

Summer 1962

**INTERNATIONAL  
SOCIALIST  
REVIEW**



*A Marxist Analysis  
of*

**C. WRIGHT MILLS'**

**"The Marxists"**

by William F. Warde

**Privilege and Progress in the U.S.S.R.**

by Daniel Roberts

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# Correspondence

## Editor:

I have just read the Spring 1962 issue. It has been around some time, but I have just gotten around to it.

Your Mr. William F. Warde and Mr. A. Binder seem to be beating around the bushes, lacking facts.

Being lazy I will not go into great detail, but will say that during my stay in the Soviet Union in 1958 I saw no evidence that queues were bothering people. In stores there were a few at the cashiers' stands, a few at the hot piroshki stands, to buy new editions of books and to get into the shows. I did not see any in the regular stores caused by the shortage of anything. I am going back this summer so I will take another look.

As for the food issue both of these gentlemen could settle the matter with copies of publications issued by the United States government. (1) **FOOD AND PEOPLE**, by the Subcommittee on Foreign Policy, 1961, and, (2) **THE WORLD FOOD BUDGET** by the Department of Agriculture. Both publications agree on these figures: (food values given in calories).

Canada .....	3,080
Soviet Union .....	2,985
West Germany .....	2,935
East Germany .....	2,950
France .....	3,015
Italy .....	2,755
Portugal .....	2,485
Sweden .....	2,935
Bulgaria .....	2,780
Czechoslovakia .....	3,010
United States .....	3,220
El Salvador .....	1,975

As you can see there is nothing wrong with the food values of the countries in Eastern Europe as compared with the countries in Western Europe. In fact Eastern Europe has a much better "diet" than many countries in Western Europe. As for black bread and cabbage soup, that is what a Russian dreams of when he is hungry. I eat it in the United States, and I am not a poor man. I will eat it all the days of my life. It is good and it is healthy.

Why should we take a thing N. Khrushchev says wrong as a gospel of truth. He talks for internal distribution as do the blabbermouth group in the U.S. If you do not believe this is so ask Mr. "Goldenwasser" of Arizona the state of the Union. His reply would be interesting. He seems to hold the "nest of thieves" theory, too.

As for the "failure of the potato crop" this is not worth answering. It has no meaning. The Soviet Union is three times the size of the U.S. and certainly some small areas will have a "failure" in any year, but the fact that the Soviet Union grows seven to eight times as

many potatoes as the U.S. does would give them ample potatoes even with some local failures. There was no crop failure in the Soviet Union in 1961. I have contact in many areas, and they have mentioned just the opposite. Good crops.

As for the 10 million tons of grain short in the 1961 (?) crop as compared with the 1958 crop, some good honest reasoning is needed. The cereal crop in the Soviet Union will run over 110,000,000 metric tons per year. In real good years it will be 10-20 million tons over the average. In not so good years 10-15 million tons less. This does not mean hunger, or the lack of bread. It means more feed for cattle or less. The 1961 grain crop was 137,432,000 metric tons.

The charge that slaughtering is going on of the cattle to fill quotas (some writers in this area) seems to be disproved by the fact that cattle have increased by 27 million head in the seven years to 1961. Number of hogs doubled, and sheep numbers went from 115 million to 144 million in the same time.

I do not think that the people have the kind of government that they deserve as one of the world's great peoples, but they are making great progress in spite of this. Their great progress is the cause of most of the hate our own government has for them.

**Seth J. Carpenter**  
Lemon Grove, Calif.

## Editor:

The following letter was sent to Connie Weissman.

"I am sending you a poem done a few hours after reading your reminiscences of Natalia Trotsky in the *International Socialist Review*. Being a recent convert to Trotskyism, I knew nothing of this remarkable woman until reading your article. Because the individual is the common metaphor, denominator, of Man, I was struck with the beauty of your portrait of her. To pretend I could conceive of her grief, of her humanity, would be stupid; but I did glimpse a courageous woman surviving with dignity in a world gone tragically wrong.

"Mrs. Weissman, I am moved greatly by your sketch, and my small tribute, which shall in no way compare to yours, is dedicated, appropriately, to you, although it is about her."

**R. L. Vaughn**  
San Francisco, Calif.

\* \* \*

*The depths and strength  
of a human character  
are defined by its moral  
reserves.*

After the betrayal,  
after the guards no longer needed,  
after the great failure,  
Natalia Trotsky,  
among friends in the Bronx,  
killing cockroaches.

Finally south  
to a well-kept garden  
with a red flag brilliant  
under a merciless sky.

Mornings before the  
sky reddened,  
when the small flag  
in the garden  
over the grave  
hung damply  
black,  
did you turn  
in your sleep  
reaching  
then  
in the bed's  
cold vastness?

Did you,  
Natalia,  
did you turn  
when the sky  
began to bloody  
in the East  
& a small breeze  
moved over the stones  
& to the flag,  
did you turn  
& awaken then  
& grieve?

Many women have stood in open windows at dawn, overlooking well-kept gardens, and grieved, Natalia; but later in the day when visitors came you refused, pridefully, to accept a proffered arm to guide you to the garden, saying:

"But what shall I do when you are not here?"

*In tragic hours  
I am always amazed  
at the reserves . . .*

## Editor:

The following comment on "The Myth of 'People's Capitalism'" by Art Preis, published in the Winter 1962 issue of *ISR*, is from a 79-year-old lady in Detroit:

"I agree with your article in the magazine you sent me some months ago. How silly to say we have no classes, no proletariat. I contend that anyone who depends solely on a job for existence belongs to that category — where else?"

"I have thought for some time that class lines were becoming more rigid. Can a boy from a poor family become a doctor or lawyer as he could 50 years ago? Every year they are making it more difficult for a worker's son to complete a medical course. And now I hear that the boy who would study medicine must be sponsored by a doctor just as a student at Annapolis or West

(Continued on page 95)

## Review Article

# "The Marxists"

by William F. Warde

**T**HE MARXISTS was the last of C. Wright Mills' books to be published during his lifetime. His death at the age of 46 ended untimely a new beginning in his quest for sociological truth.

*The Marxists* is significant both for its opposition to the dominant trends in American social thought and for its place in the political and intellectual evolution of

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the author. This irreverent Columbia Professor of Sociology rejected the credo of his fellow faculty members that liberalism provides an adequate answer to Marxism.

Liberalism was once a fighting creed, he observed, but it has come to a dead end and now serves as a rationale and rhetoric for upholding the irresponsible rule of the Power Elite. It has been conscripted for this function because American conservatism has no philosophy of its own with which to defend the *status quo*.

Repudiation of the principal ideology for justifying the Big Money brought Mills face to face with Marxism, the foremost doctrine of the anticapitalist forces. *The Marxists* records his debate with scientific socialism in order to define his own ideas and positions more precisely.

Mills accorded Marxism exceptionally high rank in the field of sociology. Marxism is more valuable for understanding today's social realities than all "the abstractions, slogans and fetishisms of liberalism," he insisted. He wanted to break down the bias against Marxism in the halls of learning and encourage students to assimilate its indispensable contributions to social science.

Mills challenged another shibboleth of the professional liberals who, for their own cold-war purposes,

accept the claim of Stalinism that it is a continuation of genuine Marxism and Bolshevism, rather than its distortion and negation. He sought to dissociate the ideas of Marx and Engels from the Stalinist stigmas and, in line with this, to highlight the twin roles of Lenin and Trotsky who came together to form "the Bolshevik pivot" in the October 1917 Revolution.

He contrasts these two with Marx, whom he one-sidedly portrays as a creative thinker but not a man of action, and with Stalin, Mao Tse-tung, Tito and Khrushchev whom he rates as purely practical politicians. Lenin and Trotsky were for him embodiments of the unity of theory and practice. "Both are thinkers of high quality and both are among the most accomplished politicians of the last hundred years."

In protest against "the enormous ignorance and systematic distortion" of Trotsky's ideas, Mills calls upon the Soviet leaders "to publish great editions of Trotsky's complete works and discuss widely and freely both his theoretical contributions and his political roles in their revolution. That will surely be most propitious," he writes, "for new beginnings in Soviet Marxism."

His recommendation that our countrymen find out what Marxism really teaches, his rejection of liberal complacency, his straightening-out of the roles of Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin in the Marxist tradition will act as antidotes to widespread prejudices in our national thought.

### Mills' Appraisal of Marxism

Apart from selections of writings by socialist thinkers, from the founders of Marxism to the Yugoslav Kardelj, the Englishman G. D. H. Cole and the Cuban "Che" Guevara, the axis of the work is an examination of the merits and demerits of Marxism. What is the substance of his critical appraisal?

Scientific socialism gave a theoretical picture of capitalist society which was better than any other in its

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THE MARXISTS, by C. Wright Mills. Dell Publishing Co., Inc., New York. 480 pp. 1962. Paperback \$ .75.

day. However, classical Marxism is a conceptual reflection of the conditions of nineteenth-century Western capitalism. The matured, highly industrialized capitalist societies of the mid-twentieth-century and the Soviet types of society require a more complex type of explanation. Marxism is the Model T of sociology, Mills implies. It must be traded in for a higher-powered design which has kept up with the immense changes in the most advanced sectors of the world.

Most important among these new phenomena is the enormous scale of the aggregations of economic, political, military and cultural power with their extreme centralization, bureaucratization and tyranny over helpless masses of ordinary individuals. These trends are most fully incorporated in the two gigantic superstates, the U. S. and the USSR, which so belligerently confront each other.

"The run of historical events," he writes, "has overturned the specific theories and explanations" of clas-

sical Marxism. On the one hand, capitalism is stronger than ever in the industrialized West where Marx foresaw the workers coming to power. On the other hand, all the major revolutions of our century have occurred in predominantly peasant societies with autocratic governments where capitalism was weak. No proletarian revolution of a Bolshevik type has taken place in a democratic capitalist society and there are no substantial reasons to anticipate that one ever will.

Above all, Marxist theory has been invalidated, Mills argues, because its central proposition that the wage-workers would become more and more class conscious, anticapitalist and revolutionary has not been borne out in the developed capitalist countries. "To a very considerable extent, they have been incorporated into nationalist capitalism—economically, politically and psychologically." The discreditment of "the labor metaphysic," the keystone of the structure, entails the collapse of the rest of scientific socialism.

All that remains of the original Marxism as a *lasting* legacy to sociology is its method of work, he asserts. Everything else from its dialectical logic to its theory of the state has not stood the test of events and must be modified or discarded.

What does Mills propose to put in place of the classic liberalism and Marxism he has swept aside as obsolete? He does not give us much concrete information. In fact, he says he does not have to give any immediate alternative to the ideologies he has presumably demolished. He intended to work out his own theoretical positions and program of action subsequently together with those colleagues of "The New Left" who shared the view that they had gone beyond the limitations of Marxism to some superior but still indeterminate type of social theory.

### Science and Society

Despite his disclaimer, Mills did have a general method of thought which inspired and directed his entire evaluation of Marxism — and it was hardly new. That method was pragmatism, the predominant mode of thought in American culture. To be sure, he gave a leftward twist to his empirical thinking in the field of sociology. But he stubbornly adhered to its premises and prejudices.

This was evident in the footnote where he curtly waved aside the dialectical method, the mainspring of Marxist thought, as mysterious and useless. "For us," he wrote, "the 'dialectical method' is either a mess of platitudes, a way of doubletalk, a pretentious obscurantism, or all three."

Yet the contrast between the shortcomings of his own method and the value of dialectical thinking can be shown in regard to his very first criticism of one of the cardinal principles of Marxist sociology. This is the distinction between the economic conditions constituting the material substratum of society and the cultural superstructure which arises out of it and rests upon it. "Exactly what is included and what is not included in 'economic base' is not altogether clear, nor are the 'forces' and 'relations' of production precisely defined

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## Author's Note

On April 11, 1961 in connection with the manuscript-draft of "The Marxists," I wrote C. Wright Mills: "Because we have so many and such deep divergencies on the validity, interpretation and application of Marxism, it will be most useful to you if I confine my remarks largely to matters of life. When the book comes out, I hope to review it at length."

I did not then think that this would have to be done without the possibility of rebuttal from Mills. He had plans for a book which would propose a program for "The New Left" and deal with the objections to his views expressed both from the academic right and the socialist left.

Mills was that rare person, a genuine democrat who welcomed the open clash of differing opinions. He resisted coercion of thought, whether it came from the Power Elite in the United States or the bureaucrats in the Soviet Union.

He wanted a free culture for himself and for everyone else. He was especially exhilarated by the prospect opened by the Cuban Revolution of instituting "a new zone of a new freedom in the Americas." He told me he was part-inspirer of the project outlined in "Listen, Yankee" for establishing in Havana a university with a world-wide faculty which would "make Cuban intellectual life a truly international, a truly free forum, for the entire range of world opinion, art, judgment, feeling."

"We want to hear in these new halls of learning a Chinese Communist Party member discussing with a North American Republican Party member the meanings of freedom!" he wrote. "Let a Polish economist discuss with a Cuban economist the problems of the collectivization of land. Let a Mexican oil expert discuss the issues of nationalization of oil resources with a Venezuelan expert, employed by Standard Oil of New Jersey. Let a British Labor Party man discuss with a Yugoslav politician — whatever they want to discuss.

"And put it all on tape. Print it in the newspapers of Cuba. Make it available in translations for the press of the world. Make books out of it."

Mills regarded "The Marxists" as just such a contribution to the discussion of the major problems of our time designed to counteract the fear and ignorance of the ideas of Communism inculcated by the cold warriors.

Socialist ideas have become such an integral part of everyday political and intellectual life in the world outside North America that the negative aspects of Mills' attitude toward Marxism would probably stand out most prominently there. But in the prevailing atmosphere of the United States the book should have a more beneficial influence.

For the past fifteen years the minds of the American people have been poisoned and perverted by anti-Marxist propagandists.

Today these range from the ultrareactionary Birchites to the Sovietologists in the universities who teach that Marxism-Leninism is worth studying primarily to decipher the intentions of the "Communist enemy."

Mills was disgusted with all this "hysterical nonsense" which has culminated in the establishment of anti-Communist schools and courses in colleges from New England to California. In "The Power Elite" he had exposed the realities of the rule of the rich. In "The Causes of World War III" he had condemned the criminal irresponsibility of the H-bomb strategy of their political and military representatives. In "Listen, Yankee" he warned the dollar diplomats to heed the voice of revolutionary Cuba and the hungry-nation bloc.

These works made Mills the mentor and hero of many young men and women who were equally fed up with the hypocrisy and brutality of the Washington policy makers and the thought control they encountered all about them. He pointed out another road for them by demonstrating that a scholar of unimpeachable standing and achievement could stand up for the truth against the lies of the monopolists and militarists and their conscripted intellectuals. He showed that the study of sociology did not have to result in acquiescence to the status quo or apology for its evils but could be the instrument of political protest and anticapitalist criticism.

"The Marxists" should be appraised in connection with this current of radicalism. The "thaw" in Soviet literature since 1953 is an advance over the Stalin era even though it does not yet guarantee full and free expression to the writer. So "The Marxists" represents a step forward in American sociology although it does not adequately interpret scientific socialism.

In place of the doctored digests of the professional anti-Sovieters, it offers samples of authentic Marxist thought along with samples of the opinions of its revisionists. Mills insists that Marxism is not only indispensable for understanding contemporary society but that it has given more effective expression than liberalism to the ideals of humanism, rationalism, freedom and democracy.

Through "The Marxists" Mills has placed the debate between socialism and capitalism, liberalism and Marxism, Bolshevism and Stalinism, Trotskyism and Stalinism in a new light. Free discussion on his serious intellectual level can help stir academic sociology from its slumbers and awaken more radical thought among the younger generation.

The criticism which I promised C. Wright Mills I would make of his positions is presented in that spirit of unhampered intellectual inquiry, of the give and take of contending ideas, which he sought to promote and so worthily exemplified—W.F.W.

and consistently used," he complains. "In particular, 'science' seems to float between base and superstructure . . ."

How does dialectical materialism approach the problem of the relations of science to the economic base and the cultural superstructure of society? This matter cannot be disposed of in a sweeping declaration, as Mills apparently demands. It is not so simple. The place and function of science in the social structure have not been the same in all historical epochs. They have changed in accord with the development of the forces of production and correlative changes in the mode of production.

Although the societies of savagery and barbarism nurtured embryonic elements of scientific knowledge, they contained as yet no science as a deliberate specialized pursuit of men, employing a rational method for investigating the phenomena of nature, society or the human mind. Science could emerge only when the

powers of production had attained a certain height of development and the relations of production were of a special type (the commercial-craft relations of slaveholding antiquity).

These prerequisites were all brought together for the first time in Ionian Greece where science was born along with philosophy, materialism and mathematics. In this first stage of its existence, science, as part of philosophy, was situated exclusively in the cultural superstructure, even though it had been born of economic conditions and needs which set the elementary problems to be solved at that point in its growth.

So long as agriculture and craftsmanship remained the pillars of production under a system of slave labor, science could not and did not decisively react upon the social economy out of which it arose. This was further demonstrated by the fact that science continued to be cooped up in the cultural superstructure during feudal-

ism, which likewise had an agricultural-artisan basis. Neither in Western Europe, India or China did science alter agriculture or craftsmanship to any real extent.

