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INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVIEW

A United Socialist Ticket

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A Testimonial

Sometimes a denunciation serves as the best testimonial. We think that this can truthfully be said of an article by Eric Haas in the January 11 *Weekly People* attacking the "Trotskyites" in general and the Socialist Workers party in particular.

The *Weekly People* is the newspaper of the Socialist Labor party. It performs a useful service in republishing the writings of the great American socialist leader, Daniel DeLeon, and it often draws correct general so-

50-50 Chance

Bertrand Russell, 85-year-old philosopher, gives the human race an even chance of existing 40 years from now.

"It's absolutely necessary if mankind is to survive that the H-bomb should be banned everywhere," he said yesterday at a rally organized by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

"It's got to be banned by America and Russia. If it's not, sooner or later you'll get an explosion. A great deterrent will not work and mankind will be wiped out."

—AP, Feb. 18.

cialist conclusions about today's happenings. However, the SLP is well-known for its sectarianism, and that is where the testimonial comes in; for the Socialist Workers party has long been represented by the Stalinists as suffering from this disease.

According to Haas, what is really wrong with the "Trotskyites" is that they "play the opportunist game" and string "the workers along with radical-sounding reform demands."

"Take, for example, the SWP national platform of 1956," Haas says. "Although the SWP poses as 'revolutionary,' and even expressly denounces 'reformism,' this platform is filled with reform demands, cynically and opportunistically conceived. Many are the kind of reform bait 'radical' reformers have been using for generations in an effort to entice the support of the discontented. They include such demands as 'adequate old-age pensions' (page Dr. Townsend!), 'free medical care and hospitalization,' price supports for 'small farmers only,' 'low-rent housing,' etc."

Another of the reforms "cynically and opportunistically" demanded by the SWP is "An escalator clause on all wages, unemployment compensation, pensions and other benefits, with taxes to be included in computing living costs . . ."

An even more shocking example of the cynical opportunism of the SWP is the demand to "tax the rich and not the poor." Haas asks, "What petty bourgeois reform outfit hasn't used this one?"

The most crushing proof of the reformism of the "Trotskyites" is, of course, the fact that they "play along with the pro-capitalist

unions" and that they call for "an independent Labor party based on the trade unions."

Youthfulness is to be noted among the Trotskyites, Haas confesses. But a De Leonist, schooled in resisting the lures and temptations of "reformism," can easily account for this. The SWP "offers a speciously 'romantic' attraction for youngsters who have become disillusioned with capitalism."

We thought that Haas's views, as an expression of expert opinion, were in refreshing contrast to the run-of-the-mill criticisms one hears around Stalinist-influenced circles about the "sectarianism" of the Socialist Workers party.

* * *

We should like to recommend the debate on psychoanalysis which appeared in the December issue of the *Monthly Review* (66 Barrow St., New York 14). D. Fedotov, Director of the Institute of Psychiatry of the Ministry of Health of the USSR, presents the official Stalinist position on Sigmund Freud's contributions. The reply is by Norman Reider, Chief of Psychiatry, Mount Zion Hospital, San Francisco. Reider, in our opinion, scores an easy win.

Psychoanalytic theory is not new to the American socialist movement. In the pre-World War I period, such magazines as *The Masses* presented Freud's views in popular form, underlined the importance of his discoveries and defended his materialistic outlook against the prevailing ignorance and prejudice.

Later, as Dr. Reider points out, socialist theoreticians were attracted to psychoanalysis "as dialectical materialism in psychology."

This attitude changed under the dictator who was finally described by Khrushchev as suffering from "paranoia." Stalinist-influenced psychologists attacked Freud with singular animosity, comparing in this respect only with some of the spokesmen of Catholicism.

Reider does not go into the reasons for the Stalinist condemnation of psychoanalysis; but Freud himself was undoubtedly in large part responsible. He did not care for the politics of sugar-coating the Stalinist regime. In fact, in the thirties he spoke the truth, from his viewpoint, about what was happening in the Soviet Union — the conversion of Marxism into a religion.

In the March issue of the *Monthly Review* Lawrence S. Kubie, Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the Yale Medical School, continues the discussion. "Official Soviet psychiatry claims to derive its attitudes and its methods from the work of Pavlov," he says. "It assumes further that there is an irreconcilable antagonism between Pavlov and the work of Freud. As our Soviet colleagues develop their position, however, they betray surprisingly elementary misconceptions not only about psychoanalysis but even about Pavlov and his works as well. Furthermore they never refer to the many studies which have been made of the remarkable agreements between Pavlov and Freud over basic issues."

Dr. Kubie concludes that "there is no self-

righteous chauvinism in pointing out that the Soviet view of psychoanalysis has been warped by irrelevant and inaccurate ideological considerations."

We congratulate the editors of the *Monthly Review* on making available to American readers the views of Dr. Fedotov and the instructive replies by Dr. Reider and Dr. Kubie.

* * *

We are happy to report a steady increase in circulation for the past few issues. This has been most observable on newsstands.

Los Angeles shows the biggest jump in this respect. Credit is largely due Joe Kent, an ardent partisan of the ISR. He keeps an eye out for newsstands that should have the magazine on display. He thinks that the key to success is mainly just to be business-like, especially in making prompt delivery when the new issue comes out and in following up from time to time to see if more copies are needed. The magazine sells itself, he says, as long as it is in the right area.

Joe admits that at first he felt somewhat hesitant about scouting for new places to put the ISR, especially after he was turned down by a dealer who carries other radical literature. But then the next dealer looked at the cover and the table of contents and decided that

Psychiatric Report

"That ordinary well-balanced citizens are growing fewer every year is just too bad. And that around 600 million gallons of spirits are produced every year in the States (apart from heavy imports of Scotch whiskey, French brandy, and so forth), also 6 billion cans of beer, some 90 million barrels of beer, 140 million gallons of wine, 400 billion cigarettes and 60 billion tranquilizers, merely proves that the American way of life plays the devil with peoples' nerves." —Robert Graves in *The New Republic*, Dec. 23.

his stand could handle about 40 copies. That made Joe feel more confident about the possibilities.

His opinion now is that many dealers are aware of what is going on in the socialist movement and have their sympathies and antipathies even though they might consider themselves to be anything but socialist. One dealer, for example, was hesitant about taking the ISR until he knew "what variety" of socialism it represented. When he found out, his response was, "Well, Trotsky was proved right." And now he gives a good display to the ISR.

* * *

We wish to close on a note of regret — over the manuscripts which have been squeezed out for lack of space. These include a study of long-range inflation, gleanings from the press in China, some new material on philosophy by William F. Warde, and two articles by Leon Trotsky translated into English for the first time. As our New York correspondent observed, "The market for socialist literature is there, and we have the product. All we need is the funds to package it."

Editorial

For a United Socialist Ticket

A NEW and heartening sign of the fraternal mood that has been growing in the radical movement in America the past two years is the effort recently launched among various socialist forces to put up a united slate wherever possible in the 1958 elections, as part of the essential preparation for the 1960 Presidential campaign.

In New York the initiators of this latest effort at joint action include the National Committee of the Socialist Workers party, some prominent former leaders of the American Labor party, the editors of the *National Guardian*, and the sponsors of the Socialist Unity Forum. A. J. Muste, of the American Forum for Socialist Education, wished the project well, although, as he indicated, electoral activity is out of his field. The Communist party, at this writing, has not said whether it will participate, but such prominent leaders as Albert Blumberg and Simon Gerson have shown interest.

In Chicago similar forces have made even greater progress, uniting behind the candidacy of the Rev. Joseph P. King, president of the Washington Park Forum and pastor of the International Church. The Rev. King is running on a socialist platform in the important Second Congressional District.

In Seattle, Jack Wright, a well-known figure in local radical labor circles, recently finished a vigorous campaign on the Socialist Workers platform. His supporters included Vincent Hallinan, Terry Pettus and Local 158 of the International Molders and Foundry Workers. The *Peoples World*, which ordinarily reflects the views of the Communist party, broke a thirty-year tradition of that party by joining in the campaign and offering editorial support to a "Trotskyist" candidate.

A still more ambitious project is now under way in California — to unite in the June primaries behind Dr. Holland Roberts. Dr. Roberts, head of the California Labor School that was padlocked by government witch-hunters, is seeking office as Superintendent of Public Instruction, a state-wide office. It is hoped that agreement can be reached on a socialist platform that will unite all California forces who want to break from the

Democratic and Republican parties. Such a campaign should offer California socialists an excellent opportunity to demonstrate what the McCarthyite atmosphere and the indifference and neglect of capitalist politicians have done to the American educational system and why it's high time to elect socialists to office in the United States.

These actions follow the preliminary demonstrations of the capacity to get together, despite differences, in the 1957 elections in New York, Detroit and San Francisco.

Three highly encouraging things are to be noted about the new look in the American socialist movement:

(1) It has already been demonstrated that an important sector of American socialists *are* able to get together to defend and advance their common political interests against the two parties of Big Business.

(2) This has not occurred at the cost of anyone feeling forced to hide or give up particular views on problems of special interest within the socialist movement.

(3) The discussion of important differences has proceeded in a friendly fashion reminiscent of the atmosphere that American radicalism knew in the days of Debs.

One of the clearest manifestations of this occurred March 1 in Los Angeles when Vincent Hallinan, 1952 Presidential candidate of the Progressive party, and James P. Cannon, founder of the Socialist Workers party, shared the platform at a banquet and meeting aimed at boosting efforts for a United Socialist Ticket in 1958. The speakers indicated their reservations about each other's particular views but welcomed the new atmosphere of friendliness and stressed the need for solidarity in furthering points of agreement. The audience, representing a cross-section of all socialist tendencies in the area, responded with extraordinary enthusiasm.

The tendency of American socialists to seek ways and means of getting together in joint activities and friendly discussion has not gone unnoticed in the capitalist camp.

The latest evidence of this is an editorial in the March 8 *Saturday Evening Post*.

The Madison Avenue propagandists singled out for attack the American Forum for Socialist Education, which has performed an important service in helping to thaw out the long-frozen relations among socialists in this country. The main criminals in this nefarious enterprise, it would seem, are the "top pacifist chieftains," A. J. Muste, of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and Russell Johnson, of the American Friends Service Committee. The *Saturday Evening Post* considers it a plot, hatched by Communist conspirators, through which the Rev. Muste hopes to snare gullible socialists into participating in public discussions.

The Madison Avenue advertising experts evidently wanted to do a good deed by alerting prospective socialist victims to the Rev. Muste's plot. However, they could not forego attacking socialism. They claim that Hitler's Nazis were "socialist-minded" and that Hitler's program was "as socialistic as that of many leading socialists today." So, they ask, "why shouldn't some Nazis or their successors be admitted" to the American Forum? Why has Muste barred fascists? Isn't this "discrimination"?

No doubt such million-dollar huckster publications as the *Saturday Evening Post* have their reasons for frothing somewhat like Hitler at the thought of American socialists uniting in anything, even a public forum where

they can discuss their differences. However, on the opposite side of the class line, the reaction has been different to the attempts of radicals to break down factional barriers, at least insofar as this has become apparent to the militant workers in the form of greater socialist electoral activity.

This seemed to us the main significance of the New York and San Francisco vote given the Socialist Workers candidates, in response to the appeals of the *National Guardian* and such figures as Vincent Hallinan and Muriel McAvoy.

It now appears that socialists can expect an increasingly favorable response to independent electoral activity. The latest evidence of this comes from Michigan. There socialist campaigners, who have been circulating petitions to put the Socialist Workers party on the ballot, report the best response in many years.

Despite the stiff electoral requirements imposed on minority parties, despite unusually bitter weather, the 15,000 needed signatures were obtained in record time; some 22,000 had been filed as we went to press, and the goal of 30,000 was within sight.

It has long been our opinion that a good section of the American working class has been ready to support independent political action. The main obstacles have not been among the workers but among leaders of limited vision. The deepening "recession" is bound to start new layers of workers thinking about the big questions and issues of our time. This sentiment can snowball so that even the blindest will be unable to avoid the conclusion that the American people are tired of the two parties of Big Business. The beginnings of this new factor in American politics, we think, showed up in the Michigan campaign.

A response, such as this one reported by *The Militant*, indicates the thinking:

"I'm over 70 years old and I've seen too many depressions and wars. I'm all for you. Seems to me we've been needing socialism for a long time."

The red-baiting often encountered in such campaigns was largely absent. A socialist circulating a petition board reported that an unemployed worker asked: "Are you a communist?" Before she could reply, he said, "I'm a communist, too. Gimme that pencil." And the entire group who were listening followed his example.

A young veteran declared, "I've been out of the army for over a year now, and I've been out of work for most that time. I'd sure hate to go back into the army, but a man's got to eat. I hope you people can do something."

This reaction displays the political instinct of a militant worker. Surely no more effective way is available to put pressure on the government for adequate relief and speedy anti-depression measures than building the socialist movement into the powerful force it should be in American politics.

The downturn in the economic situation thus makes 1958 an auspicious year for a United Socialist Ticket. Curtailment of production, mounting unemployment, short pay checks and the threatened loss of partially-

**INTERNATIONAL
SOCIALIST
REVIEW**

Published quarterly. Business office, 116 University Pl., New York 3, N.Y. Editorial Office, 1702 E. 4th St., Los Angeles 33, Calif. Second class mail privileges authorized at New York, N. Y., with additional entry at Los Angeles, Calif.

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Vol. 19 — No. 2 — Whole No. 143

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: U.S.A. and Latin America, \$1.25 a year (four issues); single copies, 35 cents; bundles, 25 cents a copy for five copies or more. Foreign and Canada, \$1.50 a year (four issues); single copies, 35 cents; bundles, 26 cents a copy for five copies or more.

paid-for homes and household necessities are powerful incentives to take a hard look at the capitalist system. Add to this the continued insistence of the Republicans and Democrats on preparing for atomic war and you get the ingredients for a most dynamic wave of radicalism.

A United Socialist Ticket can have another beneficent effect besides directly fostering the growth of socialism. The attraction of such a ticket for unionists and union locals with a militant tradition can spur some of the top union bureaucrats to make the break from their suicidal coalition with the Democratic machine. It may inspire some of the shrewder union leaders to at least follow the example of their British cousins and organize an independent labor party. Such a result, of course, can hardly be expected immediately, for it would require major events, such as those that laid the basis for the CIO, to induce the American trade-union brass to follow the trails blazed by the pioneers. But the pressure and the example would be there just the same. To start this process working would constitute a great success for the American socialist movement.

The National Committee of the Socialist Workers party took the initiative in trying to work out a platform on which all socialist tendencies might agree for the purpose of putting up joint candidates in 1958 against the capitalist machines. The Committee proposed five planks which were published as an advertisement in the February 3 *National Guardian*. These included:

(1) Offering the socialist alternative of enduring peace to the imperialist war policy of the two parties of Big Business.

(2) Presenting socialism as the only permanent solution to capitalist depressions.

(3) Advancing the socialist goal of full equality and brotherhood for all races and nationalities.

(4) Counteracting the capitalist lies about the socialist attitude toward democracy by demanding the deepening and extension of democratic rights.

(5) Standing for independent political action, urging the unions to break from the parties of Big Business and build a labor party to represent the political interests of the working people.

These general planks were broken down tentatively into more specific points to put the program in gear with current political realities.

The first response to the proposal, to judge from letters published in the *National Guardian* and *The Militant*, were quite favorable, disagreement being expressed only on a couple of the proposed specific points. Other sources likewise indicate that considerable interest has been aroused in the radical movement over the proposed platform. There is every reason to believe that agreement is fairly general on the main points. This should make it possible to deal with the secondary points without too great difficulty.

However, two exceptions to the general approval have to be noted. The Social Democrats and their peripheral groups have displayed no interest. This is somewhat strange, for the proposed platform includes what has

been a main issue for these organizations; that is, the need for political freedom throughout the Soviet bloc.

Two possible explanations can be offered for this aloof attitude: (1) the Social Democrats are content with their sectarian isolation. (2) The extreme right-wing Social Democrats, who determine policy, are not interested in supporting workers in the Soviet bloc who want political freedom *while retaining their socialist gains*.

The other exception is the Fosterite leadership of the Communist party. The platform proposed by the Socialist Workers party included the demand that the bipartisan, cold-war, imperialist foreign policy of the Democrats and Republicans be replaced "with a socialist policy of friendship and aid to the countries of the Soviet orbit" as well as the colonial peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, who are fighting for their freedom. It also included a demand to end the atom-bomb tests and to dismantle the stockpiles of atomic weapons.

It would therefore seem odd that the Fosterite leadership, which claims to put the struggle for peace first on the agenda, should find the proposed platform unacceptable. The explanation for this, very likely, is that they still wish to continue the policy followed by the Communist party for almost a quarter of a century of supporting Democratic candidates.

If the opportunities for united socialist electoral activity are seized now, this year can mark a major turning point in the process of converting American socialism into a mass movement. What is done in 1958 can pave the way for an effective Presidential campaign in 1960, with candidates of all socialist tendencies supporting one another in a nation-wide effort.

This way the socialist alternative will begin to appear realistic, not simply to the present pioneer radicals, but to millions of American working people. Such a perspective ought to appeal to the imagination of every genuine socialist in this country.

Enough Said?

"The secret report of Khrushchev is central. For years Trotsky was the devil's own name, and no Communist was permitted to read him, much less quote him. But a few weeks before writing this, I opened Leon Trotsky's book, *The Revolution Betrayed*. I had not looked at it for almost twenty years, but its words rang with the terrible timeliness of a commentary on the Khrushchev report written today. Yet the book was published in 1937.

