has been very loyal on two occasions and that they need have no doubt concerning its intentions to remain loyal in the future; but they are not sure that a new mass movement, once set going, could in the future be controlled by the French CP leadership.

And the bourgeois are still hoping today—in view of the lack of action by the workers' movement—to find a solution by the use of small-scale measures, by minimizing social clashes as much as possible.

The worsening of the situation in France is going in the opposite direction to developments elsewhere in the world, including in the majority of neighboring European countries. But it can very well continue for some time; the aggravation of the difficulties in

Algeria, the exhaustion of the Monnet loans, and the repercussions of the American recession may contribute to a change in the situation and stir the working-class masses to much more widespread actions than those of today, but that does not appear probable in the immediate future.

Nevertheless, despite this negative aspect, the present situation in France has not led to any decomposition of the workers' movement, the class has not suffered any decisive defeats, and we are witnessing a deepening of the crisis in the Stalinist leadership. Its authority, its relations with the ranks and with the working class in general, have undergone a deep and irreversible deterioration. A critical frame of mind is developing in the French CP and in the CGT. The revolutionary programme has a broader audience than in the past; the French section of the Fourth International is in a period of considerable recruiting. Capitalist France has not yet ended its decline, but this situation is also a situation of preparation of a vanguard for the next stage, when the workers' movement will be forced to take action.

(As we go to press, the continuing crisis reaches its next higher pitch with the fall of the Gaillard government.)

THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE LEAGUE OF JUGOSLAV COMMUNISTS

The VIIIth Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists will be held in Liubliana in the second half of April. It will be within two months of celebrating the tenth anniversary of the break with Stalin and the Kominform. What events have occurred since then!—the blockade of Yugoslavia by the URSS, the Korean War, Stalin's death, Khrushchev's trip to Belgrade and Tito's to Moscow, the XXth Congress, the events in Poland and Hungary, the expulsion and arrest of Djilas, etc...

For the Congress the Central Committee has prepared a draft programme which has appeared abroad only in a succinct resumé in French. But, less than two months before this congress, the CC of the LJC has sent a "letter to all the organizations and leading organisms" of this league which casts a glaring light upon it:

Decentralization does not of itself exclude bureaucratism. [...] Many communists and even leaders hold technocratic views concerning social and political questions. [...] In many plants [...] decisions are made arbitrarily [...] criticism is stifled. There are cases where workers who put forward criticisms are transferred from place to place or even fired. [...] Some of our leading comrades sometimes become indifferent to people's lives, to the workers' needs. [...] There must be noted a growth of the material privi-

leges of individuals in this last time. [...] It is generally thought that different affairs [...] can be more easily speeded up by means of "pull" and protection. [...] Grave irregularities have occurred in the distribution of bonuses, which have had harmful political repercussions. [...] Strong particularist tendencies are appearing [...] often take on nationalist and even chauvinist forms as a result of the fact that communists and often also the leading members of the League of Communists [...] sometimes fall under the influence of the remains of petty-bourgeois and nationalist intellectuals and thus themselves engage in the same nationalist and chauvinist excesses. [...] The trade-union leaderships keep their eye on what is above them. [...] The discipline and responsibility of certain communists and often also of leaders have lessened.

This letter appears on reading to be a genuine cry of alarm. It reveals an advanced decomposition, reaching "certain communists and often leaders"—everyone knows what that means. The phenomenon is not entirely recent. Already a few years ago, Djilas, at the moment when he was carrying out his break with the leading staff of Yugoslavia, had pointed out the same thing. Djilas, politically disoriented, sought the cause of this phenomenon in the "ideas" of Marx and Lenin. The very descriptive letter of the CC

concludes with organizational proposals ("regular and systematic work by the leading organisms," "constant consolidation of discipline and responsibility," "improvement in the activity of the trade unions"...), but nowise seeks the deeper causes of this phenomenon. Now if this is not done, the words discipline, responsibility, activity, etc. have no magical value, and the phenomenon will continue and even grow accentuated.

There is no doubt but that ten years earlier the Yugoslav CP—and not only its leadership—showed a remarkable strength and cohesion in the face of the assault by Stalin and the Kominform. The leadership could hold on because it had behind it a party full of ardor, proud of the revolutionary fight and the victory that it had won over the former ruling classes. This party was nowise impressed by the floods of Stalinist calumnies, or by the difficulties generated by the blockade. For the Yugoslav communists, it was then a new battle which had as its goal the defense, against an unexpected assailant, of those conquests that it had obtained by such great sacrifices.

How is it to be explained that this same party, ten years later, is showing the manifestations of decomposition that the letter of the leadership reveals?

In a general way this party, like any party that has come to power, has undergone what Rakovsky called the "transformations of power." Nevertheless, the Yugoslav experience was not the same as that of the CP of the USSR. The bureaucratic danger was explained and shown up by the very example of Stalinism. The Yugoslav leadership itself undertook decentralization as the best (it thought) method to fight against bureaucratism.

The danger of decomposition has objective sources, above all it the backwardness of the country; but, if it reached such a scope, it is because, to a great degree, the policy of the Yugoslav leadership contributed to it, even if against its will.

In fact, decentralization was only an *organizational* measure, just like the measures proposed today that we pointed out above. But what have we witnessed *politically* on the part of this leadership?

It has made great theoretical political zigzags, without really explaining things thoroughly, without engaging in criticism of its behavior in previous stages, acting in a completely pragmatic way, and showing itself all the more self-satisfied in that it has, in the question of relations with East and West, succeeded in staying on the tightrope. Let us recall that for a certain time just after the break, it declared its attachment for the USSR, then it denounced the existence of "state capitalism" in the USSR, and then again it found that the USSR was a workers' state.

On the question of Hungary, after having had a courageous attitude that stood out in contrast to the leaderships of the other CPs, disoriented or accomplices of the Kremlin, it made a *de facto* alignment

with them to pass the eraser over everything. There should also not be forgotten the way that it drew very close to the United States, to the extent that it was led to vote for United Nations intervention in Korea.

Furthermore, its proletarian internationalism has been limited to conversations at the top with leaders of CPs or of Socialist Parties, while the militants of the LJC were oriented only on the development of the Yugoslav economy.

Lastly, the leadership of the LJC, though it has had a less rigid attitude than the Stalinists on the question of the party, has been basically just as hostile as they to democratic centralism. A political discussion would have permitted beating Djilas without difficulty; but the Yugoslav leadership used state repression on him. Towards the party rank and file the leadership has shown itself to be paternalistic, and it continues to be so in this letter. It gives lessons in morality but dodges the political basis of everything. If it were necessary to show the way in which the leadership dodges its responsibilities, it is enough to mention its declaration that leading members are engaging in chauvinist excesses... under the influences of remains of petty-bourgeois and nationalist intellectuals: that is an "explanation" simply repeated from the Stalinists.

The objective situation of an economically backward country, and the everyday tasks, operate in a way favorable to bureaucratism and empiricism. Against that, it is possible to react only by an intense political life. The attitude of the LJC leadership, subordinating the life of the party to the higher interests of the state, not allowing party militants to discuss the policy of the party and the state, but only the tasks in a community or an enterprise—must have contributed considerably to demoralizing the rank and file. In the absence of broad political views, in the absence of great objectives democratically decided on, many become bureaucratized, grow concerned with their own positions, get morally degraded.

A broad political life is absolutely incompatible with the monopoly of a sole and monolithic party. The best organizational measures cannot replace socialist democracy, that which allows each worker to state his opinion not only on the immediate problems in his plant but on the general policy which determines the framework of the state and the economy. The Yugoslav leadership broke with the Stalinists and post-Stalinists on a series of important problems, but not on that decisive problem. And that is why there is needed, in Yugoslavia as in the other workers' states, a revolutionary Marxist left wing, to separate itself out in the struggle for a genuine workers' democracy, including the right to a plurality of workers' parties and tendencies. It is only in this way that it is possible to fight effectively against the phenomena of bureaucratization and decomposition generated by the effects of the seizure of power.

THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOLIVIAN REVOLUTION

For six years now the worker and peasant masses of Bolivia, a country of a small population, have been carrying on an admirable combat to defend their revolutionary conquests and to complete them by installing a genuine workers' government.

These conquests are: the nationalization of the mines, the confiscation of certain lands and the beginning of forced agrarian reform, trade unions in a united federation, the COB, and workers' and peasants' militias.

The weak native bourgeoisie, backed by American imperialism—which covets the country's mining and oil resources and fears the contagious example that Bolivia offers to all Latin America—has not up till now succeeded in breaking the unconquerable revolutionary energy and drive of the Bolivian masses. Thanks to the cowardice of the official left, led by Lechin Torres and C^o, which still controls the unions and brings their support to the MNR, the party in office, the bourgeoisie has marked up serious points, which threaten the revolution's future. All the more so in that the only revolutionary party, the POR (section of the Fourth International) has not yet been able to give organizational form to the forces needed to guarantee the masses' victory.

Exploiting these weaknesses, the bourgeoisie has been able to transfer the power from Paz Estenssoro, leader of the "left" wing of the MNR, to Siles Suazo, leader of the right wing. Siles, in his turn, trying to apply the programme of capitalist "stabilization" required by the experts of Yankee imperialism, and consequently to break the resistances of the masses, has been led to lean more and more on extreme-right elements like Quadros Quiroga, Ocampo, and even on fascist and proto-fascist forces.

The latest developments along these lines led the Siles government to resort to a new trial of strength with the masses. It all began by a government provocation against the miners, vanguard of the resistance of the Bolivian masses, who in these last months had just openly broken (1) with the MNR and its government.

On the pretext that an armed attack had occurred on March 5th in the mining centres, Uncía and Llallagua, led by "Trots-Cobist" elements, as the official press calls the de facto alliance between the POR and the revolutionary cadres of the COB unions—an intervention which supposedly ended up with the dismissal from office of the governmental authorities—Siles proceeded to a series of arrests and other reactionary measures. Their purpose was in reality to decapitate the organizations of the miners and of the workers of the La Paz factories of their revolutionary elements and to replace them by the government's straw-men, "reconstructors" of the trade-union movement.

Among the men arrested were: the miners' leader, Sinofrio Cabrera; the secretary-general of the POR, Comrade González Moscoso; Comrade Víctor Villegas, member of the POR's Political Bureau; some leaders of the Bolivian CP, and Comrade Guillermo Lora, publisher of the organ *Masas*. The order was furthermore given to extend the arrests to a whole series of miners' leaders of Catavi and Siglo XX, to reorganize the mines, and to liquidate the workers' representatives.

Without waiting for the centrist leaders of the Miners' Federation and of the COB to take action, the masses of

miners immediately reacted by launching a strike and by taking over complete control in reality of all the mining centres.

Lechin and Torres were in favor of a staggered strike, each mine striking for one day with the goal of obtaining the freedom of the trade-union leaders and defending already won trade-union rights.

Notwithstanding, the masses soon went beyond these instructions, making general an unlimited strike in all the mining centres, disarming the military forces sent by the government or shutting them up in their barracks under the guard of their own militias. In certain places, hunger strikes, with the participation of miners' wives, were launched.

The Catavi and San José radio stations in the miners' hands broadcast continuously, urging on the miners' struggle and calling on the workers of La Paz and other urban centres to join them. It is in this way that it was possible to set up a practical alliance between the miners and the factory-workers and the railwaymen of La Paz and Oruro.

The aggressive fighting spirit of the miners was such that Siles was once more forced to slow down his offensive, to free the arrested union leaders, and to temporize about his anti-union projects.

For all that, the trial of strength is not over. Siles is obliged to try to split the trade-union movement and to break up what the press calls the "Trots-Cob conspiracy," ie, the fusion that is being carried out between the POR and the revolutionary elements of the working class.

The role of the POR in these events was very important, its militants being at the heart of the combats and of the most daring initiatives of the masses. The POR launched the slogan of a general strike of the whole proletariat of the country, led by a united-front committee, and the mobilization of the workers' and peasants' militias in defense of the masses' revolutionary gains. It furthermore proposed the creation of a revolutionary front of the trade unions and of all the workers' parties so as to fight for the calling of a special congress of the COB, in which there should be discussed and settled all questions, including that of a workers' government.

We must follow with attention the next developments in Bolivia. The duality of power which has been existing in latent form since April 1952 has in this last time taken on a more accentuated open form, for the mining centres of the country are in reality under almost exclusively workers' control, and their organizations have reached a de facto rupture with the Siles government.

The revolutionary front of the trade unions, the POR, and the CP must not delay in getting itself established and in convoking the special congress of the COB in that part of the country where the workers have de facto control.

It would thus be easier to find out what must be the effective riposte on the governmental plane to the continual provocations of a government more and more cut off and isolated from the masses.

It is, furthermore, plain that it is necessary to avoid a division, in the organization and in the struggle, between the miners, and the factory-workers and railwaymen, as well as between the proletariat as a whole and the peasants. It is on such divisions that the reaction is currently speculating in order to push its offensive.

But the best answer to these plans, the best stimulant for a genuine unity of the masses, is at present a *resolute action for a workers' and peasants' government*.

(1) Consult the article by H Lucero in the January 1958 Quatrième Internationale.

THE NEW REFORM IN SOVIET AGRICULTURE

By ERNEST GERMAIN

"We were in an impasse with agriculture."

—Khrushchev interview with *The Times*, 1 February 1958

THE IMPASSE IN SOVIET AGRICULTURE

It is a genuine new reform in Soviet agriculture that Khrushchev announced in his Minsk speech on 22 January 1958. The sale of tractors and farm machinery to the kolkhozes constitutes its main feature. It can be judged at its exact value, from the viewpoint of the immediate interests of the Soviet proletariat and from that of the socialist future of the USSR, only if we start with the realistic observation placed as an epigraph at the head of this article : Soviet agriculture is in an impasse. For just as much as industrial statistics demonstrate the upsurge of industry and culture despite the brake represented by bureaucratic administration of the economy and the state, just so much does the balance-sheet of 40 years of Soviet agriculture show a crashing failure.

Does anyone want figures to confirm this severe verdict ? In 1913 Czarist Russia produced 80 million metric tons (1) of grains ; in 1950 there were produced only 84 million, for a population that had increased by 20 %. In 1954 production was still under 90 million tons, i e, a per capita production less than that of 1913 !

In 1913 Russian livestock was composed of 61 million cattle ; in 1953, for a population that had increased by more than 20 %, there were only 57 million cattle. And even in 1956, bovine livestock of only 70.4 million, or less beef on the hoof per capita than under the Czarist regime.

Khrushchev launched the immense movement for plowing up virgin land ; the surface sown was increased to 35 million hectares (2), more than a million persons were moved, and hundreds of thousands of tractors were constructed. Grain production, in 1957, however, reached only 105 million tons, i e, the same figure as that of 1955 (the year 1956 appears to have been exceptional). As the first secretary himself recognized in his Minsk speech, the average of the 1954-57 harvests is only 27% higher than the 1950-53 average. And that 1950-53 average oscillated around the average of the last years of Czarism. That is to say that, despite an enormous mechanization, the currently achieved increase in grain production is just barely proportional to the growth in Soviet population from 1913 to 1957, which is, precisely, 27%.

(1) One metric ton equals 2,205 pounds ; for approximation in tons, add a tenth. [Ed.]

(2) One hectare equals 2.47 acres ; for approximation, multiply by 2 1/2. [Ed.]

The immediate cause of this stagnation is not difficult to find. The present USSR Minister of Agriculture, Maskievitch, undertook a trip to the United States that revealed to him that American farm labor consists of one worker for each 50 hectares of arable land. This datum was published in the USSR and produced an immense sensation there (see the Soviet review *Oktjabr*, n° 11, 1957). It is because in the USSR it is notorious that agriculture lacks manpower, in spite of the use of ten workers (men and women) per 50 hectares (calculations of M V Nemtchinov in *Planovoié Khoshiäistvo*, n° 4, 1955, and of the Report of the Economic Commission for Europe : *Study on the Economic Situation of Europe in 1956*, chap. I, p. 32). The productivity of agricultural labor in the USSR thus seems to be ten times less than that of the United States, even on the basis of assuming an equal output per hectare in the two countries, which is hardly the case.

The ultimate cause of this low labor productivity lies in the peasantry's refusal to make the effort, which is the Soviet peasants' answer to the criminal way in which the forced collectivization of agriculture was carried out. Instead of the peasant being won over to collectivization by the demonstration of superior output and income, he was obliged to enter a kolkhoz at the cost of terrible material sacrifices. The peasants' vengeance has lain like a curse on 25 years of Soviet history. The price policy of the Stalinist era only hardened the peasant in this attitude.

It was, furthermore, not a question of a purely psychological reaction. During the greater part of that quarter-century, the kolkhoz peasant obtained from his miserable little patch of private ground, which on the average scarcely exceeded four-tenths of a hectare, an income that was relatively far greater than that afforded him by work in the kolkhoz. Even in absolute figures, the income in kind and in money derived from the private patch of land often equaled and even surpassed that of work in the kolkhoz. Is it surprising, then, that the peasant—who was neither a declared advocate of "Bolshevism" cooked up à la Stalin or Khrushchev, nor an altruist burning with a mystical love for coöperative property—should have systematically tried to cut down his labor on the kolkhoz lands ?

At the moment of Stalin's death, the impasse had become plain. The second industrial power in the world could not even guarantee its inhabitants their daily bread, not to mention butter and meat. Stalin's

successors sought all possible solutions for remedying this situation. They began by considerably increasing the price that the state pays for obligatory or voluntary deliveries of agricultural products by the kolkhozes. They aided private and kolkhozian stock-breeding. They reduced taxes on the private income of kolkhoz members. They tried at the same time to force the peasant to work more in the kolkhoz by threatening to suppress his little private plot of ground if he did not achieve a minimum norm (Decree of 10 March 1956). They tried to "get around the peasantry" by developing vast "grain factories" in the form of sovkhoses on the virgin lands of Asia. The results of all these measures seem disproportionate to the effort undertaken.

Though certain superficial observers believe that Khrushchev's undertakings have been systematically surrounded by a halo of success, an attentive reading during these last years of press cuttings concerning this noisy character produces a much more equivocal impression. Not to mention the famous project of "agrovilles," dropped without fuss in 1951, it seems that the "Indian corn campaign" scarcely arouses any longer the enthusiasm of specialists. The virgin lands also are not treated as the panacea that they represented two years ago; the bad harvest of 1957 had something to do with that. As for the cotton-growing projects that Khrushchev developed with great volubility in 1954, they have failed lamentably. The production of raw cotton in Uzbekistan in 1957 reached only 2.75 million tons, whereas in the course of the Sixth Five-Year Plan 4.2 million tons of cotton had been foreseen for this republic in 1958, a goal which has meanwhile been reduced to 3 million tons (this is the goal originally set for 1955).

THE MTS IN THE SOVIET ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE

The state tractor and farm-machinery stations (MTS) for a long time were fulfilling a triple role. Owners of the great means of agricultural production, they were the essential link which bound the agricultural sector, non-statified, to the sector of the national economy. As a result of their monopoly, the tractors put at the disposal of agriculture remained outside the production and circulation of commodities. At the same time they guaranteed the state a considerable part of agricultural market production, as payment in kind for services rendered the kolkhozes. They were, lastly, the instrument of political control of the state over the villages, where they represented both the worker element and the bureaucrat element, as opposed to the peasantry properly so called.

It is unquestionable that this role, empirically attributed to the MTS by Stalin, was not without its multiple wastes and losses. The 19 February 1950 *Pravda* informed us that the MTS tractors were idle an average

30% of the time in the typical region of Kursk. At the time that the campaign in favor of the latest Khrushchevian reform was launched, the newspapers presented other figures, still more eloquent. The fact that many MTS had to serve several kolkhozes at once disorganized the work in the fields. Often the tractors were not ready at the most opportune moment for the harvest, which caused delays and losses.

The article quoted above from the review *Oktjabr* reports that in many MTS the tractors were "stored" (if it may be so called) in the open for ten months out of the year, and exposed to rapid wear under the rain and snow! The "mechanical revision" — oh sanctified bureaucracy! — was in fact planned only for the eve of harvest. The MTS have a very cumbersome bureaucratic apparatus, which weighs heavily on the production price of the grain that they receive as payment in kind for their services. In fact, according to Khrushchev's Minsk speech, the wheat thus received cost the Soviet state 60% dearer than the wheat furnished obligatorily by the kolkhozes, and 150% dearer than the wheat obtained from the sovkhoses.

That is why the idea of transferring the tractors and farm machines to the kolkhozes themselves has been brought up on many occasions in the past. It is known that Stalin, in his last book (*Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*), polemicized on the subject with two economists, Sanina and Wenger. The article by Ivan Vinnitchenko in the review *Oktjabr*, that we have already several times quoted, notes that Wenger did not lay down his arms. It relates an extremely interesting conversation that the author had with Wenger that shows that that theoretician is a genuine fanatic on the principle of "rousing the material interests of the peasant" for the increase of production. Doubtless other technicians and economists specializing in farm problems have systematically defended the same ideas as Wenger.

But it is interesting to report that the idea of the sale of the tractors to the kolkhozes was raised not only by theoreticians. The German publication *Deutsche Zeitung und Wirtschaftszeitung*, a serious organ of the capitalists of South Germany, reports in its issue of 1 February 1958 that agrarian experts of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR relate the following anecdote, according to which, on the occasion of a big reception at the Kremlin in 1955, Lyskin, president of the famous and very rich "Rossia" Kolkhoz of Kuban, spoke to Khrushchev in these terms:

"Well, Nikita Sergeïevitch, when are you going to sell me [!] the MTS that provides the tools of labor for our kolkhoz? I [!] offer you 15 million rubles for it. Think hard, Nikita Sergeïevitch; next year I'll no longer pay you so big a sum."

In fact, it seems, Lyskin named himself [!] president of the MTS in question some months after the incident, and the Kremlin ratified a posteriori the measure taken.

THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE MINSK SPEECH

We do not believe that we are dealing here with an isolated incident. Many signs indicate that other presidents of rich kolkhozes acted in just as arbitrary a fashion as Lyskin.

It appears that, from the beginning of 1957 on, the Vygonitchi MTS (Briansk region) turned its tractors and machines over for a whole year to the "Leninski Putj" Kolkhoz (*Selskoié Khoshiaïstvo*, 9 January 1958). Several articles published in the October 1957 number of the review *Oktjabr* indicate that many kolkhozes had already bought tractors and farm machines in large numbers (especially the "Vladimir Ilyitch" Kolkhoz in the Moscow region, and the "Kranij Oktjabr" Kolkhoz in the Kirov region). The 10 December 1957 *Pravda* and the 16 August 1957 *Pravda Vostoka* reported that in other places MTS and kolkhozes had begun to fuse into sovkhoses. And the already quoted article of Vinnitchenko enumerates a certain number of variants of these reforms which had already been applied in various regions of the USSR. It notes at the same time that, in the region of Odessa for example, the richest kolkhozes *already own* a larger fleet of tractors of better quality than those of the MTS! It does not specify how these kolkhozes acquired these means of production, whose sale is forbidden by law and by special decrees!

It seems settled then that we have been witnessing a dual movement; discussion and experimentation of reforms within the leading bureaucracy and specialists in agronomy and political economy; and a "spontaneous" movement of acquisition by the richest kolkhozes in various regions of the country. The Minsk speech, far from having been the opening of a campaign, seems rather to constitute its finale. The very terms that it used ("There cannot be tolerated two masters on the same land") are taken literally from the speeches of presidents of rich kolkhozes and of "reformist" economists, reported by Vinnitchenko.

It must be noted, furthermore, that these "reformists" have remained very prudent about formulating general conclusions. They have generally limited themselves to preaching "the suppression of dualism of leadership between MTS and kolkhoz," or to advocating that "the tractors be put at the disposal of the kolkhozes." The question of ownership has often been passed over in silence; those who raise it do so in a restrictive fashion: "It is not necessary" to give the kolkhozes property rights over the tractors for them to have the possibility of their in fact having at their disposal the tools of labor, they say. One imprudent author even affirmed: "Since the state entrusts millions of hectares of land to the kolkhozes, why can it not entrust the tractors to them?" An imprudent question, especially at the moment when Nikita Khrushchev, disregarding theoretical considerations, is giving a right of ownership where a right of

use would have sufficed. Tomorrow, the question might be raised concerning the land itself...

THE GOAL OF THE REFORM: INCREASE IN PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY

Certain people have cast doubt on the character of a concession to the peasantry involved in the reform. In the 5 March 1958 *Manchester Guardian*, Victor Zorza even stated that the reform marks "the end of Khrushchev's honeymoon with the peasants." He bases himself on the purchasing price of the tractors to affirm that the suppression of the MTS will cost the kolkhozes dear. We shall return to this question farther on. But let us say right away that to approach the problem from this angle is to overlook the concrete conditions which frame the reform: viz, Khrushchev's struggle to increase the production and productivity of Soviet agriculture, or, as he himself likes to formulate it, "to catch up with and surpass American per capita production in milk and meat." To believe that this goal can be reached, after the partial failure of the campaign for plowing up the virgin lands, by *aggravating* the living and working conditions of the peasants, is to go clean outside the limits of possibility.

The Kremlin's desire for an increase in productivity and profitability is unquestionable. It is not by accident that Khrushchev in his theses quotes Lenin's formula: "The struggle for bread is the struggle for socialism." But it is also unquestionable, as the economist Wenger declared to Victor Vinnitchenko, that "peasants know how to count" (*Oktjabr*, n° 11, 1957). They know exactly what the annual renting of tractors from the MTS costs them. If the selling price of these tractors is such that it increases rather than lowers their costs of production, Khrushchev's reform would lead to a stagnation rather than a rise in productivity. It therefore cannot be a question of that.

Wenger is right to insist on the fact that the peasant knows how to figure. The introduction of exchange relations between the city and the country, between the state and the kolkhozes, based on a stricter application of real and not arbitrary prices, will in the long run aid the integration of Soviet agriculture in a socialist economic system. In this sense, the measure is progressive in its more general scope. But between long-term integration and the immediate repercussions of the reform, there is a gap that some people too easily stride over. It is, however, those repercussions that must be taken as a starting point in order to judge its concrete utility, that is, taking into account the special form in which it is presented.

To estimate the risks that the reform causes the planned economy to run, one must take as a starting point today's reality, and not future perspectives; at the most, one must complete the picture by an analysis of its dynamics, i e, of the probable evolution of the economy in the years to come.

Today's reality is that first of all agricultural production is and remains insufficient to satisfy the "growing needs" of the population. It is thus not a question, as some daring commentators suggest, of "bringing pressure on the selling price," i.e., refusing to buy production that is "too dear." In ten years one will no doubt be able to permit oneself this luxury, but not next year, or in two years either.

Today's reality is, next, that, with the present rate of accumulation of capital, within the framework of bureaucratic administration and its enormous unnecessary overhead, and with an arms race whose end nobody can even faintly discern, it is excluded that the state can provide the countryside with enough consumers' goods and "small" means of production (particularly building materials) at sufficiently low prices, to bring about a genuine revolution in the peasant's behavior. The day that he knows that, by doubling his *kolkhoz* production, he will be able for certain to acquire a little stone cottage in three years or a car in two, he will make an extraordinary effort. But on the scale of 30 millions of peasant households, that day is still far off.

Today's reality, finally, is *the growing inequality among kolkhozes and within kolkhozes*. In his Minsk speech Khrushchev gave the example of the "Komin-tern" *Kolkhoz* in the Mohilev sector, whose output was five times higher than the average of the sector, and six times higher than the average of the province. It must be supposed that its income is in the same proportions to the average of the *kolkhozes* of this region. Khrushchev sang the praises of K P Orlovski, president of the Ruthenian "Razviet" *Kolkhoz*, one of the "inspirers" of the reform (see his article in the review *Oktjabr*, n° 12, 1957). Now it is a question here of one of the richest *kolkhozes* in the country, which possesses 9,000 hectares of arable land (the Soviet average is a little higher than 1,000 hectares), and which has *increased* its income 17 million rubles within one year (the Soviet average is 350,000 rubles). As with the "Budjenny" *Kolkhoz* of the Odessa region, the "Gorki" *Kolkhoz* of the Moscow region, or the "Rossia" *Kolkhoz* of the Kuban, we here have genuine privileged élites, the "kulaks" among the *kolkhozes*. They can buy all the farm machines they need at one go, thanks to the liquid funds they have at their disposal.

MEANS OF PRODUCTION ARE AGAIN BECOMING COMMODITIES

But there are on the other hand some 40,000 small and medium-sized *kolkhozes*, with an average surface of 750 hectares under cultivation, with output and income often less than 20% and even 10% of those of the rich *kolkhozes*, for whom the purchase of tractors would mean a very heavy, and even unbearable, burden. The theses accepted by the Central Committee permit these *kolkhozes* to continue to rent tractors from the MTS during a transitional period. They

furthermore foresee the granting of low-cost credit. But during this whole period the inequality between the rich and poor *kolkhozes* will become accentuated.

Besides this, new juridical problems will be raised. If the tractors become the property of the *kolkhozes*, will they have the right in their turn to rent them out? Will they not be tempted to do so in order to get supplementary income, especially if they can offer their services at a low price since the amortization of their matériel has been carried out on their own current production? And at the time when this amortization will have been completed, and their tractors will "no longer have value," will they not be tempted to resell them to their poorer neighbors, since any price obtained represents a factual "profit"?

We still do not know whether the CC theses foresee safeguarding measures to avoid such an evolution. It seems that Khrushchev is counting above all on the presidents of the *kolkhozes* to brake such tendencies to the dissolution of certain planned tie-ups. It is true that for several years now the majority if not practically all of the *kolkhoz* presidents are members of the party, often come from the cities, who control the peasantry "from the inside" in a more effective way than the MTS did so "from the outside." But it would be wrong to trust the altruism of such presidents. Khrushchev talked a lot about the bureaucracy of the MTS which weighed on agricultural production. He forgot to say that, to the extent that the fleet of tractors and farm machines was transferred to the *kolkhozes*, the bureaucracy of the MTS would be there too, if not under the form of former MTS functionaries, then under the form of new administrators, accountants, and functionaries. Exactly in the same way that the famous decentralization — the Jugoslavs and the Russians now jointly admit it — ended up in a simple transfer of the bureaucracy from the centre toward the periphery, without lessening either their weight or their harmful role in the economy.

Now inequality within the *kolkhozes* grows proportionately to the growth of this *kolkhoz* bureaucracy. In the 7 January 1958 *Selskoié Khoshiästvo*, the CP secretary of the region of Krasnodar informs us that in such-and-such a *kolkhoz* the indirect (non-productive) expenditures are today already greater than the direct expenditures; that in such-and-such another *kolkhoz* the leading bureaucrats appropriate a monthly share from five to six times higher than that of a good farmer. These data cross-check with those contained in the book of N Nasarzev (*The Kolkhoz Work Unit*), published in Moscow in 1951, and demonstrate that what we have here is a long-term tendency in Soviet agriculture. And recently the sumptuous expenditures of the bureaucrats of the "cotton-growing" *kolkhozes* while meeting at a conference in Moscow, produced a scandal there.

But if the upper layers of the *kolkhozes* are acting like privileged strata having special interests to defend,

it cannot be seen why they would resist the temptation to use the property rights that Khrushchev has just granted them. True, the Soviet peasantry no longer has today the predominant weight in society that it held at the end of the '20s. The risks of Khrushchev's reform are much less than they would have been at that period.

The fact remains that the transfer to the kolkhozes of the ownership of the tractors and farm machinery opens a first breach in the state monopoly of ownership of the large-scale means of production. Through this break, *commodity relations* will appear in the whole sector of the means of production. Gasoline and spare parts will also be put on the market. But means of production transformed into commodities are means of production subject to the laws of the market. If state production costs too dear, or if it progresses too fast, overproduction threatens to appear in this sector, forcing the state to lower its selling price to below its manufacturing cost (i e, to subsidize agriculture at the expense of industry), unless it accepts to slow down the rhythm of mechanization and the growth of village production (3). On the other hand, if the increase in the production of tractors remains less than the demand, those kolkhozes having abundant liquid funds at their disposal will be able to push the price up, buy back machines from the poorer kolkhozes (which will thus find supplementary income that will be welcome) and concentrate an excessive share of the means of production in their hands.

We repeat : the operation, which would have been extremely perilous two or three decades ago, is less so today because the state, become infinitely more powerful and rich from the economic point of view, can more easily manipulate the different levers of prices, salaries, and money, so as to limit the spontaneous tendencies of the kolkhoz "market" in the means of production.

But whoever says "market" says also "spontaneous" and "anarchic" "tendencies." Willy-nilly, the Khrushchev reform reintroduces these tendencies in a sector whence they seemed to be forever banished. This strikes a mortal blow, be it said in passing, to the Stalinist theory of the completion of the construction of socialism in the USSR. But that also recalls to those who had forgotten it that, despite its immense economic progress, the USSR is still far from having surmounted all the contradictions of the period of transition, above all the contradictions between town

(3) In his theses, Khrushchev implicitly recognizes this fact by writing : "Many plants are producing badly built machines of which agriculture cannot make good use, which lie around [in the MTS (EG)] for years without being used, and must then be converted into scrap metal. Under new conditions, these plants may experience a difficult situation. *The kolkhozes will not buy their products*, and the plants will have immediately to improve their production of farm machinery."

and country, quite independently even of the specific contradictions produced by bureaucratic administration.

THE ANTI-INFLATIONARY ASPECT OF THE REFORM

The money income of the kolkhozes rose from 42,000 million rubles in 1952 to 94,600 million in 1956. A supplementary purchasing power was thus distributed during those five years which can doubtless be estimated at some 150,000 million rubles. A considerable part of this purchasing power served for the purchase of industrial consumers' goods and building materials. But a not negligible part remains available. One of the goals of the Khrushchev reform is to sponge up this inflationary purchasing power by offering it means of production in exchange.

In the theses for the Supreme Soviet, Khrushchev himself declared that the selling price of the tractors will be "a little higher" than their production cost. But this calculation, that so impresses a capitalist journalist, has no meaning for a kolkhoz peasant. He makes a quite different calculation. Up till now, he had to pay a certain sum per year for the use of a tractor ; if the useful life of this tractor is, let us say, ten years, and if the buying price is less than ten times the sum of the annual payment made up till now, he will have the impression that he has got a bargain, and he will not be wrong.

Khrushchev affirms, however, that after his reform the state will have to obtain a quantity of wheat greater, not lesser, than what it is now obtaining as payment for the hire of the MTS services. How does he expect to reach this goal ? He explained in his Minsk speech that, thanks to the transfer of the tractors to the kolkhozes, the cost price of wheat will go down, and as a result the state will obtain these products cheaper. He forgot to add that up until now the state received the wheat *as payment in kind* in exchange for the MTS services. The tractors, on the other hand, will be sold for *money*. The state and the cities yesterday profited *directly* from any increase in output by the kolkhozes, for the MTS were paid in fixed percentages of the kolkhoz production. But if the tractors are sold to the kolkhozes, the state and the cities will profit only *indirectly* from any increase in agricultural productivity by the intermediary of the more abundant exchanges and drops in prices which it is supposed that this will bring about. Thus the whole Khrushchevian reform is in fact a speculation on an increase in agricultural production, an increase sufficiently rapid to enable the state to lower the wheat prices given to the kolkhozes without having this price-drop bring about a stagnation of production and a new dangerous shortage of food.

