

LABOUR REVIEW

EDITORS: TOM KEMP, CLIFF SLAUGHTER
186A Clapham High Street, London S.W.4

VOLUME 7
Number

5

Summer 1963

Manifesto of the International Committee of the Fourth International —

25 YEARS AFTER



*Douai, March 1963
After a mass meeting, French
miners march through
the town*

**Socialist
Labour
League
conference**

**Revisionism and the 4th International
Contradictions of British capitalism
The class struggle in Britain**

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THIS is the last issue of *Labour Review*. From the autumn of 1963, our resources will be devoted to the appearance of a new magazine, *Fourth International*, which will serve the world Marxist movement on a far wider scale as the organ of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

It is 25 years since Trotsky and his comrades founded the Fourth International of revolutionary Marxists. That was in the aftermath of the defeats inflicted by Hitler's and Franco's fascists, and at the height of the Stalinist terror in Russia. Those defeats were prepared by the betrayals of the 'socialist' and 'communist' leaders of the labour movement. It was necessary above all to start on the path of solving this 'crisis of leadership'.

Now, 25 years after, the solution of the crisis of leadership is still the main issue. The conditions of 1963 are, however, vastly different. Revolutionaries now work in a situation of mounting militancy in the workers' movement of the advanced countries, from the old industrial centres of Western Europe to the cities of the United States. For many years the workers and peasants of the colonial countries have been on the offensive against imperialism. Since 1953, the states dominated by the Stalinist bureaucracy have been rocked by crisis, highlighted by the Hungarian and Polish workers' revolutionary struggles in 1956, and now reflected in the open disarray of international Stalinism under the impact of the Sino-Soviet split.

The new journal, *Fourth International*, is a political and theoretical weapon for the building of the Marxist leadership. It will carry on a relentless fight for Marxist theory and revolutionary principles, not only against the bureaucratic and opportunist 'official' leadership of the working class, but also against all those revisionists who call themselves Marxists and even 'Trotskyists'.

We publish in this last issue of *Labour Review* the Manifesto of the International Committee of the Fourth International; this declaration of war on opportunism and revisionism is our fighting programme for the new journal.

The new journal will carry articles on the workers' struggle in all parts of the world and eventually it will be published in several languages. We ask all *Labour Review* supporters in every country to send us increased orders, to contribute material, and above all to use the journal as a weapon for the construction of revolutionary Marxist parties all over the world.

The Editors



25 years after Manifesto of the International Committee of the Fourth International

TWENTY - FIVE years after the founding of the Fourth International in 1938, the International Committee of the Fourth International reaffirms the basic programme adopted then: the Transitional Programme.

This document proclaimed that only the workers' revolution could save humanity.

It defined the character of the epoch as being determined by the crisis of leadership in the working class. Basing itself on the needs of the working class, the Programme set out to extricate that class from the morass into which it had been led by the old leadership and to lead it to the taking of state power.

The Transitional Programme is one of the vital documents of our time. It is to the 20th century what the Communist Manifesto was to the 19th—an analysis of the main trends of world capitalism and an embodiment of the historical experience of the world working class over an entire epoch.

The bankruptcy of the parties of the Second International had been exposed by the war crisis of 1914, though their grip on a large part of the working class had not been broken. The Third International, founded by Lenin to take its place had, in the hands of Stalin, degenerated into a foreign policy instrument of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Under the leaderships of the Second and Third International the working class suffered a series of betrayals and defeats. Hence the need for a New International.

The background to the founda-

tion of the Fourth International was therefore a prostrate European proletariat. Betrayed by their leaders, the German working class, strongest in Europe, was under the heel of Nazism.

The Spanish Republic was being strangled. The Moscow Trials, the final expression of Stalinist degeneration, had reached a terrifying climax.

The conference itself was held under the shadow of Munich.

The cadres were few, the organisation weak and the odds overwhelming.

Trotsky was acutely aware of this. But it was not these subjective defects that necessitated the adoption of the programme and the founding of the Fourth International. Most important of all were these great historical events.

