

A MARXIST  
QUARTERLY

SPRING  
1954

# Fourth International

## The Opposition to McCarthyism



*A Survey of Labor, Liberal  
and Radical Opinion*

including

- The Nation
- The New Leader
- Labor's Daily
- The Progressive
- The Militant •

## When Anti-Negro Prejudice Began

by George Breitman

35 cents

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## MANAGER'S COLUMN

The first issue of **Fourth International** as a quarterly, and in a new format, met with an enthusiastic response from literature agents and readers. Detroit and Boston sold out their bundle orders and wrote in for additional copies. Detroit comrades are now doubling their regular bundle.

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Increased sales are reported by Philadelphia literature agent George Lorca. "The credit for this," he writes, "doesn't really belong to Philly though. It should go to the comrades who did such a successful job of re-styling the magazine and to those who gave us the contents.

"One person, after reading the magazine straight through, told me he had only one objection to raise. The subtitle, he said, called the magazine 'A Marxist Quarterly,' and it should be called 'The Marxist Quarterly,' because it's the only one there is."

Minneapolis literature agent Helen Sherman writes: "The FI cover is beautiful and the new magazine is 100 times more usable and attractive as a whole."

Nick Bennett comments for San Francisco: "The new FI came in

today and we are enthusiastic about it — both about the looks and the material in it."

"We are so proud of the new FI!" write the Chicago comrades, "Oh, it's so beautiful!" — that's the expression from all quarters around here. We are glad that Arne Swabeck's article was republished in full. Read in connection with the one by Murry Weiss, it makes a well-rounded fundamental analysis of the present situation and perspectives."

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A circle of readers in Canada ordered 20 extra copies of the Winter issue, and write: "Everyone here is very favorably impressed by the new format of the FI. The cover is very good, and it's fine to see the cuts and photos scattered through the pages brightening up the magazine. The contents of this issue are proving particularly valuable to us."

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# The Opposition To McCarthyism

by Art Sharon

**T**HE menacing march of McCarthyism has aroused a debate reaching into every corner of the United States. Rarely has political passion been so aroused among so many as during the past five months.

In the April 27 *Reporter* magazine, Marya Mannes assesses the growing anti-McCarthy mass movement as expressing the feeling of millions who "haven't the courage to stand up unless another stands up first. And so we wait outraged, indignant, and impotent, until the brave speak up." This popular movement finds little reflection in the capitalist press, which treats the developments around McCarthy as it does some championship sporting event carrying high stakes.

However, the shading of thinking and feeling animating the wide sections of the population that Marya Mannes speaks about are indicated in the press of the labor, liberal and radical movements. A sampling from various periodicals will show how deeply opinion has been stirred by the drive of the fascist Senator for power.

In the following survey, I will leave aside such columnists as Walter Lippmann and the Alsop brothers, as well as such radio and TV commentators as Edward R. Murrow. Their liberal opinions, which are bought and sold, reflect primarily their backers' judgments on meeting the market demands.

In the press of the official labor movement, the reaction to the fascist Senator has been slow, confused and contradictory. Nevertheless, an increasing realization has been growing in the labor movement as to what is at stake in the fight against McCarthyism. For example, the AFL *News-Reporter*, official weekly of the AFL,

in a typical recent issue (March 19) devotes most of its editorial page to McCarthy. The cartoon depicts him as an ominous bird being shot at by many hunters, and the caption reads: "Open Season on Buzzards." Accompanying the cartoon is an article reprinted from a Milwaukee newspaper, entitled "Joe's Record Speaks Sordid Volumes."

The *East Tennessee Labor News* is typical of one section of the labor press which carefully refrains from committing itself editorially on the subject of McCarthyism, but publishes at least one anti-McCarthy news item in every issue. The March 19 issue, for example, carries a front-page story quoting James L. McDevitt, AFL political affairs director, against McCarthyism.

Then there are the labor papers which, though they don't shy away from speaking editorially about McCarthyism, take an editorial position that is something less than forthright. They cannot attack McCarthy without at the same time proclaiming their own devotion to the fight against "communism." A good example is *Midwest Labor World*, official paper of Teamsters Union Local 688 (St. Louis), which ends its lead editorial March 1:

"The labor movement has taken its stand: **Remove the conditions that breed Communism and you won't have to fear Communism.** (Emphasis in original.) It is the one large group in America that has gone all-out against Communism. We invite the McCarthy fakers to put that in their pipes and smoke it!"

In contrast, there is another section of the labor press which recognizes the deliberate hoax of the "communist menace." For example, *Textile La-*

*bor*, newspaper of the CIO Textile Workers Union, concludes in its lead editorial March 20:

"In short, McCarthy has created a bugaboo which has no reality today. The republic is not in peril of subversion by communism. McCarthy's cleaver, buried in our individual liberties and our national honor, is vastly more terrifying than a red dentist's drill."

John L. Lewis' *United Mine Workers Journal*, in its March 15 lead editorial, entitled "Eight Years of Hooliganism and the Juvenile Senator from Appleton, Wis.," characterizes McCarthyism as a "Frankenstein monster," and ends:

"Actually, McCarthy now has tangled with just about everyone except the American people. So the people themselves will have to stop 'buying' McCarthyism. If they don't they are going to wake up some morning with an awful headache." (Emphasis in original.)

## "Deadly Parallel"

*Justice*, organ of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, finally drew the parallel that was becoming more obvious daily. The cover of its March 1 issue features a cartoon captioned "The Hindenburg Line" and showing Hitler fingering a tiny Hindenburg while McCarthy imitates the Nazi leader with a tiny timid Ike. This is followed by a short editorial headed, "Is Sen. McCarthy Doing to Gen. Ike What Hitler Did to Gen. Hindenburg?" The editorial points up the "deadly parallel in the affairs of our nation," and compares McCarthy's march to power with Hitler's twenty years ago. This cartoon



and the editorial were widely reprinted in the labor press across the nation.

On the other hand, the AFL Hat and Cap Workers Union paper, the *Hat Worker*, although agreeing March 15 "that there is some foundation for their fears" (those who see a Hitler in McCarthy), argues that the conditions that prevailed in Germany at that time do not exist here and that the only semblance between McCarthy and Hitler is their "bent for demagoguery."

In contrast to this weak stand is the hard-hitting editorial opinion of *Labor's Daily*, sponsored by the International Typographical Union. Maintaining a steady drum-fire on McCarthyite fascism over the past five months, *Labor's Daily* has set a high mark for all labor papers. In a March 17 editorial addressed to the labor movement, they say:

"Organized labor must face the unpleasant fact that it is, as an effective trade union and political force, marked for extermination by the GOP-Dixiecrat-Big Business Administration now in power. There should be no illusions on the part of labor concerning this point."

The editorial analyzes the strategy of the enemies of labor:

"The gimmick is, first, to find some social and political pariahs and hold them up as treasonous and fit subjects for drawing and quartering. After all, or nearly all, nod in agreement, legislation is passed to facilitate the execution. Many of us who thoughtlessly nodded in agreement then discover, perhaps too late, that the legal swords are shaped for our throats."

A March 19 editorial in *Labor's Daily* calls attention to the financial support coming to McCarthy from the oil barons of Texas and concludes:

"Native reaction, which we have not hesitated to label American Fascism, is slipping upon the American scene, its path well greased by Texas oil. This is a matter of profound concern to organized labor and to all working people."

Again, in the lead editorial of March 24:

"McCarthyism must be fought on principle, if it is to be beaten, not on grounds of political partisanship or expediency."

In another editorial, March 23, headed "Time of the Toad," *Labor's Daily* issues a ringing call to the labor movement for action against McCarthyism:

"The inarticulate, almost leaderless mass of our people, who nevertheless fiercely hate the tightening shackles placed on our liberties, are, we aver, looking for leadership, looking for an avenue of protest. The labor movement is the logical source of that leadership; the labor movement is the logical avenue of protest.

"If we of labor fulfill our potentiality in this crisis — for we live in a time of crisis — if we rise to our responsibility and provide the leadership of a movement which will trounce the neofascist threat summarized under the title of mccarthyism; then we shall never again need fear the collapse of the rightfully elevated position of labor in our society.

"... Without our leadership, without a program, the anti-mccarthyite, anti-Wall Street forces will surely flounder and suffer defeat after defeat. Is that not thus far the record?

"With labor in the role of the dynamic leader of the people — and that is its proper role — we shall gain zest, fire, enthusiasm; qualities, unfortunately, which have thus far distinguished the mccarthyites rather than the opposition."

With an allusion to Shakespeare's famous passage, "Sweet are the uses of adversity," the editorial ends:



McCARTHY

"Ugly and venomous toads are indeed loose in our land. But a precious jewel of opportunity is provided to labor by their presence. Let us seize it!"

The editorials in *Labor's Daily* are generally of high order, showing un-

usually high consciousness of the decisive role the labor movement must play in this critical turning-point in our national life.

### "Precious Space"

Let us turn now to what is generally known as the liberal press. The various liberal political magazines differ considerably in their reactions to McCarthyism. The position of many of them was expressed several months ago by the *Progressive*, nationally circulated liberal publication from McCarthy's home state, which in its December issue spoke in a regretful and grudging tone of having to spend "precious space" to deal with McCarthy's fakery.

However, the current issue (April) is a fat number devoted to "McCarthy — A Documented Record." The editors now state:

"In publishing this special issue . . . we are mindful of the fact that we shall be criticized by sincere and thoughtful Americans who share our repugnance for McCarthy. Their position, we suspect, will be based on their genuine conviction that we are aiding and abetting him by 'giving him more publicity' and 'building him up by taking him so seriously.'

"We can respect and sympathize with this point of view because we held it once ourselves. We abandoned it, however, when the facts proved us wrong. It is a dangerous error . . . to fail to regard the man and his 'ism' with deep seriousness. His power today comes in great measure from our failure to fight back earlier."

### The Nation Magazine

Well in the lead, however, among the anti-McCarthy liberal periodicals is the *Nation*. The tone and analyses of its articles and editorials come close to those of *Labor's Daily*.

In its November 21, 1953, issue, shortly after the explosion of the White-Brownell-McCarthy affair, the *Nation* published a lead article by Professor H. H. Wilson, titled "Crisis of Democracy." Written with deep feeling, this article reflected the apprehension and fear that has gripped millions throughout the nation. Wilson wrote:

"The 'Communist conspiracy,' a small brush fire in 1946-48, has become a rag-

ing conflagration. It may turn out to be the funeral pyre of the Democratic party . . .

"American democracy has withstood public apathy, judicial supremacy, Congressional corruption, and weak unimaginative Presidents, but it cannot survive rule by informers, political police, and delinquents in government. Democracy is jettisoned when suspicion becomes the equivalent of indictment and accusation of conviction."

The December 12, 1953, issue of the *Nation* was entirely devoted to civil liberties. The editors summarized the issue with a concluding editorial, "The Present Danger: A Call for Leadership." But this appeal for leadership is addressed to — the Democratic Party! Unlike *Labor's Daily*, which seems to have a call for a Labor Party on the tip of its tongue, the *Nation* places its hopes in a stiffened Democratic Party. The editorial declares:

"If the Democratic party is to resist McCarthyism, then the labor movement must encourage it to act in this fashion. To this end, the unions must quickly step up the tempo and scale of their political-action programs . . . If labor has enjoyed a degree of immunity from the witch hunt these last few years, it has been because its allies, the Democrats, were in power; the situation has now changed."

### "Reds, Reds, Reds"

The *New Leader*, long considered a liberal publication, has moved so far to the right that it now wars upon such anti-McCarthy liberals as the *Nation*. It slashes away, not at McCarthyism, but at the anti-McCarthyites.

Writing on the thirtieth anniversary of the *New Leader* (March 1 issue), editor William E. Bohn takes special pride in the fact that his magazine took up the fight against the "red menace" thirty years ago. In 1924, Bohn says, the *New Leader* saw that the country was "drifting toward a dangerous cataract but (we) were all so hypnotized that we could not hear the voices of those who saw the impending peril."

To the suggestion that the *New Leader's* job is pretty well done, Bohn answers:

". . . Our job has hardly begun. The Congressmen are trying to make life miserable for a few Communists, ex-Communists or may-have-been Communists. The Pentagon is making the necessary preparations for a possible military clash with Communism. But that still leaves the biggest sector of the anti-totalitarian front uncovered."

Bohn goes on to modestly acknowledge that this sector, the war of ideas, is being adequately covered by the *New Leader* crew.

In the January 11 issue Robert E. Fitch, dean and professor of Christian Ethics, Pacific School of Religion, asks, "Are the Liberals Killing Liberalism?" His answer, of course, is yes.

". . . Let us remember that a healthy democracy requires alternations in the centers of power and that these alterations in power call for recurrent cleansings. And in each instance, let us insist on the necessity and the justice of the purge, even as we regret and robustly resist the injustices that inevitably accompany it."

And Will Herberg, who traveled from Stalin via Lovestone to the Old Testament and the *New Leader*, washes his hands (January 8) of what he calls the "dreary debate over 'McCarthyism.'"

The uglier the witch hunt and the more menacing the growth of McCarthyism, the fiercer are the *New Leader* attacks upon the hapless liberals and anti-McCarthyites in general. A reader speaks his piece in the March 8 issue in a letter to the editor:

"Reds, Reds, Reds; for heaven's sake, gentlemen, start fighting the native fascists in the Administration. It won't be the Reds who will suppress the *New Leader*. Brownell, Nixon, Summerfield, Knowland, Jenner, Velde & Co. will do it."

The *Socialist Call*, official organ of the Socialist Party, is somewhat more restrained. Aside from an occasional comment in Norman Thomas' column and a note here and there, nothing appeared in their pages dealing with the rising tide of McCarthyism until the April issue. Then Aaron Levenstein, in an article titled "How to Contain McCarthy," offered what is presumably the program of

the Socialist Party. The article contains no serious analysis of the threat posed by McCarthyism, and the five-point program amounts to nothing more than admonitions to the President, the Senate, the Democratic Party, the intellectuals and finally the "man in the street," on what each should do to "contain" McCarthyism.

### The DeLeonists

The DeLeonist Socialist Labor Party has a better record. It responded early this year to the new danger. The editorial in the New Year issue of its paper *Weekly People* (January 2) noted that "McCarthy emerges more and more as a would-be American Adolf Hitler." The January 16 issue, dealing with the State of the Union message, noted the wild yells of approval that greeted the President's reactionary proposals, and commented:

". . . There was a note of ferocity in this response that certified the present ascendancy of McCarthyism, not only among America's political rulers, but also among the nation's real rulers, the capitalist class."

In several articles and editorials, the *Weekly People* has dwelt on the fascist character of the McCarthyite menace. But the sterility of the DeLeonist analysis is pointed up whenever it comes to the problem of what to do now. Caricaturing the fatal ultimatum program of the Communist Party before Hitler took power, the SLP recognizes only one program and one force to smash McCarthyism — and that is the SLP itself. The working class, it believes, must find its way to DeLeonism or face doom. Meanwhile, it has no practical suggestions to offer workers who want to fight McCarthyism but are not 100 percent convinced of the correctness of DeLeonism.

The *Industrial Worker*, publication of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), took up McCarthyism in a February article entitled, "Growing Fascism in the U.S." Listing McCarthy's rich backers, who are predominantly Texas oil millionaires, the article concludes:

"Just as in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, the scum is rising to the top."

The March 19 issue carries an interesting front-page article suggesting what to do "When Joe McCarthy Comes to Town." After rejecting the idea of "ignoring" McCarthy or trying to buy immunity by "greeting him with flags waving" or "breaking up his meetings" (the latter, they feel, is too hazardous), the article proposes a work slow-down. Since no union would sponsor such an action, according to the *Industrial Worker*, it is up to the individual and to small groups to initiate the move. The problem of defending the "individual and small groups" that might be victimized for such initiative is not discussed by the strategist of the *Industrial Worker*.

### "Fascism" as Epithet

A word should be said about the extensive press of Stalinism and circles friendly to Stalinism. The Stalinists are the principal current victims of McCarthyism and of the witch hunt out of which McCarthyism evolved. Their civil rights have been flagrantly violated. But what they have to say about the American form of fascism is largely worthless, if not worse.

In place of serious and objective analysis, the Stalinists long ago substituted epithets. The Stalinist press has been calling McCarthyism fascism for some time now. However, the Stalinists have consistently called their opponents — including the Trotskyists — fascists, no matter what their actual views might be. The present line of the Stalinists, who have turned toward the Democratic Party, is a defense of "Twenty Years of Reason" as against the McCarthyite charge of "Twenty Years of Treason." (But the witch hunt was initiated by the Democrats in 1947, so that one-quarter of the "Twenty Years of Reason" includes the worst witch hunt the country has seen.)

The so-called "Twenty Years of Reason" began with the Stalinists calling Roosevelt a fascist. Their indiscriminate use of the term and their

opportunist political path preclude any serious contribution to an analysis of American fascism. Indeed, if the past record of the Stalinists is any indication, the fascist of today could easily become the peace lover and American patriot of tomorrow — should the Kremlin's diplomatic needs require such a shift.

### Where Are the "Stigmata"?

The Stalinist generosity in using the term fascist is fittingly matched by the blind refusal of the Stalinophobes to use the term at all in relation to McCarthyism. The Shachtmanite paper, *Labor Action*, for example, speaking in its November 30 issue of the "domestic effects" of the White-Truman-Brownell explosion — which actually marked a decisive turning point in the development of McCarthyism — saw nothing but a "hopped-up witch hunt which is bound to follow in its wake."

This profound position has been maintained up to the present — though apparently not without resistance from some in the ranks of *Labor Action's* supporters. The April 12 issue carries an exchange between one of these readers and the editor. Writes William Stanley:

"I think Hal Draper's recent characterization of McCarthyism as an independent political force is a step in the right direction . . . The big question is, however, does McCarthyism represent a mere shift to the right within the democratic framework, or does it aim to smash that framework? (Emphasis in original.) Is McCarthy merely another reactionary politician or is he a fascist and the leader of an incipient fascist movement?"