"I care little at this point about denunciations by Communists, but I feel impelled to suggest that the right to challenge me be earned. I defy Communists to read the secret report again, fully, carefully, and then to balance against it Trotsky's *Revolution Betrayed* — and having done so, to refute me. As for those who will not read the evidence, their minds are locked and the Party has had its way with them."—Howard Fast.

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The "Recession" Deepens

Mounting layoffs and slimmer pay checks mark a transition in the economy. Is it a "breather" or the ominous prelude to a far worse decline?

by Arne Swabeck

THE SPOKESMEN for U. S. capitalism call it a "recession" or "deflation," a "rolling adjustment," a "shakeout" or a "levelling off." President Eisenhower soothingly describes it as "a breather." But all such comforting appellations cannot lend brighter tints to the bleak picture or conjure away the facts. The downward movement is operating with increasing force and the elements of serious crisis are gathering within the weakened national economy.

By the end of 1957 it was widely conceded that the business slowdown was swifter, sharper and cutting deeper than had been anticipated. The production index fell to 136 from its peak of 147 in December 1956. Stock-market prices came tumbling down, recording the biggest decline since 1931. The number of unemployed climbed steeply upward.

Since then the impact of these depressing movements has been spreading like a nuclear chain reaction, and with cumulative effect, throughout the economic structure.

The same capitalist sources that belittled the size of the coming slump last year assure us now that an upturn will begin later in 1958. After that, they predict, prosperity will again roll on serenely, in accord with the natural pattern of the capitalist scheme of things.

Beguiled by the long, artificially bolstered prosperity, the mouthpieces of Big Business appear to be still in a trance. Apparently they need hypnosis to sustain their faith in this sagging phase of production. And why not? If big Don Newcomb, the Dodgers' pitcher, successfully submitted to hypnotic treatment to overcome his fear of flying, why cannot they use similar means to get rid

of their anxieties over the economic decline?

The "Lost Horse" Technique

The boom has vanished; how can it be recovered? One economist, Sidney Alexander, has a simple prescription; it is called the "lost horse" technique. If you want to find a lost horse, go where he was last seen and then ask yourself: where would you go if you were a horse? Thus the economists are now rummaging through one component of the economy after another in their search for the "lost boom" and the signs of the beginning of a new one.

They are examining such factors as the extent of effective consumer demand growing out of the large baby crop of recent years and the increasing legion of old-age pensioners. It is considered helpful to know the disposition of consumer psychology; that might sell a few extra items. The views of purchasing agents are solicited for their estimate of perspectives. Inventories, at factory, wholesale and retail levels, are scrutinized for indications of business trends.

The "tightness" or "ease" of the money market, as well as the prospects for building contracts, are given close attention. Still more important is the question of how much capital investment in plant and equipment is in the offing, for this has direct bearing upon production and labor productivity. What is termed the "wage-price inflation spiral" is being carefully scanned. And finally, looming above all else, the vast government expenditures in the international arms race are being hopefully watched for

clues to a reversal of the downward plunge.

It is indisputable that all of these elements have served as underpinning for the postwar boom and can contribute to any upturn ahead. But reviewing them one by one, or adding them together, will not suffice to give a reliable estimate of the *direction* of the main trends at work in the present phase of American economic life.

The mere compilation of empirical data relating to the major factors operating for growth and decline has little value without an understanding of the specific inter-connections between these factors and their mutual interactions; since these are tied up with the economic laws of motion in capitalist society.

This is what the highly optimistic forecast made in the President's state-of-the-union message to Congress on January 9 fails to take into account. "In a free economy," the President said, "growth typically moves forward unevenly. But the basic forces of growth remain unimpaired. There are solid grounds for confidence that economic growth will be resumed without an extended interruption." Later the President boldly predicted that "March . . . should mark the beginning of the end of the downturn in our economy, provided we apply ourselves with confidence to the job ahead."

Should we remind the Chief Executive of the soothsayer's warning to Julius Caesar: "Beware the Ides of March!"

Some Democratic members of Congress, eyeing the fall elections, do not want to seem so complacent. They have introduced bills to cut taxes, to increase state unemployment compensation and to set up a public-works program.

The principal premises that underlie all these predictions of an early upturn and renewed prosperity after the present "breather," can be summarized as follows. A growing population will assure enough effective consumer demand. Excessive inventories will soon be worked off and renewed orders will again stimulate production. Government expenditures will go up rather than down — provided "peace" doesn't break out and upset the arms manufacturers. The combination of these factors is expected to give a fillip to renewed capital investments which will propel basic industry forward at high speed.

Why It Won't Work

At first sight this promised prospect may seem quite reasonable. However, what threatens to turn all the painstaking calculations along this line to naught are the gaping disproportions that have been developing during the boom period among the major segments of U.S. economy.

The stability of any economy depends upon the maintenance of a certain proportionality in its vital sectors. Its survival and growth require a sustained balance among them. This holds true, for example, of the relation of production to consumption, of industry to agriculture, to transportation, communication, etc.

Three major components in the American economy go to make up the total demand for what is called the Gross National Product. These are: consumer purchases, private domestic capital investments and government expenditures. These separate elements are linked together in definite relations which are both quantitative and qualitative in character. These relations not only interact with one another but with the national economy as a whole and they extend, with similar effect, into the wider environment of the world market to which American capitalism belongs.

Let us examine the present inter-relationship of these three decisive factors. We can gauge how great and ominous the current disparities are when we compare the boom after World War II with the previous extended prosperity during the 1920's. In 1929, shortly before the crash, consumer purchases accounted for 76.5% of the Gross National Product; private domestic capital investments comprised 15.3%; while govern-

ment expenditures were only 8.2%.

By 1955, however, the "sovereign" consumer's share, upon which purchasing power ultimately depends, had declined from 76.5% to 65.1% of the total. Private capital investments remained constant at 15.3%. But government expenditures had mounted to 19.6% of the total.

Thus the consumer's share of the national product has diminished while the share swallowed up by government expenditures, primarily for military purposes, has more than doubled. What is the significance of such a pronounced shift in the relations between these three basic components of the economy? The rise in the government's share, which has occurred at the expense of the income of the people, supplies positive proof of the incapacity of monopoly capitalism to expand the standards of consumption on a par with the forces of production it sets in motion. The doubled portion of the national product expended by the government for unproductive purposes augments the polarization of wealth and poverty which is inherent in the system of production for profit. This lack of balance not only prevents the capitalists from maintaining the conditions for prosperity but dries them up at the very source.

How has this worked out in the present instance? The two main supports in capitalist society forming the more permanent basis for sustaining the economy are the purchases by consumers of goods to fill their everyday needs and the investment by business of capital for plants, equipment and materials. What has happened to the second item which is so fundamental to the functioning of capitalism, representing as it does the conversion of profits into capital and the accumulation of capital to enlarge the means of production in order to obtain more surplus value from the increased exploitation of labor?

Although the proportion of capital investments for 1955 was about the same in the total economy as in 1929, a sharp change became evident in the relation of this all-important sector to the others. Excess capacity of production had already begun to show up. The available means of production and the enormous productivity generated by American labor could turn out much more goods than could be absorbed under capitalist conditions by the purchasing power

of the American people and the huge government expenditures combined! This is positive proof also that capitalism is incapable of continuous and planned utilization of the means of production that it creates.

The *New York Times* Annual Economic Survey points to the difficulty of estimating the ratio of output to productive capacity in exact terms, since the degree of technological obsolescence of certain industrial facilities is not easily ascertainable. Nevertheless, this survey and other reports generally agree on the following pattern.

When the two earlier recessions of 1948-49 and 1953-54 started out, industrial production was close to 100% of available capacity. When these slumps hit bottom, production had dropped to no more than 80-82% of capacity.

This time, however, the economic downturn began in the fourth quarter of 1957 with industry operating at only 82% of available capacity. From that point it has since plunged sharply downward. That is, the current recession started at the point where the previous downturns halted. This in itself must be sufficient cause for worry.

To make matters worse, steel production, the thermometer of industrial health, had dipped below 60% by the end of 1957. And now the bourgeois spokesmen, despite their hopeful posture, are becoming apprehensive lest the tremendous excess capacity of production act as a check upon further capital investment. A large-scale cutback in this field would curtail the free flow of the very lifeblood of capitalism at the point of its greatest debility.

The Points of Weakness

The contradictions of capitalism tend to accumulate and multiply and come to a head at the points of greatest weakness. This renders the economic structure especially vulnerable, as the following brief survey of various departments of the economy bears out. Let us first look at agriculture.

Excess capacity of production, which developed in agriculture quite a while ago, has led to a chronic farm crisis. Huge farm surpluses pile up in the warehouses with little prospect of disposal. This particular disproportion presents the government with the seemingly insoluble problem of

handing out ever-growing and never-ending subsidies to bolster sagging farm prices and meet the cost of running the farms.

Yet, while crop output matched previous peaks on the smallest acreage in years, one million persons left the farms between April 1, 1956 and April 1, 1957. They presumably fled the farm crisis to seek work in the cities. This flow of population tends to aggravate the swelling unemployment problem. The outlook for agriculture presages a recurrence of the harrowing experiences of the thirties when Iowa farmers were burning corn in their stoves because it was cheaper than coal while unemployed workers in Chicago were picking through garbage dumps to find food for their hungry families.

To the farm crisis and the blight of unemployment can be added the grim statistics of business bankruptcies. For 1957, according to Dun & Bradstreet, 13,700 small concerns went under. This was almost four times the failures of a decade ago. These concerns were forced to the wall mostly by the combined effects of growing monopoly concentration and the business downturn.

The "lack of financial liquidity," which has grown out of manipulation of the credit system, is still another source of weakness. For consumers this means that their installment debts are higher than ever in relation to their income. Whereas in 1946 annual payments on such debts amounted to \$6.8 billion, they have now increased more than sixfold to \$42 billion! How, in the face of unemployment and short work weeks, are these small debtors to pay off their accumulated obligations, let alone take on new ones?

Even for business and financial institutions, the capital-liability relationships are weaker than they were during the two previous postwar recessions. This is entirely apart from the mountainous federal debt which is again climbing skyward now that Congress has lifted the national debt ceiling another five billion dollars.

Thus the cumulative effects of the artificial prosperity and its inevitable attendant inflation have penetrated and corroded every pore of the credit structure from the consumer level to the Federal Treasury.

When we turn our eyes from the national scene to the world market and the status of American foreign trade, prospects are equally discourag-

An Ancient Custom

The Cynic philosopher, Diogenes of Sinope, saw at Megara sheep protected by leather jackets while children went naked. "It is better to be a Megarian's ram than his son," he said. That certain features in our highly modern America have not changed much since ancient Greece is shown by the following observation of E. Ginzberg and D. W. Bray in *The Uneducated*:

"It is not comforting to realize that the Federal Government spends many times as much on assistance to migratory birds as on assistance to the children of migratory families."

ing. The whopping rise in exports produced by the Suez crisis last year has turned out to be transient. Now the economic downslide at home is complicated by a rash of foreign exchange crises afflicting many lands. On top of these is the fact that Western Europe's productive expansion has hit the ceiling while the undeveloped countries display less and less ability to buy on capitalist terms. Even the once-sure customers in the Western Hemisphere are complaining of the difficulties of reciprocal trade with the United States.

This summary review of the national and international economic trends indicates how closely interlinked are the crucial components of the capitalist system and how in their downward movements they react unfavorably upon one another. Already affected are all the segments of the structure: industrial and agricultural production, consumption, capital investments, income and indebtedness, government expenditures, etc. As they continue to pile up in the coming months, the adverse effects of these developments are bound to be felt more and more throughout the capitalist world.

Capitalism again is exposing itself as, not simply an exploitative system, but an essentially unstable one. The very forces which produced a dynamic equilibrium of its elements during the postwar boom have generated the counterforces which are disrupting that equilibrium. Despite government regulation and monopoly domination, anarchy continues to reign in capitalist production, which is subject to no other regulators, in the last analysis, than those of the market, of competition, of the mechanism of

supply and demand and the subtle interplay of prices and credits.

Transition to What?

What impact has the already drastic economic decline had upon the thinking of the bourgeois economists? Some have ventured to describe 1957 as "a year of transition." It marks the end, they say, of one phase of the postwar era — the period of catching up with demand and of very rapid growth that always follows on the heels of war. The shortages that developed during World War II and the Korean "police action" are now overcome.

It is hardly deniable that the American economy has reached a point of transition. Transition to what? That is the ticklish question.

Although most economists are extremely hesitant to say what the next period holds, they exhibit considerable uneasiness. A typical example of such apprehension was expressed in an interview given to *U.S. News & World Report* on January 3, 1958 by Murray Shields. He was introduced as economic advisor to one hundred big corporations; it is to be assumed that he voiced the views of this clientele in saying:

"The mood today is one of perplexity about our economic outlook. The international news has not been good. It certainly is not reassuring. Psychologically we are making a transition from a condition marked by great confidence in the short and long range outlook to one involving a mixture of fear about the domestic economic situation. And in that environment, retrenchment can become the order of the day."

This anticipated resort to "retrenchment" betrays the lack of confidence in top capitalist brackets in any quick return to prosperity. They are reading the storm warnings and saying among themselves: "Let's bat down the hatches and ride it out."

Naturally the capitalists and their government are going to do what they can to stave off the ugly features of the new depression looming before them. It is to be expected that all sorts of devices will be proposed, and some will be tried, to stem and slow down the decline. But, in the best of cases, these can only serve as feeble props to shore up a sagging economic structure.

Topping the list of the pump-priming measures projected by the government is an increased military budget. But military expenditures

would have to rise in geometric proportions to slow down the slump and bring back another burst of prosperity.

The main measures so far contemplated center on the race for missiles supremacy. The budget for the coming year provides a whopping \$5.3 billion for this purpose. However, expenditures for manned aircraft are in for a decrease. B. F. Coggan, vice president of Convair division of General Dynamics Corporation, has rather grimly suggested how far this can go in reducing unemployment.

Production of Convair's F-102 airplane required ten production workers for every engineer employed. But production of its Atlas intercontinental ballistic missile requires only one worker per engineer. In other words, far fewer workers are needed to make a billion dollars worth of missiles than for the same amount of manned airplanes.

Some Congressmen are talking about a tax cut. How far would that go to improve the situation? Whatever it might add to consumer purchasing power would be more than offset by the further unbalancing of the federal budget. The revenue lost by the government would then have to be made up by more deficit spending which would bring about a new whirl of inflation and higher prices. This in turn would offset the lowered taxes.

The predominant feature of the current turning point in the American economy is plain. It is a transition to lower levels of functioning under increasingly precarious conditions. The chances for a serious economic crisis are greater than at any time in the past two decades.

Even if the present powerful trends toward depression are checked, partly and temporarily, the economic crisis will be delayed and slowed down only to strike later with all the fiercer fury.

Tell It to the Auto Workers

Today, as in the twenties, what has happened to the auto industry provides an excellent testing ground for the relative merits of the bourgeois economists and the Marxist analysis of capitalist operations. At the height of the boom during the twenties the choir boys of Big Business chanted that the theories of Karl Marx had been finally refuted by the

Watch that Language

At his press conference last week President Eisenhower referred, no doubt inadvertently, to the present economic doldrums as a "depression." So far, at least, the description doesn't fit. Things are pretty bad—terrible, in fact, for the four to five million unemployed — but a real-scale depression has yet to show up.

—N. Y. Times, March 2.

practices of Henry Ford. His Detroit factories inaugurated the marvels of assembly-line production and created the mass market for low-priced cars. This myth that capitalist free enterprise and business genius guaranteed full employment and permanent prosperity was exploded by the stock-market crash of 1929.

The same legend has been revived with even more exuberance in recent years. This time the economy and the government, administered by General Motors through the Cadillac cabinet, had surely solved the problems of continuous production and economic security.

Tell that today to the auto workers! In Michigan, hundreds of thousands of workers have been laid off alongside a relative overproduction of capital in the form of idle machines and shut-down plants. Detroit, that citadel of modern technology, with 12.4% of its labor force unemployed, provides a dramatic verification of Marx's analysis of the laws of capitalism.

The present plight of American economy is still further complicated by the effects of world capitalist decline and decay. Through the growing interdependence of national states in world affairs, the economies of the capitalist powers have been linked more closely, increasing the repercussions of major events. A serious and prolonged depression here would cause economic convulsions both among the Allied powers and the neutralist countries. This would in turn help undermine the whole world capitalist foundation.

No wonder that the growing Soviet economic penetration into one part of the planet after another is viewed with undisguised alarm in Wall Street and Washington. In his state-of-the-union message the Presi-

dent spelled out the all-embracing scope of this penetration to Congress: "Trade, economic development, military power, arts, science, education, the whole world of ideas."

Still more frightening is the prospect of economic depression here while the Soviet Union, thanks to its nationalized property relations and planned economy, forges ahead to new industrial, technological and scientific achievements. For all the prayers of the pious John Foster Dulles, the Soviet Union might even succeed in raising the living standards of the Soviet people while millions of workers in this most favored of capitalist countries go without jobs.

Eisenhower urged everybody to put their shoulders to the wheel and apply themselves "with confidence to the job ahead." However, more and more workers are finding that their only job is behind them. The Commerce and Labor Departments conceded a sharp rise in unemployment during January to a total of 4.5 million. And a still further rise is predicted by the same sources. The newspapers daily publish accounts of fresh layoffs in one branch of industry after another.

The official reports also disclosed that the average work week had declined to 38.7 hours with a corresponding drop in average weekly earnings. It should be noted that the government's unemployment figures are never very complete; no records are kept of the millions working only part time.