Trotsky saw that if the crisis of proletarian leadership could not be solved before or during the coming war, then it would be solved in its revolutionary aftermath.

Without a programme, however, the revolutionary wave would spend itself on the imperialist rock. The programme was an indispensable instrument for the triumph of the proletarian party and its leadership of the revolution.

25 years of crisis

A QUARTER of a century has passed. It has been a period of unprecedented change. Old empires have crumbled. New states have emerged.

Imperialism, weakened by war, has had to make a strategic retreat, handing over old territories to new retainers like Nehru, Nkrumah and Ben Bella. The national liberation movement has expanded into Africa and Latin America.

Fainthearts, sceptics and impressionists who have tried to revise the Transitional Programme insist that there have been fundamental changes in imperialism and Stalinism since 1938.

Some turned from the building of the Fourth International at the end of the war, declaring that the war devastation, collapse of production, famine and chaotic conditions in Europe meant that the working class had been declassed, that the struggle had been put back for centuries and the socialist revolution postponed.

Then, revisionism took on a new guise when, through the treachery of Stalinism and social democracy, imperialism was able to rebuild its foundations in Europe.

A trend, led by Pablo, developed in the Fourth International which placed a question mark over the movement and its Transitional Programme. It concluded that revolutionary conditions would make leaderships revolutionary, irrespective of their origins and previous developments.

It claimed that the Stalinist bureaucracy could no longer betray in the same way as before the war.

Against the revisionists, the International Committee was established in 1953 to build a Fourth International in the best traditions of the First and the Third Internationals and standing on the Transitional Programme.

We declare unequivocally that only a world party of Marxists—the Fourth International, as founded by Trotsky—can lead the oppressed to the overturn of decaying imperialism. Its programme is based on the international and historical experiences of the oppressed in their struggle for liberation.

No other leadership can offer a way out for humanity.

The crisis of Imperialism

THE decay of imperialism is becoming more and more evident even to the social-democratic worker beguiled by the past propaganda of his leaders. These leaders themselves no longer peddle with the same energy their servile talk of the changed nature of

imperialism and the possibilities of the 'affluent' and 'full employment' society.

There is a crisis of confidence even in sections of the ruling classes—one reason for the involvement of British Tory politicians in the notorious scandals.

In the imperialist countries the growth of monopoly power proceeds apace. Every state is burdened with monstrous war budgets.

Lenin's dictum that the decay of capitalism heralded an epoch of wars and revolutions is sharply underlined by the period since the Second World War.

Even before the war ended, the dropping of the atom bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima was in effect the first military action of world war three—meant to threaten the Soviet Union.

With increasing problems of capitalist markets there goes on in every country an organisation of the economy by the state in the interests of the monopolies.

And the so-called 'technological revolution' under capitalist property relations is now bringing bitter fruits for the working people—a permanent layer of workers in unemployment and poverty.

The prospect for the working class held out by monopoly capitalism in its organising of society is taking outline in the most advanced 'affluent' society—America. At its best, it will mean tolerable living conditions for a section of the working class but with pauperisation and unemployment for large numbers of that class.

The decisive struggles to overthrow imperialism cannot be concluded without the action of the workers in Western Europe, the USA and Japan. In the last three years the proletariat of these countries has waged a series of important struggles.

Political and industrial struggles in France, Germany, Japan, Belgium, Britain and the USA make clear that the labour movements of the metropolitan countries, which have not suffered a major defeat in the recent period, will always respond to a militant

lead. Only the grip of the labour bureaucracies on the workers' organisations saves capital from defeat.

With the slowing down of the boom in Europe and the re-appearance of mass unemployment much sharper struggles are inevitable. This unemployment is not temporary, but a consequence of the most basic trends in modern capitalism.

Many millions of unskilled workers are being thrown permanently on the scrap-heap. In every country, it is the younger generation, least dominated by the bureaucracy, which is affected and drawn into struggle.