" . . . I believe it is necessary and correct to identify McCarthyism as incipient fascism even though it is not a carbon copy of Hitler's or Mussolini's parties."

Answered editor Draper:

" . . . It is entirely misleading to interpret it (McCarthyism) in terms of 'fascism.' I would ask Stanley to remember that 'fascism' is only one form of totalitarian tendency; and if present-day McCarthyism bears virtually none of the specific stigmata of a fascist type of totalitarianization, it does not help much to use a ready-made label with

misleading connotations." (Emphasis in original.)

One cannot refrain from observing that the editor bears some of the "specific stigmata" of those socialists of ill fame who were able to make the necessary analysis of fascism only after they were in concentration camps.

Then there is the curious tabloid called *Correspondence*, put out by the group once known as "Johnsonites." Purporting to speak for "the people" and to be written by "the people," its editorial statement in the December 17 issue observes with polite restraint:

"This atmosphere of McCarthyism is a disgrace to the American people."

Finally, we have the position taken by the *American Socialist*, publication of the American ideological followers of Pablo. In their January issue they published an insipid article on McCarthy, and promised to return to a full analysis at a later date.

An attempt was made in the following issue. An article entitled, "The Secret of McCarthy's Formula," dealt largely with the parallel between McCarthyism today and the reign of terror under the Alien and Sedition Laws at the end of the 18th century, concluding that those events are "instructive in understanding McCarthyism and how to fight it."

After this account, the author offers his advice to the "New Dealers, liberals, labor leaders" — whom he describes as "the opposition to McCarthyism today." They should "adopt a more sober and rational attitude in their thinking about the world revolution, about war and Russia, (otherwise) they will always be on the defensive."

Leaving their readers with these thoughts to chew on for two months (not a word on McCarthyism in the March issue), the April *American Socialist* made up in excitement for its sobriety in February and its reticence in March. The lead article, "McCarthy's 'Kampf' — A Warning Signal," sounds the alarm that it is "bitter truth . . . and not the excitement of the moment . . ." that

prompts these new thoughts on McCarthyism. And the first paragraph, of 11 short lines, hits the reader with "terrifying convulsion" . . . "sinister progress" . . . "crucial period of decision" . . . "doomed to be ground under the tyrant's heel" . . . etc., etc.

But frenzy is never a substitute for correct political analysis. The promise made in January remains unfulfilled. Carefully refraining from characterizing McCarthyism as fascism, the editors offer no fundamental answer to the "terrifying convulsion" that is shaking American capitalist society. Not seeing fascism on the march in America, they see no problem of combatting fascism, and are therefore incapable of offering a program to meet the fascist danger. In politics, this is known as impotence.

### Trotskyist Record

The treatment of McCarthyism by the *Militant*, weekly newspaper which reflects the views of the Trotskyist movement, began two full years ago, in the issue of April 10, 1950. At that time, Paul G. Stevens observed:

" . . . (McCarthyism) is made to order for the rise of a fascist movement that can quickly overtake traditional capitalist politics in the United States."

The *Militant* followed the developing witch hunt carefully, consistently urging the labor movement to rally against it. When a qualitative turn occurred in the witch hunt last November, the *Militant* was the first radical paper to note it. Its December 7 issue printed a statement by the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party characterizing McCarthyism as having become the American form of fascism, and warning labor and its allies of the grave menace.

Every issue since then has carried extensive analyses of McCarthyism. The most important material has been reissued in pamphlet form and widely distributed in the labor movement. A careful scanning of the labor press shows the impact this analysis and campaign of the *Militant* have had in shaping and crystallizing sentiment in labor circles in the struggle to stop the fascist demagogue from Wisconsin.

# When Anti-Negro Prejudice Began

by George Breitman

IT IS now common knowledge even among conservative circles in the labor movement that race prejudice benefits the interests of the capitalist class and injures the interests of the working class. What is not well known — it still comes as a surprise to many Marxists — and should be made better known is the fact that race prejudice is a uniquely capitalist phenomenon, which either did not exist or had no perceptible influence in pre-capitalist society (that is, before the sixteenth century).

Hundreds of modern scholars have traced anti-Negro prejudice (to take the most important and prevalent type of race prejudice in the United States) back to the African slave trade and the slave system that was introduced into the Americas. Those who profited from the enslavement of the Negroes — the slave traders and merchant capitalists first of Europe and then of America, and the slaveholders — required a rationalization and a moral justification for an archaic social institution that obviously flouted the relatively enlightened principles proclaimed by capitalist society in its struggle against feudalism. Rationalizations always become available when powerful economic interests need them (that is how most politicians and preachers, editors and teachers earn their living) and in this case the theory that Negroes are "inferior" followed close on the discovery that Negro slavery was exceptionally profitable.

This theory was embraced, fitted out with pseudo-scientific trappings and Biblical quotations, and trumpeted forth as a truth so self-evident that only madmen or subversives could doubt or deny it. Its influence on the minds of men was great at all

levels of society, and undoubtedly aided the slaveholders in retarding the abolition of slavery. But with the growth of the productive forces, economic interests hostile to the slaveholders brought forth new theories and ideas, and challenged the supremacy of the slaveholders on all fronts, including ideology. The ensuing class struggles — between the capitalists, slaves, workers and farmers on one side and the slaveholders on the other — resulted in the destruction of the slave system.

But if anti-Negro prejudices and ideas arose out of the need to justify and maintain slavery, why didn't they wither away after slavery was abolished? In the first place, ideas, although they must reflect broad material interests before they can achieve wide circulation, can live lives of their own once they are set into motion, and can survive for a time after the disappearance of the conditions that produced them. (It is instructive to note, for example, that Lincoln did not free himself wholly of race prejudice and continued to believe in the "inferiority" of the Negro even while he was engaged in prosecuting the civil war that abolished the slave system — a striking illustration both of the tendency of ideas to lag behind events and of the primacy of material interest over ideology.)

This is a generalization, however, and does not provide the main explanation for the survival of anti-Negro prejudice after the Civil War. For the striking thing about the Reconstruction period which followed the abolition of slavery was the speed with which old ideas and customs began to change and break up. In the course of a few short years millions of whites began to recover from the



racist poisons to which they had been subjected from their birth, to regard Negroes as equals and to work together with them amicably, under the protection of the federal government, in the solution of joint problems. The obliteration of anti-Negro prejudice was started in the social revolution



that we know by the name of Reconstruction, and it would have been completed if Reconstruction had been permitted to develop further.

But Reconstruction was halted and then strangled — by the capitalists, acting now in alliance with the former slaveholders. No exploiting class lightly discards weapons that can help maintain its rule, and anti-Negro prejudice had already demonstrated its potency as a force to divide, disrupt and disorient oppressed classes in an exploitative society. After some vacillation and internal struggle that lasted through most of Reconstruction, the capitalist class decided it could make use of anti-Negro prejudice for its own purposes. The capitalists adopted it, nursed it, fed it, gave it new clothing, and infused it with a vigor and an influence it had never commanded before. Anti-Negro prejudice today operates in a different social setting and therefore in a somewhat different form than a century ago, but it was retained after slavery for essentially the same reason that it was introduced under the slave system that developed from the sixteenth century on — for its convenience as an instrument of exploitation; and for that same reason it will not be abandoned by the ruling class of any exploitative society in this country.

But why do we speak of the *introduction* of anti-Negro prejudice in the slave system whose spread coincided with the birth of capitalism? Wasn't there slavery long centuries before capitalism? Didn't race prejudice ex-

ist in the earlier slave societies? Why designate race prejudice as a uniquely capitalist phenomenon? A brief look at slavery of both the capitalist and pre-capitalist periods can lead us to the answers.

Capitalism, the social system that followed and replaced feudalism, owed its rise to world dominance in part to its revival or expansion of forms of exploitation originally developed in the pre-feudal slave societies, and to its adaptation and integration of those forms into the framework of capitalist productive relations. As "the chief momenta of primitive accumulation" through which the early capitalists gathered together the capital necessary to establish and spread the new system, Marx listed "the discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of blackskins." The African slave trade and slavery produced fortunes that laid the foundations for the most important of the early industries of capitalism, which in turn served to revolutionize the economy of the whole world.

Thus we see, side by side, in clear operation of the laws of uneven and combined development, archaic pre-feudal forms and the most advanced social relations then possible in the post-feudal world. The former were of course in the service of the latter, at least during the first stages of their co-existence. This was not a mere repetition of the slavery of ancient times: one basic economic difference was that the slave system of the Americas produced commodities for the world capitalist market, and was therefore subordinate to and dependent on that market. There were other differences, but here we confine ourselves to the one most relevant to the subject of this article — race relations in the early slave societies.

For the information that follows we are indebted to the writings of an anthropologist and of a sociologist: Ina Corinne Brown, *Socio-Economic*

*Approach to Educational Problems*, 1942, chapter 2 (this government publication, the first volume in the National Survey of the Higher Education of Negroes sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education, is now out of print, but the same material is covered in her book, *Race Relations in a Democracy*, 1949, chapter 4); and Oliver C. Cox, *Caste, Class, and Race*, 1948, chapter 16.\* Dr. Cox's treatment is fuller; he also has been more influenced by Marx.

This is what they write about the ancient Egyptians:

So many persons assume that racial antipathy is a natural or instinctive reaction that it is important to emphasize the fact that race prejudice such as we know did not exist before the modern age. To be sure there was group antipathy which those who read history backwards take to be race prejudice, but actually this antipathy had little or nothing to do with color or the other physical differences by which races are distinguished. For example, the ancient Egyptians looked down upon the Negroes to the south of them. They enslaved these Negroes and spoke scornfully of them. Many writers, reading later racial attitudes into the situation, have seen in this scorn a color prejudice. But the Egyptians were just as scornful of the Asiatic sand dwellers, or Troglodytes as Herodotus called them, and of their other neighbors who were as light or lighter than the Egyptians. The Egyptian artists caricature the wretched captives taken in the frequent wars, but they emphasize the hooked noses of the Hittites, the woolen garments of the Hebrews, and the peculiar dress of the Libyans quite as much as the color or the thick lips of the Negroes. That the Egyptians mixed freely with their southern neighbors, either in slavery or out of it, is evidenced by the fact that some of the Pharaohs were obviously Negroid and

\* Neither of these would claim they were the first to discover this historical information, and it may well be that other scholars unknown to us preceded them in writing about this field in recent years; all we know is that it first came to our attention through their books. Historical material often lies neglected for long periods until current social and political needs reawaken interest in it. These writers were undoubtedly stimulated into a new and more purposeful interest in the subject by the growth of American Negro militancy and colonial independence struggles during the last 15-20 years.

eventually Egypt was ruled by an Ethiopian dynasty. (Brown, 1942.)

There seems to be no basis for imputing racial antagonism to the Egyptians, Babylonians, or Persians. (Cox.)

#### On the Greeks:

One frequently finds mention of the scornful way in which Negro slaves were referred to in Greece and Rome, but the fact is that equally scornful remarks were made of the white slaves from the North and the East. There seems to be no evidence that color antipathy was involved, and of the total slave population the Negroes constituted only a minor element. (Brown, 1942.)

The slave population was enormous, but the slave and the master in Greece were commonly of the same race and there was no occasion to associate any given physical type with the slave status. An opponent of Athenian democracy complained that it was impossible in Athens to distinguish slaves and aliens from citizens because all classes dressed alike and lived in the same way. (Brown, 1949.)

... we do not find race prejudice even in the great Hellenistic empire which extended deeper into the territories of colored people than any other European empire up to the end of the fifteenth century.

The Hellenic Greeks had a cultural, not a racial, standard of belonging, so that their basic division of the peoples of the world were Greeks and barbarians — the barbarians having been all those persons who did not possess the Greek culture, especially its language . . . the people of the Greek city-states, who founded colonies among the barbarians on the shores of the Black Sea and of the Mediterranean, welcomed those barbarians to the extent that they were able to participate in Greek culture, and intermarried freely with them. The Greeks knew that they had a superior culture to those of the barbarians, but they included Europeans, Africans, and Asiatics in the concept *Hellas* as these peoples acquired a working knowledge of the Greek culture.

The experience of the later Hellenistic empire of Alexander tended to be the direct contrary of modern racial antagonism. The narrow patriotism of the city-states was given up for a new cosmopolitanism. Every effort was made to assimilate the barbarians to Greek culture, and in the process a new Greco-Oriental culture with a Greco-Oriental ruling class came into being. Alexander himself took a Persian princess for his wife and encouraged his men to intermarry with the native population. In this empire there was an estate, not

a racial, distinction between the rulers and the un-Hellenized natives. (Cox.)

#### On the Romans:

In Rome, as in Greece, the slaves did not differ in outward appearance from free men. R. H. Barrow in his study of the Roman slave says that "neither color nor clothing revealed his condition." Slaves of different nationalities intermarried. There was no color barrier. A woman might be despised as a wife because she came from a despised group or because she practiced barbaric rites but not because her skin was darker. Furthermore, as W. W. Buckland points out, "any citizen might conceivably become a slave; almost any slave might become a citizen." (Brown, 1949.)

In this civilization also we do not find racial antagonism, for the norm of superiority in the Roman system remained a cultural-class attribute. The basic distinction was Roman citizenship, and gradually this was extended to all free-born persons in the municipalities of the empire. Slaves came from every province, and there was no racial distinction among them. (Cox.)

There is really no need to go on quoting. The same general picture is true of all the societies, slave and non-slave, from the Roman empire down to the discovery of America — in the barbarian invasions into Europe, which led to enslavement of whites, in the reign of the Moslems, in the era of political domination by the Catholic Church. There were divisions, discriminations and antagonisms of class, cultural, political and religious character, but none along race or color lines, at least none that have left any serious trace in the historical materials now available. As late as the middle of the fifteenth century, when the West African slave trade to Portugal first began, the rationalization for the enslavement of Negroes was not that they were Negro but that they were not Christian. Those who became Christians were freed, intermarried with the Portuguese and were accepted as equals in Portugal. Afterward, of course, when the slave trade became a big business, the readiness of a slave to convert to Christianity no longer sufficed to gain his emancipation.

Why did race prejudice develop in the capitalist era when it did not under the earlier slave systems? With-

out thinking we have in any way exhausted the subject, we make the following suggestion: In previous times the slaves were usually of the same color as their masters; both whites and Negroes were masters and slaves; in the European countries the Negroes formed a minority of the slave population. The invidious connotations of slavery were attached to all slaves, white and Negro. If under these conditions the notion of Negro "inferiority" occurred to anyone, it would have seemed ridiculous on the face of it; at any rate, it could never have received any social acceptance.

But slavery in the Americas became confined exclusively to Negroes.\* The Negro was distinguished by his color, and the invidious connotations of slavery could easily be transferred to that; it was inevitable that the theory of Negro "inferiority" and that anti-Negro prejudice should be created, that they should be extended to other non-white people who offered the possibility of exploitation, and that they should be spread around the globe.

Thus anti-Negro prejudice was not born until after capitalism had come into the world. There are differences

\* Slavery was not confined to Negroes at the beginning. Before the Negro slave on the plantations, there was the Indian slave and the white indentured servant. But Negro slave labor proved cheaper and was more plentiful than either of these, and eventually they were abandoned. The most satisfactory study of this question is in the excellent book by Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 1944. Williams writes: "Here, then, is the origin of Negro slavery. The reason was economic, not racial; it had to do not with the color of the laborer, but the cheapness of the labor. As compared with Indian and white labor, Negro slavery was eminently superior . . . The features of the man, his hair, color and dentifrice, his 'sub-human' characteristics so widely pleaded, were only the later rationalizations to justify a simple economic fact: that the colonies needed labor and resorted to Negro labor because it was cheapest and best. This was not a theory, it was a practical conclusion deduced from the personal experience of the planter. He would have gone to the moon, if necessary, for labor. Africa was nearer than the moon, nearer too than the more populous countries of India and China. But their turn was to come."

of opinion as to the approximate birthdate. M. F. Ashley Montagu, discussing the "modern conception of 'race'," says: "Neither in the ancient world nor in the world up to the latter part of the eighteenth century did there exist any notion corresponding to it . . . A study of the cultures and literatures of mankind, both ancient and recent, shows us that the con-

ple of the world and their resources. He sees "nascent race prejudice" with the beginning of the slave trade: "Although this peculiar kind of exploitation was then in its incipency, it had already achieved its significant characteristics." However, he finds that "racial antagonism attained full maturity" only in the second half of the nineteenth century.

and press of a country dominated by capitalists and their apologists. Anti-Negro prejudice arose out of the needs of capitalism, it is a product of capitalism, it belongs to capitalism, and it will die when capitalism dies.

We who are going to participate in the replacement of capitalism by socialism, and who have good reason to be curious about the first stages



ception of natural or biological races of mankind differing from one another mentally as well as physically, is an idea which was not born until the latter part of the eighteenth century," or around the French Revolution. (*Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race.*)

Cox says that if he had to put his finger on the year which marked the beginning of race relations, he would select 1493-94 — when the Pope granted to Catholic Spain and Portugal jurisdictional control over, and the right to exploit, all of the (predominantly non-white) heathen peo-

Whichever century one chooses, the point is this: Anti-Negro prejudice was originated to justify and preserve a slave-labor system that operated in the interests of capitalism in its pre-industrialist stages, and it was retained in slightly modified form by industrial capitalism after slavery became an obstacle to the further development of capitalism and had to be abolished. Few things in the world are more distinctly stamped with the mark of capitalism.

The implications of this fact are so plain that it is no wonder it has received so little attention in the schools

of socialism because we will be living in them, need have no fear about the possibility of any extended lag with respect to race prejudice. Unlike the capitalist system that dominated this country after the Civil War, the socialist society will be free of all exploitative features; it will have no conceivable use for race prejudice, and it will consciously seek to eradicate it along with all the other props of the old system. That is why race prejudice will wither away when capitalism dies — just as surely as the leaf withers when the tree dies, and not much later.