The privations which inescapably come in the wake of unemployment take on varied forms, ranging from repossession of homes, cars or appliances, in default of payments, to subjection to the costly clutches of loan sharks. Relief agencies have heavier loads than their staffs and appropriations can handle. But these are only some of the more obvious ways in which the effects of a declining capitalist system are translated into terms of human misfortune.

The Decline in Income

Alongside of the deepening economic insecurity the working-class standard of living is actually declining. This is clearly expressed in what is designated as "real per-capita disposable income." This term means total after-tax income, adjusted for price changes and divided by popula-

tion. The *New York Times* Annual Economic Survey noted that there had been a perceptible drop in this *real* income about the middle of 1956. Even though the income figures, in current dollars, continued to creep upward, prices had gone up faster. As a result, *real* income began to decline.

Statistics for the more recent period are not yet available, but the mounting unemployment, the reduced average work week and the more extended part-time work tells its own story. Moreover, *real* per capita income is calculated on the basis of the whole population, embracing rich and poor alike. A drop in real income affects the living standards of coupon clippers very little. But even a small cut in real income is a very serious matter for the mass of the people.

This is how the capitalist relations of production work out, and the trend indicated above is bound to be accelerated. Wages, prices, interest and profits, together with taxes and inflation, become crucial elements of the sagging economic structure and the stepped-up arms race. They form the center of increasing conflicts. But such elements are capable of final explanation only in terms of the class relations which underlie them; in terms of the position each social class occupies in the productive process. And any decision concerning these questions is subordinated entirely to class interests.

Anti-depression measures which are being discussed in Washington are not motivated by any concern for the welfare of the working millions but rather by the requirements of the plutocrats. This is clearly evident in the bi-partisan demands for a massive increase in military spending. This type of depression dispeller serves three purposes. It assures continuance of lush profits for the arms manufacturers; promotes further concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the dominant monopolists; and implements their foreign policy of making the world safe for imperialist ambitions.

Sacrifice — by Whom?

At the same time there is a persistent outcry from the same capitalist circles against too high wages and too great union power. Murray Shields, whom we quoted earlier, is likewise out in front on this issue. Speaking for his list of one hundred big corporations, he insists:

"We haven't had monetary inflation, we haven't had budgetary inflation — what we have had is wage-cost inflation." Taking off from this absurd premise, Shields feels sure that "sometime business has to come to a point where it will refuse to negotiate long term contracts providing for automatic increases which cannot possibly be offset by increased productivity." Significantly Shields adds: "Something else I think we ought to do is to fight the four day week."

This hired adviser of the big corporations does not stand alone. President Eisenhower recently repeated the demand that wage increases must not go beyond overall productivity gains. This trick of linking wages to productivity is merely a cunning device under which to hide an attack on prevailing wage standards. Wages have been moving upward only in labor's belated and unsuccessful efforts to catch up with the rising cost of living. The fact that wages have not kept pace with the galloping prices is shown by the previously cited evidence of declining *real* per capita disposable income.

The capitalist leaders, caught in a declining economy amidst the world crisis of imperialist supremacy, are bent on unloading the consequences of their depression on the backs of the workers while making them pay for the arms race. That is the meaning of the President's message to Congress demanding sacrifice from the American people. "Sacrifice," he said, "must be made for the right purpose and in the right place — even if that place happens to come close to home."

With minor variations, the spokesmen of the ruling class emphasize the same theme, and their aims are identical. Step by step these have taken on concrete form and more clearly marked direction. They are part and parcel of the offensive Big Business seeks to unleash against labor.

Any success in these efforts holds a serious threat to the working-class standard of living. Are the workers prepared to meet the threat?

We can remain confident that the American workers will fight; they will fight most fiercely to maintain conditions and rights gained as a result of long and severe struggles during past decades. It is precisely the attempts to lower their standard of living and their right to economic security which will provide the greatest spur to resistance.

Potentially one of the most decisive social forces in the world, this massive working class will learn, in

time, to draw the necessary political conclusions from the struggles it will be compelled to engage in. In time it will recognize also that the capitalist system has failed to justify its further existence. When that happens the American working class will be face to face with the only alternative, a socialist America.

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Proposed Roads to Soviet Democracy

How can totalitarianism be ended in the Soviet Union?
Analysis of the main proposals reveals areas where
reformists and revolutionists can come to agreement

by Joseph Hansen

ONE OF THE MOST important and perplexing problems now under discussion among socialists in this country and the rest of the world concerns the enigmatic contrast between the socialistic economic foundations and the glaring inequalities and totalitarian political structure in the Soviet bloc.

It would be difficult to find a contradiction more absolute than that between the extension of democracy and equality forecast by Marx and Engels under socialism and the utterly anti-democratic practices and swollen privileges of the ruling oligarchy. In the struggle to popularize socialism here and in other countries, these practices and inequalities have long constituted a major obstacle; for the working class as a whole, like it or not, has come to associate socialism with the grim political reality of the Stalinized regimes. Few developments could give greater impetus to the advance of socialism on a world-wide scale than the regeneration of democracy in the Soviet bloc. But in view of the resistance of the bureaucracy, how is this to be accomplished?

To judge from the variety of positions put forward, this question is not easy to answer.

* * *

The statesmen of "democratic" imperialism have indicated the kind of solution they have had in mind since 1918 when Churchill organized the interventionist armies in support of the Czarist admirals and generals who sought to restore the Romanov autocracy. Their persistent aim has been to eliminate the socialist property

forms in order to bring back capitalism.

Friedrich A. Hayek voiced what theory there is to this approach in his book *The Road to Serfdom*, published in 1944 and still touted in Chamber of Commerce circles. Hayek's thesis is that social and economic planning, because of its complexity must inevitably be arbitrary, and, since it is also pervasive, the arbitrariness is imposed on everyone; consequently planned economy inherently threatens individual freedom. Thus the loss of liberty in the Soviet Union was lodged from the beginning in its resort to planned economy. To this we might answer briefly, deferring for the moment a fuller answer, that something still more complex and pervasive, and therefore arbitrary — if we have found the root source of arbitrariness — is the chaos inherent in a crisis-torn capitalism. This system, then, even on Hayek's assumption must be the ultimate source of the danger to individual freedom in today's world.

A political variation of this same theme is most persistently advocated by those Social Democrats who hold that democracy in the Soviet Union was doomed from the start by the kind of organization that went into the Bolshevik party. This superficial view, like Hayek's, completely leaves out of account the interplay of economic, social and political forces in the Soviet Union and the effects on the young, backward and isolated workers state of the reconsolidation of the world capitalist structure in the twenties.

As a rule, however, the capitalist statesmen, as practical men of affairs, are not much concerned about either the theory or practice of democracy;

they are intent upon protecting the system that puts profits first and resisting any force that stands in the way, regardless of what happens to other values. The Nazi representatives of German capitalism demonstrated this ferociously enough in the years before the invasion of the Soviet Union.

The representatives of American capitalism have demonstrated it in the postwar decade, not so dramatically but equally unmistakably, by their attitude toward the civil liberties and civil rights of minority groupings, by their involvement in the McCarthyite erosion of democracy in America, by their alliances with the Chiang Kai-shek's, Syngman Rhee's and Franco's, their repeated participation in efforts to suppress the freedom-seeking movements of the colonial peoples, and their dictatorial disregard of the universal opposition to the stockpiling and testing of atomic weapons.

The practical experience of the past forty years demonstrates that any "democracy" exported to the Soviet bloc via guided missiles — even if these did not bring the world to the democracy of a radioactive graveyard — would offer little improvement over the "Aryan culture" exported by Hitler's Panzer divisions.

* * *

The discussion of the question of democracy in the USSR among socialists can likewise be traced back to the very foundation of the workers state.

At first, debate proceeded over whether or not the Bolsheviks erred in denying democratic rights to the

ousted Czarist and capitalist elements. The Bolsheviks pointed to the fact that these elements had not only refused to recognize the Soviet government but were conducting unrelenting civil war against it. By withdrawing from the arena of democratic decision and imposing civil war on the new workers government, the capitalists themselves by that very act rejected the framework of democracy. The representatives of the workers republic recognized that they had no choice but to abide by the harsh methods of civil war chosen by the capitalists or give up the socialist revolution and its conquests in Russia. The Bolsheviks accepted the struggle forced on them and won. Although the capitalists have long since stopped talking about their initial attempt to cut the throat of the young workers republic, they complain to this day about "illegitimate" Bolshevik methods.

This capitalist propaganda had its echoes in the radical movement of the time. Such outstanding Social Democratic leaders as Karl Kautsky inveighed against the Bolshevik course. In considering the Social Democratic position, an element of sincerity should be recognized, for the Marxist program does call for widening — not curtailing — democracy with the victory of a workers government, even in countries with the most democratic traditions and institutions such as England. It should also be recognized that the Social Democratic movement was not prepared for a socialist victory in Russia. Neither Marx nor Engels had visualized the workers coming to government power in a backward country like Russia with its vast illiterate peasantry, tradition of autocracy and serfdom and lack of democratic training. The hesitation of a figure like Kautsky and his thought that perhaps the Russian workers should have refused to take power is understandable, even if wrong and harmful.

The Bolshevik leaders argued that the facts of civil war and their inescapable political consequences had to be recognized. Not to have taken power in 1917, or not to defend the workers republic thereafter against all enemies, would have meant the triumph of the worst reaction in Russia. A Soviet victory, on the other hand, could inspire the working class everywhere and accelerate the movement toward world-wide socialism. The Bolsheviks stressed the enormous

difficulties they faced because of the failure of the Social Democratic leaders to carry out the socialist revolution in Western Europe when the opportunity came, a failure they traced to the 1914 debacle of the Second International when the Social Democratic leaders gave up the struggle for socialism in order to back the capitalists in the world's first general slaughter.

In the light of all that has happened in the forty years since the event, the correctness of the Bolshevik position in this sharp dispute surely appears to be certified. If nothing more were involved, the matter could be relegated to the history books. However, two complications, one of enormous proportions, ensued.

First of all, under the intolerable stresses of civil war, famine and the devastation in the wake of World War I, the Bolsheviks felt constrained to temporarily limit democracy in other sections of the population besides the capitalists and landlords. The limitations at one point included prohibition of factional activity in the Communist party itself.

The historian, judiciously balancing accounts decades later, with all the advantages of 20-20 hindsight, may well include these admittedly temporary measures, taken under military necessity, among the mistakes made by the Bolshevik leaders. The fact remains that, apart from these, the workers democracy was very real. It included workers control of the government through soviets, the most democratic political institution that has yet appeared. It included the election and control of officers by the ranks of the armed forces. It included equality for national minorities, the youth and women. As for discussion, Soviet Russia enjoyed a freedom of expression that attracted independent thinkers the world over.

The temporary character of the subordination of workers democracy to the requirements of a successful outcome of the civil war in Russia would have been made evident by another socialist victory anywhere else in the world, for the pressures which Lenin's government felt constrained to counteract by extraordinary measures of dictatorship would have been relieved. As is known, this did not happen.

Another possible source of relief was victory in the civil war and the recovery of Russian industry. This did occur. But about the time that the

partial limitations on workers democracy might have been expected to give way to a new advance of democracy, a second complication, something unforeseen, intervened. A force gathered headway in Soviet Russia itself which was intrinsically inimical to democracy: the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The bureaucracy in its drive to power had to smash the very organs of democracy established under Lenin and Trotsky. It liquidated the soviets. It destroyed the democratic life and socialist integrity of the Communist party by converting it into an instrument of bureaucratic rule. It did the same to the trade unions. It ended democracy in the armed forces, setting up a privileged officer caste modeled on that of the capitalist armies. It purged, framed-up and murdered virtually the entire generation that had led the revolution. It banned independent thinking, putting all fields, including art and science, under government ukase. In place of growing equality it erected special privilege into its guiding principle. It crowned this totalitarian political structure, fittingly enough, with what Khrushchev himself has portrayed as the personal dictatorship of a bloodthirsty paranoiac.

Thus over the next thirty years the axis of the problem of democracy in the Soviet Union shifted from concern with an attempted capitalist come-back and the possible errors of the Bolsheviks to something of a different order — the role of the bureaucratic caste and the task of removing it. The destruction of the very institutions through which Soviet democracy had operated — whether poorly or admirably, with or without flaws and mistakes — made this issue a primary one.

This did not lead, however, to freer and more intensive discussion of the question. With the consolidation of the political counter-revolution which it represented, the Stalinist regime ruled out any whisper of discussion about Soviet democracy. It was the official and unchallengeable creed that both democracy and socialism were in full bloom — and anyone who felt disposed to question this was taken care of by way of purges and frame-ups.

Circles under Stalinist influence outside the Soviet Union did not take this suppression of discussion of democracy as evidence of any lack of

democracy. Instead, for more than twenty years, propaganda picturing the Soviet Union under Stalin's Constitution as the most democratic country in the world was accepted at face value. Mere inquiry into the question was amalgamated with capitalist counter-revolution and those inclined to call attention to flaws in the Stalinist Kodachromes were brushed off as "fascists," "Trotskyists," "agents of imperialism," and so on.

The long-standing taboo was finally broken by Stalin's successors. Khrushchev at the Twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist party ventured to confess some of Stalin's crimes, to criticize some of the late dictator's totalitarian practices and to promise to "go back to Lenin." This ended the hypnosis.

Today, at last, objective considera-

tion and a fraternal exchange of views on this vital problem is possible among the various political currents that recognize and support what is progressive in the Soviet economic and social structure. Many elements both in the satellite countries and inside the Soviet Union are debating among themselves this overriding question on which their fate hinges. In radical circles, particularly in this country, people who were formerly not on speaking terms are now drawing together, probing differences over what can and should be proposed to help restore democracy in the Soviet Union.

With increasing points of agreement, the possibility of united action among socialists in speeding the process already at work looms as a realizable goal.

Socialist, which tends to follow Deutscher's opinions, recently ventured an "educated guess" at a "protracted, see-sawing process" involving both "reform from above" and "action from below."

The *Monthly Review*, on first considering the question, left the answer indeterminate. After a trip to Europe that included a visit to the Soviet Union, editor Paul M. Sweezy took out some of the indetermination: "It goes without saying that the democratization of the Soviet Union will have to be the work of the Soviet people themselves. It will come, if at all, not as a gift from above but as the result of struggle from below. I for one believe that such a struggle will be undertaken, that it will be protracted and in the main nonviolent, and that it can succeed." (*Monthly Review*, February 1958.)

(4) *Socialist Workers*. The position of that school of thought to which the Socialist Workers party belongs has a long history, going back to the bloc formed in 1923 by Lenin and Trotsky against Stalin. From 1923 to 1933 the Left Opposition of Russian and international Communism fought the rising bureaucracy on a program of restoring democracy by means of reforming the Communist party and the Soviet government. Even after Trotsky was exiled and the movement he headed had been crushed, he still sought to achieve a return to freedom through the road of reform. The Stalinist officialdom, however, viewed its usurpation of power as fixed and final and closed all legal means for changing their autocratic political structure. From this fact Trotsky reluctantly drew the conclusion that the new despots had left the masses no alternative but direct action to throw out the Stalinist bureaucrats and put in a new regime of their own choice. Since 1935, therefore, the Trotskyists have seen a political revolution, in which supreme power is transferred from its present possessors to the people, as the only realistic way of democratizing the Soviet Union.

The correctness of this outlook has thus far been substantiated in two respects. First, the Kremlin has vigorously suppressed all political opposition — even potential opposition — not hesitating to use the most fearful terror to this end. Secondly, the workers intent on securing changes have had to take the road of mass

The Various Positions

WHAT ARE the principal roads to democracy in the Soviet Union proposed by currents in the working-class movement? We may classify them as follows:

(1) *Social Democratic Reformist*. This is short on socialism and long on democracy — U.S. State Department style. Discourteous as this judgment may appear, it is not intended as an epithet. Not much study of such publications as *The New Leader* is necessary to reach the conclusion that the editors are most agonized in their appraisals over the lack of fitness — and success — the State Department displays in conducting the cold war. By refusing to see anything progressive whatsoever within the Soviet Union that is worth defending against capitalist aggression, these Social Democrats deny themselves any possibility of assisting or influencing those forces that can bring about the rebirth of democracy in the Soviet bloc.

(2) *Stalinist Die-hard*. In America this position is most consistently represented by the Fosterite grouping in the Communist party. Since the Khrushchev revelations they have reluctantly admitted that certain "excesses" occurred under Stalin; but they claim that corrections have already been made or are well under way. They call for complete confidence in Stalin's heirs as genuine representa-

tives of socialism. They are still inclined to brand as "counter-revolutionary" any socialist who seeks ways and means to encourage and aid the Soviet people themselves in their struggle for democracy in the Soviet Union.

(3) *Pro-Soviet Reformist*. This important body of opinion recognizes that the Soviet political structure is totalitarian, in conflict with the nationalized economy and in need of democratization. The range of views in this grouping is wide. Some think that the bureaucracy is quite capable of reforming itself out of enlightened self-interest. Others that mass pressure will compel such an accumulation of reforms that the eventual total effect will be to dismantle the tyranny. Their general consensus is that progress toward democratization will be made by slow steps and doled-out concessions, with no major, deep-going and irreconcilable clashes between the rulers and the ruled.

On the key question of the relation between the bureaucracy and the masses in the struggle for democracy, Isaac Deutscher, the most influential and informed spokesman for this view, at first placed considerable hope in the self-reform of the bureaucracy. However, after the Hungarian events, he began to put much more stress upon the dynamic role of self-action by the masses. *The American*

rebellion in East Germany, Poland, Hungary and the Vorkuta concentration camp area. It is true that Stalin's heirs have granted concessions, but these have been yielded in attempts to soften the powerful pressures or revolutionary struggles of the awakening masses.