Is this speculation sheer madness ? We dare not say so. Given the degree of mechanization of Soviet agriculture, which has at its disposal 1.7 million trac-

tors and 450,000 combines, there are enormous reserves for a rapid increase of productivity. These reserves, however, will be mobilized only if the peasant finds sufficient stimuli to increase his effort. It is a question of the sales price of semi-durable and durable consumers' goods (and building materials). Paradoxically, the success of Khrushchev's speculation depends at least as much on industry as on agriculture itself. This whole policy of *increasing commercialization of agricultural production* will succeed only if, in exchange for an increased flow of wheat toward the cities, an increased stream of industrial consumers' goods pours toward the villages. If this latter current dries up or remains insufficient, the only way out for bringing pressure on farm prices would be their arbitrary manipulation by the state, as in the period of Stalin. But let us not forget Wenger's nice phrase: "The peasant knows how to figure." The price paid for such a manipulation would be stagnation of agricultural production, i.e., a scarcity of good-quality food in the cities.

It is significant, moreover, that Khrushchev in his theses takes into account the kolkhozes' *desire for commodities* (whatever may be the desire of the kolkhoz members of the kolkhoz bureaucracy). He proposes to form, in each sector (in each region), commissions which will have to discuss the purchasing price of farm machinery from the MTS, and to leave also to commissions of this sort the concern of settling the rhythm of sales of these machines. Here it is a question of concession to demands for *an increase in power* which are coming from the peasantry and the kolkhoz bureaucracy. The importance of the demands for autonomy and self-administration of the kolkhozes, raised during the discussion preceding the meeting of the Supreme Soviet, cannot be exaggerated. They tend in the direction of the *social differentiation of political life by social layers* (a tendency stressed by the theses *Rise and Decline of Stalinism* and *Decline and Fall of Stalinism*).

It can be seen, therefore, how wrong are those who believe that the (more or less "terrorist") power of the state is enough to remove the risks of Khrushchev's reform. For the first time since the suppression of the NEP, the Kremlin is faced by the peasant problem in its purest, i.e., commercial, form. The reform will succeed only if the relative evolution of agricultural prices and industrial prices does not work out to the disadvantage of the peasant and does not destroy his desire to produce, as it did in the period of Stalin.

COOPERATIVE PROPERTY AND STATE PROPERTY

The ease with which Khrushchev disregarded the "theoretical warnings" contained in Stalin's last work has disconcerted not only Western observers. The

first secretary himself has recognized in his "theses" prepared for the Supreme Soviet that "certain comrades" maintain their opposition to any sale of means of production to the kolkhozes. His reply is close to a form of "dialectic" that was Stalin's own: precisely because [!] nationalized property is a superior form of socialist property, compared to coöperative property, it is necessary first to strengthen [!] the latter before fusing it with statified property:

The general property of the people [more exactly: nationalized property (EG)] is a superior form of socialization, whereas kolkhozi property represents a less high form of socialization. It is therefore a question of gradually raising the level of socialization of kolkhozi property, in order to lead it to the level of the general property of the people. That can be carried out only by the strengthening [!] and the gradual general development both [!] of statified property and of kolkhozi property. (Theses for Khrushchev's Report to the Supreme Soviet)

From the point of view of logic, both formal and dialectic, this "thesis" contains as many errors as it does words. Nationalized property is not the superior form but the most primitive form of social property. Kolkhozi property is not at all a form of social property, but a transitional form between individual property and social property. The ultimate form under which property will wither away in a communist society will not be nationalized property "with which kolkhozi property will have fused," but precisely coöperative property in the historical meaning of the term, the property of "free communes of producers and consumers" of which Engels speaks.

Certain "theoreticians," even more daring than their master, have not hesitated to assimilate this "commune" of tomorrow to the kolkhozes of today: thus K Orlovski in the already quoted article in the review *Oktjabr* (n° 12, 1957). This comparison is ridiculous. The "commune" of which Engels is speaking will not be an "agrarian" commune, but a commune of a society in which the difference between town and country will have disappeared, and in which the division between manual labor and intellectual labor will be in the process of withering away. To compare with this communist ideal of tomorrow even the richest kolkhoz in the USSR, where they are only *planning* to build the first theatres, is to discredit communism in the eyes of the Soviet people.

What Khrushchev means in reality — and in this matter he is right — is that before chattering on about the "withering away of the kolkhozes," it is preferable to guarantee the provisions of bread, milk, and meat for the Soviet workers. If it is necessary, *for this purpose*, to sell the tractors to the kolkhozes, it is no doubt an unavoidable concession. But in order to formulate his thesis in this form, he would have had

to admit that, far from "building communism," we are still a long way from the "disappearance of classes" and from the completed socialist society.

It is true that Orlovski speaks of a *dual* strengthening of kolkhozian property : both at the expense of the MTS (i e, of the state) and at the expense of the private property of the kolkhoz members. And in the Minsk speech there are traces of the same reasoning, presented however in a more prudent form. There are many signs of a strengthening of the pressure against the private plots of land, and Khrushchev as well as Orlovski raises the question of the "voluntary giving up" of their private livestock by the peasants. Quoting the example of his native village, Kalinovka, Khrushchev explains that the peasant woman wants the milk and not the cow ; if the kolkhoz guarantees her more milk with less work, why will she refuse to give up her cow? Orlovski even sketches out a picture of communist distribution, the kolkhoz saying to its members, "Do you want food, vegetables, fruit? Go to it, take what you want."

The pictures are well chosen and show in fact the psychological road of the disappearance of private property (and of the *mentality of private property*) in the countryside : what is needed is to experience it, to have *the habit of abundance and a communist method of distribution*, in order to guarantee their peaceful disappearance.

But these pictures are completely out of place when one tries to integrate them into Khrushchev's reform. This is not a step forward toward communist distribution ; it is a step backward toward the more generalized commercialization of village life. To believe that one can at the same time commercialize the relationships between the state and the kolkhozes, and reduce if not indeed suppress the desire for private enrichment within the kolkhozes, is to defy all economic laws. The rule of "to each according to his

needs" cannot be applied in the kolkhoz if it sells its wheat to the state at competitive prices (the new Khrushchevian ideal). It is clear that in this case each peasant has an interest in creating a little private commercial channel toward the city, still thirsting for milk and meat. And so the Khrushchevian dialectic which tends to *cover up the character of retreat* in the reform is all the more dangerous in that it does not explain how it is necessary to be armed against the risks that this retreat implies.

We doubt that the Soviet proletariat will be frightened by Khrushchev's concessions to the kolkhozes : like the first secretary himself, it is more concerned about bread, butter, and meat, than about the historical dialectic of the transition toward socialism (not to mention communism). But the theoretical problems raised by this concession will not leave young communists indifferent. The new wave of discussion that it will start rolling will contribute in its own way to the renaissance of a political life, half semi-official, half underground, in the vanguard of the working class. From the transfer of the tractors to the question of the Plan, from the "transition toward communism" to workers' administration of the factories — all questions raised by the Soviet reality of today will emphasize the impasse in which the bureaucracy has got itself. To explain the failure of Stalinist agricultural policy ; to explain the need of a new worker-peasant alliance on a higher level ; to explain the need of a reorganization of the Plan starting from the consumption needs of the city and the country — there is the road that the consciousness of that vanguard will take, which will lead it to the ineluctible conclusion : it is necessary to reestablish soviet democracy, by a political revolution, in order that the Soviet economy may finally be able wholly to fulfill its promises, on every level !

20 March 1958

THE ARGENTINE ELECTIONS *and the Tasks of the Proletariat* ⁽¹⁾

By J POSADAS

The election results show that the political crisis of the bourgeoisie is both deep and continuing : only the Trotskyist Partido Obrero and Frondizi advanced, while for the other parties, workers' or bourgeois, the election was a catastrophe. They also show considerable growth in the political maturity of the working class.

The whole press, reflecting the ideological, social, and political interests of the bourgeoisie, attempts to conceal this second lesson. They analyze the election only as a polarization around the two main candidates, with the working class supporting Frondizi against Balbin, in an attempt to prevent the proletariat from drawing its own class conclusions from the experience so as to guide it in its future tasks.

For the real struggle was not the immediate one between two tendencies representing the national industrial bourgeoisie and the oligarchy, but that of both tendencies against the proletariat. Previously, to prevent it from presenting itself independently with its own class programme ; since, to prevent it from seeing itself confidently for the force that it really is.

What do the elections really show about the degree of political maturity and class combativity of the masses ?

BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

Prior to the elections, the working class and the petty-bourgeoisie had launched powerful strikes and other mass mobilizations. Frondizi (backed by the sell-out Peronist leaderships) launched a furious campaign to persuade the masses to stop their struggles, to wait for everything to be settled after the elections. As "persuasion," it forbade strikes for 40 days, under threat of up to 25 years' imprisonment. Neither fooled nor intimidated, the working class refused to postpone its movements: the construction workers, railwaymen, oil workers, textile workers, and bank and insurance-company employees, kept right on fighting. On the programmatic level, three months before the elections there was held in Córdoba the Congress of the Regional Sections of the CGT and of the 62 organizations, which adopted a trade-union, social, economic, and political programme for the struggle for national and social liberation — a remarkably advanced document to emerge from a national trade-union congress. [Vide text at end of this article.]

(1) Condensed from a much longer detailed study, which may be consulted in the current issue of *Quatrième Internationale*.

On the electoral plane, Perón passed the word, and his lieutenants in the country ordered the workers to vote for Frondizi. After a severe internal crisis, the Communist Party also came out for support to Frondizi. Peronists, Stalinists, various petty-bourgeois tendencies, brought unremitting pressure on the working class, presenting support for Frondizi not only as a lesser evil but as the only way out : the opposite would be dictatorship, catastrophe. Wherever the masses turned toward traditional leaderships, they heard nothing but the deafening beating of drums for Frondizi. If the Argentine masses had been as politically immature as in past decades, the calculations of the Peronists and Stalinists would have been fulfilled 100 %. What actually happened was significantly different.

ELECTION RESULTS AND THE GROWING MATURITY OF THE PROLETARIAT

Under capitalism, elections permit a periodic measuring of the condition, the will, the combativity, and the political maturity of the proletariat and the petty-bourgeoisie. This is usually shown in votes for candidates, with the percentage variations in votes for workers' parties having an extreme symptomatic significance. But in certain circumstances, the masses express themselves politically, not by direct voting, but by write-in campaigns, ostentatiously blank ballots, or abstentionism. These apparently negative expressions of opinion can, under certain circumstances, be on the contrary very positive indeed, and such was the case in our recent election.

Perón's orders to vote for Frondizi were rejected by a large part of the Peronist masses. *Thirty-six percent* stuck to the previous policy of blank ballots. There were *more than a million* abstentions. These sectors demonstrated strikingly and unmistakably their rejection of *support for a bourgeois candidate and their no-confidence in such elections as a way out*. They demonstrated that, if they are to vote, they want a independent political party of the working class to vote for. And thereby they demonstrated to what a degree, in the two and a half years since Perón fled, they have begun to see through the manoeuvres and mysticisms of Peronism and to gain new political maturity.

Some went even further along the path to maturity, as is evinced by the remarkable results in the Province of Buenos Aires, the only province where it was possible to fulfill the legal conditions for presenting an

election slate of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario—Trotskista.

As a condition for its being legally recognized, the Partido Obrero Revolucionario—Trotskista was forced by the bourgeois state to call itself just the Partido Obrero and to eliminate a few clauses from its Declaration of Principles and its programme. The party formally complied, without — needless to say — renouncing any of its principles, programme, or goals.

It was the first time the party had presented itself at elections, and it lacked the financial means and numerical strength to carry the campaign to the entire province. It obtained the right to participate only 40 days before the elections. Nevertheless, it got 15,424 votes. Where it was represented, it got more votes than the Unión Federal, the Partido de los Trabajadores, the Partido Laborista, and many other bourgeois or so-called workers' parties operating on a national scale and with tradition and seniority. And though its campaign was limited to only three districts, it got a quarter as many votes as the Communist Party did in the entire Province of Buenos Aires. The Communist Party, with 69,590 votes, lost 12,800 in comparison with 1957. The Partido Laborista dropped from 51,900 to 8,500; the Partido de los Trabajadores from 49,017 to 13,663. In various circumscriptions the Partido Obrero obtained more votes than the Communist Party. Most bourgeois parties were also hard hit. In sum, the only two parties that advanced electorally were the two that expressed the tendencies in the real struggle, that between the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie: the Partido Obrero and the UCRI.

Significantly, the Partido Obrero got 75 % of its votes in the workers' districts of, and the proletarian belt around, Greater Buenos Aires. For Trotskyism is known to ever broader sectors of the proletariat. For years now Trotskyists have tirelessly engaged in consistent trade-union and political work. Party militants have participated in the most important mobilizations of the working class, occupied leading posts in big strikes, and are thus known and respected in the labor movement. Dozens of its militants have been expelled from the factories because of their fighting activity as labor leaders. *Voz Proletaria* [the party's fortnightly newspaper] is known to the whole labor movement.

Thus the votes for the Partido Obrero were not the result of either accident or misunderstanding. A high proportion of them represented conscious support of the full Trotskyist programme. The rest expressed in the most specific way the desire for an independent workers' party.

We are now in a position to see what, behind Frondizi's victory over Balbín, was the real meaning of the elections: that as a result of its experience in the two and a half years since Perón fled, the Argentine proletariat has advanced very seriously indeed in its political maturity.

First, that there is a vanguard sector that will support a revolutionary Marxist programme, as exemplified by the 15,424 votes for the Partido Obrero in only three districts in one province.

Second, as shown by the immense number of blank ballots and abstentions, that the masses, a) in a negative way, refuse to support a bourgeois candidate even with Peronist and Stalinist backing and feel no confidence at all in elections like this last one, and b) in a positive way, want their own independent working-class party.

Combined with the adoption of the Córdoba Programme, and the refusal of the proletariat to abandon its strike actions and other class manifestations despite government threats and Peronist persuasion, these are highly encouraging results.

THE CRISIS IN PERONISM

The elections clearly confirmed the crisis of Peronism. Its strong point was the unity of the class that it controlled. In these elections that unity was broken, and Peronism lost and will continue to lose control and leadership of the masses.

Since 1945 the proletariat has maintained a profound sense of unity, fraternity, and class solidarity. After Perón's flight, while Peronist labor leaders were stumbling around or deserting outright, it retained its cohesion, vigorous fighting spirit, and trade-union and political unity. And in this process of increasing unity, it assimilated the experience of the colonial peoples of Algeria, China, Korea, Bolivia, Egypt, etc., which developed its international consciousness.

The Peronist leadership had some grounds for believing that it could count on unconditional support by this united working class. But its policy handcuffed the workers, headed off a generalized class movement to overthrow the reactionary military government. It averted all attempts at general mobilization of the masses, limited them to narrow demands accompanied by terrorist and putschist adventures. Even with the prospect of the general strike thus eliminated, the workers still plainly wanted somehow or other to fight actively, to demonstrate against the government. Peronist election policy was also an attempt to provide a discharge for this pent-up pressure through an electoral outlet.

Instead, it split the working class along the lines of comparative political maturity. With the division brought about by support of Frondizi by one sector, this break in unity will make itself felt in activity; but it can be rapidly repaired through renewed class mobilizations — and in the right direction. Those sectors which cast blank ballots or abstained from voting can once more pull along the rest of the class with them and reunify it in action, despite the waning influence of the Peronist leadership. But the most important obstacle along this path is the lack of an independent class leadership and political organization. It is necessary to prevent the crisis in

Peronism from being used by the bourgeois and labor-bureaucratic leaderships to paralyze the process of growing political maturity and organization of the working class. To give the crisis of Peronism a progressive course, it is necessary to organize the labor party based on the trade unions.

There has ripened within Peronism a petty-bourgeois "Jacobin" tendency that is trying to take advantage of the crisis, but only to drag the Peronist party back to a petty-bourgeois programme of mere national liberation. This tendency has found an echo and a certain acceptance among leaders and middle-ranking cadres of the Peronist trade-union movement. Yet these Jacobin tendencies also express in a deformed way a reflection of the ranks' tendency to detach themselves from a programme of unconditionally serving the industrial bourgeoisie.

Peronist support for Frondizi was not a last-minute decision. It was decided in principle a year ago. After the failure of the June 1956 coup d'état, the Peronist leadership realized that it had no chance of regaining power by military means. And it would never have recourse to a real revolutionary mobilization of the masses. So it decided on support of another figure who serves the same master: the national industrial bourgeoisie. But it found great resistance in both the ranks and the middle cadres. Typically symptomatic was the fact that it was only one day before the elections that the Peronist Tactical Command was able to publish an announcement signed by well-known unionists with authority in the working class, saying that Peronists must vote for Frondizi. If there had not been deep divergences, it would have appeared 12 days earlier, i.e., on the date of the first Peronist communiqué announcing the policy of voting for Frondizi. Such petty-bourgeois leaders as Leloir are trying falsely to present these divergences as reflecting political differences within the bourgeois camp. But the real reason for the resistance and even rejection by sectors of working-class and even petty-bourgeois Peronist leaders of the vote-for-Frondizi policy was that they sensed the discontent of the working-class base and its refusal to vote for a bourgeois candidate (immediately to be exemplified by the massive casting of blank ballots and abstentionism), in short, a class attitude. This class significance will make itself deeply felt in the next period of mass struggles, within Peronism and in the trade-union movement.

THE CRISIS IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY

On electoral policy, there was no unanimity in the CP leadership. They weighed each candidate's possibilities, the advantages and concessions each might provide. Discussion was lengthy. Even support for Balbín was considered. Finally they chose Frondizi, with the calculation that the visibly combative proletariat, not being given voting guidance by the Peronist leadership, would vote for Frondizi

for President and themselves for deputies, senators, etc. As usual, they calculated on the basis of their subjective desires, not in accordance with objective reality and the masses' mood. In calculations made for the CP rank and file, the leadership made it clear that it was expecting a 30 % increase in votes.

At first the CP rank and file rejected the policy. It finally had to give way and follow the line, but it remained dissatisfied, uneasy, and worried. The militants in everyday work saw that the workers were not inclined to support their party. They have been asking their leadership why the party is not growing. (Now they will have to ask, Why is it growing smaller?) But the leadership persisted. It was bargaining for its support of Frondizi against post-election promises and possible commercial agreements with the USSR. The rank and file sensed, especially after adoption of the Córdoba Programme, that the Argentine workers were ideologically and politically in an ascendant stage, growing politically mature, and seeking an independent class road, including a party of their own, and were not attracted by the Communist Party's class-collaborationist line. But the leadership had the pretention of keeping that working class subject to the limits of its agreements with the bourgeoisie and of using it simply for its own diplomatic and commercial aims.

The answer to its policy was condign. We have already pointed out how in Buenos Aires Province it lost 26 % of its previous votes, while the Partido Obrero was receiving 24 % of its total. In Tucuman Province, the CP dropped from 6,754 to 1,779 votes; in Santa Fé Province, from 24,800 to 17,100; in Santiago del Estero Province, from 5,549 to 1,700; in Salta Province, from 2,045 to 26. The leadership blamed the defeat on "circumstantial" factors, mistakes in the form of voting, sabotage, or lack of maturity of the Peronist workers. This is nonsense: the defeat was the result of the fact that the CP leadership thought it could put over a conciliatory sell-out collaborationist policy that operates against the objective revolutionary needs of the working class and the exploited masses, just at the moment when they were sensing that their way out lies, not through class-collaboration, but through their own labor party based on the trade unions, through a fight to achieve the Córdoba Programme and to have the 62 function as the CGT, etc. The CP militant, feeling the opposing pressures inside the trade unions, which form the present arena in which the working class is gaining its maturity, has been thrown by the election defeat into doubts, hesitations, and resistances to his leadership, and is demanding critical discussion of the election results.

THE PROSPECTS FOR FRONDIZISM

Frondizi, operating in the name of the industrial bourgeoisie, proposes to solve governmental instability, which opens the door to social instability. But he

faces a discouraging task. The stock markets are paralyzed, and many stocks have dropped to half their previous values. Trade exchanges are piling up enormous deficits. A process of unemployment is beginning, and some factories are closing down entirely. The crisis of the Argentine bourgeoisie continues.

The majority of the army wishes to turn over the power, because it feels that decomposition and loss of discipline and caste authority are reaching it, hence coups d'état, through not excluded, are unlikely. But even without coups d'état, Frondizi will be under permanent threat of intervention by the army. He is also under constant pressure from imperialism. But on the other hand, he depends on the support of the anti-oligarchic petty-bourgeoisie and proletarians, who demand that he fulfill his election promises. The capitalist and imperialist forces are lying in wait to exploit all his difficulties in these sectors. This, combined with the proletariat's struggles for its Córdoba Programme, will create new instability and crises.

Frondizi needs to combine with sectors of Peronism to create a new movement to back him up in his programme on behalf of the industrial big bourgeoisie, especially his own bureaucratic trade-union apparatus. Here he will find invaluable the services of the Peronist bureaucracy. It is ready to serve him. But the working class, no.

THE PROSPECTS AND TASKS OF THE WORKING CLASS

Yet Frondizi must take into account a working class that is increasingly hard to handle. Before, during, and after the elections, the masses were involved in some of the greatest strikes of their trade-union history. The bank clerks and insurance-company employees, the building workers, port workers, and oil workers have been fighting vigorously. The determined attitude of the workers of the giant Anglo meat-packing plants, who forcibly threw out the officials sent to intervene in their union; the tendency of the workers to reject the shutting-down of factories and to occupy them; the magnificent fighting spirit of the railway workers — these demonstrate the working class's present very high combativity.

Frondizi needs a bridge to the working class, and part of the leadership of the labor movement — Peronists, Communists, and the "free unionists" — are preparing to serve as such. By coöperating in the construction of a new labor bureaucracy, they can possibly succeed in a unification, in order to hold back the working class's independent class struggles. There is here a real danger of attempts to solve the crisis of the bourgeoisie on the backs of the workers.

A leadership that is responsible, honorable, and loyal to the working class, on the contrary, must determine its principles and attitudes in accordance

with the class's own interests, not worrying about the difficulties of the bourgeoisie but profiting by them. The present leadership of the labor movement has shown itself conciliationist and ready to serve, not the working class, but the national bourgeoisie. The conclusion is inescapable that the labor movement needs a *new and class-loyal leadership*.

And on what programme? That programme exists, one democratically accepted in a historic congress, which marks a new stage in the increased ideological and political maturity of the working class. The *Córdoba Programme* corresponds to the needs of the exploited population and the country's economic-social development. It is a guide in the fight against industrialized exploitation, for the country's economic development, for increased trade exchanges, for workers' control, and for the struggle against imperialism. It is a programme that a new and loyal leadership must on every occasion put forward in contrast to the pretensions of the national bourgeoisie.

And with what organization? By their diverse interventions in the elections, the Argentine masses have shown that they are looking, not for one more bourgeois party, but for their own independent class party. Their mandate is clear. The basis for organization exists: the trade unions. Now is the time to organize a *labor party based on the unions*. Once the unions and the central and regional organization have formed it, they must call on all the exploited sectors of the population to join, either individually or as organizations, call on all housewives, farmers, students, white-collar workers, etc.

And with what political goal? The duty of the responsible leaders, cadres, and militants of the working class is not to hasten to help Frondizi save the bourgeoisie, to get it out of its contradictions and difficulties, but to advance the working class toward its own power. Its immediate goal must be that of a *Workers' and Peasants' Government*. In the meantime, the 62 organizations must function as the CGT, while the struggle goes on for the reconquest of the patrimony of the Central Obrera. On the road to a *Workers' and Peasants' Government*, the masses can now be mobilized by the Córdoba Programme, against unemployment, against the high cost of living, against the dismantling of industries, and for diplomatic relations and trade agreements with all the workers' states, and for the expulsion and appropriation of imperialism.

With the recent demonstration of the increased political maturity of the proletariat, and its continued high level of combativity, its militants and leading cadres must not wait to be called for organization. They must themselves take the initiative and dynamically organize committees in the factories, carry the matter forcefully to the districts and unions. In this very struggle the new leadership of the labor movement will be selected.

4 March 1958

Appendix : THE CORDOBA PROGRAMME

IN VIEW OF :

The magnificent expression of the maturity reached by the Argentine workers in their concept of the struggle and its forms, meaning that the Argentine workers from now on, after the experience of the struggle lived through in these last years, have demonstrated that not only is their concern not limited to increases in wages and to strengthening their trade unions as a means of struggle, but that they are also constantly concerned — with all the implications that this involves on the economic, social, and political planes — with the general situation of the country and that of the wage-earners defending for progressive purposes the national industry and power resources of the country ; and

CONSIDERING :

That the thought of the working class is unanimous around economic, political, and social concretizations synthesizing the eagerness to become a Nation that can become an independent economy through a social policy which by guaranteeing justice establishes in definitive form our sovereignty as a Nation ;

For these reasons the Plenary National Meeting of Regional Delegations

RESOLVES :

To raise before the Coördinating Bureau of the "62" organizations, as the expression of the desires of this Plenary Meeting, the following programme :

INDEPENDENCE

In the economic aspect :

Attainment of economic independence in integral form. For this it becomes indispensable to support :

- a) *Foreign trade.*
 - 1) State control of foreign trade on the basis of the formation of a state monopoly.
 - 2) Liquidation of foreign import and export monopolies.
 - 3) Control of producers in trade operations with a view to defense of the national income. Planification of the process with a view to the needs of the country, in function of its historic development, taking into account the interest of the laboring class.
 - 4) Broadening and diversification of international markets.
 - 5) Denunciation of all pacts injurious to our economic independence.
 - 6) Planification of trading taking into account our internal development.
 - 7) Economic integration with our brother peoples of Latin America, on the bases of achieved experiences.
- b) *In the internal field :*
 - 1) A policy of high internal consumption ; greater production for the country in a national sense.
 - 2) Development of light industry adequate to the country's needs.
 - 3) Augmentation of an economic policy tending to attain the consolidation of heavy industry, basis for any future development.
 - 4) A national power policy : for this there becomes necessary the nationalization of the natural sources of power and their exploitation in function of the country's needs for development.
 - 5) Nationalization of foreign meat-packing-houses, in order to

render possible effectiveness of control over foreign trade, taking out of the hands of foreign monopolies these basic means of our economy.

6) Fundamental solutions in a national sense of regional economic problems on the basis of integrating these economies into the country's real needs, overcoming the present division into "rich provinces" and "poor provinces."

7) Centralized control of credit by the state, rendering it adequate to a plan of integral development of the economy with a view to the interests of the workers.

8) An agrarian programme, synthesized in : mechanization of agriculture, "national tendency of industry," expropriation of latifundia, and extension of agrarian coöperativism, in an effort so that the land may be for those who work it.

JUSTICE

In the social aspect :

1) *Workers' control* of the production and distribution of national wealth by means of the effective participation of the workers :

a) in the preparation and execution of the general economic plan, *through* the trade-union organizations ;

b) participation in the direction of private and public enterprises, guaranteeing, in each case, the social function of wealth.

c) popular control of prices.

2) *Minimum living wage and a sliding scale.*

3) Integral Social Security :

a) unification of benefits and their extension to all sectors of labor.

4) *Reforms in labor legislation* tending to make it adequate to the historic moment and in accordance with the general plan of popular transformation of the Argentine reality.

5) Creation of the state organism which, with *workers' control* renders possible the genuine applicability of social conquests and legislation.

6) Absolute job stability for workers.

7) Trade-union rights.

In the political aspect :

1) Preparation of the great political-economic-social plan of Argentine reality, which recognizes the presence of the labor movement as a fundamental national force, through its preëminent participation in its construction and direction.

2) Strengthening of the popular national state, tending to bring about the destruction of anti-national oligarchic sectors and their foreign allies, and taking into account that the working class is the only Argentine force that represents in its interests the desires of the country itself, to which are added its unity in struggle and its strength.

3) Direction of action toward an integral (politico-economic) understanding with the Latin American sister nations.

4) Political action to replace the artificial internal divisions based on liberal and false federalism.

5) Freedom to elect and be elected without disqualifications, and the definitive strengthening of popular will.

6) Solidarity of the working class with the national liberation struggles of oppressed peoples.

7) An independent international policy.

TWENTY YEARS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL (1938-1958) *(A History of Its Ideas and Its Struggles)*

By MICHEL PABLO

I

From the Founding Conference (September 1938) to the Outbreak of the Second World War (September 1939)

The Fourth International was founded in 1938, about five years after the coming to power of fascism in Germany and the historic bankruptcy of the Third International and the Communist Parties in this decisive test.

The year 1938 was indeed not propitious to rapid revolutionary developments that might swell the ranks of the new International. It was on the contrary one of the most sombre pre-war years, a culminating point in the period of defeats for the international proletariat, of fascist reaction, of Stalinist crimes and terror. The experiment of the Popular Front in France was ending up with the coming to power in April 1938 of the reactionary government of Daladier, which was beginning to liquidate one by one the gains of 1936, signing the Munich Pact, and hurling the confused and demoralized country on to the path to imperialist war.

In Spain, after Franco's capture of Teruel, there was rapidly looming up the defeat of the Spanish Revolution, betrayed by its "Popular Front" leadership.

In the USSR, Stalin's Thermidorian reaction was at high tide with the third big Moscow Trial, the "Trial of the 21," which condemned to death and executed Bukharin and 18 of his companions, all Old Bolsheviks, leaders of the October Revolution and of the Third International.

The shadow of the imperialist war was spreading darkly, dominating the international scene.

In Europe Hitler's coups d'état followed one on another, bringing closer the fateful date of the new world massacre: the occupation of Austria; a similar fate in preparation for Czechoslovakia.

In the Far East, Japan was settling into the difficult war against China and sounding out by cannon-shots the USSR's ability to resist on its eastern frontier.

The arms race in all capitalist countries was at its height. That was, furthermore, a means of combatting the persistent and still not yet overcome economic crisis that had fallen upon the capitalist world from 1929 on.

War itself was more and more silhouetted on the horizon as the only outcome to this situation.

Stalin, conscious of this danger and fearing to be lost in case of a conflict with an imperialist coalition, had staked everything on the "Democratic Front for Peace" in collaboration with the "democratic" imperialists of the United States, France, and England. This class-collaboration policy, combined with the sanguinary terror of the GPU toward revolutionary tendencies in the USSR and in the international workers' movement as a whole, had ended by bringing that movement's decomposition and demoralization to its peak.

From then on, therefore, the road was wide open to the outbreak of the imperialist massacre.

Only the handful of Trotskyists who had survived Stalinist terror in the USSR and in the capitalist and dependent countries were fighting unflinchingly on a programme of revolutionary Marxism, denouncing the war preparations of imperialism — both "fascist" and "democratic" — and calling for a *class front* to fight effectively against fascism and the danger of war.

In order to guarantee the masses peace, Leon Trotsky wrote just after Munich in September 1938, we must overthrow imperialism under all its masks. Only the proletarian revolution can accomplish this task. To prepare this goal, the proletariat and the oppressed peoples must be set in irreconcilable opposition to the imperialist bourgeoisie and rallied in a single international revolutionary army. This great liberating task is now being carried out exclusively by the Fourth International.

For this reason, the international tendency of the Trotskyists, known at that time (and more especially after 1936) under the name of "Movement for the Fourth International," became the target for the repression and the hatred of "fascist" and "democratic" imperialism, of the social-patriots, and of the Kremlin lackeys.

In Germany, many Trotskyists lay in Nazi jails and concentration camps; in Greece, the prisons and the places of exile of Metaxas, ally of the "democratic" imperialists, held the same fate for Trotskyists.

But the blows of imperialism counted for little compared to those rained on the revolutionary Marxists by the enraged Thermidorians of the first workers' state.

Proletarians will learn one day, which we think will be soon now, the incredible epic of the Bolshevik-Leninists in the USSR, fighting fearlessly against their Stalinist exterminators, in the prisons, the concentration camps, and the Arctic isolators.

The year 1938 witnessed the death in Paris, after an abrupt and brief illness, in most suspicious circumstances, of Leon Trotsky's son, Leon Sedov. A few months later, in July 1938, there disappeared, kidnapped by the GPU, the international secretary Rudolf Klement (Camille), a student of German origin.

In Mexico itself, the Stalinists' preparations for the assassination of Trotsky were multiplied: their agents, with Lombardo Toledano at their head, were trying to create in advance an ambience favorable to this crime.

In Spain, Trotskyists and POUMists were also being persecuted and imprisoned by the Stalinist police of the "Popular Front" government.

THE FOUNDING CONFERENCE

It was in this ambience of imperialist and Stalinist terror, and of the approach of the war, that the Founding Conference of the Fourth International was held on September 3rd 1938. It lasted in fact only one day, somewhere in the inner Paris suburbs (1), with 30 delegates present, representing the ten following countries, plus a Latin-American representative: USA, USSR, Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Belgium, Holland, Greece. Several other sections were prevented by circumstances from sending their representatives.

Despite the difficult conditions of this meeting and the still fresh memory of the kidnapping of Rudolf Klement, the conference was inspired by the great afflatus of its historic significance and the importance of its labors. Confronting the rumblings of the war approaching with giant strides, recording the incredible bankruptcy of the traditional Social-Democratic and Stalinist leaderships in Germany, in Austria, in France, and in Spain, the international tendency of revolutionary Marxists affirmed its unshakable confidence in the future of the proletarian revolution and of world socialism.

The threatened storm was the inevitable penalty for the failure of the traditional leaderships of the workers' movement to replace war by its revolutionary solution. But the war in its passage would not fail to sweep away all the old equilibrium and to bring about the upsurge of a new revolutionary period with unimaginable possibilities, in which the opportunities for authentic revolutionary Marxism and, consequently, for the Fourth International, would become clear.

To give the revolutionary Marxist tendency the structure of a single international organization, to endow it with a precise programme, would be already a guarantee of its survival as such and of its inevitable future successes. That is exactly what the Founding Conference of the Fourth International accomplished.

WHY THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Between 1933 and 1938, and at the very Founding Congress of the Fourth International, the question of a new International was often debated (2).

Patiently but firmly, our tendency, with Leon Trotsky at its head, fought during this period against the centrists outside and the skeptics inside our own ranks as to whether *it was opportune to create a new International*. These arguments were in reality summarized in this one: *The revolutionary Marxist tendency is too isolated from the masses, who have not yet become conscious of the betrayal of the traditional leaderships and especially of Stalinism*. Consequently it is necessary to wait for more favorable conditions and avoid creating an International "artificially."

How did we answer these arguments, out of the mouth of the very Founding Conference of the Fourth International? By noting simultaneously three things: the bankruptcy of the traditional leaderships, proved by the historic defeats of the proletariat in Germany in 1933, in France and Spain in the years 1936 to 1938, defeats that produced no reaction of possible correction of the organizations led by the Social-Democrats and the Stalinists; the incompatibility of our programme and doctrine with those of these leaderships; our factual existence as an international tendency fighting on the same programme. That is to say, our existence as an international organization was both an objective result, and a fact, an objective cause, which from then on was influencing developments. That the masses were not yet with us was a secondary aspect compared to our objective existence as an effectively international organization, created, consolidated, and inspired by a common programme, fundamentally distinct from any other tendency.