# Trade Unionists And Revolutionists

by James P. Cannon

FOR several months we have been discussing the contrasting proposals of the two sides in our internal party conflict. It is time now, I think, to go a step further; to advance the discussion to an examination of the basic causes of the fight. You will recall that Trotsky did this in the 1939-40 fight with Burnham and Shachtman. At a certain stage of that struggle, after the positions of both sides were made clear — not only what they had to say but what they didn't say, and how they acted, and the atmosphere of the fight, and everything else — when it was fairly clear what was *really* involved Trotsky wrote his article "A Petty-Bourgeois Opposition in the Socialist Workers Party."

That article summed up his judgment of the Burnham-Shachtman faction as it had revealed itself in the fire of the struggle — when it had become clear that we were not dealing, as sometimes happens, with a mere difference of opinion among co-thinkers on a given point or two which might be settled by fraternal discussion and debate. Burnham and his supporters — and his dupes — were moved by a profound inner compulsion to break with the doctrine and tradition of the party. They carried their revolt against the party to the point of frenzy, as petty-bourgeois factionalists always do. They became impervious to any argument, and Trotsky undertook to explain the social basis of their faction and their factional frenzy. We must do the same now once again.

*A speech made at a meeting of the Majority Caucus of the New York Local on May 11, 1953, in the course of the factional struggle within the Socialist Workers Party against the ideological followers of Pablo.*

The social groupings in the present opposition are not quite the same as in 1940. In that fight it was a case of a few demoralized intellectuals based on a genuine petty-bourgeois social composition of a section of the party, especially in New York, but also in Chicago and some other parts of the country — a petty-bourgeois concentration revolting against the proletarian line of the party.

The social composition of the party today is far better and provides a much narrower base of support for an opportunist faction. As a result of the split with the Burnhamites and our deliberate concentration on trade union work, the party today is far more proletarian in its composition, especially outside New York. Despite all that, the real social composition of the party is by no means uniform; it reflects some of the changes which have taken place in the American working class. This has been strikingly demonstrated by the line-up of the party trade unionists in our factional struggle. The revolutionists among them — the big majority — on the

one side, and the conservatized elements — a small minority — on the other, have chosen different sides instinctively and almost automatically.

Since the consolidation of the CIO unions and the 13-year period of war and post-war boom, a new stratification has taken place within the American working class, and particularly and conspicuously in the CIO unions. Our party, which is rooted in the unions, reflects that stratification too. The worker who has soaked up the general atmosphere of the long prosperity and begun to live and think like a petty-bourgeois is a familiar figure in the country at large. He has even made his appearance in the Socialist Workers Party as a ready-made recruit for an opportunist faction.

In our 1952 Convention Resolution, we explained the situation in the American working class as a whole in the two sections, "The Causes of Labor Conservatism and the Premises for a New Radicalization" and "Perspectives of a New Radicalization." In my report at the National Convention, I called those two sections "the *heart* of the resolution" and centered my report around them.

It appears to me now, in the light of the conflict in the party and its real causes which are now manifest, that those sections of the Convention Resolution, dealing with the class as



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a whole, require further elaboration and amplification. We need a more precise examination of the stratifications within the working class, which are barely touched there, and of the projection of these stratifications in the composition of the unions, in the various inner-union tendencies, and even in our own party. This, I believe, is the key to the otherwise inexplicable riddle of why one proletarian section of the party, even though it is a small minority, supports a capitulatory opportunist faction against the proletarian-revolutionary line and leadership of the party.

### Examples from History

This apparent contradiction — this division of working-class forces — in party factional struggle is not new. In the classical faction struggles of our international movement since the time of Marx and Engels there has always been a division, in the party itself, between the different strata of workers. The proletarian left wing by no means ever had all the workers, and the opportunist petty-bourgeois wing was never without some working-class support, that is, working-class in the technical sense of wage workers. The revisionist intellectuals and the trade union opportunists always nestled together in the right wing of the party. In the SWP at the present time we have a repetition of the classical line-up which characterized the struggle of left and right in the Second International before the First World War.

Trotsky told us on one of our visits with him — I think he also wrote it somewhere — that there was a real social division between the two factions of the original Social Democratic Party of Russia, which later became separate parties. The Mensheviks, he said, had nearly *all* the intellectuals. With a few exceptions, the only intellectuals Lenin had were those whom the party had trained, a good deal like our own worker-intellectuals for the greater part. The intellectual — I mean the professional intellectual of the Burnham type, the man from the professor's chair, from the

universities — was a rarity on Lenin's side, whereas the Mensheviks had shoals of them.

In addition, the Mensheviks had most of the skilled workers, who are always the privileged workers. The printers union was Menshevik even through the revolution. The railroad workers' bureaucracy tried to paralyze the revolution; it was only by military force and the aid of a minority that the Bolsheviks were able to prevent the Menshevik railroad workers' officialdom from employing their strategic position against the revolution.

Trotsky said that the Mensheviks also had most of the older workers. Age, as you know, is associated with conservatism. (In general, that is, but not always; there are exceptions to the rule. There are two different ways of measuring age. In ordinary life you measure it by the calendar; but in revolutionary politics you measure it by the mind and the will and the spirit — and you don't always get the same result.)

On the other hand, while the older workers, the skilled and the privileged, were with the Mensheviks, the unskilled workers and the youth were with the Bolsheviks; that is, those of them who were politicalized. That was the line of division between the factions. It was not merely a question of the arguments and the program; it was the social impulses, petty-bourgeois on one side, proletarian on the other, which determined their allegiance.

The same line-up took place in Germany. The pre-war German Social Democracy in its heyday had a powerful bloc of opportunist parliamentarians, Marxologists who utilized their scholastic training and their ability to quote Marx by the yard to justify an opportunist policy. They were supported not merely by the petty shopkeepers, of whom there were many, and the trade union bureaucrats. They also had a solid base of support in the privileged stratum of the aristocracy of labor in Germany. The trade union opportunists in the German Social Democratic Party supported Bernstein's revisionism with-

out bothering to read his articles. They didn't need to read them; they just felt that way. The most interesting facts on this point are cited by Peter Gay in his book on Bernstein and his revisionist movement, entitled *The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism*.

All through the pre-war fight over revisionism, then through the war and post-war days, through 1923 and 1933, the skilled, privileged trade unionists were the solid base of support of the opportunist Social Democratic leaders — while the communist revolutionaries, from the time of Leibknecht and Luxemburg all the way down to the fascist catastrophe in 1933, were the youth, the unemployed and the unskilled, less privileged workers.

If you will go back and read Lenin again, in case you've forgotten it, you will see how Lenin explained the degeneration of the Second International, and its eventual betrayal in the First World War, precisely by its opportunism based upon the adaptation of the party to the conservative impulses and demands of the bureaucracy and aristocracy of labor.

We had the same thing in the U.S., although we never had a Social Democracy in the European sense and the working class was never politically organized here as it was there. The organized labor movement, up to the Thirties, was largely restricted to a privileged aristocracy of labor — as Debs and DeLeon used to call it — of skilled craftsmen, who got better wages and had preferred positions, "job trusts" and so on. The chief representative of this conservative, privileged craft union stratum was Gompers.

On the other side, there was the great mass of the basic proletariat, the unskilled and semi-skilled, the mass production workers, the foreign-born and the jobless youth. They were without benefit of organization, without privileges, the outcasts of society. It was not without reason that they were more radical than the others. Nobody paid any attention to them except the revolutionists and radicals. Only the IWW of Haywood and St.

John, Debs and the left Socialists voiced their bitter grievances, did the organizing work and led the strikes of the mass production workers in



EUGENE V. DEBS

those days. If the official labor bureaucracy intervened in the spontaneous strikes of the unorganized it was usually to break them up and sell them out.

The officials of the skilled unions did not welcome the great upsurge of the unorganized workers in the Thirties. But they could not prevent it. When the spontaneous strikes and drives for organization could no longer be ignored, the AFL began to assign "organizers" to the various industries — to steel, rubber, auto, etc. They were sent, however, not to lead the workers in a struggle but to control them, to prevent the consolidation of self-acting industrial unions. They actually wouldn't permit the auto workers in convention to elect their own officials, insisting that the AFL appoint them "provisionally." The same with the rubber workers and other new industrial unions.

These new unions had to split with the conservative labor fakers of the AFL before they could consolidate unions of their own. The drives behind the 1934-37 upsurge were the bitter and irreconcilable grievances

of the workers; their protest against mistreatment, speed-up, insecurity: the revolt of the pariahs against the pariah status.

This revolt, which no bureaucracy could contain, was spearheaded by new people — the young mass production workers, the new, young militants whom nobody had ever heard of. They were the real creators of the CIO. This revolt of the "men from nowhere" reached its high tide in the sit-down strikes of 1937. The workers' victory in these battles definitely established the CIO and secured stability of the new unions through the seniority clause.

### Conservatizing Influences

It is now 16 years since the sit-down strikes made the new CIO unions secure by the seniority clause. These 16 years of union security, and 13 years of uninterrupted war and post-war prosperity, have wrought a great transformation in the unprivileged workers who made the CIO.

The seniority clause, like everything else in life, has revealed a contradictory quality. By regulating the right to employment through time of service on the job, it secures the union militant against arbitrary discrimination and lay-offs. It is an absolute necessity for union security. That is the positive side of the seniority clause. But, at the same time, it also gradually creates a sort of special interest in the form of steadier employment for those unionists who have been longest in the shop. That is its negative side.

In time, with the stretching out of their seniority rights and their upgrading to better jobs, a process of transformation in the status of the original union militants has taken place. In the course of 16 years they have secured more or less steady employment, even in times of slack work. They are, under the rules, the last to be laid off and the first to be rehired. And in most cases, they have better jobs than newcomers to the shop. All of this, combined with war and post-war prosperity, has changed their material position and, to a certain extent, their social status.

The pioneer militants of the CIO unions are 16 years older than they were in 1937. They are better off than the ragged and hungry sit-down strikers of 1937; and many of them are 16 times softer and more conservative. This privileged section of the unions, formerly the backbone of the left wing, is today the main social base of the conservative Reuther bureaucracy. They are convinced far less by Reuther's clever demagoguery than by the fact that he really articulates their own conservatized moods and patterns of thought.

But these conservatized ex-militants are only part of the membership of the CIO, and I don't think that our resolution at the Convention deals specifically and adequately with that fact. In these mass production industries, which are real slave pens and hell holes, there are many others. There is a mass of younger workers, who have none of these benefits and privileges and no vested interest in the piled-up seniority rights. They are the human material for the new radicalization. The revolutionary party, looking to the future, must turn its primary attention to them.

If we, counting on a new upsurge in the labor movement, look to those who led it 16 years ago, we could indeed draw a gloomy picture. Not only are they not in a radical mood now; they are not apt to become the spearhead of a new radicalization. That will take youth, and hunger, and raggedness and bitter discontent with all the conditions of life.

We must look to the new people if, as I take it, we are thinking in terms of the coming American revolution, and not limiting our vision to the prospect of a new shake-up in the bureaucracy and caucus combinations with slick "progressive" fakers for little aims.

This new stratification in the new unions is a feature which the party can no longer ignore. All the more so, since we now see it directly reflected in our party. A number of party members in the auto union belong to this privileged upper stratum. That's the first thing you have to

recognize. Some of the best militants, the best stalwarts of the party in the old times, have been affected by the changed conditions of their own lives and by their new environment.

They see the old militants in the unions, who formerly cooperated with them, growing slower, more satisfied, more conservative. They still mix with these ex-militants socially, and are infected by them. They develop a pessimistic outlook from the reactions they get on every side from these old-timers, and, unknown to themselves, acquire an element of that same conservatism.

That, in my opinion, is the reason why they support a crudely conservative, pessimistic, capitulatory tendency in our internal faction fight. This, I am afraid, is not a misunderstanding on their part. I wish it were, for in that case our task would be easy. The miserable arguments of the Cochranites cannot stand up against Marxist criticism — provided one accepts the criteria of revolutionary Marxism.

But that's the rub. Our conservatized trade unionists no longer accept these criteria. Like many others, who "used to be radicals themselves," they are beginning to talk about our "Theses on the American Revolution" as a "crack-pot" idea. They don't "feel" that way, and nobody can talk them out of the way they do feel.

That — and perhaps a guilty conscience — is the true explanation of their subjectivity, their rudeness and factional frenzy when one tries to argue with them from the principled standpoint of the "old Trotskyism." They do not follow Cochran out of exceptional regard for him personally, because they know Cochran. They simply recognize in Cochran, with his capitulatory defeatism and his program of retreat from the fighting arena to a propaganda circle, the authentic spokesman of their own mood of retreat and withdrawal.

Just as the older, more skilled and privileged German trade unionists supported the right against the left, and as their Russian counterparts sup-

ported the Mensheviks against the Bolsheviks, the "professional trade unionists" in our party support Cochranism in our fight. And for the same basic reasons.

I, for my part, must frankly admit that I did not see this whole picture at the beginning of the fight. I anticipated that some tired and pessimistic people, who were looking for some sort of rationalization to slow down or get out of the struggle, would support any kind of an opposition faction which would arise. That happens in every faction fight. But I didn't anticipate the emergence of a conservatized workers' stratum serving as an organized grouping and a social basis for an opportunist faction in the party.

Still less did I expect to see such a grouping strutting around in the party demanding special consideration because they are "trade unionists." What's exceptional about that? There are fifteen million trade unionists in this country, but not quite so many revolutionists. But the revolutionists are the ones who count with us.

### **Losing Faith in the Party**

The revolutionary movement, under the best conditions, is a hard fight, and it wears out a lot of human material. Not for nothing has it been said a thousand times in the past: "The revolution is a devourer of men." The movement in this, the richest and most conservative country in the world, is perhaps the most voracious of all.

It is not easy to persist in the struggle, to hold on, to stay tough and fight it out year after year without victory; and even, in times such as the present, without tangible progress. That requires theoretical conviction and historical perspective as well as character. And, in addition to that, it requires association with others in a common party.

The surest way to lose one's fighting faith is to succumb to one's immediate environment; to see things only as they are and not as they are changing and must change; to see only what is before one's eyes and imagine that it is permanent. That is the cursed fate of the trade unionist who sep-

arates himself from the revolutionary party. In normal times, the trade union, by its very nature, is a culture-broth of opportunism. No trade unionist, overwhelmed by the petty concerns and limited aims of the day, can retain his vision of the larger issues and the will to fight for them without the party.

The revolutionary party can make mistakes, and has made them, but it is never wrong in the fight against grievance-mongers who try to blame the party for their own weaknesses; for their tiredness, their lack of vision, their impulse to quit and to capitulate. The party is not wrong now when it calls this tendency by its right name.

People often act differently as individuals, and give different explanations for their actions, than when they act and speak as groups. When an individual gets tired and wants to quit, he usually says he is tired and he quits; or he just drops out without saying anything at all, and that's all there is to it. That has been happening in our international movement for 100 years.

But when the same kind of people decide as a group to get out of the line of fire by getting out of the party, they need the cover of a faction and a "political" rationalization. Any "political" explanation will do, and in any case it is pretty certain to be a phony explanation. That also has been going on for about 100 years.

The present case of the Cochranite trade unionists is no exception to this rule. Out of a clear sky we hear that some "professional trade unionists" are suddenly against us because we are "Stalinophobes," and they are hell-bent for an orientation toward Stalinism. Why, that's the damndest nonsense ever heard! They never had that idea in their heads until this fight started. And how could they? The Stalinists have gotten themselves isolated in the labor movement, and it's poison to touch them. To go looking for the Stalinists is to cut yourself off from the labor movement, and these party "trade unionists" don't want to do that.

The people in Michigan who are

hollering for us to make an orientation toward the Stalinists have no such orientation on their own home grounds. And they're perfectly right about that. I don't deny that people like Clarke, Bartell and Frankel have heard voices and seen visions of a gold mine hidden in the Stalinist hills — I will discuss this hallucination at another time — but the Cochranite trade unionists haven't the slightest intention of going prospecting there. They are not even looking in that direction. What's amazing is the insincerity of their support of the orientation toward the Stalinists. That's completely artificial, for factional purposes. No, you have to say the orientation toward Stalinism, as far as the Michigan trade unionists are concerned, is a phony.

What is the next thing we hear? That they are full of "grievances" against the party "regime." I always get suspicious when I hear of grievances, especially from people whom you didn't hear it from before. When I see people revolting against the party, on the ground that they've been badly treated by this terrible regime in our party — which is actually the fairest, most democratic and easy-going regime in the history of the human race — I always remind myself of the words of J. Pierpont Morgan. He said: "Everybody has at least two reasons for what he does — a good reason and the real reason." They've given a good reason for their opposition. Now I want to know what the hell is the real reason.

It can't be the party's hostility to Stalinism, as they say — because the Cochranite trade unionists wouldn't touch the Stalinists with a ten-foot pole, not even if you stood behind them with bayonets and lighted firecrackers under their coat tails.

It can't be the "Third World Congress," concerning which they are suddenly working up a lather. These comrades in Michigan have many admirable qualities, as has been shown in the past, but they're by no means the most internationalist-minded section of the party; not by far. They're not that section of the party most interested in theoretical questions. The

Detroit branch, sad to say, has been most remiss in the teaching and study of Marxist theory, and is now paying a terrible price for it. This branch hasn't got a single class going, no class in Marxism, no class in the party history, no class on the World Congress or anything else.

So, when they suddenly erupt with the demand that the Third World Congress be nailed to the party's mast-head, I say that's another "good" reason, but it's a phony too.

The real reason is that they are in revolt against the party without fully knowing why. The party, for a young militant, is a necessity valued above everything else. The party was the very life of these militants when they were young and really militant. They didn't care for jobs; they feared no hazards. Like any other first-class revolutionists, they would quit a job at the drop of a hat if the party wanted them to do this or that. It was always the party first.