The program of political revolution is not held as a dogma by the Socialist Workers party. It is a conclusion drawn from an analysis of the forces at odds in the Soviet bloc and from the experience of the past decades. It can be modified or revised if further events require it. In any case, the viewpoint is subject to free and full discussion by all socialists concerned with preserving and developing the gains of the Russian revolution, uprooting Stalinism, and participating in the formation of an honest and genuinely democratic revolutionary workers movement. In such a discussion the analysis from which the program of political revolution is derived may not stand up, or it may yield new results due to profounder considerations or to new developments in the changing relation of forces within the Soviet bloc.

With the understanding that the final result of reasoned discussion cannot be decided in advance and that it is best to keep one's mind open, let me attempt a more detailed examination of the three main positions.

* * *

The Stalinist die-hards headed by Foster are in the unenviable status of cult-worshippers whose Great Man-God has been exposed as a murderous Moloch. Their adjustment to the new reality is reduced to trying to find some good in the evil. Their best hope is to reconstitute the cult of unthinking and automatic adherence to whatever heir happens to be wearing Stalin's mantle, in order to sell the "new look" totalitarian regime as "socialist." They have made no attempt to explore in a scientific, socialist manner the material interests and social forces that brought a psychotic dictator to power and kept him there for a quarter of a century. They see no need for any essential modifications in the Soviet political structure.

In this they are simply continuing to read and follow the signals from Moscow. They have not questioned the totalitarian political structure because, despite all the promises about

a "thaw," they have seen no indication in the Kremlin of genuine intention to turn toward democracy. They did not see it under the "collective leadership" that swore collective loyalty over Stalin's coffin; they do not see it now under Khrushchev, who so crudely and cynically shot or dumped his colleagues.

What can be expected from bureaucrats of the Foster type in regard to the Soviet workers struggle for democracy has been demonstrated in the crisis in the U.S. Communist party over the past two years. There were many who thought the organization capable of self-reform (in line with their hopes about self-reform of the Soviet bureaucracy) and who urged that from now on it should try to reach its own decisions and, if occasion arose, voice criticism of errors of other Communist parties or of

Can the Bureaucracy Be Reformed?

THE DESIRE to democratize the Soviet Union through reform of the bureaucracy is reasonable and has much to commend it. Of that there can be no doubt. First of all, it would be the smoothest and most economical road, for it would entail the least disruption. Secondly, it would be the safest road, offering the least opportunity for intervention by the imperialist powers. One can wholeheartedly concur with these sentiments as the preferable way of restoring workers democracy to the Soviet Union.

Another possibility, under exceptionally favorable internal and international circumstances, is that the Soviet masses could mobilize such overwhelming forces and mount so powerful an offensive against a demoralized and divided absolutism that it could overcome the resistance of the bureaucracy as rapidly and easily as Czarism was overthrown. Such a consummation is "devoutly to be wished." It could be facilitated by the fact that, apart from distant America, no foreign army could intervene to crush the popular upsurge, as Soviet troops did in Hungary.

But where such great issues are at stake, and such immense social forces are locked in combat, it would be reckless, it seems to me, for those on the side of the people to count solely

crimes committed by the Kremlin against the working class, as in the case of Hungary. They were met with the response: "Get out of the party." If they left, they faced the charge of "capitulating to American imperialism." John Gates publicly charged that even the party's newspaper the *Daily Worker*, which he edited, was deliberately destroyed by the Fosterites because of the staff's inclination to take independent and critical stands.

Basically the Stalinist Bourbons are committed to some kind of rehabilitation of Stalin — a political miracle to justify not only their past defense of the dictator's crimes and false policies but their present support of the anti-socialist policies and totalitarian institutions administered by Khrushchev and Company. Such a miracle is less likely than the second coming of Christ.

upon the realization of the easiest and most pleasant road of struggle. The better course is to carefully consider just how much realism there is, from our present vantage point, in the prospect of transforming the bureaucracy or ousting it from power by way of reform.

We have just witnessed how obstinately the handful of Fosterite representatives of the Soviet bureaucracy here resist reforming themselves or liquidating their holdings, slim as they are. We have seen how murderously the Kadar's reacted to the Hungarian insurgents. How much more powerful must be the inclination of the million-membered caste in the Soviet Union, especially its top brackets, to cling to the enormous special privileges they enjoy!

In *The Revolution Betrayed*, Trotsky estimated "that 15 per cent, or, say 20 per cent, of the population enjoys not much less of the wealth than is enjoyed by the remaining 80 to 85 per cent." The Kremlin publishes no statistics on such disparities in the USSR, but the evidence is that the inequalities have not diminished since Trotsky's estimate in 1936. The bureaucracy acts like a ruling class, although it is only a parasitic formation, in the persistency with which it advances its own standard of living at the expense of the country as a whole.

These very real material interests are the most formidable block to the surrender of the autocrats and a gradual growth of democracy in the USSR. In fact it was to protect and increase these economic advantages that the bureaucracy crushed Soviet democracy in the first place. Trotsky accurately indicated the root of the totalitarian trend when he observed: "In its conditions of life, the ruling stratum comprises all gradations, from the petty bourgeoisie of the backwoods to the big bourgeoisie of the capitals. To these material conditions correspond habits, interests and circles of ideas." (*The Revolution Betrayed*, p. 140.) Can it reasonably be supposed that narrow-minded, selfish bureaucrats, Russian replicas of the Beck-Meany-Reuther type, long in the habit of allocating the national surplus without any democratic checks, will gradually cut down on what they have been diverting to themselves and their cronies, or gradually hand over to the workers the political power that has assured this lucrative control?

* * *

Isaac Deutscher has argued that the growth of material wealth in the Soviet Union now makes it feasible for the bureaucracy to introduce more and more democracy. If I follow his argument correctly, the greater the wealth, the greater the feasibility of democracy and therefore the greater the chances for its gradual emergence. This is the counterpart of Deutscher's view that the crushing of democracy in the Soviet Union, regrettable as it may have been, was historically inevitable and even, in a certain sense, progressive, for it allegedly made possible the accumulation of capital on which depended the increase in material wealth seen today. Poverty fostered totalitarianism; totalitarianism fostered wealth; wealth should now foster democracy.

At first sight this line of argument is highly attractive. The trouble is, however, that it views the rise and decline of Stalinism as an automatic economic process, directly and wholly linked to the development of Soviet industrial capacity. In this evolutionary process the inner conflicts of social and political forces and the intervention and influence of conscious socialist leadership are reduced to minor im-

portance. Out of moral or humanist considerations the Deutscherite historian can sympathize with those who opposed Stalinism — but actually wasn't their opposition utopian and weren't those who backed Stalinism objectively playing a progressive and even revolutionary role?

A second look at this hypothesis induces even greater caution in accepting it. Isn't it an illegitimate application to quite different forces and circumstances of the Marxist theory about the withering away of the state?

Marxist theory holds that *once socialism is achieved*, the state will begin to lose its function as a repressive instrument. With the loss of its original function, the workers state will decline as an institution. Its growing role in the administration of planned economy will convert it eventually into a simple administrative apparatus in which, we may now suppose, electronic computers will play a considerable role.

The material basis for the withering away of the state will be the increase in wealth, an increase of such enormous proportions as to wipe out all poverty. This theory holds, it must be noted well, only under the achievement of *socialism*. That means an integrated, planned economy on a world-wide scale, or at least among the major countries, a planned economy based on the achievements of capitalism and carrying them forward at an accelerated rate.

Can this concept about the evolution of the state under the socialist plenty of the future be applied to the evolution of the parasitic bureaucracy yesterday and today in the poverty-stricken Soviet Union? There, for all its advances, the country's economic task is still to catch up to the capitalist levels, especially in the living standards of the people.

The role of the Stalinist bureaucracy is not analogous to the role of the state in the first phases of socialism. That state will give truly prodigious impetus to production. The role of the Stalinist bureaucracy has been to retard and mismanage production, to slow down the accumulation of capital, to divert and waste the wealth produced by the workers. True enough, the bureaucrats have been in charge of the planned economy, but it is a considerable error, as I see it, to credit the bureaucrats with the achievements inherent in planning itself.



In the first place, democracy is absolutely essential to the efficient operation of planned economy; a bureaucracy that is inimical to democracy is by that very reason inimical to the flourishing of planned economy. The diversion of the surplus product into plush living for the bureaucracy is also a diversion of that surplus from the expansion of the means of production.

The extra hardships imposed on the workers in the form of miserable housing, poor food, bad working conditions and a drab existence lower the productivity of labor power, the country's greatest resource. Moreover, the general politics of the bureaucracy has profound economic consequences. It should be sufficient to cite the disruptive effect of the pervading atmosphere of fear that is only now beginning to dissipate. In addition, the foreign policy of the bureaucracy has had unfavorable economic consequences; this was demonstrated in catastrophic fashion in the case of the Stalinist policy that paved the way for the German imperialist invasion of the Soviet Union. It was shown again by the explosion in Hungary.

* * *

Granting all this, one may reply, there has still been an observable in-

crease in Soviet wealth and this must have some effect on the bureaucracy, mellowing it, making it more inclined to take the road to democracy. The bureaucracy, as it gains in culture due to increased wealth, is, so to speak, affected qualitatively for the better.

One elemental fact uproots this assumption. Soviet productivity has long been great enough to provide immense boons for a privileged minority but not a high income for the whole population. The increase in Soviet productivity has been far from sufficient to provide abundance for all. At best the increase has been sufficient to provide for a quantitative increase in the bureaucracy or for a quantitative increase in the privileges already enjoyed by the ruling minority. Even at the present rates of expansion, this disparity will hold for a long time to come.

Meanwhile what are the masses going to do? Accept the inequalities passively? Apparently the ruling clique has a fairly realistic appreciation of what the masses are capable of doing, given the right combination of circumstances. *That is why they have not yet granted one single deep-going democratic concession. That is why they strive to retain the entire totalitarian apparatus. That is why they are following the policy of maneuvering, promising, delaying, granting concessions, then again mobilizing their repressive agencies and cracking down.*

The fact is that as Soviet productivity has grown, inequalities have intensified and become more intolerable rather than softening and becoming easier to bear. The increased flow of goods has whetted the appetites of the workers and peasants as it has increased the greed of the bureaucrats. Consequently what we can expect under these conditions is still fiercer strife over the division of the national income between the bureaucracy and the industrial and agricultural producers. Naturally it is to be expected that the bureaucracy can and will throw the workers something in hope of appeasing their most urgent demands, but they cannot give them enough to satisfy their growing material and cultural needs; the bureaucrats will not erase their own privileges nor relinquish the economic and political supports of their own parasitism.

* * *

The means of pressure and protest available to the workers are extreme-

Stalinist "Vigilance"

The widespread mistrust of individual initiative has eaten so deeply into public life [in the USSR] that even when young people join together in publicly proclaimed tasks, they may be met with suspicion and fear. For example, not so long ago a group of Russian youngsters banded together for hikes, games, swimming parties, and also to help keep up their city's parks. Officials of the Young Communist League learned of this extraordinary development, suspected the orthodoxy of a group that had formed without their knowledge, and sent an emissary to the local high school to look into the "secret organization." "It is only natural," *Komsomolskaya Pravda* ruefully concluded, "that the young people are afraid to meet any longer."

—*The Reporter*, Feb. 20.

ly limited under the totalitarian setup. They are denied real participation in collective contracts, setting of work norms, the right to strike. When the avenues of peaceful negotiation are closed, the settlement of differences tends to become arbitrated by means of direct action, the display and exercise of power by both contending parties.

This likewise holds true in regard to political policies. Any lowering of international tension, like the increase in Soviet productivity, tends not to lessen but to sharpen internal frictions. The masses feel freer to put the heat on for concessions. Up to a point they can extort reforms through indirect pressure. But then issues of the most elementary democratic kind arise—the right to organize in the plant, the right to criticism or opposition in the governing party, the right to assemble freely, publish a newspaper, form a party, and so on. How are these questions to be settled? So far, all the concessions have been made within the established totalitarian framework. What happens when the most aggressive sections of the masses start going by direct action beyond these limits? This would signify the beginning of a revolutionary situation heading toward a showdown between the opposing social forces.

Because of the peculiar role of the state in Soviet life, the economic struggle against material inequalities tends to merge with the political struggle for democracy. The government is not only the upholder of the totalitarian political structure but also

the direct employer, the regulator of planning, production and distribution. This imparts extraordinary explosive force to large-scale economic struggles, since a fight over distribution of the national income can quickly become transformed into a political fight over who shall wield state power, the bureaucrats or the workers.

The revolutionary challenge emerges so sharply because the workers cannot achieve economic equality without winning political democracy—and this means deposing the bureaucracy, stripping it of all its arbitrary powers and privileges.

* * *

The increased flexibility of Kremlin policy since the death of Stalin has been interpreted by many as a favorable omen indicating the readiness of Stalin's heirs to turn to the rule of law and reason. The secret police have been curbed, the concentration camps reduced, political prisoners rehabilitated, legal abuses corrected and the artists told to breathe easier.

All of this is undeniable. They are welcome changes. But the limits of the increased flexibility appear to have been rigidly determined. Not even the disputes in the top circles are conducted or concluded democratically. Rule by personal dictatorship has not been ended. The measure of freedom granted the artists was withdrawn by Khrushchev, evidently in fear that the mildest centers of intellectual freedom might become rallying points for popular resistance. The aim of the increased flexibility seems clear—it is not to prepare for the introduction of more democratic reforms but to strengthen bureaucratic resistance against them.

The limits of bureaucratic elasticity stand out even more clearly when we turn to the problem of those nationalities who yearn to throw off Moscow's domination. How explosive these national feelings and stirrings are can be judged from what has already happened in East Germany, Poland and Hungary. The revolutionary potential extends to the USSR itself, especially the Ukraine and the Baltic countries. But will the Great Russian bureaucracy grant freedom to the Ukrainians and the other national minorities any more than it did to the Hungarians? The exploita-

tion of the subject republics, including the East European satellites, constitutes a big source of income for the bureaucracy. If it will not voluntarily relinquish what it wrings from the Russian workers, how can it be expected to act more generously with those less powerfully situated?

The national minorities have already demonstrated that they do not care to wait, hands folded, for that distant day when the bureaucratic satraps reform themselves. Not even new bloodlettings such as the Kramlin visited on the Hungarian people can save the bureaucracy from an eventual accounting. When it comes, we may envisage that nothing will be able to stop the national minorities from gaining their freedom, but it is not likely to come as a gift thoughtfully packaged by the bureaucracy.

* * *

Closely related to the theory of the "mellowing" of the bureaucracy is the theory of "convergence," which has been picked up by such former Communists as Joseph Starobin. The reciprocal relation set up under "competitive coexistence," it is held, will lead to America's democratic practices rubbing off onto the Soviet Union; vice versa, the government planning of economy in the USSR will rub off onto the United States. They imitate us where we're strong; we imitate them where they're strong. The two countries gradually "converge," coming to be more and more alike, each beneficially absorbing the influences of the other.

The best that can be said about the idiocy of this supposition, which leaves out the class struggle, is that it is cheerful. Suppose that only the bad on each side rubs off onto the other, what then? Or the good and bad mutually interpenetrate in such a way as to rub off at the same rate as they rub on?

* * *

In the preceding analysis it may seem that I have treated the Stalinist bureaucracy too much like a true ruling class. This analogy, it may be argued, has strict limits — limits which are, in fact, determined by the pressures exerted upon the bureaucracy. What we are really dealing with,

it may be said in refutation, is a caste structure and a *workers* bureaucracy. As such, whether under attack from the side of capitalism, or, in an opposite way, from the Russian workers, with enough pressure the bureaucracy may be obliged to take a proletarian, even revolutionary, orientation.

There is an element of truth in this contention. However, it is necessary, one must think, to separate out the *aims* of the bureaucracy from the *consequences* of its actions. These do not necessarily coincide.

For example, the bureaucracy may grant a concession, hoping to allay the dissatisfaction of the workers; this may well have the consequence of encouraging the workers to demand more, as it did in East Germany in 1953. On the other hand, the bureaucracy may undertake a repressive action in hope of clubbing down the dissatisfaction; and this may have the effect of infuriating the workers to such an extent as to touch off an uprising as happened in Hungary in 1956.

A concession does not indicate that the bureaucracy has become more democratic. A repressive action does not indicate that the bureaucracy has become more reactionary. In both cases its fundamental character and role remain the same.

The essentially reactionary character of the bureaucracy does not change even when, as in the case of Eastern Europe, it finds itself forced to overturn capitalist property relations, nationalize the economy and institute planning. This was fully demonstrated when the bureaucracy followed up the overturns in Eastern Europe, which were progressive, with a bloody purge and a series of frame-up trials of native Communist leaders modeled on the infamous Moscow trials of the thirties. It was demonstrated again by Stalin's heirs when the "thaw" was followed by the repression of the Hungarian revolution.

The truth is that the distribution of the national income in the Soviet Union occurs, not in accordance with socialist or working-class norms, but in accordance with bourgeois norms. Moreover, it proceeds under the totalitarian political rule of a social stratum differentiated out of Soviet society *in correspondence with these bourgeois norms*. Insofar as distribution of the national income is concerned, it serves a bourgeois function.

The fact that this social formation has not succeeded in extending its bourgeois function to production and property ownership, thereby achieving the status of a true class, does not mean that its personal consumption is any the less *bourgeois* in character. It is the planter, and the promoter, and the protector of inequality in all domains of Soviet life.