War preparations on an unprecedented scale, which have been a major factor in maintaining the economic boom, at the same time have generated enormous strains in bourgeois economic and political life.

Now, as the space satellites take over from the missiles as the main weapon, these preparations enter a new stage, imposing still greater burdens on capitalist industry and finance. Divisions appear within the ruling class and determined leadership by the working class can create the opposition to unemployment and war for a revolutionary victory.

Against Bureaucracy

THE bureaucracy of the labour movement has become today the primary cause of the continued survival of imperialism. Struggle against capitalism today is meaningless without an analysis of the role and historical significance of the labour bureaucracy, Stalinist and Social-Democratic, and an irreconcilable struggle to defeat those bureaucracies.

In Greece, Italy and France, the leaders, faithful to Stalin and the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, held back the post-war upsurge and consciously betrayed it. The economic revival of Western Europe was based on the political defeats of the working

class inflicted by the Stalinists and Social-Democrats.

On the scales of history, the defeats in Western Europe weigh infinitely more heavy than the dispossession of the capitalists in Eastern Europe.

In the capitalist countries, Stalinism bases itself on peaceful co-existence, parliamentary transition to socialism and the gradual evolution of the colonial peoples to self-government.

Stalinism in the metropolitan countries is doubly counter-revolutionary because it betrays its own working class and because it helps to oppress the colonial slaves of imperialism. This has been the role of the French and the British Communist parties.

Stalinism, since it represents the interests of one of the most powerful bureaucracies in the world, is the most sophisticated and systematic form of reformism.

Togliatti, the most sophisticated of all, has worked out a complete programme for the reform of Italian capitalism—which will leave the structure of the state intact.

In the other advanced countries the policies of the Communist parties conform to Togliatti's reformist principles. In place of workers' power, they are for bourgeois parliamentarianism.

The Fourth International brands as a pernicious lie the Stalinist claim that peace can be furthered by summit conferences or by reliance on the United Nations Organisation. We state categorically that secret diplomacy can neither prevent wars nor help the development of socialism. The UNO, like its predecessor the League of Nations, is a 'thieves' kitchen' in the service of imperialism.

Today's 'peaceful co-existence' is more than ever a formula for the conscious deception of the masses in the interests of imperialist survival. When imperialism has amassed one of the most fearful arsenals of nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles, when every inch of the planet is under the scrutiny of a satellite, a U2 or a US warship, what grounds are there for believing that the imperialists can be won

to a policy of peace?

Militarism and imperialism are inseparably linked. The decline of imperialism forces it to indulge in all kinds of militaristic adventures against the colonial peoples, as in Korea, Vietnam, Algeria, Kenya and Cuba.

The possession of nuclear weapons by both power blocs does not mean, as the Stalinists argue, that war is impossible under imperialism, but, on the contrary, that imperialism must be overthrown by proletarian revolution.

The Transitional Programme states unequivocally: 'The only disarmament which can avert or end war is the disarmament of the bourgeoisie by the workers.' Is this not the lesson of the last 25 years?

The Soviet Bureaucracy

THE Stalinist bureaucracy has not changed its nature. It has made its desperate attacks on the 'cult of the individual', its 'liberalisation' in an attempt to adjust itself to the post-war situation while retaining its grip on the Soviet working class. Only those who wish to be blind can fail to see that it has resolved none of the basic contradictions in Soviet society and the Stalinist movement.

The expansion of Stalinism in the period following the war has left the fate of the Soviet Union determined more sharply than ever by the fate of the world revolution. Victory in that revolution will be possible only by building a Marxist leadership of the world's workers and in the process destroying the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Khrushchev's plea for a non-aggression pact with the US is consistent with his past policy of summit conferences. It is the logical outcome of his betrayal of the Cuban revolution by conceding the imperialist embargo on Cuba after the cynical 'missiles' adventure last November.

The summit conferences in

Geneva, Camp David and Paris have failed to advance the cause of socialism and peace by one inch. There is no reason to hope that the non-aggression pacts will succeed where secret diplomacy has failed.