The party is the highest prize to the young trade unionist who becomes a revolutionist, the apple of his eye. But to the revolutionist who becomes transformed into a trade unionist — we have all seen this happen more than once — the party is no prize at all. The mere trade unionist, who thinks in terms of "union politics" and "power blocs" and little caucuses with little fakers to run for some little office, pushing one's personal interest here and there — why should he belong to a revolutionary party? For such a person the party is a millstone around his neck, interfering with his success as a "practical" trade union politician. And in the present political situation in the country, it's a danger — in the union, in the shop and in life in general.

The great majority of the party trade unionists understand all this as well as we do. The vulgar "trade unionist" appeal of the Cochranites only repelled them, for they consider themselves to be revolutionists first and trade unionists second. In other words, they are party men, as all revolutionists are.

I think it's a great tribute to our

tradition, to our cadres, to the leadership of our party, that we have succeeded in isolating Cochranism to a narrow section of the party membership. It's a great satisfaction, in these troubled and heavy times, to see the great majority of the party standing firm against all pressures. In the further course of the discussion we will strike still heavier blows and chip off a few more here and there. We don't want to see anybody leave the party if we can help it.

But soul-saving is not our main occupation. We are determined to protect the party from demoralization, and we will do that. We are concerned with individuals only within that framework. The rescue of political derelicts can be left to the Salvation Army. For us, the party comes first, and nobody will be allowed to disrupt it.

This fight is of the most decisive importance because the prospect before our party is the prospect of war and all that goes with it. We see the dangers and the difficulties — as well as the great opportunities — which lie ahead of us, and just because of that we want to get the party in shape before the worst blows fall upon us.

The party line and perspectives, and the party leadership, will be settled in this fight for a long time to come. When harder times come, and when new opportunities open up, we don't want to leave any doubt in any comrade's mind as to what the party line is and who the party leaders are. These questions will be settled in this fight.

The Socialist Worker Party has the right, by its program and its record, to aspire to a great future. That's my opinion. That was the opinion of Trotsky. There is a line in the document of the Cochranites that sneers at the 1946 SWP Convention and at the "Theses on the American Revolution" adopted there. It says: "We were children of destiny, at least in our own minds." In that derision of the party's aspiration, the whole pessimistic, capitulatory ideology of Cochranism is contained.

In 1929, when Trotsky was deported to Constantinople, the victory of Sta-



linism was complete, and he was isolated and almost alone. Outside the Soviet Union there were only about 200 people supporting him in the whole world, and half of them were the forces we had organized in the U.S. Trotsky wrote us a letter at that time

missal of our revolutionary aspirations, I remembered a speech I made to our young comrades 13 years ago in Chicago. The occasion was our Active Workers Conference, held just a month or so after the death of the Old Man, when everybody felt bereft;

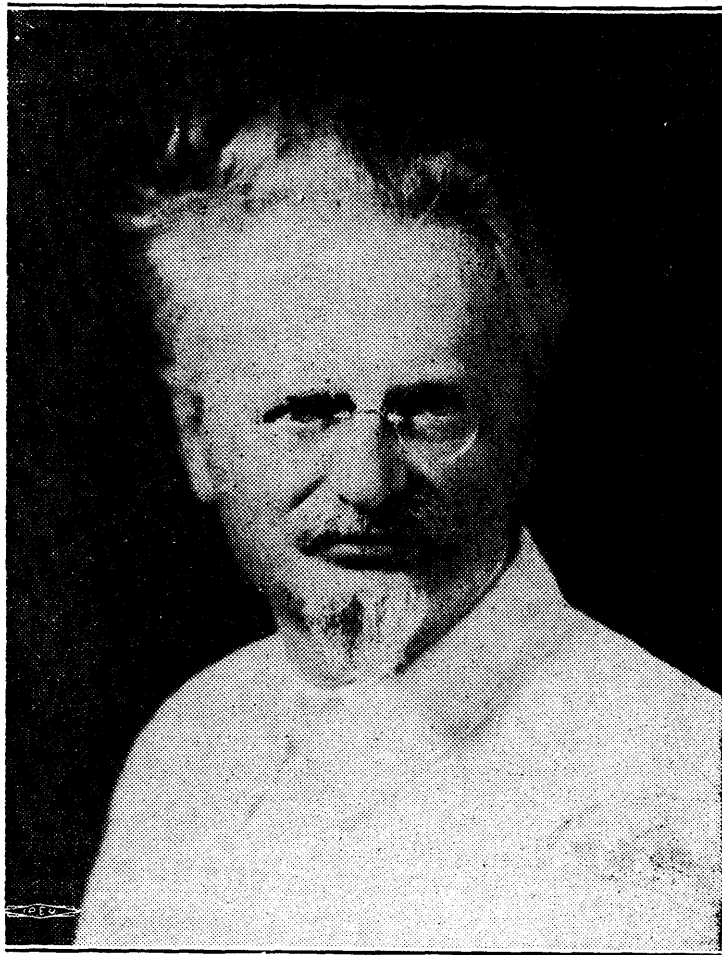
the Cochranite sneer out to me and said: "What about that? If I didn't think our party has a great future, why should I be willing to devote my life and everything I have to the party?" Anyone who low-rates the party and crosses off its future ought to ask himself what he is doing in the party. Is he here on a visit?

The party demands a lot, and you can't give a lot and risk everything unless you think the party is worth it. The party is worth it, for it is the party of the future. And this party of the future is now once again getting its share of historical luck. Once again, as in 1939-40, it has the opportunity to settle a fundamental conflict in open discussion before a war, on the eve of a war.

Before World War II the party was confronted with a faction which threatened its program and, thereby, its right to exist. We didn't have to jump immediately into the war before the question was settled. We were working in the open while the rest of our comrades in Europe were underground or in concentration camps. We, here in America, were privileged to conduct a debate for the whole International over a period of seven months.

The same thing is happening again now. We ought to recognize this historical luck and take advantage of it. The best way to do this is to extend and amplify the discussion. I will repeat what Comrade Dobbs said, that our aim is not to split the party but to break up the split and save the party. We will try to prevent a split by a political fight which hits the opposition so hard that it can have no perspectives in a split. If we can't prevent a split, we will reduce it to the smallest possible size.

Meantime, we will develop the party work on all fronts. No party work is going to be sabotaged. If the attempt is made, we will move our forces in everywhere and take over. We will not permit the party to be disrupted by sabotage or derailed by a split, any more than we did in 1940. We have made a good start and we won't stop until we have won another complete victory in the struggle for a revolutionary party.



**LEON TROTSKY**

in which he hailed our movement in the United States. He said our work was of world historical significance because, in the last analysis, all of the problems of the epoch will be settled on American soil. He said that he didn't know whether a revolution would come here sooner than in other places; but in any case, he said, it was necessary to prepare by organizing the nucleus of the party of the future revolution.

That's the line we have been working on. Our cadres have been raised on that doctrine. When I read in the Cochranite document that cynical dis-

when the question in the minds of all, here and all over the world, was whether the movement could survive without Trotsky.

At the end of the Conference I gave a speech and I said to the young activists assembled there: "You are the real men of destiny, for you alone represent the future." In the 1946 Convention Theses we put the same concept.

That has been the position of all our militants who are standing together through this long, hard battle. A young comrade in California, one of the leading party activists, pointed

# Automation

by Lynn Marcus

THE development of automatic tracking and firing apparatus for anti-aircraft batteries during World War II introduced the germs of a *new* industrial revolution. The process thus portended is already under way. We have before us the technological possibility of freeing mankind from drudgery, providing mankind with incalculable material abundance and giving humanity the leisure time to develop its full potentialities. We have at hand the beginnings of a self-operating means of production. The name given to this new industrial revolution is *automation*.

The first industrial revolution came as one of the effects of capitalism's unquenchable thirst for relative surplus value. Labor-saving machinery, increasing the productivity of labor, cut down the amount of socially necessary labor in a commodity; thereby breaking through a profit barrier. This first industrial revolution brought a persistent lowering of the value of labor power, an increase of constant capital at the expense of variable capital, and an inescapable decline in the rate of profit.

Now a new industrial revolution, automation, has entered upon the scene — a consequence, again, of capitalism's lust for relative surplus value. Automation raises the contradictions of capitalist industrialization to a new intensity: technological unemployment beyond yesterday's wildest fears, astronomical quantities of constant capital for each worker directly employed, and a plummeting rate of profit. With automation, the capitalist "spider" has taken a "wasp's egg" under its skin. Automation, a qualitative change in the means of production, hastens the doom of an outdated society. Automation carries with it an intensification of the social and political forces

that will drive the working class to take power and reorganize society from top to bottom.

Already the beginnings of this new industrial revolution are met in such significant areas of the economy as Ford's engine plant in Cleveland. (See *Electrical Manufacturing*, August, 1953.) The various journals which circulate among management and engineering staffs are crammed with both ads and articles featuring the "gimmicks," instruments and methods of automation. Parts and units specifically designed for use in constructing computers are manufactured and offered in quantity by an increasing number of firms. Large banks are advertising their willingness to finance automation in industry. Practically every major manufacturing firm in the country has some kind of automation plans already in development.

Part of this development of automation is a by-product of the munitions industries. Modern jet aircraft fly too fast for the response rates of human reflexes. More and more of the control of these craft is passing from the pilot to various types of electronic "brains." A supplier of parts receives orders for a certain quantity of such essential computer elements as servomechanism units. Soon this supplier is in position to produce more servomechanism units than his Air Force contract requires. He advertises the surplus on the open market. This pattern is reproduced over the entire electronics industry.

The manufacture of radar equipment, television sets, etc., generates productive facilities which are readily convertible to manufacture of control circuits. The general scramble for odds and ends in a shrinking internal market forces the process to a new pitch. We have only to survey the topics of articles and ads in industrial and professional engineering journals dur-

ing the past few years to see some of this process in operation.

Thus it is the inner, inescapable logic of U.S. capitalism that drives it to wade in the seas of automation — seas in which it cannot swim.

What we shall do here is to show why automation represents the beginning of a *new* industrial revolution, why it is not merely a continuation of the old industrial revolution. We shall show why capitalism, for the most profound social and economic reasons, cannot complete this revolution. Finally, we shall show how automation relates to the problems of the socialist revolution.

### What is Automation?

The history of man's economic, social and political development revolves around his invention and development of tools. It is by the implements of chipped and flaked stone that we identify paleolithic man. The spear, the axe, the bow and arrow raised man's food-gathering power above that of other animals. The invention of the plow speeded the development of agricultural economy and the social and political forms which evolved from agrarian society. In each stage of man's social and political development we look for the root in the changes in man's relationship to tools — changes in the means of production.

The first industrial revolution under capitalism, through mechanization, took the motive power and the tools from the workman and transferred them to the machine, *but kept the workman as an appendage of the machine.* (Marx, *Capital*, vol. I, chap. 15.) Automation changes this relationship between man and his tools. From machines to *make* machines, our technology has now advanced to machines that *control* machines — and thereby machines that control themselves. The appendage of the machine — the worker at the machine — is junked. A small portion of this displaced labor force will find jobs in the control room and on maintenance teams. Further steps in automation will eliminate even these.

Automation eliminates the human

appendage (1) by devices which automatically transfer work from one machine in a sequence to another; (2) by built-in guides and feeds; (3) by "monitoring" devices which constantly or regularly inspect the operation's output and automatically make the adjustments to the machine that meters, gauges, etc., indicate to be necessary; (4) by coordinating devices, such as computers, which integrate each machine into a larger whole, and which make the whole production line work as one self-operating machine. In general, the devices and techniques for accomplishing this already exist.

Some further features are not yet developed: (1) constructing machines which are effectively "self-repairing"; (2) constructing machines which can add new elements to themselves automatically. Neither of these two problems is more than an engineering problem; automation hasn't yet reached that stage of practical development where these two features have received much attention. Nonetheless, a fully automatic factory must incorporate these features.

Thus it is technologically possible, through automation, to eliminate *most* of the labor force in industry today. This is not science-fiction; it is fact, as more and more workers will realize shortly.

### How Automation Works

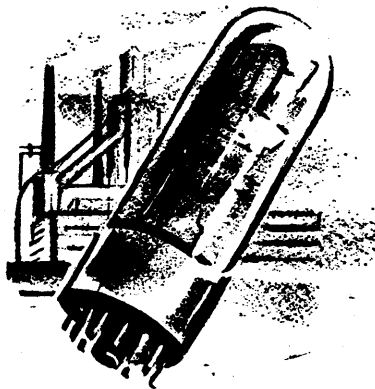
The one key principle that underlies automation is the principle of *feedback*. We shall attempt to make this principle clear through illustration.

Manufacturer Jones walks into the office of his engineering staff and announces a problem he wishes solved. In his factory there are a number of electroplating tanks which are cooled by water running through coils placed in the tanks. In this case it is important to keep the tanks at a temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit, with a tolerance of plus or minus two or three degrees. This means that the amount of water flowing through the cooling coils must be carefully regulated. If too much water runs through the coils, the tank temperature will drop too low; if not enough water

flows through the coils, the temperature of the tank will rise too high.

It is not possible to run a fixed amount of water through the coils, for two main reasons: first, the tendency of the tanks to heat up varies with the amount of water and the temperature of the shop air; second, the temperature of the water flowing through the coils varies. So the manufacturer has to hire labor to regularly adjust the valves on the cooling coils.

Since Manufacturer Jones, like any successful business man, is money-hungry, there is a strong probability



that he will perforate an ulcer unless his engineering staff finds a way to drop that "extra" labor from the payroll.

Fortunately for Jones' ulcers, his engineering staff pops up with a quick and easy solution. On each valve they install a small, reversible motor, geared way down. In each tank they place a thermo-couple, which puts out varying currents according to the tank temperature. Now they take the wires from the thermo-couples and run them to control boxes which regulate the valve motors. When the temperature starts to rise, the electronic control starts the motor to open the valve. When the temperature starts to fall, the electronic control starts the motor in the opposite direction to close down the valve . . . and the "extra" workers get their notice.

A simpler but similar device operates the automatic oil-fired central-heating system in a modern home or office-building.

What has been done? Electrical "information" — a quantity of voltage, amperage or phase difference — from

the output (in these cases, temperature) is transmitted to the device regulating the input (in these cases, a source of cooling or heating).

The same problem might be solved *hydraulically*. The engineers at Jones' might have put a ball of fluid in the tank. Assuming that this fluid expanded and contracted in volume fairly rapidly with changes in temperature, they could connect the ball to a spring-loaded valve on the water line, so that when the tank temperature went up the fluid would expand, opening the valve; and when the temperature went down in the tank, the fluid would contract, allowing the spring to force the valve partly closed.

In this kind of solution to Jones' problem, hydraulic "information" about the temperature would have been used to control the device regulating the input.

In either case, this transmission of information about outputs to control devices regulating inputs is called *feedback*. Whether the information is electrical, hydraulic or mechanical, the principle is the same. Many modern computers use all three kinds of information, according to whichever kind is the most efficient and least costly.

Obviously, the same principle can be used to "tie" a reading from a meter, gauge, micrometer, etc., to a small motor or valve on a machine — to make the machine "self-adjusting."

What, then, does a worker do to his machine? He reads a meter, gauge, micrometer, counter or blueprint, takes an order from some central authority — "information" — and adjusts, starts, sets up, stops the machine. The worker, then, represents to the machine a small amount of power used to adjust controls, and a "nervous system" to handle the nerve impulses (information) to control those iron muscles. The worker does not use all his intelligence, but only a very small part of it, to do his job on the machine. (Cf. Marx; *op. cit.*, pp. 461-462.) The factory uses the principle of *feedback*, built into the human being, to control the variable features

of the machine. (Cf. Wiener, *Cybernetics*, 1948, chap. 5.)

Now, by utilizing this principle of feedback in control and computing devices, it is possible to eliminate the production worker from his last function. Naturally, where the job is the most dull and repetitive, the possibility of relatively cheap automation is the greatest. Where a greater amount of skill is involved, it *may* be more expensive to automate.

### Automation vs. Capitalism

It is clear that most workers are threatened with replacement by a machine. The practical question that faces the average factory worker is: How far can capitalism go with automation, and how long will it take them to get to me?

Unquestionably we are going to see a lot of automation in the next few years. Ford's Cleveland engine plant is a clear and unmistakable warning of things to come. A project called "Operation Tinker Toy" threatens to eliminate a large percentage of the workers in the electronics parts manufacturing industries, leaving out the effect of the rate of growth of the electronics production industries. The major tool industries are showing a galloping interest in producing automation equipment, with a growing army of engineer-hucksters peddling the automation-products from door to door in industry. Can Wall Street go all the way to essentially man-less production lines?

We may answer that categorically: *No*.

The Bureau of Standards is now analyzing "Operation Tinker Toy," according to a note in a recent issue of *Electronics*. "Operation Tinker Toy" presents a new method of assembling the components of radio, TV, radar, etc., in a manner suited for automatic production. Here are some of the figures given for the cost of producing 400 units of a certain assembly unit per hour:

Method	Materials	Direct Manufacturing		Total
		Labor	Overhead	
Conventional	\$ 35.85	\$ 5.60	\$ 5.44	\$ 46.89
MDE (hand)	20.56	2.27*	2.27*	28.23
MPE (auto)	20.56	2.83	2.86	26.25

\* Source gives \$2.27 for each — undoubtedly an error. — L. M.

What is the capital investment in each method? *Electronics'* sources do not give figures for conventional methods, but a comparison of MDE (hand) with MPE (auto) gives us the kind of information we seek. MDE requires a capital investment of \$82,000 for a productive capacity of 400 units per hour. MPE requires a capital investment of \$665,000 (sic) for a productive capacity of 405 units per hour. For less than 10 percent decrease in the cost of production, your electronics capitalist must increase his capital investment by over 700 percent!