The Fourth International emerged as an international tendency opposed to the traditional leaderships, through the very development of the class struggle in the pre-war world, and of the inevitable differentiations which this caused within the international communist vanguard.

From the point of view both of ideas, programme, and doctrine, and of cadres, the Fourth International was the result of the objective development, of the very evolution of the workers' movement, and nowise an "artificial" creation. The fact of its conjunctural isolation from the broad masses could not be evoked as an argument against its founding. Revolutionary

(1) The official communiqué of the conference, for security reasons obvious for that period, gave Switzerland as the place of the meeting.

(2) More particularly by the Polish delegates.

Marxists have long since understood the concrete dialectic that exists among the class, the parties, and the leaderships. There is a fusion among these elements only at rare moments in history, only at culminating points of the revolutionary upsurge. The changing dynamics of the class struggle constantly disassociate these elements and bring them together again, without identifying them.

The party, furthermore, while being a fraction of the class, is distinguished from it by its ideological quality, by the fact that it constitutes a more homogeneous fraction, more enlightened than the class as a whole about the conditions and the goals of the class struggle. The programme and the doctrine, while being constantly worked up out of the elements of the class struggle, its actions and its experiences, are the party's own work, and not that of the class as a whole.

Similar relationships exist between the party as a mass organization and its leadership group. A party, a revolutionary leadership, can be very far in advance of the mentality and consciousness of the masses, just as they can sometimes fall no less colossally behind them. The history of the international workers' movement is full of examples.

What definitively counts for the quality of a revolutionary leadership is not the degree of its liaison with the class at any given moment, but its programme and its doctrine, as well as the continuity and consistency with which they are advocated by the revolutionary cadres. If the programme and doctrine effectively correspond, not to the conjunctural consciousness and mentality of the class, but to the objective situation; and if the organization advocates these ideas with consistency and perseverance, sooner or later it will bring about its junction with the masses set in movement toward it by the objective conditions that finally determine the struggle of the masses.

That is the basic reasoning that we find both in the act of founding the Fourth International and in its programme.

It was already known in 1938 that the new International was and would remain for a whole period isolated from the broad masses; even an aggravated isolation was foreseen at the time of the beginning of the war; nor was much confidence felt in the adults of that period, tired out and demoralized by the defeats and betrayals of the traditional leaderships. We staked especially on the new revolutionary period to which the upsets of the war would not fail to give rise.

Enemies of or renegades from our movement rarely miss the opportunity to remind us of the "prophecy" that has not been "fulfilled" contained in Trotsky's 19 October 1938 speech to the meeting held in New York to celebrate the founding of the Fourth International:

During the next ten years the programme of the

Fourth International will become the guide for millions, and these millions of revolutionaries will be able to move heaven and earth.

It is true that the evolution of the Second World War, by dividing the imperialist camp, presented a variant which aided the survival of the traditional leaderships. This in its turn complicated revolutionary developments and lengthened the respite. The fact remains, however, that millions, in spite of everything, have taken the revolutionary road in China and elsewhere, overthrowing capitalism and imperialism on a great part of the globe, and above all that a new revolutionary period has arisen from the war, the most extraordinary in upsets and dynamism. It is in fact the period of the triumph of the revolutionary programme of the Fourth International, as concerns both capitalism and Stalinism.

What is this programme?

THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMME

From the viewpoint of *political documents*, the main contribution of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International was unquestionably its adoption of *The Transitional Programme*. (3)

Worked up principally by Leon Trotsky, this programme was subjected to full discussion before and during the Conference, in which the then principal cadres of our movement took part. This programme is naturally not *the* programme of the Fourth International, ie its *total* programme, but only a part thereof, which covers "action from today until the beginning of the Revolution" (Leon Trotsky). In order for it to be complete, as Trotsky himself specified (4), it would have to have at the beginning a part that was more analytical from a theoretical viewpoint concerning "modern capitalist society in its imperialist stage."

We find this analysis in other writings by Leon Trotsky, such for example as the criticism of the programme of the Third International worked up by Bukharin on the occasion of its Sixth World Congress, and *The Permanent Revolution*. It is in these writings that there must be sought the fundamental characteristics of the imperialist period which determine the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary proletariat.

There would also have to be a final part concerning itself with "the social revolution, the seizure of power through insurrection, the transformation of capitalist society into the dictatorship of the proletariat, and of the latter into socialist society."

The programmatic ideas of our International in this more and more important and timely field must be sought in the writings of Leon Trotsky on the USSR and Stalinism, particularly in *The Revolution Be-*

(3) Its real title is *The Death-Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International*.

(4) Discussion on *The Transitional Programme*.

trayed, as well as in the later documents of the Fourth International.

The goal of the Transitional Programme was and remains specific :

...to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist programme of the revolution ; to aid in thus surmounting "the contradiction between the maturity of the objective revolutionary situation" which characterizes our period, "and the immaturity of the proletariat and its vanguard," due essentially to the policy of betrayal of the traditional leaderships.

This bridge, the Transitional Programme specifies, should include a system of *transitional demands*, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and unalterably leading to one final conclusion : the conquest of power by the proletariat.

This is what distinguishes this programme, dialectical in structure, from the programmes of the Social-Democrats and Stalinists, which set up an organic separation between their minimum programmes, limited to reforms within the framework of capitalist society, and their maximum programmes, promising for an indeterminate future the replacement of capitalism by socialism.

The Transitional Programme, modeling itself on the way the first Congresses of the Communist International (5) posed revolutionary tactics, wipes out this distinction and tries on the contrary to connect up organically the struggle for the immediate demands of the masses with the struggle for power.

The programme's *transitional*, that is, *dynamic and revolutionary*, and *not static and reformist*, structure is not, however, a mental trick, an intellectual abstraction. It is based, on the contrary, on the conviction that the orientation of the masses is in the last analysis determined by the objective conditions that characterize society.

If consequently the programme is worked out in adaptation, not to the conjunctural mentality of the masses, but to objective conditions, we can be certain that sooner or later the masses will adopt the leading lines and the slogans of such a programme. That is the meaning and the strength of revolutionary Marxism.

Naturally, objective conditions determine only the *content* of the programme. In order to decide on its *form*, the form of its slogans for action, the form of agitation or propaganda, a genuine revolutionary leadership in touch with the realities of the workers' movement will always take into consideration the exact mentality and consciousness of the masses. Sectarianism in such a case would consist in concerning oneself

only with the content while neglecting the form capable of conveying it best, fastest, and in time, to the masses. On the contrary, opportunism would consist in sacrificing the content to the form so as supposedly to shorten the paths over which the ripening and revolutionary organization of the class pass.

The Transitional Programme, developed on the basis of such considerations, has successfully undergone the test of events and of time. Several of its fundamental slogans have been taken up throughout the world by immense masses, taught by their own experience. Such for example are the slogans : *sliding scale of wages and sliding scale of working hours, workers' control of industry, expropriation of certain groups of capitalists, strike pickets and workers' militias, factory committees and soviets*.

Indeed, certain among them are now part of the official programme of various trade-union organisms, from the unified AFL-CIO in the USA to the Bolivian COB and the Chilean CUT. Naturally, these organizations always have an *eclectic and minimalist* tendency which consists of taking certain slogans out of the programme and filling them with a *reformist meaning*. But the fact that at a given moment such-and-such a slogan of the Transitional Programme has been taken up—necessarily, as it were—by the masses, shows the scientific soundness of this programme, based on a correct evaluation of objective conditions and of the movement of the masses determined by these conditions.

What can we say at the present moment about the validity of the Transitional Programme twenty years after it was worked out ? That it remains in general timely, save for a few adaptations rendered necessary by new elements in the situation. For example the section on the "trade unions in the transitional epoch" could with advantage be improved by including some paragraphs on the possible role of the trade unions, in semi-colonial and dependent countries, going outside specifically economic limits. The broad-scale introduction of automation and atomic energy will unquestionably give rise to the formulation of new economic slogans, as well as new forms of organization.

The section on "transitional demands in fascist countries" is now—at least temporarily—rather out-of-date, even though it contains highly instructive appraisals about the revolutionary way of using democratic slogans and of conceiving their organic liaison with transitional slogans.

On the contrary, the section on the "problems of the transitional period" in the workers' states takes on an importance quite other than in 1938, because of both the evolution of the USSR since then, and the appearance of new workers' states.

The indispensable changes and additions to this chapter we shall find in the later documents of the

(5) Particularly the Third Congress (1921) in its "Theses on Tactics."

Fourth International, and more especially in those of its Fourth and Fifth World Congresses.

Leon Trotsky described the adoption of the Transitional Programme as "our capital conquest." And it was in fact the fundamental contribution of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International. But the work of this conference was not limited to that document. Besides that, the Founding Conference also accomplished the following tasks: it adopted a manifesto on the danger of the war that was silhouetted on the horizon; a resolution on the war in the Far East, and another on the world role of American imperialism. It also adopted the first statutes of the Fourth International containing the declaration of principles of its policy and its organizational structure as the world party of socialist revolution, based on a regime of democratic centralism on the international scale.

Various other resolutions concerned particular questions of an internal nature: the unification of the Trotskyist movement in England and Greece, and its situation in France, in Poland, and in Mexico. Another resolution concerned the question of the policy to be followed in the youth conference which was held soon after the Founding Congress of the Fourth International. Greetings were addressed to the fighters in Spain, to the dead, imprisoned and exiled militants of the Fourth International, and to Leon Trotsky.

In short, a very considerable labor was accomplished by the First World Congress of the new International, a striking proof of the intense political life of the movement it represented, and of its vitality.

THE PERIOD UNTIL THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR

The months that followed the foundation of the International were marked by the worsening of the international situation, evolving rapidly toward war, the debacle of the Kremlin's policy of the "Democratic Front for Peace" by means of Popular Fronts and class collaboration with the "democratic" bourgeoisie, and new defeats of the international proletariat.

Analyzing the international situation after Munich, Leon Trotsky easily brought out the real meaning of the compromise there reached, which, far from preventing the war, was in reality precipitating it. He furthermore demonstrated the bankruptcy of the Kremlin's "Popular Front" policy, and called for a class policy.

After the Czechoslovak events, the key to the European situation lay once more in France, where the Socialists and Communists had by their April 1938 vote brought into power the government of Daladier, the gravedigger of the Popular Front. France was now evolving rapidly toward a reactionary regime whose outlook was the perspective of war.

Nevertheless, the French masses still wanted to resist this trend. Despite the betrayal of Jouhaux and Thorez, and the discouragement and confusion of the most advanced sectors of the proletariat of that country, about two million workers went on strike between mid-November and the beginning of December against Daladier's extra-constitutional measures. This was, however, a rear-guard action, for the reformist and Stalinist leaderships had no intention of seriously combatting Daladier and replacing him this time by a genuinely worker's government.

On December 14th 1938 Leon Trotsky, commenting on these struggles, wrote his article, "The Decisive Hour is Approaching in France," in which, having drawn the balance sheet of the bankruptcy of the Popular Front, supposedly "betrayed" by its partner, the Radicals, "the most corrupt party" of business and careerist circles of the French bourgeoisie, he urged the vanguard elements to resolute revolutionary action, the only thing able to try to stop the trend to totalitarian reaction and war.

Side-by-side with this, the Spanish Revolution was living out its last tragic hours. The new year 1939 began with the onrush of the Franco hordes toward Barcelona, which the "Popular Front" government of Negrín was soon to abandon. The Stalinists tried to cover up the debacle by holding out bright prospects of "resistance," and above all by unloading the blame on their "democratic" bourgeois allies and on the Socialists, while carrying on, right up to the last minute of the fall of Barcelona, the persecutions, the trials, and the imprisonments of the POUMists and the Trotskyists.

In February 1939 Leon Trotsky drew the balance sheet of the "Spanish tragedy," and brought out how there also the Popular Front had proved itself to be "a system organized so as to fool and betray the exploited masses."

As a policy of class collaboration, subordinated, as everywhere else, to the political leadership of the "democratic" bourgeois ally, the Spanish Popular Front systematically sabotaged the social deepening of the revolution so as supposedly to devote itself the better to the "military" pursuit of the struggle. It did not dare to proceed either to agrarian reform or to the liberation of Morocco, and it did everything to crush the soviet organisms of the masses. Thus it both disappointed the masses and consolidated Franco's positions.

Negrín and Azaña begging Franco for peace after the fall of Barcelona, and soon the lamentable exodus toward the Pyrenees—with these pictures of humiliation was sealed the extraordinary epic written during three years by the Spanish masses.

On the plane of the Fourth International movement itself during these first months after its founding, we must mention: activity and some successes by the

French, Belgian, and American sections ; news from the sections in Argentina, Peru, and Greece ; the arrests of a large number of the leaders of the unified section of the last-named country, among them Comrade P Pouliopoulos (October 1938) ; the news, arriving in January 1939, of the trial and sentencing to long prison terms of our German comrades of Magdeburg and Berlin by the Nazis ; the persecution of the leading comrades in Spain, Grandizo Munis and Carlini, by the Stalinists ; the joint campaign against Leon Trotsky, accused by the Stalinists of Mexico of being an "agent of imperialism," and by the imperialist press of the USA of having "inspired" President Cárdenas of Mexico in his policy of "nationalization" of petroleum ; the campaigns of the SWP for the right of asylum in the United States for political refugees from Europe, for the freeing of the leaders of the POUM arrested by the Stalinists in Spain, and against the war plans of Yankee imperialism which were becoming ever clearer.

In a general way the essential policy of the sections of the Fourth International at that period was concentrated around the struggle against the danger of war. Taking their inspiration from the Manifesto issued by the Founding Congress, the different sections of the Fourth International were insisting on the following ideas : The "democratic" imperialists and the "fascist" imperialists were actively preparing for a new war. The reason for it would not be the defense of "democracy" against "fascism," or of some new "poor Belgium" (in this case, Czechoslovakia) against "aggression," but the internal contradictions of imperialism as a whole. Only the class action of the proletariat and of the oppressed peoples would be able to stop the fascism and war engendered by capitalism.

Just as during the First World War, it was necessary to stand resolutely up against "social-patriotism," against class collaboration, while distinguishing the eventuality of the USSR, a workers' state, being involved in an inter-imperialist war, as well as the case of colonial countries standing up against imperialism.

The correctness of such a line did not have to wait long to be strikingly verified, on the one hand by the compromise concluded by the "democratic" bourgeoisies with the "fascist" bourgeoisies at the time of the Munich Agreement, and on the other hand by the spectacular reversal operated by Stalin with the German-Soviet rapprochement. It was Leon Trotsky who first expressed the hypothesis of such a possible rapprochement between Stalin and Hitler, in October 1938.

Soon after, the international press began also to glimpse this possibility. On March 6th 1939, Trotsky again discussed the possibility of a Stalin-Hitler agreement, and endeavored to clarify its significance. Just a few days later (March 10th) there was held

the XVIIIth Congress of the CP of the USSR, in which Stalin presented a report. Manuilsky, suddenly baptized "secretary" of the Communist International in place of Dimitrov, who suffered an unexplained eclipse, also spoke in the name of the International. The two speeches were most extraordinary, characteristic of the cynical opportunism of the Stalinist leadership.

The two orators, who were speaking almost at the very moment when the Spanish revolution was undergoing a last humiliation at Madrid, turned over to the Franquists by the military junta presided over by "Comrade Miaja" (6), the military hero of the Popular Front and a member of the Spanish Communist Party, did not even mention the Spanish defeat. It was as if the Spanish revolution and its tragic end had never existed ! Stalin in particular did not even deign to breathe a word about the policy of the "Popular Front," reserving all his eloquence for an unexpected indictment of the democratic states and bourgeoisies, his allies of the day before, and for undissimulated advances, this time toward the fascist states !

Discovering "inter-imperialist antagonisms," he explained that the roots of inter-imperialist rivalries between the Axis powers on the one hand and the "democracies" on the other must be sought in the "unjust" Treaty of Versailles imposed by the imperialist victors of the First World War ! Getting into step with him, Manuilsky criticized the policy of Popular Fronts for having aided "certain tendencies of rightist opportunism" which "idealized the role of the so-called democratic states and blurred their imperialist character" !

In his usual way, Stalin, observing the obvious failure of his Popular Front policy, and being engaged in bringing about a rapprochement with Hitler, unloaded all errors and defeats on his subordinates, and, without any self-criticism, moved on to the directly opposite policy !

Meanwhile the trend toward war was speeding up extremely. In March 1939 Hitler entered Prague and practically annexed Czechoslovakia ; in April, Mussolini annexed Albania, and London mobilized.

In the United States, Roosevelt was putting the last touches to war mobilization plans and openly took a position for the use of "force against force." He thus encouraged England and France in their feverish preparations for war against the Axis powers. The news coming from the International during these

(6) Who was General José Miaja, President of the "Madrid Defense Council," who turned over the capital to Franco, and whom the Stalinists continued to cover up ? "The President of the famous Madrid Defense Commission, Comrade Miaja, is a member of the Communist Party. His work, with that of his colleagues, will enter into history !" wrote the official organ of the Communist International, *Imprekor*, dated 6 February 1937.

months concerned the activity of the Trotskyist organizations in the United States, in France, in Canada, in China, and in Indochina. In this last-mentioned country the Trotskyist leader Ta-Tu-Thau was freed from his jail sentence and soon after (April 1938) triumphantly elected, with his whole slate, in the Cochinchina elections

The flirtation between Hitler and Stalin was continuing. After Dimitrov, theoretician of the Popular Front (replaced by Manuilsky who was discovering the virtues of Nazi Germany), Litvinov, who for years had directed the diplomacy of the "Democratic Front for Peace," was eliminated and replaced by Molotov (May 1939). The summer began under the auspices of the Dantzig crisis and Hitler's threats to Poland.

On August 21st 1939, Hitler announced the non-aggression" pact concluded with Stalin !

Far from preventing the war, this pact, deeply disorienting the world proletariat (which had not expected in spite of everything such a spectacular reversal by the Kremlin), and encouraging the Nazis, in reality only rendered the unleashing of the conflict an immediate question from then on.

In order to attack Poland and carry on the war against France and England, Hitler needed the benevolent "neutrality" of the USSR, and its raw materials, Trotsky declared to the press on September 4th 1939. The political and commercial pact now concluded assures Hitler of both.

The next day, Friday, September 5th, the Second World War had begun.

What was, then, the policy urged by the Fourth International in the face of this war ?

The question has its importance both with reference to the attitude of the International during the development of the second world-wide conflict, in which after 1941 the USSR itself was involved, and with reference to the divergences that arose within the International itself.

II

From the Outbreak of the War (September 1939) to the Assassination of Leon Trotsky (August 1940)

The war question had been a very early concern of the Fourth International. Indeed, from the time that Hitler sprang to power in Germany, Trotsky had concluded that the Second World War had become thenceforth almost inevitable. He did not, for all that, stop calling the proletariat to the revolutionary struggle in both the fascist capitalist states and in the "democratic" countries, since only such a struggle had any chance of turning back the trend toward war by the victory of the revolution.

In June 1934, a fundamental document of our

movement, entitled "The War and the Fourth International," defined its essential positions on the war in preparation (7). The document correctly foresaw that the new war would begin as an *inter-imperialist war* between two blocs of imperialist countries, the "rich ones", the Treaty of Versailles victors on the one side, and the "poor ones," those vanquished by this treaty or those in an inferior position in the dividing up of the world, on the other. The goal of such a war would be, as during the first world-wide conflict, the "redivision of the world" among the great imperialist powers.

Nevertheless, the document specified, any great war, independently of its initial motives, must inevitably raise the question of a military intervention against the USSR for the purpose of transfusing fresh blood into the sclerotic veins of capitalism.

The document then took up again the classic arguments that Lenin had developed at the time of the First World War (8) against the social-patriotic slogans of "national defense," "defense of democracy," and "defense of small or neutral nations," and polemicized against their being served up again, warmed over in the sauce of the new circumstances, by Social-Democratic advocates, centrists of every kidney, and those of the Stalinist Third International.

That International, already the completely docile servant of the diplomacy of the Soviet bureaucracy, was attempting to solve questions as important as those of war and peace by opportunist key-formulae like "general disarmament" and "rejection of aggression" !

The document concretely foresaw the eventuality of the USSR getting involved in an inter-imperialist war as the ally of one of the two blocs of states in the fight. It admitted that the USSR, as a state that was isolated and weakened as a result of the repeated defeats of the proletariat caused by the Stalinist leadership, had the right to conclude an alliance with this or that imperialist state, and even with this or that camp of imperialist states. But the proletariat and its parties must preserve their independence in relation to these imperialist allies of the USSR. Far from idealizing them in any manner whatsoever, the proletariat must fight them in case of war by a Leninist attitude, one of *revolutionary defeatism, advocated equally in both camps.*

By *revolutionary defeatism*, the document, taking as its models Lenin and the Third International in his time, understood : *the carrying out by the proletariat, in case of war, of a revolutionary policy against its own bourgeoisie, independently of possible consequences of this policy on the military front, its*

(7) Theses issued by the International Secretariat, dated 10 June 1934, at Geneva.

(8) In this connection, vide Zinoviev's collection, *Against the Stream.*

weakening and even collapse. Military defeats of its bourgeoisie, resulting from the development of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, would be preferable and more favorable to the final goal of the Revolution than the knuckling-under of the proletariat in a sacred union."

The alliance of any given imperialist country with the USSR must nowise alter this conduct of the proletariat ; it would, however, call for a certain difference in *practical tasks* in the case of a proletariat of a country at war with the USSR. In the case of an allied country, the proletariat must not, for example, sabotage the transport of arms destined for the USSR, whereas in the case of a country fighting against the USSR, all forms of action, including sabotages, are permitted and even necessary.

The document concluded with an analysis of the idea that the struggle against the war in preparation was in reality synonymous with the struggle for the formation and strengthening of a new revolutionary International : the Fourth International.

On August 9th 1937 in his article "Before the New World War," Trotsky became more affirmative as to the eventuality of a new inter-imperialist conflict. He even set the date with considerable exactness : in one or two years. The war, Trotsky said in this article, would begin between the states who were defenders and those who were adversaries of the status quo, but, once begun, it would rapidly degenerate into a fight for a new division of the world, including of the USSR.

As for the USSR's chances of survival, despite its international isolation and the terrible errors and crimes committed by the Stalinist regime in the USSR itself, Trotsky wrote :

Everything leads us to believe that if all of humanity is not thrown back into barbarism, the social bases of the soviet régime (the new forms of property and planned economy) will resist the ordeal of the war and even come out of it strengthened.

He reaffirmed this same position in the article he wrote just on the eve of the war's outbreak, 2 September 1939, on "The War and the Soviet-Nazi Pact."

The last official stand of the International on the Second World War before the USSR entered the conflict, and just before Trotsky's assassination, was that contained in the Manifesto of the "Emergency" Conference held the 19th and 20th May 1940 in the United States.

This international conference was called on the initiative of the Trotskyist organizations of the United States, Mexico, and Canada, with the participation also of representatives of the Trotskyist organizations of Germany, Belgium, Spain, Cuba, Argentina, Chile, and Puerto Rico. Its principal document was its manifesto, titled "The Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution," in which the Fourth International

restated its previous positions on the war and its will "not to change course," as Trotsky wrote soon after in an article under that title.

Indeed, the pressure caused by Hitler's spectacular victories was at that moment enormous and weighed heavily, including even on our own ranks. Let us briefly recall the evolution of events following on the declaration of war.

After the invasion of Poland in September 1939, there followed in December of the same year the invasion of Finland by Stalin. The League of Nations, dominated by Stalin's "democratic" ex-allies, took a position against the USSR. In March 1940 Finland, after an unexpected resistance, was led to ask peace from the Kremlin. In April 1940 Norway was jointly invaded by the "allies" and by Germany.

In May 1940 there began the French defeat and the occupation of France. The battle of continental Europe was practically won by Hitler, and his shadow was already spreading over England.

Hitler promised Europe's subject peoples centuries of "German peace," and the effect of his lightning-like victories was so great that people wondered how far and how long the Nazi steam-roller would roll.

The atmosphere of demoralization in the ranks of the workers' movement was lowering, aggravated by the terrible ambiguity maintained by the attitude of the USSR as ally of the Nazis.

For, in fact, the good entente between Hitler and Stalin continued. In November 1939 the Third International, by an article of Dimitrov, resurrected for this purpose, and by a manifesto, ratified the policy of rapprochement with Hitler. Dimitrov in his article picked up some arguments put forward a few days previously by Molotov (declarations of 31 October 1939). Molotov had said that Germany was fighting for the earliest possible end of the war and for peace, whereas England and France were for the continuation of the war and opposed to making peace. Dimitrov "theorized" these arguments, by establishing "two stages" : in the first, Hitler was "the aggressor" ; in the second, it was England and France who had gone over to the offensive against Germany, whereas the latter was now calling for "peace" !

The Manifesto of the Third International was, for its part, entirely aimed against the "democracies," ex-allies of the USSR, and did not breathe a word against Hitler !

In December 1939 Stalin, replying to Hitler's greetings on his birthday, declared that "the friendship of the peoples of Germany and of the USSR, *cemented by blood* [sic !], had all the preconditions for being prolonged and stabilized" !

It is true that, despite this scandalous policy toward Hitler, the Kremlin was not at all reassured about Hitler's final secret intentions, and tried to find guarantees against a possible sudden reversal by its new ally. The invasion of Finland, like the later inva-

sion of the Baltic countries in July 1940, was to a large extent determined by this fear.

After the defeat of France in June 1940, there could be discerned even a sort of slow withdrawal of the Stalinist policy toward Hitler, more perceptible at the beginning in the attitude of the Communist Parties of the United States and of England, which announced a new turn in the Kremlin's policy toward Hitler, who had become too powerful and, from this point of view, more to be feared than ever.

It remains none the less true that a terrible uneasiness was weighing on the international workers' movement, cast down by the defeats and betrayals of its traditional leaderships. This uneasiness had its repercussions, including within the ranks of the Fourth International, as we shall soon see.

For the moment let us concentrate on the stand of the Emergency Conference on the war question, at the moment when Hitler's victory became overwhelming. Was that a reason for the Fourth International to "change its course," to abandon its policy of "revolutionary defeatism" applicable in both camps, and to line up for example on the side of the "democracies" against fascism?

The Conference resolutely answered No. Despite the fact that the Manifesto was written "at a moment when, after overwhelming Holland and Belgium, the German armies are rolling like a tide of fire toward Paris and the Channel," the task posed by History remained always "not to support one part of the imperialist system against the other, but to put an end to the system as a whole."

The Manifesto foresaw the involvement of the USSR in the war as inevitable. In this case the war on the part of the USSR would be a *just war* (as in the case also of a colony fighting against its imperialism), and *it was necessary to defend the USSR unconditionally against imperialism*. But that would not give the right to extend this characterization of "just war" to include the USSR's possible imperialist allies.

Among the most important parts of the Manifesto are those which defined the meaning of the defense of the USSR, despite the crimes of Stalin committed in his operations in Poland and in Finland, by his alliance in general with the Nazis and against the international proletariat, and his tyrannical reign in the USSR itself.

The class-conscious worker, the Manifesto declared, knows that a successful struggle for complete emancipation is unthinkable without the defense of conquests already gained, however modest these may be.

In the case of the USSR, these conquests were called *the statified and planned economy that it was necessary to defend independently of this or that policy of Stalin* ("unconditionally") against imperialism.

The defense of the USSR, in this sense, was tied up with the defense also of all colonies against imperialism.

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries the struggle for an independent national state, the Manifesto proclaimed, and consequently the "defense of the fatherland," is different in principle from that of the imperialist countries. The revolutionary proletariat of the whole world gives unconditional support to the struggle of China and India for national independence, for this struggle, "by tearing the backward people out of the Asiatic system, particularism and foreign bondage, strikes powerful blows at imperialism." (Quoted from *War and the Fourth International*.)

The struggle for the national independence of the colonies, the Manifesto of the Emergency Conference further added, is, from the point of view of the revolutionary proletariat, only a transitional stage on the road to drawing the backward countries into the international socialist revolution.

The Manifesto accorded much importance to the revolutionary developments which the imperialist war, already begun, would not fail to produce in the colonies, especially in China, India, and Latin America. It concluded with the need of profiting by the war to bring about the victory of the world socialist revolution.

In contradistinction to the policy of the Second or the Third International, the Fourth International, the Manifesto declared, built its policy, not on the military ups-and-down of the capitalist states, but on the transformation of the imperialist war into a war of the workers against the capitalists, on the overthrow of the owning classes of all countries, on the world socialist revolution.

Independently of the course of the war, we fulfill our basic task: we explain to the workers the irreconcilability between their interests and the interests of bloodthirsty capitalism; we mobilize the toilers against imperialism; we propagate the unity of the workers in all warring and neutral countries; we call for the fraternization of workers and soldiers within each country, and of soldiers with soldiers on the opposite side of the battle front; we mobilize the women and youth against the war; we carry on constant, persistent, tireless preparation of the revolution—in the factories, in the mills, in the villages, in the barracks, at the front, and in the fleet.

This is our programme. Proletarians of the world, there is no other way out except to unite under the banner of the Fourth International!

And it is fundamentally this line of the Manifesto of the Emergency Conference that has in general lighted the path that the Fourth International has followed since the Second World War.

[to be continued]

THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE ALGERIAN REVOLUTION

PREFATORY NOTE

The fact that the bourgeois press occasionally reports the trials in Algeria of Communist Party members accused of aiding the Algerian people to free itself from the French colonial yoke is likely to mislead the uninformed concerning Stalinist policy toward the Algerian anti-imperialist struggle. The militants of the Algerian C P are far to the left of its leadership, which is in turn to the left of that of the French C P, whose behavior toward the fight for Algerian liberation can be characterized only as hypocritical and scandalous.

The straight facts, set out in the following document, require no repetition here. What does need stressing, however, is the effort of the French Stalinist leadership to play simultaneously on two keyboards, to eat its cake and have it. At rare intervals, it isolatedly pastes up a poster

objecting in a routine way to the continued slaughter in Algeria, or casually calls for a quite unprepared and unorganized day of protest — just enough “to make the record.” But in reality it has not lifted a finger to help the fighters for Algerian freedom by a genuine mobilization of the broad masses of French workers still under its influence, or by practical aid — even to the extent of mimeographing a communiqué for the police-hounded French Federation of the FLN (National Liberation Front).

Faced with the French CP's double-faced attempt to corral credit for backing the fight for Algerian independence, the bitter cup of the Algerian nationalists recently overflowed, and the French Federation of the FLN issued an official document exposing the real record of the French C P. In the interests of historical clarification, we are reprinting below this document of well-justified protest.

THE DOCUMENT

This text that we are submitting to French opinion is more an attempt at clarification than a negative or impassioned criticism of the French Communist Party concerning its Algerian policy.

We are duty-bound to specify a certain number of historical and political points on which the French CP up until now has not behaved according to what would be demanded by the principle that it claims to hold: unconditional support for the struggle of oppressed people against imperialism.

In view of the assertions of the leaders of the French Communist Party, it has become necessary, indispensable, to place clearly the responsibilities that weigh on their shoulders concerning the immobilization of the social strata they control or influence.

In emphasizing the gap between action and political thought and the reality of facts, which characterize the attitude of the French C P in face of the Algerian Revolution, we are conscious of helping the French workers to a better understanding of the deep nature of the Franco-Algerian conflict. For in the long run the attitude of the French people in its constituent parts will not be devoid of consequences upon the future relations between Algeria and France.

The publication by *France-Observateur* of articles taken from the *Moudjahid* and of an article by Jean Amrouche, has been the pretext for the French CP to justify once more its Algerian policy. An article by Elie Mignot in *France Nouvelle* opened the debate. The following week there appeared in the same organ an article by Léon Feix, a member of the CP's Political Bureau and a “specialist” in colonial matters. The text begins with a mild review of Jean Amrouche whom Léon Feix reproaches for having forgotten “that the natural friends of the colonial peoples are the

metropolitan working class and its party.” Let us take up again, therefore, the positions of the French CP, which is not to be confused with the French working class, and let us examine how this line in question—solidarity with oppressed people—is applied in fact.

In January 1958 and until the 12th of March a great hope was stirred in the Algerian people by the awakening of the French people and of its courageous actions (demonstrations in the Gare de Lyon, in Rouen, Grenoble...).

The attitude of the mobilized reservists seemed to contradict the pessimism of those who brought up 1937 and the banning of L'Etoile Nord-Africaine, or 1945 and the slaughter in the region of Constantine. The events that followed were to show that the political apparatuses which officer and lead the working class have not learned anything from history and always know how to overcome the upsurges that could turn the solidarity of the working class with the colonial peoples into a living and lasting reality. On March 12th, the French CP, which did not wish to sacrifice “the whole”, i e, the alliance with the Socialists whose “anti-colonialism” was displayed during the whole war in Indochina, and in the persons of officials in Africa such as Naegelen, Bécharde...) to “the part,” i e, the struggle against the war in Algeria, voted for the extra-constitutional military laws. That put an end to an illusion.

A REMINDER OF SOME SLOGANS

On November 1st 1954 the radio announced that a series of attacks had taken place in Algeria. The armed struggle was beginning. On November 8th 1954, the French CP issued a communiqué in which,

according to a process of thought we shall often find again, it admitted that "a problem of a national character" (a fine euphemism) was being raised in Algeria, in order to get away with its disavowal of the movement. It wrote :

Holding fast to Lenin's teaching, the French CP, which could not approve a resort to individual acts liable to play into the worst colonialists' hands, if indeed they were not provoked by these very elements, assures the Algerian people of the solidarity of the French working class in its mass struggle against repression and for the defense of its rights.

Léon Feix, commenting this statement in an article (*Cahiers du Communisme*, February 1955) casts light on it as follows :

The Communists send a warning to the working class and to the masses against what runs the risk of causing them to deviate from their essential aim or weakening them in their struggle, especially in falling into the enemy's traps or in facilitating his plans in any manner whatsoever.

The platform of action proposed by the French CP to the French masses shows its absolute lack of understanding of the meaning of our struggle.

Our people, unanimously, leaving the old organizations, was mobilizing itself to claim a right to live as a nation, and the French CP put forward the following hodge-podge of slogans : "defense of the material demands of the Algerian workers (family grants, etc...) ; struggle against repression and for an amnesty ; support for the well-grounded demands for the liberty of the Algerian people." Passing over almost in silence the existence of the National Liberation Front — its leading role and the support that the masses gave it — the Communist press for months was to refer to "Algerian patriots," "negotiations with authorized representatives." On the other hand, it published euphoric statements about the role of the Algerian CP, which, repaying the courtesy, adopted the French CP slogans in Algeria. A dialogue was established between the French CP leaders ...and their mirror.

The January 2nd 1956 election took place. It showed what everyone knew : the expression of the possibilities latent in the French masses for carrying on an anti-colonial struggle. On March 2nd 1956, the Political Bureau of the French CP issued a statement which was to be the basis of the French CP struggle at a time it counted on emerging from its isolation.