The great shift in the relations between science and production began with the bourgeois epoch. The economic needs and class interests of the merchants, mine owners, ship owners, manufacturers and their patron states not only promoted the growth of the sciences, especially in certain branches of physical knowledge such as astronomy, mechanics and optics, but changed the range and prospects of science in the social structure. This change was speeded up by the industrial revolution which became the technological basis of a matured capitalism. For example, the expansive power of steam, which was known in Greco-Roman antiquity but had been used solely for trivial purposes in temples and toys, became the prime motive force in the mechanism of production through applied science.

**S**INCE then science, through reciprocal action with industry, has grown like a giant. In the twentieth century the inventions and applications of science have transformed old branches of industry and even agriculture in the advanced countries. Scientific methods and discoveries have created wholly new, previously unknown industries such as electronics. In this way science is becoming the paramount factor in the progress of social production.

Thus we find that science has already passed through three distinct stages in relation to the rest of the social structure.

1. In precivilized communities science was too rudimentary and negligible to be counted as a separate social factor or productive force.

2. In the first period of its existence from Greece to the close of the Middle Ages, science was almost entirely confined to the upper reaches of society. It remained the possession of a few learned men aided by ingenious craftsmen, having little effect upon the production of wealth.

3. As capitalism grew, science grew with it in many directions. Breaking through the barriers between itself and the material foundations of social life, science has with the advent of nuclear energy become so revolutionizing a power that it has brought on the greatest crisis in human history.

Capitalism, which stimulated science in its progressive days, tends more and more to pervert and stifle its growth. The boundless potential of science can now be realized only through abolishing the outmoded capitalist mode of production and private property restrictions. Socialism means, in essence, the scientific illumination, planning and direction of all man's social activities from material production to the summits of intellectual creation.

\* \* \*

This may seem an overlong answer to a single objection. But Mills has not brought up an incidental point. The history of science is bound up with the science of history. When Mills doubts whether Marxism really knows where science belongs in the totality of social

development, he is questioning the scientific solidity of its method. If Marxism cannot answer this correctly, its credentials as a scientific sociology become dubious since science in its workings is the most influential factor in our lives today.

It is worth noting that, while questioning the capacity of historical materialism to provide a clear solution to the problem of the place of science in social development, Mills offers no answers of his own. He, not the Marxist, is really the one who is "floating" in empty space on this question.

Historical materialism approaches all aspects of social life from the standpoint of their connections with the development of the conditions of production. The evolution of science from primitive days to the present provides a prime example of this objectively conditioned process. Moreover, the reversal in the importance of science in the social order confirms the operation of two of the dialectical laws which Mills so scornfully dismisses: the law of the interpenetration of opposites and the law of the transformation of quantity into quality.

Science, once insignificant in production, has, through subsequent expansion of the forces of production, acquired the foremost place in production. Through the ages the relations between science and economy, the foundation of society, have changed into their opposite. Mankind is passing from a society dominated by routine, tradition, blindness and superstition to a society guided and controlled by conscious scientific method. And this qualitative change, to be perfected under socialism, has come about as the climax to the quantitative accumulation of scientific knowledge from savagery to the Atomic Era.

Do not the results of this dialectical and materialistic approach to the problem of social and scientific development offer some advantages over the skeptical empiricism of Mills?

### The Laws of Social Development

The deficiencies of Mills' method can be seen in his one-sided approach to the laws of social development. Mills praises Marx for using the principle of historical specificity which means that "each epoch must be examined as an independent historical formation in terms of categories suitable to it." Mills however overlooked the fact that Marx not only studied the social formations of separate epochs but the entire evolution of society through all its stages. Every distinctive type of society from savagery to socialism was for him an *interdependent* link in a causal chain of social development which grew out of its predecessor and created the preconditions for its successor.

Marx was guided, not only by the principle of *historical specificity*, but equally by the principle of *historical generality*. As a dialectical thinker he understood the organic unity of the particular and the general and combined these two rules of method in all his investigations.

This is verified by Marx's Preface to *The Critique of Political Economy*, reprinted in *The Marxists*, which contains his broadest formulation of the materialist

conception of history. There Marx set forth, as "the general result" of his researches, fifteen propositions on the evolution of society. Twelve of these are not specific to any one social formation or historical epoch but apply to them all. Only in the last three does he refer to definite historical formations (the Asian, ancient, feudal and bourgeois modes of production and the transition of the latter to socialism).

It is understandable why Mills exalts the principle of historical specificity at the expense of the generalized conclusions Marx drew from his study of the successive stages of social development in their continuity and totality. It enabled him to lock Marx in a time-cage with other superannuated Victorian thinkers and to deny that his comprehensive laws of social evolution and revolution can be extended to cover the decline and downfall of capitalism while indicating the inescapable road to the next stage of human progress.

Mills is especially concerned to disqualify the foundation of the materialist conception of history which holds that production (and exchange) is the basis of every social organization; and that therefore, according to Engels, "the ultimate causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought not in the minds of men, in their increasing insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the mode of production and exchange; they are to be sought not in the *philosophy* but in the *economics* of the epoch concerned."

**M**ILLS denies there has been any one such central determinant of social movement operative throughout human history. Together with his tutors Weber and Mannheim and other liberal sociologists, he counterposes the theory of multiple, independent and parallel causes to the unified Marxist conception of historical causation. According to historical materialism, all the aspects of social activity—from burial rites to witchcraft and from politics to philosophy—exert their own measure of influence upon events but throughout their reciprocal action economics is the most important and conclusive element.

This "economic determinism" of Marx is too one-sided and dogmatic, he says, to do justice to the complexities of social evolution. Many factors other than economic conditions have been and can be fundamentally decisive in the course of development, not only within precapitalist societies but also under capitalism. Whereas, for example, economics may have been preponderant in early capitalism, political, military and other superstructural factors play an "autonomous and originitive" role in its later and contemporary stages.

### The Welfare and the Warfare State

This thesis that economics is or can be subordinate to political and military forces will be familiar to readers of Mills' previous works: *The Power Elite* and *The Causes of World War III*. There he found the ultimate causes for the unprecedented expansion, imperialist policies and aggressive strategy of U.S. militarism, not in the economic necessities of monopoly capitalism, whose servitors are the decision makers in Washington, but rather in the "military metaphysics" which

obsesses the statesmen and generals. Thus Mills reverted to the untenable viewpoint of idealism that the ultimate determinant of political events must be found, not in the economic framework within which the men at the top operate and within which they serve class interests, but in their mentality and outlook. From this sociological analysis flows the political conclusion that it is more realistic to try to change the thinking and policies of the people in power than to change the *class* possessors of power.

In *The Marxists* Mills goes on to affirm that the Welfare State, Siamese twin of the Warfare State, is likewise not "determined by the mode of economic production, although of course it is made possible by economic developments." The imperialist democracies of monopoly capitalism have supplanted the *laissez faire* regimes of competitive capitalism, just as the guided missile has replaced the cannon ball. The Welfare State, which combines Keynesian credit devices with social legislation, is the result of many interacting factors, from the exigencies of capitalist rulership to the pressures of the trade unions.

The serious question is: whose class interests do these policies primarily serve? Roosevelt, the improviser of the New Deal, granted reforms where Hoover did not because, as he candidly admitted in 1936: "liberalism becomes the protection of the far-sighted conservative." By diverting a small fraction of the national revenue from its magnates to some of the more favored segments of the working people, the capitalist government is able to shore up its system. The masses more than pay for these restricted benefits by having to bear the penalties and burdens of continued exploitation and misrule along with misleadership by conservatized union bureaucrats.

The welfare provisions of the Warfare State can be sustained only by the wealthier capitalist countries, which can afford certain privileges for the labor aristocracy so long as these are offset by superexploitation of the underdeveloped continents. Whenever international competition tightens and corporation profits decline, the most liberal governments start whittling away at these social gains, as Belgium recently showed. Thus the extent and endurance of these concessions at bottom depend upon the economic resources and prospects of the national capitalism. Despite Mills' contention, the causal mechanism of the Welfare State is to be found in the specific necessities of capitalist rule and its mode of production.

### The Longevity of Capitalist Rule

In accord with his thesis that "political and military means of action and decision" can override economic laws, Mills maintains, against the Marxists, that contemporary Western capitalism can be readjusted without limit by the policies of the monopolists or by liberal and Laborite reforms. Despite his repugnance to their course, he agrees with its supporters that the capitalist system has enough resiliency to go on indefinitely.

This confidence that the political dexterity of the capitalists can control the harmful consequences of their rule does not fit the main facts of the twentieth cen-

ture. The failure of the monopolist policy makers to solve the problems of markets, raw materials, colonies and world supremacy led to two global wars which prepared and provoked anticapitalist overturns from Russia to China. Since 1917 one-third of humanity has thrown off the economic and political control of world capitalism.

To be sure, the economies of the U.S. and Western Europe have had no grave economic disturbances in the past two decades comparable to the crises of the 1930's. We have had the Cold War instead. But the U.S., mainstay of world capitalism, has passed through five recessions since 1945. Each one has lasted a little longer, leaving a larger residue of permanently unemployed and a growing anxiety about their material insecurity among sizeable sections of the workers.

Moreover, prolonged prosperity in the highly industrialized centers has been attended by chronic impoverishment in the less developed countries. The contrast between the economic levels and living standards of the rich and poor continents has become wider and deeper—and no Point 4 or Alliance for Progress programs can stem their inevitable consequences. The inability of the imperialist powers to overcome the disparity of rich and poor nations is at the root of the irrepressible surge and spread of the colonial revolution.

Meanwhile, the capitalist bloc confronts the workers' states, not only as military, diplomatic and political adversaries, but as economic rivals. These states have considerable distances to travel before catching up with the older capitalist nations, but, paced by the Soviet Union, they are experiencing a faster rate of economic growth.

If Western capitalism were considered by itself since the end of the Second World War, it would be easy to conclude with Mills and others that political maneuvers and measures can immunize it indefinitely from revolutionary convulsions. Yet even here, a *caveat* is in order. If, from 1944 to 1946 the Stalinist and Social-Democratic leaderships had not collaborated with Churchill, Roosevelt and de Gaulle to derail the workers' thrust toward power and to rehabilitate the shattered capitalist structure in Western Europe, history would have taken a different turn. Moreover, the respite did not save world capitalism from losing ground; it looks far less formidable on the world arena than it does from within the Atlantic Alliance.

**I**T IS true, as Mills emphasizes, that government intervention in the economic life of the capitalist countries has taken place on a massive scale. These measures have succeeded in delaying the advent of severe crises and will probably be stepped up in the years ahead. However, political regulation of the economy is a manifest symptom of the growing infirmity of capitalism which, in its monopolist-imperialist phase, can no longer rely upon the automatic operation of its forces for salvation. The plutocrats must utilize all the resources of state power to keep their system on an even keel, maintain their international positions, and forestall economic decline and political disturbances. Such intervention can alleviate the incurable ailments of the

economy and attenuate their consequences but it cannot fend off the recurrence of more and more serious slumps.

Now, in this country government intervention is being extended to capital-labor negotiations where the Kennedy administration has held down wage increases in the steel industry under the pretext of "protecting the national welfare," a pseudonym for corporation profits. This domestic policy is tied up with the worsening position of the U.S. economy on the world market. The persistent deficit in the international balance of payments keeps draining the gold reserve, threatening more inflation and depreciation of the dollar.

The permanent overproduction crisis of U.S. agriculture reflects the inability of the strongest capitalist government to counteract the workings of the "free enterprise" system. Price-support measures and new farm programs concocted by successive administrations do not go to the root causes of the problem. They simply relieve the situation for the time being and postpone the final reckoning.

The most malignant offshoot of government policy has been the unending arms race. The \$50-billion annual military budget keeps injecting artificial stimulants into our sick economy. But the changeover from planes to guided missiles tends to diminish the effectiveness of this economic stimulant. Equivalent appropriations generate fewer jobs, since it takes fewer workers and less plant space to build missiles than planes.

Technological developments in the military domain are only one aspect of the impact of automation and mechanization upon the capitalist economy. These will reduce the industrial work-force as twenty-six million new young workers enter the job market in the next ten years. The cumulative consequences of these trends will serve to revive labor militancy, especially among the younger and less favored strata, and pose the issue of socialism versus capitalism more forcefully in bread-and-butter terms.

Mills' faith in the endurance of capitalist sovereignty and his underestimation of the capacity and will of the working class for independent action spring from his acceptance of the predominant economic and political conditions of the past fifteen years as fixed and final. He does not expect these to be altered and undermined by countertendencies in the capitalist economy or by fresh advances of the anticapitalist forces which in the coming years will abruptly upset the *status quo*. The brusque conversion of the Fourth Republic into de Gaulle's personal military regime indicates how rickety democracy can be when a national capitalism gets into difficulties. The most violent convulsions of capitalism lie ahead and are not safely buried in the past.

\* \* \*

In his assessment of the stability of capitalist rule, Mills for some reason fails to take into consideration the H-bomb crisis which he dealt with at length in other works. The political-military situation called forth by the development of nuclear devices provides striking proof of the Marxist proposition that the crisis



of a social system is brought about and its downfall prepared by intensified conflict between new forces of production and outmoded relations of production. In the case of nuclear energy, this new force of production—or destruction, which is one and the same—is pounding against the national boundaries and property forms of monopoly capitalism. The development of this limitless source of power for beneficial social purposes is retarded and straitjacketed, while the major effort is concentrated on increasing its megatons of destruction.

This has involved the capitalist statesmen in the most excruciating of dilemmas. On one side, they must pile up nuclear arms as the indispensable instrument of their strategy to halt the progress of the workers' states and socialist forces and hold on to their possessions and power. On the other side, the incalculable consequences of dropping the bombs becomes a deterrent to their use.

How long can capitalism—and, even more, the people who live under daily threat of annihilation—go on this way? This intolerable "balance of terror" keeps pressing for solution. It is a major factor in politicalizing and radicalizing the most sensitive segments of the population, from the youth to the mothers. Sooner or later their opposition to H-bomb diplomacy will extend into the ranks of labor, as it already has in Japan and England.

### **The Role of the Working Class**

Mills clashes most profoundly with Marxism over the revolutionary role of the working class. He opposes the Marxist doctrine that the class struggle over the surplus product of the working force has been the prime mover and reshaper of history since the beginnings of civilization and private property. Asserting that class harmony and collaboration is "as much a fact of class history as is a struggle," he extends this generalization to the monopoly capitalism of today. There collaboration between classes will remain predominant.

Mills acknowledges that the Marxist law of the capitalist concentration of wealth and power has worked out to the danger point in the U.S. But the corollary to this process, the deepening of the antagonism between the monied magnates and the hosts of labor, has not. Western capitalism may be stratified into classes but it has become stabilized, he argues. The workers in the affluent countries have neither desire nor need to do away with the existing system. They want nothing more than a larger share of the national income. Since their living standards have been improving wherever capitalist policies have been flexible and wherever democracy and unionism have been strong, they can have no reasons for revolutionary ideas or action.

Mills apparently arrived at his conclusion—that the workers are nonrevolutionary and will forever be subordinate within Western capitalism—through an objective examination of present facts. But this conviction really rests upon a prior disbelief in the creative and directive capacities of the working people. Otherwise, why should he assume that a handful of monop-

olists could rule whereas the mass of workers never could?

This disqualification of the workers as potential leaders of society is the most flagrant expression of Mills' essential sociological conception that elites of one kind or another have been and will continue to be the principal history makers. He looks to the intellectuals for immediate salvation. He finds his hopes for peace, freedom and progress, not on the victory of the working masses over the plutocracy, but rather on the benign influence to be exerted by scholars, ministers, scientists and writers, the peripheral and not the central forces in our society.

In downgrading the workers Mills forgot that ascending social classes do not realize their full potential all at once. Classes undergo a prolonged development in which they are gradually transformed as the result of ceaselessly renewed efforts to satisfy their growing needs. Only after successive stages do they finally arrive at the point of a showdown with the ruling power that oppresses them. And history teaches that progressive forces do not make this challenge simultaneously and all together but in highly irregular sequence as necessity dictates.

In *The Marxists* Mills has demonstrated nothing beyond the obvious fact that up to now that part of the world working class which is directly dominated by imperialism and has shared its privileges has not mustered enough energy and clarity of consciousness to dislodge the monopolist masters from power. That is to say, the growth of the workers in the West as a revolutionary force has, for ascertainable reasons, been stunted and retarded. This is very different from the conclusion that their revolutionary qualities are non-existent or exhausted.

### **Two Incompatible Perspectives**

Our argument with Mills does not center primarily on what the workers are today. We can agree that the political passivity, lack of militancy and dulled class consciousness of labor in the advanced countries stand in sharp contrast with the revolutionary ardor in the colonial areas. Our divergences revolve around what the workers can and must become in the further course of economic, political and cultural development.

Is the present state of affairs and alignment of class forces transitional or permanent? Mills foresees the prolongation of capitalist stabilization and harmony with labor. The revolutionary socialists envisage an erosion of the supports of monopoly capitalism which will lead to social conflicts and labor radicalization. Here two irreconcilable lines of capitalist and anticapitalist development are projected. Which is right?

The social scientist, even more than the political strategist, ought to measure vast social changes on appropriate scales. The contest between organized capital and its labor opposition concerns nothing less than the replacement of one global social regime by another. The direction and ultimate destination of the contending forces cannot be correctly and comprehensively apprehended at a single cross-section of time in a particular area of the world. They must be viewed in the

context of their over-all evolution on the world arena.