"Operation Tinker Toy" consists of light operations: dip-soldering, tube-insertion, etc. Now turn to the behemoths of steel and auto production — what fantastic ratios of capital investment are required to automate these giants? Only 8 to 1? We may well doubt it.

In other words, automation means, in the first place, a tremendous increase in constant capital relative to variable capital. Staying on the conservative side, let us assume that it only halves the labor force at only eight times the investment: the effect on the rate of profit becomes starkly clear. (Cf. Marx, op. cit., pp. 444-445.)

How much capital would be required to automate a major part of the U.S. economy? There is no precise estimate available, for obvious reasons; but from the preceding discussion, it is clear that the amount would be "astronomical."

Thus automation presents those sections of the capitalist class lacking sufficient backing to convert to the new process with a potential squeeze many times more severe than similar past developments which sank powerful robber barons in the competitive struggle. Finally, automation signifies a great increase in technological unemployment, and therefore an ultimate narrowing of the market. Since auto-

mation represents the next stage of development in the means of production, we may scratch our heads in vain for a way for capitalism to escape these consequences.

### Need for National Planning

At the present level of productivity, even the mighty U.S. industrial apparatus cannot produce enough wealth to undertake automation at a leap. This holds true for either a capitalist U.S. or a U.S. under a Workers and Farmers Government.

What is possible is the planned achievement of automation through definite stages. Let us arbitrarily call these stages A, B, C, etc. — with stage A representing the amount of automation possible now. By accomplishing stage A we will raise the national productivity to a higher level, which will permit the advance to stage B. Then B will permit C, and so on.

Now, each stage of automation has the characteristic of linking together ever larger areas of the industrial capacity. Stage A might represent the automation of assembly lines within the factory. Stage B might represent the tying together of the whole factory as one automatic machine. Stage C might be the linking of steel mills to iron and coal mines, etc., as one automatic, man-less assembly, and so on.

Obviously, in order to put these assemblies together as one machine, they must be *compatible*. This requires national standardization of equipment, so that parts later to be fitted together will actually fit together. Otherwise, the rate of automation will be slowed down to a snail's pace by the necessity for junking large quantities of useful national wealth and replacing it over and over again, simply because there was no planning.

Automation is going to produce great social changes, whether under capitalism or under a Workers and Farmers Government. Millions of jobs rationalized out of existence mean that workers have to have new jobs, jobs which should be at least as good or better than the jobs they have lost. If national planning is in play, it is feasible to coordinate the wiping out

of old, outdated jobs with the creation of the new jobs which have to be done. Also, as the amount of socially necessary labor decreases, national planning will enable the general reduction of hours with planned increases in "pay."

Again, automation not only wipes out jobs, it wipes out the need for old-style, repetitive factory labor. In place of production workers, we will need an equal or greater number of engineers and scientists. Our whole educational system will be hopelessly outdated by these changes in the means of production. Educational changes must be made so that we may have the skills we need. That is another problem of national planning.

At the level of productivity which automation brings about, the problem of natural resources — already an acute world problem — becomes a major issue. The archaic and wasteful use of coal for fuel, wood for houses and metal for products destined for junk, must be brought to a halt. The thoroughgoing national and international planning of the conservation and replacement of world resources is absolutely essential if we are to survive and raise our standard of living.

### Automatic "Brains"

We have shown that full automation under capitalism is impossible. Some bourgeois sources agree with this conclusion — but for the wrong reasons.

From the Philadelphia engineering offices of Minneapolis-Honeywell, a firm which presumes to know something about control systems, we hear that "push-button" factories are not foreseeable. Minneapolis - Honeywell engineers point out that a computer with an "intelligence" comparable to that of an ant would require a structure the size of the Pentagon building in Washington. They inform us that it would require the amount of power necessary to service a city the size of Philadelphia. Also, they assert, it would require a cooling system equivalent to the flow of the Mississippi River.

How does this analogy apply to the problem of automation? What lies behind their thinking here? It is not only Minneapolis-Honeywell engineers who are laboring under a delusion here; many other major controls manufacturing firms make the same error. Their difficulty arises not from a slip of the slide-rule, but from their abysmal ignorance of capitalism and the vulgar social prejudices which they drag into the engineering laboratory.

### Bourgeois Economics

Marx remarked of the bourgeois political economist:

"... when considering the capitalist mode of production, he... treats the work of control made necessary by the cooperative character of the labor process as identical with the different work of control, necessitated by the character of that process and the antagonism of interests between capitalist and laborer." (Marx, op. cit., pp. 364-365.)

Since engineers learned their little mishmash of economics from third-rate poll-parrots of the same variety, it is not to be wondered that they miss this all-important point. They mistake the class role of the boss for the necessary direction of the productive apparatus:

"It is not because he is a leader of industry that a man is a capitalist; on the contrary, he is a leader of industry because he is a capitalist. The leadership of industry is an attribute of capital. Just as in feudal times the functions of general and judge were attributes of landed property." (Ibid.)

In other words, the Minneapolis-Honeywell engineers implicitly assume that the function of the boss is essential to the means of production. From that they assume that automation requires the imposition of intelligence on the production line from the top down, that automation requires a hierarchy of "capitalist" thinking-machines to replace the existing hierarchy of bosses.

Exactly the contrary is true. The development of the means of production has outdated the capitalist economically and socially. That means we can dispense with the boss and his equivalents altogether.

Let us recall our illustration of Manufacturer Jones' plant. A man was removed from production. Did we replace him with a machine with the equivalent of human intelligence? By no means. A motor, a thermo-couple, and a few wires and tubes did the job quite nicely — even better than the human operator. In principle, we shall have no greater scientific problem in "laying off" the bosses: automation makes them "extra labor." In fact, getting rid of the boss is equivalent to an essential technological improvement in the means of production.

### Lesson from the Ant

Let us take our Minneapolis-Honeywell engineer sluggards to the ant and teach them a few lessons.

The individual ant is not particularly intelligent as insects go; an ant is a muscle-head through and through. However, the ant colony displays a marvelous degree of over-all intelligence. From whence this intelligence? From a super-ant "boss" hidden among his bonds and coupons down in the hill? Not at all. The intelligence of the ant colony is greater than the intelligence of all its members; it is the product of all the ants functioning in a social organism; this intelligence is a *social product*.

The intelligence of the ant colony is derived from the organic evolution of ant colonies, as the intelligence of a human being is a function of matter organized through organic evolution, an effect of natural selection. There is nothing mystical about it; as any dialectician knows, when you put a lot of similar objects together you obtain a whole which is something quite different from its parts. The intelligence of the ant colony does not reflect an average intelligence in each ant, but arises from the particular organization of ants as a whole.

A similar "law" holds when individual workers are put together in a factory. Turning again to Marx:

"When numerous laborers work together side by side, whether in one and the same process, or in different but

connected processes, they are said to cooperate, or to work in cooperation.

"Just as the offensive power of a squadron of cavalry, or the defensive power of a regiment of infantry, is essentially different from the sum of the offensive or defensive powers of the individual cavalry or infantry soldiers taken separately, so the sum total of the mechanical forces exerted by isolated workmen differs from the social force that is developed, when many hands take part simultaneously in one and the same undivided operation, such as raising a heavy weight, turning a winch or removing an obstacle. . . Not only have we here an increase in the productive power of the individual, by means of cooperation, but the creation of a new power, namely, the collective power of masses." (Marx, *op. cit.*, pp. 357-358.)

This may be instanced in the problem-solving power of certain groups of individuals, in relation to the problem-solving power of the same persons working individually. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts; the intelligence of the group is greater than the intelligence of the sum of its members taken separately. We may say that this organization produces a new intelligence, a social intelligence, a social product, which, for lack of a proper term, we may call a "social brain."

### **Social Intelligence**

Needless to say, not all kinds of organizations of human beings produce an efficient increase in social intelligence, just because they seem to be cooperating groups. Fifteen real Bolsheviks, organized as a "problem-solving group" in a Bolshevik organization, generally present more collective social intelligence than a thousand Mensheviks, organized in one of their bleating conventions. This is historical fact, as any candid and intelligent student of history will admit. The source of the difference lies largely in the fact that Bolshevik organization represents a group integrated about the performance of a function, whereas Menshevik organization is linked to the performance of no continuous practical function. The cooperation of workers in the means of production forms them into an efficient problem-solving group, evolving on the basis of its efficacy

in improving productive output. It is for this reason that we place so much justified confidence in Bolshevik organization and in the social intelligence potential of factory workers in cooperative productive groups.

Now, applying these principles to automation, when we "slave" a machine to the output of a standard of production, we have given that machine enough "intelligence" to do its job, and not much more. We don't concern ourselves with the pretty problem of making the machine as "intelligent" as the man it replaces; we merely construct the machine to do the job required.

Let us take the example of several automated machines in a sequence. When machine A does its job on a part, it ejects its finished product, which then goes into B. But what if A begins to outproduce B? B simply doesn't pick up any more parts from A than it can handle. This prevents A from ejecting its parts ahead of schedule — so A has to slow itself down to the proper pace. No boss is needed. By simply putting the machines together in the proper fashion, we have machines which "automatically" solve their problems.

The viewpoint of Minneapolis-Honeywell engineers would not permit this. They would say: "Let's build a computer which will handle this kind of problem, and tell A, in that case, to slow down." What would they do? They would build an analog (the electrical or other equivalent of a working-model of A and B). Now, if A "wished" to step up its production, it would first have to send that information to the computer-boss. The computer would "try out" A's higher output on the scale-models. Then, discovering that B couldn't handle the work, it would tell A to slow down. What has been accomplished? Minneapolis-Honeywell engineers have built a very expensive and by no means fool-proof machine to tell A what B could tell A all along without a computer-boss: Slow down.

You don't have to have computer-bosses to make automation work. A machine is the best working-model of itself that can be built. Once you

have built sufficient information and control networks into the machine for it to do its own job automatically, it is able to transmit, at the same time, any essential information about its performance to other machines — the computer can do no better. Merely by hooking these machines up in the proper way we have made them capable of doing group problem-solving.

The automated factory thus completed has enough "intelligence" to handle all the jobs for which it is constructed. If we discover that this is far less than the intelligence of a human being, that only reveals how much we have been wasting human intelligence under capitalism.

### **Machines Don't Revolt But Workers Do**

Finally, it is important to emphasize the separation of truth from claptrap concerning the "intelligence" of the machine. The capitalist notion of robot "intelligence" springs from a society where capitalist bookkeeping reduces the worker to a cost item along with oil, electricity, tools and raw materials. From the capitalist point of view, the worker is nothing more than he is on the production line, an appendage of the machine. Thus, when the capitalist replaces a worker with a robot, the capitalist assumes that the robot is as intelligent as the worker replaced.

In fact, the intelligence of the worker, as history proves, is of another sort. The worker's intelligence fits him not only for slavery to his master or his master's machine. The worker's intelligence is sufficient to accomplish what no machine has yet threatened to do: topple a whole rotting society and replace it with a new society. In automation we do not reproduce the "intelligence" of a worker; the "intelligence" of our automated machines is less than what the biologist meets under the microscope in that simplest of animals, the amoeba.

What kind of organization of the labor process occurs under automation? It parallels the social organization of a workers' state. This is not an accident. We have reached the

point of historical development where the means of production have outgrown capitalist society. At this point the working class is impelled by the unbearable contradiction between social production and private appropriation to take the leadership of society and reconstruct it along patterns compatible with the new development of the means of production — automation.

Automation, under capitalism, will be distorted, gross and brutal. The falling rate of profit, impelled by the tremendous investments that automation requires, will drive the capitalists to take fresh advantage of competition among the workers over vanishing jobs. For the worker, it means the constant threat of unemployment, destruction of whole sectors of skilled work, and a savage drive to lower the standard of living.

The establishment of a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States, on the other hand, means that automation will be used to lower the average working day and raise the standard of living. Socially, automation under a Workers and Farmers Government will free mankind from degrading slavery to the factory production line, and give humanity the leisure to raise the cultural level to a point which would now seem impossible.

On the international scale, an automated U.S. industrial power will be able to end hunger and poverty on a world scale, to really raise the level of life of colonial peoples to our own level. We shall be able to break down all national boundaries and make a universal reality of that dignity of man which capitalism preaches on Sunday occasions, that dignity of man which capitalism works so mightily to suppress and corrupt 365 days a year.

Since freedom and culture cannot exist in the face of want and exploitation, automation in the hands of the socialist revolution represents the only real solution to the ills of humanity. With that knowledge it cannot be much longer before the workers and farmers of America exert themselves politically to undertake both tasks.

# The Myth of Women's Inferiority

by Evelyn Reed

ONE of the conspicuous features of capitalism, and of class society in general, is the inequality of the sexes. Men are the masters in economic, cultural, political and intellectual life, while women play a subordinate and even submissive role. Only in recent years have women come out of the kitchens and nurseries to challenge men's monopoly. But the essential inequality still remains.

This inequality of the sexes has marked class society from its very inception several thousand years ago, and has persisted throughout its three main stages: chattel slavery, feudalism and capitalism. For this reason class society is aptly characterized as male-dominated. This domination has been upheld and perpetuated by the system of private property, the state, the church and the form of family that served men's interests.

On the basis of this historical situation, certain false claims regarding the social superiority of the male sex have been propagated. It is often set forth as an immutable axiom that men are *socially* superior because they are *naturally* superior. Male supremacy, according to this myth, is not a social phenomenon at a particular stage of history, but a natural law. Men, it is claimed, are endowed by nature with superior physical and mental attributes.

An equivalent myth about women has been propagated to support this claim. It is set forth as an equally immutable axiom that women are *socially* inferior because they are *naturally* inferior to men. And what is the proof? They are the mothers! Nature, it is claimed, has condemned the female sex to an inferior status.

This is a falsification of natural and social history. It is not nature, but class society, which lowered women and elevated men. Men won their social supremacy in struggle against and conquest over the women. But this sexual struggle was part and parcel of a great social struggle — the overturn of primitive society and the institution of class society. Women's inferiority is the product of a social system which has produced and fostered innumerable other inequalities, inferiorities, discriminations and degradations. But this social history has been concealed behind the myth that women are naturally inferior to men.

It is not nature, but class society, which robbed women of their right to participate in the higher functions of society and placed the primary emphasis upon their animal functions of maternity. And this robbery was perpetrated through a two-fold myth. On the one side, motherhood is represented as a biological affliction arising out of the maternal organs of women. Alongside this vulgar materialism, motherhood is represented as being something almost mystical. To console women for their status as second-class citizens, mothers are sanctified, endowed with halos and blessed with special "instincts," feelings and knowledge forever beyond the comprehension of men. Sanctity and degradation are simply two sides of the same coin of the social robbery of women under class society.

But class society did not always exist; it is only a few thousand years old. Men were not always the superior sex, for they were not always the in-

dustrial, intellectual and cultural leaders. Quite the contrary. In primitive society, where women were neither sanctified nor degraded, it was the women who were the social and cultural leaders.

Primitive society was organized as a matriarchy which, as indicated by its very name, was a system where women, not men, were the leaders and organizers. But the distinction between the two social systems goes beyond this reversal of the leadership role of the two sexes. The leadership of women in primitive society was not founded upon the dispossession of the men. On the contrary, primitive society knew no social inequalities, inferiorities or discriminations of any kind. Primitive society was completely equalitarian. In fact, it was through the leadership of the women that the men were brought forward out of a more backward condition into a higher social and cultural role.

In this early society maternity, far from being an affliction or a badge of inferiority, was regarded as a great natural endowment. Motherhood invested women with power and prestige — and there were very good reasons for this.

Humanity arose out of the animal kingdom. Nature had endowed only one of the sexes — the female sex — with the organs and functions of maternity. This biological endowment provided the natural bridge to humanity, as Robert Briffault has amply demonstrated in his work *The Mothers*. It was the female of the species who had the care and responsibility of feeding, tending and protecting the young.

However, as Marx and Engels have demonstrated, all societies both past and present are founded upon labor. Thus, it was not simply the capacity of women to give birth that played the decisive role, for all female animals also give birth. What was decisive for the human species was the fact that maternity led to labor — and it was in the fusion of maternity and labor that the first human social system was founded.

It was the mothers who first took the road of labor, and by the same token blazed the trail toward humanity. It was the mothers who became the chief producers; the workers and farmers; the leaders in scientific, intellectual and cultural life. And they became all this precisely because they were the mothers, and in the beginning maternity was fused with labor. This fusion still remains in the languages of primitive peoples, where the term for "mother" is identical with "producer-procreatrix."

We do not draw the conclusion from this that women are thereby naturally the superior sex. Each sex arose out of natural evolution, and each played its specific and indispensable role. However, if we use the same yardstick for women of the past as is used for men today — social leadership — then we must say that women were the leaders in society long before men, and for a far longer stretch of time.

Our aim in this presentation is to destroy once and for all the myth perpetuated by class society that women are naturally or innately inferior. The most effective way to demonstrate this is to first of all set down in detail the labor record of primitive women.

### Control of the Food Supply

The quest for food is the most compelling concern of any society, for no higher forms of labor are possible unless and until people are fed. Whereas animals live on a day-to-day basis of food-hunting, humanity had to win some measure of con-

trol over its food supply if it was to move forward and develop. Control means not only sufficient food for today but a surplus for tomorrow, and the ability to preserve stocks for future use.

From this standpoint, human history can be divided into two main epochs: the food-gathering epoch, which extended over hundreds of thousands of years; and the food-producing epoch, which began with the invention of agriculture and stockbreeding, not much more than 8,000-10,000 years ago.