We are in favor of the existence and the permanence of special political, economic, and cultural bonds between France and Algeria... A radical change in policy is needed. It is necessary to desire to restore peace in Algeria. There are no other ways of achieving it than to negotiate first with those against whom the fighting is waged, in order quickly to reach a general cease-fire

under freely debated conditions, a cessation of repression. and the release of all prisoners. This would allow the opening of loyal negotiations between the French government and the representatives of all the currents of the national movement, of all the social strata of the Algerian population without distinction of origin.

What does such a communiqué contain ?

1) "Durable bonds." For is there a better way of admitting the famous "right to divorce" than by emphasizing "the union" ?

2) "A cease-fire without a political prerequisite." Concerning Algeria the French CP is not as firm as the Front since the very interests of the Algerian people and its aspirations are at stake.

3) An implicit negation of the existence of "valid counter-spokesmen." Not a word about the National Liberation Front. Better still, the fighters with whom a cease-fire will be concluded are differentiated from the representatives of all the currents of the national movement, which are carefully not named.

4) Lastly, the political demand is expressed by one of those formulæ wrought with a great care for shadings of meaning, which is found in every article : "the national fact in Algeria."

Months went by. The prospect of the United Front grew fainter. The sacrifice of the "part" to the "whole" does not seem to have furthered the latter ; worse, it has postponed it. 1957 was to be the year of the compromise. In October, at the Cirque d'Hiver, Maurice Thorez exclaimed :

It is known that we have clear ideas about this problem : recognition of the Algerian nation and of its right to independence ; discussion with the Algerian people to establish new relations, freely negotiated and profitable [sic] to both countries. But we do not ask other parties to fall in with our point of view. It is a question of coming to an agreement on a programme acceptable for all. It is a question of working out a compromise advantageous for the country.

The French leaders refused to negotiate with the National Liberation Front — never mind, the French CP is a counter-spokesman that does not make a prerequisite of independence. So is was to propose a platform whose only result would be to develop in France a belief in the Algerian patriots' intransigence. For, after all, what is a compromise but an agreement in which everyone proposes to give up something ? Now what is the French CP ready to give up, if not the right to Independence itself — a right on which no Algerian patriot would ever yield.

SLOGANS AND ACTION

The different slogans launched by the French CP since November 1st 1954 and their evolution in relation to the progress of our Revolution found an expression

on the plane of action in the refusal of the struggle and in the negation in fact of the so-called "unconditional support for colonial peoples." Solidarity with the Algerian workers in emigration in France has been almost nil. No demonstration or action found support other than words among the workers' organizations. Against the repression that is every day striking at our compatriots, no struggle has been organized.

True, here and there the solidarity of the French workers manifests itself. It remains, however, individual and up till now, has never taken on the aspect of organized action. Recent instances are a proof of this. Algerian trade-unionists are put under arrest and transferred to Algeria. The event rates only a few discreet lines in *l'Humanité*.

In 1955-1956, workers' demonstrations against the call-up of reservists ran up against underhand opposition by the French CP. *L'Humanité* denounced the "leftists," the "provocateurs," of Grenoble; and did not call for extending the action, offered no slogan at all to the soldiers who were going off to preserve the colonialists' privileges, and long kept silent about the gesture of those who, like Liéchi, refused to bear arms against our people. The vote in favor of the extra-constitutional powers was followed by a deep sleep marked by the constant aggravation of the war and its horrors.

"The vote of the extra-constitutional powers is a capital that we must make bear fruit," Léon Feix declared with a straight face. The resultant immobilization from March 1957 to October 1957 was the bitter fruit of this "capital."

The alibi demonstration of October 17th 1957 showed the regression in the consciousness of the French toiling masses toward the Algerian problem, a regression confirmed by the still greater failure of the "week for Algeria" started by the FSM and taken up by the CGT.

THE THEORETICAL BASES OF FRENCH CP POLICY

A) *The French Union*

The first characteristic of the French CP's attitude toward the colonial question is to shout *urbi et orbi* that the interest of oppressed peoples is to remain tied to their metropolitan country: "the right to divorce does not entail the obligation to divorce," writes Maurice Thorez who draws the conclusion of the necessity of union. This way of seeing things betrays an under-evaluation of, if not scorn for, liberation movements in colonies, and the intention to use them as contributory forces for French movements. Before the war the union was necessary in North Africa, for instance, because of the "Franquist or Italian pretensions."

Today the same applies on account of "the pretensions of American imperialism." In 1945 in Syria and Lebanon it was Anglo-Saxon imperialism which

justified criticisms against the liberation movement. If the contradictions between French imperialism and its supposed rivals are always resolved for colonial peoples on behalf of French imperialism, then indeed the right to divorce vanishes, for these contradictions will disappear only when colonizing imperialism itself does. It is in fact to deny the colonies the right to separation, hence to self-determination. What would have become of Syria and of Lebanon today had they considered it their interest to remain tied to France? Let us continue the analysis of the French CP's texts. In his speech to the Assembly on March 20th 1957, Laurent Casanova clearly summed up this policy:

Our party takes the following complementary factual data into account. First, the existence of historical bonds between France and Algeria. Next, the presence on African soil for several generations of an Algerian population of French and European origin whose interests have nothing to do with colonialism. Lastly, the aid that newly emancipated peoples require to make up the backwardness imposed on them by the colonial regime.

Starting from such premises, the French CP declared itself in favor (Fajon, April 13th 1954) "of the existence of lasting bonds between France and Algeria in the political, economic, and cultural domains, within a genuine French Union." In 1956, in the *Cahiers du Communisme*, Léon Feix specified the theoretical bases of the French CP's attitude.

Some nationalist leaders advocate the fusion of the three countries in an Arab or Moslem Maghreb, tied up with all the Moslem or Arab countries, from Morocco to Pakistan. That is an old idea of the Arab League, taken up and stimulated by the leading bourgeois circles of Cairo and Karachi. A long time ago Lenin and Stalin showed the inevitably reactionary character of currents based on race or on religion. It is quite natural that the Algerians, the Tunisians, and the Moroccans entertain fraternal feelings for one another. It is equally natural that they feel strongly drawn to the peoples of the Near and Middle East, owing both to the community of religion and the similarity of language, and to the support which they have received from these peoples during these last years.

But that does not justify a political community against which so many historical, geographical, and economic elements work. Another way is available, or better, still available, for the peoples of North Africa: the way of the French Union. It would not be possible to get into so few lines more historical untruths and political blindness. Let us examine the real content of these writings.

1) *The concrete historical bonds between France and Algeria*

What are they save bonds created by colonialism?—and were such bonds a justification for denying Algeria

separation from France, then a colony must never separate from its metropolitan country, for this kind of historical bond exists between all metropolitan countries and their colonies. And if we must talk about real historical bonds, we beg to evoke, beside those created among the three countries by the community of language and of culture, those created by the community of struggle against French colonialism. To compare the support of the Moroccan and Tunisian peoples for our struggle with that of the French people shows in facts and not merely in theory which are our main natural allies.

2) *Aid to newly emancipated peoples*

So, then, tyrannical colonialism, scarcely defeated, would be transformed into a loyal guardian? The experience of Tunisia and of Morocco every day demonstrates the aberration of such views. A colony which obtains its political independence must also secure its economic independence. To do so, its interest is to remain free of bonds and to use offers only with regard to its own interests, "to avoid the bondages of tête-à-tête relations." As for the "political bonds," the lack of content leaves it a mere abstraction unless the French CP implies (and in that case it must be explicitly said) federative bonds.

This orientation, whose jingoist and flag-waving aspect has not escaped the notice of anyone, save its authors, appeals to equivocal and confused notions such as "French greatness" or "the legitimate interests of France."

Etienne Fajon thus expresses himself when he asserts that the maintenance of Algeria within the French orbit is "the interest of France and the guarantee of its keeping its rank as a great power." Maurice Thorez thus expresses himself when he presents the victories of oppressed peoples as so many defeats for France :

Ten years, and longer, ago, we were asking for the establishment of other relations than colonial relations between France and overseas countries. Our voice was not heard and the results of the imperialist policy have been what everyone knows in Syria and in Lebanon, then in Viet-Nam, and now in Morocco.

And he adds these phrases that our brothers, who are suffering from the barbarity of the French military hordes, duly appreciate :

Fortunately the great mass of the army — the men of the annual draft, the majority of the non-coms and officers even up to some generals — demonstrate their indignation against these fascist methods [it is only a question of tortures]. Even General Navarre protests today against the tasks which the army has been made to do.

B) *Algeria, a nation in formation*

In the case of Algeria, the theory of the French Union has been propped up by the theory of Algeria, a nation in formation. Restored to its historical

context, this thesis was to be used as a barrier against nationalism and the demand for independence. To get a fuller understanding of its meaning, let us refer to Maurice Thorez's speech as it is published in his complete works.

a) *Anti-historical content :*

From a reading of this speech, it seems that Algeria is an accumulation of different peoples and races, each of them contributing equally to the whole. Neither the decisive influence of Arab civilization, nor what our country was in 1830, is taken into account. An amusing parenthesis to show how the Frenchmen of Algeria are characterized: "Frenchmen, and what Frenchmen ! Frenchmen of the French lands of Corsica and of Savoy, from the land of Alsace who emigrated in 1871 so as not become Prussians." (1)

Ignorance of the history of Algeria serves as a foundation for theoretical concoction.

In 1830, the Algerian state existed, recognized on the international plane till 1847. The national consciousness was shown by a resistance which lasted scores of years, a consciousness similar in many respects to that of Egypt under Mohammed Ali or that of Morocco under Sidi Abderrahmane. To deny existence to the Algerian nation is to pass over a territorial, historical, linguistic, and cultural unity which colonialism has not been able to destroy.

Today there is on the one hand French imperialism which conquered Algeria by arms, and on the other a nation which wants to regain its liberty by arms.

The problem remains that of an implanted European minority in no way assimilated to the Algerian nation. To note such a factual situation, far from depreciating the doings of certain Europeans, magnifies them. To assimilate such a minority to the remainder of the Algerian people, is deliberately to ignore its "poor white" character and the benefit it draws from the colonial status.

It is to bind the liberation movement to the destiny of this minority and to compel it to wait for an integration impossible within the colonial framework. Does the existence of a minority bring into question the very existence of a nation? Whether the French of Algeria are brought to assimilate to the nation, as the National Liberation Front proposes, or coexist as a foreign minority, that nowise changes the reality of Algeria as a nation.

b) *Assimilationism :*

If it is possible for the French in Alsace and Lorraine to have a special religious status... why, once having admitted it in the light of French unity, could we not grant it to Moslems in Algeria for the same reason?

c) *Confusionism :*

To unite all men who wish to live freely... all the French of France and all the French of

(1) The Alsations were settled in Algeria on lands confiscated from Algerians following on the 1871 National Uprising.

Algeria, the naturalized French, the Israelites, and you too, Arabs and Berber Moslems, all the sons united by ties of blood or at least by the heart of the great French Revolution.

d) *Retreat from the national demand* :

We acknowledge the right to a free life as individuals of a collectivity to the Algerians : French by birth, Arabs, Berbers, or Jews (2).

e) *Ridicule* :

There are French citizens who have a particular personal status. I am very well acquainted with a Senegalese negro deputy, Citizen Galandou Diouf, concerning whom the Paris press informed us that he had just brought to Paris his youngest, sixth, wife. If it is possible for the Senegalese Galandou Diouf to be polygamous and at the same time both a French citizen and a deputy, why would it not be possible for the Moslems of Algeria ? Why two laws and measures ?

The theory of the nation in formation, taken up after November 1st 1954, has been used to justify advice against armed action. Indeed, is it possible to approve of it if its echo in the masses is doubted, and how can this echo be believed in, if the national consciousness is evaluated on the basis of the European minority and the progress of integration among the ethnic elements living on Algerian soil ? History is not waiting for the French CP ideologists' convenience to shatter these inadequate schemata. In view of the strength of the Liberation Movement, it became difficult to maintain certain myths. It is thus that Maurice Thorez, who for years contended that without integration between Europeans and Algerians, no Algerian nation would be formed, on February 15th 1957 declared the integration to have been carried out and the Algerian nation constituted, whereas the quasi-totality of the Europeans had rallied around the colonialists.

CONCLUSIONS

A gap between action and political thought on the one hand, and between political thought and factual reality on the other, comes from the French CP's purely and simply adopting a policy of blocs. The French CP does not hesitate, and has never hesitated, to transform itself into a contributory force for colonialist or neo-colonialist circles when they agree with it as to a parliamentary regrouping around certain objectives of foreign policy. History attests this. At the expense of colonial peoples there were brought about :

1) the Popular Front, for it was necessary not to displease the Radical-Socialists, opposed to Germany... till 1940 ;

2) the Socialist-Communist-Gaullist unity from 1945 to 1947 (Sétif, Madagascar, Haïphong) ;

(2) Guy Mollet said nothing different in his speech of March 12th 1956.

3) the unity against the European Defense Community in the vote for Naegelen as President of the Republic ;

4) the attempt at unity around Guy Mollet in 1956, and the vote of extra-constitutional powers.

Now, in 1958, we are witnessing this parody in which the French CP hurls itself against atomic war and considers the struggle against the war in Algeria, which mobilizes 600,000 men, as an objective of secondary importance. And Monsieur Thorez very coolly states : "The people of France love peace." The French CP wishes to be considered as the outstanding anti-colonialist party.

The Algerians have good grounds for believing that, if unity had been brought about in 1956 (the Communists taking part in the gouvernement), their country would have been used as small change for bargaining. The early part of the war in Indochina is a proof of this. Up until March 1947 the Communists never blocked the vote of the military credits. Far better, was not Jacques Duclos seen to bow in homage to the suffering and the spirit of self-sacrifice "of the expeditionary corps" (March 8th 1947) ? It is true that at the time colonialism was for Monsieur Duclos not "the external expression of relationships of internal oppression, but a system with its good and bad aspects." At the National Assembly on March 18th 1947, he exclaimed :

Just as it is false, so also it would be unfair, not to take facts into account, and not to stress the inescapable difference between civilizing actions which were carried out in the overseas territories, and less civilizing actions, as much it would be unfair to deny that colonialist excesses were committed ; if these acts had not existed, why should have we felt it necessary to condemn colonialism in our Constitution ?... I say this because it is also a question of tact with regard to the population of oversea territories.

These populations must be spoken to in a language they can understand. We must not heap all the faults upon them and adorn ourselves with all the virtues. Here also facts must be taken into account.

Such oratorical variations give food for thought about the ideological level of some people.



The just fight of the Algerian people for its independence is the best demonstration of Democracy in action. As such it is a help and an example for those who, all over the world, wish to live as free men. Whatever be the obtusenesses of some, the inconsistencies of others, our glorious people, aroused and led by the National Liberation Front, will bring the fight to its final outcome : the foundation of a Democratic and Social Algerian Republic.

2 February 1958

INDIA SINCE 1947

By AN INDIAN MARXIST

India achieved independence from British imperialism in August 1947 more as a historical accident than as a result of a planned anti-imperialist revolution. Under the threat of nation-wide revolutionary upheavals, the imperialist rulers, economically weakened by the war and the post-war crisis, were forced to transfer political power to the Indian bourgeoisie.

It resulted in an overall compromise involving financial, political, and diplomatic deals of British imperialism with the Congress and the Moslem League representing the Indian bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes, who were equally frightened by the rapidly rising tempo of the revolutionary movement threatening to get out of their control. It led to the communal vivisection of the country between the Indian Union and Pakistan, thus disrupting a single national economy into two fragments and ensuring the continued operation of foreign capital in the sub-continent.

Although the political power was transferred, adequate opportunities were created for the British imperialists to continue to play a decisive role in the economies of India and Pakistan. Thus August 1947 ushered in a new era of rearranged partnership between imperialism and native capitalism.

The Indian bourgeoisie through its newly acquired state power has endeavored to unify and consolidate its own internal capitalist economy by trying to assimilate the former feudal princely class within the capitalist framework and by reorganising feudal land relations on capitalist lines. The bourgeoisie has relied mainly upon imperialist economic aid to stabilize itself. It has to some extent exploited the contradictions between the imperialist powers and the Soviet Union to bargain for advantages from both sides, while fundamentally aligning itself with the imperialist camp.

In fact, since 1947, the Indian bourgeoisie has entered into a more intimate partnership with British and American capital, as has been evident from the formation of several companies jointly financed by the Indian and Anglo-US capitalists. In these deals, however, there is still an overall subservience of the Indian capital to the British capital. The Indian rupee is still tied up with sterling and India has to regulate its export-import policy to subserve the needs of sterling, often even against the dollar. The Indian bourgeois state has to resort to such financial manipulations as devaluation of the rupee, raising of the bank rates, etc., to suit the needs of British finance capital from time to time. The Indian bourgeoisie,

still retains its link with the British Commonwealth.

There is, however, this difference : whereas in the pre-independence period, the Indian bourgeoisie had to struggle against imperialism to win certain privileges, today it can implement its own plans and policies with the help of the state apparatus at its disposal ; it can negotiate with imperialism on terms of political equality. It is a willing partnership of the Indian bourgeoisie with imperialism.

In recent years, US capital investments have been steadily growing in India. The Indian bourgeois state and private entrepreneurs have entered into a number of economic deals with the US Government and private firms for establishing certain industrial units (oil refineries, etc.) in India and for partly financing the Second Five-Year Plan. But the total amount of private American capital invested in India is still very small and cannot be regarded as a serious competitor to British capital. The Indian capitalists have also entered into independent economic and trade deals with other capitalist countries like France, West Germany, Japan, etc., but these deals are of small magnitude. There is growing awareness among the leaders of the Indian bourgeoisie that capitalism cannot be consolidated in this country without the active collaboration of foreign capitalists, especially in view of the acute shortage of capital goods experienced in India and the rapidly growing "cut-throat" competition in the world capitalist market.

The Indian capitalist state led by Nehru has also entered into trade relations with some countries of the Soviet bloc. But the volume of trade with the workers' states constitutes only a small fraction of India's trade with the capitalist countries. The Nehru regime has deliberately accepted technical and other assistance from the Soviet Union for developing certain key industries (steel plants, prospecting for oil, etc.) ; but this is more as a strategy to compel the unwilling imperialist powers to take greater interest in India's economic development.

POST-WAR PROSPERITY AND RECESSION

Indeed, the Second World War did strengthen the Indian bourgeoisie. The war broadened its base and to some extent made it a strong power in Asia. During the war years, the Indian capitalists reaped fabulous profits, entered into huge war contracts with the British government, and took advantage of the difficulties of Britain in maintaining normal trade relations with India, to exploit the indigenous market more

intensively. They also fattened on the war-time and post-war inflation which brought ruin to the peasantry and lower middle class in India.

Because of the virtual withdrawal of Japanese competition in the immediate post-war period, the Indian capitalists could gain new markets in Asia and Africa; they could also exploit the artificial boom created by the Korean war to dump their goods in those markets.

Having come into existence late in history and being relatively undeveloped, however, the Indian capitalist class could not take advantage of its post-war prosperity to consolidate its economy on a steady level. The industrial expansion in India even during the prosperous post-war period was insignificant as compared to the huge profits reaped by the industrialists. All attempts made by the bourgeois state since 1947 to cajole the capitalists into bringing out their hidden incomes to be invested in the industrial sector were greeted with the now familiar technique of "capital getting shy" and "capital on strike," etc. It is clear that the growth of backward Indian capitalism has not proceeded along the road of normal development as was the case with capitalism of the classical period in America and Europe.

Capitalism in an underdeveloped country like India can flourish only under abnormal conditions like war. In normal conditions capitalism can stabilize itself, to the limited extent possible under prevailing world conditions, only through a process of "state capitalism," i.e., the capitalist state and private capitalists sharing the responsibility of industrialization of the country. Unfettered free enterprise of the classical period is a myth under present-day capitalism, an admission coming even from the capitalist economists who today recognize the need for "stateization" of several sectors of the capitalist economy in the interest of its very survival. The so-called principle of "mixed economy" adopted by the Indian bourgeois state reflects this basic strategy of capitalism.

The short span of prosperity enjoyed by Indian capitalism is fast disappearing with the emergence once again of Japan as a serious competitor in the South Asian markets. The bourgeoisie has not succeeded in expanding the home market appreciably, because of the low purchasing power of the Indian people. Thus one is confronted with the sorry spectacle of several units in organized consumer-goods industries like textiles closing down at a time when the bourgeois state is making frantic efforts to industrialize the country. The Indian bourgeoisie is entering a period of deepening crisis.

BOURGEOIS STRATEGY

The industrial policy resolution adopted by the Congress government in 1948 and reiterated in 1956 reflects the basic economic strategy of the bourgeoisie to stabilize its economy under the present adverse

conditions. The resolution seeks to place on the state the responsibility of developing certain key industries like steel, power, mining, transport, communications, etc., which cannot be developed by private enterprise because of the huge capital investments required, heavy risks involved, and low profit margins realizable from them in the initial stages. At the same time these industries are vital for the very preservation of the national capitalist economy as a whole and to strengthen the bargaining position of the Indian capitalists in the world market.

The state-owned enterprises are so designed as to subserve the needs of the capitalist economy as a whole. Even the wages and service conditions in the public sector are deliberately kept low so as to prevent them from adversely affecting the exploitation of the working class in the private sector. Moreover, the direction and the control of the public sector remain in the hands of capitalist magnates or so-called experts and administrators who believe in capitalism.

Disguising this partial development of the Indian economy in the direction of "stateized" capitalism as one designed to establish a "socialist pattern of society," the bourgeois state in India led by the Congress Party is arming itself with a moral justification to suppress the resistance of the working class and other exploited masses to their increasing exploitation. The capitalist state is steadily curtailing the democratic liberties of the people by coercive means.

FIVE-YEAR PLANS

The Five-Year Plans of the Congress government are a device to strengthen and perpetuate weak Indian capitalism in the environment of a decaying world capitalist economy. It sought to implement these plans by intensifying the exploitation of the working class and by imposing greater burdens on the lower and the middle strata of the population through direct and indirect taxation and, above all, deficit financing. Foreign aid is another important feature of financing these plans.

Since these plans envisage salvaging capitalism at the expense of the masses, they are already creating resistance by the masses to the capitalist regime. Planning under capitalism is doomed to failure. Already the bourgeois state is experiencing serious difficulties in the implementation of its second Five-Year Plan; it is haunted by the dangers of inflation, by dwindling foreign exchange resources, and above all by the growing struggles of the masses for better living conditions. It is desperately trying to save its economy from the approaching catastrophe: on the one hand, by wooing the foreign capitalists into investing a larger share of capital in India, with the bait of liberal economic concessions, and, on the other, by resorting to such emergency measures as drastic import cuts, regulation of bank credits, and currency manipulations. Today it has become a serious struggle

for the bourgeois state to attain even the physical targets of the much boasted Second Plan, which is being pruned under pressure from a sector of the monopoly capitalists. These short-term measures, howsoever bold they may sound, cannot resolve the basic contradictions of backward Indian capitalism. They will only aggravate its crisis.

AGRARIAN POLICY

In the agricultural sphere, the capitalist state has attempted during the last decade to reform the old feudal land relations with the basic objective of reorganizing agriculture on capitalist lines. Its legislative measures to abolish feudal zamindari by a gradual process and by paying heavy compensation to landlords, have been halting and half-hearted because of the numerous ties of capitalism with the feudal landed interests. The basic objective of these land reforms, however, is admittedly to create a new class of capitalist farmers and rich peasant proprietors in the rural sector as a stable prop to the capitalist economy.

But the various measures introduced by the state to "bourgeoisify" the rural economy, instead of bringing relief to the rural poor, have further aggravated the class conflicts and contradictions in the countryside. The benefits from the various government schemes, such as community development projects, cheap credit facilities, supplies of improved seeds and manure at subsidized rates, have gone mainly to strengthen the newly emerging class of rich peasants or existing landowners. The poor peasants and share-cropping tenants who constitute the bulk of the rural population have derived practically no benefits from the land reforms of the Congress government. Wherever zamindari abolition acts have been passed by a legislature, the landlords have grabbed land by resorting to large-scale eviction of the tenants. There is a steady dislodgement from land of poor peasants and share-croppers whose conditions are further aggravated by their acute state of indebtedness and penury.

The statutory abolition of zamindari with payment of heavy compensation to the deprived landlords has imposed additional burdens on the actual tillers of the soil, who are made to pay the amounts of compensation by instalments. It is admitted in official government reports that in a large number of cases the tillers prefer to surrender their uneconomic holdings to the landlords rather than pay a compensation which is often beyond their means.

The agricultural workers who constitute about 30 % of the village population are completely outside the purview of the land reforms enacted by the Congress government. A large percentage of them, furthermore, who belong to the so-called scheduled castes and tribes ("untouchables"), are socially oppressed and are being virtually tyrannized by the landed interests in the villages. At present there are frequent

violent clashes between these "untouchable" village proletarians and the "upper caste" (touchable) landowners. These conflicts assume the distorted forms of communal or caste strife in the absence of proper political leadership. The rural proletariat in India which has so far remained unorganized is being drawn into the vortex of economic struggles, but at a time when it is confronting the prospect of being ejected from the land. This sector of the wage earners does not enjoy any legislative protection, not even a guaranteed minimum wage.

There is, in fact, a steady migration of the poor peasants and agricultural workers to urban centres in search of jobs, there to swell the already growing armies of the unemployed urban proletariat. The disastrous consequences of such a development on agricultural production can well be imagined—in spite of the hypocritical "grow-more-food" and other campaigns launched by the bourgeois state to boost food production. This new imbalance in the rural sector, more serious than ever before in the Indian economy, cannot be stalled off by the bourgeois state. Its claim to make India self-sufficient in food has remained a farce despite the colossal amounts spent by the government on irrigation and other land-development projects.

Thus it is obvious that the bourgeois leadership is unable to tackle the land problem in the real sense and harness the rich natural resources of India to develop agriculture on modern scientific lines. The peasant masses still continue to be exploited by usurious money lenders and unscrupulous merchants who manipulate the grain prices, invariably to the detriment of the peasant producers. The bourgeois leaders themselves are getting disillusioned about their ability to solve the food problem in the country. The only panacea they hold out is "population control." Meanwhile large tracts of arable land lie waste and several regions in the country continue to be haunted by famine and near-famine conditions. The American imperialists are utilizing the food problem as a bargaining counter to extort political concessions from the Indian bourgeoisie in return for their periodic grain "loans" and "gifts." Even the elementary problem of food has become a practical slogan of the socialist revolution in India.

INDIAN PECULIARITIES

While it is not denied that the Indian bourgeoisie suffers from all the inherent weaknesses of an underdeveloped capitalism, it would be a mistake to ignore some of its peculiar characteristics and distinguishing features. India is the most developed and stable national capitalist economy among the newly independent states of Asia and Africa. The Indian bourgeoisie, above all, has had the benefit of having one of the most experienced political leaderships — the Indian National Congress, built up by one of the

outstanding bourgeois leaders of the XXth century, Mahatma Gandhi. The bourgeois leaders of the Congress have provided the country with a stable political administration for the last ten years, in striking contrast to the "palace" revolutions witnessed among the ruling cliques in other Asian countries like Pakistan, Indonesia, Egypt, etc. This has added to the political prestige of the Congress leadership of the Indian bourgeoisie.

The leadership of the Indian bourgeoisie, moreover, has evolved a Constitution which, despite its numerous reactionary features, guarantees certain fundamental rights to the citizens within the matrix of capitalist property relations.

It has also been successful in holding two general elections in the country on the basis of adult franchise, with freedom to all political parties to participate. This has created an illusion in the minds of sections of the people that a parliamentary transition of Indian society from capitalism to socialism is possible. This illusion is being deliberately fostered by the Stalinist Communist Party and petty-bourgeois Social Democrats. It must, however, be noted that democratic liberties exist in India only de jure while they are being increasingly curtailed de facto by the bourgeois state in the interest of preserving capitalism. The democratic content of the capitalist state is steadily vanishing while only the democratic shell remains. Besides, the bourgeois state is armed with enough powers to suspend the constitution in an emergency.

It has been a masterly strategy on the part of the Congress leadership to permit the Communist Party of India to run a provincial government in Kerala, as a vindication of its claim that bourgeois democracy has triumphed in India. This is a coincidence, made possible by the present class-collaborationist line of the CPI. In reality, however, the CPI is administering a capitalist state and is objectively playing the role of a defender of bourgeois property. The Congress leadership is conscious of this peculiar role of the Indian Stalinists, who are only faithfully honoring the Kremlin's political alliance with Nehru, while in reality betraying the class struggle of the Indian proletariat. The bourgeois leadership, however, has no illusion that the present class-collaborationist line of the CPI would continue in the event of a new shift in the Kremlin's foreign policy. The Stalinists are perpetrating their new betrayal of the Indian masses under a revisionist and anti-Marxist plea of supporting the so called "patriotic national capitalists" against the "imperialists and monopoly capitalists."

The outcome of the two general elections in the country has shown that the political influence of the bourgeois leadership is fast declining. Already serious organizational rifts have occurred in the ruling Congress party in different provinces. Its strength, if it can be called strength at all, is negative : namely, the lack of an independent revolutionary leadership

of the proletariat. Added to this are the treacherous betrayals of the masses by the Stalinist CPI and the petty-bourgeois Socialist Parties.

The masses are getting disillusioned with the bourgeois regime through their own experience. The accumulated political prestige of the Congress and of Prime Minister Nehru is being steadily consumed since the Congress governments are unable to stem the process of gradual impoverishment and aggravating unemployment of the people.

SOME OTHER PROBLEMS

The bourgeois state in India has to rationalize its administrative set-up by reorganizing the provinces on a linguistic basis, as a partial concession of autonomy to the regional bourgeois interests in different linguistic regions within the Indian Union. The demand for linguistic reorganization of provinces had been backed by popular struggles in different linguistic regions. All provinces have been carved out on the basis of the language spoken by the people. The only exception made is in respect of Maharashtra and Gujerat which are retained as component parts of a bilingual state of Bombay. This again is due not so much to the opposition of the bourgeois leaders to the principle of linguistic states as to the peculiar status enjoyed by the city of Bombay from the viewpoint of the big financial and banking interests of India. The agitation for the creation of the two unilingual provinces — Marathi- and Gujerati-speaking — is continuing to undermine the Congress prestige.

The Kashmir issue, one of the curses inherited from the communal division of India, is being exploited by the bourgeois leadership to work up the chauvinistic feelings of the Indian people to strengthen itself politically. The bourgeois leaders, however, refuse to concede the right of self-determination to the Kashmir people. The reactionary bourgeois-landlord clique ruling in Pakistan also is exploiting Kashmir as a weapon to perpetuate its tottering regime. The Kashmir problem cannot be solved by the existing capitalist-landlord regimes in India and Pakistan. It can be solved only by the united struggle of the proletariat of the two countries against their exploiters. Meanwhile Kashmir has served as a justification for the governments of both these countries to maintain a large standing army, consuming about 40 to 50 % of their annual revenue expenditure, while the masses of the people are made to starve and suffer privations.

The bourgeois state in India is greatly embarrassed by existence of the Portuguese pockets (Goa, Diu, and Daman) on Indian soil. The Nehru Government has tried to enlist popular support for its policy of bringing pressure on the Portuguese imperialists to quit. But it has miserably failed to take any decisive steps in this connection because of its link-up with the Anglo-American imperialists who are the real backers

of the Salazar regime. Here again it is demonstrated that it is only the Indian working class that can take decisive steps in this case to drive out the Portuguese imperialists from their pockets.

In order to exploit the present political conflicts, the Indian bourgeoisie has invented the ingenious theory of "Panch Sheel" (or peaceful coëxistence) in collaboration with international Stalinism. This slogan in fact represents the anti-war needs of Indian capitalism at the present juncture. The professed non-alignment policy of the Indian bourgeoisie can be only a temporary strategy. In the event of a war between the imperialist powers and the Soviet Union, the Indian bourgeoisie will be compelled to join the imperialist camp.

The acceptance of the slogan of a "socialist pattern of society" has helped the bourgeois leadership temporarily to camouflage its real intentions of consolidating capitalism in India, and thus create illusions among sectors of the toiling masses. These socialist pretenses of the bourgeois state are being exposed rapidly. The state is being compelled to resort to ruthless suppression of all struggles of workers for a living wage and against rationalization and retrenchment, of the peasants' resistance against the eviction offensive of the landlords, of the struggles of teachers, government servants, bank employees, and other middle-class wage earners for better service conditions, and of students' movements against increased fees and undemocratic regimes in the universities.

Resort to firing has almost become a habit with the bourgeois regime. There have been more shootings since "independence" than the total number of shootings under the entire period of British rule. The suppression of popular movements is a historical necessity for the weak Indian bourgeoisie for its very

survival, just as the overthrow of the present capitalist-landlord system through relentless class struggle is the inexorable need for the exploited classes for their survival.

Whatever be its internal contradictions, the revolutionary Marxists know that capitalism will not collapse automatically. The peaceful transition of Indian society to socialism is a petty-bourgeois myth, which of late has found its most ardent supporters in the Stalinist CPI. Marxists know that only as the result of conscious political struggles of the working class, supported by the poor peasantry, and only under a workers' and peasants' government can the present stagnant property relations in India be transformed into social ownership of the means of production. A socialist revolution is on the agenda of the working class movement in India.

Capitalism today, more than ever before, is an indivisible world force. Any danger to its existence in India will be resisted by the united strength of the world capitalist reaction. The Indian working class, therefore, can march to the goal of socialism only with the active support and collaboration of workers of other lands.

The most important pre-requisite for the successful and speedy consummation of the present social ferment and growing struggles of the exploited masses into a socialist revolution is the creation of a strong and well-knit revolutionary Marxist Trotskyist party of the Indian proletariat, a party based on the experience of the international proletarian movement for the last century. Fortunately, forces capable of forging such a proletarian party are emerging in India.

[In a later issue it is hoped to publish, as a continuation of this study, an article on "Political Parties in India."]

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ALGERIAN REVOLUTION

An Open Letter to "The Militant"

PREFATORY NOTE

At the date of writing, we observe with regret that the editors of *The Militant*, New York weekly, usually reflecting the views of the Socialist Workers Party, to whom the following open letter was sent on February 3rd, have not seen fit to publish it either in whole or in part. We have thus been forced to the decision to publish it here in *Fourth International*. For it is quite impermissible that the factually false information and politically incorrect position expressed in the series of Magri articles on Algeria should be presented as a Trotskyist position, either in the United States itself or in semi-colonial countries, especially those of the Middle East, without

an open call to order and public correction of these extremely misleading errors, that can seriously discredit Trotskyism.

We seize this occasion, further, to repeat a request made in the article «Où en est le M.N.A.?» by Jacques Privas in the January issue of *Quatrième Internationale*:

"The Militant [...] states that the MNA has disavowed Bellounis. We can only hope that its good faith has been imposed upon (as with so many other statements in its articles), and ask it to quote the source of its information."

This key question also remains unanswered.

14 April 1958

TEXT OF THE OPEN LETTER

COMRADES,

Your paper published in its issues of December 16, 23, 30, and January 6, three articles on the Algerian revolution and the Algerian nationalist movement by a casual collaborator, one Philip Magri. These articles are full of false or distorted information, and the conclusions at which they arrive are incompatible both with factual truth and with revolutionary Marxism. The continuing defense of these incorrect ideas would do great harm to the Trotskyist cause among the revolutionaries and rising masses not only of Algeria itself but also of all the countries of the Middle East.