The bureaucracy also manages the planned economy and in this function serves, in the final analysis, as a "workers" bureaucracy. But it is a basic error to think that the character of the bureaucracy as a ruling caste is derived from its managerial function. If such were the case, it would have to be called a class in the scientific sense of the term and we would have to add that the nationalized and planned economy of socialism itself will inevitably generate a ruling class — the administrators or managers.

In their thoroughly bourgeois function of siphoning off the surplus for their own personal benefit, the bureaucrats act in complete contradiction to their managerial function. As between plundering and managing, their primary interest is plundering. Since this side is uppermost, Trotsky used the term "parasitism" to describe the contradictory relation of the bureaucracy to the planned economy. The term is exact enough. The utterly reactionary character of this layer of Soviet society does not come from the planned economy, nor from managing the planned economy, as Hayek would have us believe. On the contrary. It is the democratizing efforts of the Soviet masses that derive from the organic necessities of planned economy. The bureaucracy is simply defending its parasitism and that is the source of the tenacity with which this caste defends its totalitarian political rule.

The same conclusion also underscores the uselessness of the bureaucratic caste. The planned economy can be managed better under workers democracy.

However, even if it were true that the Soviet bureaucracy is like a trade-union bureaucracy in every respect, it does not follow that as a whole it is amenable to reform like *some sections* of the trade-union bureaucracy. To base a policy on that perspective seems to me not only illogical but unwise. Political experience advises against counting on the easiest way out of so profound a conflict. It is wiser, if

we are to draw any lessons from the past, to prepare for the more difficult alternative. However, things turn out, the stronger the workers are, the better organized, the more resolute, the

easier the job will finally be. That is also the experience, isn't it, of struggles for democracy in trade unions where a reactionary bureaucracy has become entrenched?

oversize dose like a horse pill. It develops in interlinked stages affecting interlinked fields. If any of the demands of any of the stages be viewed in isolation, or fixed as an end in itself rather than a means to a higher goal, it appears as a reform. If its connections to the demands of other stages be kept in mind, it appears as a transitional step. It is only when the process is viewed as a whole—in its origin, its fundamental aims and final results—that it appears for what it really is, a revolution: an organic qualitative change in whatever structure is involved.

The Program of Political Revolution

LET ME BEGIN by indicating where I can agree with those who prefer to confine themselves to a program of reforming the regime.

The struggle for reforms is surely progressive and worthy of energetic support. There is nothing wrong with peaceful reform; in fact, as I have already tried to indicate, ideally it would be the best way. Moreover, from the Marxist point of view, any partial gains are completely acceptable, and wholly to the good. Above all, it seems to me, one must favor the effort and the struggle.

The reservation which I feel must be made in regard to the reformist position is simply that the struggle, in the course of action, will tend to pass beyond the limits of mere reforms and that such a climactic development should not be rejected if it turns out to be the reality. By peaceful means and measures, if possible; revolutionary resistance, if necessary—this alternative holds true for all struggles of the masses against reactionary forces.

To stand by a program of political revolution does not exclude either fighting for reforms or winning reforms. In fact, it presupposes such a struggle. These can be considered as by-products of revolutionary struggle insofar as they are actually achieved. Such reforms under capitalism as the shorter work day, the right to organize, higher wages, and so on, resulted from truly titanic struggles when they first became working-class goals.

Reforms are partial successes on the road to more definitive solutions of pressing problems: they can stimulate the working class and help prepare the stage for bigger struggles for more decisive goals. Looked at in this way, for instance, the great achievement in winning industrial unionism in the United States in the thirties laid a powerful basis for independent political action at the next stage. The rise of the CIO, I am convinced, will eventually be regarded as an indispensable preliminary stage in the rise of a labor party in the

United States, which in turn will prove but a prelude to the victory of socialism.

At the most advanced stage, reforms, however won, prove inadequate in meeting the needs of the masses, and so the struggle passes beyond the limits of reforms. This has been the experience in every great revolutionary transition. At a certain point the masses are driven to intervene directly and forcefully to set up new institutions of their own choice. We saw this in Hungary where the masses considered the reforms finally granted in response to their pressure to be too little and too late. They set about revolutionizing the entire political structure to bring it into conformity with what they felt were the needs of planned economy. From this experience it seems safe to make the generalization that in the Soviet bloc not even the biggest bounty from the bureaucrats will in the long run satisfy the masses. They want to get rid of the privileged and brutal Stalinist bureaucracy itself and they will not hesitate at direct intervention and open struggle to achieve it.

The program of political revolution in the Soviet Union has been badly misunderstood — and sadly misinterpreted — in the radical movement. It has been pictured as "revolutionary romanticism," a smoking-hot kind of sectarianism that rejects the struggle for reforms in principle, a remote - from - this - world attitude like that of the De Leonists, who haughtily scorn "mere" reforms and who will settle for nothing less than the whole hog delivered at the kitchen door. A more generous visualization sees something like a TV Western where the victimized cow hands organize a posse to shoot up the outlaws who have taken over the sheriff's office.

It is much closer to reality to view the program of political revolution as *the total series of reforms, gained through militant struggle, culminating in the transfer of power to the workers.*

No revolution comes in a single

This way of considering the program will become clearer if we simply project a few successes in what the Soviet people are seeking right now.

Let us suppose that sufficient mass pressure develops to force the bureaucracy to grant the elementary democratic right of freedom of thought in the arts and sciences. What happens next? Intellectuals capable of expressing independent ideas *in these fields* will at once become centers of attraction, especially for the student youth. Their homes, their classrooms, the forums at which they appear will begin to change into incipient clubs for the exchange of opinion. This happened in Poland and Hungary. There is not the slightest doubt that this exchange of opinion will rapidly extend to related problems *in other fields*. The preparation of a cadre of young independent leaders will have already begun.

It takes little imagination to picture the effect of such a success on the Soviet workers. They would begin pressing for acknowledgment of their own elementary democratic right to organize in unions of their choice; and, as in the United States in the thirties, would probably begin organizing committees in the plants even before the right was officially conceded. New incipient centers of organization, paralleling those in the intellectual fields, would thus appear with extraordinary speed. We may be sure that close ties would rapidly be forged between the workers and the intellectuals. Thus would begin the preparation of a cadre of militant union and factory committee leaders.

The preliminary actions of the new union movement will involve the settlement of grievances over working conditions, production norms, hours and wages. A few successes, however, and the struggle would widen to include housing, shortages of basic nec-

essities and the prices of commodities. The logic of this is the organization of consumers committees where housewives play a dynamic leading role.

The agricultural workers, who have a long list of grievances of their own, would soon begin pressing their own demands and organizing committees in their own way.

Long before this, the bureaucracy, we might expect, would have begun considering to what uses the armed forces might be put in stemming the tide. But the Russian workers have had experience along these lines, too. Very likely the rank-and-file soldiers and sailors tied up with the masses would already be pressing their own democratic demands, especially a return to the practice under Lenin and Trotsky of organizing their own committees and subjecting the officers to their democratic control.

Stiff resistance by the bureaucracy would now pose the question of political democracy in all its force. Do dissident members of the Communist party have a right to organize factions, to publish bulletins? Do insurgent workers have a right to organize their own political parties, the right to run slates of their own choice against officially hand-picked nominees? Shouldn't the one-party system in the Soviet Union — as Trotsky proposed more than twenty years ago — give way to democratic freedom for all Soviet parties?

All these developments point to a great new stage — the revival of soviets, the councils where all tendencies and parties meet to discuss and act on policies and problems of government. With the appearance of soviets, dual power would exist in the USSR and the developing revolution would enter its crucial stage.

At every turn in these events, the crisis in the bureaucracy deepens. A section of the officialdom, the section that is capable of responding sensitively to the demands of the people, comes over to the workers at various speeds and in varying degrees, providing fresh sources of encouragement.

The final result is the complete elimination of the bureaucratic caste and the democratization of Soviet life from top to bottom. Industrial management is exercised through factory committees, democratically elected and holding control over the specialists. Government is run once again through the soviets where representatives are subject to instant recall and serve at the same rate of pay as a factory work-

er. The whole hideous apparatus of secret political police, political prisons and concentration camps, which served the totalitarian bureaucracy so well, disappears with the bureaucracy itself.

This type of change is best called a "political revolution" although any one of its stages centers upon this or that demand for workers democracy, which, in isolation, might appear simply as a reform.

* * *

To remove any further misunderstanding, I want to emphasize that political revolution is not proposed as a slogan for immediate action. Nor is it proposed as a slogan for agitation. It is a *strategic line* to be used as a guide for understanding and helping to shape coming events in the whole next historical period of Soviet development.

At present, in the period of preparation, it can be presented solely as a goal, a method, a program around which only the most advanced and socialist-enlightened elements can be rallied. Even in the Soviet bloc it is not suitable for agitation or action, for the masses appear ready to demand and fight for only partial, limited, or if you prefer to call them that, "reformist" demands. But it does seem to me that a general formulation of the underlying aims and the inescapable outcome of the process is an essential part of the struggle and that it should be included in the program of any socialist leadership concerned with the fate of the Soviet workers and their planned economy.

In politics the road to the goal is no less important than the choice of the goal itself. It cannot be a matter of indifference which road is recommended to the Soviet peoples by their authentic spokesmen and supporters in their drive toward democratization. The results attained, and the achievement of the objective itself, can depend in the last analysis upon which course is taken.

The program of reform, it appears to me, moves along the line of least resistance; it relies over-much upon the prospect of a change of attitude and policy within the ruling group and to reliance upon supplication rather than the methods of mass action. The program of political revolution, as I understand it, urges not the slightest confidence in any benevolence of the bureaucrats, hard or soft, but only the independent organiza-

tion and activity of the workers, peasants and intellectuals themselves. It is the line of utmost opposition, aimed at mobilizing the masses to chase out their oppressors in the shortest order.

Finally, I would like to make clear that dissidence and opposition in the ranks of the Stalinist parties and regimes are extremely important, both as symptoms of the mass pressure and as possible points of support for increasing the pressure. We should offer critical support to any tendency, no matter how partially developed it may be, or what illusions it may have, so long as it seriously struggles for democratic reforms.

That includes heads of states like Tito and Gomulka as well as prominent officials or rank-and-file members of the Communist party or those who have left it. Such leaders do not merit political confidence from the workers so long as they have not broken clearly and completely with Stalinism, and adopted in practice a consistent and comprehensive socialist course, but it is surely correct to favor collaboration in organizing and conducting their opposition. As in Hungary, we can expect that many of them, when the showdown comes, will be found fighting in the workers camp against the bureaucracy.

To those fellow socialists who have reached the conclusion that Stalinism must go but are undecided whether or not the bureaucracy can be reformed out of existence in one way or another, I am quite willing to let the test of further events prove which program and perspective best fits the needs of the workers struggle amidst the new conditions of Soviet life. Let's continue the discussion and the exchange of ideas on this process as we join in combatting capitalism and in supporting every effort of the Soviet masses to win back and extend the democratic rights that are indispensable to the development of a socialist society.

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The Struggle in the Communist Party

The rank-and-file desire for party democracy and regroupment of socialist forces in America keeps the fire going under the old-line Stalinists

by Harry Ring

A WORKING CLASS party sympathetic to the Soviet Union, but exercising ideological independence; or an isolated sect functioning as a pliant instrument of Kremlin foreign policy? This is the alternative over which members of the Communist party have fought for the past two years. This is the issue that continues to divide their steadily dwindling ranks.

The division is the product of a crisis that has racked the Communist party since the Khrushchev revelations at the Twentieth Congress of the Russian CP. The persistence of the factional struggle is unique in the history of the American CP. In France and Italy, where the Stalinist parties have substantial mass support, the crisis following the Twentieth Congress was "resolved" — for the time being — through reassertion of Stalinism. In Great Britain and Canada where popular support was lacking, the party bureaucrats met the crisis by driving out all oppositionists, heedless of the fact that this reduced their parties to hopeless Stalinist sects.

In the American CP, the wing of the leadership headed by William Z. Foster has fought grimly, with no holds barred, to end the crisis in the same way, seeking to reconsolidate the battered organization on the old platform of blind apologetics for the Kremlin bureaucracy.

This has not been easy. Sentiment for independence has been strong in the CP since Khrushchev's revelations about Stalin's real role. Consequently, the Foster faction has remained a minority. Despite this fact, they

have been able to pretty much call the tune at each stage of the fight over policy.

First there was the experience of the opposition under the leadership of John Gates, editor of the now defunct *Daily Worker*. The Gates grouping started out with full control of that paper and a heavy majority in the New York organization, which constituted a good half of the party. Gates had significant support in other areas as well.

But Gates followed a fatal course. First of all, under pretext of seeking to deal with American realities, he projected a program of reformism and revisionism which lent substance to Foster's demagogic pretense of being more "revolutionary." Some of the best rank-and-file workers in the Communist party lined up behind Foster because they considered him to be the lesser evil. Even where Gates was correct as against Foster, he failed to maintain his positions firmly. This led him into a blind alley. Top leaders of the faction, including Gates himself, finally declared it hopeless to try to change the party and quit in disgust. A majority of the New York state leadership, according to a National Committee report, simply walked out.

The *Daily Worker*, already badly affected by fast shrinking circulation and income, was given the death blow on January 13, 1958. The Fosterites then took over the weekly *Worker*, converting it into their faction organ.

Yet rank-and-file pressure for ideological independence and party democracy continues to plague the Foster-

ites. Since Gates left, a new and perhaps more substantial opposition has developed. This tendency first registered its views at the December 1957 meeting of the National Executive Committee, a subcommittee of the National Committee. At that meeting, a Fosterite motion to endorse the Moscow declaration of twelve Soviet-bloc Communist parties was defeated by a vote of eleven to seven.

Opponents of the resolution correctly viewed it as part of a drive to reconstitute the subservience of all Communist parties to the Kremlin. They also rejected the resolution's pronouncement that "revisionism" is the "main danger" facing the various organizations. They declared that endorsement of the resolution, with its implicit recognition of the supremacy of the Russian party, would violate the stand taken by the last National Convention in favor of "equal status" for all Communist parties.

At the same meeting in December a sharp debate occurred between Party Secretary Eugene Dennis and Organization Secretary Sid Stein. Dennis and Stein had previously been co-leaders of a grouping dedicated to a "two front" fight against Gatesite "liquidationism" and Fosterite "ultra-leftism." The text of the Dennis-Stein debate, as published in the January *Party Affairs*, a CP bulletin, indicated that Dennis had in fact lined up with the Fosterites, despite his protestations about the need for a "center" course.

Stein, on the contrary, appeared to be expressing the views of a significant section of the party. His arguments

against Dennis followed virtually point for point a resolution presented to the National Committee with the unanimous approval of the party's influential Northern California District Committee.

This resolution assailed the Fosterites as "dogmatists" — a term designating their unmodified Stalinist orthodoxy. It attacked the still-continuing bureaucratic practices and demanded "democratization" of the organization. It declared that the party crisis could only deepen unless recognition was given the right of the membership to formulate party policy instead of blindly accepting everything handed down from above. The resolution also insisted on the right to criticize the regimes in Soviet bloc countries if necessary. Particularly significant was the declaration in favor of active participation in the process of socialist regroupment now going on in this country.

This was not the only manifestation of renewed opposition to the Fosterite line. In the Southern California district a document expressing views similar to those of the Northern California resolution was circulated among the membership. The twenty-two signers of this statement of views are reported to represent the bulk of the leading cadres, including organizers and heads of trade-union fractions. Most of the signers are members of the Los Angeles Executive Council of the party.

These views found their reflection in the West Coast weekly, the *People's World*. Along with four candidates tied to the capitalist parties, the editor endorsed the candidacy of Jack Wright, Socialist Workers nominee for the Seattle City Council in the February primaries.

This action breached the thirty-year stand of the Communist party that Trotskyism is a "main danger," not to be supported in any way, under any circumstances. The endorsement, of course, did not signify agreement with the program of the Socialist Workers party. The support of capitalist party candidates in a suggested "coalition" has been consistently opposed by the SWP as class collaboration. The editorial support of Wright did reflect, however, the growing sentiment of readers of the *People's World* for independent so-

Memo to Dulles

"The establishment of Communist regimes in China, North Korea, North Vietnam and in Central Europe is the result of historic processes which, whether good or ill, cannot be undone by any form of power available to the West; we should accept the situation and learn to live with and deal with it rather than indulge in counter-revolutionary hopes and propaganda which are futile to begin with and ill become the greatest of the conservatives and *status quo* powers."—Walter Millis in *The New York Times Magazine*, Feb. 2.

cialist electoral activity.

It was an indication, too, of the growing realization that the Communist party has no prospect of getting off the ground with the Fosterite line of "go-it-alone and let the rest of the radical movement be damned;" The CP cannot win the ear of union militants who largely regard it as an agency of Kremlin totalitarianism, and it will get a hearing from the radical public, where its prestige and influence are now almost nil, only if it demonstrates willingness to participate democratically in the regroupment process.

The welcome shift of the *People's World* also reflected the growing recognition among many CPers that the old Trotsky-baiting is now out of order.

A generally more positive approach to regroupment, particularly as it relates to attitude toward the SWP, is apparent in other sections. For example, in the December 1957 *Party Affairs* Minnesota party leader Carl Ross wrote:

"... new currents of broader left discussion are emerging in which we must of necessity participate and meet on ideological grounds the Trotskyist views, among others, whether or not we ourselves might consider them a constructive part of the socialist current."

To this Ross adds:

"It used to be written in our party statutes that members should not associate with Trotskyites. We have members today who reject such views of 'sheltering' them from contact with anybody as insulting to their intelligence. It served no useful purpose in the past. It led to the party voluntarily and mistakenly cutting itself off from many good people."