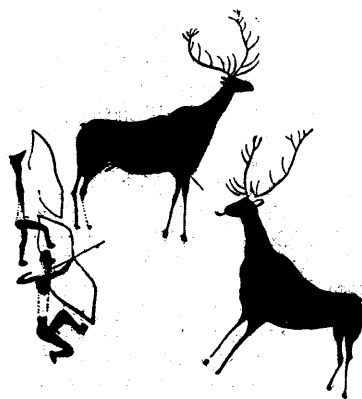
In the food-gathering epoch the first division of labor was very simple. It is generally described as a sexual division, or division of labor between the female and male sexes. (Children contributed their share as soon as they were old enough, the girls being trained in female occupations and the boys in male occupations.) The nature of this division of labor was a differentiation between the sexes in the methods and kinds of food-gathering. Men were the hunters of big game — a full-time occupation which took them away from home or camp for longer or shorter periods of time. Women were the collectors of vegetable products around the camp or dwelling places.

Now it must be understood that, with the exception of a few specialized areas in the world at certain historical stages, the most reliable sources for food supplies were not animal (supplied by the man) but vegetable (supplied by the women.) As Otis Tufton Mason writes:

"Wherever tribes of mankind have gone, women have found out that great staple productions were to be their chief reliance. In Polynesia it is taro, or breadfruit. In Africa it is the palm and tapioca, millet or yams. In Asia it is rice. In Europe cereals. In America corn and potatoes or acorns and pinions in some places." (*Woman's Share in Primitive Culture*.)

Alexander Goldenweiser makes the same point:

"Everywhere the sustenance of this part of the household is more regularly and reliably provided by the efforts of the home-bound woman than by those of her roving hunter husband or son.



HUNTING SCENE  
Stone Age Painting



It is, in fact, a familiar spectacle among all primitive peoples that the man, returning home from a more or less arduous chase, may yet reach home empty-handed and himself longing for food. Under such conditions, the vegetable supply of the family has to serve his needs as well as those of the rest of the household." (*Anthropology*.)

Thus the most reliable supplies of food were provided by the women collectors, not the men hunters.

But women were also hunters — hunters of what is known as slow game and small game. In addition to digging up roots, tubers, plants, etc., they collected grubs, bugs, lizards, molluscs and small animals such as hares, marsupials, etc. This activity of the women was of decisive importance. For much of this small game was brought back to the camp alive, and these animals provided the basis for the first experience and experiments in animal taming and domestication.

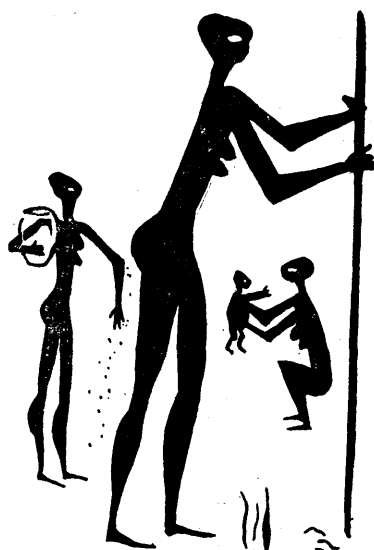
Thus it was in the hands of women that the all-important techniques of animal domestication began, which were ultimately climaxed in stock-breeding. And this domestication had its roots in maternity. On this score, Mason writes:

"Now the first domestication is simply the adoption of helpless infancy. The young kid or lamb or calf is brought to the home of the hunter. It is fed and caressed by the mother and her children, and even nourished at her breast. Innumerable references might be given to her caging and taming of wild creatures . . . Women were always associated especially with the milk and fleece-giving species of domestic animals." (*Ibid.*)

While one aspect of women's food-gathering activity was thus leading to the discovery of animal domestication, another aspect was leading to the discovery of agriculture. This was women's labor in plying their digging-sticks — one of the earliest tools of humanity — to procure food from the ground. To this day, in some backward areas of the world, the digging-stick remains as inseparable a part of the woman as her baby. When the Shoshone Indians of Nevada and Wyoming, for example, were discovered, they were called

"The Diggers" by the white men, because they still employed this technique in securing food supplies.

And it was through this digging-stick activity that women ultimately



THE DIGGING-STICK

discovered agriculture. Sir James Frazer gives a good description of this process in its earliest stages. Using the natives of Central Victoria, Australia, as an example, he writes:

"The implement which they used to dig roots with was a pole seven or eight feet long, hardened in the fire and pointed at the end, which also served them as a weapon of offense and defense. Here we may detect some of the steps by which they advanced from digging to systematic cultivation of the soil.

"The long stick is driven firmly into the ground, where it is shaken so as to loosen the earth, which is scooped up and thrown out with the fingers of the left hand and in this manner they dig with great rapidity. But the labor in proportion to the amount gained, is great. To get a yam about half an inch in circumference, they have to dig a hole about a foot square, and two feet in depth. A considerable portion of the time of the women and children is therefore passed in this employment.

"In fertile districts, where the yams grow abundantly, the ground may be riddled with holes; literally perforated with them. The effect of digging up the earth in the search for roots and yams has been to enrich and fertilize the soil, and so to increase the crop of roots and herbs. Wincrowing of the seeds on the ground which has thus been turned up with the digging sticks would naturally contribute to the same result.

It is certain that wincrowing seeds, where the wind carried some of the seeds away, bore fruit." (*The Golden Bough*.)

In the course of time, the women learned how to aid nature by weeding out the garden patches and protecting the growing plants. And finally, they learned how to plant seeds and wait for them to grow. On this, A. S. Dimond writes:

"Some of the food-gatherers discovered, for example, that the crowns of yams, after removal of the tubers for eating, would grow again when put back into the earth. Once the technique was learned for one plant or root or grain, it could be extended to others. In the process of cultivation, not only was quantity assured, but the quality began to improve." (*The Evolution of Law and Order*.)

Not only were quantity and quality improved, but a whole series of new species of plants and vegetables were brought into existence. According to Chapple & Coon:

"Through cultivation, the selective process had produced many new species or profoundly altered the character of the old. In Melanesia people grow yams six feet long and a foot or more thick. The miserable roots which the Australian digs wild from the ground is no more voluminous than a cigar." (*Principles of Anthropology*.)

Mason sums up the steps taken in agriculture as follows:

"The evolution of primitive agriculture was first through seeking after vegetables, to moving near them, weeding them out, sowing the seed, cultivating them by hand, and finally the use of farm animals." (*Op. cit.*)

According to Gordon Childe, every single food plant of any importance, as well as other plants such as flax and cotton, was discovered by the women in the pre-civilized epoch. (*What Happened in History*.)

The discovery of agriculture and the domestication of animals made it possible for mankind to pass beyond the food-gathering epoch into the food-producing epoch, and this combination represented humanity's first conquest over its food supplies. This conquest was achieved by the women. The great Agricultural Revolution, which provided the food for beast

as well as man, was the crowning achievement of women's labor in plying their digging-sticks.

To gain control of the food supply, however, meant more than simply relying upon nature and its fertility. It required, above all, woman's reliance upon her own labor, her own learning and her own capacities for innovation and invention. Women had to find out all the particular methods of cultivation appropriate to each species of plant or grain. They had to acquire the techniques of threshing, winnowing, grinding, etc., and invent all the special tools and implements necessary for tilling the soil, reaping and storing the crop, and then converting it into food.

In other words, the struggle to win control over the food supply not only resulted in a development of agriculture, but also led to working out the first essentials in manufacturing and science. As Mason writes:

"The whole industrial life of woman was built up around the food supplies. From the first journey on foot to procure the raw materials until the food is served and eaten, there is a line of trades that are continuous and born of the environment." (Op. cit.)

### Women in Industry, Science and Medicine

The first division of labor between the sexes is often described in a simplified and misleading formula. The men, it is said, were the hunters and warriors; while the women stayed in the camp or dwelling house, raised the children, cooked and did everything else. This description has given rise to the notion that the primitive household was simply a more primitive counterpart of the modern home. While the men were providing all the necessities of society, the women were merely puttering around in the kitchens and nurseries. Such a concept is a gross distortion of the facts.

Aside from the differentiation in food-getting, there was virtually no division of labor between the sexes in all the higher forms of production — for the simple reason that the whole industrial life of primitive society was lodged in the hands of the

women. Cooking, for example, was not cooking as we know it in the modern individual home. Cooking was only one technique which women acquired as the result of the discovery and control of fire and their mastery of directed heat.

### Uses of Fire

All animals in nature fear fire and flee from it. Yet the discovery of fire dates back at least half a million years ago, before humanity became fully human. Regarding this major conquest, Gordon Childe writes:

"In mastery of fire man was controlling a mighty physical force and a conspicuous chemical change. For the first time in history a creature of Nature was directing one of the great forces of Nature. And the exercise of power must react upon the controller. . . . In feeding and damping down the fire, in transporting and using it, man made a revolutionary departure from the behavior of other animals. He was asserting his humanity and making himself." (Man Makes Himself.)

All the basic cooking techniques which followed upon the discovery of fire — broiling, boiling, roasting, baking, steaming, etc. — were developed by the women. These techniques involved a continuous experimentation with the properties of fire and directed heat. It was in this experimentation that women developed the techniques of preserving and conserving food for future use. Through the application of fire and heat, women dried and preserved both animal and vegetable food for future needs.

But fire represented much more than this. Fire was the tool of tools in primitive society; it can be equated to the control and use of electricity or even atomic energy in modern society. And it was the women, who developed all the early industries, who likewise uncovered the uses of fire as a tool in their industries.

The first industrial life of women centered around the food supply. Preparing, conserving and preserving food required the invention of all the necessary collateral equipment: containers, utensils, ovens, storage houses, etc. The women were the builders of the first caches, granaries and store-

houses for the provisions. Some of these granaries they dug in the ground and lined with straw. On wet, marshy ground they constructed storehouses on poles above the ground. The need to protect the food in granaries from vermin resulted in the domestication of another animal — the cat. Mason writes:

"In this role of inventing the granary and protecting food from vermin, the world has to thank women for the domestication of the cat . . . Woman tamed the wild cat for the protection of her granaries." (Op. cit.)

It was the women, too, who separated out poisonous and injurious substances in foods. In the process, they often used directed heat to turn what was inedible in the natural state into a new food supply. To quote Mason again:

"There are in many lands plants which in the natural state are poisonous or extremely acrid or pungent. The women of these lands have all discovered independently that boiling or heating drives off the poisonous or disagreeable element." (Ibid.)

Manioc, for example, is poisonous in its natural state. But the women converted this plant into a staple food supply through a complicated process of squeezing out its poisonous properties in a basketry press and driving out its residue by heating.

Many inedible plants and substances were put to use by the women in their industrial processes, or converted into medicines. Dr. Dan McKenzie lists hundreds of homeopathic remedies discovered by primitive women through their intimate knowledge of plant life. Some of these are still in use without alteration; others have been only slightly improved upon. Among these are important substances used for their narcotic properties. (*The Infancy of Medicine*.)

Women discovered, for example, the properties of pine tar and turpentine; and of chaulmoogra oil, which today is a remedy for leprosy. They invented homeopathic remedies from acacia, alcohol, almond, asafoetida, balsam, betel, caffeine, camphor, caraway, digitalis, gum, barley water, lavender, linseed, parsley, pep-

pers, pomegranate, poppy, rhubarb, senega, sugar, wormwood, and hundreds more. Depending upon where the natural substances were found, these inventions come from South America, Africa, North America, China, Europe, Egypt, etc.

The women converted animal substances as well as vegetable substances into remedies. For example, they converted snake venom into a serum to be used against snake bites (an equivalent preparation made today from snake venom is known as "antivene").

In the industries connected with the food supply, vessels and containers of all types were required for holding, carrying, cooking and storing food, as well as for serving food and drink. Depending upon the natural environment, these vessels were made of wood, bark, skin, pleated fibers, leather, etc. Ultimately women discovered the technique of making pots out of clay.

Fire was used as a tool in the making of wooden vessels. Mason gives a description of this technique; and it can be easily understood how the same technique was extended to the manufacture of the first canoes and other sailing craft:

"They burned out the hollow part, keeping the fire carefully checked and controlled. Then these marvelous Jills-at-all-trades removed the fire and brushed out the debris with improvised brooms of grass. By means of a scraper of flint which she had made, she dug away the charcoal until she had exposed a clean surface of wood. The firing and scraping were repeated until the dugout assumed the required form. The trough completed, it was ready to do the boiling for the family as soon as the meat could be prepared and the stones heated." (Op. cit.)

In this remarkable conversion, a substance, wood, which is ordinarily consumed by fire, was fashioned into a vessel for cooking food over fire.

The industries of women, which arose out of the struggle to control the food supply, soon passed beyond this limited range. As one need was satisfied, new needs arose, and these in turn were satisfied in a rising spiral of new needs and new products. And it was in this production of new needs

as well as new products that women laid down the foundation for the highest culture to come.

Science arose side by side with the industry of women. Gordon Childe points out that to convert flour into bread requires a whole series of collateral inventions, and also a knowledge of bio-chemistry and the use of the micro-organism, yeast. The same knowledge of bio-chemistry which produced bread likewise produced the first fermented liquors. Women, Childe states, must also be credited with the chemistry of potmaking, the physics of spinning, the mechanics of the loom and the botany of flax and cotton.

### From Cordage to Textiles

Cordage may appear to be a very humble trade, but cordage weaving was simply the beginning of a whole chain of industries which culminated in a great textile industry. Even the making of cordage requires not only manual skill, but a knowledge of selecting, treating and manipulating the materials used. Chapple & Coon write:

"All known peoples make some use of cordage, whether it is for binding haftings on implements, making rabbit nets and string bags, or tying ornaments around their necks. Where skins are used most, as among the Eskimo, this cordage may consist mostly of thongs cut from hides and animals sinews; people who use few skins and live in forests, use vegetable fibers, such as rattan, hibiscus, fiber and and spruce roots, where no secondary treatment is necessary to make them serviceable. Other fibers are short, and must be twisted together into a continuous cord or thread." (Op. cit.)

Out of the technique of weaving, there arose the basket industry. Depending upon the locality, these baskets were made of bark, grass, bast, skins, roots. Some were woven, other types were sewed. The variety of baskets and other woven articles is enormous. Robert H. Lowie lists some of these as follows: burden baskets, water bottles, shallow bowls, parching trays, shields (in the Congo), caps and cradles (in California), fans, knapsacks, mats, satchels, boxes, fish-creels, etc. Some of the baskets are so tightly woven that they are water-

proof and used for cooking and storage. (*An Introduction to Social Anthropology.*) Some, writes Briffault, are so fine that they cannot be duplicated by modern machinery:

"The weaving of bark and grass fibers by primitive woman is often so marvelous that it could not be imitated by man at the present day, even with the resources of machinery. The so-called Panama hats, the best of which can be crushed and passed through a finger ring, are a familiar example." (The Mothers.)

In this industry, women utilized whatever resources nature placed at their disposal. In areas where the coconut is found, a superior cordage is made from the fibers of the husk. In the Philippines, an inedible species of banana furnished the famous manila hemp for cordage and weaving. In Polynesia, the paper mulberry tree was cultivated for its bark; after the bark was beaten out by the women, it was made into cloth, and from this cloth they made shirts for men and women, bags, straps, etc.

The textile industry emerged with the great Agricultural Revolution. In this complex industry there is a fusion of the techniques learned by the women in both agriculture and industry. As Gordon Childe writes:

"A textile industry not only requires the knowledge of special substances like flax, cotton and wool, but also the breeding of special animals and the cultivation of particular plants." (Man Makes Himself.)

A textile industry, moreover, requires a high degree of mechanical and technical skill, and a whole series of collateral inventions. For such an industry to develop, Childe continues,

". . . another complex of discoveries and inventions is requisite, a further body of scientific knowledge must be practically applied . . . Among the pre-requisite inventions, a device for spinning is important . . . most essential is a loom.

"Now a loom is quite an elaborate piece of machinery — much too complicated to be described here. Its use is no less complicated. The invention of the loom was one of the great triumphs of human ingenuity. Its inventors are nameless, but they made an essential contribution to the capital stock of human knowledge." (Ibid.)

Hunting, apart from its value in augmenting the food supply, was an extremely important factor in human development. In the organized hunt, men had to collaborate with other men, a feature unknown in the animal world where competitive struggle is the rule. On this point, Chapple & Coon state:

"Hunting is fine exercise for body and brain. It stimulates and may have 'selected for' the qualities of self-control, cooperation, tempered aggressiveness, ingenuity and inventiveness, and a high degree of manual dexterity. Mankind could have gone through no better school in its formative period." (Op. cit.)

### Leather Makers

However, because hunting was man's work, historians are prone to glorify it beyond its specific limits. While the men, to be sure, contributed to the food supply by their hunting, it was women's hands that prepared and conserved the food, and utilized the by-products of the animals in their industries. It was the women who developed the techniques of tanning and preserving skins, and who founded the great leather-making industries.

Leather-making is a long, difficult and complicated process. Lowie describes the earliest form of this type of labor as it is still practiced by the Ona women of Tierra del Fuego. When the hunters have brought back a guanaco hide, the woman, he tells us,

". . . kneels on the stiff rawhide and laboriously scrapes off the fatty tissue and the transparent layer below it with her quartz blade. After a while she kneads the skin piecemeal with her fists, going over the whole surface repeatedly and often bringing her teeth into play until it is softened. If the hair is to be taken off, that is done with the same scraper." (Op. cit.)

The scraper that Lowie speaks about is, along with the digging-stick, one of the two most ancient tools of humanity. Side by side with the wooden digging-stick that was used in vegetable collecting and later in agriculture, there evolved the chipped stone, scraper, or "fist-axe" used in manufacturing. On this subject Briffault writes:

"The 'scrapers' which form so large a proportion of prehistoric tools were used and made by women . . . Much controversy took place as to the possible use of these scrapers. The fact that went farthest toward silencing skepticism was that the Eskimo women at the present day use instruments identical with those their European sisters left in such abundance in the drift gravels of the Ice Age.

"The scrapers and knives of the Eskimo women are often elaborately and even artistically mounted on handles of bone. In South Africa the country is strewn with scrapers identical with those of Paleolithic Europe . . . From the testimony of persons intimately acquainted with the Bushmen, these implements were manufactured by the women." (Op. cit.)