Restricting our analysis to the past forty years, labor in Western Europe and North America does not present a picture of unrelieved stagnation or retrogression. The labor movement from Spain to Poland was crushingly defeated by fascism during the 1930's. At that time numerous former radicals asserted that European labor was forever pulverized, would never rise again as an independent force, and all its socialist perspectives were obliterated. Yet its economic and political organizations have been rebuilt to the point where Western European labor can again become the challenger of capitalist power.

U.S. labor, on the other hand, passed from industrial atomization to union organization in one mighty leap during the 1930's—and has been marking time ever since. It now combines an immensely powerful organization and latent strength with an utterly reactionary officialdom and a crusty conservatism in its upper ranks.

Our trade unions are politically more backward than the newly emerging unions of Africa. Now that the Canadian unions have launched the New Democratic party, ours is the only one among the major industrial countries that has not formed a political party of its own. Yet, in view of the recuperative capacities shown and the precedents set by labor in other lands, there is no reason to doubt that labor in this country will under changing conditions also shed its conservatism and resume its forward march.

**M**ANY skeptics regard socialist propaganda for a labor party as hopeless. They doubt whether the American workers can ever generate enough steam to cut loose from the Democrats and establish themselves as an autonomous political force. In the 1920's, an earlier generation of wiseacres had it figured out that the industrial proletariat was too divided, ignorant, downtrodden and leaderless to beat back Big Business and unionize the basic industries. It might be added that this was a tougher job to carry through than it would be to set up a national labor party with the resources of the existing unions.

Let us grant that U.S. labor has a long way to go in catching up with its more advanced contingents in the rest of the world. Yet over the past hundred years our labor movement has grown into an economic, social and political power of a magnitude topped only by organized wealth itself.

Now the question is posed: should the partisans of the Old Left—or the New—take as their point of departure the achievements culminating in the militancy of the 1930's . . . or should they base their estimates of the future upon the passivity of the Cold War period and look back upon the capacities displayed earlier as labor's last burst of creative energy? Which is the virile rising class and which is the senile and reactionary one—capital or labor?

Revolutionary socialists deduce from the international and national experiences of the past century, and the antagonistic tendencies of capitalist development,

that the wiping out of the open shop in basic industry was not the final upheaval in the struggle between corporate wealth and organized labor. In reality, the industrial class battles in the first half of this century were only the opening chapters in a process of class struggle and social transformation which will find its sequel, and very likely its culmination, on the political plane during the second half. Just as the forward leap of the 1930's overcame the stagnation of the 1920's, so the advances of the coming period will erase the apathy of the 1950's and open up broader opportunities for radicalism and Marxism in the U.S.

Mills took his stand on the opposite alternative. He regarded any program depending on the independent action and heightened political consciousness of the workers as "metaphysical moonshine." This is the gravest decision a radical can make, for upon it hinges the main line of his political activity.

### **Significance of the Negro Struggle**

In calculating the status and prospects of American labor, Mills unaccountably failed to reckon with the implications of the Negro struggle for equality which has the most direct bearing upon the movement for social change in this country.

Mills seemed to look upon the Negro movement as something essentially separate from the general labor struggle. To be sure, the fight against Jim Crow has its special roots in American history and has its own characteristics, aims, pace and channels of development. At the same time, it is an integral part of the conflict of American labor against the established order. Almost all Negroes belong to the working class and are the most abused section of it. Color discrimination is the most vicious instrument of class exploitation. That is why the Negroes have taken the lead in combating its consequences.

That is not all. Although the Negro movement arises from the disabilities suffered here, it is connected with the uprisings of the disinherited colored peoples in the colonial and semicolonial countries. The Negro demand for democratic rights is the most forcible and advanced expression to date within our own borders of this world-wide revolutionary process. This is understood, at least in part, by its most active participants who have been uplifted and strengthened by the Asian, African and Cuban revolutions.

The Negro struggle testifies that the rebellious mood which the imperialists fear so much and resist so fiercely is surging up in our very midst. It is far from its final expression. Even at this point it is the major source of instability in our social and political structure.

As A. Philip Randolph has reminded the AFL-CIO heads, the white majority of the working class, and especially its leaders, is far from sharing the sentiments or even properly supporting the battles of their black brethren. Their indifference in this respect resembles the attitude of French labor toward the Algerian rebels.

It cannot be expected that all the potentially dissident elements will react to the same grievances and swing into action simultaneously. The most exploited and oppressed, those with the least to lose and the most

to win immediately, move first and fastest both on the world arena and within our own country. Their initiatives serve to unbalance the forces of reaction and unloose effects which can, in time, reanimate the more sluggish sections of labor.

It is useful to recall in this connection that not so long ago the Negro minority was even more low-rated as a militant and effective agency for social change than the working class majority is today by Mills and others. If the first prejudice is harder to sustain nowadays, the second is more enduring. But it, too, will be shattered by events to come.

### The Nature of Postcapitalist Societies

Mills held that Marx's prevision of the birth process of postcapitalist societies was as defective as his forecasts of capitalist development. Marx expected the workers in the most highly industrialized countries of Western Europe to abolish capitalism first and lead the way to socialism. Actually, capitalism has been overthrown only in backward peasant lands with autocratic regimes. According to Mills, this reversal of Marx's anticipated order of revolutionary victory invalidated all claims to the scientific character of his sociology.

This argument was first invoked (in the name of Marxism) by the Social-Democratic theoreticians against the legitimacy of the Bolsheviks taking power in October 1917. The opponents of Bolshevism shut their eyes to the real advancement of the revolution because it ran counter to their preconception of its predestined route. But the living Marxism of the twentieth century rejected such a scholastic approach, adjusted its outlook to the actual events and, what is more, comprehensively explained them.

The unexpected fact that the proletariat first attained supremacy, not in the advanced sectors of Europe, but in one of its most backward countries did indeed go counter to Marx's personal projection. But, far from nullifying the laws of historical materialism, the Russian Revolution extended the range of their application and enriched their content. This is certified by the fact that it was precisely the revolutionary Marxists who foresaw that probability years before it was realized and based their strategy upon it. Such was the political conclusion Trotsky drew from his theory of the permanent revolution applied to Russia as early as 1904-1906.

After 1917 Lenin explained that the socialist revolution had first triumphed in backward Russia for two main reasons. Under the stresses of imperialist war the chain of world capitalism had broken at its weakest link and let loose a peasant war of immense proportions and powers to back up the proletarian uprising. The interlocked struggles of these two classes enabled the Russian people to clean out, not only Czarism and landlordism, but bourgeois property and power and lay the foundations for a workers' republic.

The victorious socialist revolutions in Yugoslavia, China and Cuba after the Second World War have followed the same general pattern. They have taken place not in the richest but in the most backward lands where

long-delayed agrarian revolution has meshed with the anticapitalist and anti-imperialist actions of a rebellious proletariat which has not been held back by its own conservatism.

Here we have examples of the operation of the Marxist law of uneven and combined development. This law states that, in order to break out of their misery and catch up with the more progressive sectors, historically backward peoples and classes are often obliged to take over the most up-to-date ideas and achievements, act upon them, and thereby for a time rush ahead of their predecessors.

Mills mistakenly maintains that the revolutions in the underdeveloped countries have been primarily anti-feudal. It is true that feudal survivals, because of their extreme oppressiveness, provoke the most violent explosions among the colonial peoples. From this fact it is easy to draw the conclusion, as Mills does, that the colonial revolution is primarily antifeudal in character. But this is an extremely superficial view.

The vestiges of feudalism in backward lands long ago ceased to have any independent character or significance. In extending its sway over the entire globe, capitalism incorporated the survivals of earlier modes of exploitation into its own system. Today they are inextricably intertwined. Hence, while the colonial peoples place great emphasis on the fight against "feudalism," this is but a single aspect of their struggles. Fundamentally, and in essence, the colonial revolution is directed against exploitation by foreign and domestic capital which bars the colonial and semi-colonial peoples from the benefits of a modern economy and culture. The only way the Russians, Yugoslavs, Chinese and Cubans could gain access to these advantages was by knocking down capitalism and taking the road to socialism.

That is why the world socialist revolution in this first stage has conquered in the colonial and semi-colonial regions and is progressing from there toward the most advanced capitalist countries of Europe and North America. The fact that the proletariat, at the head of the peasantry, had to take power in the poorer countries, while imperialism retained its grip upon the more productive ones, has created tremendous practical difficulties for the socialist forces and introduced grave distortions into their regimes. But these problems, too, have been illuminated by Marxist theory.

**W**HAT is the sociological character of the regimes that have issued from the great revolutions of our time in Russia, Yugoslavia, China and most recently in Cuba? Does Soviet society, despite its defects, hold a place in the historical progression of humanity superior to that of the capitalist regimes, whatever their formal democracy? Can its planned economy be more productive and efficient than capitalist economy?

From Mills' book we can learn what Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Hilferding, Kautsky, Mao Tse-tung and G. D. H. Cole think on these not unimportant matters. But, except for a few remarks on the bureaucratic charac-

(Continued on page 95)

# Privilege and Progress in the Soviet Union

by Daniel Roberts

We publish this article, in rough draft form, as the last contribution made to revolutionary socialism by its author, Dan Roberts. Comrade Roberts, aged 44, died May 24, 1962, after a long struggle with a debilitating form of cancer. For over twenty years he was an active, leading revolutionist in the Socialist Workers Party, an organizer in Los Angeles, Calif., in Seattle, Wash. and in Newark, N. J. and a writer on the staffs of the *International Socialist Review* and *The Militant*. He was editor of the latter from 1956 until the onset of his illness in 1960.

Even in the weakness of his approaching death, his whole being was concentrated on the political, analytical work that was his life. On the eve of his final hospitalization, Dan Roberts submitted the draft of this article to the Editor of the *ISR* for final editing and publication. We give it to our readers, his comrades and his friends, as the unfinished "work in progress" of a comrade whose life was devoted to the socialist future of humanity—*The Editor*.

Such an approach has "nothing in common with Marxism-Leninism" and those who urge it are acting "not from positions of internationalism, but of nationalism and chauvinism," the magazine charged. It denounced the Albanians for demanding "one-sided and unlimited aid" rather than paying attention to developing their country through the best use of its own resources.

These few excerpts from *International Affairs* reek of the Kremlin's arrogance towards China and Eastern Europe. It is not these countries that, in this question, display chauvinism but the Soviet ruling group. Indeed, Great-Russian chauvinism has been the hallmark of the Soviet bureaucracy's conduct toward non-Russian nationalities ever since Stalin rose to power. As early as 1922, Lenin condemned Stalin for his brutality toward non-Russian Soviet peoples. And "de-Stalinization" notwithstanding, Khrushchev's policy in this sphere has far from removed this blot on Soviet society.

The rupture of Soviet relations with Yugoslavia, China and Albania originated to no small extent from the incredible arrogance of the Kremlin overlords. The June 1953 uprisings in East Germany and the 1956 upsurge in Poland and Hungary also had deep roots in the Great-Russian oppression by the Soviet bureaucrats.

As for the claim of *International Affairs* that in the past the Soviet Union gave generously to Eastern Europe and China, this will be treated by the countries concerned as a gallows joke. At the end of World War II, Stalin ordered factories all over Eastern Europe and in Manchuria to be dismantled and their equipment to be shipped to the Soviet Union. Then the Kremlin imposed economic relations on the other Soviet-bloc countries that siphoned off a huge portion of their annual surpluses.

Here is an example of how the exploitation of these countries works. In 1958, Moscow charged its satellites 307 rubles per ton of wheat, while countries outside the Soviet bloc were charged only 273 rubles. For barley

**A**S THE Sino-Soviet conflict deepens, the Kremlin has announced that China and Eastern Europe can no longer expect large Soviet loans for economic development. The Soviet magazine, *International Affairs*, in its March issue, made public the ban on future support to other Soviet-bloc countries. The article was reported in the March 26 *New York Times* by Harry Schwartz, the newspaper's Soviet affairs analyst.

In the past, says the *International Affairs*, Soviet-bloc countries needing aid, got it even at the cost of "definite sacrifices" by the Soviet people. In the present stage, the rule is mutual assistance in which other countries help the Soviet Union as well as getting help from that country.

"It would be strange to say the least," says the Soviet magazine, "if the Soviet Union having completed the building of socialism ahead of the other [Soviet-bloc] countries were to wait for the leveling up of the general economic development of the Socialist countries before starting on the construction of communism."

the figures were 259 and 214 rubles. Russian tractors were sold to the satellites for 21,500 rubles each, while outside the bloc they sold for 13,600 rubles. Cotton goods sold at 1,800 and 600 rubles respectively.

On the other hand, for 17 commodities for which information is available, Moscow paid 20 per cent less than it would have if the satellites had charged the price they charged outside the Soviet bloc. Evidently this sort of trade is what *International Affairs* means by "mutual assistance." (The above figures were compiled by H. Mendershausen, "The Terms of Soviet-Satellite Trade," *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, Harvard, May 1960, and cited by Tony Cliff, "The 22nd Congress of the Soviet Communist Party," *New Politics*, Winter, 1962.)

In the case of China, the Soviet Union extended credits in 1953, 1954 and 1955. But these loans never exceeded three per cent of the total Chinese national investment during those years. (Choh-Ming Li, "Economic Development," the *China Quarterly*, Jan.-March, 1960.) Since 1956, however, China has had to pay for all Soviet machinery — its prime import from the USSR — in grain deliveries. In the pricing of these exchanges, the Chinese seem to have been treated as outrageously as the Eastern European satellites.

In his report on the *International Affairs* article Schwartz says that the Soviet magazine "has made public a Chinese Communist complaint that the Soviet Union is not sharing its wealth justly with less fortunate nations, but is greedily concentrating on improving its own people's prosperity."

As we have seen, the first half of this accusation is all too true. However, the second part — namely, that the Kremlin is now concentrating on raising the living standards of the Soviet working people — is wide of the mark. Indeed, this claim, if the Chinese actually made it, plays into Khrushchev's hands. It would give validity to Khrushchev's claims and promises for the future.

### The Real Situation

Because of the enormous pressure the Soviet workers have exerted on the ruling group, they have gained some significant economic concessions during the past eight years. But a great gap remains between what they have already won and what they are entitled to under socialist norms of distribution in a workers state.

Thus, according to the report of V. Grishin, Chairman of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, real earnings of workers and employees rose by only 20 per cent between 1954 and 1959, while labor productivity rose by about 38.5 per cent and national income by 61 per cent. Thus the share of the workers in their produce declined during those six years.

In the 1920's, the Left Opposition in the Communist Party, lead by Leon Trotsky, called for a "systematic elevation of real wages to correspond with every growth in the productivity of labor." (Platform of the Left Opposition, 1927.) The Oppositionists demanded these improvements together with a much bolder annual rate of industrial growth than the Stalin regime was then

willing to undertake. They also stipulated that the increases must be granted without speed-up or lengthening of the working day.

The counter-revolutionary Stalinist dictatorship crushed the Left Opposition through imprisonment, exile and murder. Then it swung abruptly from an almost do-nothing economic course to a policy of building up industry at an incredibly rapid tempo — with a greatly disproportionate emphasis on heavy industry and with total disregard of the living standards, health, muscles and nerves of the working people. The figures indicate that, although Khrushchev has reduced Stalin's inhuman extortions from the Soviet workers, he is far from having redressed the balance between Soviet economic development and the workers' living standards as advocated by the genuine Leninists who made up the Left Opposition of 1923-1928.

But if neither China and the East European countries nor the Soviet working people have gained substantially from the rapid expansion of the Soviet economy, who has been the real beneficiary? The answer is a vast horde of party, government, military, indus-

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trial, agricultural and trade-union officials plus scientists, artists and writers. Together they make up a bureaucratic caste—a distinctly separate social formation of privilege holders and privilege seekers.

This Soviet aristocracy, in whose immediate interests Khrushchev exercises his totalitarian dictatorship, swallows up a hugely disproportionate share of the national income. The top brass in the Soviet Union receive a salary about fifteen times as great as the average industrial wage and about thirty times as great as the lowest paid workers or collective farmers.

In addition to their outlandishly high salaries, the well-heeled functionaries enjoy expense accounts comparable to those of presidents of huge corporations in this country. Thus they enjoy private as well as official use of government-furnished limousines; they live in spacious apartments at government expense; and they are served by domestics who frequently are carried on the public payroll.

Between the people who occupy the loftiest posts and the ordinary working people, there is a vast hierarchy of bureaucrats enjoying various degrees of privileges. In fact, the planting of privilege is a function of the higher officials who want to be surrounded by a retinue of parasitic time-servers as a buffer between themselves and the masses.

In 1954, *Pravda* gave an inkling of how top heavy with officials Soviet industry had become. The Georgian Oil Trust "has three oil fields and twelve offices to serve them." In the Moldavian Fishing Industry "there are 112 officials as against 163 workers at the fisheries, of which only 98 are employed in catching fish." (Cited by Cliff.)

Since 1954, Khrushchev's administrative shakeups and reorganizations may have reduced the proportion of officials to productive workers. Even so, the bureaucracy keeps growing in numbers and wealth with every advance in the national income.

### **Bureaucracy Hampers Defense of Country**

But it isn't only the huge salaries, swollen bureaucratic payrolls and unlisted privileges that account for the lopsided distribution of the national income. The bureaucrats "have it made" several times over, and, Khrushchev's grandiose promises to the workers notwithstanding, they treat with callous disregard the poverty of the masses and China's needs for economic aid.