Discussing the possibility of united action in the radical movement, Ross, while repeating some of the ancient anti-Trotskyist nonsense, says significantly, "Certainly it is wrong to boycott a useful campaign because it may be led by Trotskyites."

This is contrary to the position of the Fosterite leaders who have obstinately balked at common discussion and united action with other radical tendencies, especially the SWP. When the American Forum for Socialist Education was organized under the inspiration of A. J. Muste, the CP participated mainly through the unilateral action of the anti-Foster wing. While the Fosterites have not openly condemned the American Forum, they have refused to support it and have spread the charge in the party that the move toward participation in its activities is part of a design to liquidate the CP into the social democracy.

The hostility of this faction toward regroupment was expressed most clearly when a United May Day celebration, including all the radical groupings outside of the State Department socialists and their allies, was organized in New York in 1957. While the Gates wing participated with official CP approval, the Foster faction organized a dual meeting in the Bronx, featuring Ben Davis as the speaker.

The end result of such a course was foreshadowed by the attendance at the two meetings. Fifteen hundred people turned out for the united rally while about a hundred appeared at the Fosterite meeting.

Application of the old-line Stalinist approach paid off in a scandal for the CP in the November 1957 New York-city elections. The party backed the Liberal party endorsement of Robert Wagner, the witch-hunting mayoralty candidate of the Tammany machine. Supplementing this, an official effort was made to discredit the editors of the *National Guardian* and various prominent radicals who endorsed the Socialist Workers ticket. Such support was made out to be "objective aid to counter-revolution."

The contention that supporting a capitalist politician aids socialism and supporting socialist candidates aids

counter-revolution did little to refurbish the CP's moral and political standing in the radical movement.

Despite the derisive laughter, the Fosterites are hewing close to the Moscow line about Trotskyism being a "main enemy." One of the first indications of their editorial policy in the *Worker*, when it came under their full control, was an announcement of refusal to accept a paid advertisement for a public meeting of the Militant Labor Forum featuring a lecture by the distinguished economist and militant civil liberties fighter, Dr. Otto Nathan, on the struggle for peace. The *Worker* declared that because of its opposition to "the Trotskyite group" sponsoring the forum the advertisement was unacceptable.

The deepening recognition of the unfavorable consequences of such a course is one of the principal sources of the opposition to the Fosterite line. Consider what has happened to the CP in the two years since Khrushchev broke up the cult of Stalin and the Polish and Hungarian revolutions exploded.

Such outstanding figures as Howard Fast, Joseph Clark and John Gates have left. Dozens of less prominent members of the apparatus have quietly departed. Thousands of key cadres have stopped paying dues. In fact, whole sections of the party have literally disappeared since the Twentieth Congress. In a report to the National Committee last July, Sid Stein stressed the need for "special attention to cities where the party has completely collapsed — like Springfield and Lawrence in Massachusetts, Cincinnati, Akron, Youngstown and many others across the country." Since last July the trend has not abated; instead, it has continued at an accelerated pace.

In 1956 the party membership was down to a claimed 17,000 from its World War II peak of about 75,000. Today, the top estimate is 10,000 and it is more generally agreed that 7,000 is a high figure.

Was it the worst elements who left the party in droves? Stein replies: "They are not all middle class or professional people. Large numbers of them are workers and many are workers in basic industries and active peo-

ple in mass organizations . . ."

Further losses during this two-year span include the dissolution of the shattered Labor Youth League, the closing of the Jefferson School in New York, the reduction of the *Daily Worker* and *People's World* to weeklies. A further gauge of what has happened to the CP is the change in its fund-raising capacity. In March 1957 a three-month drive was opened to raise \$100,000 for the press. The drive was finally called off after eleven and a half months, still \$14,000 short of the goal. The printer's bill for the *Daily Worker* was admitted to have been long unpaid.

The extent of the disintegration becomes even clearer when viewed in the light of admissions about the condition of the party prior to the Twentieth Congress. For example, here is a picture of the New York party, where about half the membership was then concentrated, as presented by the Organization Secretary in July 1956:

"Over the last ten years we have lost more than two-thirds of our membership . . . Of our present membership one-third are industrial workers. No more than 30-35 percent attend meetings even on an irregular basis. No more than 20-30 percent engage in sustained activities. Our party keeps getting older — two-thirds of our present membership are over 40 years old, with no recruiting taking place." (In his series of articles in the *New York Post* in January 1958, John Gates estimated that the present average age of the membership is "well in the 50's.")

What is the level of activity in the New York organization today with the Fosterites in the driver's seat? They have spread the word throughout the country that since they took over in New York things are rolling again. And if information is limited to what appears in the *Worker*, it really looks like things are humming. In January, for instance, the *Worker* announced a study program that included nine classes, a Friday night Review of the Week and a Sunday Forum.

Here are some facts indicating the true state of affairs: A Sunday forum celebrating Negro History Week, with W. E. B. Du Bois, the distinguished historian, as speaker — 50 present. A forum with party leader Robert Thompson speaking on the Twelve-Party Declaration — 35 present. A

Review of the Week featuring the recent United Auto Workers convention — 9 present, including the speaker. A lecture on Lenin — 10 present. A Saturday morning class for teenagers; fifteen minutes after starting time—the teacher and one lone pupil.

Intent on resurrecting the party as it was in the days of Stalin's infallibility, the Fosterite leadership understands that free discussion is incompatible with kowtowing to whatever clique in the bureaucracy happens to be wielding power in the Soviet Union. That is why they so stubbornly oppose all the efforts to democratize the Communist party.

In the crisis that followed Khrushchev's revelations, rank-and-file members of the Communist party were permitted to speak their piece in the *Daily Worker* and in the discussion bulletins. Their right to organize factions was not conceded but they were permitted to blow off steam for the first time since the Trotskyist Left Opposition was expelled in 1928. The pent-up grievances that poured out were forcefully summarized in a letter from a group of Communist party steel workers in Gary, Indiana, published in the *Worker* of December 2, 1956:

" . . . for the past many years there has been an absence of conventions, of democratic selection of leading people, of the ability of the members to disagree, and most important of all, an absence of leaders consulting with comrades of the branches and learning from these comrades who are in daily contact with the people. From where we sit we see a cleavage in the thinking between the full-time leadership and the rank and file which is so great as to in effect give us two parties."

But Stalinist bureaucratism was so entrenched in the party that two years later—two years of the biggest shake-up in party history — Eugene Dennis, in his debate with Stein, was moved to confess:

"We have continued to suffer also from the deep-rooted evil of bureaucracy. There continues to exist strong criticism by our members that leadership and membership are still separated by a gulf and that the leadership still fails to promptly take the membership fully into its confidence, and that arrogant attitudes to the membership persists on all levels of party organization. Such complaint is unfortunately justified."

It was Stein, however, who indicated the root of the problem. Tying

the issue of bureaucratic practices to that of political subservience to the Kremlin, he said:

"The source of bureaucracy in the Communist Party is the idea that some one can do your thinking for you. That there is a Pope. That there are Cardinals — that's the source of bureaucracy. Once you accept that idea then there can be no democracy! There can be no free discussion. There can be no majority rule."

"Small wonder," Stein bitterly added, "that thousands of our comrades are leaving us *since* the convention and hundreds of our cadres are fed up to here."

Does the Fosterite wing of the leadership view the continuing exodus with concern? Stein aptly summarized the situation when he scored the attitude of Foster and Davis: "Minority or majority doesn't matter. The minority can drive the majority out of the party and has been doing it for ten months."

The significance of these words is worth noting. Experience has demonstrated that compromise with the Fosterites adds strength to their policy of driving out the majority. The National Convention is a graphic case in point. As Stein noted, thousands have left the party since then. Inasmuch as the convention registered a serious defeat for the Fosterites, how is this to be explained?

At the convention the Kremlin effort to stampede the party into the Foster corral failed. The intervention came in the same crass form used to dump Earl Browder in 1945 — a letter from Duclos, leader of the French CP. Duclos branded the views of the anti-Fosterites as "a dangerous departure from Marxism-Leninism" and crudely lumped their position with the outlook of John Foster Dulles. Despite Foster's plea to accept this "sage advice," the Duclos letter was given the brush-off.

By a two-to-one majority, the delegates adopted a resolution declaring the party's intention henceforth to interpret Marxism-Leninism for itself. This vote came after Max Weiss, reporter for the resolutions committee, emphasized that adoption of the resolution meant a decisive break with past practice under which the party "tacitly assumed that the interpretations of the principles of Marxism-Leninism as made by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was ipso

facto valid and that all we had to do was to creatively apply their interpretations to our conditions."

However, before, during and after the convention, Gates made a series of basic concessions to Foster in the vain hope of avoiding a showdown fight. The result of these concessions might have been foreseen.

In advance of the convention, Gates joined in the attempt to bury the dif-

Bourbon Blood Bank

A bill to require racial labeling of blood taken in Georgia for transfusions unanimously passed the Senate today.

Sen. Quill Sammon of Lawrenceville, author, said "this is not a prejudice bill. It is a precaution to preserve the dignity and identity of each race and prevent the mixing of races."

—AP, Feb. 12.

ferences in the top leadership. He supported a weasel-worded "united" draft resolution that could be interpreted by either side as presenting their line. He followed this by capitulating at the convention on the crucial issue of the suppression of the Hungarian revolution. This took the form of a wretched agreement to "neither condemn or condone" the brutal Kremlin assault on the Hungarian workers. Finally, after speaking out, as a socialist must, against the refusal of the Khrushchev regime to take up the question of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, Gates voted for a resolution which averred, without a shred of evidence, that abuses against Jews in the Soviet Union were being corrected and that their rights would soon be restored. The complete text of even this whitewash resolution has not been made public to this day. Gates permitted it to be buried along with a lot of other good intentions.

These persistent efforts to soften the struggle against unreconstructed Stalinism signified the negation of the convention decision to "interpret" Marxism-Leninism independently. The consequence was the mass walk-out from the party.

Despite the overwhelming evidence that compromise with the Fosterite

leaders serves only to cripple the struggle for independence and democracy in the Communist party, there are indications that the new leaders of the anti-Foster grouping have not fully absorbed the lesson of Gates' debacle.

At the meeting of the National Committee in February, the divisions were so deep that only nine members could be elected to the new fifteen-member National Executive Committee. Despite the profundity of disagreement, a new "compromise" resolution on the Twelve-Party Declaration, drafted by Dennis, was adopted, reportedly by unanimous vote.

As with the "united" convention resolution, such a compromise can only further strengthen the hand of Foster, who continues to push his pro-Stalinist line with fine contempt for any "compromise" agreements.

What then lies ahead for those members of the Communist party who wish to make a meaningful contribution to the struggle for a socialist America? The answer lies in the possibility of breaking through the self-defeating compromises that block discussion of the basic causes of the crisis in the CP — a discussion that has, in reality, been thwarted throughout.

Such a discussion involves, first of all, a Marxist evaluation of the economic and social basis of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and the causes of its rise to power, which none of the faction leaders have undertaken.

It involves, in this country, a Marxist examination and criticism of the class-collaborationist policy of "coalition" with the Democratic party which the leaders of all the factions support. It involves active participation in the twin aspects of the regroupment process; that is, democratic discussion of the great issues confronting the socialist movement and energetic support of united actions to advance that movement.

This is the indicated road for all those in the Communist party who want to help bring about the unification of revolutionary socialist forces in this country.

The Politics of Soviet Music

What is the connection between Stalinist power politics and the musical productions applauded in the capitalist world? The fate of the composers suggests an answer

by M. Bernz

IN THE development of Soviet art music, two distinct currents are visible: one, modernistic; the other, conservative and traditionalistic. The first has sought to keep Soviet music abreast of the world main stream. It stems from the internal preferences and necessities of the composers themselves; it also, evidently, has supporters among cultured circles in the Soviet population. The other, the traditionalist current, is slanted to the tastes of urban mass audiences within the Soviet Union, and has been much touted among Stalinist and Stalinist-influenced circles abroad. During the latter depression years and during the war it was held to be the greatest music of its time; but, with the cold war, this conviction has quietly subsided. Interest in it, however, may still be revived — the international political climate will largely determine this.

The modernistic or advanced current, the bureaucracy prefers to regard as bourgeois, or "formalistic." It is "advanced," to the bureaucracy, only in its putrefaction. The traditionalist current, consequently, comes to be regarded as "proletarian," as "people's" music. Beneath this theoretical vulgarization a certain real class difference is nonetheless evident; for, as we shall see, each current tends to wax or wane in conjunction with periods of collaboration or intensified hostility in relation to the encircling bourgeois world. Further, the fluctuations seem to reflect variations in the strength of the bourgeois and pro-

letarian tendencies in the Soviet Union itself.

In its actual substance, the so-called "bourgeois" music simply shares the characteristics of that produced among the more advanced composers in the bourgeois world; while the "proletarian" music is mainly drawn from the musical stuff and sentiment of a bourgeois world that is dead and past. It is noteworthy that this latter music, reflecting the Soviet mass taste and the bureaucracy's deformation of it, is precisely that music which most bureaucracy-haters prefer, and which they mistakenly assume has somehow escaped the bureaucratic stultification.

The primary purpose of the bureaucracy, of course, is to employ art music prestige-wise, to glorify and advertise the regime and its policies. This they can best effect if it remains tuneful, easily grasped, colorful, and safely traditionalistic. Within certain bounds, this results in the stirring popular compositions so beloved by Stalinists and simple music-lovers. Beyond this, it results in the hyper-conservative and scared works that followed the music purge of 1948. These went so far in the direction of bureaucratic glorification and musical inanity that only the security police were left to appreciate them.

The course, consequently, has been backward; that is, leaving aside secondary ups and downs, Soviet art music has grown tamer and more old-fashioned with the years. At no time has it represented the world vanguard; rather has it smoothed the path for conservatism and reaction. And for this, not simply the bureaucracy, but the inescapable mass level of the product and consumer it brought together has been responsible.

The cultural guidance provided by

the bureaucracy is theoretically rationalized, one way or another, upon a serviceable and handy esthetic; namely, that nice-sounding music liked by thousands and millions of persons is better than tonal sophistications such as are liked — if that — by handfuls of cognoscenti.

This is plain and straightforward; it is also susceptible to subtilizations suitable for those who do not care to take it straight. At any rate here, too, there is an element of validity: all great music came to be regarded so by affecting thousands and millions of persons. This it did, however, by percolating through these thousands and millions over some several generations. The bureaucracy, undeterred by this, prefers to lump the process and these multitudes into one generation; and, in principle, with modern means of cultural distribution, the broader propriety of this is not excluded.

Bureaucratism, we can all agree, tends to progressively stifle individuality. This, however, does not mean that there can be no competitive individualism for the mass favor. It simply cannot be addressed to and tested by the market place as it can under capitalism. Instead it has to be addressed to the bureaucracy. But the bureaucracy, as a substitute for the market, tends to be more subject to the mass taste than to its own caprices. In music it does not pay to frustrate or ignore this mass taste; rather, it is expedient to graft the bureaucratic need upon it. It is here, on the cultural, even more than the basic levels of Soviet production, that bureaucratism becomes a brake compelling the quality of the product to spiral downward.

However, to counterpose to all this

M. Bernz is a music critic. His contribution was offered in response to our invitation to discuss questions concerning art and socialism.

the artistic freedom and individuality that is based on the capitalist market place, is an easy and a dangerous error. The way out is not backward, but forward, to socialistic freedom and individuality.

In the garbled conception of art and music as the bureaucracy is forced to expound it, a sprig of validity is nevertheless to be noted. If a socialist art is the product of decades, there is a "Soviet" art, a product of the moment, which serves to promote and protect the social order it grew out of. American popular songs stimulate such fantasies as tend to perpetuate the American capitalist order; and Shostakovich symphonies, in like manner, generate such fantasies as help to perpetuate the bureaucratized proletarian order. It does so with materials held in common with bourgeois society, past and present, even as do Soviet guns and aircraft.

* * *

The bureaucracy, inheriting so much from Czarism, might, it would seem, have inherited the early Stravinsky to give the future Soviet music the most auspicious of send offs. This, however, proved politically unfeasible; also, it was musically utopian; for Stravinsky, no friend of the regime even prior to Stalinism, would not only have occasioned an ideological muddle propagandistically, but worse — neither masses nor bureaucracy were prepared to like his music.

Likewise unacceptable, because he was an enemy of the regime, was Rachmaninov. Eventually, years later, after Rachmaninov was dead and could not disown the function, he was set up as a model for Soviet composers by the bureaucracy's department of musical criticism. Rachmaninov's old-fashioned and innocuous music, despite his politics, finally won him acceptance. Stravinsky, with the same politics but with his best music too harsh and too real for bureaucratic tastes, has remained singly-if not doubly-damned to this day.

Under the Bolsheviks, let us not forget, with the criterion of "for or against the revolution," art and politics were not separated. Lunacharsky's reputed concern for some architectural gems during the insurrectionary fighting, or even his sym-

pathetic tolerance of ultra-modernist pictorial gems later on, was supposed to have earned little kindly comment from Lenin. In music the great works with religious connotation, the masses, the oratorios — these were simply banned. On another front, the musical idioms associated with Schönberg and Hindemith were deliberately not represented; for these were "bourgeois" in the sense that they were ideological advance elements of the encircling and hostile bourgeois world.