Mason corroborates this:

"Scrapers are the oldest implements of any craft in the world. The Indian women of Montana still receive their trade from their mothers, and they in turn were taught by theirs — an unbroken succession since the birth of the human species." (Op. cit.)

### Tanning

But leather-making, like most other trades, required more than manual labor. Women had to learn the secrets of chemistry in this trade too, and in the process of their labor they learned how to use one substance to effect a transformation in another substance.

Tanning is essentially a chemical alteration in the raw hide. Among the Eskimos, writes Lowie, this chemical change is achieved by steeping the skins in a basin of urine. In North America, the Indian women used the brains of animals in a special preparation, in which the skin was soaked and the chemical alteration thus achieved. True tanning, however, requires the use of oak bark or some other vegetable substance containing tannic acid. As part of the process of leather-making, the women smoked the leather over a smouldering fire. The shields of the North American Indians were so tough that they were not only arrow-proof, but sometimes even bullet-proof.

Leather products cover as vast a range as basketry. Lowie lists some of the uses of leather: Asiatic nomads

used it for bottles; East Africans for shields and clothing; among the North American Indians, it was used for robes, shirts, dresses, leggings, moccasins. The latter also used leather for their tents, cradles and shields. They stored smoking outfits and sundries in buckskin pouches, and preserved meat in rawhide cases. The elaborate assortment of leather products made by the North American Indian women never ceases to excite the admiration of visitors to the museums in which they are collected.

Briffault points out that women had to know in advance the nature of the particular hide they were preparing, and to decide in advance the type of product for which it was best suited:

"It varies infinitely according to the use for which the leather is intended; pliable skins smoothed out to a uniform thickness and retaining the layer to which the hair is attached; hard hides for tents, shields, canoes, boots; thin, soft washable leather for clothing. All these require special technical processes which primitive woman has elaborated." (Op. cit.)

Mason writes:

"On the American continent alone, women skin dressers knew how to cure and manufacture hides of cats, wolves, foxes, all the numerous skunk family, bears, coons, seals, walrus, buffalo, musk ox, goats, sheep, antelopes, moose, deer, elk, beaver, hares, opossum, muskrat, crocodile, tortoise, birds, and innumerable fishes and reptiles.

"If aught in the heavens above, or on earth beneath, or in the waters wore a skin, savage women were found on examination, to have a name for it and to have succeeded in turning it into its primitive use for human clothing, and to have invented new uses for it undreamed of by its original owner." (Op. cit.)

### Pot-Makers and Artists

Pot-making, unlike many of the other industries of women, entailed the creation of entirely new substances which do not exist ready-made in nature. On this point Gordon Childe writes:

"Pot-making is perhaps the earliest conscious utilization by man of a chemical change . . . The essence of the potter's craft is that she can mold a piece of clay into any shape she de-

sires and then give that shape permanence by 'firing' (i.e., heating to over 600 degrees C.) To early man this change in the quality of the material must have seemed a sort of magic transubstantiation — the conversion of mud or dust into stone . . .

"The discovery of pottery consisted essentially in finding out how to control and utilize the chemical change just mentioned. But, like all other discoveries, its practical application involves others. To be able to mold your clay you must wet it; but if you put your damp plastic pot straight into the fire, it will crack. The water, added to the clay to make it plastic, must be dried out gently in the sun or near the fire, before the vessel can be baked. Again, the clay has to be selected and prepared . . . some process of washing must be devised to eliminate coarse material . . .

"In the process of firing the clay changes not only its physical consistency, but also its color. Man had to learn to control such changes as these and to utilize them to enhance the beauty of the vessel . . .

"Thus the potter's craft, even in its crudest and most generalized form, was already complex. It involved an appreciation of a number of distinct processes, the application of a whole constellation of discoveries . . . Building up a pot was a supreme instance of creation by man." (*Man Makes Himself.*)

Indeed, primitive woman, as the first potter, took the dust of the earth



INDIAN POTTERY

and fashioned a new world of industrial products out of clay.

Decorative art developed side by side with all of these industries in the hands of the women. Art grew out of labor. As Lowie writes:

"A basket-maker unintentionally becomes a decorator, but as soon as the patterns strike the eye, they may be sought deliberately. The coiling of a basket may suggest a spiral, twining the guilloche, etc. What is more, when these geometrical figures have once been grasped as decorative, they need

not remain riveted to the craft in which they arose. A potter may paint a twilled design on his vase, a carver may imitate it on his wooden goblet." (*Op. cit.*)

The leather products of women are remarkable not only for their efficiency but also for the beauty of their decorations. And when women reached the stage of cloth-making, they wove fine designs into the cloth, and invented dyes and the techniques of dyeing.

### Architect and Engineer

Perhaps the least known activity of primitive women is their work in construction, architecture and engineering. Briffault writes:

"We are no more accustomed to think of the building art and of architecture than of boot-making or the manufacture of earthenware as feminine occupations. Yet the huts of the Australian, of the Andaman Islanders, of the Patagonians, of the Botocudos; the rough shelters of the Seri, the skin lodges and wigwams of the American Indian, the black camel-hair tent of the Bedouin, the 'yurta' of the nomads of Central Asia all are the exclusive work and special care of the women.

"Sometimes these more or less movable dwellings are extremely elaborate. The 'yurta' for example is sometimes a capacious house, built on a framework of poles, pitched in a circle and strengthened by a trellis-work of wooden patterns, the whole being covered with a thick felt, forming a dome-like structure. The interior is divided into several compartments. With the exception of the wood, all its component parts are the product of the Turkoman woman, who busies herself with the construction and the putting together of the various parts.

"The 'pueblos' of New Mexico and Arizona recall the picturesque sky-line of an oriental town; clusters of many-storied houses rise in terraced tiers, the flat roof of one serving as a terrace for that above. The upper stories are reached by ladders or by outside stairs, and the walls are ornamental crenellated battlements . . . courtyards and piazzas, streets, and curious public buildings that serve as clubs and temples . . . as their innumerable ruins testify." (*Op. cit.*)

The Spanish priests who settled among the Pueblo Indians were astonished at the beauty of the churches and convents that these women built

for them. They wrote back to their European countrymen:

"No man has ever set his hand to the erection of a house . . . These buildings have been erected solely by the women, the girls, and the young men of the mission; for among these people it is the custom that the women build the houses." (Quoted by Briffault, *op. cit.*)

Under the influence of the missionaries, men began to share in this labor, but their first efforts were greeted with hilarity by their own people. As one Spanish priest wrote:

"The poor embarrassed wretch was surrounded by a jeering crowd of women and children, who mocked and laughed, and thought it the most ludicrous thing they had seen — that a man should be engaged in building a house!" (*Ibid.*)

Today, just the opposite is laughed at — that women should engage in the building and engineering trades!

### On Women's Backs

Women were not only the skilled workers of primitive society. They were also the haulers and drayers of goods and equipment. Before domesticated animals released women from part of their loads, it was on their backs that primitive transportation was effected. They conveyed not only the raw materials used in their industries, but entire households of goods being moved from one place to another.

On every migration — and these were frequent before settled village life developed — it was the women who took down the tents, wigwams or huts, and put them up again. It was the women who transported the loads, along with their babies, from one settlement or camp to another. And in everyday life, it was the women who carried the heavy loads of firewood, water, food and other necessities.

Even today, the women among the Ona tribes of Tierra del Fuego, as Chapple & Coon point out, carry loads of well over 100 pounds when they change camp sites. Of the Aki-kuyus of East Africa, the Routledges write that men were unable to lift loads of more than 40 to 60 pounds,

while the women carried 100 pounds or more:

"When a man states: 'This is a very heavy load, it is fit to be carried by a woman, not a man,' he is only stating a fact." (W. Scoresby and Katherine Routledge, *With a Prehistoric People*.)

Regarding this aspect of women's work, Mason writes:

"From woman's back to the car and stately ship is the history of that greatest of all arts which first sent our race exploring and processing the whole earth . . . I do not wonder that the ship-carpenter carves the head of a woman on the prow of his vessel, nor that locomotives should be addressed as she." (Op. cit.)

Does all this extensive labor activity mean that women were oppressed, exploited and ground down, according to our modern notions? Not at all. Quite the reverse was true. On this score, Briffault writes:

"The fanciful opinion that women are oppressed in savage societies was partly due to the complacency of civilized man, and partly to the fact that the women are seen to work hard. Wherever women were seen engaged in laborious toil, their status was judged to be one of slavery and oppression. No misunderstanding could be more profound . . .

"The primitive woman is independent because, not in spite of her labor. Generally speaking, it is in those societies where women toil most that their status is most independent and their influence greatest; where they are idle, and the work is done by slaves, the women are, as a rule, little more than sexual slaves . . .

"No labor of any kind is, in primitive society, other than voluntary, and no toil is ever undertaken by the women in obedience to an arbitrary order . . .

"Referring to the Zulu women, a missionary writes: 'Whoever has observed the happy appearance of the women at their work and toil, their gaiety and chatter, their laughter and song . . . let him compare with them the bearing of our own working women.'" (Op. cit.)

It is not labor, but exploited and forced labor, that is galling to the human being.

When women began their labor, they had no one to teach them. They had to learn everything the hard way — through their own courage and persistent efforts. Some of the first hints they probably took from nature itself. Mason writes:

"Women were instructed by the spiders, the nest-builders, the storers of food and the workers in clay like the mud-wasps and termites. It is not meant that these creatures set up schools to teach dull women how to work; but that their quick minds were on the alert for hints coming from these sources . . . It is in the apotheosis of industrialism that woman has borne her part so persistently and well. At the very beginning of human time she laid down the lines of her duties, and she has kept to them unremittingly." (Op. cit.)

### The First Collective

But because women began their labor in so humble a fashion, many historians have presented women's industries as merely "household crafts" or "handicrafts." The fact is that before machines were developed there was no other kind of craft than hand craft. Before specialized factories were developed in the towns and cities, there was no other factory but the "household." Without these households and their handicrafts, the great guilds of the Middle Ages could not have come into existence. Nor, indeed, could the whole modern world of mechanized farms and streamlined industries have come into existence.

When women began their labor they pulled mankind out of the animal kingdom. They were the initiators of labor and the originators of industry — the prime mover that lifted humanity out of the ape-like state. And side by side with their labor there arose speech. As Engels points out:

"The development of labor necessarily helped to bring the members of society closer together by multiplying cases of mutual support and joint activity . . . the origin of language from and in the process of labor is the only correct one . . . First comes labor, after it and then side by side with it, articulate speech." (The Part Played by Labor in the Transition from Ape to Man.)

While men undoubtedly developed some speech in connection with the organized hunt, the decisive development of language arose out of the labor activity of the women. As Mason writes:

"Woman, having the whole round of industrial arts on their minds all day and every day, must be held to have invented and fixed the language of the

same. Dr. Brinton, in a private letter, says that in most early languages not only is there a series of expressions belonging to the women, but in various places we find a language belonging to the women quite apart from that of the men.

"Savage men in hunting and fishing are kept alone, and have to be quiet, hence their taciturnity. But women are together and chatter all day long. Apart from the centers of culture, women are still the best dictionaries, talkers and letter writers." (Op. cit.)

What labor and speech represented, first of all and above everything else, was the birth of the human collective. Animals are obliged, by nature's laws, to remain in individualistic competition with one another. But the women, through labor, displaced nature's relationships and instituted the new, human relationships of the labor collective.

### "Household" the Community

The primitive "household" was the whole community. In place of individualism, social collectivity was the mode of existence. In this respect, Gordon Childe writes:

"The neolithic crafts have been presented as household industries. Yet the craft traditions are not individual, but collective traditions. The experience and wisdom of all the community's members are constantly being pooled . . . It is handed on from parent to child by example and precept. The daughter helps her mother at making pots, watches her closely, imitates her, and receives from her lips oral directions, warnings and advice. The applied sciences of neolithic times were handed on by what today we should call a system of apprenticeship . . .

"In a modern African village, the housewife does not retire into seclusion in order to build up and fire her pots. All the women of the village work together, chatting and comparing notes; they even help one another. The occupation is public, its rules are the result of communal experience . . . And the neolithic economy as a whole cannot exist without cooperative effort." (Man Makes Himself.)

Thus the crowning achievement of women's labor was the building and consolidation of the first great human collective. In displacing animal individualism with collective life and labor, they placed an unbridgeable

gulf between human society and the animal kingdom. They won the first great conquest of mankind — the humanizing and socializing of the animal.

It was in and through this great work that women became the first workers and farmers; the first scientists, doctors, architects, engineers; the first teachers and educators, nurses, artists, historians and transmitters of social and cultural heritage. The households they managed were not simply the collective kitchens and sewing rooms; they were also the first factories, scientific laboratories, medical centers, schools and social centers. The power and prestige of women, which arose out of their maternal functions, were climaxed in the glorious record of their socially useful labor activity.

### Emancipation of the Men

So long as hunting was an indispensable full-time occupation, it relegated men to a backward existence. Hunting trips removed men for extended periods of time from the community centers and from participation in the higher forms of labor.

The discovery of agriculture by the women, and their domestication of cattle and other large animals, brought about the emancipation of the men from their hunting life. Hunting was then reduced to a sport, and men were freed for education and training in the industrial and cultural life of the communities. Through the increase in food supplies, populations grew. Nomadic camp sites were transformed into settled village centers, later evolving into towns and cities.

In the first period of their emancipation, the work of the men, compared with that of the women, was, quite naturally, unskilled labor. They cleared away the brush and prepared the ground for cultivation by the women. They felled trees, and furnished the timber for construction work. Only later did they begin to take over the work of construction — just as they also took over the care and breeding of livestock.

But, unlike the women, the men

did not have to start from first beginnings. In a short time, they began not only to learn all the skilled crafts of the women but to make vast improvements in tools, equipment and technology. They initiated a whole series of new inventions and innovations. Agriculture took a great step forward with the invention of the plough and the use of domesticated animals.

For a fragment of time, historically speaking, and flowing out of the emancipation of the men from hunting, the division of labor between the sexes became a reality. Together, men and women furthered the abundance of food and products, and consolidated the first settled villages.

But the Agricultural Revolution, brought about by the women, marks the dividing line between the food-gathering and food-producing epochs. By the same token, it marks the dividing line between Savagery and Civilization. Still further, it marks the emergence of a new social system and a reversal in the economic and social leadership role of the sexes.

The new conditions, which began with food abundance for mounting populations, released a new productive force, and with it, new productive relations. The old division of labor between the sexes was displaced by a new series of social divisions of labor. Agricultural labor became separated from urban industrial labor; skilled labor from unskilled. And women's labor was gradually taken over by the men.

With the potter's wheel, for example, men specialists took over pot-making from the women. As Childe writes:

"Ethnography shows that potters who use the wheel are normally male specialists, no longer women, for whom potting is just a household task like cooking and spinning." (What Happened in History.)

Men took over the ovens and kilns — that had been invented by the women — and developed them into smithies and forges, where they converted the earth's metals: copper, gold and iron. The Metal Age was the dawn of Man's Epoch. And the most

common name today, "Mr. Smith," has its origin in that dawn.

The very conditions that brought about the emancipation of the men brought about the overthrow of the matriarchy and the enslavement of the women. As social production came into the hands of the men, women were dispossessed from productive life and driven back to their biological function of maternity. Men took over the reins of society and founded a new social system which served their needs. Upon the ruins of the matriarchy, class society was born.

From this labor record of the women in the earlier social system, it can be seen that both sexes have played their parts in building society and advancing humanity to its present point. But they did not play them simultaneously or uniformly. There has actually been an uneven development of the sexes. This, in turn, is only an expression of the uneven development of society as a whole.

During the first great epoch of social development, it was the women who pulled humanity forward and out of the animal kingdom. Since the first steps are hardest to take, we can only regard the labor and social contribution of the women as decisive. It was their achievements in the fields of production, cultural and intellectual life which made civilization possible. Although it required hundreds of thousands of years for the women to lay down these social foundations, it is precisely because they laid them down so firmly and so well that it has taken less than 4,000 years to bring civilization to its present estate.

It is therefore unscientific to discuss the superiority of men or women outside the framework of the actual processes of history. In the course of history, a great reversal took place in the social superiority of the sexes. First came the women, biologically endowed by nature. Then came the men, socially endowed by the women. To understand these historical facts is to avoid the pitfalls of arbitrary judgment made through emotion or prejudice. And to understand these facts is to explode the myth that women are naturally inferior to men.

# Pablo Approves "New" Economic Policy Of Malenkov Regime

by Joseph Hansen

IF WE are to believe Churchill, Tory war dog of the British Empire, and Pablo, leader of a revisionist faction in the Fourth International, a relaxation of the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy has occurred in the Soviet Union, a relaxation that holds out great promise.

This common view stems, of course, from opposite grounds. Churchill's calculations are based on the unpreparedness of the British bourgeoisie for the armed assault planned by Wall Street on the Soviet bloc. Churchill finds Wall Street's timetable for World War III a bit too strenuous for the aged lungs and legs of British capitalism. He is therefore inclined to welcome the overtures of the Malenkov regime for an extension of the period of "peaceful co-existence" between world capitalism and the Soviet bloc.

Churchill even hopes that by proper diplomacy some kind of deal can be reached that will include lowering of trade barriers and other concessions to Moscow in return for an al-

liance against the independence movements of the colonies and the socialist revolution, particularly in Western Europe. To him, therefore, the "relaxation" of the Malenkov regime signifies the marked readiness of the bureaucracy's representatives to reach a counter-revolutionary understanding mutually advantageous to British capitalism and the parasitic ruling caste of the USSR.

Churchill can scarcely be accused of impressionism or naivete in reaching such views. He is in direct diplomatic touch with Moscow's rulers and has available the vast secret information services of Anglo-American imperialism. His judgment is based on some 37 years' solid experience in leading the counter-revolutionary struggle of world imperialism against the Soviet Union, the colonial sphere, and the world socialist movement.