The decision to supply MiG fighters to India to be used against China shows how far removed the Soviet bureaucracy today is from socialism and international working-class solidarity.

It is a counter-revolutionary act through and through, confirming once again the words of the Transitional Programme: 'The bureaucracy which became a reactionary force in the USSR cannot play a revolutionary role in the world arena.'

The bureaucracy's desire for a peace agreement with Kennedy stems from reactionary interests, namely, to discipline the Russian workers and the more articulate sections of the intellectuals. It fears the growing tide of political unrest inside Russia more than it does the threat of imperialist encirclement.

'Communism in a single country' is today revealed to be an impossible and reactionary utopia, designed only to cover up the abandonment of communist politics in the rest of the world.

At the same time, faced by a powerful working class, it needs, in order to maintain its own position, to be able to increase the output of consumer goods. It requires a disarmament agreement with the capitalist states to permit transfer of resources from the arms industries.

Such an agreement, by freezing the status quo, will also serve the interests of the bureaucracy, which fears revolution in any corner of the globe as much as it fears the working class in Russia itself.

It is ready to support any agency which seems to be working in this direction, hence its recent support for the Vatican and for the encyclicals of Pope John.

It is no accident that it is ready to enter into such combinations, involving as they do abandonment of support for national liberation and working-class revolutionary movements.

The Soviet-China Split

IN 1956 the Chinese Communist Party supported Khrushchev's repressions in Hungary. Their own position in the present conflict with Moscow exposes the folly of that step and the inadequacies of their political position.

In order to complete his 'victory', Khrushchev had to divert economic resources to Eastern Europe and turn away from China. More important, the Hungarian repression strengthened Khrushchev's rightward course of concession to imperialism.

This has culminated in an attempted full-scale deal with imperialism and the necessity to completely revise all Marxist conceptions.

The depth of the split between Peking and Moscow reflects the contradictions of Stalinism in the post-war world. The Chinese leaders are forced to grope for policies which can open the way to a spread of the revolution.

Ever since the Second World War, the Chinese Revolution, because of its proximity to the Pacific, has had to fight its battles in headlong collision with the military and economic aims of US imperialism. This antagonism was expressed most sharply in the Korean war.

Yet it is precisely the leaders of this dominant imperialist power with whom Khrushchev tries to reach agreement at the expense of the world revolution. Thus, empirically, the Chinese Communist Party leaders have stumbled across the counter-revolutionary role of the Russian bureaucracy.

But the Chinese, still tethered to their Stalinist history, cannot provide the answers to the problems they raise, answers which members of the Communist parties inside and outside the workers' states will be searching for, now that the Chinese-Russian split is plain for all to see.

Only the independent revolutionary line of the Fourth Inter-

national can provide the explanation and the alternative.

Against Revisionism

SINCE its inception, the Marxist movement has had to wage a life and death struggle against revisionist trends. In an earlier epoch, revisionism represented the pressure of the petty-bourgeoisie of town and country directly on the labour movement.

Today, however, this pressure is concentrated in the labour bureaucracy which is integrated in varying degrees with the capitalist state machine and the super-structure of world imperialism.

The revisionists today are all those who succumb to the pressure of capitalism by adapting the theory and practice of the Marxist movement to the existing bureaucratic leaderships.

What characterises all brands of revisionism today is their denial or underestimation of the role of the international working class as the **only** independent and revolutionary social force capable of liberating humanity. For these people the working class has ceased to be the subject of history and has become its despised and passive object.

Thus the Marxist movement today cannot ignore for a single moment revisionist ideas and trends. Not only the liberation of the working class but its very existence as an independent force is assured only to the extent that an implacable war is waged against revisionism.

That is why the International Committee refused to participate in the recent 'unity' conference convened by the Pabloite revisionists in Italy.

For ten years now an uninterrupted struggle has gone on against Pabloite revisionism. Some people in Europe and America who supported us earlier have changed their ideas on Pablo and Pabloism in the course of the last decade.