Furthermore, because the bureaucracy fears the spread of the world socialist revolution, which would undermine its power and privileges, it has relied, for the defense of the Soviet Union, primarily on deals or attempted deals with imperialism. This policy in turn has been backed up by an almost paranoid stockpiling of weapons and by large-scale nuclear testing.

But the tests have alienated popular support for the Soviet Union throughout the world, thus undermining far more reliable defenses of the workers state than any number of deals with imperialism or any kind of nuclear super-weapons can provide. From an economic

point of view, this has meant a huge squandering of national resources that could profitably have been devoted to meeting consumer needs at home or industrial construction problems in China.

It is upon this background that I will discuss in a subsequent article whether and how the Soviet Union can simultaneously increase the living standards of the masses at home, provide massive aid to China and maintain a military establishment adequate for the defense of the Soviet Union. For these are key questions of Soviet policy today, and they occupy the attention of radical workers throughout the world.

[The following is the draft of the second article as promised by Comrade Roberts—Ed.]

If the Soviet government refuses to grant any development loans to China and Eastern Europe, as the Soviet magazine, *International Affairs*, announced in its March issue, it is not for the sake of swiftly improving the living standards of the masses at home, as the magazine claims, but to safeguard the enormous privileges of the bureaucracy. Khrushchev's bureaucratic regime has already reluctantly granted economic concessions to the Soviet workers, and it fears that more will be torn from its grasp. Under these conditions, it does not want to further endanger the privileges of the Soviet aristocracy by shouldering a part of China's burdens.

As we indicated in a previous article, the bureaucratic privileges are only one part of the maldistribution of productive resources and national income. The bureaucracy is committed to a whole series of economic policies that flow from the nature of its rule and which, in the present government's eyes, take priority over the needs of the masses or the Soviet Union's international responsibilities.

Indeed, despite the astounding industrial successes achieved by the Soviet Union, its economy is hobbled all along the line by the bureaucracy's false policies and malpractices. The tremendous gains have been scored thanks to the planned economy created by the Russian Revolution of November, 1917, and despite the mismanagement of the new, progressive social relations by the bureaucracy.

Let us examine this mismanagement more closely. It is very evident in the field of agriculture, which lags far behind industry in its development during the last 37 years that the bureaucracy has held power.

Everyone knows that Stalin's measures of forcibly collectivizing agriculture in the 1930's led to such a severe crisis as to threaten the very existence of the Soviet Union. The recovery since that time has been extremely slow. One half of the Soviet Union's working force is still tied up in agriculture. Soviet farming is the most backward of the nations that are included in the category of economically developed countries. Why? Is the principle of collective farming perhaps at fault? I believe not. Collective farming is a great progressive principle capable, as Leon Trotsky once put it, of bringing the farmers out of barbarism into civiliza-

tion. But, as Engels, Lenin and Trotsky explained, there are rules which must be followed in collectivizing agriculture which, if violated, will throw agriculture backward instead of insuring its rapid progress. The Soviet bureaucracy—as well as the bureaucratic regimes in Eastern Europe and China—have systematically violated every one of these rules.

Thus, collectivization can succeed only if the farmers are free to choose whether to join a collective or engage in individual farming. But the Soviet bureaucrats collectivized the Russian farmers forcibly and continue to deprive them of freedom of choice.

Collectivization must be based on modern agricultural techniques—the widespread use of machinery, chemical fertilizer and modern grain selection methods. Otherwise the collective farmers will hardly be able to raise their living standards and the collective will not appeal to them. At the recent meeting of the Soviet Communist Party's central committee, Khrushchev berated Stalin for having starved agriculture of its proper share of investments in machinery and modern fertilizer. But the central committee wound up its sessions without recommending any increase in farm investments.

A third condition for the success of collectivization is that the farmers be allowed to manage the common enterprises in a democratic fashion. The management of the Soviet collectives is as bureaucratic as the management of industry or the conduct of governmental affairs.

A fourth requirement is that the workers state not tax the farmers — whether working collectively or individually — at such a high rate as to leave them with no surpluses. It is absolutely valid, especially for a workers government in an economically backward country to take from agriculture in order to promote industry. But there are limits which the government cannot surpass without killing the farmers' productive incentives. The Soviet bureaucracy systematically violates these limits.

Finally, the nationalized industry must as rapidly as possible provide the farmers with consumer goods for which they can exchange their agricultural products. The Soviet bureaucracy neglects the farmer-consumer as shamefully as the worker-consumer.

The net result of the bureaucracy's systematic violations of the socialist principles of collectivized agriculture is that it has had to sanction a bastardized setup under which individual collectivized farmers till small plots individually and engage in animal husbandry on their own while also contributing labor to the collective entity. The individual holding is small, but the farmer, aided by his family, devotes his best efforts to it.

Privileges and privilege seeking are as prevalent in agriculture as in the rest of Soviet society. Besides a top-heavy body of farm administrators, only a minority of collective farms thrive well. The majority of farms provide rural workers with an average income even lower than that of the industrial workers.

Besides the extreme distortions introduced by the bureaucratic regime in the field of agriculture, the

bureaucratic tyranny in general holds back economic progress. It is responsible for snafus of all kinds resulting in tremendous waste. Above all, by rigidly preventing the workers from having any democratic voice in the management of the economy, they prevent the workers from correcting inefficient methods and from introducing needed improvements.

Furthermore, unable to correct inefficiencies and waste, the workers become apathetic about the conduct of industrial affairs, and this, together with dissatisfaction over their living conditions and anger over the privileges of the bureaucrats, is reflected adversely in the productivity of their labor.

The only way to remove the crippling effects of the bureaucratic stranglehold on the economy is to abolish this power and privilege and to replace it with a regime of workers democracy. Then the resources will flow into those channels where at present the bureaucracy allows only a trickle if it permits any stream at all. Resources will flow amply into the channels of consumer goods at home and aid for China and other workers regimes in need of help.

This presupposes, too, that in overturning the bureaucratic regime, the workers place at their helm a party animated by authentic Marxist-Leninist principles — a party of the revolutionary socialist vanguard.

One of the first tasks of such a regime will undoubtedly be to formulate a new economic plan, which according to the norms of workers democracy will be freely debated by the entire Soviet population before being adopted with all the necessary amendments and revisions produced by the debate itself.

It is impossible to predict how the plan will look in detail, but its main features will probably be the following:

[Comrade Roberts left in penciled notes the list of topics to be more fully elaborated at this point in his article. — Ed.]

Where the resources will come from:

1. Workers Democracy
2. Leninist farm program
3. Limit *privileges* at ratio of 5-1. Cut out *creation* of lazy privileged
4. Cut out space program and nuclear tests.

Go before people with program of:

1. Raising living standards (housing, consumer goods)
2. Long delayed farm investment
3. Aid to China, etc.
4. Enough military to arm the people and help arm embattled revolutions.

Such a program, which includes further sacrifices as well as tangible gains will meet with overwhelming approval.

It requires removal of bureaucracy and restoration of Soviet democracy.

# Women Who Work

Discrimination against women in the U. S. is profitable for some but costly for others. What is the extent of this problem and what is the prospect for its solution?

by Melba Baker

**T**HE material conditions for the complete emancipation of woman have long existed. But it has been only in the last few decades that woman's strategic position, her assimilation in industry, has so altered as to make that emancipation an urgent necessity.

For many centuries, the separate, private labor of the woman was essential to the well-being of the family unit. She rendered fat, dipped candles, made the soap, prepared the food, wove cloth and made clothing. Her labor was socially necessary. But her productive activity was largely restricted to the household and was remunerated only through her husband's pay. Man's labor developed in the broader arena of society. He bargained for his pay. His economic and political dominance was fixed by law.

Modern industry, however, made much of woman's labor not only unnecessary but uneconomical as well. A wire brings in the light. A simple touch of the switch turns it off or on. Bread is baked in great continuous-mix factories. The arduous and most unpleasant part of food preparation is performed by truck gardeners and food processing plants. It is pre-measured and pre-cooked. Giant machines, operated by relatively few men and women, can make, launder, clean, press and mend the clothes of hundreds of families.

This simplification of the labor of the household, its potential elimination, has destroyed the challenge and creativity it once offered. It has left housework empty, dull and monotonous, almost an insult to the intelligence and ingenuity of the modern woman.

Child care is a challenge to an individual who has specialized in the well-being and development of children. But it is not that to the vast majority. For most mothers, trapped alone in the house all day with small children, child care is a prison sentence in which association is restricted to her social and intellectual inferiors, the children, relieved only by the more sensible collective education of the child in the public school.

Ashley Montague, in the book *The Natural Superiority of Women*, expresses the view that "the mother alone with kids all day becomes a non-social, often anti-social being, and therefore, a bad parent. Housework claims her time, more than the child's needs. And the latter in today's complex world demands extensive professional training to understand."

It is the quality of mothering that counts and not the quantity. If a mother looks forward to going to work and to coming home to her children, she will be a happier person and contribute more to the happiness of her family — so said Dr. Edith S. Taylor, psychiatric director of the Jewish Social Agency's nonsectarian Child Guidance Clinic, in a recent interview.

Motherhood is not the glorious end-all for a woman. It is one aspect of her life, just as fatherhood is for the man and the kind of mother she is depends upon the kind of person she is. It happens to demand more biologically from the woman than from the man, but the pleasures and the problems of each new generation are the responsibility of both sexes.

The growth of capitalism, the development of industry, has reduced the necessity for woman's labor in the home. And the decline of capitalism, World War II and the continuous war economy since, has forced open the door to the social employment of women on a mass scale. Women have replied to the old reactionary formula that "a woman's place is in the home," by walking through that door to escape the household tedium and win at least a measure of economic independence and freedom. The U. S. Department of Labor survey in 1960 found that one out of every three workers in the United States was a woman.

Under capitalism, however, social progress is not rational, the result of a plan. Profit is the motor force. Progress is only a by-product, appearing, when it does, in uneven stages, often raising new problems and imposing new burdens before the old ones are eliminated. Women are still under pressure to maintain the primary responsibility of the household and at the same time, their labor is demanded in industry. Her burden therefore is increased.

Frederick Engels wrote in the *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, "The emancipation of women will only be possible when woman can take part in production on a large scale and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amount of her time. And not only has that become possible through modern large scale industry which does not merely permit of the employment of female labor over a wide range, but positively demands it, while it also



tends toward ending private domestic labor by changing it more and more into a public industry."

**A**LTHOUGH modern industry has made possible the complete abolition of the duties of the housewife, as we now know them, the majority of women still perform many traditional tasks and maintain their traditional role. They have not yet realized the benefits of modern industry.

Women find themselves in a dual position. With one foot they are stepping into the future while the other foot is trapped in the past. For most women, ours is a period of transition, filled with doubts and misgivings. Is she an unnatural mother? Is she failing in her duty as a housekeeper and wife? She feels damned if she does and is damned if she doesn't.

This partial freeing of women from domestic labor has brought a large section of them into the working class and in addition has freed another large section to participate in politics and community projects of one kind or another. The very participation of women in many of these areas is a recent historical development. Women who work may also participate in a number of community organizations of one kind or another as well as in politics and to a more limited extent in labor organizations. Their political activity is generally limited to the lower echelons, as is their participation in fund raising, community efforts, church activities, etc. The bulk of the "Jimmy Higgins" work is done by women.

Many of these activities were denied to the great majority of women not so very long ago. Today virtually every woman is in some activity that takes her out of the home for varying periods of time. The woman going to work and going into public life has found a new self. She is becoming a new personality. She is becoming a socially conscious individual, more aware of the economic and cultural realities of life and developing a new interest and new confidence in herself.

Twenty-three million women are today at work in the United States on a full-time basis. Another six million work part-time, making for a total work force of twenty-nine million women. One-half of these working women are married. Of the single women in the United States, from 20-64 years of age, about 75 per cent are working. The work pattern of the single working woman is generally the same as the working man's. The married woman may lose time for child birth and the care of small children.

These women are involved, to a greater or lesser extent, in the class struggle which goes on all the time in one form or another. During the last 20 years, when the class struggle has been relatively muted, the only section of workers who built a new union were the telephone workers. They built their union from a company union. In the best traditions of union militants, they withstood attacks by firemen with high pressure hoses, police clubs, company intimidation and trips to the local jails. In the process they developed new methods of fighting, peculiar to their industry.

This union was brought into existence by that sec-

tion of society that has always been considered impossible to organize. These workers were primarily young women who, it was said, were only interested in "getting married and settling down with some man to support them." Many of these young women still lived at home and were not under compulsion to provide themselves with the necessities of life. In fact they were supposed to have it pretty good. But they just didn't like "Ma Bell" and her low wages.

**W**OMEN constitute about one quarter of all manufacturing employees. This number includes the women working in the factory offices as well as the production workers. In the lighter manufacturing industries, such as textiles and apparel, more than nine-tenths of the workers are women. The largest employment of women in the durable goods industries is in the electrical machinery industries.

Two-thirds of the women who work are engaged in the distribution of goods and services, with the greatest concentration of women in business services. Ninety-four per cent of all stenographers, typists and secretaries are women. The next largest section of women workers are bookkeepers and telephone operators. About half of the women workers are concentrated in twenty-eight occupational groups. In twelve occupations, women supply nine-tenths of the labor power.

The women who go to work are reaching out toward the future. They find an identity with their fellow workers along class lines. Having gone to work, the problems of women are recognized as basically social problems. This makes it easier to seek a means to solve them in common.

Of course, the woman who goes to work is not on easy street. In fact, she takes on a new load that is, for the most part, added to her old burden of kitchen and cradle. Some in despair, turn back to the protection and shelter of four walls and a husband. To them, the struggle for emancipation is too difficult; they will settle for the status quo. Others lack the physical energy necessary or the emotional stability to form consistent work habits or the ability to work in an organized unit with other people. Some, of course, play the same part as the "Uncle Tom's" play in the movement of the Negro people. Some are so demoralized as to be content with social parasitism. And others are pushed out of a labor force that is put to use only when profits are high.

The first thing a woman discovers when she enters the market place with her labor power, is its value. Even though she comes with a skill, such as typing or bookkeeping, her labor power is valued lower than that of a male worker, and many times this is in relation to a male worker without a skill.

In general, labor unions have concentrated on organizing men, and usually the more skilled men. This concentration resulted in a higher general wage scale for men as against women.

With the large influx of women into industry in the last two decades, the unions have defaulted in rela-

tion to women. Although one-third of the present labor force is composed of women, only 15 per cent of them are organized into unions. A good number of unions make little or no attempt to organize the white collar workers, who are predominantly women.

This callous disregard of the needs of the women workers is a direct concession to management by the union bureaucrats. They go one step further and add insult to injury by using the bosses' age-old argument that women are only working for "pin money." This was the fiction invented to excuse the low wages paid to women and children by factory owners at the dawn of the manufacturing period. It still is a good excuse for employers eager to make more profit, but a very bad reason to be accepted by a union.

In a number of industries that are primarily composed of women workers there is often a union settlement of the contract on the basis of outright sex discrimination. The practice of settling for ten cents an hour more for men and three cents an hour more for women is very common. The result is that over the years the spread becomes greater and greater. Needless to say, the employer with 100 women and ten men in his work force is very glad to make a deal of this nature — after a little shadow boxing of course.

**T**HERE is a very accurate measure of the value of discrimination and prejudice to the employer that is apparent at a glance in the wage scale of different sections of the population.

**Wage and Salary Income of White and Nonwhite Men and Women for the Year 1958**

GROUP	ALL WORKERS	
	WOMEN	MEN
White	\$2,364.00	\$4,569.00
Nonwhite	1,055.00	2,652.00

These figures from the U.S. Department of Commerce give the dollar value of discrimination and prejudice. The nonwhite male is somewhat better off than the white female, but the nonwhite female worker pays the highest price for her color and sex. Her yearly income is at the bare point of existence.

In relation to family "head" (it is automatically assumed, of course, in our equalitarian paradise, that it is the man) the figures are equally unpleasant. Families with males at the head received a median yearly income in 1958 of \$5,292.00. One-tenth of the families in the United States have females at the head and they had a median yearly income in 1958 of \$2,741.00. Thus the family headed by a woman has just half as much food, clothing, shelter, recreation, health benefits, etc., as the one headed by a man.

When the union officials speak of vast sums of money to organize the unorganized they rarely mention the women workers. It is almost as if this group of workers did not exist.

And their silence is not difficult to understand. To organize women workers would present the union officials with a problem they do not want. It would upset the status quo to bring this great section of exploited

workers into the general stream of organized labor. To equalize the wage scale would require battles of major proportions. In addition the unions would find themselves grappling with much broader problems than just economic ones. There would of necessity arise renewed and greater pressure from the ranks for independent political action to meet the general social problems of child care, peace, slums, etc.

The low pay of women is linked with the low pay of national and racial minorities. Certain classifications of work are commonly done by women or by men and women of these minorities.

Discrimination is rampant in job classification as well as in rates of pay. Of the twenty-eight occupation groups for women in the United States, a good number are virtually closed to women of the minorities who find their job openings primarily in the lowest-paid categories.

Forty-five per cent of the nonwhite women work outside the home and constitute one out of every eight women working. They work generally in three fields: private household workers, other service workers and operatives in factories, laundries and other work places. Economic necessity is greater in this group and undoubtedly accounts for 45 per cent of the nonwhite women working as against 35 per cent of the white women.