In contrast to Churchill, Pablo sees in the "relaxation" of the Malenkov regime a sign full of hope for world Trotskyism. Pablo even maintains that the Malenkov regime has under-

taken "a new economic course which appears generally to adopt the main lines of the economic thought of the Left Opposition and of L. Trotsky in particular."

This course, he tells us, "cannot but favor a more normal evolution of Soviet economy" and — believe it or not — lower the "social tension" in the USSR. (See the April 19 *Militant* for an analysis of Pablo's position.)

From these promising straws in the wind, it follows, of course, that a proper attitude toward the Malenkov regime by the world Trotskyist movement can assist the Stalinist bureaucracy to reform itself by structural assimilation of other "main lines" of the thought of the Left Opposition and of L. Trotsky in particular.

Thus, locking little fingers with Churchill, Pablo — like the official head of British imperialism — takes a conciliatory attitude toward the Malenkov regime and the new economic policy it has promised.

How did Pablo happen to find himself in this, let us say — extraordinary position? His approval of Malenkov's promised new economic policy enables us now to determine fairly definitely what was really behind many of the cryptic utterances that began to arouse uneasiness several years ago among the ranks of the world Trotskyist movement as to what was actually going on in Pablo's head.



JOSEPH HANSEN



## **"Centuries" of Deformed Workers' States**

In the fall of 1949 in an article "On the Class Nature of Yugoslavia," Pablo casually indicated that he saw a period ahead "which can extend for centuries" of "workers' states that are not normal but necessarily quite deformed." (International Information Bulletin. Dec. 1949, p. 3.)

Some thought at first that this might be a slip of the pen, as it flew directly in the face of the teachings of Marxism.

However, Pablo did not correct himself. "As for us," he said, "we reaffirm what we wrote . . . this transformation will probably take an entire historical period of several centuries . . . We are aware that this statement has shocked certain comrades and served others as a springboard to attack our 'revisionism.' But we do not disarm." (Ibid. March 1951, p. 13.) That was no empty boast. He set about organizing a secret personal faction in the world Trotskyist movement.

Although in his first statement Pablo had declared that the "centuries" meant "a much more tortuous and complicated development of the revolution than our teachers foresaw," under fire of criticism he sought theoretical sanction from Marx, Lenin and Trotsky.

This required considerable juggling of words and stretching of meanings. Thus, in the case of Trotsky, he held that the perspective of "centuries" of deformed workers' states "conforms to Trotsky's spirit (if not to the very letter of his writings)." Trotsky's "spirit" was then converted within a few paragraphs into the "real views of Trotsky on these questions." (Ibid. July 1951, pp. 11-12.)

For Pablo, this was no measuring of hairs with a micrometer.

"And what is the practical importance of insisting so much on the **probable duration** and the **character** of the **transitional period**?" he asked. "It appears considerable to us. It is first of all a question of arming the communist cadres of our movement with a historical perspective and with clear notions of the aims to be attained so that they can master whatever is conjunctural and

avoid any activist impatience or impressionism. It is also a question of rendering them capable of grasping the development of the Revolution in our epoch in its real and concrete manifestation unhampered by any formalistic thinking." (Ibid. pp. 12-13. Pablo's emphasis.)

Taking it at face value, who can object to being armed with a "historical perspective" and "clear notions"? Who doesn't want to avoid "activist impatience" or "impressionism"? Who is not interested in grasping "the real and concrete" development of the revolution "in our epoch"? Who doesn't want to be unhampered by "formalistic thinking"?

### **What It Really Means**

It is now possible in the light of Pablo's recent course, and particularly in the light of his approval of Malenkov's promised new economic policy, to get an idea of the Pabloite content that fits these abstract desiderata.

"Formalistic thinking" turns out to be the formulas of Trotsky, including his Transitional Program. "Junk the old Trotskyism!" cries Clarke, one of Pablo's American disciples, pressing for all Trotskyists to unhamper if not unhinge their thinking.

"The real and concrete development of the revolution" turns out to be the postwar extension of the sphere of Soviet influence and the indefinite delay of the revolution in the advanced countries because of the backward (counter-revolutionary?) character of the mass of workers in these lands.

"Impressionism" turns out to be the Trotskyist impression that Stalinism is counter-revolutionary to the core.

"Activist impatience" turns out to be the program of patiently constructing independent revolutionary socialist parties to win power in the Soviet Union and in the advanced capitalist countries.

"Mastering whatever is conjunctural" proves to be the ability to leave Trotskyism behind bag and baggage, in return for whatever might turn up in the Stalinist "milieu."

"Clear notions" includes the revisionist notion of Clarke that the Sta-

linist bureaucracy may share power with the Soviet masses.

"Historical perspective" signifies giving up any idea of socialist revolution, especially in the USA, for generations to come.

Piecing together the evidence, we may now surmise that Pablo holds to a theory somewhat as follows:

The real course of the proletarian revolution is proceeding in a geographical spiral from the Soviet Union through the backward countries. Eventually it will include the advanced countries, but perhaps not for centuries because the workers there are unable to overcome the anti-Soviet poisoning their minds have been subjected to.

In its real and concrete development, if we read Pablo's thoughts correctly, the revolution is proceeding without benefit of a party such as Lenin and Trotsky thought necessary. A military-bureaucratic leadership is replacing it; the revolution in fact is being led by Stalinism. This reduces the revolutionary socialists to the role of simply advocating better methods that could shorten the process and make it less costly and more palatable. Recognizing what the real historical perspective is, revolutionary socialists must take part in this "new reality" as advocates of the best possible transitional measures and as leaders in the struggle to reform the inevitable bureaucracy or at least to temper its excesses.

### **"Will Right Itself"**

This perspective must not be judged as one of darkest pessimism, if we are to believe Pablo's repeated assurances about the golden opportunities now opening up for Trotskyist ideas; for the Stalinist bureaucracy, passively reflecting the interests of the working class, is amenable to suggestion and modification. The revolution "will right itself." Germain, who seems to be seeking a niche in history as attorney and counsellor-in-orthodox-phraseology for Pablo, is even so optimistic as to divide Pablo's perspective by twenty — where the Stalin era lasted thirty years, "the Malenkov era," he promises us, "will not even

last ten." Ten, the man said. (*Quatrieme Internationale*. January-February 1954, p. 15.)

It is worth noting in passing that in face of the widespread opposition to his "centuries" theory, Pablo quietly put it back in his brief-case. In place of it he substituted the prognosis of an early outbreak of World War III. By "early," Pablo really meant *early*. He converted the Marxist concept of the speeding up of all tempos in this epoch of wars and revolutions into a lopsided caricature. Discounting the possibility of effective resistance to war in the advanced countries, he predicted war in several years from 1951.

From this, Pablo drew extreme conclusions. The war, he held, would occur so early as to leave the working class insufficient time to construct mass parties capable of staying the war-makers. Whatever moves the workers did make would go into Stalinist and Social Democratic channels. But fortunately, the mounting threat of war would inevitably impel Stalinism in particular toward revolutionary actions in defense of the Soviet Union.

The deferment of the outbreak of World War III, and — more important — the continued counter-revolutionary politics of Stalinism despite the threat of war, have done this theory no good. In capitulating to Malenkov's alleged new economic course, Pablo does not mention the prognosis of World War III in "several years" from 1951.

Instead, he has taken the "several centuries" theory out of his brief-case, modifying the "centuries" to the more timeless phrase, "long period." "Several centuries . . . several years" turn out to be two sides of the same street. The course indicated for the Trotskyist movement remains the same — a turn toward Stalinism — just different reasons for taking it.

The "several centuries" theory, which appears to be at the heart of Pabloism, as a revisionist structure is symmetrical to "bureaucratic collectivism" (the theory of the appearance of a new, unforeseen type of exploiting class in the USSR). The ad-

herents to the "several centuries" theory do not see the bureaucracy as a new exploiting class, and they also differ from the bureaucratic collectivists in placing a plus rather than a minus sign on the bureaucracy. And where the bureaucratic collectivists attempted to work out a novel terminology, the Pabloites cling to Trotskyist terminology, gutting it of its content so that it becomes nothing but a shell for the new revisionism. However, fundamentally both theories are the product of petty-bourgeois impressionism.

The theory of bureaucratic collectivism constituted a bridge from Trotskyism to the Social Democracy. In perfect symmetry, the theory of "centuries" of deformed workers' states constitutes a bridge from Trotskyism to Stalinism.

### Some Consequences

Various positions taken by the Pabloites derive a certain consistency, on the basis of these assumptions, that is otherwise lacking.

For example, if for generations to come the problem is to "build socialism" in backward countries in isolation from the advanced centers of the world, then Pablo's scholastic dissertation on getting a "Correct Comprehension of the NEP" of 1921 (see the April 19 *Militant*), which constitutes the theoretical underpinning for his support to Malenkov, becomes understandable as a timely and politically important contribution.

In the light of the "several centuries" theory, an economic course such as Malenkov promises is simply a *general* requirement of all transitional regimes yet to be born. It is therefore perfectly normal in this *particular* instance and must be supported. Q.E.D.

Hence Pablo's acclamation of Malenkov's new economic policy and also his strained efforts to find a theoretical rationalization for his capitulation to Malenkov by "correctly understanding" Trotsky's views on the New Economic Policy of 1921.

Hence also Pablo's belief that Malenkov's promised new economic course can lead to a lowering of the "social

tension" in the Soviet Union. Less social tension is required if the Soviet Union is to hold out during the "centuries" to come, as visualized in the Pabloite schema. Under this perspective, lowering of the social tension is an objective requirement that the bureaucracy, as a passive reflection of the working class, is bound to respond to sooner or later. Pablo sees it responding now. The revolution will "right itself."

In line with this, Germain tries to convince us that the Stalinist bureaucracy is giving up some of its privileges: ". . . the economic reforms introduced the past year are all in the direction of a *diminution of the share of the bureaucracy* in the division of the national income." (*Quatrieme Internationale*. January-February 1954, p. 10. Germain's emphasis.)

These revisionist views provide the foundation in economic theory for Clarke's revisionist political theory projecting the "sharing of power" between the Stalinist bureaucracy and the Soviet masses in place of Trotsky's projection of the overthrow of the bureaucracy by the Soviet masses.

When Clarke was called to account for publishing such a brazen revision of Trotskyism in *Fourth International* (January-February 1953, p. 13) Pablo came to Clarke's defense. He did not explain at the time why he thought Clarke was correct; but in the light of the above analysis it is quite obvious that Clarke was simply offering a perfectly logical extension of Pablo's basic revisionist theory.

As a variation on the same theme, Germain, in the article cited above, speaks of the "enfeeblement" of the bureaucracy. His principal evidence is his own impression that the bureaucracy is really sharing its income on a more equitable basis with the masses it has by the throat. It apparently does not occur to Germain, in his concern about providing Pablo with a protective Trotskyist coloration, that the Stalinist bureaucracy also appreciates in a tight spot the value of protective coloration — such as promises of concessions to the masses and even a posture of "enfeeblement." A wounded wolf likewise dis-

plays enfeeblement but is all the more dangerous for that.

Germain's economic confidence in the bureaucracy's sharing its pilfered income with the masses is obviously the crystal twin to Clarke's political confidence in the bureaucracy's sharing its usurped power with the masses.

### Political Implications

In his article pronouncing benediction on the new economic policy of the counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy, Pablo refrains from discussing the political consequences of his capitulation. However, since economics is not divided from politics by an impassable sound barrier, particularly in the Soviet Union, it is not difficult to work out the implications of Pablo's revisionist views.

If the revolution is confined to the backward countries and is not expected to succeed for generations to come in the advanced countries, then it follows that the demand for "peaceful co-existence" between the Soviet bloc and the imperialist powers moves into the front rank of slogans of the world revolution, coinciding happily with the counter-revolutionary needs of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Even the pacific diplomatic gestures of a Churchill or Daladier must be duly appreciated.

This is not exactly new. It has been the Stalinist view since 1924. The conciliatory attitude of the Pabloites toward Moscow's reactionary diplomacy, noted early in the factional struggle with them, is evidence enough of the drift of their thinking on this issue.

Similarly, if the socialist revolution in the advanced countries is a song of the distant future, the proper role of the vanguard of the present generation, and probably their offspring for five or six generations to come, is not to try to build an independent party, but to avoid such utopian nonsense — "crackpot antics" is the apt phrase chosen by Pabloite spokesman Cochran — and organize a border guard for the Kremlin.

This too has been the Stalinist view and practice since the bureaucracy usurped power. Pablo's rejection of the independent role and policy of the Socialist Workers Party in the

United States fits in perfectly here, as does his warm approval of the split his American ideological followers engineered in the SWP in their turn toward the Stalinist "milieu."

Such revisionist views monstrously contradict everything Trotsky taught and stood for. The Pabloite awareness of this is perfectly expressed in the gross slogan voiced by Clarke: "Junk the old Trotskyism!"

Pabloite revisionism requires the junking of Trotsky's theory of the incompatibility of the Stalinist bureaucracy with the planned economy of the Soviet Union. Pablo, acting on the concept he has put in place of this decisive contribution by Trotsky to the correct understanding of Soviet reality, publicly proclaims that Malenkov, whose hands drip with the blood of murdered Trotskyists in the Soviet Union, has adopted "the main lines of the economic thought of the Left Opposition and of L. Trotsky in particular." Germain sees the bureaucratic gangsters sharing their take more equitably with their victims. Clarke projects the possibility of the same totalitarian thugs sharing their stolen power with those they oppress.

Objectively, such declamations serve as nothing but Stalinist lures to get Trotskyist babes into the back seat of the car.

If the Stalinist bureaucracy is compatible with the planned economy for an indefinite period to come, then another far-reaching consequence follows. Pabloite revisionism requires the junking of Trotsky's theory of the counter-revolutionary character of Stalinism. As a matter of fact, the unpleasant characterization, "counter-revolutionary," cannot be found in Pablo's article capitulating to Malenkov. We had already been tipped off about this side of Pabloite theory by some of his rank and file ideological adherents in the USA who stoutly argued early in the faction struggle that "Stalinism can no longer betray"; it can move "only to the left."

But this is only the beginning. Pabloite revisionism requires junking Trotsky's view of the impossibility of reforming the Stalinist regime and of the need to overthrow it. That

means junking the task of constructing an independent revolutionary party in the Soviet Union, just as it means in the advanced countries junking the program of constructing independent revolutionary parties aiming at power.

Along with this it requires junking Trotsky's analysis of the Soviet Union as a degenerated workers' state — for how can you call a state *degenerated* where the bureaucracy adopts the main lines of L. Trotsky's economic thought, is willing to share its income more equitably with the masses and even share state power? This conclusion, startling as it may seem at first sight, follows strictly from Pablo's thesis of "centuries" of deformed workers' states: since such states can be expected for *centuries*, they no longer constitute *deformations*. As "the new reality," they have become the *norm*.

And as a matter of fact, the word "deformed" cannot be found in Pablo's article capitulating to Malenkov. He uses throughout simply the blanket term, "proletarian state," in speaking of the Soviet Union, its satellites, and future satellites to come.

### Defense of the Soviet Union

I have room to mention only some of the major items that go into the ash can under Clarke's all-inclusive slogan. One, of exceptional importance, is currently being given the broom treatment by the Pabloites: Trotsky's concept of the defense of the Soviet Union.

The Trotskyist defense of the degenerated workers' state stands in revolutionary opposition to that of the Stalinists. Trotsky's program calls for defense of the conquests of the October Revolution as part of the overall struggle for the world socialist revolution — and that is all. It specifically excludes defense of the counter-revolution headed by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Against the imperialist foe, it signifies defense of the Soviet Union as a whole; that is, "unconditional" defense. This defense is not conditioned on the policies of the bureaucracy or its preliminary overthrow, but at the

same time it is inseparable from organizing for the revolutionary overthrow of the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy.

Above the Soviet Union in priority stands the world revolution. In no case can the needs of the world revolution be subordinated to defense of the Soviet Union. This means consistent, stubborn efforts to build independent revolutionary parties in every capitalist power, parties that aim at establishing Workers and Farmers Governments. In the final analysis this course offers the Soviet Union not only the best possible defense but the only realistic one.

According to this concept, to improve the economic policies of the bureaucracy, even to paint up the bureaucracy or foster illusions in it, constitutes *betrayal of the defense of the Soviet Union*.

Similarly, to give up the struggle for an independent party, besides everything else it betrays, constitutes *betrayal of the defense of the Soviet Union*.

It is precisely because the Pabloites have a guilty conscience about this that they now accuse the Socialist Workers Party of giving up the defense of the Soviet Union. But the SWP has not altered its long-standing position on this question by one iota.

The truth is that the Pabloites have junked Trotsky's concept of the defense of the Soviet Union in accordance with their general slogan, "Junk the old Trotskyism!" In place of Trotsky's emphasis on the contradiction between the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy and the conquest of the October Revolution, they have substituted an identity of interests. From this it follows that defense of the bureaucracy equates to defense of the Soviet Union, a view long maintained by Stalinism.

The mere fact that the Pabloites dared accuse the SWP of giving up the defense of the Soviet Union is sufficient indication of how far their revisionist theories have taken them into the camp of Stalinism, for their accusation is nothing but an echo of an old Stalinist slander against the American Trotskyists.

What they really mean by their slander is that the SWP continues to follow Trotsky's "outmoded schema" of defense, which they as "realists" have junked in favor of a "new" schema that corresponds more closely to the "new reality" Pablo has found in the Malenkov regime.

In its Open Letter to Trotskyists throughout the world (*Militant*, Nov. 16, 1953), the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party charged the Pabloite faction with having

"abandoned the basic program of Trotskyism." It charged Pablo with "conciliation to Stalinism." These charges were fully documented. Pablo's latest article, publicly placing his rubber-stamp of approval on Malenkov's new economic policy, in outrageous violation of the Trotskyist program of revolutionary opposition to Stalinism, shows how far Pablo is prepared to go. His latest move, I venture to predict, will prove to be only the beginning.

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