We have not. Pabloism represents to us an advanced form of centrist degeneration in a section of the Trotskyist movement.

It arose in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Pablo and his group represented then and do today a degenerated, petty-bourgeois clique without any roots in the working class movement, lacking not only training in the Marxist method but also all respect for the traditions and principles of Trotskyism.

Like Burnham and Schachtman, they were overwhelmed by events. Lacking stable roots in the class, they were easily disoriented by the spread of Stalinism, the defeats of the working class, the revival of Social-Democracy and the rise of the native bourgeoisie in many ex-colonial territories.

Unable to comprehend the scope and complexity of the crisis afflicting world imperialism, the Pabloites began to revise Marxism. The world, they said, was faced with the prospect of 'centuries of degenerated workers' states', atomic war was imminent and inevitable, the Soviet bureaucracy would give an impetus to the world revolution and the working class of Europe and America could and would do nothing until World War III broke out—probably in 1954!

In order to impose this wretched perspective on the Fourth International, Pablo and his clique carried through a split which began with the expulsion of the French majority of the PCI in 1952 and culminated with the 'Open Letter' of the SWP in 1953.

Scepticism towards the working class and adulation of bureaucracy are the hallmarks of Pabloism. When Stalin died, Pablo, following in the footsteps of Deutscher, informed the world that the 'liberalisation' of the bureaucracy had begun.

This was an explicit repudiation of the Transitional Programme which states: **'There is but one party capable of leading the Soviet masses to insurrection—the party of the Fourth International.'**

Yet it was precisely this sentence that Pablo excluded from

the resolution on Stalinism submitted to the IVth Congress of his international organisation.

History has already given a fitting answer to his prognosis.

When the East German workers rose against Ulbricht and the Soviet Army of Occupation, Pablo refused to call for the withdrawal of Soviet troops—in order not to prejudice the struggle of the workers!

Again in 1956, Pablo and his International Secretariat tried to give a progressive tinge to the Soviet bureaucracy by acclaiming the November 30 Declaration of the Soviet government on Hungary as an historic document—only four days before the brutal second intervention of the Red Army! In this way they tried to minimise the counter-revolutionary role of the Soviet bureaucracy and by the same token betrayed the heroic resistance of the workers' councils.

It is in Western Europe, however, that the most disastrous effects of Pabloism have become evident. In no single country in Western Europe has a viable revolutionary party been built by Pablo's group. On the contrary, scores of opportunities have been missed and many groups have been either destroyed or disoriented.

Why? Because of Pablo's suicidal tactical turn of entrism 'sui generis' (of a special, unique kind) which was determined by the equally suicidal strategy of 'War—Revolution'.

Basing himself on the assumption that the workers would flock to their traditional organisations in the event of war—that further, the leaders would become revolutionary under the pressure of the workers—then the only question, he believed, confronting the Marxists was to enter these parties—and do nothing to embarrass the bureaucratic leaders.

The lessons of the Belgian General Strike have confirmed once again our conviction that nothing but defeat and demoralisation can result from the strategy and tactics of the International Secretariat.

At the first serious challenge from the Belgian capitalists and

their state, the forces of the IS instead of leading an independent revolutionary struggle for workers' power completely subordinated themselves to the strategy of the labour bureaucrats. At no time was a single transitional demand advanced.

The 'structural reforms' of the S P leaders could not liberate the workers, and the IS by its uncritical support of these programmatic demands reduced itself to an appendage of social democracy. In the words of the Programme: 'They have displayed a complete inability to make head or tail of the political situation and draw revolutionary conclusions from it.' This is the balance sheet of entrism.

Pablo has rationalised his failure to construct revolutionary parties in Europe with the 'theory' that the 'epicentre of the revolution' has moved to the colonial world, and that the only revolutionary force in the colonial countries is the peasantry. This is a total perversion of Marxism which must be exposed and combated.

Now this 'theory' finds unadulterated application in Algeria, where Ben Bella maintains a tenuous hold on the administration with the support of French finance on the one hand and Pablo's advice on the other.