For that reason I have felt it necessary and urgent to send you this letter, which presents the balanced opinion of the great majority of the world Trotskyist movement about the Algerian revolution and the Algerian nationalist movement. I hope that you will live up to the Leninist tradition of telling the truth without restraint by publishing in *The Militant* the whole or extensive parts of this letter, thereby correctly the false positions of Philip Magri—which I hope are not those of the SWP.

"POLITICS OF ASSASSINATION" —IN RECENT MONTHS OR FOR THREE YEARS?

Philip Magri's thesis, in a nutshell, amounts to the following. The National Algerian Movement, MNA, led by Messali Hadj, is the left wing of the

Algerian revolution; the National Liberation Front, FLN, is its right wing. The struggle between the FLN and the MNA is something like a class struggle between the "bourgeois" and the "proletarian" wings of that revolution. The point of departure for this thesis is that "in recent months, many supporters of the Algerian liberation struggle have been profoundly disturbed by crimes against Algerians committed, not this time by the French, but by other Algerians participating in the struggle against French imperialism."

As the victims of these murders have been "a large number of Algerian trade-unionists," the inference drawn is simple: "reactionary bourgeois" forces within the FLN have murdered honest socialist revolutionaries of the MNA.

Unfortunately for Philip Magri and other defenders of this thesis, it is not only in "recent months" that "crimes and murders" have been committed against Algerian revolutionaries in France. These crimes have been going on without interruption since the end of 1955. Philip Magri does not mention these assassinations for a very simple reason: they were, with few exceptions, committed by the MNA: the victims were militants and leaders of the FLN (among them, the leader of the FLN organization of the Algerian workers in Belgium).

The then Minister of the Interior, Bourguès-Maunoury, speaking before the French National Assembly, declared recently:

The attacks multiplied during the year 1956. The victims were mostly FLN people: there were 80 murdered, most of them of that faction, during that year. At the beginning of 1957, the FLN, having consolidated itself, started to counter-attack by increasing its activity. And it also began a terrorist campaign and tried definitively to exterminate its enemies.

These actions and reactions are becoming more and more violent, and the two nationalist parties are today carrying on a real struggle of mutual extermination on our territory.

(Journal Officiel, November 12)

But we do not need this testimony of French imperialism to confirm the correctness of our thesis. Philip Magri himself says that the MNA solidly controlled the Algerian workers in France at the moment of the outbreak of the revolution. How could the weak, if not inexistent, FLN have in a short time organized sufficient arms and people to kill 80 persons? All French revolutionaries know how desperately the few FLN cadres were searching for arms to defend themselves during the whole year 1956. Why does Philip Magri keep silent about the 80 murders of that year? Certainly not because they were committed by the "bourgeois" FLN; he indicts them only for the crimes of 1957. Very significantly, the "solemn" public appeal made by Messali himself to the Algerian workers in France to stop murder and bloodshed was made... in the summer of 1957, not in the spring of 1956. Is it not because it was his own supporters who were killing FLN militants in 1956 before the tide turned?

The truth is that the MNA had the complete support of the Algerian workers in France when the revolution broke out. It tried to keep that support by pretending that it was the MNA that led the revolutionary struggle in Algeria itself. But as this was an obvious falsehood, and as the Algerian workers in France started to receive news about the actual struggle in their homeland from their families and friends on the spot, first a few, then more and more, militants left the MNA to set up an FLN organization among the workers.

Messali was furious and desperate. He had lost his control over the revolution in Algeria. He began to fear that he would lose also his control over the Algerian workers in France. So he gave orders that militants leaving the MNA in France to found FLN organization should be executed as "traitors." Philip Magri well characterizes this action when he writes:

What more need to be said to characterize a political movement than that its preferred method of political discussion is the assassin's bullet?

Finally the FLN, having consolidated its organization and receiving more and more help from the Algerian workers in France when it became clear

that the armed struggle in Algeria was FLN-led, started to answer back to assassination by assassination. And as the relationship of forces changed radically between the two organizations around the beginning of 1957, soon the majority of the people killed became MNA people. And it was only then, after they had been forced to swallow their own bitter medicine, that Messali and the MNA began to protest about "murders"...

Let me make our position clear from the start. We are opposed to methods of physical violence inside the labor movement, inside the international revolutionary movement, in which we include the liberation movement of the colonial peoples. Just to the extent that violence is inevitable in the fight against imperialism, to the same extent it should be banned within the revolutionary forces. We have consistently defended that position in the past, we defend it today, and we shall defend it tomorrow. It applies in the Algerian question quite apart from the change in the relationship of forces between the rival nationalist organizations. Only such a principled position can be consistently defended. It is completely unprincipled, nay, cynically hypocritical, to let out a great shout of moral indignation about the killing of Messalists by their opponents while keeping complacently silent, whitewashing, or justifying for reasons of "self-defense," the numerous murders of FLN militants by MNA people.

These murders, by the way, continue, especially in the North of France where the MNA still has some strength. The latest incident was during the night of January 27-28, when five armed Algerians broke into a workers' dormitory of the Bouchain factory, near Valenciennes, and savagely sprayed the room with shots, killing one worker and gravely wounding another; a third saved his life by simulating death. Three hours later the murderers were arrested. According to all newspapers, they belonged to the MNA: the leader among them had already been arrested on December 18 for "reconstitution of a dissolved league" (the police definition of the Algerian nationalist organizations), and—significantly—later on set free. It is particularly to be noted that it is a matter of public knowledge that those cases where whole cafés are machine-gunned without regard to the individual identities of the people in them are exclusively MNA jobs.

THE ORIGINS OF THE FLN AND THE MNA

The second reason why, according to Philip Magri, the MNA is the "left" and the FLN the "right" wing of the Algerian nationalist movement is to be found in the origins of both organizations. The story he tells in that respect is highly colored. He writes about the split which occurred inside the old *Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques* (MTLD) in 1954, between the right-wing

"centralists" and the "orthodox" Messalists. He himself admits that the insurrection of November 1st 1954 was launched, not by these centralists (who wanted to collaborate with French imperialism, according to Philip Magri), but by "impatient" militants of the MTLD. But he then hastens to conclude that at present it is these right-wing people who lead the FLN, whereas the MNA continues to be led by the old intransigent revolutionary group around Messali Hadj.

There is something slightly ridiculous about the "leader Messali" "carefully preparing the revolution," and suddenly "taken by surprise" by the "action of a small group of men" somehow "stealing" the masses from the "true revolutionists" by launching it. The truth of the matter is that the Messali leadership had been for years procrastinating and increasingly passive, that it was that passivity and lack of perspectives—I shall return later to the *political* reason for this—which had led some opportunistic leaders of the Messalist party to incline toward a policy of winning reforms from the "moderate" imperialists, that at the same time however the rank and file and the lower cadres in Algeria became exasperated by the passivity of the leadership, especially when they saw how armed struggle was spreading over Tunisia and Morocco and winning important victories for the revolution in those countries, and that it was these rank-and-file militants who started the insurrection of November 1st 1954.

It is very sad for self-proclaimed "leaders" that the revolution doesn't follow their timetable. But if they are responsible people they acknowledge the fact and try to reintegrate themselves into it. When on the contrary they subordinate the objective processes of history to their own narrow sectarian purposes, the revolution simply passes them by. That is what happened to Messali.

But, says Philip Magri, the nature of the FLN "changed" when right-wing politicians like Ferhat Abbas and the former reformists of the MTLD (the so-called "centralists") joined it, and when its initial leadership around Ben Bella was kidnapped from a Moroccan plane by the French army. Now the FLN leads a revolutionary army of tens of thousands of people, spread over thousands of villages. It has the active support of hundreds of thousands of poor peasants and agricultural workers, organized in village committees. It is hard to see clearly how the nature of that mass movement could have been changed by the kidnapping of a couple of its leaders.

Contrary to what Philip Magri affirms, the whole world press has reported the fact that the real leadership of the FLN is in the hands, not of the Cairo or Tunis politicians, but of the leaders of the

armed underground. These, on the other hand, are described by the bourgeois press as "the hard ones," the "intransigents," and "the extremists." They lead the army; they collect the money; they control the apparatus; and they are under the tremendous pressure of the uprisen revolutionary masses of Algeria. It is not very clear why they should turn the leadership of their movement over into the hands of a couple of turncoats.

But, some bright boy will argue, didn't we see in Spain how the leaders of a revolutionary mass uprising abdicated and turned their power over to the shadow of a bourgeoisie? Well, in the first place, there is no comparison between the capitalist class inside the Republican camp in Spain and the "Algerian bourgeoisie" in Algeria. The former, though very weak, did have factories, banks, landed property, big merchant capital, innumerable links with its class brothers in Wall Street, the City, and Paris; the latter is economically, socially, and politically non-existent, as Philip Magri himself indicates. Wealthy lawyers, physicians, and state functionaries are not capitalists, but rich petty-bourgeois.

In the second place, the Spanish "shadow of a bourgeoisie" got the power back, notwithstanding its weakness, for the sole reason that the recognized leaders of the mass movement, i.e. the Stalinists, the Social-Democrats, and the right-wing Anarchists, *handed it back to them voluntarily. By their own strength.* the Spanish capitalists could never have expropriated the revolutionary masses in the Republican camp. Even Philip Magri himself does not dare say that the leaders of the Algerian revolution in Algeria, the heroic figures who lead the armed struggle against the sanguinary French imperialists, voluntarily handed over the power, which they created through innumerable sacrifices, to a (non-existent) bourgeoisie. This "bourgeoisie" "captured" that power somehow by... taking a plane to Cairo and Tunis? The absurdity of this thesis simply knocks one's eye out.

It is true that some opportunist petty-bourgeois leaders of nationalist groups to the right of the old Messalist MTLD have joined the FLN. But if it is "historical precedents" that are being sought for, the correct one would be that of some bourgeois and petty-bourgeois politicians joining Tito's "Popular Front" during the war. At that time also, many comrades feared that these forces would lead the Yugoslav revolution back to capitalism: history showed those fears to be unfounded. There is a decisive difference between workers or revolutionary leaders being the "hostages" of the bourgeoisie, and petty-bourgeois politicians being the "hostages" of revolutionary or Stalinist forces. The Algerian case seems much closer to the Yugoslav than to the Spanish one.

*THE CLASS NATURE OF THE ALGERIAN
REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATIONS*

In order to determine the social nature of both the FLN and the MNA, it is necessary to sketch the social structure of the country, to analyze the objective role which both organizations play toward the different social classes and layers of Algeria, to examine their programmes and see to what extent their day-to-day politics are consistent with those programmes. This is the Marxist method of analyzing the social nature of an organization in the past; it is the same method which has to be applied to the case of Algeria, and for which we cannot substitute Philip Magri's method of gossip and fairytales about "intrigues," "murders," and some people taking planes to strange places with strange passports.

As Philip Magri himself admits, there does not exist any capitalist class in Algeria. There is not a single Algerian industrialist or banker of any importance. There is no comprador class linked to French capital in foreign trade. The French capitalist class, which tried to destroy the Algerian nation, has completely monopolized the leading economic and entrepreneurial functions in all ways of life. The only better-off layers of the Algerian population are some landowners and the upper strata of the petty-bourgeoisie (local merchants, intellectuals, and state functionaries).

At the other end of the social ladder, the broad mass of the Algerian population is composed of semi-proletarian layers of landless peasants, who work as agricultural laborers and as wage-earners for private bosses or the public administration, whenever they find work, which is not very often. Above them stands the class of more or less permanently employed city-dwelling wage-earners, the proletariat in the true sense of the word, which is not very broad. The rest of the Algerian people is composed of a mass of small peasants, eking out a dubious existence for themselves and their many unemployed relatives on the unfertile land which the French colonialists did not grab, and in the primitive Algerian village where a strong bond of collective solidarity still reigns.

Under such conditions, it is clear that no bourgeois or even petty-bourgeois mass movement is possible. The incredibly miserable and highly explosive social conditions imply an instinctively revolutionary mass movement, plebeian and semi-proletarian in nature, led by more or less educated petty-bourgeois elements. That was the nature of Messali's MTLD. That is the nature of the MNA. That is also the nature of the FLN. Inasmuch as the basis of the FLN is today much broader than that of the MNA, the relationship of forces is more favorable to the plebeian masses than to the petty-

bourgeois elements in that movement than in the MNA. And as a matter of plain fact there are more conservative religious landowners in the MNA than in the FLN.

Again I should like to make our position quite clear. We do not say that the FLN is a socialist or a revolutionary Marxist movement. We say that it is a broad mass movement of a revolutionary anti-imperialist character, in which the crystallization of distinct political currents, defending distinct social interests, has only begun, reflecting parallel tendencies within the society itself. It is the task and duty of revolutionary Marxists to aid that process by defending and unconditionally helping the Algerian revolution and its organizations against imperialism, by developing a clear Marxist programme for Algeria, North Africa, and the whole Arab world, by advocating an independent organization of the working class. Such an independent organization is a matter of principle for Marxists; but not the independence of one petty-bourgeois nationalist organization from another, and especially not in armed struggles against imperialism.

Concerning the programme of both the MNA and the FLN, it can be in general said that they remain mostly on the line of the old MTLD programme. It should not be forgotten that Messali was in origin a Communist, and that the old pre-war Algerian Popular Party (PPA), of which the MTLD was an offspring, had strong socialist elements in its programme. In the MTLD's own programme these socialist slogans were much less put in the forefront; in the MNA's propaganda they are never mentioned. It is true that both organizations, being petty-bourgeois nationalist groupings and not revolutionary Marxist class parties, are trying to solve their problems also by internationalizing the Algerian conflict and thus avoid any formulation which would antagonize American imperialism. The only distinction is that the FLN, from time to time, reasserts these socialist elements of its positions, whereas the MNA has descended to such depths of opportunism as calling upon Washington to save Algeria... for NATO!

For instance, on 24 January 1957 Moulay Merbah, secretary-general of the MNA, sent a telegramme to President Eisenhower which said among other things:

The Algerian people and Messali Hadj greet with favor your policy on the Middle East and approve it as a generous and positive contribution to the well-being, the peace and the liberty of the Arab people... The truly colonial war which is being waged in Algeria weakens the security of Europe [!], as 500,000 French soldiers, among which 4 NATO divisions and NATO arms, are being engaged in it.

(*Le Monde*, 25 January 1957)

And in an interview with a Social-Democratic weekly, *Demain*, Messali Hadj declared:

We are convinced that a solution of the Algerian problem will consolidate peace in North Africa, will reinforce the camp of freedom [!], and consolidate Franco-Arab friendship... Islamic North Africa will develop by taking into account its Western neighbors, their economic interests and relations with Mediterranean states. Let us meditate about the examples of India and Pakistan. Pakistan, this great Islamic power, while enjoying freedom [!] and independence, has maintained links of sympathy and relations of interest [!] with Great Britain.

On the other hand, the FLN leaders, in an interview with the radical French weekly *France-Observateur*, made the following statement of policy:

European property which has been honestly acquired will be respected. But the Algerian government will claim the right, if public interest makes it necessary, to nationalize for example the great means of production which are today in the hands of a few colonialists. It will be the same for the agrarian reform.¹ No Algerian government worthy of the name could tolerate that a single family exploits tens of thousands of hectares while the immense majority of Algerians stagnate in dismal misery.

Again I repeat that in our opinion the FLN is not a socialist organization, although there is a Marxist proletarian current which is crystalizing in that organization. The one thing I do want to point out is that there is no objective basis in the matter of programme for handing the palm of virtue for socialism or "leftism" to the MNA while refusing it to the FLN. What remain are two radical plebeian organizations, which represent the same class forces and present substantially the same written programme. It is precisely under these conditions that the concentrated attacks of the MNA upon the FLN, which leads the revolution, lose all principled character, and become purely cliquish, destructive, and gravely harmful.

Philip Magri proclaims that the MNA is for a "general uprising of the people" whereas the FLN is for "blind terrorism." These accusations smack somehow of the slander campaign which the French

¹ Just as this issue was going to press, there arrived the March-April issue of the British publication, *Labour Review*, with an article by Michael Banda, "Marxism and the Algerian Revolution," which is as factually inaccurate and politically erroneous as that of Philip Magri. Taken in connection with the above declaration, there is a particular lack of candor in Michael Banda's phrase, "Since the programme of the FLN does not involve land reform or nationalization..." Both Philip Magri and Michael Banda would do well to study the programme adopted by the FLN in its 1956 Congress in the liberated Valley of Summam, particularly its quite advanced provisions for agrarian reform.

imperialists are conducting day and night against the heroic Algerian revolutionaries. This "blind terrorism" is being carried out by a revolutionary army of tens of thousands of poor workers and peasants, swelled month after month by new recruits. The official programme of the FLN, adopted at the Congress held in the liberated Valley of the Summam on 20 August 1956, proclaims that the FLN is preparing the general armed uprising of the whole Algerian population and the general armament of the whole people. A strange slogan indeed for "bourgeois" forces trying to come "to an agreement" with French imperialism!

THE STRUGGLE FOR ALGERIAN INDEPENDENCE

"Certain" newspaper correspondents have found the MNA more moderate than the FLN, says Philip Magri; nothing, he considers, could be more ludicrous. May I point out that this opinion has been voiced not only by "certain" newspaper correspondents but by such responsible bourgeois organs as the London *Economist* and the *New York Times*? I should further like to point out to him that the International Latex Corporation, the most fanatic defender of French imperialism within American monopolist circles (because it owns great plantations in South Vietnam), is paying thousands of dollars to put ads in newspapers like the *New York Times*, in which all the attacks are concentrated upon the FLN, and the MNA is also declared to be "moderate." And I should like finally to point out that French Foreign Minister Christian Pineau, a staunch partisan of the imperialist Atlantic Pact and a staunch supporter of the Algerian War, who should know what he is talking about, declared at the United Nations on 4 February 1957:

What is the difference between the MNA and the FLN? The MNA appears to us to be more Westernized [!], more realistic [!], especially more independent [from whom?], which does not mean that its claims are less vivid.

(*Le Monde*, 5 February 1957)

Be this as it may, the essential difference in day-to-day policy between the FLN and the MNA is the fact, as Philip Magri states, that the FLN stands for unconditional independence which France must recognize prior to any negotiations, whereas the MNA stands for a round-table conference between all representatives of Algerian opinion and French imperialism, in order to prepare free elections which would lead to self-determination.

Now, says Philip Magri, the FLN position is only "verbally radical." What the FLN really wants is "to persuade the French to allow them to share in the government of Algeria and in the profits to be derived from its exploitation." Why do they really want only such a "share" and not total independence? Because, Philip Magri writes, the FLN,

"representing the Algerian capitalist class [?]," cannot dream of standing alone against the Algerian masses. Its privileges [?] have been derived from coöperation with colonialism, and their perpetuation requires the continued "French presence" in Algeria as a counterweight against the Algerian revolution.

According to that thesis, one would then expect the MNA, that authentic representative and leadership of the "Algerian revolution," to stand for unconditional independence. Alas, against the "verbal extremism" of the FLN, the MNA asks—I quote—"that the war be ended by means of a round-table conference at which all French and Algerian tendencies involved would be represented," *without* prior recognition of independence by France.

What does that mean? It means that the representatives of different Algerian parties *plus* the representatives of French settlers in Algeria will start "discussing" its future status with French imperialism, i.e., repeat the sterile policy of stagnation and practical passivity which Messali has consistently followed for many years and which provoked the crisis and split in his organization! It means that the French imperialists will be allowed to play the cards of communal and national differences among the various sectors of the Algerian people, instead of a united front of anti-imperialist struggle being built. It means giving up the tremendous advantages won by the armed revolutionary struggles through countless sacrifices of thousands and thousands of the best sons and daughters of the Algerian people.

It means more. The actual slogan launched by the MNA for many months was the slogan, "For an Aix-les-Bains on the Algerian question." Now the Aix-les-Bains round-table conference to which this slogan alludes was the conference which granted formal independence to Morocco *while* "safeguarding" the economic interests of French imperialism in that country. (In the December 1957 issue of the newspaper *La Voix du Travailleur Algérien*, organ of the MNA-controlled trade-union federation, the USTA, Ahmed Bekhat, its secretary, since killed, published an article on the Bamako Conference, that brought together most of the political militants of the French colonies of Central Africa at the end of September 1957. In this article he wrote: "We have seen that the African people are whole-heartedly ready to build a union with France on a basis of equality." Terrible words if we recall the moment when they were written. At the moment when the Algerian people had gone into open insurrection, whose example has been inspiring and will continue to inspire the revolutionary movement in Central Africa, the so-called "left-wing" leader of the Algerian nationalist movement calmly takes the opinion of the reformist collaborationist tendency among the petty-bourgeois politicians for the opinions

of "the people"! And then they condemn the FLN for "collaborationist" tendencies?)

So now we have the following ludicrous picture painted by Philip Magri: the FLN, which stands flatly in so many words for unconditional independence, and refuses to stop the civil war until the imperialists formally recognize that independence, is accused of really wanting "to share power" with French imperialism; but the MNA, which actually launches the slogan for a conference leading to a share-the-power compromise, is presented as the staunch defender of unconditional independence! It is hard to imagine a more grotesque distortion of truth and facts than this completely upside-down picture.

NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND PERMANENT REVOLUTION

Philip Magri tries to make some capital out of the fact that the MNA defends the "consistently democratic position" of self-determination by means of free elections for a sovereign Constituent Assembly. But the FLN recognizes the same principle. The whole question here is *who and under what conditions will call for these elections?*

The Algerian people have had a bitter experience with "general elections." Philip Magri himself describes how "all the elections in Algeria were outrageously falsified" after 1945. Now at that time there was relative "peace" in Algeria, whereas today there are 500,000 French soldiers and tens of thousands of armed European "militiamen." Under these conditions could "elections" be anything but a sinister farce? The position of the FLN is that only a provisional Algerian government could call for general elections *after* the recognition of Algerian independence and *after* the withdrawal of French troops.

It might be said that democratic guarantees for elections under these conditions would be found insufficient. The right for all Algerian national parties, all shades of Algerian national opinion, to participate in these elections, could and should be demanded. We ourselves would always defend the right of the MNA to participate in the elections. But is it not clear that the FLN position is far more anti-imperialist, revolutionary, and democratic than that of the MNA which, *in the midst of a war*, calls for a "democratic election" without saying one word about the presence of the sanguinary occupation troops!

This is all the worse because it has been the political programme of that reformist stooge of French imperialism, Guy Mollet, to counterpose "democratic elections after a cease-fire" to the FLN's demand for unconditional recognition of Algerian independence. The MNA slogan came dangerously close to that *imperialist* one; and what

is implied in the latter has been made clear by that French Noske called Robert Lacoste, who openly stated last week in the French National Assembly that a "cease-fire" implied *disarmament* of the rebels, and that no elections could be held without those rebels being disarmed.

The position now becomes quite clear. In the armed uprising of the Algerian people against French imperialism, the FLN, leaders of the revolution, whatever may be the insufficiency of their doctrine or the opportunism of their tactics, call for unconditional independence and for the withdrawal or disarming of the imperialist troops: the imperialists, for their part, logically stand for the disarming (ie, wholesale murder) of the revolutionaries, and "free elections" afterwards. And what does that "vanguard" organization called the MNA stand for? For a round-table conference of both camps and "free elections," without mentioning the few hundreds of thousands of people busy cutting each other's throats in the war! One could make a definition of that position. But it would certainly not be the definition "Bolshevism" or "socialism."

The question of the winning of national independence by an armed uprising of the masses is a decisive question in the unfolding of the revolutionary process in a colonial or semi-colonial country. It is no accident that the colonial or semi-colonial bourgeoisies, from Ghana to India, and from Argentina to Iran, have always shied away from the perspective of an armed mass uprising against imperialism. Their way to "win independence" has always been that of negotiation, of haggling, of compromise, of "round-table" conferences, which enabled them to keep the masses from violent action and to maintain important economic links with imperialism. On the other hand, the strategy of proletarian parties in the national-liberation struggles of colonial countries has always consisted in developing the mass struggle, culminating in the armed uprising, to its logical conclusion, because the theory of the permanent revolution teaches us that the process that begins as an armed mass struggle for national independence ends as a civil war for proletarian dictatorship.

The hesitations, weakness, and betrayal of the Indian bourgeois national Congress leadership prevented this process from working out completely in India in August 1952; the same characteristics of the bourgeois Mossadegh leadership in Iran, of the bourgeois Arbenz leadership in Guatemala, of the bourgeois Perón leadership in Argentina, enabled imperialist or pro-imperialist counter-revolution in each of these cases to triumph temporarily without organized armed mass resistance. But the example of Yugoslavia shows that where a revolutionary leadership, even an opportunist Stalinist one, consistently tries to develop the mass uprising for national independence, it is forced by the logic of the situa-

tion and the pressure of the masses to trespass on the fields of social revolution. There are many signs that the same process is taking place in Algeria, with incalculable consequences for the whole of North Africa. The confirmation of that revolutionary process would shatter the shaky compromises in Tunisia and Morocco, would bring about a new stage of the North African revolution, and would give a tremendous impulse to the revolution in all Arab countries.

Already today the relations between Bourgiba and that part of the FLN revolutionary army stationed on Tunisian territory are very strained. They are indeed strained to the point where American imperialism felt it wise to send some arms to Bourgiba to enable him to defend himself against the much stronger Algerian forces. In Morocco the FLN partisans openly collaborate with the Liberation Army, against the pro-imperialist stooges around King Mohammed V.

It is true that the FLN leadership as a whole cannot be said to work consciously for a socialist Algeria. But by developing the mass uprising more and more broadly, by preparing and putting into effect regionally the general arming of the whole population, it is objectively preparing the socialist Algeria and socialist Middle East of tomorrow. It deserves unconditional support in its fight against imperialism, and friendly criticism in working out its politics. It does not deserve irresponsible attacks and slanderous gossip, copied from the imperialist yellow press which, like Philip Magri, speaks of them only as "gangs of killers" and "assassins."

THE BELLOUNIS CASE

In the last weeks, however, at the very time that Philip Magri's articles were being printed in *The Militant*, the real situation in the Algerian national movement has been made even clearer by the dramatic betrayal of Bellounis.

Bellounis was the only important underground leader heading a large group of armed fighters in Algeria in the name of the MNA. The Algerian "maquis" visited by the French journalist Claude Gerard, whom Philip Magri quotes, was precisely the "maquis" organized and led by Bellounis. After many months of very strange and shady goings-on, Bellounis, at the beginning of December 1957, signed an agreement with the French imperialist army. In the first public declaration, published by the French newspapers, he declared:

If I should be recognized as representing the national army of the Algerian people and the Algerian National Movement, and if Messali Hadj were recognized as the "valid negotiator," I am ready to participate in the pacification [!] of Algeria with my army.

As there are differences among the imperialists,

and most of them do not think it useful to "play up" the MNA and Messali. Bellounis a few days later made a speech over the French radio of Algiers, in which, without mentioning the name of Messali, he denied having any links with the MNA.

Some provinces of Algeria were covered with his "proclamations," in which he defends the position of "free elections" in his somewhat special manner:

I hereby solemnly declare that my army is struggling against the anarchistic [!] forces of foreign obedience represented by the FLN, in order to liberate the population of this country from their [!] cruel rule. My goal is essentially to allow everyone to express himself freely on the day when the destruction of the FLN will allow the people of Algeria to define freely [!] their destiny in a harmonious framework *indissolubly linked with France*.

I have undertaken this struggle in close collaboration and friendship [!] with the civil and military authorities of France. My army is engaged in the struggle which France wages against the killers of the FLN, who spare neither women nor children nor old people.

Bellounis, of course, has become a vulgar traitor. After his proclamation and the open collaboration of his armed forces with the imperialist army, there can be no doubt about this. But Bellounis was defended by Messali and his friends till the very last moment; *why do they keep silent today? Why don't they openly and publicly dissociate themselves from this traitor?* (In its issue of 6 January, *The Militant* states that "the MNA has disclaimed any connection with Bellounis or his action." I believe that *The Militant* published this statement in good faith, and that some "informants" have deliberately provided incorrect information to its editors. Because in fact, *no such declaration of the MNA has been published anywhere*; and several French left newspapers have repeatedly declared that Messali Hadj, while refusing himself to come to terms with imperialism, has also refused to denounce Bellounis, because the majority of his followers in Algeria approve Bellounis.)

We do not want to identify the MNA or Messali with Bellounis; neither do we identify with the MNA that irresponsible split-off group of French Trotskyism led by Lambert. But what should one say about these people when one reads the following sentence in their newspaper, *La Vérité*, of 14 November 1957?

With regard to the objectives of Bellounis and the situation in the zone he controls, most fantastic and contradictory information has circulated and still circulates. On the other hand, the assertions of those who pretend that Bellounis has gone over "to serve France" are brought into question when one reads [...] *l'Action*, the official paper of Bourgiba, which,

in its issue of 28 October, says that Bellounis has reached a "modus vivendi" with the French troops, that is to say, an armistice, which is a purely military situation [!] and which does not presuppose any particular policy.

The "purely" military situation which involves *collaboration* with the French army against "anarchistic," "communist" assassins—doesn't that remind one of the behavior of the Mihailovitch forces in Yugoslavia making "armistices" with the fascist forces against Tito's "gangs of assassins"?

Furthermore, *after* Bellounis's political betrayal became public and he went over into the camp of imperialism, a trial was being held in Algiers of some MNA militants. According to *Le Monde* of 15 January 1958 they claimed that they were MNA people and that they had fought under the leadership of Si Lahoucine and Si Mohammed Bellounis. Two days later, *Le Monde* gave the following excerpt from the speech for the defense made by Lawyer Dechézelles, a close friend of Messali Hadj:

Today my task could be easy: for if these men had not been captured in 1956, they would be part of an army which seems to have been recognized [!] by the French government. I do not wish to penetrate into the mysteries of government affairs, but I am forced to state that the civil and military authorities have come to an agreement with the chief of these accused: Bellounis.

Some sophists have tried to compare the "desperate situation" of the Bellounis forces to the situation of the POUM and Trotskyist armed forces on the Spanish Civil War front, when Stalinist repression closed in on them from behind. I have already explained why the social and political characterization of the FLN makes such a comparison absolutely slanderous. The Stalinists in Spain strangled and killed the revolution; the FLN for the moment organizes it and pushes it forward. But even if the parallel were correct, can anyone for one moment visualize the POUM or the Trotskyists making "purely military" or military and political agreements with Franco for common struggle against the Stalinists? Only the Stalinist slanderers of our movement have ever advanced such possibilities. It will be to the eternal honor of the Trotskyist movement that never and nowhere did it for one moment subordinate the general interests of the revolution and the abyss separating hostile class camps, to its own self-defense. There were no such traitors or turncoats in our movement, no people making "military armistices" with fascism! We must defend the POUM and all honest revolutionaries against slanderous comparisons like this one. And we must openly denounce the unprincipled irresponsibility of people like the Lambert group, which puts the label of "Trotskyism" on sentences like

the above-quoted, which come very near to open betrayal.

Comrades might say: in Spain and in Yugoslavia there was fascism; in France, there is bourgeois democracy; this makes a difference. These comrades are quite wrong. It was not in France that Bellounis made his agreement with the army of imperialist butchers; it was in Algeria. And in Algeria there is not only no bourgeois democracy, there is a regime of terror and wholesale assassination worse than Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1938 and beyond comparison with fascist Italy. The horrors of the imperialist repression in Algeria can be compared only with the worst traits of the Nazis in Poland, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union. Conservative figures of the number of innocent civilians slain by the imperialist bandits are around 500,000. In such a situation one chooses one's side without a moment's hesitation. One is the camp of the revolution, whatever may have been the errors or even the crimes of its leaders, and the other is the camp of counter-revolution. And that's where Bellounis is today. Any honest revolutionary who has mistakenly identified himself with that traitor should today show the moral courage of acknowledging his mistake. And an organization like the MNA, which has consistently and proudly identified itself with Bellounis, should dissociate itself all the quicker because of the extent of its past mistake in the matter. History tolerates no misunderstandings on questions of such importance.

A DANGEROUS REVISION OF LENINISM

But, it might be asked, how do we explain the bitter fight between the two Algerian nationalist organizations, if there are no class differences between them?

One of the reasons for this fight is, of course, cliquism, which has often and will often in the future play a role in young and rapidly growing revolutionary movements. Messali was the acknowledged leader of the Algerian nationalist movement. At the Hornu Congress of 1954, he had himself nominated "president for life" (a strange proposal for a socialist, don't you think?). When he saw that control over the mass movement and the revolution was escaping from him, he tried to recapture it by all means, abandoning thereby all principled positions and becoming cynical and demoralized.

But of course there is a question of "profound political difference" between Messali and the FLN, and that question trickles through Philip Magri's articles, although it is nowhere explicitly stated. Magri many times alludes to the "necessary solidarity between the French proletariat and the Algerian masses." This seems OK, of course. But what is behind this correct phrase is Messali's conception that, because of the presence of a million

French settlers in Algeria and the strength of resistance of French imperialism toward the national liberation movement in that country, *the victory of the Algerian revolution is impossible without a revolutionary upsurge in France*. As there is no immediate prospect of such an upsurge, the Algerian revolution cannot achieve military victory.

During the last session of the United Nations General Assembly, according to the newspaper *Le Monde*, the MNA issued a communiqué stating that "the end of the Algerian conflict cannot be the result of military victory. The only democratic and just solution can be the organization of free elections under the effective control of the United Nations."

And the irresponsible Lambert, acting like a mouthpiece for Messali, faithfully echoed in *La Vérité*:

As a result of its relative isolation, essentially from the French proletariat [...] the Algerian people cannot achieve a military victory.

(Issue of 7 November 1957)

Such theories are wrong in principle and unproved and irresponsible in practice. It is true that the proletarian vanguard in a national-liberation movement of a colonial country must be internationalist in theory and action, that it must call on the oppressed people of its own country not to identify the rulers of the metropolitan country with the exploited toilers of that country. It is also true that the victory of the colonial revolution will be the easier and the quicker, the more energetically the proletariat of the metropolitan country joins in the fight against imperialism. But it is absolutely wrong that the armed uprising or the revolution of the oppressed people must be subordinated in any way to the "favorable timetable" for revolution... in the metropolitan country. On the contrary, the revolutionaries of the colonial country must audaciously forge ahead, conscious of the fact that by the blows they are striking against imperialism, *they are preparing* the revolutionary upsurge in the metropolitan country.

Philip Magri comes close to formulating this wrong and dangerous theory of the "impossibility of a victorious *revolution* in a single country" when he writes in the 6 January *Militant*: "Exhaustion of the Algerian revolutionary forces is a serious danger," when he speaks of a "deadlock," and when he concludes:

But the French workers will have to act soon, for the war of attrition has begun to tell on the Algerians. As Messali has emphasized all his life, the fate of the Algerian revolution rests in the hands of the French working class.

This thesis of the "exhaustion" of the Algerian revolution was feverishly developed by French imperialism on the eve of and during the session

of the United Nations General Assembly, in order to prevent an "internationalization" of the Algerian conflict. All bourgeois and pro-imperialist newspapers in France were talking about this "exhaustion." Alas, no sooner was Philip Magri's article printed than the news from Algeria caused great alarm in French imperialist circles. Butcher No. 1, Robert Lacoste himself, was forced to admit that the "rebels" were now so strong and so well-armed they they could go over from "terrorism" to full-fledged "guerilla warfare." And Bourgiba announced to French public opinion, without being contradicted, that the Algerian revolutionists control "large parts of the Algerian territory."