In twenty states there are laws demanding equal pay for equal work, but most of these states insert two exceptions: for domestic labor and for agricultural labor. These are areas where the greatest exploitation and also the most miserable working conditions exist.

Twenty-three states and Puerto Rico have minimum wage laws. Here again, exceptions are made with regard to agricultural labor and domestic labor.

Forty states have laws that regulate hours of employment and days of rest, meals, rest periods, night work, etc. Twenty states have a maximum of a six-day working week to protect the health of women workers. However, these laws all are strangely blind to the plight of agricultural workers.

While many of these laws look good on paper, they have no real significance unless there is a union organization to enforce them. If each woman, as an individual, is compelled to demand the enforcement of the legal provisions that are supposed to protect her, they will not and cannot be enforced. In most cases, the woman does not even know about protective laws. The bosses have legal staffs to advise them. Small businessmen generally belong to trade associations that provide legal service or information. But what working class family has access to this general information outside of the trade union movement?

**O**NE of the largest unions of women workers in this country is the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. This bureaucratically run union still allows the piece work system. Each woman is forced to work to the limit of her strength for the bare necessities. Many of the food processing unions allow the operation of the same principle, or permit a quota sys-

tem that introduces speed-up. The unions generally have permitted speed of the belt system in mass production to be determined by the boss. (In the 1930's the workers fought to have their say in the tempo of their labor.)

Women are also blocked in their hope of advancement to higher pay categories of labor. This problem is another reason the male-dominated unions are reluctant to organize women. They would also have to make at least a token effort to fight for their advancement. This would mean many women would reach higher-level job categories than men and those men who are reluctant to give up their illusion of superiority would resent this. A male "B" mechanic in a crew under a female "A" mechanic would find his ego a bit bruised. Union officials are undoubtedly uncomfortable in the presence of skilled women workers who won't be treated with the old arrogant and condescending paternalism.

*Nation's Business* for September, 1961, gives some interesting figures on women's place in the business world. In 1940 four per cent of the executives in the United States were women. In 1950 this figure rose to five per cent. It was still at this level when the 1960 census was taken and is believed to be only slightly higher at the present time. This must be compared to a 1960 work force of 23.5 million women — estimated as close to 25 million in 1961.

*Nation's Business* goes on to say, "Most firms feel women are too much of a risk to put into administrative jobs. Many companies shy away from giving women top jobs because they fear the effect this will have on other employees — particularly men. Of the nation's approximately seven million managers, officials and proprietors only 1.1 million are women and about half that number are self employed."

This means that about half of the 1.1 million women executives are owners of beauty shops, restaurants, child care centers, boarding houses, nursing homes, etc.

Women are also excluded from top posts in fields of work that are traditionally theirs. For example, in the library field women fill a very large proportion of the staff positions but a very small proportion of the administrative positions.

Likewise, in the field of education, there are relatively few women in the administrative staffs of the schools. In elementary schools nine-tenths of the teachers and half the principals are women. In secondary schools where women fill about half the teaching posts, they represent about nine per cent of the principals. Women constitute over one-quarter of the administrative staffs in colleges and universities, but they are concentrated in women's colleges. Less than one-tenth of all college board members in coeducational colleges are women.

The 20,000 women teachers in colleges and universities comprised about one-fifth of the college faculty in 1959-60. Of the college instructors, about one-third were women, and of full professors, about one-tenth were women.

The discrepancy between men and women in admin-

istrative bodies of unions appears to be even greater than in the business or professional world. Material available in the Seattle Public Library failed to reveal *any* woman in *any* policy making body of *any* union.

**T**HE universal discrimination against women tends to unite them in the struggle for equality. But even more of a unifying factor is the problem of child care which all women share, actually or potentially. The extent of the problem in its actuality can be seen in the fact that one out of every seven mothers in this country is in the labor force. One out of every two mothers in the labor force has a child or children under 12 years of age.

Apart from the public school, there is no general provision for the care of children of working mothers. The public school is the only area in which society intervenes in any organized fashion in the welfare and development of the child. Today, seven million women are attempting to solve the same problem of child care, each in her own individual way. Needless to say, this is not the best way for the emotional and physical development of the child or for the peace of mind of the mother.

The task of finding a baby sitter is an arduous one, not to speak of the expense. An individual mother must read newspaper ads, solicit friends, relatives, neighbors and fellow workers.

In general the women who are available for baby sitting and housework are those who for one reason or another are excluded from industrial work. Most often this is due to discrimination in relation to age, health, color or nationality. These women are forced into this occupation. It is not a vocation which they freely selected and for which they have been specially trained.

But all too often, the baby sitter is an emotionally unstable woman. A scandalously high percentage of damage is done to children by emotionally sick individuals. Only a most fortunate few working mothers can afford the luxury of trained baby sitters and housekeepers to relieve them of these tasks and worries.

The United States Children's Bureau regards the most fortunate child of all is the child of the working mother who has the good fortune to attend a good group child care center. But this is the privilege of only one out of every four children of working mothers. The majority of children are cared for by neighbors, relatives and friends. About one child in every thirteen is expected to look out for himself.

This problem, again, is the most severe at the lower income level of working women. This is the bracket of nonwhite working mothers. When we add job discrimination to their extremely low wage scale, and the fact that she may also head a family, the magnitude of the problems she faces in this society is one of truly staggering proportions.

Technically all of these problems can be solved. Social labor is productive enough to be able to provide child care centers staffed by full-time professionals. And there is no reason why the housework

(Continued on page 90)

# Yugoslavia's Way: The Workers' Council System

Tito tries formal democratic concessions at home while turning his back on the movement of world revolution: A contradictory policy leading to contradictory results

by Theo Schulze

**T**HE "Yugoslav way" toward industrialization has earned Yugoslavia such epithets as "hybrid" and "renegade," but has nevertheless endured and stirred interest. To determine the acceptability of the Yugoslav example, those interested will study carefully the system of Workers' Self-Management.

The origin of this system is well known. It sprang from the first fissure in the Soviet monolith known to the world, the 1948 Cominform conflict. At that time, Tito and the Yugoslav Communists defied the Kremlin, survived expulsion and went on to stabilize the country and thereby their own power. In that process, they revised their ideology, concluding that "deformations of socialism" had occurred in the Soviet Union, where a privileged bureaucracy had grown out of the overly centralized economic and state apparatus. Their alternative was therefore, decentralization — granting more and more economic and administrative power to broader sections of the population.

To better understand this development, however, one must note that this answer was reached empirically and tardily. The "experiment," as the Yugoslavs themselves long referred to it, did not begin until one year after the split. The same leaders who had tried, in that year, to seem holier than Pope Stalin by pushing through the previous mammoth plan for heavy industrialization, decided to place economic decision-making power in the hands of elected bodies in the factories. This fact alone explains the limited nature of the reforms which do not touch on questions of political power. The hegemony of the League of Yugoslav Communists was and remains insured in this system.

The primary ideological justification for the reforms was the argument that only through decentralization can the State begin to "wither away" as it should in a socialist society and as it had not in the Soviet Union. Two other goals were stressed by the Yugoslav Party theoreticians in ushering in the new system: one based on Marxist social-psychology, the other directly on the needs of Yugoslavia.

The condition of the alienated individual, as Marx envisaged him in capitalist society, cannot be ameliorated simply by nationalizing the means of production. The worker's conception of himself as powerless and insignificant does not change if the private corporation is replaced by an equally remote State. The Yugoslavs claimed, therefore, that only by giving the workers control over their factory, making them the main decision-makers, could this condition be changed. The Workers' Councils system was, then, to serve as an important innovation in communist ideology.

It was also to serve as a means of education. Transforming a predominantly rural population into an industrial

labor force is the classic problem of nearly all underdeveloped countries. Although a large part of this problem is preparing the peasant for urban society by training him in industrial techniques, teaching trades is half the struggle. The hands on the production line must be skilled, as they can really only be when directed by a conscientious worker. The Yugoslavs hold that when the worker must solve, together with his colleagues, the basic problems of production, investment, wage and price policy, he develops not only a keen awareness of the processes of business and industry but also a more profound social consciousness. The knowledge that his decisions will affect the factory and ultimately his own work and life, affords him the greatest impetus for interest, application and higher productivity.

The structure through which these lofty ideals were to materialize was formed with the "Law on Administration of Economic Organizations Through Workers' Collectives" in June 1950. Examination merely of the mechanics of this structure cannot produce a definitive statement as to how it measures up to its own ideals, nevertheless a few generalizations can be made. The first observation is that the burdensome, Soviet-type, economic bureaucracy has indeed disappeared from the scene. No longer are there massive ministries, planning or misplanning the economy; decentralization has achieved for Yugoslav enterprises, which compete with one another, an independence from the State heretofore unknown under any Communist Party regime and has made the laws of the market the main determinants of the economy. A second observation is that although extensive decision-making is exercised by the individual enterprises, this does not necessarily mean that it is always the workers in each plant who make these decisions. Bureaucracy at all levels of society has not been eliminated and small, local bureaucratic cliques are a danger within the system. This can be seen in the factory structure which reflects a discrepancy between ideals and the harsh realities of a country which was once among the most backward in Europe. The attempt to change the condition of the worker in the modern factory is meant to coincide with the building of those very factories. Both are worthy goals and their fulfillment urgent, but the trial-and-error learning process of a new, crude and groping working class can conflict with the need for higher productivity. Within the factory, therefore, the necessity for a continuous, efficient administration is juxtaposed to the aim for direct workers' control. Certain factors weaken the workers' controlling position: some stem from the weakness and immaturity of the Yugoslav working class; others from the pressures of hard, day-to-day living; still others arise in a political situation where one party has a power monopoly.

Closer scrutiny of the system's main features bears out these remarks.

## The Law

In Yugoslavia, the means of production belong to society: the 1950 law delegated to the workers of each manufacturing, mining, commercial, trade and agricultural enterprise the right to manage that concern in the name of society. It further designated the form of such management: in concerns employing over thirty, all employees, or the collective as it is called, must vote for a Workers' Council every two years. This Council in turn votes for an Administrative Board. The third component of management is the directorship, which is not a true organ of worker self-administration. The General Director is not a member of the collective, nor is he elected. He is appointed by the governmental organs of the locality in which the enterprise operates.

The Workers' Council is directly responsible to the collective and is elected on the basis of lists of candidates set up by the trade union local or by any other group of workers above a certain number. This minimum number of collective members required to set up a list of candidates apart from that of the trade union local, the number of seats the Council is to have, as well as other procedures are set down in the company constitution when the concern is first organized. This constitution is voted on by the entire collective. Each candidates list must be endorsed by the signatures of 10% of the collective in concerns employing less than five hundred; by as many workers as there are seats on the Council in concerns where there are more than that number. The average factory of a thousand-odd employees has a Council of fifteen to thirty members.

The law makes certain stipulations designed specifically to prevent the growth of a bureaucratic clique. The most important among these are entitling every employee except the General Director and his assistants to a vote, and prohibiting consecutive terms to Council members. Yet the actual instruments of control over the Council at the disposal of the collective are very limited. If the collective is dissatisfied with the decisions of the Council, its sole recourse is a drastic one — recall. The idea being that the work of the administration should not be unduly interrupted, thus impeding production, the law is not clear on how the recall is to be brought about. The official interpretation calls for an involved process — the same number of workers who endorse the candidates list must appeal for a new election.

**T**HE function of the Council is to decide the general line of financial and administrative policy at open meetings. These are fairly far-reaching and autonomous decisions, for the Yugoslav enterprise is no longer required to fulfill any sort of plan. Its guiding principle is to make the highest profit in competition with other enterprises. The State has ceased to be the complete planner of economy, instead merely maintains certain instruments through which it can influence economic processes toward the desired goals contained in yearly or five-year "plans." These instruments are investment policy and the determining of rates of interest and turnover tax. The Council has no other duties to the Federal State but to give it one half of the factory's net profits. A smaller part must also be turned over to the Commune or District. The portion of profit left at the disposal of the Council, once these obligations have been achieved, has tended to increase over the years. The Council alone decides how, when and where to spend this remainder. It sets its own prices, decides with whom to do business, and formulates the conditions of wage contracts and social benefits. One additional obligation is that it vote for an Administrative Board at its first session.

This Board is elected from and by the members of the Workers' Council every year. Its number may not be less than three nor more than eleven and no member may

serve more than two consecutive years. This organ must report its activities to the Council at every meeting, but other than this periodic review of what sometimes amounts to accomplished facts, the larger organ has no controlling mechanism but recall. This can, however, be obtained by a simple majority vote in the Council. The function of the Board is to execute the general line set by the Workers' Council and to refine this general policy into basic monthly and operational plans. It investigates any phase of production where the policy is not working and makes recommendations accordingly. There is one automatic member of this Board: the General Director.

This man is appointed for an indefinite term by a committee established for this purpose by the People's Assembly of the particular Commune or District where the concern is located. One third of this selection committee is chosen by the Council, which also determines the necessary qualifications. Once selected from a host of applicants, he is responsible to the Commune and District People's Assemblies as well as to the Administrative Board. His function is very generally defined by law, hence very encompassing. As director of production and administration, he may intervene into any phase of the plant's operation. He hires and fires personnel with the approval of the Board, and he designates jobs. Although his decisions must be in keeping with those reached in the self-administrative organs, he may reject them if he considers them to be illegal. No equivalent right to reject the Director's decisions is extended to the self-administrative organs. He makes and signs contracts, and in general, represents the firm to the community and all governmental bodies.

## How It Works

It is upon examination of the role of the General Director that the discrepancy between the ideal of maximum workers' power and the necessity for maximum production becomes obvious. The Director embodies the aim for continuous, efficient administration. His term is indefinite, his autonomy extensive. As in the case of the other organs, recall is the only control mechanism over the Director that the collective or Council has, but the process is longer, more complicated, hence more discouraging. Whereas the reason for recall of the Council and the Board on the part of the collective can simply be lack of confidence because of disagreement on basic policies, proof must be submitted to the local People's Assembly that the Director has acted illegally or contrary to the policies set forth in the Council. The application for recall must originate in the Council and be submitted by the Board, thus requiring complete agreement between the two organs. Another reason for recall, one difficult to prove, is that the concern has not operated optimally due to the Director's negligence or incapability. If the commission set up by the People's Assembly to investigate the evidence finds it to be inadequate, the Assembly will not only refuse to oust the Director but may dissolve the Council and call for new elections, as well. A simplified model built of these many facts might look like this: a significant portion of the collective harbors a chronic gripe against the Director, but can only oust him by convincing the Council of the merit of its request. The Council must in turn convince the Administrative Board which, if not agreeable, must then be removed in toto by the Council. If the Council itself balks, that section of the collective must start the long process of getting a more amenable Council elected. Assuming it succeeds at long last in this venture, the Director may still find himself on the side of grace after the People's Assembly decides.

Once in, the good man is hard to get out. Yet the reason is expressed succinctly in one of the conditions on which he can be recalled: he answers to the community for the optimal operation of the plant. If he succeeds in joining forces with the few men on the Administrative Board, and if personnel policy is used subsequently as a weapon against opposition, a hierarchy resembling the

traditional employer can develop. How far the balance of power can tip in favor of the Director and his cohorts in the hierarchy, is attested to by the not infrequent and astounding cases of white-collar criminal activity organized by such high-level managers. Cases of embezzlement, theft, and illegal sale to the tune of millions of dinars have sometimes not been discovered for years. Scandalized outcries abound in the press on the occasions of such discoveries: who and where were the self-managing workers during all this time?

**A**N ATTEMPT to answer this question is not complete by simply pointing out the weak control-mechanisms in the factory structure. A Director is still easier to overcome than some remote State ministry, if the workers of the collective and Council are alert, concerned, and determined enough to assert themselves. The reason that none of these qualities is particularly developed among Yugoslav workers lies among the immensely more serious ramifications of a nonindustrialized society.

In order to be able to raise his hand in dissent at the right moment, a worker must keep a watchful eye on the administrative proceedings as well as all other processes in the factory. For this, he must understand them. The mass of production line workers in Yugoslavia are, however, unskilled, fresh from the land and in many cases still bound to their rural origins. The intricate workings of business and industry are for them remote concepts. The Yugoslavs hasten to point out that the worker will learn these things by experience, if he really wants to, but there are numerous factors working against even the best of intentions.

One factor is time, which in Yugoslavia, as everywhere else, can mean money. Early in the development of the system the sessions of the Workers' Council were held during company time and the workers were paid for work-time lost. The negative effect on the plant's productivity was immediately evident, and, as a rule, meetings are now held after hours. This means the worker must first give up his free time and then go home to study the problems raised at meetings. One could, perhaps, with appeals to conscience, convince the average worker to lose leisure time and even sleep, but one cannot convince him to give up the very necessary supplement to his regular low income. This he acquires, legally or illegally, through after-hour, part-time work at another concern or with a private employer. The Yugoslavs give no statistics on this type of "moonlighter," but one has only to compare the rising cost of living with the average wage to know that other incomes would have to be obtained in order for the worker's family to break even at the end of the month. A worker will be less concerned with what he may regard as "factory politics" the more energy he has to expend to make ends meet. Further, such concern can only be trifling in the case of Yugoslavia's many peasant-workers, almost one quarter of the labor force, who regard their main task to be tending their small farms to which they return after daily or seasonal work in the factory. It is for these reasons, then, that the participation of unqualified or semi-qualified workers in factory self-administration has remained more or less at about 10%. The trend is toward more participation on the part of skilled and professional personnel, who have the advantage of more knowledge and background as well as a somewhat easier financial situation.