The repression of the Communist Party, the rigged elections, the firing on unemployed workers, the arrest of Boudiaf—these and other acts of repression are either ignored or excused by the Pabloites, while the miserable reforms of the government are magnified and dramatised beyond recognition.

This proves (if proof is required) that Pabloite revisionism is the mortal enemy of Trotskyism in the colonial and semi-colonial world. It renounces the task of building revolutionary working-class parties; it embellishes bourgeois and petty-bourgeois regimes with socialist trappings, and it obscures the real role of finance-capital in the colonies.

The task of Marxists in Algeria and elsewhere is **not to defend**

the status quo, but to carry the struggle against imperialism to the bitter end. This cannot be done without the working class and its leadership.

The peasantry, as the Russian Revolution proved, cannot play a leading and independent role in the democratic revolution. Those who, like Pablo, deny or distort this universal truth are traitors to the working class and Marxism.

The most instructive example of opportunist degeneration, assisted, if not inspired, by Pablo, is the Lanka Sama Samaja Party in Ceylon. In 1954, at the time of the split in the Fourth International, the leaders of this party took an equivocal position.

(Yet only a few months prior to this a minority advocating a Pabloite policy split from the LSSP. The leaders, however, refused to draw any political conclusions from this split.)

In return, Pablo actively encouraged the opportunism of the LSSP leaders who today have replaced their revolutionary pretensions with the most servile crawling before bourgeois parties and regimes. In 1960, the LSSP, be it noted, was prepared to form a coalition government with Mrs. Bandaranaike and the bourgeois Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

These leaders are petty-bourgeois charlatans masquerading as Marxists. If anyone doubts it let him read the Transitional Programme on the tasks of the International and contrast it with the policies of the LSSP.

'There is not and there cannot be a place for it in any of the People's Fronts. It uncompromisingly gives battle to all political groupings tied to the apron-strings of the bourgeoisie ...'

The International Committee is confident that the many hundreds of devoted Communists in the LSSP will successfully reaffirm the principles and programme of the Fourth International and purge the party of revisionism and the revisionists.

In the USA, Pabloism has expressed itself belatedly, but in no less malignant form in the

leadership of the SWP. Despite the fact that the SWP launched the struggle in 1953 against Pablo and made numerous criticisms of his policies in 1953-54, nevertheless, today they are in all essentials political supporters of Pablo, although for legal reasons they cannot participate in his International.

In our opinion, the reason for this retreat must be sought in the failure of the SWP leaders to develop, enrich and concretise the theory of Marxism as Trotsky often urged them to do.

The theoretical decline of the SWP co-incides with a sudden and dramatic change in the political life of the country—a change without equal since the formation of the CIO. The policy of the SWP is, therefore, for all genuine Marxists a matter of the utmost importance.

The activities of determined Marxists in the US today can, we feel, play a tremendous part in overthrowing imperialism tomorrow and in that way resolve the major problems of our planet.

The policy of the SWP on Cuba and the Negro question, however, constitutes a grave and impermissible violation of revolutionary duty. When the Federal government sent troops to Arkansas and Mississippi to enforce the 'desegregation' of the education system it was the duty of American Marxists to call upon the workers and Negro people to place no faith in Federal intervention and to create their own militia to defend minority rights.

Instead, the SWP supported the measures of Eisenhower and Kennedy, and even criticised them for being dilatory! (The same Federal army is today poised for action against Cuba!)

Again, when organised violence was being unleashed on the Negroes in the south, the SWP—contrary to all past practice and precedent—called upon the Democratic administration to deputise the Negroes!

We feel it would be just as effective to call upon Mr. Kennedy to institute socialism. By these tactics and slogans the SWP does not advance the cause of

Negro-Labour unity and enables fakery like Luther King and Malcolm X to maintain their control over the Negro movement.

Much work has been done by the SWP around the Cuban revolution and its defence. But when the time for plain speaking came during the 'missiles' crisis last November, the SWP leaders did not criticise the cynical manoeuvres of Khrushchev who tried to use the missile bases in Cuba to get a summit conference with Kennedy.