Under these conditions, talk about "exhaustion" and "attrition" is irresponsible, to use a very moderate term. Working-class and Marxist revolutionists should always be the most enthusiastic and intransigent soldiers in the struggle for national liberation, who should tell the downtrodden masses that *they are able to liberate themselves*, and not constantly shed doubt on the future of the colonial revolution and repeat the defeatist and anti-Leninist thesis that without action of the metropolitan proletariat the colonial revolution is doomed to defeat.

Lambert even dares reproach the FLN leadership for its "adventurism" which "favors" the climate for war in France! This is Leninism turned upside-down. When the exploited people of the colony rise, it is the task of the vanguard of the metropolitan proletariat to call tirelessly on the masses to come to the *defense and active help* of the colonial revolution, irrespective of the "errors" and "mistakes" of its leaders. To correct these "errors" is primarily the task of the proletarian revolutionaries of the colonial countries, rather than of the workers of the metropolitan countries. They must first *win the right* to "correct the errors" of the colonial revolution by showing in practice their capacity to help this revolution.

Now in practice the French proletariat, owing to the betrayal of the Stalinist and reformist leaderships, and to the hesitations and procrastinations of the most influential centrists, has *done nothing* to help the Algerian revolution. There has not been one strike in a harbor: there has not been one ship transporting soldiers or loaded with munitions

which was held up 24 hours; there was not one general strike on an all-city level anywhere in France against the Algerian war. Under these circumstances, it is not very becoming for a French revolutionist to reproach the heroic leaders of the Algerian revolution for their "nationalism"; he would do better to address these reproaches to the leaders, cadres, and even sometimes militants, of the working-class organizations of his own country.

It is significant that the FLN is not only far to the left of bourgeois-nationalist parties such as Bourgiba's Neo-Destour or the Moroccan Istiqlal. Its criticism of Stalinism it also criticism of a *left* nature. CP leader Léon Faix was forced last week in the Stalinist paper *France Nouvelle* to get into public polemics with the FLN over its accusations that the French CP leadership is criminally inactive with regard to the Algerian war. He timidly reproaches the FLN for its "ingratitude," saying that French Communists have "done much" to help the Algerian revolution. In reality, the bitter FLN criticism of the criminal passivity of French Stalinism has found broad echoes inside the French CP, and especially in the international Communist movement (Moroccan and Tunisian CPs, Yugoslav CP, Polish CP, Chinese CP, etc.).

There is no imperialist war in Algeria; there is a war of liberation by an exploited people against imperialist slavemongers. Under these conditions, no honest revolutionary can "wage a war on two fronts." Leninism teaches us that under such conditions the only correct position is the united front, not made conditional on politics within the colonial revolution, between the working class of the imperialist country and the colonial revolution. *for the defeat of imperialism*. The MNA, Messali, and the Lambert group have never said this in so many words. Our International and its French section are proud to be the only working-class organizations that have consistently defended that position. *The Militant* would do well to defend it also.

Fraternally,

PATRICK O'DANIEL

Paris

3 February 1958

Documents

XXth Plenum of the International Executive Committee :

THE TURN IN THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION THE PERSPECTIVES, AND OUR TASKS

Report Presented By Comrade MICHEL PABLO

The international situation is engaged in a turn which may prove to be the most important since at least the Korean War.

We are witnessing the combination, the interaction, of various facts and processes: *the evident end of the boom in the capitalist economy which had lasted since 1953-1954, and the beginning of a stage of economic decline¹; a new advance of the colonial revolution in Indonesia, in the Arab countries, in Central Africa, and in Latin America ; sensational successes of the Soviet economy and technics, guaranteeing the military superiority of the USSR ; confusion and crisis in the ranks of imperialism, and this time particularly in American imperialism. The resultant among these factors is a new grave deterioration for imperialism in the global relationship of forces.*

This turn in the international situation naturally opens *new revolutionary perspectives* which it is a question of understanding so as the better to define our tasks and activity in the coming months.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

Our evaluations, prognoses, and apprehensions at the time of the Fifth World Congress, and of its documents, have been confirmed. Opinion is now general that we are witnessing an evolution of the capitalist economy from boom to recession. The only question is that of the scope and duration of the economic slump that has begun.

This slump is above all marked, as we had emphasized, in the United States itself. From August to December 1957, US industrial production declined 6%. The steel industry is working at 60% of capacity; the other industries, at about 80%. Industrial inventories have been reduced only very little, remaining at a level of \$ 1,600 million more than in 1956.

For as long as it takes to reduce them, they will continue to have a rather depressing influence, since industrialists prefer to dip into their existent inventories rather than produce more.

In the auto industry alone, inventories at the end of 1957 were 200,000 units higher than at the end of 1956 (1).

A decrease is foreseen in investment expenditures in the neighborhood of 7% on the average; in the cases of industrial firms, properly speaking, it will reach an average of 16%. That would mean a reduction in the total demand for goods and services in 1958 of more than \$ 6,000 million.

Complete unemployment reached about 4,000,000 at the end

1. Automobile production in January 1958 was only about 500,000 units, as against 642,000 in January 1947, 612,000 in January 1956, and 659,000 in January 1955.

of December, and this month threatens to go beyond 5,000,000 (2).

The industrial crisis is aggravated by the persistence of the chronic agricultural crisis, the falling off of exports, and—a special feature—the *persistence of inflation*.

Naturally this last feature, a very important one, can be explained only as a manifestation of the excessive indebtedness of the state, occasioned by the inordinate swelling of non-productive expenditures, and in the very first place by military spending.

In spite of the reduction of the farm population by another million farmers and in spite of crop restrictions, agricultural production in 1957 set a new record, and the state was obliged to double (compared to 1956) its aid to agriculture, which reached \$ 1,000 dollars.

This turn of the American economy toward depression gives the lie to all the optimistic predictions of its defenders, such as *Fortune*, which in July 1957 foresaw a sustained expansion of the economy during all of 1957 and even 1958. It constitutes, furthermore, a very important element in the formation of the current *political* conjuncture in the United States and in the capitalist world as a whole.

Naturally the capitalists are trying to react to this turn in the economic conjuncture, and means therefor, particularly in the United States, are not wholly lacking. We shall examine them further on.

Let us for the moment turn our attention to the capitalist economy of Europe and of the semi-colonial and dependent countries.

“Economic expansion in Europe as in England,” *The Economist* recently (11 January 1958) noted, “is slowing down. Outside of England, it is in Germany that this slowing down is the most marked”—where industrial production in 1957 was only 5% higher than in 1956, ie, a rate of increase considerably less than that of preceding years (3).

2. At the end of January, unemployment was more than 6% of employed labor in 45 key industrial centres of the country, with a tendency to increase further. The industries most affected are those of automobiles, aviation, and metallurgy.

3. According to the data provided by *The Economist* (25 January 1958), the condition and perspectives of the German economy work out as follows:

The rate of production of several metallurgical articles (machine-tools, office equipment, electric generators) has gone down this year compared to the previous year. Profit margins also, and certain important firms, like Henschel locomotives at Kassel, have had financial difficulties.

It is a more general case that led the Bundesbank to lower the interest rate by 0.5% on January 16th.

The investment boom in Europe has also slowed down everywhere. This is particularly visible in such industries as steel and machine-manufacture, and in countries sensitive to fluctuations in such industries, like Belgium and Germany. In other countries, such as Holland and Sweden, which have been forced to adopt restrictive measures to improve their balance of payments, their rate of expansion has perceptibly lessened.

Even France and Italy seem in these last months to have been affected by this decrease in the rate of expansion. Industrial expansion in Italy, however, increased 9 % in 1957 compared to 7.6 % in 1956. Agricultural production on the contrary stagnated. In France production increased 10 % in 1957, but the country experienced on the other hand a grave financial crisis due principally to the cost of the war in Algeria. The loans granted by the United States and Germany, however, have given it a respite.

European production is now marking time, unemployment is reappearing and increasing here and there, exports are sagging, as are also investments in industry and for building. *A new stimulant must intervene to stop a greater contraction.* In the case of the United States, that might be a serious increase in military expenditures. In the case of European countries, except perhaps Germany, a top limit has been reached in this field, beyond which there is the risk of being precipitated into inflation.

The prospects of the European economy certainly do not encourage optimism. The progress of inflation is weakening the stimulant of internal consumption. The depression in the United States and the difficulties of the colonial and dependent countries, which arise principally from the fall in raw-material prices, weaken the stimulant of exports.

Under these conditions we can foresee an aggravation of the depression of the European economy, keeping pace and in interaction with the depression in the United States and in the colonial and dependent countries. For certain of the latter, the situation can rapidly become critical as a result of the exhaustion of their reserves and the impossibility of renewing them under the conditions of the continued drop in the prices of raw materials.

Countries dependent on their exports run the risk, in this case, of suffering the most. Take the example of *Japan*. The situation in that country has abruptly and rapidly worsened in these last months. Industrial inventories have risen 50 % over 1956, while industrial production begins to sag (6 % in steel during the second half of 1957) as well as investments (10 to 15 % less foreseen for 1958). Unemployment is rising rapidly : 500,000 full unemployed in October 1957 ; 1,500,000 predicted in mines, textiles, and metallurgy this year.

There is much talk, including in official spheres, about the "overproduction" crisis in *Japan* in 1958, a year in which the industrial plant-expansion of the preceding years will have its effect. *Only an increased export drive* can alleviate *Japan's* situation. But this effort runs the risk of failure precisely

Since Spring, the rate of building has also gone down. Despite the fact that Germany still needs two million new dwellings, there will be a rate of only 500,000 new units per year, as since 1951. Reconstruction has also been completed in such industries as steel and shipbuilding, as well as that to replace the industries of East Germany.

As Germany receives 1/5th of its national income from exports, a world recession threatens to affect it very much, in view of the slowing down also of internal demand. There are, however, *military expenditures*, especially those of rearmament, which can absorb some 55,000 million marks between now and 1961 (instead of the 45,000 million foreseen). An international recession, and the danger of inflation in case of new internal expansion, are lying in wait for the German economy.

from the fact that the general conditions of the capitalist economy are becoming difficult this year.

Other exporting countries like Germany, Britain, Austria, Italy, etc., run the risk of experiencing the same difficulties.

I shall lay further stress on the case of semi-colonial and dependent countries :

As is known, their main revenues come from the sale of raw materials and of their agricultural production. The fall in the prices of these products, apart from the repercussion that this may have on exporting industrial countries, can lead to an especially serious situation for the producing countries by setting brakes to their industrial development and by aggravating inflation. This is already the case.

Let us dwell a moment on some examples :

India. For this country 1957 was "a year of despair," observes the *New York Times* for 7 January 1958. There were "fewer new factories, fewer development projects, more unemployment, and a lesser purchasing power" than in the previous year, expenditures having exceeded receipts and, with inflation contributing, the Second Five-Year Plan begun in 1956 soon found itself out of balance.

If in the next 18 months *India* does not obtain \$1,500 million, it will be caught between "bankruptcy and" a considerable "slow-down" of its rhythm of development. True, industrial production increased further in 1957 (13 %), but on the other hand agricultural production stagnated, and in certain regions of the North some 80,000,000 people are at present faced by a real famine.

In order to check unemployment and increase resources, the Congress government imposed new restrictions on imports, and aggravated taxation, especially indirect taxation. Without serious foreign aid, *Nehru's India* is at the end of its experiment in "state capitalism" and "free" "mixed" economy.(4)

Indonesia has suffered from the fall in the prices of the raw materials that it exports (apart from oil) and from the poor rice crop. It ended the year with a very serious budget deficit (3,775 million rupees—1,000 million more than in 1956) and an aggravated inflation. The half-measures of the present Indonesian government seem to be running the risk, by prolonging the sufferings of the masses, of aiding the projects of reaction and of imperialism against the Indonesian revolution that has begun.

Latin American countries have generally had a very difficult year, their resources having been decreased by the fall in the prices of what they produce—non-ferrous metals, coffee, cotton, wool—while their imports have been increasing. Thus the deficit of their trade balance with the United States alone has gone well beyond \$600 million in 1957, or half as much again as the total of loans received from the United States, the Import-Export Bank, and the World Bank.

Brazil this year has experienced a serious trade deficit. Both industrial production and, especially, agricultural production remain far behind the development (62 million) and the needs of the population—hence also a continued inflationary pressure.

In *Argentina*, production, with the exception of agriculture,

4. The United States seems disposed to grant *India* a loan of \$225 million. *India's* reserves are currently of only \$580 million. The achievement of the Second Five-Year Plan in its entirety is already abandoned. An effort will now be made to complete only the essential part of the Plan, the three new steel works and the means of power, transport, and ore necessary for them to function. If the aid of the United States is confirmed, it will lower the resultant deficit of expenditures for carrying out the limited plan to about \$1,000 million (*Japan* and *Germany* having already lent sums that lessened the initial deficit).

has in reality been stagnating since 1955, and inflation is still causing its ravages.

This is also the case in Chile, Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia. The last-named is currently staking everything on oil (investments and production) to improve its finances.

The only exceptions where the situation is better are those of Venezuela and, in part, of Mexico and Cuba.

In case the depression of the world capitalist economy hardens, the Latin American countries will have to face a still more difficult year which, at certain places and times, can create a genuine revolutionary or counter-revolutionary crisis.

The reversal of this economic conjuncture of capitalism is currently possible only if the economy of the United States finds the means to stop the deepening and the spreading of the depression and to set forward again thanks to a new stimulant. If not, what is threatened is a process of cumulative interaction of the different depressing factors that aggravates the whole situation and, by affecting for example the mechanism of financing international trade—based in all these last years on credit—provokes at a certain moment a genuine crisis and not simply a "recession."

But before examining the reactions of capitalism, let us say a few words about the economy of the workers' states.

In contrast to the depression that is getting hold of the economy of capitalism, the economy of the workers' states in general is experiencing a continuing upsurge, although at a slower rhythm of expansion.

It is the Soviet economy that is still in the lead, having experienced in 1957 a productive development of about 10 % instead of the predicted 7 %, followed by that of Czechoslovakia, China, and Poland. It must be noted, however, that agricultural production in all these countries always runs behind, both in comparison with the comparative progress of industry and especially in comparison with the needs of a population that is growing and is more demanding than in the past about food supplies and consumers' goods.

The national and international planification of the workers' states, on which these demands weigh, is in a *state of transition*. Its new orientation will be the result not only of economic requirements in themselves but also of the pressure currently being brought to bear by the masses in these countries, and of the relationship of forces with the bureaucracy.

The tendency that is discernible in all plans under preparation — to lower the rate of expansion of heavy industry and to give more importance than in the past to agriculture, and thus to be able better to satisfy the production of consumers' goods — naturally reflects the increased pressure of the masses in these countries and their new relationship of forces with the bureaucracy.

"ANTI-CRISIS" MEASURES OF IMPERIALISM AND THEIR EFFECTIVENESS

In what way does imperialism think of reacting against the "recession" that has begun and preventing it from being transformed into a genuine crisis ?

We now have sufficient indications to answer this question, and they confirm the main ideas developed on this matter in the Fifth World Congress document, "International Economic and Political Perspectives." Imperialism's principal means for correcting the situation on the economic plane is naturally to check the deepening of the "recession" in the United States itself, whose economy very closely determines that of the capitalist world as a whole.

The present case is much more characteristic than during

the 1953-1954 recession, when the European economy could for a certain time develop in spite of the recession in the American economy, and to some extent help the latter to straighten out more quickly. At present, even the immediate prosperity of the European economy depends on its possibility of continuing to export to the United States and Canada, as well as to the semi-colonial and dependent countries.

On the other hand, the latter would be able to maintain their exports only if their trade balance with the United States improves thanks to a rise in the prices of raw materials and agricultural products, a rise which only the restored dynamism of the American economy could bring about.

Now a deepening of the recession in the United States, threatens to limit American imports and keep up the deflationary pressure on the prices of raw materials and agricultural products.

Thus the question of the immediate future of world capitalist economy boils down to that of the American economy. Now the principal means by which the latter is at present trying to escape from the grinders of the "recession" is that of a new important increase in *budgetary expenditures, principally military expenditures*.

Thus the proof is once more made that the American "miracle" is viable only thanks to artificial injections, from time to time, and *in doses that in reality are ever-increasing*.

The new American budget for 1958-1959 foresees an increase of \$ 2,100 million in expenditures, but the figure that we should keep in mind is that of an increase in military spending of more than \$ 4,000 million, thanks to "economies" elsewhere, which include the decrease in building of schools and hospitals, the abandonment of various public works, the reduction of aid to farmers, the increase in postal rates, etc. More serious reductions in all sorts of expenditures of a social nature are, furthermore, recommended for coming years. "Economy" and "discipline" in the sector of civil and social expenditures are the characteristics of the new war budget of the Republican administration. As for the advisers most hardened to by the Republican administration, à la Rockefeller, they did not hesitate to propose a gradual increase in the military budget involving \$ 30,000 million additional in the next four years (3+6+9+12) ! (Recommendations of the Rockefeller Commission)

Another important figure to keep in mind for economic predictions in the United States this year is that of *cash* military spending in the form of production orders that are counted on for 1958 : \$ 6,000 million compared to those of 1957 (or the equivalent of the losses occasioned by the lessening of production in the last quarter of 1957, or of the reduction in the total demand for goods and services resulting from the sag in 1958 investments). Parallel to this stimulant, we are witnessing a new "liberalization" of credit policy, an easing of stock-market margins, as well as an increased aid to export (\$ 400 million for 1958).

It is naturally difficult to predict with certainty whether all these measures, already important in scope, will be sufficient to check the "recession" (5). As for us, we think that they are still insufficient and that they will not adequately offset the decrease in purchasing power which results from the already

5. Eisenhower's economic message to Congress notes the falling-off of expenditures for investment, as well as export, and places all his hopes in the stimulant of new state spending to offset the forces of "recession". The recession is attributed more especially to the existence of big inventories, which are being liquidated at the rate of only \$ 3,000 million per year, which has caused a reduction in new production. It is also to be noted that the message implicitly accepts the serious probability for this year of the recession's being accompanied by inflation—which would oblige the government to limit the use of "stabilizers" that are inflationary by nature.

serious spread of unemployment, from reduction of aid to farmers, and in general from new and inevitable advances of inflation — all the more so in that the bosses, aided by the government, are preparing to reject wage increases.

Furthermore, the special military effort concerning rockets (to the detriment of all other arms), though it aids certain branches of industry, threatens to aggravate the decline of others which employ more personnel and use more raw materials.

Also the attempt of American imperialism to "export" to some extent its industrial and agricultural crisis can only aggravate the difficulties both of European industry and of the agricultural and raw-material economy of the semi-colonial and dependent countries.

For all these reasons we think that the "recession" that has begun can prove to be much more difficult to overcome with the same relative rapidity as in the past, and in any case to be more serious than that of 1949-1950 or that of 1953-1954.



THE AGGRAVATED GENERAL CRISIS OF IMPERIALISM

What gives a quite special character to the current economic difficulties of imperialism is that they arise at a moment when imperialism has also a political crisis as a result of Soviet economic and technical successes and of the new advances of the colonial revolution.

The intercontinental guided rocket and the interplanetary rocket (which confirms the reality of the former) have given the USSR, on the strictly military plane, a superiority that it may be able to maintain for at least several years.

In reality it is not excluded that this advance may prove to be henceforth irreversible (on the plane of military armament). That is a fact of considerable and perhaps historic scope, whose consequences we have not yet finished deducing.

The psychological effect on the masses and on imperialism of these successes of the statified and planified economy, which we hail with all our hearts, is already immense. *The masses are realizing the inferiority of the imperialist side in the relationship of forces and are interpreting the changes in a revolutionary way, as a stimulus to new struggles and victories over imperialism.* This effect can only increase by bounds in the coming period.

This inferiority is realized also by imperialism, including this time, for the first time, by American imperialism. That is also a fact of historic importance.

It would however be wrong and dangerous to draw as conclusion the possibility of seeing imperialism let itself be paralyzed by a sort of unswerving propagation of a defeatist current (which unquestionably exists and is growing stronger). The leading and still decisive circles of the international bourgeoisie are in practice reacting, in the last analysis, by strengthening their military potential and preparations.

That is the conclusion we must draw from what is now going on and being prepared both in the United States and in NATO. The disarmament discussions, the Rapacki Plan, a new top conference, etc., which are going to continue, the always possible and even inevitable partial compromises, must not hide from us the practical achievements of imperialism in the direction of a *superarmament*, with the generalization of atomic arms, the construction of rockets, and soon of anti-rockets, and the multiplication throughout the world of military bases and launching ramps.

In this field there has been no retreat since the Korean War. There is on the contrary an ever broader and more intense practical preparation. Imperialism has replied to the Soviet

sputniks by creating a genuine hysteria for *superarmament* in the shortest possible time, a hysteria which in the United States has spared nobody, including the "liberals," the "democrats" à la *New Republic*, *The Reporter*, etc., who have "thanked sputnik" for having awakened the "healthy" reactions of the "nation." As for more prudent men like Kennan or Lippman, taken to task so vehemently by the Democrat Dean Acheson, they are far from being opposed to the effort to "catch up with" the USSR. They ask only that this effort be combined with a diplomacy that is less ambitious and less provocative, more realistic and more cautious, which avoids a premature clash with the workers' states, in a relationship of forces that is plainly unfavorable to imperialism.

(They furthermore propose diplomatic ripostes to the Kremlin's "peace" offensive, aiming to seize the initiative in this field and to drive the Kremlin back, if the occasion should arise, on to the defensive.)

Such, however, might well not be the opinion of the American leading circles which expressed themselves through the still secret reports of the Gaither, Rockefeller, and other commissions. By insisting on a gradual serious increase in the military budget, as well as on the idea that time for still several years threatens to work against the United States, and on the advantages of a "surprise" offensive, these commissions are toying to some extent with the idea of a *preventive war*.

We must nowise minimize the dangers of such a situation. *We must on the contrary concentrate our policy on denouncing them and on putting forward and into practice our own solutions, revolutionary solutions, whose realistic character it is also necessary to demonstrate, ie, that it is a question of the only genuine realism.*

Let us approach the question in its full scope. It is unquestionable that the unbridled race for atomic arms, itself the cause of sensational technical achievements on both sides, will soon bring humanity into "the era of *automatic push-button war*." That is the expression already used by Dr Pickering, director of the rockets laboratory at the California Institute of Technology. That is to say that, in order to save time, to intercept the enemy's rockets before they reach their objectives and to launch reprisals, there will soon be machines to determine whether the radar signals come from enemy rockets, and to trigger the offensive. The whole process threatens to become automatic and to escape from the control of men, including isolated individuals and groups of soldiers — who, themselves cut off from any broader democratic control, constitute a feeble guarantee of avoiding errors of panic or simply of madness.

Furthermore, an atomic war at the rocket level, set off in any manner at all — automatically or after "mature" reflection — would not fail to be immensely catastrophic for humanity. Consequently it is infinitely correct not to take the question lightly and to do everything to avoid this disaster.

But the question of war is not a question of logic, of reasoning; it is a social question, and all current practice shows that imperialism is capable of anything, except of "peacefully" abdicating. It is necessary to take that as our point of departure, and, as *realists*, to envisage what is the most effective manner to reduce if not eliminate the risks.

Our movement unhesitatingly replies: *the propagation of the effective revolutionary struggle everywhere; the overthrow of capitalism over the greater part of the globe.*

And this for the following two main reasons. It is evident that imperialism, first of all that of the United States, will try to compensate for its military inferiority and increase its chances of success by means of a strategy of multiplying bases

throughout the world which would disperse the military action of the USSR and render its territory more vulnerable. *This clear strategy of imperialism must be answered by the neutralization of its bases, above all those in Europe and Asia, and if possible also those in Africa. This neutralization can be guaranteed only by the victory of workers' regimes.*

Furthermore, the use of atomic arms in a revolution, by native reactionary forces or by imperialism, is infinitely more difficult than in the case of a general war.

To encircle American imperialism by continents and regions in which it has ceased to have bases and support-points is the only realistic manner of envisaging the possibility of avoiding atomic war, or of disarming American imperialism with relative ease, without colossal destructions, in case of an attempt at war on its part.

The policy of the Kremlin, or of centrists and reformists of every kidney, which aims at "pacifying" the world on the basis of the present status quo, is in reality utopian, since the status quo is constantly altered by the progress of technical and human revolutionary forces, and since capitalism is organically bound up — as the example of the USA best demonstrates — with a war economy and war preparations.

Naturally, while reasoning and in practice acting in this way, we must not have a negative or ultimatic attitude toward *transitional slogans, struggles, or forms*. First of all, when we speak of the need of revolution in each country, we are not speaking of the *ultimate form of the dictatorship of the proletariat*, but of its first steps, under the transitional form of a *workers' government of workers' parties* applying a *minimum programme*.

It is the task of each section to put forward the transitional form of workers' power adequate to its country, and to work up very realistically its minimum programme. What differentiates us from the Stalinists and reformists on the question of *power* is that, for us, firstly, no matter what minimum but truly anticapitalist and anti-imperialist programme can be applied only by workers' political formations; and secondly, that such a workers' government can be formed and above all can last only if it is supported in an extraparlimentary way by the masses organized in committees and armed.

As for the *programme*, we can and we must show ourselves to be *very realistic*, for example by taking economic necessities into account in a very concrete manner in each case so that economic life is not dislocated. For example it can very well be envisaged in the case of semi-colonial and dependent countries to form *capitalist* businesses under control of the workers' state, and even to permit *imperialist* businesses working under the same control, but under new conditions profitable also to the workers' state (examples of Chilean copper, Bolivian oil, etc.).

The moment and form of certain nationalizations are not questions of principle but of tactics, according to a given relationship of forces. Only the question of the *political power* is a question of principle and is really determinant.

The question of a *transitional* and *realistic* concrete solution to face up to both the threat of war and the situation that can be created by a possible deepening of the "recession" already begun must concern all our sections. On the basis of such a solution, we can and we must conclude *practical agreements* with *left centrist* tendencies that may develop in the mass organizations where we are active, in order to push them in such a direction, *the essential being to present ourselves not only with our ultimate programme but with a realistic immediately applicable programme*.

For the struggle for workers' power, under this form and in

this sense, can in places rapidly become, in the new conjuncture, a very immediate and very urgent question.

*Furthermore, there is an even lower échelon of the transitional struggle currently possible and necessary: that of a struggle by our forces rooted in mass organizations against atomic arms and tests, against launching ramps, for the Rapacki Plan and any sort of propositions aiding "disarmament." Our forces in mass organizations can very well give *critical support* to all these propositions, and, along the road, find the opportunity to clarify them by the perspective of a workers' and peasants' government.*

We must even try to promote the broadest possible workers' united front, on the international scale, around such propositions, and make their achievement, to whatever extent it be effected, depend on workers' control, on the control of workers' organizations.

In the NATO countries in particular, the struggle against atomic arms and tests and the launching ramps must be at the centre of the immediate activity of our forces active in the Socialist Parties.

We can even envisage to what extent it is possible to raise *the idea of an international workers' conference bringing together the Communist and Socialist Parties and other workers' organizations, the associations of scientists, and the organism of the Cairo Conference, in order to organize and synchronize an effective struggle for forbidding atomic arms and tests, and against launching ramps and military bases in Europe, Asia, and Africa.* Such a conference could be visualized as the end-product of other preliminary conferences, beginning for example with an international conference of the Socialist Left.

To act with imagination, audacity, and energy means to raise oneself to the level of a thorough understanding of urgent necessities, but also of currently immense possibilities.

NEW ADVANCES OF THE COLONIAL REVOLUTION

The economic and political difficulties of imperialism are aggravated by new important advances of the colonial revolution in Indonesia, the Arab countries, Central Africa, and Latin America. We are witnessing a new upsurge of the colonial revolution. While India is struggling with the economic difficulties already described, which threaten the achievement of the Second Five-Year Plan, and the Congress Party is showing itself to be more worried than ever about political evolution in the country (as clearly emerges from the last session of this party), *in Indonesia the revolution has begun*. It has taken the form of the seizure, on the initiative of the working masses of the SOBSI trade unions, of the industrial, agricultural, trading, banking, and transport enterprises of Dutch imperialism.

The seizure had as its pretext a nationalist reaction concerning Western Guinea (Irian), still under Dutch domination. But in reality the masses thus found an opportunity to push forward their revolutionary positions, stimulated since the elections of last summer which confirmed a great victory for the Indonesian Communist Party. In reality the masses spontaneously created *committees*, embryos of dual power, installing workers' control and in places even workers' administration over the seized enterprises.

Sukarno's bourgeois Bonapartist government, which is supported by the PKI [Indonesian Communist Party], found itself faced with a fait accompli, and overwhelmed by the revolutionary initiatives taken by the masses. In order to get the situation back in hand, it put forward the army, which it interposed between the masses and imperialism. Since then, the situation has remained uncertain, the masses not having received the leadership they were expecting from the PKI to complete the

revolution, but the government not daring to undo the seizure of the imperialist enterprises, either.

As for imperialism itself, it was caught off guard and with no practical possibility to react by force. The importance of the economic consequences for imperialism of the seizures in Indonesia can be measured by pointing out that 15 % of the cultivated area of the country belongs to foreign plantations and that half the area reserved for technical agricultural products destined for export (coffee, tea, rubber, sugar-cane) belongs to foreign capital (of which 70 % is Dutch capital). The principal extractive industries (the only ones in reality that exist in Indonesia, the rest of industry being insignificant), of oil, coal, and tin, also belong to Dutch capital and to foreign capital in general, as well as the main banking, trading, and transport enterprises.

Without non-indemnified nationalization of all these enterprises, with the exception of those whose immediate functioning requires that they simply come under the control of a workers' state, it would be quite futile to speak of the possibilities of harmonious and profitable economic development for the country. Furthermore, the agrarian question in Indonesia has a very acute form both because of the fact that 70 % of the peasants own no land (or less than half a hectare), and that the cultivation of food crops, especially that of rice, was relatively blocked in favor of the technical crops in which imperialism was interested.

Imperialism's rule has produced other imbalances that aggravate the situation in this country and at present require radical solutions. Thus Java was overpopulated, with 54 (out of 82) million poor peasants and pauperized urban masses, while the technical crops and mining production flourished on other islands of the archipelago, considerably less populated. It is, furthermore, the relative wealth of these islands, and principally of Sumatra, coming from coprah, rubber (Indonesian production is 40 % of world production), and oil, that feeds the separatist tendencies of the local feudalists—which imperialism is currently encouraging (6).

The future of the Indonesian revolution that has been begun naturally depends on the attitude of the PKI. It is not excluded that, subjected to the very strong pressure of the masses who are now hoping for a radical solution, this party may see itself

(6) The press (eg. *The Observer* of 26 January 1958) has been talking of a conference of separatists held at Padang, in Central Sumatra, with a view to creating an independent Moslem state under the presidency of Brigadier Daud Bereuch, vice-president of the reactionary movement Darul Islam.

The Indonesian government, furthermore, has just confirmed (on January 24th) that Lubis, former head of the general staff, and other persons, have taken part in a "plot" aiming at the creation of an independent State of Sumatra.

It is in any case unquestionable that the present situation favors separatist tendencies nourished by the geographical and economic structure of the country. The dislocation of communications and the difficulties in supplying the country with food-stuffs stimulate direct trade of each island with foreign sources (for example, Singapore). This naturally threatens to dislocate the national economy completely.

Java contributes only 6 % to exports, whereas it needs, out of a million tons of imported rice, 700,000 tons. Borneo and Sumatra, on the contrary, which have a population of less than 20 million, contribute 85 % of exports.

In case of the secession of these islands, the financial resources of the central government would be very considerably diminished — hence the efforts of this government to maintain the centralized structure of the country by ordering the military to help build "National Front Committees for the Liberation of Irian" (order of General-Staff Chief Nasution dated 23 January 1958). The "National Front" is an organization that has been active since 11 January, aiming at promoting a civil-and-military movement all over the country so as to offset separatist tendencies.

obliged to behave in the long run in the Yugoslav or Chinese way. But the danger also exists that its shillyshallying, its hesitations, its complicated game of ruses with the bourgeois Bonapartist staff of Sukarno—which is trying to keep the country to a middle-of-the-road regime—may play into the hands of the reactionary forces of the country, represented by the army, and of politicians such as Hatta, who are aspiring to a sanguinary dictatorship, entering into new compromises with imperialism.

It is particularly up to the revolutionary Marxist elements working inside the PKI, who are not lacking in the country, to help the revolutionary current polarized in this party to go forward and complete the revolution that has been begun.

The Arab revolution has also made serious progress recently. I shall briefly mention: the creation of a federated state of Egypt and Syria, which will not fail to prove to be a very powerful stimulant to Arab unity and to the revolution in the Middle East; the successes won by the Moroccan Army of Liberation against the Franquists at Ifni; the growing political maturity and the renewal of military activity of the forces of the Algerian revolution, numerically reinforced and now endowed with medium-heavy matériel, the handling of which, as soon as it has been learned by the young revolutionary fighters, will qualitatively transform the military aspect of the struggle.

As for tropical Africa, we must mention the rising movement of the trade-union vanguard, both in the French and in the English and Belgian colonies, for attainment of genuine independence, with such advanced points as the guerilla begun in the Kamerun territory by the forces of Um Niobé, former Communist trade-union leader.

A high point illustrating this new upsurge of the colonial revolution in Asia and Africa was unquestionably the Cairo Conference which brought together about 500 delegates and representatives from some 50 Afro-Asiatic countries. The progress achieved over the Bandoeng Conference can be measured by observing that the Cairo Conference put the accent on some highly explosive ideas and resolutions: *Nationalization of foreign firms; economic and technical aid, without conditions, to be asked from the workers' states; active support of the Algerian revolution, as concretized in a well-known resolution.*

I now come to the recent progress of the colonial revolution in Latin America. I shall briefly mention only the salient points in this situation:

In Argentina, on the approach of the elections, labor activity was renewed with an impressive wave of new strikes. It is unlikely that the extreme instability with which this country is still struggling will end with the elections.

In Chile, the presidential candidacy of the socialist leader Allende, backed by the Communists, has had great success. Our comrades, both inside the SP and outside, are very actively participating in this campaign.

In Bolivia, the polarization of the worker and peasant masses around a new leadership hostile to the MNR is becoming accentuated. The activating nucleus of this new leadership is unquestionably our party, as you comrades have been able to verify by reading the information we provided in a recent *Internal Bulletin of the International Secretariat*.

In Cuba, the Fidel Castro rebellion, which is operating in the maquis, is spreading and having new successes; sparked by an anticapitalist and anti-imperialist programme, it has a good chance of overthrowing, by means of a popular uprising, the hated regime of Batista (7).

(7) Fidel Castro — according to information provided by the American press — now controls the Sierra Maestra region.