### The Trade Unions

The main factor in the election of this more qualified group of workers and professionals is the trade union. Although there are always more candidates on the lists than there are seats to be filled and election irregularities can be taken to the local court, it is highly improbable that anyone not nominated by the trade union local can get elected to the Workers' Council. A specified number of the collective may set up its own list of candidates, but the fre-

quency of such independent lists rarely exceeds 5 or 6%, and only about 2 or 3% of such candidates get elected. This situation need not be construed as contrary to the philosophy of the reforms: the Yugoslav Trade Union Federation embraces about 85% of the labor force. Membership is theoretically voluntary, and the locals are now much more independent of the central committee than they once were. One might expect that more interested and responsible worker-candidates will come from the trade union lists. On the other hand, the preponderance of qualified and professional employees in the administration belies a tendency on the part of the union to be more concerned with plant-effectivity than with the education of unskilled workers. Apart from this, the trade union, subordinate as it is to the League of Yugoslav Communists, whose cells operate throughout the organization, cannot be regarded as an entirely independent voice of the Yugoslav workers. It is prohibited from being a completely separate, hence potentially competitive entity, and consequently can present the worker with only limited alternatives.

The net effect of these various limitations is to deepen the doubts of the industrial worker in his own power, which in turn weakens his concern and vigilance over the factory. A sign of this lack of confidence seems to be the fact that since the inception of the system, the number of Councils to be recalled by collectives in any one year has not been over 8% of the total.

Nevertheless, there is still much identification with the system. The number voting in factory elections increases from year to year and exceeds the membership of the Trade Union Federation. This, along with the steady advances Yugoslavia has made, might lead interested observers from underdeveloped areas to regard the discrepancy between ideals and practice as merely formal failings. For ultimately, the criterion of over-all economic effectivity is the decisive one. Such general advance in Yugoslavia has been obvious: in 1959, a United Nations economic commission found it to have the highest rate of expansion in Europe. This point, however, warrants a few additional remarks, for within the system itself, certain hinderances to steady progress are noticeable.

**I**T IS true that after complete State planning was abandoned, the decentralization of investment funds into the hands of the Communes and Districts accelerated rational investment to a great extent. Broader sections of the population were now voicing their needs through the market and long-existent gaps were thereby filled. But the consequences of dispersing already small capital reserves are that investment flows primarily into short-term projects, as there are fewer entities capable of making and sustaining heavy investment. This means much investment into consumer-goods industries which promise rapid success on the market, and a potential neglect of heavy industry as well as of those areas in the country where there is no industry at all. This disequilibrium has been more or less warded off in Yugoslavia by extensive foreign aid and credits, coming primarily from the West. The Yugoslavs have thus not as yet proven that their economic success is inherent in the system alone, which fact will doubtlessly invoke consideration among the new, ex-colonial nations.

The pressures of the market on the enterprises have brought still another problem to light, that of the much-discussed "factory egotism." This term covers all practices of Yugoslav concerns in their quest for higher profits which are to the disadvantage of the consumer, the community and finally the national economy. Cut-throat competition, deliberate reduction in the quality of products, and rampant price-hiking are some of the frequent maneuvers. The most severe examples of such "egotism" are caused by the monopolistic behavior of businesses in those less developed branches of the economy where there is little

(Continued on page 90)

# Automation and the Trade Unions

by Ed Beecher

*"When looms weave by themselves slavery will end."*  
—ARISTOTLE

One trade union newspaper asks the question, is automation "A blessing for the industrial giants of America, or a curse for millions of working people who earn their daily bread through their labor?" *The Trainman News* says "Automation, a fearful word among workers up to this point because of its connotation to them of resultant unemployment as technological changes take place in industry, can and must be a boon to us all if harnessed properly."

A large part of the effects of automation on the working class and the unions lies in what the unions themselves do about it. What are the various approaches of unions to the problems of automation?

## Lewis and McDonald

The first is the obvious do-nothing, business-as-usual policy of some unions. Their methods are the same as the business unionism of Samuel Gompers or William Green in their heyday — as if there had been no qualitative or quantitative change in the mine, mill or office in this century. This type of leadership is best exemplified by John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers and David J. McDonald of the Steelworkers. Their policy is to negotiate a new contract periodically which usually includes some fringe benefits and an hourly wage increase which helps maintain a relatively high wage for the fewer and fewer workers who still have jobs. The recent 3% agreement in steel shows, however, that even this neat business arrangement is coming to an end as a desperate American capitalism brings pressure to bear on these labor lieutenants of the capitalist class.

What does the union do for the tens of thousands of workers who are displaced by automation in these industries? Nothing — nothing whatsoever, because industry is given a free hand to rationalize production at the expense of the workers. Industry has a free hand to automate where and when it wants to. It can automate old plants or close them down and build new streamlined plants at will, without let or hindrance from the union, and without throwing so much as a bone to those workers who are displaced and will never again work in the industry.

Is there any reason to wonder why production has gone up, while employment has dwindled in these industries? The real wonder is that the bureaucracy of these unions doesn't lift a finger to alleviate the plight of these workers, let alone prevent it. Under this leadership 200,000 coal miners in 1959 produced more coal than 1,000,000 in 1949, and the membership of the United Steel Workers declined from one million to 796,000 while production increased 50%.

## Quill and Bridges

Another approach to the problem of automation is more humane and makes an attempt to alleviate its impact; but the end result is the same — fewer workers with greater production. This approach is, in essence, no layoffs when automation is installed, but transfer to another vacant job

made available because of sickness, death, retirement or injury.

Generally speaking, this is the approach of the Transport Workers Union under Mike Quill, and, with some variations, of Harry Bridges and the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen Union on the West coast. With this "humane" approach the number of transport workers in the New York City subway system has decreased from 30,000 to 20,000 since 1945. The ILWU membership on the docks had already declined from 25,000 to 18,000 when it signed a 5½ year "mechanization pact" in 1961 which allows unbridled automation, but some consideration for displaced workers. The transport worker is guaranteed 52 weeks a year employment, while the longshoreman has a guarantee of 32 weeks a year or \$4,692, with severance benefits of up to \$7,000. (The airline pilots in the TWU have a similar provision of up to \$40,000.) It remains to be seen if this provision will hinder automation, but it is highly doubtful.

"In exchange for these benefits — employers are relieved from restriction in the contract and working rules dealing with sling loads, first place of rest, multiple handling, gang sizes and manning scales, so as to permit them to operate efficiently, change methods of work, utilize labor saving devices and direct work through employer representatives, while explicitly observing the provisions and conditions of the contract."<sup>1</sup> This sounds like the worst possible type of speed-up imaginable. That there was a substantial opposition to it is shown by the vote on it of 7,862 to 3,695.

## The Electrical Workers

Finally, there is the approach of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 3 in New York City. There are 34,000 members in this local, with varying scales of pay and hours. In its construction division, this local has 6,750 members working in the building industry who have had a 30-hour week for over 25 years. These members are the cream of the labor aristocracy, with a father-to-son inheritance of jobs, and college scholarships for their brighter sons and daughters. To the chagrin of President Kennedy and Arthur J. Goldberg, who openly opposed it and to the consternation of George Meany and Walter Reuther, they struck for and won with ease a 25-hour week at approximately the same wages as before. The only concession Local 3 gave the employers was an agreement to allow more apprentices into the union in case of a future "shortage" of skilled labor.

The main catalyst in this tremendous victory was the gradual mechanization (not automation) of the industry in the form of time-saving tools and devices. One example of mechanization was the introduction of a machine appropriately named "The Powercrat" which pulls heavy cable through a building with one man operating it instead of the 6 to 10 men previously required for the same job. Another example is the introduction of a powder-actuated gun which shoots studs into steel in 30 seconds instead of the 30 minutes it formerly took. The net result of these

<sup>1</sup> ILWU Reporter, October 24, 1961.

and other improved production methods was that in the last 25 years the output per worker more than tripled.

There was some unemployment and consequent discontent and grumbling from the membership, but the main exponent and chief inspiration for the 25-hour week came from the bureaucracy in the person of Harry Van Arsdale, president of the IBEW Local 3. Harry Van Arsdale is a conservative, old-line labor leader who formed the Brotherhood Party in New York to support Kennedy and Mayor Wagner in 1960, and is now endorsing Tammany Democrats Powell and Buckley in preference to more "liberal" Democratic Party opponents.

The logic behind this tremendous victory was twofold. Foremost is the fact that a small number of strategically important workers can bring an entire industry to its knees. Second is the fact that a bureaucracy (Van Arsdale and other officers of the union) must have a corresponding membership to justify and support their existence. While a McDonald or a Lewis has an ever-decreasing membership base, they still have hundreds of thousands of members left to support them. But a small craft union leader cannot afford this "luxury." All indications are that the other craft unions in the building industry in New York will follow the example of the Electrical Workers and attain, without too much difficulty, a 6-hour day to replace their present 7-hour day.

### Craft Vs. Industrial

The leadership of the craft unions is much more sensitive and responsive to the needs of its membership than the national mass trade unions. For one thing, they have closer day-to-day personal contact with the membership. Secondly, as indicated, they cannot as readily afford to idly sit by and see the disappearance of their whole *raison d'être* — a dues-paying membership. Finally, like any Roger Blough, Chairman of U.S. Steel, they are hard-headed capitalist business men who look out for their own interests. That is why, unlike McDonald, they don't (and can't afford to) listen to the pleadings and siren songs of Kennedy or Goldberg to be "reasonable" and hold the line on wages and hours in the "national interest." They support the Democratic and Republican parties wholeheartedly, and the U.S. State Department too, but they evince no desire to attend their own funerals a la John L. Lewis. That is why Meany, who comes from the building trades and is therefore more responsive to the craft sector of the AFL-CIO finally came out for the 35-hour week, May 17, 1962, while Reuther is still hedging and holding the line.

This tragic paradox of the conservative AFL being miles ahead of the once militant mass unions of the CIO on this issue is explained not by the class interests of the respective memberships, but by the personal and bureaucratic vested interests of their respective leaderships. Meany is the classical representative of the bureaucrat whose job is the only thing that matters; while Reuther and McDonald represent nothing but themselves as the defenders of a declining capitalism and its State Department. *Nation's Business* Wall Street's magazine, knows how this operates. In a June 1961 article entitled, "Who Would Pay for Shorter Hours," it says, "Mr. Reuther's interest in a shorter work-week has been hot and cold over the years. In 1953 he opposed it on the ground that the need was for more houses, schools and other goods, and that 40 hours' pay won't buy more if only 30 hours output were available. UAW leadership branded attempts within the union to press for a 30-hour week as 'a communist trick to weaken our might and reduce our standard of living.'

"Four years later, Mr. Reuther began to push for shorter hours. But the Russians launched their first sputnik and the American people became concerned about our military strength. That was not the time to push for more leisure. So the idea was dropped from the union's 1958 demands . . ." Big business gets what it wants and needs from big unionism. We hope, for Reuther's sake, that it is appreciated.

Meanwhile, what are the prospects for the future, both

for the workers and their trade unions? While the total number of workers has increased from 61.6 millions in 1953 to 65.8 millions in 1962, much of the rise was the result of the artificial war economy and increased government spending. Of this 4.2 million increase, government employment accounted for 1.9 million, or 45%. In spite of a tremendous increase in production, the number of factory workers has declined since 1951 from 13.2 million to 11.6 million in 1961. In the same period the number of white collar, professional and service workers increased from 28 million to 37 million, of whom 24 million are white collar workers.

It is in the white collar area that most bourgeois economists and labor leaders saw a hope for the future. They contended that automation would create new industries, new skills and more jobs. When it finally came, the awakening was quite a shock. As Albert Whitehead, Director of the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO said, April 22, 1958, "We were told that while there might be a decline in the number of production workers, this would be more than offset by the number of higher paid workers required for more skilled non-production jobs.

"This simply didn't happen. Maintenance requirements in automated plants appear to be no greater than in non-automated plants. In fact, the evidence seems to point in just the opposite direction. The National Industrial Conference Board study found that there was a drop in the proportion of maintenance workers in automated plants, as well as a decline in the number of production control and security personnel involved."

It is precisely in the office and white collar field that it is the easiest and cheapest to automate, and where automation is proceeding at the most rapid rate. It is here that the automation of already automated processes is taking place in the form of "thinking machines" called computers.

To cite one example, the U.S. Census Bureau was able to use fifty statisticians in 1960 to do the tabulations that required 4,100 in 1950.<sup>2</sup> The President of the Office Employees International Union testified that "Computer Sciences, Inc. estimates that 10,000 computer installations will be made in the year 1961. [As against 2,000 in 1959—E.B.] Based on studies made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, it is estimated that each computer will affect 140 jobs. It is, therefore, easily seen that in the year 1961 1.4 million workers will be affected by these new installations.

The President of the Office Employees International testified that the "BLS has also indicated that 25% of the jobs affected will be eliminated. We therefore, can anticipate that 350,000 white collar positions will be permanently abolished by virtue of computer installations in the year 1961."<sup>3</sup> According to the IUD of the AFL-CIO, "For every job that automation adds, it eliminates 5 others."<sup>4</sup>

### Organization of Unorganized

While the trade union leaders have talked a great deal in recent years about organizing the unorganized in general and the white collar workers in particular to replenish their diminishing membership (and coffers of their treasuries) they have done virtually nothing to implement these threats.

The reason for their ineffectualness can be concretely shown in the recent New York City teachers' strike. The *Wall Street Journal*, April 5, 1962, reported that "Mr. Reuther, his aides say, believes that the methods used until now to lure white collar workers are not enough. What's needed, in Mr. Reuther's view, is a good case exhibit of successful organizing combined with an improved salary contract." While Reuther and Meany were literally dying verbally to organize them, they gave no assistance either verbally or physically when 20,000 teachers April 11 walked out. "The strike, carried out in the teeth of the Condon-Wadlin Law which forbids strikes by public employees and

<sup>2</sup> Automation, *The Silent Conquest*. The Fund for the Republic, 1962.

<sup>3</sup> Howard Coughlin, Statement on Automation before the U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor, March 29, 1961.

<sup>4</sup> I.U.D. Bulletin, August, 1960. Industrial Union Dept., AFL-CIO.



imposes heavy penalties for violations, was enjoined by the Board of Education." (N.Y. *Labor Chronicle*, April, 1962.) Even when this "textbook model of an anti-labor injunction" was issued by the courts, the silence of the New York and national labor leadership was unbroken and the teachers went back to their desks with a semi-victory which could have been the very thing Reuther claimed he wanted — "a good case exhibit" for all white collar workers.

Is it any wonder, then, that only 2.2 million of the 24 million white collar workers are organized, and that from 1958-1960 only 8,000 were added. Incidentally, a good part of the organized white collar workers are government workers and union employees which are lobbying organizations rather than effective unions.

In the industrial portion of the labor movement the picture is no brighter. The tremendous gains of the 1930's and 1940's are being dissipated by the ne'er-do-well inheritors of a vast amount of trade union wealth which was accumulated by the sacrifice of the millions of militants who have been isolated, discouraged and demoralized by the inept policies of their leadership. In this area, unlike the craft union sector where the main impetus thus far comes from the bureaucracy, the leadership in the fight against the decimation-through-attribution of the working class must at the start come from below, through the fighting spirit that the workers are capable of.

Meanwhile automation proceeds apace in the mass production industries. An ironic example of this was seen at the recent opening of a plant in Ravenswood, W. Va., where the Kaiser Co. was induced by the Chamber of Commerce to open a \$3,000,000 automated rolling mill. "Federal, State and Local officials turned up for the opening to make speeches lauding Kaiser and to snip pink ribbon for the photographers. When the ceremonies concluded, 10 men in overalls walked into the plant to begin work. In other words it cost \$300,000 to provide one job for one man in today's automated industries."<sup>5</sup> (The average capital investment per worker in 1961 was \$13,000.—E.B.) Hundreds of similar examples could be cited, but by now it is an old story published almost daily.

### United Automobile Workers

In the mass industrial field the logical place for the struggle against unemployment and for some gains is in the UAW and in Detroit where the struggle for better conditions and against speed-up was accompanied by strikes and sit-downs that really got the CIO off the ground. In 1955 Reuther welcomed automation and said that "... automation can and should make possible a four day week, longer vacation periods, opportunity for earlier retirement, as well as a vast increase in our material standards of living."<sup>6</sup> This sounds fairly good, for 1955, and even perhaps today. But by 1961 Reuther not only did not progress past these modest requests, but even retrenched. In 1961 he asked for an improved minimum wage, (how much?) reduction of the work week (to how many hours?), area redevelopment (where and what kind?), improved employment services (?), assistance to workers in relocating (to where?), improvement of educational opportunities (for whom?), and — God save the mark — strengthening of collective bargaining (by whom?). No mention whatsoever of longer vacations, of earlier retirement, or the most important proposal of 1955, for a 4-day week.<sup>7</sup>

At every convention and each contract year this demagogue comes up with a brilliant "solution" for the auto workers and sidetracks them into a blind alley. One year it's "open your books, no increase in the price of cars." The next it's the guaranteed annual wage and share the profits. Now it's retraining of unemployed auto workers for white collar jobs and — fight the communist trade unions in Europe, Asia and South America.

To top it all off, the 3% formula of Kennedy and Gold-

<sup>5</sup> TWU Express, May, 1962.