Comrade Dobbs, National Secretary of the SWP, speaking before the Militant Labor Forum in New York City, November 9, 1962, said:

'Until we have more information, I think we should take it rather slowly on the missile question for two reasons:

1) This is not what is most germane to the basic meaning of the crisis and the lessons we draw from it (sic).

2) It's not a very wise thing to make snap judgments on tactical questions without having all the facts.

We should study this aspect of the Cuban question, as we dig more deeply into the lesson of the crisis . . .'

International Socialist Review, Vol. 24, No. 1, Winter 1962.

This attitude contrasts sharply with the impeccable record of the SWP on Korea and the Geneva conference of 1954 when the SWP leaders correctly analysed and denounced the counter-revolutionary role of the Kremlin without having access to 'all the facts'.

Comrade Dobbs asks us to 'dig', 'study' and 'wait for all the facts'. But the most important fact is stated explicitly in the programme of the International:

'Having betrayed the international proletarian revolution . . . the Comintern could not help betraying simultaneously also the struggle for liberation of the colonial masses . . . The banner on which is emblazoned the struggle for the liberation of the colonial and semi-

colonial peoples . . . has definitely passed into the hands of the Fourth International.'

The task of Trotskyists everywhere, we repeat, is to explain the cynical nature of the bureaucracy's foreign policy, in order that advanced workers may be better prepared to fight it in times of revolutionary crisis—but we do not make apologies for the Soviet leaders at any time.

The deviation of a section of the SWP from the path of class struggle and irreconcilable opposition to Stalinism is a symptom of theoretical confusion and political stagnation.

There is only one way out of this blind alley into which the SWP has stumbled. We say: turn the face of the Party resolutely away from the 'Radical Milieu' towards the trade unions, the Negro, Puerto Rican and Mexican minorities and, above all, the working-class youth.

'Only the fresh enthusiasm and aggressive spirit of the youth can guarantee the preliminary successes in the struggle—only their successes can return the best elements of the older generation to the road of revolution. Thus it was, thus it will be.'

Transitional Programme.

To a very large extent the future of the SWP depends on the recognition of the fact that the struggle for Negro equality and working-class emancipation must be combined with a merciless struggle against revisionism.

Notwithstanding the present situation in the party, we are sure that in the coming period the SWP will justify the hopes and desires of Marxists everywhere who look forward to the dawn of the American Revolution under Trotskyist leadership.

The Duty of Marxists

THE International Committee has always championed unity of the Fourth Interna-

tional and fought against every attempt to split the movement and destroy its cadre. The recent conference in Italy must be seen not as 'unity', but as the political continuation of a split begun in 1953.

Real unity of the Fourth International can come about only through adherence to a correct method, firm principles and a tried and tested programme. Unity which is built on confusion—which does not base itself on the conviction to build a world Marxist leadership in competition with all other trends—such unity is a rope of sand.

'This is a Trotskyist epoch' say the revisionists. But there is neither confidence nor optimism in this sort of cheerful idiocy. It expresses the attitude of those who have successfully adapted their policies to the needs of petty-bourgeois nationalists and

left reformists.

Pablo's international has no future because it is based on the petty-bourgeois—a social group without any historic future. We are optimistic about the International because we base ourselves on the working class and the class struggle which goes on all over the world.

We say this is a Trotskyist epoch not because some irreversible process makes it so but because out of firm, principled, independent intervention in the struggles of the working class we will build a world party.

The struggle to build the Fourth International is inseparable from the struggle against revisionism. 'The Fourth International sweeps away the quacks, charlatans and unsolicited teachers of morals.'