In Venezuela, the magnificent popular revolt of the masses won out over the sanguinary dictatorship of Jiménez, the straw-man of the North American oil trusts, who had been ruling the country for now ten years by means of repression and terror. The dictatorship was weakened by dissensions in the armed forces, by the rebellion of the air force and the navy, but above all by the growing discontent of the masses, the students, workers, and petty-bourgeoisie, a discontent which determined the attitude of the army. The Jiménez regime was overthrown only thanks to a heroic popular uprising that produced hundreds of dead and thousands of wounded, for the masses of Caracas hurled themselves recklessly against the tanks and the nests of Jiménez's police assassins barricaded in the offices of [the Venezuelan equivalent of the FBI or CID], of the political police, and against the prisons to free the prisoners (8).

The revolutionary Marxist forces, operating inside the *Acción Democrática* led by ex-president Rómulo Bethencourt, have a good chance, under the new conditions created by the smashing popular victory, of developing a *worker's left wing*, to which belongs the future of this fabulously rich country, pillaged up till now by imperialism and the limited native comprador circles.

The evolution of the economic and political situation in Latin America opens great revolutionary possibilities for our sections and lays urgent duties upon us. In Argentina, our organization is fighting audaciously to broaden its base and its influence, to recruit on a large scale, to obtain its legalization [this has already been done], and make itself known to the country's extensive proletarian masses who are looking for new leadership. To win these masses, especially the most radicalized of them, who were formerly polarized around the myth of Perón, with the help of a big labor party based on the trade unions, is the central political task of our organization.

In Chile and in Uruguay, it is the work inside the SPs that must be carried on in a broader and more systematic way, while avoiding a premature clash with the bureaucratic leaderships which would try to expel the genuine left. In Chile, furthermore, the unification of all Trotskyist forces in one organization cannot fail to increase very considerably the effectiveness of our work as a whole in this country.

In Bolivia, the International must tend to giving all practical support to the application of the line of the Fifth World Congress resolution on this question, a line which is proving itself to be generally correct and which is already beginning to have a successful application.

From there his men make raids into the whole country, recently using even bazookas. One of these raids led them to the momentary possession of the Radios in Havana, from which they called on the population to act "a la Caracas." A people's administration has been set up in the regions controlled by Castro, having at its disposal tribunals, schools, and hospitals. The rebels often confiscate or destroy certain capitalist agricultural enterprises and distribute the spoils to the poorest elements of the population.

(8) It was the *Junta Patriótica*, an united-front organization including the Communist Party, that played the dominant role in the Venezuelan events. Its underground leader, till recently still unknown, was Fabricio Ojeda, 29, a journalist, from the left wing of the *Unión Democrática*.

The junta was organized in committees of three: strike committees, factory committees, students' committees, and also "committees of violence" possessing incendiary bombs and other weapons. It was the junta that launched the general strike, as a result of which the army (on the second day) decided to intervene.

The junta was created as a united front on the rank-and-file level last summer, including the *Unión Democrática*, *Acción Democrática*, the Christian-Democratic Party, and the Communist Party.

THE SITUATION IN THE USSR, IN THE OTHER WORKERS' STATES, AND IN THE COMMUNIST PARTIES

In appearance at least, the Zhukov crisis opened a period of relative stability in the political leadership of the Soviet bureaucracy. The success of the sputniks, and the evolution of the international situation, generally unfavorable to imperialism, seems to be reflected in the USSR to the profit of the current Kremlin leadership.

This evaluation is partly correct. But we must not forget that the very serious problems which are at the basis of the crisis of the Soviet bureaucracy have never found a satisfactory solution. The Soviet economy is at present in full *transition*. Very thorough-going reforms have been introduced in it, which aim at checking its bureaucratic sclerosis, at increasing its elasticity, at rationalizing it and rendering it qualified to absorb rapidly and without shocks the new productive forces of automation and nuclear energy.

This is the purpose of the decentralization into broadly autonomous economic regions and groups of regions, from the industrial and even agricultural point of view, of the *sovkarkhozes*—a decentralization that Khrushchev is now trying to extend also even to the agricultural field.

This decentralization is not a purely economic operation (or influenced by the prospect of atomic war) but a highly political and social operation. It upsets the social structure of the USSR and raises fundamental political problems. It involves a structural recasting of the bureaucracy, to the disadvantage of the layers of the central administration for the benefit of more technical layers more directly connected with production. But at the same time it raises the question of the distribution of roles within each enterprise, making more imperative than ever the need of a democratic association of the productive masses with the working up and carrying out of the plan.

In all this, the political leadership of the bureaucracy is acting in a Bonapartist way, playing one against another and yielding to sometimes contradictory pressures. The very latest developments seem, however, to be continuing concessions under pressure from below, *by increasing the powers attributed to the plant committees not only toward the directors but even toward the trade-union bureaucracy that strangles them*.

One gets the impression that "destalinization," temporarily stopped in the strictly political and cultural fields, is continuing and deepening in the field of the economic and social powers attributed to the proletariat and the local mass organisms (factory committees, soviets).

In this category of ideas there also enters the very important measure whereby from now on the "correction camps," much reduced in number and in the number of their inmates, will be dependent not on the Ministry of the Interior, on the police, but on the local soviets.

The economic concessions to the peasants continue and broaden. Khrushchev's proposal to give the *kolkhozes* the ownership of tractors and farm machinery is a new "Bukharinist" concession, but which, under the present conditions of Soviet agriculture and of the relations between the peasants and the state, might prove to be necessary and useful. It comes about naturally as a result of the persistent comparative stagnation of Soviet agriculture, in such contrast to the advances in the industrial field (or to the successes of American agriculture).

The year 1957, Khrushchev said in his 24 December 1957 speech, "was unfavorable": wheat stocks about equal to those of 1955, a mediocre year, in spite of the considerable extension of areas under cultivation in the "virgin lands," as well as of

cotton. As for livestock-raising, the figure of 31,500,000 milch-cows at the end of 1957 remains still lower than that of 33,200,000 in 1928 before collectivization and was increased by only about 600,000 head between 1956 and 1957 (a figure which allows it to be supposed that it will be hard to reach by 1960 the 40 million head foreseen by the Sixth Five-Year Plan).

In the appeal that it made on January 21st to agricultural workers, the party's Central Committee and the government admitted that the year 1957 had been a difficult one, and that meteorological conditions in the Lower and Middle Volga regions had been worse "than in 1921," a famine year in the USSR.

But the basis of the still insoluble difficulties in agriculture is to be found elsewhere: *in the willful non-coöperation of the peasants with the state, as a result of the way in which collectivization was carried out, and in the uneconomic conditions of exchanges with the state and with the cities.*

Khrushchev's reforms are an attempt to bet on the material interests of the peasants and to restore a balance on that basis. It remains to be seen under what economic conditions the machines and tractors will be sold to the kolkhozes, whether the peasants will rid themselves of their distrust toward the "exploiting" state, and under what juridical conditions these freedoms given to the kolkhozes may not end up by accentuating the economic and social contradictions among the kolkhozes and within each of them; and also the repercussions of such market forces on the planned economy as a whole (9).

It is hard to say along what exact lines all these reforms are reconstructing the bureaucracy, and what attitude the different bureaucratic strata will take toward the present leadership. What is clear in any case is that Khrushchev has alienated the support of representatives of important bureaucratic strata without having found a stable popular base. *The whole situation in the USSR is still in tumultuous evolution, from which "surprises" are not excluded—indeed, quite the contrary.*

The situation in the "Popular Democracies" and in China is also not without repercussions for the stability of the Khrushchev regime. First of all, their needs of economic aid from the USSR are hardly diminishing but continue to increase. This weight, added to that of the diplomatic aid needed for a series of semi-colonial and dependent countries, must currently lie heavily on the Kremlin. Then there are the political difficulties arising from the maintenance and even the renewed accentuation of a quite Stalinist rigidity in East Germany, in

(9) There are at present 8,500 MTS (with about 3 million members) having at their disposal some 750,000 tractors (of 15hp) for some 82,000 kolkhozes (with 35 million members).

Khrushchev justifies the reform by insisting on the bad maintenance and the bad utilization of the machines, the weight of the extra charges on the production costs of agricultural products (sometimes, he said, as much as two-and-a-half times) caused by the administration of these stations, the bureaucratic snafu arising from the fact of the "coexistence of two masters on the same land." He seems furthermore to have confidence in the presidents and other party members in the kolkhozes (30,000 presidents named ex officio in 1956 by the party) to control the kolkhozes.

The following questions are raised by this reform: on what terms of payment will the kolkhozes buy the machines, and on what terms will they make their purchases of new machines and spare parts, so as to avoid falling under a greater than ever dependence on the state; on what basis will the machines be distributed among rich and poor kolkhozes, without accentuating their economic and social differentiation; under what juridical conditions will the purchase (and not the exchange) of means of production by non-satisfied commercial groups which the kolkhozes—at least partially—are, combined with the trading activity of these groups, not set free uncontrollable Nepist forces?

Hungary, in Czechoslovakia, and in the other European "People's Democracies."

In these countries tension is great and explosions always possible. In Poland, the persistent economic difficulties—which have no prospect of serious rapid improvement (especially in case of a more widescale world recession, which keeps the price of Polish coal down to the \$ 14 a ton to which it recently fell from \$ 25, and shrinks its markets in hard-currency countries)—only aggravate the political uneasiness resulting from the neo-bureaucratism of a Stalinist hue into which "Gomulkaism" is settling (the *Po-Prostu* affair; purging of the best October 1956 elements from the CP; censorship of writers; strike movements in Wroclaw, etc.). It is only in Yugoslavia that the atmosphere is less tense, due to a considerable extent to the concessions (and not only economic ones) which the regime is making to the masses (including that of letting strikes break out, and not repressing them) (10).

As for China, we must note a new rectification of the famous "rectification" campaign, which consists of putting the accent back on the struggle against "bureaucracy, subjectivism, and sectarianism" in the leading apparatus of the government and of the party, and of considering this struggle as forming part of the category of "contradictions in the ranks of the people"—whence the need to treat such contradictions, not by repression, but by education and persuasion, in a manner as "gentle as a breeze, or mild rain" (Hsi-Chung-Hsun, General-Secretary of the State Council, at the XVIIIth extended Plenum of the party committees and organizations of the central government, 17-18 January) ! (11)

The economic difficulties, the discontent of the masses, and the fear of completely alienating the sympathies of the intellectuals, spurred the Chinese leadership to come back, to some extent, to the initial themes and goals of the campaign. But this leadership has—perhaps for the first time since the coming of the new power to China—lost much of its prestige during this campaign, which overwhelmed it and which it had to carry on in abrupt and contradictory zigzags.

As for the situation in the different Communist Parties, there is naturally much to be said. Let us note that several of these parties have lost more than their plumage in the "destalinization" crisis opened by the XXth Congress. Certain of them are quite simply dislocated and reduced to sects: this is the case particularly for the American CP, the British CP, the Belgian, Danish, Swiss CPs, etc. But in a general way the CPs of the capitalist and dependent countries have seen a grave deterioration in their relations, first with the intellectuals and then with their working-class base and with the working class itself.

Something seems to be broken in the relations between the Stalinist leaderships and their base and with the working class in general. The Stalinist leaderships' loss of prestige, of

(10) The uneasiness among the industrial workers of Yugoslavia seems to have as its cause, among others, their low salaries compared to those of white-collar workers and functionaries in the commercial sector of the enterprises.

According to the new legislation on "workers' councils," these participate in the sharing of the profits of the enterprises among their members. In this sharing the productive workers seem to be very unfavorably treated compared to the commercial sector, sometimes receiving scarcely a month's basic wage (as was the case, confirmed by Tito, in the recent strike of the miners of Trbovlje, in Slovenia), and a maximum of a month per year, while the "commercials" succeed in getting up to 27 months' wages in a period of nine months!

(11) See also the note on this question published in the January 1958 issue of *Quatrième Internationale*.

confidence, and of contacts, among the masses, is enormous and very deep-going. Everything is happening as if we were witnessing a quasi-*qualitative* change in the relations of these leaderships with the masses.

True, we are not witnessing the formation of a current behind a new leadership ; we cannot speak even of a disaffection of the masses toward the Stalinist political and trade-union organizations manifested for example in political or trade-union voting. But we are unquestionably witnessing a rupture of the bonds of confidence and enthusiasm between the leaders of these organizations and the masses. The masses are trying to go beyond these leaderships, not along any reformist or centrist road, but along a road that they cannot yet see clearly but which can be only an authentically democratic revolutionary communist one. This is what gives the measure of the chances for our movement in this continuing and deep-going crisis in international Stalinism.

Only an accentuation of our sui generis entrust tactic, of combined entrust and independent work, carried out with force, audacity, and drive, can prevent hundreds and thousands of communist cadres from becoming demoralized and giving up the fight, and enabling them on the contrary to find a perspective of struggle for the renewal of communism and the triumph of the revolution.

We must be deeply conscious of the fact that the present situation of the CPs includes both great possibilities and great dangers. Everything depends on our action, more decisive and extensive than ever.

In entrust work properly so called, we must try to polarize the uneasiness and discontent and to fight against defeatism, around a left-opposition organ that makes the Stalinist leaderships responsible for the stagnation and the liquidationist course that these organizations run the risk of experiencing, and that audaciously presents an alternative policy to that of the bureaucratic, bankrupt, and treacherous leaderships.

The question of such a press, much needed, written by elements who are well acquainted with the milieu of these organizations, and with their members' aspirations, worries, complaints, and criticisms, and who are capable of expressing them in terms that touch these members, is at present a primordial one. This press must not be the pure and simple duplication of our independent organs, but something more adapted to the specific milieu of these organizations, to their political level, to their language. It must be composed of articles which criticize in clear terms, in a direct style, "à la Marty,"

the general policy of the CPs (campaigns of mere signatures "for peace" without class action lighted by the perspective of working-class political solutions ; class-collaborations ; the tactic of partial strikes ; the lack of democracy, etc.), and which sketch out an alternative policy ; more short articles written by militants, with a bearing on all sorts of questions, complaints, criticisms, concrete experiences, as well as letters from correspondents, readers, etc. Editorials should make clear the immediate platform on which the left opposition is currently fighting.

From these articles and the paper as a whole there should stand out a line of absolute distrust toward the leaderships who have failed, who are betraying and liquidating the party, and who continue to rule bureaucratically.

The slogan of a special congress, with a right for tendencies, to liquidate the crisis by liquidating the leaderships, has a general scope. The line and the tone of the paper will be in each case the product and reflection of the political breaking-in process of the left in formation, of its importance and of its experience. But what can and must be avoided right from the beginning is to bring out an organ of partial criticism, that lacks conviction, bite, and a gust of deep revolt.

The CPs are at present going through an unprecedented crisis, and only an internal press capable of arousing the patriotism and anger of their members against the responsible leaderships can prove to be a valid instrument of polarization for a current for a well-defined fight, with clear perspectives, for the democratic revolutionary straightening out of these parties.

Together with this internal work, the independent work, properly so called, must go forward, by the improvement of our press, its daring and wide distribution in Stalinist circles, independent interventions in the factories and trade unions, as well as by seizing on the crisis in student and intellectual circles, where henceforward we have the possibility of playing a leading role.

The directive of the Fifth World Congress, to behave, in this period of great revolutionary possibilities everywhere, not so much as a critical opposition, but as a positive leadership, must be concretized.

Without exaggeration, we must feel the breath of the situation and show ourselves capable of translating it into activity broader and more audacious than ever.

That is the most central meaning of this report on the present international situation and its perspectives.

1 February 1958

ERRATUM

On the first page of this report, second column, line 14, the figure should be : \$ 1,000 million.

Book Reviews

SOCIOLOGY OF THE AMERICAN OWNING CLASS

C. Wright Mills : *The Power Elite*. 423 pp. New York,
Oxford University Press.

The notion of class is the fundamental notion of Marxist sociology. The notion of class ideology that derives therefrom is another corner-stone of this sociology. Nevertheless, in the enormous mass of works written by Marx, Engels, and their principal disciples, these notions have undergone only fragmentary analysis. The concrete application of these categories to the study of certain countries and certain epochs is rarely given in these works in a complete and balanced fashion. Masterpieces of Marxist historiography and sociology like Marx's *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*, Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*, or Franz Mehring's *The Legend of Lessing*, are the exceptions, not the rule.

Obligated to use Marxism above all as an instrument of practical class struggle, the Russian Bolsheviks did not leave an overall study of the ideology, the morals, or indeed the social structure of the Czarist nobility, and Marx himself did not find the time to analyze the ideology of the English bourgeoisie outside of a few specialized fields such as that of political economy.

Such studies are very necessary, however, to give Marxism its genuine richness of explanation of *social phenomena taken as a whole*, in their entirety. To understand an epoch, it is not enough to know its mode of production. It is necessary further to understand how the different social classes that characterize it are formed and maintain themselves, what ideas they have about themselves, what are the historical roots and evolutionary tendencies both of this society and of the ideology of its different social classes, and in what way the social infrastructure is both reflected and deformed in each of the spheres of the superstructure.

And now an American social-democratic sociologist, Professor C. Wright Mills of Columbia University, has proved that such a sociology of a class, and above all of a dominant class, is possible. His work, *The Power Elite*, is a remarkable demonstration of Marxist method applied to the study of the contemporary bourgeoisie. Starting from the historical origins and social structure of this bourgeoisie, Wright Mills deduces therefrom in a masterly manner its behavior in the political, military, economic, ideological, moral, æsthetic, pædagogical, and other fields. It is an example to be followed, and it is a lesson in modesty for all Marxists. For this 99 % Marxist work was written by... a non-Marxist.

THE ECONOMIC SOURCES OF POWER

the most powerful class that has ever existed on this earth. No class has hitherto gathered together such material wealth, no class has had at its disposal technical means perfected to such a point. No class has exercised its power in so universal a way, penetrating with its commodities and its generals, its aeroplanes and symbols of Coca-Cola, into the most distant corners of the globe, at least of that part of the globe still subjected to the capitalist mode of production.

The roots of this immense power reach both into the history of the United States and into history itself ; they come as much from the peculiarities of American development as from the general laws of capitalist development. The United States, if we leave aside the systematic extermination of its native occupants, is the only country where capitalism installed itself on a virgin land. Here there was no struggle for ascendancy over the nobility or over a royal central power ; no need to share a part of the surplus-value with the old owners of the soil or of the subsoil. Here there were no mediæval, imperial, national, religious traditions, that could oblige the bourgeoisie to accept symbiosis with other dominant strata of precapitalist origin. The historical peculiarities of the United States are in short reduced to this formula : in that country capitalism could develop itself in the freest way and demonstrate on the greatest scale its general tendencies of development. It is, furthermore, both these peculiarities and these general tendencies which explain the major condition for the absolute political omnipotence of the American monopoly bourgeoisie, namely, the delay in the formation of political consciousness by the American proletariat.

The history of capitalism is, in all countries, the history of the expropriation of the old owners of the means of production by the bourgeoisie ; it is also the history of the steady expropriation of part of the bourgeoisie to the profit of its dominant strata. The history of Capital is not the story of a certain number of families who, from the XVIth century up till today, would transmit from generation to generation the ownership of the major part of capital. It is a history in which *continuity and discontinuity are combined*, in which the transmission of inherited wealth, and especially of the "rules of the game" and the morals of the system, is combined with a periodic replacement of the dominant strata of the bourgeoisie by new strata. Each epoch of the history of capitalism has its own dominant bourgeoisie.

Wright Mills begins by examining the following questions : what are the ties that connect the American monopoly bourgeoisie of today with the old pre-Civil-War "aristocratic" bourgeoisie ? What are the origins of the wealth of this monopoly bourgeoisie, and with what period does its reign, properly so called, begin ?

Before the War of Secession, when capital accumulation was brought about still relatively slowly, the heights of the bourgeoisie constituted a more or less stable aristocracy, tracing its origins back to the period of the War of Independence of the United States. These were : the 400 metropolitan families ; New England owners of ships and the textile industry ; Virginia planters, and descendants of St Louis creole aristocrats. Some "nouveaux riches" like the Vanderbilts tried to get into this caste, thanks to fortunes won in real-estate speculation and railroad building.

After the War of Secession this pseudo-aristocratic caste that crowned the American social edifice was absorbed into the new dominant stratum. The merchant and financial bourgeois aristocracy was succeeded by the pioneers of the age of the "corporations," the big stock companies, the Rockefellers and Carnegies, Morgans and Duponts. The majority of them came themselves from the bourgeoisie, but not from its dominant layer. With a few exceptions, their families are still part of the monopoly bourgeoisie today.

It is therefore this period from 1880 to 1910 that seems to be the decisive period for the formation of the power of the monopolies. True, since then several families have disappeared therefrom. Some others have broken into it in a spectacular way (for example, the Texan oil multimillionaires since the Second World War). But, leaving aside these minor fluctuations, the stability of this dominant stratum is surprising.

Among the 90 richest families in the United States in 1900, 39 % had their origins in the dominant circles of the bourgeoisie, 28 % in less rich bourgeois layers. In 1950, 68 % of the richest families had their origins among the higher layers of the bourgeoisie, and 62 % were composed of heirs of the 90 richest families of 1925. Another characteristic fact : among the richest families of 1900, 55 % had formed their own great businesses. But already in 1922, only 22 % of the richest families had taken such initiatives...

What is the origin of these fortunes that are generally of more than \$ 100 million per family? Wright Mills gives an explicit answer : it was the overall economic, political, and legal conditions that we call "capitalism" which have enabled such individuals to appropriate as their private property these enormous resources in nature, technics, and labor coöperation.

No type of man could have accumulated the big fortunes had there not been certain conditions of [an] economic, material, and political sort. The great American fortunes are aspects of a particular kind of industrialization which has gone on in a particular country. This kind of industrialization, involving very private enterprise, has made it possible for men to occupy such strategic positions that they can dominate the fabulous means of man's production ; link the powers of science and labor ; control man's relation to nature — and make millions out of it. (P 98)

Wright Mills justifiably stresses that if the state power had not been in the hands of the bourgeoisie, this accumulation could never have been produced on such a scale and at such a rhythm :

In understanding the private appropriations of the very rich, we must also bear in mind that the private industrial development of the United States has been much underwritten by outright gifts out of the people's domain. State, local, and federal governments have given land free to railroads, paid for the cost of shipbuilding, for the transportation of important mail. Much more free land has been given to business than to small, independent homesteaders. Coal and iron have been legally determined not to be covered by the "mineral" rights held by the government on the land it leased. The government has subsidized private industry by maintaining high tariff rates, and if the taxpayers of the United States had not paid, out of their own labor, for a paved road system, Henry Ford's astuteness and thrift would not have enabled him to become a billionaire out of the automobile industry. (P 100)

In short, the origins of the power of the American monopoly bourgeoisie are to be found in the private appropriation of the riches of the subsoil and the discoveries and inventions of

technics, in juridical conditions guaranteeing an ultra-rapid accumulation of capital, in an exceptionally favorable natural and historical milieu.

RENTIERS, MANAGERS, AND MONOPOLY BOURGEOISIE

Wright Mills demonstrates that two theories concerning the dominant strata of the American bourgeoisie are not valid : the theory according to which it is a question of idle rentiers, and the theory according to which the "managers" have replaced the owners of capital, properly so called.

The present basis of the power of the monopoly bourgeoisie is the *corporation*, the stock company, or rather the few hundred most important corporations in the country. The myth according to which the control of these companies is "dispersed" among a great number of stock-holders is refuted by Wright Mills. He shows that between 0.1 and 0.3 % of the American population owns the great majority of stocks in these companies. The myth according to which the main administrators of these companies form a separate social stratum, that of the "managers," as Burnham calls it, is refuted in an equally energetic fashion. Sixty percent of these administrators of the 100 most important companies are themselves the sons of bourgeois and at birth are already wealthy stock-owners. Almost in their entirety, they acquire during their career sufficient stocks to be counted in the stratum of those who get the major part of their revenues as unearned income and not as salaries. The type of specialist "manager" and "bureaucrat" predominates among the *middle* layers of company administrators. But their upper layer is composed of men having the necessary liaisons in the world of industry, finance, and the stock market to protect the company against "dirty work" and to cash in on "windfalls" when they present themselves. In other terms, the upper layer of administrators is with few exceptions recruited from within the stratum of the monopoly bourgeoisie itself.

It is true that these monopolists, inasmuch as they are the directors of big companies, enjoy *broader privileges* than those derived from just the ownership of their immense fortunes. Privileges of tax exemptions ; private spending at company expense ; appropriation of immense expense accounts ; grants of fantastic pensions by the companies, etc. But these privileges are *in addition* to their income from capital ; they do not *replace* it. In examining the income of the 120 persons who in 1949 made a million dollars or more per year, Wright Mills found that on the average 94 % of this income was income from capital. Even if the major part of the new privileges is illegal and escapes income tax, it still after all does not reach *that* level. The idea of the "reign of managers" in the United States is thus, roughly speaking, a myth.

But this fusion between the monopolists and the heads of the big companies means that the idea according to which the upper layers of the bourgeoisie are constituted by rentiers does not correspond to the truth either. Rentiers are spreading among the middle layers of Big Capital ; they are disappearing from the highest levels. That does not mean that their number is diminishing among the richest layers ; on the contrary, they are increasing there. Nor is it either that the higher layers kill themselves by overwork. Wright Mills points out that they have brought about in their own favor the 35-hour and indeed 30-hour week. But the predominance of the big monopoly companies accumulating their capital by means of self-financing has made *the active heads of the great monopoly*

families the genuine masters of the capitalist class. This type of monopolist is distinguished from both the "captain of industry" of the years 1870-1910 and the banker-financier-rentier of the years 1910-1920.

THE SELECTION OF "THE ELITE"

Every ruling class is characterized by its attachment to the institutions which permit the maintenance and transmission of social power. These institutions are more complex than the formula: private property, family, state. They involve an organization of daily life that tends to convince both the ruling class itself and the entire people that those who have wealth, glory, and power form a genuine social "élite." One of the great merits of Wright Mills's book consists of the impeccable demonstration that he develops for us on this subject:

They live in one or more exclusive and expensive residential areas in fine old houses in which many of them were born, or in elaborately simple modern ones which they have constructed. In these houses, old or new, there are the correct furnishings and the cherished equipage. Their clothing, even when it is apparently casual and undoubtedly old, is somehow different in cut and hang from the clothes of other men and women. The things they buy are quietly expensive and they use them in an inconspicuous way. They belong to clubs and organizations to which only others like themselves are admitted, and they take quite seriously their appearances in these associations.

They have relatives and friends in common, but more than that, they have in common experiences of a carefully selected and family-controlled sort. They have attended the same or similar private and exclusive schools [...]. Their men have been to Harvard, Yale, Princeton [...]. And now they frequent the clubs of these schools, as well as the leading clubs in their own city [...] (Pp 57-8)

In each of the circles in which he moves, [each one] acquires and exercises a confidence in his own ability to judge, to decide, and in this confidence he is supported by his ready access to the experience and sensibility of those who are his social peers and who act with decision in each of the important institutions and areas of public life. One does not turn one's back on a man whose presence is accepted in such circles [...]. (P 70).

The ruling strata of the bourgeoisie do not like to be talked about in the newspapers; they have an arrogance and pride which are above a desire for notoriety. They have no need for their wealth or power to be trumpeted; they are too firmly established. They are sparing of speech and philanthropy. They possess above all that supreme assurance which comes from the feeling of security and power which has been inculcated into them from their earliest childhood.

There is the true portrait of a ruling class. That is what is requisite to be in the presence of a ruling class and not a group of individuals exercising power for one or two generations. The roots of this behavior are naturally to be found in economic power; but, without the poisonous flowers described by Wright Mills, we should not be in the presence of a fully developed class society.

It is hardly a question of idealizing the members of this ruling class. Behind the quietly aristocratic façade, there are plenty of paste jewels and lots of rot. The source of the evil is the very nature of bourgeois society, which makes money, capital, the common measure of all values. In no country and in no other epoch has the glorification of money as the supreme measure of man been pushed to such excesses as in the United

States today. "You're not paid to think" and "If you're so smart, why aren't you rich?" are only two out of innumerable formulas which have entered into daily speech and which express this ideology in a way as direct as it is naïve.

The American dominant class applies these rules in a literal fashion. It believes that everything can be bought with money, and it buys everything: lawyers and judges, newspapers and politicians, Arab sovereigns and Zionist leaders, rights to subsoil wealth and oil concessions, works of art and scholars, young women and the certainty of "eternal salvation." In brilliant foreshortening, Wright Mills shows the American monopoly bourgeoisie in the mirror of its own convictions. The millionaire is always respected, whatever be the origin of his fortune: "a million dollars wipes out a lot of sins." And the greater part of the corruption that exists in the United States does not have peculiar "American" origins: it is only an inordinately malignant expression of the capitalist effort to accumulate capital without scruple and without conscience toward the social results of this effort.

The selection of the monopoly "élite" has, however, brought about during the last decades an important modification in the psychology and behavior of the dominant strata of the American bourgeoisie. The "self-made man" never existed in the literal meaning of the term. But it was a myth which, half a century ago, expressed the lack of "standing" of the dominant layers, the "robber barons" who had got rich by pillaging the public domain.

The stage of ferocious competition among these "self-made men" has been followed by a stage in which upper monopoly strata of the bourgeoisie are linked together among themselves by innumerable common interests. Representatives of different families and "interests" sit on the boards of the same banks; they meet in the same public administrations. The success of each of the companies depends less on some individual "success" than on intimate collaboration with other important companies, a collaboration which insures an uninterrupted flow of credits and information about the conjuncture.

Thus the ideal type of monopolist is no longer that of the speculator who makes a couple of million dollars by a daring coup, nor that of an industrialist who, like Rockefeller, destroyed his competitors by lowering prices to 10% of their previous level. The ideal type of monopolist is "the dynamic man with a smile of irresistible charm," who keeps up good relations with all the members of his class, who, without knowing much about society, knows how to surround himself by savants from whom he will borrow some useful ideas, who, without being a technician, will have sufficiently competent technicians on his staff to remain on top of technical progress. In such an atmosphere, where magnates choose their own successors at the head of the economy, where it is useless to have personal attainments because the most exceptional attainments can be bought, the (positive or negative) qualities of individuals become obstacles to rather than preconditions of success.

The American monopoly bourgeoisie chooses its leaders, at the head of the economy and of society, by coöptation. Irresponsibility toward formal "electors," including "stock-holders," contains in reality a very well understood responsibility toward the dominant class itself. It chooses its chiefs in its own image. It wants them above all to be conformist. To have been born into a bourgeois family, to have received a bourgeois education, to have the morals and habits of the big bourgeoisie—that is the one thing that cannot be bought in adulthood if one has not in fact enjoyed it. That is why *bourgeois conformism*, the fact of resembling one another intellectually and morally,

is the most striking quality among the monopolists. That is why, if Washington read Voltaire and Locke to relax, Eisenhower reads cowboy tales and detective stories...

THE DOMINANT CLASS AND ITS MILITARY APPARATUS

One of the peculiarities of XIXth-century American capitalism was the extreme weakness of the central state apparatus. The majority of the population was armed as a result of its existence as colonists in the midst of a hostile native milieu. The militia system won out over that of a permanent army. In the same way, local and "state" administration was stronger than "federal" administration. The rule of the bourgeoisie was direct; but because it was direct and decentralized, the broad petty-bourgeois masses (the majority of the American population at that epoch) could identify themselves with it.

Two powerful factors changed that situation. The Spanish-American War, on the eve of the XXth century, marked the official birth of American imperialism; entry into the First and then the Second World War marked the march of that imperialism toward world domination. The participation of American capital, only yesterday the country cousin of the powerful of this world, in the struggle for world domination, involved the creation of a fleet and an army capable of carrying the combat through. The geographical position of the United States, even more than that of Great Britain, involved a gradual worldwide extension of military support-points and naval and air bases throughout the globe. From the penetration of Japan to the conquest of Cuba, and from Wilson's Fourteen Points to the Washington Naval Conference, the international expansion of American imperialism has been accompanied by a gradual strengthening of the permanent military apparatus of the United States.

The entry of the United States into the Second World War produced a qualitative transformation in this evolution. United States imperialism has no longer been simply participating in a struggle for a new carving-up of the world. It has become the principal world power, that to which since 1944 the world destiny of the whole capitalist system has been entrusted. Its normal existence has suddenly become that of preparing for or waging war. There has resulted a *gradual militarization of all political and social life*, a militarization that reached its culminating point (so far) with the Korean War and the wave of the "witch hunt." At the same time, rearmament and the existence of a vast sector of war economy not only appear to be a normal and permanent institution; they seem more and more to be the only possible guarantees of prosperity and a high level of employment.

The complete transformation of the situation and international responsibilities of the American bourgeoisie in half a century — the last phase of this transformation, furthermore, has just been opened by the manufacture of intercontinental ballistic weapons in the USSR, which makes the territory of the US itself a probable battlefield of the next world war — has led to a profound change in the attitude of the tops of the bourgeoisie toward the personnel directing military institutions, the generals of the army and the air force and the admirals of the navy. Outsiders coming from the middle layers of the bourgeoisie, they have become in the course of a generation full members of the dominant strata themselves.

At the same time the nature of these military institutions has also been modified. In their structure they more and more resemble corporations. A vast pyramid of technicians responsible to the next higher echelon is crowned by chiefs who centralize a universe of specialized information — "on one

sheet of paper" — for the purpose of making overall strategic decisions, essentially inspired by the reflexes and habits of self-defense learned within their class. These supreme leaders do not have very much in common with "combatants exposed to enemy fire." The only time in their lives that they pick up a gun, Wright Mills ironically states, is when they go duck-hunting in the company of directors of big stock companies. And an insurance company has even observed that the mortality rate of officers at the front is less than that of wage-earners in big industry (p 189).

What fundamentally distinguishes the generals and admirals from the "civilian" chiefs of Big Business, is that they are more bureaucratized and stereotyped than the latter. "The military spirit" has modeled them rigorously; success in their career has done the rest. Besides, unlike the civilian sectors of Big Capital, the military chiefs are connected among themselves by the formal bonds of discipline, hierarchy, and seniority; they have at their disposal in addition an immense objective apparatus that collects and interprets information and produces "solutions." All that has undoubtedly increased their specific weight within the dominant class. It is indeed not by accident that we have seen, just after World War II, generals occupying political positions of the greatest importance: a McArthur, proconsul in Japan; a Marshall, Secretary of State; an Eisenhower, President of the United States.

Nevertheless, the *specific* weight of the military caste in the capitalist class as a whole must not be exaggerated. What has happened is not the appearance of a caste having specific interests. We have rather witnessed the fusion, or better still, the gradual absorption of the tops of the army and the navy by the dominant strata of the monopolists. It is the heads of the big stock companies that act as the principal advisers of the supply departments of the army; from time to time (Wilson!) they even become Secretary of Defense. Simultaneously, on leaving the army, the military chiefs have been regularly integrated into Big Business. General Lucius D Clay became president of the board of directors of the Continental Can Company; General Bradley fills the same function with Bulova Research Laboratories Inc., and General McArthur at Remington Rand. General Doolittle is vice-president of Shell Oil, General Wedemeyer fills the same function at AVCO, General Leslie R Groves at Remington Rand, and General Bedell Smith at the American Machine and Foundry Company. Admiral Moreell is chairman of the board of the Jones and Laughlin steel trust, Admiral Alan Kirk of that of Mercastr Inc., and General Matthew B Ridgeway that of the Mellon institute of Industrial Research (p 214).