<sup>6</sup> Senate Subcommittee on Automation, 1955.

<sup>7</sup> House Committee on Education and Labor, 1961.

berg which was foisted on the Steelworkers is acceptable, it seems, on earth where wage increases are "inflationary," but couldn't they make an exception for space and missile workers where price increases are not passed on to the public? The Salvation Army with its pie in the sky couldn't do one whit better than that.

Reuther is so convincing that he has had more than just the auto workers befuddled all these years. In 1957, an English writer said, "British Trade Unions have been surprisingly slow in recognizing the simple fact that the benefits of automation have to be fought for. They could learn a lot from their American counterparts . . . The UAW, for example, has been running a great campaign of education and propaganda to explain the problems to its members and to the general public. It has fought for a guaranteed annual wage. . . . They have been preparing the ground for the 35 or even the 30 hour week . . ."<sup>8</sup> At the time there were 160,000 unemployed auto workers in Detroit. Reuther leads a charmed life and has the best public relations man in the world — himself!

But this situation cannot last forever. The inevitable effects of automation in auto can be traced by an analysis of the membership figures of the UAW, which decreased from a peak of 1,418,000 in 1953 to 995,000 in 1961. The sharpest drop, during relatively high production was a loss of 135,000 members from 1960-61, or 12%!

There are some sounds of grumbling from the rank and file. Even in the most undemocratic, steam-rollered, "automated" convention in UAW history there were portents of discontent with the bureaucracy. There was opposition to the Reuther proposal to use \$3,200,000 of the union's strike fund to combat communist trade unions abroad. Reuther did handsprings and even amended the constitution to push this proposal down the delegates' throats in a desperate effort to curry favor with Kennedy and the State Department. But more important to the future life of the UAW was the slogan of 30-40-60 (30 hours work for 40 hours pay and retirement at 60), which was raised by John De Vito, president of Local 45, G. M. Fisher Body in Cleveland, who led this movement. It is a pretty safe prediction that this slogan will gain momentum and that it will become popular not only in Cleveland and Detroit, but throughout the country. Reuther's response to this was for a "flexible adjustment of the work week" based on the level of employment at any particular time plus double pay for overtime." On paper it sounds good, but, as usual, it is typically Reutherian — an unwieldy, complicated, impossible formula designed to sidetrack the workers once again.

But Reuther cannot get away with this tactic indefinitely. The auto workers are restive. As the 30-40-60 movement says in its appeal:

"It is unfortunate that the negotiations of 1961 failed to win a reduction in the work week. Now time presses us. Each year intensifies the problem. Each year it becomes that much more difficult because we must make up for that much lost time. Delay is self-defeating. Automation picks up speed like a rocket heading for the moon. A sense of urgency is the order of the day. We must agree upon a program, set out aims, announce our purposes, enlist our supporters, draw up our plans, and proceed toward the goal which must be won!"

The distance that separated the leadership from the rank and file was aptly put by a union lawyer who said, *New York Times*, May 16, 1962, "A very unhappy and very real gap is developing between the trade union leadership and the rank and file. Top leaders in big locals and international unions have a bureaucratic instead of a rank-and-file mentality. There is not a real understanding on the part of these leaders of what the members are thinking and wanting."

### Thirty-Hour Week

What is the answer to automation and its consequent displacement? The obvious and instinctive answer is the

<sup>8</sup> S. Lilly, *Automation and Social Progress*. International Publishers.

shorter work week because it is the only real solution. But how short a work week? George Meany believes that the "35-hour week will solve the problem overnight." While it certainly would help many workers now employed it wouldn't make much of a dent into the total number of unemployed. All indications are that the quantitative effect of automation has reached the stage where it has become qualitative. By Meany's own testimony before the Congressional Subcommittee on Automation, part-time employment has increased from 9.2 million workers in 1953 to 12.2 millions in 1960. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in spite of an absolute increase in the number of employed workers and a tremendous increase in production, the total number of hours worked in the private economy increased by only 0.7% between 1953 and 1957, and declined by 0.7% between 1957 and 1959. (The difference between industries where partial automation and more intense automation has occurred can be seen in a comparison between the food industry where employment has declined 82,000 or 8% and the textile industry where employment has decreased 246,000 or 22%).

In most manufacturing industries the full 40-hour week is academic, since the majority of the workers either do not work the full 40-hour week or a full 52 weeks a year. In the white collar field the 35-hour or 37½-hour week has been the practice for many years and the effect of a 35-hour week would be virtually nil. The only conclusion that can be reached is that the minimum demand that can absorb the unemployed is the 30-hour week.

Can the American working class achieve this step which is a prerequisite to its life as a viable force in society as we know it. It must or else it will gradually dwindle and face defeat. Automation and its consequent dependence of one machine on another's functions, has put the worker in a strategic position. A stoppage in one factory can bring an entire industry to a halt. An entire industry (steel, oil, transportation, power, etc.) can bring a whole economy to its knees.

### A Program for Socialists

While this is the pragmatic answer to the practical problems facing the working class and its organizations, the tasks of the revolutionary vanguard are on a somewhat different plane. Obvious and elementary is the necessity to lead in the struggle to organize the unorganized and for the 30-hour week. Almost every economist predicts another recession within ten to fifteen months. A recession combined with unemployment due to accelerated automation can only mean mass unemployment second only to that of the great depression.

But, like most of the social and economic problems of our era, the ultimate answer is found in the political arena. The struggle for the 6-hour or 5-hour day should and can be the basis for building a labor party and the enlargement of the socialist movement in the U.S. The capitalist parties give lip service to civil rights, racial equality, health insurance, minimum wages, etc., but they will not adopt a shorter work day as part of their platforms within the foreseeable future. This differentiating factor could attract millions of the unemployed and part-time workers, as well as other sections of the working class to the banner of a militant program.

## ...Yugoslavia

(Continued from page 86)

or no competition. Aware that it is the sole supplier to the community, such a concern will often abuse its position through poor service and high prices. Whether it is the workers themselves, eager to increase meager incomes, who decide to conduct business in this way, or it is an administrative clique of smart operators, the management of some concerns seem more imbued with the spirit of

19th century capitalism than with the socialist consciousness so often appealed to by the Communist regime.

Since factory and local "egotism" seems in part to stem from the dearth of competition, the government has strengthened its appeals to conscience with a concrete measure. The recent liberalization of foreign trade has forced Yugoslav enterprises into more competition with foreign companies and the government, by putting more foreign currency at their disposal, has granted them more leeway to compete on the world market. The immediate future will show how much of a solution this latest measure is.

Further innovations will be judged by the Yugoslav people according to how successfully they combine economic effectivity with worker self-administration. In any case the "Yugoslav Way" already constitutes one of the significant experiences to be studied by those concerned with the problem of workers democracy.

## ...Women Who Work

(Continued from page 83)

that remains to be done, cannot be done by a section of the working class sufficiently equipped and trained to do it in the most economical time — as office buildings are now scrubbed, dusted and put in order for the next day's work.

Ashley Montague proposes the four-hour working day for those who are married — so that both parents can be equally parents and wage earners to the advantage of all. He goes on to say, "Women's going to work has forced the father back into the family, and this is good, for his 'responsibility' to his children is no less great than his wife's. When men abandon the upbringing of their children to their wives, a loss is suffered by everyone."

In whatever specific way women will solve their problems, the first essential, if one is not naive, is to win a society that poses all questions for rational solution. That means, above all, the elimination of capitalism where profit alone is the determinant — even when it means the waste of human labor power of millions of human beings and billions of working hours.

**W**OMEN can, and will, play a key role in this general historical task. They cannot expect to solve their problems without a struggle. Freedom will not be given them as a gift. It must be fought for and won as a human right.

The super exploitation of the women workers adds fuel to the fires of revolutionary struggles everywhere. These women, new to the direct clash of social forces, will supply militants and leaders to the working class in its struggle for freedom. They will give impetus to independent political action. The labor movement will find itself greatly reinforced, not only with the working women but with other sections of the female population who will be in sympathy or will feel the need for the demands of the women workers.

Men and women who have already begun to learn to work together, will also learn how to fight together for the complete emancipation of all. This is the inevitable historical trend. And in the struggle itself the confusion, the doubts that plague women in this transition period will dissolve in the new-found hope for the future.



## Judgment at Nuremberg

by Trent Hutter

This Stanley Kramer picture is probably the finest American screen drama that was released in 1961. It is a fictional story about one of the last war-crime trials held in Nuremberg, West Germany, by the U.S. occupiers: a trial of German Nazi judges who had perverted the law and handed down sentences for purely political reasons. Yet the facts in *Judgment at Nuremberg* are not fictional at all.

In the picture, a Nazi judge who had been an eminent, internationally respected jurist before the Hitler era, is accused of having sentenced to death a Jewish businessman, Feinstein, for allegedly committing a so-called racial outrage, that is: for having had intimate relations with an "Aryan" girl. The Nazi judge realized Feinstein was innocent. But he delivered him to the executioner because he thought it was in the best interests of the State.

In real life, Feinstein's name was Leo Katzenberger. His judges were indeed convinced the 68-year-old former businessman from Massbach (Lower Franconia) was not guilty of "racial outrage" which the infamous Nuremberg Laws of 1935 had made a capital crime. Nonetheless, they did sentence him under government pressure, and he was executed in 1942. The former Nazi District Attorney, Hermann Markl, who had prosecuted in the case, later became a judge in Adenauer's Federal Republic!

But while former Nazis naturally resent *Judgment at Nuremberg* and the truth about Hitler's infernal "Third Reich," many anti-fascist Germans, especially among the younger generation and in the labor movement, react in the opposite way. An energetic student demonstration following the film's showing in Munich forced Judge Markl to retire. And the Bavarian Ministry of Justice declared that a "preliminary in-

vestigation" of the judges and prosecutor who had handled the Katzenberger case had started a year earlier . . .

In the U.S., even in Europe, those who were born during or after World War II do not always have a clear notion of what fascism actually means. Talking to teen-agers and persons in their early twenties, I have noticed that they learned much from the Eichmann trial. They also can learn much from *Judgment at Nuremberg*.

But the picture's subject is not just the perversion of justice under a totalitarian regime and the disastrous reasoning or rationalizations of "serious" legal minds who surrender to it, or the unscrupulous or badly confused "patriots" who identify their country with a dictator, his stormtroopers and his secret police apparatus. The picture's subject — and this makes it particularly revealing and valuable — is justice under political pressure, not only under totalitarianism but also in a bourgeois democracy, the conflict between the integrity of the judge and political expediency, between the independence of the courts and the so-called national interest.

Dominating the story is the searching, elderly American judge, a thoroughly honest, conscientious and unprejudiced figure, most admirably played by Spencer Tracy, one of the few genuine artists among Hollywood actors, who really makes him come alive. The judge arrives in Germany from his native Maine without feelings of hatred or revenge. He is impressed by the beauty of the country, by the Germans' polite manners and by the handsome widow of a general whom the Americans hanged as a war criminal — impressed but not seduced. He is willing to give the accused every chance to defend themselves and examines their case with an open mind. He even allows the de-

fendants' lawyer to inflict mental torture on witnesses for the prosecution. And because the tough and coldly clever defense lawyer is permitted to operate quite freely and to re-create an unbearable nightmare atmosphere of Nazi-type inquisition, the hitherto silent main defendant, the former judge who sentenced Feinstein — by far the most intelligent of the men in the dock — disgustedly stops the attorney and confesses his guilt. No doubt is left about the culpability of the accused.

Meanwhile, the 1948 Soviet blockade of West Berlin is beginning. U.S. authorities start wooing the Germans as their prospective allies against the U.S.S.R. The war-crimes trials have become "untimely" and have to be ended. The defendants in the last one are to be given mild sentences, the higher-ups decide. Pressure is put on the prosecutor and the judges of the American war-crimes tribunal at Nuremberg. While the very trial showed how Nazi politics made German judges doom innocent people, America's "democratic" politics now are to let those criminal Nazi judges literally get away with murder.

The American prosecutor, who has made an intense and successful effort to prove his case and who seemed to be very uncompromising, finally is resigned reluctantly to give in to this pressure. The old judge from Maine, who seemed to be so mild and so intent on not restraining the defense, does not give in. Despite political pressure, he pronounces the life sentence he believes is indicated.

Does this mean that justice can be, and sometimes is, independent from the ruling class (or caste)? Does it mean the old judge who is concerned only with evidence and genuine justice wins the case over Washington's objections? — Again, *Judgment at Nuremberg* conveys the truth of the matter. The de-

defendants' angry German lawyer tells the judge his sentence will not stand: in a few years, all the defendants will be free. And his forecast is correct. The picture informs us that none of the Nazi criminals who got a life sentence in these trials is still in prison.

Whatever the sentence, politics turns out to be decisive in the end. A judge can resist pressure and remain independent. But justice as a whole is not independent from political and social class interests, even if bourgeois democracy generally cannot afford to mock justice quite as openly, as glaringly as

## A Classic Reprinted

**TERRORISM AND COMMUNISM: A REPLY TO KARL KAUTSKY** by Leon Trotsky. Ann Arbor Paperbacks for the Study of Communism and Marxism, The University of Michigan Press. 1961. 191 pages. \$1.95.

"... it seems to me that this book is still not out of date — to my regret, if not as an author, at any rate as a Communist." The author's words in June, 1920, when the Bolsheviks were concluding the civil war in Russia seem remarkably appropriate forty-two years later when the Cuban revolution is under similar stress.

Trotsky's pamphlet was a defense of the policies of the besieged young Soviet republic which was being attacked by the theoretical leader of the Second International, Karl Kautsky.

Today, forty years later, Kautsky-like "democratic" detractors of the Cuban revolution point a critical finger at the use of "el *paredon*" against saboteurs and murderers.

Trotsky responded to similar vilification with: "The question of the form of repression or its degree, of course, is not one of 'principle.' It is a question of expediency. In a revolutionary period the party which has been thrown from power, which does not reconcile itself with the stability of the ruling class, and which proves this by desperate struggle against the latter, cannot be terrorized by the threat of imprisonment, as it does not believe in its duration. It is just this simple but decisive fact that explains the widespread recourse to shooting in a civil war."

On so-called suppression of the press, Trotsky wrote: "The press is a weapon not of an abstract society, but of two irreconcilable, armed and contending sides. We are destroying the Press of

totalitarian regimes do and has to be more subtle and more respectful of legal forms.

*Judgment at Nuremberg* is a great motion picture. In addition to producer-director Stanley Kramer and to Spencer Tracy, it is only fair to mention also Burt Lancaster as the former Nazi judge, Richard Widmark as the American prosecutor, Maximilian Schell's "Oscar"-winning performance as the German defense lawyer, Marlene Dietrich as the widow of a German war criminal, Judy Garland and Montgomery Clift as witnesses for the prosecution. An exceptional cast.

by Richard Garza

the counter-revolution, just as we destroyed its fortified positions, its stores, its communications, and its intelligence service."

Taking up Kautsky's charge that the

## Natural Manners

**THE HOUSE OF MIRTH** by Edith Wharton. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962 (copyright 1905); 329 pages; \$1.45.

The bourgeois academicians and critics of our middle-class culture (with the exception of Edmund Wilson) maintain that Edith Wharton, one of the finest writers in American Literature, is not only a disciple of Henry James, but is also a second-rate novelist of the Genteel School. Neither allegation is true. Quite contrary to the style of James, Wharton has a lucid, concrete prose that, unfortunately for James, influenced him only occasionally. Secondly, Mrs. Wharton, in her best works, and *House of Mirth* is one of the best, was hardly genteel. As Edmund Wilson says, "it is true that she knew the top strata better than she knew anything else; but... she is always aware of the pit of misery which is implied by the wastefulness of the plutocracy, and the horror or the fear of this pit is one of the forces that determine the action."

*The House of Mirth* is, I believe, a new genre: a fusion of the novel of manners and the novel of naturalism. (Perhaps it should be called a dialectical novel because these two opposite genres are perfectly fused.) It is a

other socialist tendencies were being suppressed, the founder of the Red Army pointed out: "The army of Kolchak was organized by Socialist Revolutionaries (how that name savours today of the charlatan!), and was supported by the Mensheviks. Both carried on — and carry on — against us, for a year and a half, a war on the Northern front. The Mensheviks who rule the Caucasus, formerly the allies of Hohenzollern, and today the allies of Lloyd George, arrested and shot Bolsheviks hand in hand with German and British officers. The Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries of the Kuban Rada organized the army of Denikin. The Estonian Mensheviks who participate in their government were directly concerned in the last advance of Yudenich against Petrograd. Such are these 'tendencies' in the Socialist Movement." A few lines further Trotsky points out: "If the dispute with the S.R.'s and the Mensheviks could be settled by means of persuasion and voting — that is, if there were not behind their backs the Russian and foreign imperialists — there would be no civil war."

The translation is a bit stilted and loses some of Trotsky's expert style. But this little mars the value of the reprint which is far more than historical.

by Maria di Savio

novel of manners because it satirizes the manners and other trivia of the leisured class of New York City in the 1900's; and it is a novel of naturalism because environment and heredity combine to work the crushing defeat of the heroine.