During the subsequent period of the New Economic Policy all this changed. Schönberg, Berg, Krenek, Hindemith — all these began to be performed in the Soviet Union. With the restoration of market conditions and the renewal of foreign trade, the art products of the surrounding capitalist world also made their entry. And, just as this intercourse signaled the birth of bourgeois elements in Soviet society itself, so too did it signalize the birth of Soviet music as such: Shostakovich, in 1926, came out with his First Symphony.

This work, possibly, can be regarded as the first of consequence in that genre which can properly be called "Soviet." It was sufficiently distinguishable from that being composed elsewhere; and it was also different from that of the pre-Soviet Russian musical world. Its closest affinity was with music already written by Prokofiev, then an expatriate Russian; and, through Prokofiev, it maintained a certain tenuous bond with Stravinsky.

From the standpoint of musical modernism, all this augured moderately well. But the whole Soviet scene, from the standpoint of capitalism, also augured well. The kulak, the nepman, the soviets themselves in places, and the theorizing of the Bukharin-Rykov-Tomsky group, left only a little more time to be desired. Upon all these, of course, descended the centrist fist of the Stalin faction; and with the kulak and the nepman went the proponents of polytonalism and atonalism. Poor Shostakovich, rising from the promise of his First Symphony to a Second and a Third, awoke to find himself developing in the wrong direction.

(The Second, I have never heard. The Third Symphony, performed in this country in the early thirties by Stokowsky, is quite impressive. Because of its harshly dissonant harmonic substance, and its title, the *May Day Symphony*, it has found

little hospitality in or out of the Soviet Union, however.)

On its musical front, in order to reverse the NEP tendencies, the regime threw its musical guards: proletarian youths flocked into the conservatories; simple-sounding marches, dances, and "working class" songs began to pour out. This was the period of the First Five Year Plan; and work, production, austere living — these were to be the glories of Soviet life. Music and the rest of the arts had to promote the sentiments appropriate to them.

(Some of the "steel"-like and "industry" music of this industrialization period presented in this country again by Stokowsky — was also quite impressive and promising. Moreover, it was even experimental. Orchestras without strings, with hugely augmented brass sections, and various other unorthodox features — on an orchestral and not on the chamber ensemble scale already commonplace elsewhere — these became the order of the day. Here, too, I have never heard any of these works since.)

From the First to the Second Five Year Plan, a change of esthetic evidently became feasible. The esthetic of the First operated in direct relation to the back muscles and stomach cavities of the population. It told them how strong they were, how little of food and other inessentials were necessary to their heroic spirits. The Second Five Year Plan esthetic, however, bore a certain impressionistic element. It sought to entertain the masses into believing how prosperous they were, now that they had attained "socialism."

From coxswains and cheerleaders, the creative artists had to become proud advertisers of the fruits of the recent and continuing labors. For this, Gorky in 1934 gave a new exposition of the guiding principle of "socialist realism," making the fantasies of the bureaucracy's "socialism" the norm. In short, the bread-and-circuses formula was now to become the categorical imperative of art; and the people, it was hoped, would thus be made happy in their own eyes, and tractable in those of the bureaucracy.

Shostakovich, our most representative example of a Soviet composer, obliged with a truly edifying work. His opera *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk*, brought out in 1934, depicts a tale of abundant intrigue, eroticism, and murder; and its music, in all these

respects, remains faithfully realistic. The evening it provides, evidenced by its Soviet and world-wide success, is unquestionably entertaining. Its success, however, lasted only until 1936. For those two years it seemed to fit the temporary relaxed mood; it was permissible, it seemed, for people to be thus edified on both sides of the Soviet border.

Then, in 1936, on the eve of the great purges, the Soviet critics suddenly discovered that this realistic drama was too barbaric to be contained within the bounds of "socialist realism:" the score was declared "fidgeting, screaming, neurasthenic music." Down came the curtain on *Lady Macbeth*: the curtain of a million-fold more murderous drama was about to go up. And Stalin and his henchmen, scared yellow over what was happening inside and outside the Soviet Union, feeling the baleful glare of Hitlerite Germany and their growing isolation within the whole capitalist encirclement, decided that the Fatherland needed something different and safer in art and music.

In 1932 Prokofiev had returned from abroad to become a Soviet citizen. His most popular works soon followed: the G Minor Violin Concerto, the *Lieutenant Kije* and *Alexander Nevsky* music, and *Peter and the Wolf*. Still freshly Sovietized, Prokofiev the ex-cosmopolite probably had no difficulty justifying these conservative pieces to himself. After all, *Kije* and *Nevsky* were only movie scores, and *Peter and the Wolf* was for children. Now, unless he wished to compose music for the feeble-minded, it was about time for him to get back to the musical highroad of the twentieth century.

This was never to be. The Soviet musical highroad led backward — and ever backward. The blast at Shostakovich over *Lady Macbeth* was but part of an unfolding pattern of guideposts; and, in due time, Prokofiev, with his own "bourgeois formalism," became an even more enduring affliction to this same critical opinion. What better road he might have found outside the Soviet Union is wholly impossible to say; for Stravinsky himself was by now bogged ear-deep in his post-*Sacre* curiosities; others were plumbing the charms of atonalism with divining rod in one hand and slide rule in the other; and still others were also taking the road back. Wherever Prokofiev might have fitted in all this,

he at least would have belonged; in the Soviet musical scene, he did not.

Shostakovich, more accustomed to these surroundings than Prokofiev, eventually showed the way: his Fifth Symphony. This stirring and tuneful oddity, admittedly concocted in strict accordance with the bureaucratic prescription, set first the Soviet critics by their enthusiastic ears, and then the whole wide world of Stalinists, semi-



Stalinists, and simple music-lovers. In the then deepening world reaction, of course, the whole rabble of Stalinist and semi-Stalinist liberals could see salvation only by fortifying Western capitalism with tanks, artillery and aircraft, and by supporting the purges and frame-ups of Stalinism, blessed as they all were by the "most democratic constitution on earth."

The bounding hearts, the tramping feet, the clanking tank treads — these were what Shostakovich, in his Fifth Symphony, had set to music. And in it he had forged a Popular Front surpassing that envisaged by Stalin himself. With Shostakovich, not only several classes, but several generations — living and dead — were amalgamated. What bourgeois composer could do as much for imperialism?

Another luminary of this Golden Age in Soviet music was Khachatourian. He specialized in what is professionally — and properly — known as hootchy-kootchy music; that is, music which, through use of a simple scale formula, is automatically rendered "oriental," or "Caucasian," or a number of other things

or places. Something little better than this, the Soviet critics soberly cognized as that folk element without which any music is doomed to be weak and flaccid. The other Soviet composers, plumbing the Russian soul as Khachatourian plumbed the Caucasian, rolled forth the bassoons, and did likewise.

To repeat — the music of this period, commonly regarded as the best of its time by Stalinists, Stalinophobes, and ordinary innocents, could never have been created except by bureaucratic prescription: for it violated, without the slightest doubt, all the inner preferences and scruples of the composers who committed it to paper.

Such was the courting and subsequent honeymoon music of the bureaucratic bid for a pact with Anglo-American imperialism. With the end of the shooting war and the beginning of the cold war, a new turn had to be made. The blasted mementoes of the collaboration period had to go. The composers who had scored with their world-wide hits had to be shunted away from the bourgeois world which had applauded them so vigorously. More important, the war-made speculators and profiteers, the agrarian millionaires had to be put in their places. Most vital of all, the expanding bureaucracy, the technicians and managerial staffs of industry, growing with the reconstruction programs and the technological advances of Soviet industry, had to be put in or had to find their proper proper places.

Before an out-and-out purge could be attempted, a probing action and a demonstration evidently had to be made. The music purge of 1948, striking at the composers and through them at their collateral and higher-up connections, was launched. On February 10 the Central Committee issued its decree. Although, as a piece of musical criticism, it was couched in the purest pseudo-technical gibberish, only a fool would be diverted into a musical decipherment of it; for whatever is real is rational, and what was here rational, was mainly political.

In so far as the general charge of "bourgeois formalism" against the composers had any meaning, it simply signified that the composers were not spending enough time writing works using solo or choral voices to sing texts advertising the virtues and glories of the regime. Furthermore, unless all this was set to nice

comprehensible tunes, the solos, the choruses, the texts, the virtues and the glories would all be wasted on inattentive ears. Like any advertiser in the market for a singing commercial, bureaucratism was paying its money and knew what it wanted.

Zhdanov, Stalin's close henchman, a cop-politician of the best Politbureau timber, and no serious mouth-piece for any artistic opinion, was the spokesman for the decree. Who, consequently, was here speaking to whom? In a case like this, it was evidently the social layers in which the composers moved that had to pay heed. Presumably, as we shall soon see, the composers paid only half a heed; and their friends paid none at all.

Shostakovich, for instance, while carefully writing concert hall works in the officially approved style, at the same time continued to write chamber works full of the officially condemned "bourgeois formalism." (His Tenth Symphony, appearing in 1955, long after the purge, is tame and compliant; but string and piano works, written in 1949 and 1951 soon after the purge, are full of the "cacaphony" and "dissonance" of non-compliance.)

Chamber works, we must note, are not for concert halls, are not for the popular masses; they are for some kind of cognoscenti; and in the Soviet Union these elements could only be found among the bureaucratic layers, particularly of the younger, more educated generation. Furthermore, these elements would represent those with the decisive skills in production, the ones who could best afford to devote their surplus time and resources to something other than bureaucratic politics. When Zhdanov and his co-thinkers therefore tagged as "bourgeois" the music supported by these layers in common with corresponding types in the bourgeois world, while the evidence is one of circumstantial association only, it is not without social foundation. Something similar happened, we must remember, in the earliest period of the Soviet state; and it happened in the swing from the NEP to the First Five Year Plan.

If Shostakovich and the social fabric he was part of survived Zhdanov's attack, Zhdanov himself did not. He died under obscure circumstances; and much of his bureaucratic entourage, according to

some, perished in the purge that unfolded in the buffer countries and in the Soviet Union. Whether this had anything to do with the clash of forces represented by the music purge, we do not yet know.

The actual event supposed to have triggered the music purge was the production of an opera *The Great Friendship* by a Georgian composer named Muradeli. (Some of his music, performed here by the Philharmonic under the inescapable Stokowsky, is of the same general idiom as Khachaturian's. It is competent and colorful; also, it is not overly consequential.) The subject of its libretto, the "great friendship" between Lenin and Stalin, did not seem to be the target of the attack. It was its music which was diagnosed as "formalistic," "tuneless," and so on. Hence, unless the attack was aimed at separatist tendencies then becoming manifest in the Georgian Republic (against the central bureaucracy, or against the Great Russianism, or whatever else) its significance remains unclear. One thing, however, is reasonably certain: Muradeli's music, judging from the above-cited example, is scarcely such as would excite much condemnation, much approbation, or much of anything else.

* * *

Stalin's demise was followed, in musical circles, by a few notable events. For one thing, Prokofiev, the best and the most cosmopolitan of the Soviet composers, and hence, to the bureaucracy, the most bourgeois, and the most vilified since the 1948 decree, quietly and inconspicuously died. Of the top layer of Soviet composers, he was the most independent, the one furthest from servility. He was notorious for his caustic tongue, and for his success in finding targets for it. He was contemptuous of the politicians; and, during the meeting when the composers were lectured by Zhdanov, he was supposed to have sat through the session with his back to the great man.

After his return to the Soviet Union and the passing of this popularity, he seems to have sunk into some disillusionment. Taking full note of whatever might here be personally praiseworthy, we must not forget the following: he was indeed the most bourgeois culturally among his colleagues; consequently, his re-

bellion against bureaucratism was not from any socialist grounds, but from those of ordinary bourgeois individualism. Most of the Soviet composers, it must be remembered, were inherited from the Czarist period. This includes such as Miaskovsky, and, only to a lesser degree because he was younger, a Shostakovich. Prokofiev was more individualistic than any of these, not so much because of his similar Czarist years as because of his lengthy residence in such cosmopolitan centers as Paris, Chicago, and the Bronx.

This should remind us that, for the bureaucratized Soviet Union, competent composers could only be of such origin as would bring an added social deformation of the regime. As a spontaneous counterweight to these, with their entourages of admirers, their clique alliances with critics, editors, performers, opera and concert hall managers, there arose a group of musicians and composers whose successes were scored in party instead of musical circles.

In the 1948 purge, for instance, Khachaturian lost his post as general secretary of the composers union to one Khrennikov, a party stalwart and composer of no known consequence.

Thus the Soviet rejoinder to the cold war undertaken by American imperialism struck the real artists, the ones with know-how. In conclusion, just as the bureaucracy reclaimed Rachmaninov as its own — for his sweet tunes and his Russian heart, so too may the world bourgeoisie reclaim Prokofiev — for his clever tunes and his individualistic spirit.

Shortly after Stalin's death Khachaturian stated in the magazine *Soviet Music* that "a creative problem cannot be solved by bureaucratic means." A couple of months later, Shostakovich gave the same message in the same magazine. Here again: who is speaking to whom? If Malenkov was already beginning to dismantle old-line Stalinism, were these two set the task of further dismantling Zhdanovism? An operatic performance June 27, 1953 seemed to offer the answer.

The opera was *The Decembrists* by Georgi Shaporin; the libretto was by the veteran literary toady, Alexei Tolstoy. This opera, begun in 1925, revised in 1937, revised again in 1947, was thus finally premiered in 1953; that is, its career in and out of limbo coincided almost inversely with that of J. Stalin himself. Its

premiere, however, made up for the delay. The story, which is about an army officer group's attempted overthrow of Nicholas I, who was notorious for his corps of secret police, brought out Premier Malenkov in his first public appearance since Stalin's death. Equally noteworthy was the fact that among the dignitaries accompanying Malenkov, Beria, chief of the late Stalin's corps of secret police, was conspicuously absent. His absence, it proved, was permanent.

Prior to the 1948 purge, the Soviet composers had already perfected a style quite free of "bourgeois formalism." It flourished in a couple of varieties. There was the out-and-out propaganda-poster work, with suitable text lauding The Leader, or some crash program in swamp drainage, or something; and there was the monster orchestral work — bigger longer, louder than anything any bourgeois composer could afford. Shostakovich's celebrated wartime symphonies, drawn out of the safest portions of his Fifth, well padded with adagio writing and wood-wind interval effects, are fair examples; and, to disarm any accusation of gold-bricking, such a work could be polished off with a snappy race-track finale.

When the purge came in 1948, therefore, there was little of anything alive to meet it. Shostakovich could shortly fulfill its dictates with his *Song of the Forest*, a truly vegetable-like work designed to propagandize a reforestation program. Prokofiev's Seventh Symphony, completed in 1952, tops even this with an aimlessness which defies criticism from any quarter. Kabalevsky's Fourth Symphony, featured in the 1957 Philharmonic season, is, however, incautiously definite enough in places to provide a few grounds for complaint.

The death of Stalin, the fall of Beria, and the revelations of the Twentieth Congress all had their liberating effect upon the Soviet musical world. The 1948 decree had proscribed a long list of works, allegedly rife with "atonalism," "cacaphony," and the like. After 1953 the composers could not only sport a few modernisms in their esoteric output; they could, through their cronies in musical journalism, seek to extend these practices into their official output.

But their newly won freedom, if

it prospered with these events, was soon to decline with the removal of Malenkov (and Molotov and others) from the Soviet Presidium in 1957. With this occurrence, the elements supporting the new freedom must have suffered a setback. The current policy presages a tighter party-police hold upon the arts.

Shortly before Zhukov's removal, the Oct. 14 *New York Times* reported that the editors of *Soviet Music* had been fired some time previously. (This is the publication in which the Khachatourian-Shostakovich attack on bureaucratism was made shortly after Stalin's death.) What had they been fired for?

The views they had been expressing, in varying degree since 1953, were reported thus: they defended "atonal music;" they ridiculed proponents of "melodious music;" they regarded the recent period in Soviet music as one of "murky stagnation;" they supported the theory that "great art works were not immediately understood by the masses of the people."

In short, instead of speaking for a unified and disciplined bureaucracy through the party, these editors and critics had been able to speak directly for those elements they themselves belonged to.

* * *

Perhaps it would be prudent to conclude with some observations which complicate rather than contradict the picture thus far developed. The Russian-American composer Nicholas Nabokov, who has had some contacts with the Soviet musical world, informs us that our notion concerning the popularity of certain Soviet composers is somewhat exaggerated. Shostakovich and Prokofiev, he holds, are not so much "liked" in the Soviet Union as "admired."

On strictly musical grounds, this sounds unclear; records of concert attendances, and similar data, seem to contradict it. However, this observation could still be accurate so far as the main mass of the Soviet population is concerned. It could "admire" these figures without either "liking" or being particularly interested in them. They could be admired as world figures; and as world figures — figures of cultural consequence in the lands of capitalism, they represent a particular kind of political property appreciated by the bureaucracy.

A few further points on Prokofiev

are here instructive. Throughout the late twenties and early thirties, before and after he became a Soviet citizen, he moved freely in and out of the Soviet Union, pursuing his composer-pianist career with as real a material base in capitalism as in the bureaucracy. And during this period, he was the most celebrated and pampered of any of the Soviet composers.

Toward the late thirties, however, Shostakovich, a simon-pure representative of the caste, definitively emerged as the leading Soviet composer. Prokofiev began to recede into a kind of emeritus status. This continued until the music purge of 1948. And here, suddenly, on the list of those who had sunk deepest into "bourgeois formalism," the name of Prokofiev led all the rest.

There is some conflict in testimony on Prokofiev's reaction at the time; according to one source, as already stated, he treated Zhdanov's musical criticism with contempt; according to another, he was already a bureaucratically battered figure, too sick to even attend the Zhdanov meeting. In either case, he defied the Zhdanov decree to the extent of recanting more tardily and more conditionally than the others. As a consequence, his whole past of bourgeois associations was now flung at him unremittingly; deeper and deeper layers of "bourgeois putrefaction" were laid bare in his music.