Shell, Mellon, Jones and Laughlin, Continental Can (tied up with the Morgan group), are not just any old companies; they are companies forming part of the domain of the most powerful monopolists in the country. And it is in this domain that the generals and admirals have been integrated. As soon as this integration has become a fact, the military chiefs are no longer acting in function of particular interests, even though they be clique interests, but as an integral part of the leading monopolist strata of the American bourgeoisie, and are totally identified with the interests of those strata.

THE POLITICAL PERSONNEL OF BIG BUSINESS

During the XIXth century, politics was a career looked down on by the American bourgeoisie. It was considered that only those who were incapable of succeeding in any profession became professional politicians; and it was supposed that they sordidly enriched themselves out of public funds. In this legend

there is quite a lot of exaggeration (in the last analysis, a generation of businessmen robbed the state far more than three generations of politicians!), but there is still quite a lot of truth. In his preface to *The Civil War in France*, Engels quotes the example of the American state as that of an apparatus which renders itself autonomous of society in order to plunder it with impunity.

The period of the break-through of the monopoly bourgeoisie did not fundamentally change this situation: the leading political personnel simply put itself in a more open and cynical fashion (particularly during the period of Mark Hanna!) at the service of Big Capital, combining the latter's legislation for pillage in the grand manner with its own little short-term thievery. Even the period of the '20s more resembles that situation that it does the present structure of American government.

Already during the '20s, however, a gradual change began to take place in the recruiting of *leading* political personnel. While the professional politician continued to dominate the lower and intermediate jobs in the political hierarchy, the higher jobs began to be granted in increasing numbers directly to members of the dominant strata. They predominated first among the ambassadors, where a Mellon was to be seen serving during the '20s. The Roosevelt period and the Eisenhower period powerfully accentuated these tendencies. Nearly half the present cabinet secretaries and subsecretaries never carried out political functions before being called to the heights of the administrative hierarchy. And the Eisenhower government illustrates in a striking way the *personal union between the monopolists and the state*: the principal secretaries are not only members of the predominant monopoly strata, but also the representatives of key interests within these strata: General Motors-Dupont; the firm of lawyers that serves the Morgan interests; a Rockefeller in person; the principal bank of the West of the United States.

The choice of the personnel directing the state, like the choice in the principal stock companies, is therefore made neither through effective election, nor through a professional career, nor even through bureaucratic success. *This personnel is chosen by coöptation by its peers*, within the upper layers of the dominant class itself (p 235)! At the top of the government, just as at the top of society, the fusion among economic leaders, military chiefs, and cabinet members is perfect. It is in the same milieu, indeed in the same families, that they are chosen!

Wright Mills shows in a masterly fashion how this personal union between the monopolists and the state destroys the legend of "the balance of forces" which supposedly governs the relations among social forces in the United States. Granted, the pressure groups and lobbies try to influence the decisions of the American government. To the extent that they are workers or petty-bourgeois, they sometimes succeed on a local scale; rarely on a "state" scale, almost never on a "federal" scale. And even when they do succeed, it is in secondary questions which nowise modify the structures in which they must act, and which fix the "rules of the game" in favor of the monopolists. The famous exclamation of Charles Wilson that "*what is good for General Motors is good for the United States*" expresses not so much a philosophy as a reality. The American government functions in order to assure the obtention of surplus-value and capital accumulation by the dominant monopoly layers of the American bourgeoisie.

Wright Mills observes how the real differences between the two big American political parties have disappeared, to the point where they are obliged to *invent* subjects of discord to justify their autonomous existence. The members of Congress, representatives and senators, represent most of the time a

resultant among the forces of contradictory pressures at the city, region, or "state" level; that is why their real power keeps declining. Those who preside over congressional commissions and who have real legislative power work hand-in-hand with the Executive, and, by their origin and the interests they represent, are inextricably tied up with Big Business. Wright Mills states:

The interpenetration between government and the business world has reached a degree [...] where the two can no longer be considered separate worlds.

AMERICAN MONOPOLISTS AND BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY

How have the monopoly strata of the American bourgeoisie succeeded in establishing so strict a control over society in the United States without having to pass over to openly totalitarian forms of government, Bonapartist and military dictatorship or fascist dictatorship? There are two essential answers to this question. Wright Mills gives a first one; he only sketches out the second.

As American industrialization has been pushed to its ultimate stages, as agriculture itself is drawn into the utmost mechanization, as the old more or less coherent collectivities disappear in the country, the general characteristic of American society becomes that of "mass society," or to speak in clearer language of the *total atomization of the people*. The "public" has been transformed into a "mass", says Wright (we should have preferred the formulation, has been atomized), which involves:

1) that an increasing number of individuals no longer have opinions of their own and no longer express them, but are simple passive receivers of opinions broadcast by the great instruments of "formation of public opinion" (the press, radio, television, cinema, advertizing, etc.);

2) that these instruments are organized in such a way as to render impossible any dialogue between the "producers" and "consumers" of opinions; when a speaker in a public meeting expresses false opinions, you can interrupt him and the whole hall would be able to follow you; but it is useless to interrupt in your isolated apartment a speaker who, on television, is talking to ten million viewers;

3) that non-conformist or critical elements have in practice no means at their disposal to get their ideas to penetrate into the mass, these means being monopolized by the dominant class and by the state;

4) that the mass is not independent of the institutions but is on the contrary penetrated by the agents of these institutions, who control within them the expression of opinions, and even the opinions themselves.

In a more explicit and Marxist form, we can say that the petty-bourgeois democracy of old, based on a certain equality among the citizens of small agricultural or artisanal collectivities, has given way under monopoly capitalism to a purely formal "democracy," the mass of citizens being only a vast "market" to which the monopolists "sell" ideas as they sell automobiles and toothpaste.

Wright Mills insists (exaggerating, in our opinion) on the *structural* causes of this evolution: the growth of the population, the development of cities and of technics; the hypertrophy of the means for forming public opinion, etc. Unquestionably, it is a question here of the material framework of the atomization of the "American public" of old, of which conservative liberals dream with nostalgia. Without these material transformations, this "atomization" would have been impossible. But this new

framework does not necessarily involve this atomization ; it involves it only to the extent that the political labor movement is lacking or is in decline.

And it is here, in our opinion, that the second cause of the decline of bourgeois democracy in the United States lies, a cause on which Wright Mills touches lightly, but to which he does not accord all the attention that it deserves. In fact, though the atomization of citizens is only an advanced form of the division of labor and the degradation produced by capitalist industry and described in detail by Marx, the labor movement in Europe, beginning in the '80s, has constituted a *powerful counterweight* to this evolution.

It is within the labor movement that the worker found the needs of culture and human warmth that an inhuman society had slowly killed in the "average citizen." It is within this labor movement that the working-class youth has discovered other worlds than alcohol or dancing. It is within the same movement that the worker begins to become a citizen again, that he learns how to formulate an opinion on political subjects and to express it, that he has learned that his opinion counts and can change things. It is there that he has won a sense of dignity and independence from Capital. *It is by gaining articulate class consciousness in the labor movement that the worker can overcome the atomization produced by capitalism,* that he can face it as an individual integrated in an organized class.

Now the United States has never known a mass political labor movement, but to the degree that the CIO unions were sufficiently democratic at the beginning to permit self-activity by the masses within them, experience has shown that *potentially* the American working class could escape from the total control of its life and thought by capital, that it could begin its emancipation in its own class organization (1).

It is therefore the lack of a political mass movement and the rapid degeneration of the mass trade unions that explains the omnipotence of the ideas, the norms, and the code of the monopolists in the United States, which is at the same time their political omnipotence. It is the lack of a great labor party that transforms the elections into a farce, the press into a monopoly of the bourgeoisie, and the tens of millions of workers into robots shut up in occupations, habits, pleasures, and thoughts prefabricated by their masters. By a tragic reversal of things, the totalitarian society of ant-men which, according to the ideologists of capitalism, would be the final end of socialism, is now being constructed in the United States, in the paradise of Big Capital.

It is in the final analysis this same factor that explains the unlimited political rule of the monopolists in the United States. It explains why, in the absence of a powerful political party of the working class, the monopolists can continue to manipulate all the classic instruments of bourgeois democracy without having to run the risk of introducing authentic representatives of the workers into the mechanism of the administration. But the day when the American trade unions create a great *Labor Party*, many characteristics of the American political regime that Wright Mills considers definitive will experience a shaking-up that will be as rapid as it is radical. The evolution he describes is neither fatal nor irreversible. The same forces which, on a world scale, favor the upsurge of the Revolution, will end by undermining the political influence of Capital on the American workers.

1. See on this subject the excellent work by Daniel Guérin : *Où va le peuple américain?*

DOMINANT CLASS OR POWER ELITE?

If Wright Mills's excellent analysis grows weak in its examination of the causes of the current atomization of American society, it is disappointing when it touches on the fundamental theoretical question : do the monopolists in power represent a *social class*, or are they, to quote the author's own words, a "power élite" ? Needless to say, disfiguring the remarkable results of his own work, and demonstrating a regrettable lack of moral courage, Wright Mills tries in a few formulae to polemicize against the "simplistic" Marxist notion of class. Thus he writes on page 277 : "The simple Marxist view makes the big economic man the *real* holder of power [...] ; and again, on the same page :

'Ruling class' is a badly loaded phrase. 'Class' is an economic term ; 'rule' a political one. The phrase, 'ruling class,' thus contains the theory that an economic class rules politically. That short-cut theory may or may not at times be true, but we do not want to carry that one rather simple theory about in the terms that we use to define our problems ; we wish to state the theories explicitly, using terms of more precise and unilateral meaning. Specifically, the phrase 'ruling class,' in its common political connotations, does not allow enough autonomy to the political order and its agents, and it says nothing about the military as such. It should be clear to the reader by now that we do not accept as adequate the simple view that high economic men unilaterally [?] make all decisions of national consequence. We hold that such a simple view of 'economic determinism' must be elaborated by 'political determinism' and 'military determinism' ; that the higher agents of each of these three domains now often have a noticeable degree of autonomy ; and that only in the often intricate ways of coalition [?] do they make up and carry through the most important decisions.

We shall let the term "simple" go, though it appears four times in this passage as quoted : we cannot know whether it is aimed at the *deformers* of Marxism, who make a simplistic and mechanistic elaboration of it, or Marxism itself. In the first case, Wright Mills should have been more explicit ; in the second, he does not bring even the shadow of a proof. Should we maliciously say that he is himself the victim of an "education which becomes more and more an instrument for forming public opinion," as he so correctly defines it ? As for the "precise and unilateral" notions, we confess that the term "power élite" seems to us far from this ideal, and highly equivocal.

Wright Mills's objection to the term "ruling class" is that it puts the accent too much on the "economic" phenomenon, and allows too little "autonomy" to political and military agents. To speak of a ruling class as an "economically determined" notion is, however, more than abusive, and quite contrary to the sense of Marxism. A ruling class is by definition a group of men who, holding control of the means of production or of social surplus-product, fashion *social institutions* so as to preserve, transmit, and guarantee that control. It is therefore a social and not an economic phenomenon. In transitional historical periods, which nevertheless occupy centuries, it can even be deprived of the principal economic wealth : think of the court nobility under the absolute monarchy from the XVIIth to the XVIIIth century ! Wright Mills's objection is therefore absolutely unfounded. To demonstrate that we are not faced with a ruling class, he ought to demonstrate that those who hold the political and military power are not born into the bourgeoisie, do not make their studies at the side of other sons

of bourgeois, have not taken courses in "aristocratic" universities, do not live in fashionable suburbs, do not frequent the clubs and associations of the monopolists, do not occupy on retirement posts on the boards of directors of big companies, do not invest their "savings" in stocks of these same companies (speculations helping to fill out the budget, thanks to "tips" from a good source!). In short, he ought to demonstrate that the members of *another social class* (for example, members of the working class, or of the new middle class of white-collar workers, or of the class of craftsmen and working farmers) occupy the leading posts of the political and military apparatus, and that they "infiltrate" bit by bit into the predominant strata of society, *despite the fact* that they are not, and do not become, bourgeois.

Now not only does Wright Mills nowhere show such an evolution; *his whole book shows the contrary*. In many places he speaks of the class consciousness of the tops of American society (pp 29, 31, 283). This, he says on page 30, is the most apparent in the upper class, an intimately united class. The members of the owning classes, he says on page 69, having studied at the same universities, belonging to the same clubs, and bound together by innumerable ties of marriage and friendship, are spread over various leading circles, economic, political, and military.

One promising son enters upon a high governmental career—perhaps the State Department; his first cousin is in due course elevated to a high executive place in the headquarters of a corporation; his uncle has already ascended to naval command; and a brother of the first cousin is about to become the president of a leading college. And, of course, there is the family law firm, whose partners keep in close touch with outlying members and with the problems they face.

Really, is it not the picture of a *ruling class* that is thus described?

The independence of the political power? On page 125, Wright Mills writes:

Not the politicians of the visible government, but the chief executives who sit in the political directorate, by fact and by proxy, hold the power and the means of defending the privileges of their corporate world [...] and

no powers effectively and consistently countervail against them [...].

And on page 169 he specifies:

Yet more and more of the corporate executives have entered government directly; and the result has been a virtually new economy at the apex [sic!] of which we find those who represent the corporate rich.

And on page 275 he emphasizes again that it is the representatives of the big stock companies that are "politically predominant."

As for the military chiefs, Wright Mills specifies that they have been "recruited from among the ruling strata of the civilian population" (p 173), that they came to agreements with the big companies (p 213), that they fused with the monopolists (pp 214-215). It is true that he indicates that with the growth of the arms sector in the economy, the military chiefs wield an influence on the whole economy; but they wield it, just by chance, for the almost exclusive profit of the great monopoly companies...

What then remains of Wright Mills's thesis, in the light of his own analysis, is the fact that the ruling monopoly strata of the American bourgeoisie are being recruited not only among the direct representatives of the monopoly companies, but also among the *bourgeois* military and political chiefs who are periodically drawn into the "inner circle," to which, as it were, they bring fresh blood. That is an old phenomenon in the history of the bourgeoisie. It strengthens the notion of a ruling *class* instead of weakening it, for this political and military leading personnel, which identifies itself so well with the interests of the monopolists, itself comes, as Wright Mills describes in an excellent way, *from the same social milieu*, follows the same ideologico-moral code, and has the same political and social consciousness. It is therefore that it is part of the same ruling class.

This final fault of Wright Mills's book should be an additional reason for Marxists to study in a detailed and critical fashion this otherwise excellent work. And they will have no reason to exult until the day when one of them, without committing Wright Mills's errors, but imitating and surpassing all his qualities, will succeed in making an equally complete and detailed analysis, say of the British, French, German, or Indian ruling class.

ERNEST GERMAIN

News of the World Workers' Movement and of the International

Indonesia

CIVIL WAR

The present situation in Indonesia is dominated by the military struggle of the central government at Jakarta against the "revolutionary" movement of Sjafruddin and Smibolon at Padang in Central Sumatra. Frightened by the action of the popular masses who had occupied the Dutch enterprises and formed committees for managing them, part of the Indonesian bourgeoisie and the semi-feudal forces sought the direct support of imperialism to protect themselves against the revolutionary wave. The ex-governor of the National Bank of Indonesia, Sjafruddin, a number of nationalists closely connected with imperialists, as well as a few local military commanders in Central Sumatra, set up a "counter-government for all Indonesia," which no longer recognized the authority of President Sukarno and of Commander-in-Chief Nasution.

This counter-government figured that North and South Sumatra, which were also in conflict with the central government but remained neutral in the conflict with Central Sumatra, would soon join the rebellion.

The rebels hoped to receive the support in Java of part of the army, and especially of Colonel Lubis, for a long time now hunted by the central government. More especially it was counting on the open support of the Socialist Party of Sjahrir, and particularly on that of Indonesia's biggest party, the Masjumi. Besides, Sjafruddin was awaiting with assurance the support of the ex-vice-premier of Indonesia and notorious anti-communist Mohammed Hatta. And, last but not least, the rebels were counting on rapid recognition by the imperialist West, i e, first of all, the United States, which has at no moment concealed its friendliness toward the counter-government and continues to consider it a strong card in its own counter-revolutionary game. The idea of having a "government of its own" at its disposal in Indonesia is very attractive for American imperialism, not only to safeguard its imperialist interests there, but also to break up the coalition between the Soviet bureaucracy and the national bourgeoisie and to call a halt to the colonial revolution. In the period of recession in which the USA is entering, the need of reaching this goal by starting a new "Korea" has nothing frightening about it for the imperialist gangsters. The real reason for holding the Manila Conference of SEATO was not just love for Sukarno. The presence of the Seventh Fleet in Sumatra waters "to protect" the few hundred Americans was a very specific threat. And Mr Foster Dulles's announcement that the possibility of recognizing the Padang "government" as a "power at war" would be reconsidered failed to conceal where the sympathies of the American imperialists lie. Dulles's statement at a press conference, that much would depend on the strength that the counter-government could build up, simultaneously gives the key for understanding the hesitations that Washington is showing about going any further.

It is in reality the strength of the Indonesian revolution, hidden behind the façade of the struggle between two bourgeois governments, that has up till now prevented a direct imperialist intervention. The "counter-government" has been able to form itself only in the most backward part of Sumatra. The fighting has already shown that it cannot count on the support of the popular masses. The Jakarta government, on the contrary, feels sure of the aid of the Sumatran workers, though it does not much like the idea of arming them, for quite understandable reasons...

Sjafruddin, conscious of his weakness, is doing everything to stimulate more direct imperialist aid. He is demanding the "internationalization" of the conflict, and is making appeals to the imperialists by comparing his civil war—and not without reason—to the civil war in Spain.

The "neutrality" of North and South Sumatra, and of the Masjumi (whose president, Mohammed Natsir, is at Padang, and which is the strongest party in Sumatra), as well as the result of the military operations, show furthermore, as already mentioned, that the Mohammedan workers and landless peasants are not letting themselves be used by the counter-revolutionaries. Unquestionably the action of the Javanese proletariat in occupying the Dutch enterprises has deeply impressed them.

It is no accident that the results of the quite recent provincial elections in South Sumatra show increasing influence of the PKI [Indonesian Communist Party]. The Stalinists promised that, if they won a majority, they would distribute the land (a similar promise a year ago after the municipal elections led to the distribution of the public parks at Solo). The PKI has replaced Sukarno's PNI as the second party. The voting was as follows :

Masjumi	553,276 votes	13 seats
PKI	225,965 »	6 »
PNI	157,042 »	5 »
NU	113,555 »	3 »

In view of the permanent radicalization of the Indonesian masses, it is quite understandable that Sukarno hesitated a thousand times before launching war against Padang. He did everything to reach an "agreement" with Hatta, which would have been the introduction to an agreement with the counter-revolutionary forces. He could not, however, accept the condition of giving up the support of the PKI, i e, of the masses under Stalinist control. Without this support, Sukarno would find himself disarmed not only toward the masses but at the same time toward the counter-revolutionary pro-imperialist forces.

Nevertheless, even after the break-down of the negotiations with Hatta, Sukarno resisted the launching of the war, fearing that the operation would get out of his control. It was above all the pressure of the PKI and the left wing of the PNI that forced him to begin the war. A comparison with Kerensky,

who also was forced to begin the struggle against counter-revolutionary forces (led by Kornilov), might be in order here.

The fact that the Jakarta government decided to give back the ships to the [Dutch] KPM is in the same frame of things. It wants above all to avoid definitive rupture with imperialism.

However this may be, the war launched against Padang under the pressure of the masses will have its own logic. True, the weak resistance on the Padang side is momentarily increasing the authority of Sukarno and the government. It is momentarily facilitating the opportunist (and even treacherous) policy of the PKI which is subjecting the masses to the control of the bourgeois government. It is delaying differentiation (along class lines) in the forces fighting against the counter-revolution.

But at the same time it is clear that a return to the status quo ante is excluded. During the struggles, beginning with the occupation of the enterprises, the consciousness of the masses has not stopped growing. Granted, at the instigation of the

PKI, they allowed the government's armed forces to take over the control of the factories and plantations. They thus took a step in retreat, of a qualitative significance—no question about it. But they do not at all have the feeling of having been beaten. They consider the launching of the war against Padang to have been their own doing. The victories over the counter-revolutionary forces, even though they increase Sukarno's prestige, they consider their own victories.

Under these conditions, the increase in maturity, the politicization, and the growth of self-confidence, of the masses are written clear in the new stage of the Indonesian revolution.

By launching the war against Padang under the pressure of the masses, Sukarno has in reality undermined his Bonapartist position. From then on, he has become more dependent on the good will of the masses than even before, even if the easy victories over Padang may temporarily work in the other direction.



Poland

THE XIth PLENUM OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED WORKERS' (COMMUNIST) PARTY

The XIth Plenum of the Central Committee of the United Workers' Party of Poland was marked by a series of economic decisions and a new battle, this time against Gomulka and the Stalinist tendency properly so called (the "Natolinists").

The party decided to discharge about 200,000 workers of the metallurgical industry and to try to find work for them in agriculture, trade, and public services, as well as in the underdeveloped western provinces taken over from Germany. One hundred thousand other employees of the central offices are to find more productive jobs elsewhere.

The CC also decided on a serious raise in rents in order to make housing construction self-supporting.

These measures gave pretexts to the Stalinist fraction for an attack on Gomulka under cover of a policy "in defense of the workers." The attack was carried out by Wiktor Klosiewicz, former trade-union leader during the Stalinist period, and currently Minister of Labor. Klosiewicz in reality wanted to criticize Gomulka's "insufficiently resolute" attitude against the revisionists and especially his insufficiently conformist attitude toward the Kremlin on the occasion of the Moscow meeting of the leaders of the Communist Parties last November.

Klosiewicz was backed up in his criticisms by only 5 (out of 75) other members of the CC, despite estimates that the

number of "Natolinists" is far greater than this figure. Polish left-communist circles explain this by the fact that Klosiewicz is in reality one of the least anodyne, least capable, and most discredited, of the Stalinists, and that the others refrained from running the risks that he did. And in fact Klosiewicz was expelled from the CC for having made an "attack on the unity" of the party.

The question of the balance-sheet of the party purge was not discussed at this Plenum. It will probably be a subject at the next Plenum especially devoted to preparing the party congress.

Up till now the purge has eliminated only about 150,000 (out of about 1,300,000) members. But far from having been carried out on a political basis that might reinvigorate the now extinguished political life of the party, it was carried out on the basis of moralistic considerations, while having yet hit at some genuinely leftist elements and some show-piece "Stalinists."

The most backward aspect of current developments in Poland, which is still struggling with serious economic difficulties, is the lowering of the level of political, ideological, and cultural life. Gomulkaist neo-conformism is once more making everything sclerotic.



Japan

SITUATION IN THE COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST PARTIES

At the end of September 1957, the Japanese CP announced that it would hold its VIIth Congress beginning 2 February 1958—ten years after its VIth Congress. At the same time, it presented its new draft programme. This programme provoked big internal discussions; and by the end of last year it had become clear that a majority or at least a very strong minority was opposed to it. In particular, the two largest local organizations, ie Tokyo and Kansai (which includes Osaka and Kyoto), were decidedly against it. The JCP's Central Committee did

not dare hold the Congress at the appointed date. So it postponed it until two months after the coming general elections, which will be held this autumn.

There are two main problems in dispute by the fractions within the CP. The first is the possibility of peaceful constitutional revolution. The second is the theory of revolution in two stages: a) a "people's democratic revolution"; b) the socialist revolution.

A large number of Communist militants are against both

ideas. Some disapprove of one or of the other. The majority of Communist militants, however, still approve the Moscow bureaucracy's perspective of peaceful coexistence between the two world social systems.

Last autumn the Tokyo Local Committee presented a document in which it criticized the draft programme. This document expressed a centrist viewpoint. On the one hand, it asserted that the socialist revolution should be a strategic aim; but on the other it stressed the perspective of a constitutional revolution and the tactic of a "People's Front." Generally speaking, the Tokyo Local Committee reflects the force of the new generation in the Communist Party. Within the framework of Stalinism this new generation demands that the present Central Committee should be replaced because it has shown for the past 12 years that it is not able to lead the party and the labor movement.

Among the youngest generation, especially among Communist students, there is a current clearly moving now from this centrist viewpoint, as represented by the Tokyo Local Committee, toward a real left-oppositional viewpoint. These student Communists are beginning to assert the fundamental importance of world proletarian revolution. Some university cells are moving sharply left toward Trotskyist positions.

An attempt to organize a broad anti-Central-Committee faction has already been begun. One member of the Central Committee, Syojiro Kasuga, has expressed in the party organ his minority opinion that the party should adopt the strategy of socialist revolution. It is likely that he will become a leader of the opposition. And it is possible that the opposition will win a majority in the coming congress. But within the opposition, stability will not be easily reached.

There is a threat that the Central Committee will open an offensive against the Left. It is certain that they have begun hunting after a Trotskyist movement inside the JCP.

The JCP held a small conference near the end of February. Criticism of the Central Committee from local activists was so

severe that it was very much isolated. It is probable that in the near future the JCP will have a new regime characterized by a younger and leftist centrist leadership.

The annual congress of the Japanese Socialist Party was held near the end of February. The left fraction maintained its majority and elected 24 members of the Central Executive Committee compared to 16 for the right fraction. The Congress announced that the party has only 56,000 members, whereas it had aimed to reach a figure of 100,000 members during the previous year.

During the congress discussion, there was a fight between the representatives of both labor organizations, the SOHYO (left-wing) and ZENRO (right-wing). During the previous year some right-wing Socialists had tried to split the National Railway Trade Union. Their attempt did not have much success: only 4,000 out of 370,000 followed them. The SOHYO representative attacked the fact that the party had not expelled the rightists who had attempted to split the NRTU, while the ZENRO representative defended these elements.

The left-wing leadership, however, considers that unification with the rightists is most important in order to come to power. Hence both the left-wing and right-wing leaders defended each other: the left-wing leaders defended the right wing from the attacks of SOHYO, while the right-wing leaders defended the left wing from those of ZENRO.

This combination was the principal characteristic of the last congress. The left- and right-wing tops are combined in one and the same leadership. Among them there is a relative stability. In the trade-union field, however, there are many conflicts between the left and right wings. These conflicts have not yet expressed themselves in the political field. As a result, there was no serious political clash at the congress.

Among the young Socialists, there is a widespread feeling that the unification with the rightists is no good for the revolutionary course of the party. They have begun to form their own fraction—an interesting event for future developments.



China

THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE PEOPLE'S CONGRESS

The fifth session of the first National People's Congress opened at Peking on February 1st 1958 before 970 deputies, and ended on February 11th. The principal decisions at this session concerned the approval of the 1958 budget, of the 1958 economic plan, and of the introduction of the 26-letter Latin alphabet for the purpose of reforming the Chinese written language.

The presentation of the 1958 budget by Li-Hsien-Nien, Vice-President and Finance Minister, is significant for the present economic situation of the country and for the government's goals. Faced by production, especially agricultural production, that rises only very slowly compared to the increased needs of a population that is constantly growing—despite the systematic campaign for birth control—the government is making desperate efforts to struggle against "squandering," to engage in economies, to shake up "conservatism," and to spur the productive effort of the masses. The accent is put on the slogan, "Produce more, faster, better, and cheaper."

The struggle against "squandering" and for learning to save, moreover, not only concerns public administration but extends

to every individual, called upon to get rid of "extravagances" in his way of life and to get used to "austerity." "To engage in economies is not only the task of government functionaries and those who are engaged in some sort of economic work," the Finance Minister shouted, before concluding his presentation of the budget, "but the common task of the whole people." And he added:

Only when people all over the country join in the effort to increase accumulation and economize funds will our construction work proceed with speed. It is therefore necessary to publicize economy extensively among the people of the whole country so that every household and individual understands its meaning, and that thrift becomes a new social convention and every person will practise economy voluntarily. There is no contradiction between the advocacy of thrift and reasonable consumption by the people and their proper desire to improve living standards on the basis of development in production. In advocating hard work and thrifty housekeeping, we want every household to

economize in the consumption of grain and cotton, the supply of which is still not plentiful, we want coöperative members to pay attention to increasing the coöp's accumulation of funds, we want every person to remember to save, and we oppose loafing and laziness, feasting and drinking with abandon, gambling, and waste and extravagance on the occasion of weddings, funerals, holidays, and celebrations. Functionaries of the state organs, in particular, should set a good example in hard work and thrift in house-keeping. Therefore, the significance of advocating thrift and opposing waste lies not only in accumulating funds for construction but also in changing the social customs and cultivating good habits and moral qualities in the people of our country. Let all of us, functionaries in government organizations and those in economic work, and the people of our whole country, take action at once. Let us pluck up revolutionary energy, fight against conservatism and waste, and launch a large-scale campaign to increase production and practise economy to usher in the upsurge in production and construction in the first year of the Second Five-Year Plan.

The words "hard work" and "thrift" in order to increase production keep coming up also all through the discussion both on the budget and on the economic objectives for 1958. The main worry of the government seems to be about a more important development of agricultural production.

Speaking about economic objectives for 1958, the first year of the Second Five-Year Plan, Po-I-Po, Vice-President and president of the National Economic Commission, put in the forefront "an energetic work in all fields in order to bring about an upsurge of agricultural production and obtain a better harvest."



Ceylon

THE RECENT STRIKE WAVE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The wave of strikes initiated by the Trotskyist-led Ceylon Federation of Labour in the private sector of Ceylon's economy has recently ended. It dealt a severe blow to the government's new anti-working-class industrial legislation, and to the Stalinists who, guided by their line of support for the government, had advised their unions to adhere to the new industrial legislation.

The wave of strikes in the private sector followed that in the state sector, which had come to an end about two months previously. Under pressure of the rising cost of living, the government workers, led by the railwaymen, had struck, demanding readjustment of their wage scales. The strike paralyzed in particular island-wide rail transport. The Trotskyist leadership of these strikes was widely recognized, and Comrade N M Perera of the Lanka Samasamaja Party (Ceylonese Section of the Fourth International) negotiated with the government on behalf of the workers. With the government's immediate increase of the workers' special living allowance by 17/50 rupees, and the promise to readjust wage scales without delay, the strike was called off.

In anticipation of the demand for the new cost-of-living allowance (won by the government workers) in the private sector, the government had passed legislation empowering the government to refer any industrial dispute at whatever stage to an Industrial Court. According to this legislation, the parties to the dispute were forced to abide by the Industrial Court's

The "vigorous development" of heavy industry is to a large extent justified by the needs of agriculture (in fertilizers, machines, electric power).

It is Po-I-Po, furthermore, who gave an official resumé of the initial goals, the ups-and-downs, and the prospects, of the famous campaign of "rectification." In view of its interest, we quote this passage from his speech in its entirety :

The launching of this struggle, and the general debate participated in by all the people throughout the country about the two roads — socialism or capitalism — which set the rectification campaign going on a national scale, have greatly raised the level of socialist consciousness of our cadres and the masses, heightened their spirit of initiative in labor, pushed forward our construction work in various fields, and brought about improvements in all kinds of work. The rectification campaign continues. It is now entering the stage where the key task is to rectify incorrect styles in work and improve ways of working. In the near future, it will advance to another stage where everyone will study relevant documents, make criticisms and self-criticisms, and so raise his ideological level.

It is thus confirmed that, at its present stage, the campaign of "rectification" has to some extent returned to its original motifs, by once more putting the accent on the struggle against the "bureaucracy, sectarianism, and subjectivism" of party and government functionaries.

The sending of these functionaries to the countryside and into the plants, in order to share in "manual labor" and remake contact with "the people" in production, continues and takes on the character of a real mass exodus from the offices.

decision and to eschew all direct action both during and after the Court proceedings. Even criticism of the award was illegal.

The Parliamentary Opposition, led by the Trotskyists, exposed this legislation as an anti-working-class measure. In their criticism they were supported by the three Stalinist members in Parliament too, but after its enactment the Stalinists advised their unions to agree to allowing their dispute over the special living allowance of Rs 17/50 being referred to an Industrial Court.

The Trotskyist-led Ceylon Federation of Labour, on the other hand, advised all its affiliated unions to resort to strike action on this issue. The principal strike in this wave was that of the workers of the Oil Companies (Shell, Standard Vacuum, and Caltex), which nearly paralyzed the road transport of the country.

Others involved in the strikes were the engineering workers, shop and office employees, hotel workers, and gas workers. All these strikes, except the engineering workers' strike, were settled with the companies agreeing to pay the Rs 17/50 with arrears. The managements of the engineering sector are reluctant to settle the strike on these terms because they expect a lesser sum to be awarded by the Industrial Court. It is hoped, however, that the granting of the Rs 17/50 by the strike-bound firms would make the Industrial Court also make this its own award.

Greece

THE ELECTIONS

The 28th government formed since the war, headed by Karamanlis, resigned as a result of a "rebellion" by two of its ministers and some 13 deputies who backed them up. The Palace named its own man, Georgacopoulos, to form a new ministry entrusted with organizing general elections in May.

This cabinet crisis was not the direct result of any movement by the masses. They are deeply discontented but also deeply disorganized and disoriented by Stalinist policy. The crisis was due rather to inter-capitalist quarrels, frictions, and manœuvres which broke out on the occasion of discussion about the "strengthened proportional" election law prepared by Karamanlis.

This draft-law was aimed at guaranteeing the two "big" parties of the present parliament — the radical National Union of Karamanlis, and the Liberals of Venizelos — three-quarters of the seats in the new parliament, even if these parties together received only 40 % of the votes.

To face up to this danger, the "little" parties came out in favor of an electoral alliance which was to extend from the EDA, the legal camouflage of the Greek Communist Party, to

the Progressive Party headed by Markezinis, of a fascisizing tendency.

Herein lies the tragedy of the situation.

In the 1956 elections, the EDA had allied itself with the Liberals and the capitalist formations whose leaders were among the most discredited with the masses. It was to a large extent thanks to the support of the EDA that those parties and men enjoyed a sort of "second youth." Needless to say, they kept none of their demagogic election promises, on the basis of which the EDA had instructed the masses to vote for its alliance with these parties.

This time, the EDA wanted to repeat the same treachery, including with Markezinis, who, whether in his own interests or by demagogy, declared that he was in favor of the simple proportional, and of a policy of "national independence," and against launching ramps in Greece. But at the last minute, Markezinis having insisted too much on the necessity of keeping Greece in the NATO, the alliance planned by the EDA could not be concluded.

The Greek Trotskyists will vote for candidates who are exclusively of the EDA, as an indication — however deformed — of a class vote.

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Peru

PUBLIC MASS MEETING

The POR, Peruvian Section of the Fourth International, on March 26th held a public mass meeting in University Park, Lima, of some 4,000 persons.

The entire press of the Peruvian capital wrote up this demonstration, which aroused great interest among the proletariat and the youth of the city.

What Is Trotskyism ?

Few words are more bandied about without any precise meaning being attached to them than that very specific word, Trotskyism. Against the cohorts of the Fourth International there have been hurled over the years accusations ranging all the way from the obscenely vicious to the grotesquely comic, from "lubricious vipers" to "Pabloist liquidationists."

If you want to pierce through these slanderous miasmas and parochial obfuscations to what is the real essence of Trotskyism, there is hardly a better way to begin than to read

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