The main character of *House of Mirth* is Lily Bart, a parasite living on "society," an impoverished young woman who, because she was raised to be only beautiful and charming, must dig out a living for herself by performing petty and sometimes reprehensible tasks in return for the luxurious housing and food provided by her wealthy "friends." Lily is weak and selfish, craving the ease that goes with a life of luxury. She is also cunning, and plots to marry a wealthy boor of one sort or another. There is an unconscious conflict of values in Lily, however; a conflict that speaks through her glands, for whenever she traps a wealthy young prig she somehow always sees another man, fascinating but broke, and openly flirts with him. The rich boy is frightened off, and Lily must again chase another prey. After ten years of such performances Lily might be called self-destructive. She is not, however; on the contrary, she is making attempts — although unconscious and stupid — to

break out of her luxurious prison and lead a life of freedom and independence. This is one of the main points of *House of Mirth*: that a life of independence is better than the parasitical life of "society."

The other main point of the novel is that one must establish decent, non-exploitative relationships with others. Selden, the man who should have married Lily, is also weak. His weakness consists of backing off in pious self-righteousness whenever he finds Lily in one of her many ugly situations (for example, flirting with a married man to accommodate his wife who is sleeping with a young boy), instead of pressing on to offer Lily both his confidence and an honorable escape. When Lily and Selden finally come to a fully conscious realization of themselves and their love for each other, it is too late; both are ruined.

Wharton is saying two important things: first, one must choose between comfort and ethics — to have both in this vicious society is impossible; second, despite accidents of "mistiming" and other elements of change that interfere with human happiness, one must still muster the courage to take a stand.

## Periodicals in Review

### **The Labor Front**

Years of relative quiescence in the trade union movement have had their effect upon the radical movement in the United States. Trade union matters occupy less space in all the radical journals than they used to, and many a socialist no longer follows events in this field as he once did.

Whatever the justification may have been for this two or three years ago, we doubt if any justification can stand up today. The accumulation of problems like the speed-up, automation, unemployment and run-away shops is beginning to prepare the way for important changes within the trade union movement.

It is within this framework that we must judge two new publications devoted to trade union affairs which have recently made their debut, *Union Democracy in Action (UDA)* and *Progressive Labor*. *UDA* is a monthly newsletter edited by Herman W. Benson, a former frequent contributor to the now-defunct *Labor Action* and presently active in

Socialist Party circles. Mr. Benson's publication is an attempt, from a Social Democratic political point of view, to grapple with the problems now facing the American Labor movement. It is a knowledgeable and a very serious attempt.

As the title of his publication suggests, it is Herman Benson's thesis that the central problem facing the trade union movement is that of internal democracy. With this as his basic starting point, Benson reports on the development of rank-and-file opposition movements within various trade unions including the Painters Union, International Association of Machinists and the Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Union. Benson's newsletter is therefore of considerable value in supplying information on this extremely important aspect of the trade union movement. Certainly the official labor press never reports such developments, except when it is called upon to smear them.

The weakness of the newsletter is the weakness of the Social Democratic approach to the trade union movement and the class struggle in general. Even when analyzing the direct economic organs of the working class itself the Social Democrats refrain from making a class analysis. They evaluate the trade union movement not from the point of view of its effectiveness in representing the interests of the workers in a struggle against the interests of the capitalist class. Rather, they apply to the trade union movement the classless abstraction of "democracy" as the only issue of import. Thus, they correctly support the struggle within the union movement for rank-and-file democracy but do not relate this struggle to the need to utilize such rank-and-file control in order to implement a trade union policy to reflect the real interests of the working class.

Even more revealing of the "classless" outlook of Benson is his attitude towards Public Review Boards. The United Automobile Worker's "solution" to the problem of rank-and-file democracy and union corruption has been to set up a special appeals board composed of "impartial" citizens who are to decide objectively on any appeals made by the rank and file of the union. Thus the control of the union is taken out of the hands of the rank and file and put into the hands of representatives of another social class who make up this board. This gimmick of Walter Reuther's is the purest example of Social Democratic and liberal thinking which puts its trust in a handful of "objective" prominent citizens rather than in the working class itself. To Herman Benson, as to Reuther, the Public Review Board is a panacea to cure every trade union problem. The struggle for democracy in itself in the unions is to be conducted under the supervision of these "prominent" citizens.

Mr. Benson has inadvertently given us a very good picture of just how we can expect such "prominent" citizens to act. In issue No. 5, which is devoted to the New York Teachers' strike, Benson correctly attacks the anti-union action of the new Board of Education in voting an injunction against the union. He notes that this board was "viewed as a new, liberal group to give socially enlightened leadership . . ." and in fact contained several men with former connection with the labor and radical movements. These are truly "prominent" citizens suitable for one of Benson's Review Boards. We prefer the workers.

*Progressive Labor* is a somewhat different kind of publication. Like *UDA* it contains much valuable information on the situation inside the important trade unions. Like *UDA* it orients its publication in the direction of the trade union movement and its most militant section. However, *Progressive Labor* is a publication of a political grouping. It thus is an attempt to serve both as a reporter of events in the trade union movement and as an advocate of a particular socialist program.

*Progressive Labor* is published by Milton Rosen and Mort Scheer who were recently expelled from the Communist Party, the *Worker* informs us, for being "pro-Albanian." This, we gather, means that they are identified with the Chinese in their polemics with the Russians.

In its reporting on trade union matters and the Democratic party, *Progressive Labor* takes a stand substantially better than that of the *Worker* or the Social Democrats. Rosen and Scheer are very sharp in characterizing the liberal wing of the Democratic Party as being representative of capitalist interests. They take a strong stand against the kind of support to capitalist politicians that has become the hallmark of both the official Stalinist and Social Democratic organs in this country.

In its trade union coverage *Progressive Labor* clearly emphasizes the necessity of replacing the labor bureaucracy with a new militant leadership which will come out of the rank and file itself. This approach gives a freshness and incisiveness to its analysis of trade union affairs for it poses questions in precisely the class terms that Benson in his publication attempts to ignore. A sharp class approach to broad political questions, especially in the international field, could make *Progressive Labor* a very effective and important publication indeed.

### **The Trap Is Set**

The radical student movement seems to be entering a new stage in its development. For the last two or three years the pure joy of open, direct expression through picket lines and demonstrations fulfilled the needs of the bulk of newly radicalized youth on the

campus. After years of witchhunting and apathy on the campus a militant demonstration, no matter what it happened to be about, seemed an act fully justifying itself, regardless of its possible effectiveness in achieving its purported aim. This mood received its literary expression in the proliferation of student radical publications which also seemed to exist without clearcut goals or program — to exist for the sake of existing and permitting radical opinions to find an open expression.

Today a new, more serious note of maturity is to be found among student activists. They are increasingly concerned with the effectiveness of their activities in basically changing the structure of a society from which they feel alienated. This concern with program, with more long-range effective action, is wholly progressive and should soon find its ideological expression in more serious treatment of political and theoretical problems in the new student radical journals.

However, there are strong forces at work within the student movement which seek to channel this striving of student militants in order to negate the effectiveness of the whole movement. Thus, they answer the search for programmatic solutions by offering a program which destroys the effectiveness of the mass actions themselves. These views are now finding expression in publications coming out of both social democratic and Stalinist circles.

This, we are sorry to say, is the political role being played by liberal-Social Democratic *New University News*, a monthly newspaper produced by the University of Chicago group that also publishes *New University Thought*. For instance, the May issue of this paper gives front page backing to Mark Lane's futile attempt to win the support of the New York City reform movement for a primary fight for the Democratic nomination in the 19th Congressional District. Elsewhere in the same issue, Jack Newfield, who also writes in *Common Sense*, reports on the demonstration organized in front of the Madison Square Garden rally of the conservative Young Americans for Freedom. To Newfield, "The most vital result of the liberal counter-assault was undoubtedly the coherent vision of a new political movement given 4,000 students by Lane and Harrington (editor of the Socialist Party organ *New America* — TW). "... If YAF is to be combatted, it will be done by a democratic movement with a vision, and not by clever picket signs and a few choruses of 'We Shall Overcome.'"

This "democratic movement" of Harrington and Lane is none other than the liberal section of the capitalist Democratic Party. In the April 6 issue of *New America*, Max Dombrow gives his backing to the reform Democrats as "the most hopeful and meaningful political development to hit New York in

decades." A similar political line is put forward by Marvin Markman in his article on the anti-YAF demonstration, "Unity for Democracy," in the April-May issue of *New Horizons for Youth*.

The clearest, most unabashed expression of this political line can be found in a mimeographed publication put out in New York City, *Common Sense*. This publication is issued by a group of students who politically straddle both the Stalinist and Social Democratic political camps. This, while in itself insignificant, is important because it presents the distilled essence of what these two tendencies hold in common — a class collaborationist approach to American political life. To the editors of *Common Sense*, the demonstration against the YAF was simply part of the "day-to-day process of political realignment within the Democratic Party." Monroe Wasch, in his article "Kennedy's Fight in Congress," views this multi-millionaire politician as an independent agent whom at the moment "business agents . . . have been able to dominate." He sees the task of radicals to join with liberals in the Democratic Party so that the liberal wing of that party will "dominate" our very malleable multi-millionaire President. "The Negro people, the urban working classes," we are told, "speak through the Democratic politicians." Therefore, Mr. Wasch urges students to "go out to work for Congressional candidates [especially left-liberal Democrats] who will work for the expulsion of the Dixiecrats from the Democratic Party."

As we see, these people aim to direct the energies of the thousands of students who have been participating in important mass actions over the past few years into precinct work in the Democratic Party. All their youthful energy and enthusiasm is to be dissipated in a futile attempt to transform a multi-millionaire President into an opponent of the social order upon which he rests, to transform a political party intimately tied in a million ways to the ruling class in our society into a weapon against that class.

But the objective course of these students, of the Negro people, of the workers in the trade union movement is precisely in the other direction — to break out of the narrow framework of capitalist politics — to strike out on an independent road. Only to the extent that the student movement remains essentially outside the capitalist parties will it be effective in achieving its aims of a better, more just world. Those who seek to channel the students militants into the trap of capitalist politics will not succeed in transforming the capitalists and their agents into something contrary to their nature. Rather they themselves and those who follow them will be transformed into the servile tools of the powers they seek to "convince."

—Tim Wohlforth

## Root and Branch

The purpose of this periodical, stated in an initiatory editorial under the heading "Why Another Magazine?" is one of youthful rebellion against the present-day "American Left." Today's Left, charge the editors, is old-fashioned; it acts "as if the world has not changed since the 1930's — the same categories are used in analysis, the scope of problems defined as important has not changed, and the same labels are mechanically applied to political opponents." The old-timers find "it is too easy to dismiss an argument by calling it 'Stalinist' or 'Revisionist.'" These young intellectuals "want to re-open the dialogue," on the basis of the 1960's, not the 1930's.

Two of the more outstanding articles, dealing with Cuba, are by Maurice Zeitlin. The first, "A Cuban Journal," is a combination of intelligent observations and solid analysis. Zeitlin offers "critical support" to Cuba; that is, he wholly supports the Revolution and the Castro leadership, but attempts to deal fairly with what he feels needs improvement in Cuba: workers' democracy and the "paradox of Soviet friendship." The second article, "An Interview with 'Che,'" asks some forthright questions, and gets some forthright answers from the revolutionary leader. (See *The Militant*, issue of April 9, 1962.)

Another excellent article is "The American Economy," by Cyril Wolfe Gonick. He presents a Marxist analysis of the "Keynesian Revolution" in much the same scholarly (but far more readable) way as Paul Baran. While this article is praiseworthy, it is interesting to note that it is *not* the dramatic new version of political theory advocated in the editorial statement. (Because, unfortunately, the world is basically the same as in the thirties, and Keynesian economics is merely a new twist to an old boost to capitalism.)

A disturbing article is "The Black Negro," by Donald Warden. This essay damns one and all, some deservedly, some not, but offers no answer. There are numerous quotations, "proving" that white leaders (including Marx) were — and are — anti-Negro, but there are no sources given for these plentiful quotes — a peculiar lack in a scholarly essay in a theoretical journal! What is important in this article, however, is the *tone* that correctly mirrors the attitude, whether justified or not, of many of the more militant Negroes today.

Other items include two dull articles on Ghana and Canada; many cartoons, most of which are well-done, biting satire, but others are poorly executed. There are also some poems, most inter-

esting, but one extraordinarily bad by Lawrence Ferlinghetti (labelled "his first poem" with a facetiousness that backfires — it indeed reads like a first poem). Also included are excellent photographs and some thought-provoking reviews. An article that could have been eliminated is a muddled bit of prosinism called "The Question About Meaning," which reminds one of Swinburne's poem "The Higher Pantheism in a Nutshell," which ends "God, whom we see not, is; and God, who is not, we see; / Fiddle, we know, is diddle; and diddle, we take it, is dee."

While there is more than just a grain of truth in their castigations of the American Left, it is an unfortunate fact that the periodical does not do any better than the old folks; it offers no new solutions, or even new aspects of old problems. On the whole, it is an uneven production, offering some excellent (but hardly new) analyses and reporting, and some examples of old-fashioned muddled thinking. Finally, like the Left that it criticizes, this group of intellectuals is isolated, bringing with its isolation a lack of faith in the proletariat.

— Maria di Savio

## ... Correspondence

(Continued from page 66)

Point must be sponsored by a member of Congress.

"When I lived in Detroit in the early Twenties there was a judge here — Judge Murphy — and a very good judge too, who had not been a lawyer — I don't recall all the circumstances. I suppose he ran for the office and was elected. Maybe he hadn't finished his law studies — if there had been any. He couldn't have been a member of the bar or they wouldn't have made an issue of it. Anyway, he was the last such judge. A law was passed prohibiting anyone not a member of the bar serving as a judge. That was my first awakening to the changing mores of our society.

"Two years of high school used to equip a girl to teach school. It costs her parents much more now and if they can't help her she joins the supply of typists, clerks, factory workers, etc. There's the nurse — a few years ago it was much easier for an ambitious girl to get into that profession. No classes!

"Some years ago I read a book about

the South titled, 'A Preface to Peasantry.' I've forgotten the author's name, but not his main thesis: that sharecropping was on the increase — that the small landowner was going to find himself in a few years working for someone else with the same conditions that prevailed in Europe — a kind of peonage. No classes!!

"The million farmers that are being forced off their land each year are either being recruited into the new peasantry or joining the proletariat in the big cities. Certainly they are not retiring to live in penthouses.

"Right after Galbraith's *Affluent Society* became a best-seller, the *Progressive* magazine published a list of people who were not Affluent by any standard. They included the **30 million families** whose income before taxes was \$2,040 a year; the 10 million marginal farmers whose yearly income was around \$1,000, often less. No classes!!—Who are they fooling besides themselves. If our present social order lasts another 50 years class lines will be as rigid as they are in Europe. With few exceptions you'll remain in the class in which you are born."

B. V. McG.,  
Detroit, Mich.

## ... Mills

(Continued from page 75)

ter of the Soviet superstate, we cannot tell how Mills defines its social-historical nature.

Mills says that contemporary Marxists face the necessity of elaborating theories to explain the diverse types of Soviet-bloc societies. But beyond posing a series of questions about the prospects of de-Stalinization under Khrushchev, he refrains from telling us his views. He evidently had still to work out his solutions to these perplexing sociological problems.

Yet contemporary Marxism is not so impoverished or embarrassed in this field as he implies. The movement of the Fourth International has formulated and published views on all these questions, proceeding from Trotsky's analysis of the reasons for the degeneration of the Soviet state under Stalin and indicating the sources of its regeneration through the extension of the international revolution, the advances of Soviet economy and culture, and the political revitalization of its working masses.

But much as he esteemed Trotsky, Mills could not adopt his conclusions. He remained equally resistant to the Marxism of the nineteenth and of the twentieth centuries.

Through Mills we can observe the left flank of American liberalism undergoing a process of negation and dissolution. His thinking was a mass of contradictions. Repelled by the decay of liberalism and its apology for capitalist reaction and militarism, he nevertheless adhered to its fundamental pragmatic method of approach to the major social processes of our epoch. He was attracted by socialism but could not accept its scientific doctrine. He was a partisan of the Latin-American revolution who had no faith in a North American revo-

lution. He opposed the autocracy of the Power Elite and aspired to a rebirth of democracy in our country. But he despaired of the capacities of the working people to clear the way for its realization.

Such an extremely awkward theoretical and political posture could not have been maintained for long. How these inconsistencies would have been resolved and his positions finally crystallized no one can say. But the example of his inquiring mind and courageous stands should inspire others among the New Left to go farther and cast off, not only the compromising policies of liberalism, but its false theories and methods in sociology and politics as well.

Mills won enduring honor for his impassioned defense of the Cuban Revolution. He saw in the young Cuban rebels a model for the New Left of the post-Stalin generation. He was not wrong. But while he was writing off Marxism as obsolete and Utopian, the *Fidelistas* were going forward from abstract humanism to Marxism and from bourgeois-democratic to explicit proletarian-socialist aims. As "Che" Guevara told K. S. Karol: "We are not the same men we were when we fought in the Sierra Maestra. I have always been a student of Marx. But now I realize that Marxism is not simply a doctrine—it is a science." (*New Statesman*, May 19, 1961.)

This postscript, written by the Cuban revolutionists to *Listen, Yankee!*, is an ironic refutation of the skepticism about scientific socialism expressed in *The Marxists*. The Cuban experience will not be confined to Latin America. It prefigures the future on the whole Western hemisphere. The banner of Marxism and the socialist revolution today flying over Havana will yet be unfurled on the shores of North America.

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by Leon Trotsky



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