Prokofiev, by degrees, tried to conform, to capitulate. Each new composition outdid its predecessor in banality and conservatism. No longer a man of two worlds, he tried belatedly to integrate himself into the bureaucratic pile he had formerly adorned. He is supposed to have left his wife and children at about this time. Then he married the niece of no less a personage than Kaganovich; and, in collaboration with her, attempted a comeback with a new opera. In the fruits of this labor, however, the critics, after a couple of suspense-filled rehearsals, only discovered a new mare's nest of Prokofievian putrefaction.

In all this, during the years following the music purge of 1948, there was more than a rude twitch of the Kaganovich mustache; Stalinism itself, menaced by even more unruly forces, seemed in desperate need of diverting attention from itself and of preventing the formation of independent-minded groups even in music circles.

BOOKS

The Experts Report on the New China



by John Liang

MAO'S CHINA, by Ygael Gluckstein, The Beacon Press, Boston, Mass. 1957. 438 pp. \$8.50.

This book is a serious and substantial addition to the growing body of literature about revolutionary China. It is a comprehensive and thorough economic and political survey based mainly on official documents of the Peking government — laws, decrees, speeches, reports, etc. — and the Chinese press. Like most other writers on the subject, the author is not at all friendly to the regime of Mao Tse-tung. This has its positive as well as its negative aspects, for in contrast to the apologists for Stalinism, he presents the new government and party bureaucracy in the cold light of reality, not through rose-tinted glasses.

Without his ever making it explicit, one gathers that Gluckstein's views of the Peking regime flow, not from any hostility to socialism and revolution, but from a deep antipathy for Stalinism with all its anti-democratic and totalitarian practices. Indeed, he brings out clearly the remarkable similarities between the Maoist regime of bureaucratic absolutism in China and its Stalinist counterpart in the Soviet Union. He describes the "leader cult," police control of the population (complete with a system of internal passports), bureaucratic mismanagement of the economy, with a special chapter on "The New Privileged."

That's one side of the picture. He

also deals extensively with the development programs of the new regime and with the actual accomplishments, properly relating them to the inherited backwardness and also discussing general problems of China's economic development.

Especially interesting is the chapter on "Regimentation of the Working Class." Gluckstein points out how Mao's rise in the Chinese Communist Party coincided with a transformation of its social composition — from proletarian to peasant. By 1949, he shows, there was a "complete divorce" of the party from the working class. The Shanghai workers, in 1925 when they staged a general strike, and in 1927 when they struck again and seized the city in an armed uprising, established a revolutionary tradition that seemed forgotten in 1949 when the People's Liberation Army marched in. The workers were merely passive spectators of their own "liberation." Mao's strategy of reliance on the peasantry, the author says, completely contradicted the Leninist-Trotskyist conception of the leading role of the working class in the revolution.

"In fact," says Gluckstein, "the Communist leaders did their best to prevent any workers' uprisings in the towns on the eve of their being taken." To prove it, he cites a proclamation by Red Army Gen. Lin Piao just before the capture of Tientsin and Peking and a special proclamation by Mao and Gen. Chu Teh at the time of the crossing of the Yangtze

River preceding the occupation of Shanghai, Hankow and Canton.

The fear of revolutionary action by the workers and the manifest attempts to head it off were in line with what was to follow. Says Gluckstein: "After occupying the towns Mao followed a consistent policy of regimenting and atomising the working class, and subordinating it to State and Party." This he goes on to substantiate with an impressive array of facts.

Ending his volume on a note of pessimism, Gluckstein expresses the belief that China will prove to be "the strongest and most impregnable citadel of Stalinism. As China's backwardness is so much greater than Russia's — not to speak of Russia's European satellites — her working class so small, and lacking in cohesion and culture, the forces compelling the bureaucracy to grant concessions, perhaps even threatening to blow up the regime through revolutionary explosions, are much weaker in China than in Russia, and even more, than in Eastern Europe. In all probability, if revolutionary events elsewhere do not cause China's course to be steered along a different path, she will have to pass through a generation, perhaps two, before the rule of the bureaucracy is threatened. The present regime in China, if she is kept in isolation, will probably make its Russian Stalinist precursor seem mild, by comparison. Mao's China is and will be an important factor strengthening Stalinist exploitation, oppression and

rigidity in the 'Socialist Third of the World.' "

In face of the retreats and concessions forced upon the Soviet bureaucracy; the revolutionary uprising against Stalinism in Hungary; the continuing incipient revolts against Stalinism in Poland and East Germany; and, above all, the recent revolutionary history of China herself, Gluckstein is overgenerous, one might say, in allowing Chinese Stalinism a life-span of one or two generations. He also takes no account of the rapid growth of the Chinese working class, numerically and culturally — the Achilles heel of the new bureaucratic regime.

THE CHINESE ECONOMY, by Solomon Adler. Monthly Review Press, 66 Barrow Street, New York 14, N.Y. 1957. 276 pp. \$5.

Long ago, before the present era of wars and revolutions set in, writers and politicians who vaguely apprehended the dynamics of history liked to quote Napoleon's reference to China as a "sleeping giant." They felt sure the giant would some day awaken and teach the rest of the world a thing or two. Solomon Adler's book, describing China's amazing present-day development, is striking confirmation of their premonition. Little did they suspect, however, that the giant would not awaken just in order to pick up where his ancestors had left off, but would stand in the forefront of the greatest revolutionary transformation of all time.

During the last, dying stages of the effete Empire ruled over by the Ching (or Manchu) dynasty, through the ensuing war-lord period, and finally during the twenty-year Kuomintang dictatorship, China's economic and social life moved sluggishly, almost unchangingly, in well-worn ruts. Today, as a result of the destruction of the Kuomintang regime and the expulsion of the imperialists, it is flowing rapidly in wider, deeper channels. Adler's careful study documents the process to date and forecasts, at least inferentially, what is to come.

The revolution that led to the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949 liberated China's economic forces and resources from the integument of an outworn system of social relationships and furnished the impulse for immense forward strides in all spheres of Chinese life. The pace of industrial development during the past eight years has already given assurance that China's transformation from a backward agricultural country to an advanced industrial country will be more rapid than was the case with Russia. China's economic program proceeds, not upon the technological levels of yesteryear, but upon those of today. Among other things, it will use atomic power.

Every politically literate person wants to know what is going on in China, land of 600 million people, more than a quarter of

the world's population. Adler's book brings together a wealth of socio-economic data. The author was sent to China by the U.S. Treasury in 1941 and spent six years in the country. As acting American member of the Stabilization Board of China (which stabilized nothing), later as U.S. Treasury attaché at Chungking and Nanking, he acquired a considerable insight into China's economic problems. This book, in which he makes no effort to conceal his pro-Peking partisanship, is the outcome of a continuing interest in the subject, for Adler left China in 1947, before the Communists took over, returning to England, where he had been educated at Oxford and the London School of Economics.

Adler's material encompasses China's resources, recent economic progress, industrialization and planning, the first five-year plan, agriculture, transportation and commerce, finance, living conditions and education, foreign trade. Appendices provide statistical tables and extracts from the Common Program and Constitution.

The giant is awake. Adler's book gives you the first promising results of the awakening.

UNDERSTANDING CHINA, by Earl Herbert Cressy. Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York. 1957. 278 pp. \$5.

Here is a book by a well-known Sinologue, one of those Old China Hands who spent the best years of his life "doing good" as an American missionary, only to have an honored and comfortable career abruptly ended by a revolution his learning had not taught him to expect. He dislikes the "Red" regime most heartily and shares the U.S. State Department's attitude toward it.

The purpose of his book, Dr. Cressy tells us, is to furnish historical background for current Chinese events and thus facilitate understanding of them. Alas, his history is largely of the barren textbook variety, revealing little of the dynamics of historic progression. But by squeezing a wealth of fact into the framework of arbitrary interpretive constructions he comes up with a thesis to the effect that "Communism" is a kind of maverick current running counter to the mainstream of Chinese history and therefore has no future.

It thus appears that Dr. Cressy, under the guise of scholarship, has engaged in politics — the politics of counter-revolution. The real purpose of his book is to provide an ideological basis for those politics.

There is a rather startling lapse from the correct Christian attitude of brotherly love for the heathen in one of the chapter headings: "Mao Mobilizes Rural Riffraff." The riffraff were landless peasants or oppressed tenant farmers who dared to covet land that could only be obtained by dispossessing the landlords.

Like Senator Knowland, Dr. Cressy pins his hopes for a counter-revolution in China on Chiang Kai-shek. Formosa, he says, "remains of great value as a symbol of freedom . . . hidden in the hearts of millions . . . who have learned to hate the communist regime."

How a military-police dictatorship can be

a symbol of freedom is something Dr. Cressy does not try to explain.

NO DOGS IN CHINA, by William Kinmond. Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York. 1957. 211 pp. \$4.95.

Why are there no dogs in China, except for a very few pets owned by the still well-to-do and obliged by law to be kept under strict control? The author, a Canadian newspaperman, asked the question of his Chinese interpreter in Peking. The reply, as he reports it: "They were all killed when the U.S. started germ warfare in Korea. We found the dogs were carriers of the germs so we had to destroy them."

The author, incredulous, said to the interpreter: "Surely you don't believe that there was any truth to the reports of germ warfare. You are too intelligent a person to swallow that propaganda." He found that the interpreter was indeed quite serious.

Since he cannot accept the germ warfare charge, our newsman opines that the dogs were really exterminated because they consumed food needed by the people in a country chronically short of food. With a better knowledge of China he would have been aware that, except for the privately kept pets of the few rich, China's huge dog population consisted of hordes of starving, mangy, often hairless curs, abounding in every city, town and village. They never in any way significantly diminished the human food supply, for as homeless scavengers they subsisted on garbage — garbage that under Chiang Kai-shek's regime had already been picked over by homeless human scavengers. Their extermination was a necessary measure, regardless of the truth about germ warfare.

The chapter on dogs, which gives the book its title, is one of a number of articles on various aspects of life in present-day China which Kinmond wrote for the *Toronto Globe and Mail* in the course of a two-month visit in the spring of 1957 and which he rehashed and embellished for publication in book form.

In a preface, our newsman assures us that "to the best of my ability as a newspaperman" the book is "an unbiased and accurate account of how 650 million Chinese are faring under a Communist regime." The book, however, exudes bias. What's perhaps worse, it is permeated with the spirit of condescension that always marked the imperialist attitude toward China. Thus, on the train trip to Canton from Hongkong, Kinmond refers to the "mouthings" coming over the train's radio. Though the loudspeakers were "spouting I knew not what (I) could only assume it was propaganda." Quite a nice, friendly, unbiased attitude with which to begin his tour behind the "Bamboo Curtain"!

His first interpreter, in Canton, was a Miss Fen, he tells us. She is the subject of another typically friendly appraisal: "Her white bobby socks and low-heeled shoes did nothing to generate an illusion that she had even a trace of the legendary oriental feminine charm. These vital statistics are not, however, an effective measure of the unbounded energy of this product of the new China whose precise, stilted English was acquired from a textbook

at the University of Shanghai." This, if you please, from a man totally ignorant of the Chinese language!

Taking note of these and other examples of the author's objectivity, the reader will approach his reporting with the needed reserve. He saw the ancient city of Peking, with its wealth of artistic, architectural and scenic wonders as a mere "brassy veneer" overlaying a backward, dirty, ugly country. He doesn't actually say that all Chinese looked alike to him, but he gets pretty close to it with the inane remark that "in Peking all intersections appear to look alike and, in fact, do."

Accustomed to the conservative Western diet of Toronto, he evidently felt that Chinese food, like China and its people, were inferior. He found meals no problem in the Peking hotels, where, thank goodness, "a fair attempt is made to provide European-style food as a change from Chinese, which is all that can be obtained outside the hotels." But the menus, for the benefit of linguistic ignoramuses like himself, were printed in English, Russian and Chinese — something he'd never find in Toronto, or even New York or London.

Kinmond repeats the well-worn idiom that "Communism . . . is alien to the Chinese nature." Yet the story of mankind is largely one of changing social habits, which is what the author means by "nature." He himself bears witness to this when he reports the "almost painful honesty of the people of China. It is practically impossible to persuade them even to accept a tip, especially if they are employed by the government." Yet before the 1949 overturn foreigners in China were wont to remark that tipping and petty graft were second nature to the Chinese! Eventually, the Chinese may even get rid of the national spitting habit which Kinmond, like most other visitors, finds so obnoxious.

With so much to object to in the new China, it is a little surprising to find the author making, at the end of his book, summary acknowledgment of the revolution's accomplishments. The currency has been stabilized, official corruption has been ended. Prostitution has disappeared, so have the swarms of beggars. "There is the beginning of an efficient public-health service in China: new railways are being constructed and old ones rebuilt, a new industrial base is being constructed well inland, less vulnerable to military attack; a long-range program is under way to control the country's rivers." The unified country has acquired a national pride never known before.

Our newsman merely confirms here the observations of many others. Stagnation has given way to life and movement. Yet the author denies specific credit to the revolution. "With or without them (the Communists) it seems reasonable to assume that some progress would have been made during the years since the revolution. No country, not even China, can stand still." But during the twenty-year dispensation of Chiang Kai-shek China did, economically and socially, stand still. Incidentally, it is the author's ignorance of pre-revolutionary China that prevents him from appraising properly, i.e. comparatively, the progress that has been made.

Kinmond found China a veritable beehive of activity in all spheres of economic, social and cultural life. Despite this, he finds it possible to declare that life for the Chinese people "is a dreary affair." There are no night-clubs or honky-tonks, no strip-tease shows, no Hollywood extravaganzas. In short — no fun!

Hongkong, where he spent all of forty-three hours, was much more attractive to our sophisticated Canadian reporter. It had "bright lights, gaiety, music, pretty girls, good food, and comfortable hotels — all the

things in life we of the Western world have come to view as commonplace."

Hongkong also has abysmal slums. Most of the teeming Chinese population live in terrible poverty. The prostitution of young girls is a large-scale, organized racket tolerated by the government of the British crown colony. There, too, a system of actual child slavery known as *mui tsai* is still practiced. This side of Hongkong's visage our author apparently did not concern himself to see or report.

Geniuses at Work

THE TURN OF THE TIDE, by Arthur Bryant. Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York. 1957. 624 pp. \$6.95.

Utilizing the diaries and autobiographical notes of General Sir Alan Brooke (now Field-Marshal Lord Alanbrooke), who was then chief of Britain's Imperial General Staff, Arthur Bryant has succeeded in constructing a highly readable, in part illuminating, account of World War II from its outbreak on September 3, 1939 to the surrender of Italy on September 8, 1943. Another volume is promised that will bring the narrative along to the defeat of Germany and Japan.

In Bryant's view, Brooke was a military genius, though Brooke himself, as revealed in his diaries, appears as a military leader of quite ordinary stature with a modest view of his own abilities. Brooke and Churchill represented a "Partnership in Genius," the title of Bryant's opening chapter. It was this partnership that won the war for the Allied powers. The huge armies, the struggling, suffering, bleeding, dying soldiers, the bombed and gutted cities, the endless streams of war refugees — all this is quite incidental to the scintillatingly brilliant performances of the two geniuses of the imperialist conflict.

In Franklin D. Roosevelt, General George C. Marshall and the stubborn Admiral Ernest King the British geniuses met their counterparts. Despite surface amicability, not much love was lost between them. There was present in the Britons' minds, for instance, the not ill-founded suspicion that the Yankees wanted to trade military aid for chunks of the British Empire.

The Americans, for their part, felt that the British were less concerned with defeating the Axis than with the conservation of the Empire. The British, it is also clear, considered the Americans novices in war. They accepted Eisenhower as North African commander and later as commander of the invasion of Fortress Europe though they had scant confidence in his abilities. Brooke's estimate of Eisenhower, whom he came to know quite intimately, is one of the bright spots of Bryant's book. He writes:

"I was beginning at that time [November 24, 1942] to feel uneasy about the course of operations in North Africa. Eisenhower seemed to be unable to grasp urgency of pushing on to Tunis before Germans built up their resistance there. It was a moment when bold and resolute action might have gathered great prizes. Eisenhower . . . was far too much immersed in the political aspects of the situation. He should have left his deputy, Clark [General Mark Clark] to handle these and devoted himself to the tactical situation . . . It must be remembered that Eisenhower had never even commanded a battalion in action when he found himself commanding a group of Armies in North Africa. No wonder he was at a loss as to what to do, and allowed himself to be absorbed in the political situation at the expense of the tactical. I had little confidence in his having the ability to handle the military situation confronting him, and he caused me great anxiety . . . He learnt a lot during the war, but tactics, strategy and command were never his strong points."

This harsh but evidently justified estimate of the abilities of the future President of the United States Brooke softened somewhat by writing:

"Where he [Eisenhower] shone was his ability to handle Allied forces, to treat them all with strict impartiality, and to get the very best out of an inter-Allied force. In all the early times he was uncommonly well served by his Chief of Staff, Bedell Smith, who had far more flair for military matters than his master. In addition Ike was blest with a wonderful charm that carried him far; perhaps his great asset was a greater share of luck than most of us receive in life. However, if Ike had rather more than his share of luck we, as allies, were certainly extremely fortunate to have such an exceptionally charming individual. As Supreme Commander what he may have lacked in military ability he greatly made up for by the charm of his personality."

Strategists in the Republican party high command also seem to be arriving at the conclusion that Ike's one positive quality is his grin.

J. L.

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