We call on all those who want to build a true communist leadership of the working class: we call

on all those who fight for the Transitional Programme: on all those who accept the fundamental proposition of the Founding Conference, that the crisis of leadership can only be resolved through the conscious activity of the Fourth International, to:

● *Fight to build the Fourth International as the only movement capable of overthrowing imperialism and Stalinism.*

● *Translate the Transitional Programme into action in every country where Trotskyism exists.*

● *Work for the International Conference of Marxists in the Autumn of 1964.*

**INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE FOURTH
INTERNATIONAL
JULY 1963**

Two resolutions of the International Committee meeting of June, 1963

At its meeting on June 23, 1963, the International Committee of the Fourth International passed resolutions on the Negro struggle in the United States, and the persecution of the Peruvian Trotskyist leader Hugo Blanco

THE NEGRO STRUGGLE

THE mounting struggle of the Negro people in the South, and now the spread of the struggle to the Northern industrial cities, indicates that it is moving into a new phase, which is raising critical problems for the labour movement.

The existing liberal and pacifist leadership of middle class clergymen and civil rights leaders like Martin Luther King and the NAACP, with their policy of non-violence and limited measures of desegregation, are increasingly unable to satisfy the aspirations of the Negro working class, especially the unemployed and the youth.

It is, however, from these sections of the Negro movement that the present movement receives its most devoted support; the most oppressed sections of the US population cannot be satisfied with a struggle whose limits are set by the needs of the oppressors.

The American Negro workers, often paid only half the wages of a white worker, discriminated against by many unions as well as employers, afflicted by a very high rate of unemployment, are now determined to fight to a finish. Kennedy's desegregation gestures have had the effect of opening the gates just a little wider for this push against reaction.

It is important to underline the class bases of the present move-

ment for equal rights. Its first centre, Birmingham, Alabama, is not a vestige of the slave era but one of the world's largest steel towns.

Those in the forefront of the struggle are workers fighting against monopoly capitalism, whose political chief is Kennedy himself.

It thus forms part of the movement of the oppressed victims of imperialism throughout the world; it is in no sense the product of an exclusively 'American dilemma' but a product of the severe contradictions of capitalism in the advanced countries at its present stage.

It is impossible to carry it forward without the solidarity and

support of the entire labour movement, beginning with that in the US itself.

The world-wide implications of the struggle are understood by the ruling class. Kennedy's foreign policy, and the need for the US to establish profitable relations with the newly emerged 'independent' backward countries, have led the US administration to make certain gestures to solve the segregation problem.

This has brought it into open conflict with the white supremacists in the South who represent, with their petty bourgeois supporters, the most backward side of US capitalism. Kennedy understands that he must break with the extreme segregationists in order to safeguard US capitalism on a world scale.

The leaders of the AFL-CIO, demonstrate once again their role as labour lieutenants of the capitalist class by their passivity on this question. US capitalism and the Kennedy administration could

not withstand a determined movement for equal rights were it to be based on a united struggle of the whole working class.

The labour leaders fear such a struggle. They are not independent of monopoly capitalism, but are obliged to serve its every need. Their concern with desegregation goes no further than that of the administration itself.

While objective circumstances have forced the Negro workers, students and youth into the position of front line fighters against American capitalism, they thus find themselves bereft of leadership.

The middle-class Negro leaders, backed by white liberals, have proved a failure. The official labour leaders remain tied to the coat-tails of the employers.

Naturally, therefore, the Negroes are searching for some way out of their situation. The limited successes of the Black Muslims in winning a base in the towns reflect this, but only lead into

another blind alley.

What is required is a movement which exposes in struggle all the traps set for the Negro masses by the non-violent pacifist leaders, the Kennedy liberals and desegregationists, the counsellors in the official labour movement, the fanatical black nationalists—and projects a principled policy based upon uniting the whole American working class against monopoly capitalism.

One of the most oppressed sections of the American working class is already on the move. As the contradictions of capitalism reveal themselves, other sections will be drawn into the struggle.

The preparation of a new independent working-class programme and leadership is already overdue and lags behind the objective opportunities. The need for an understanding of the Negro upsurge as part of the struggle against American capitalism is a first requirement if these opportunities are to be grasped.



RELEASE HUGO BLANCO!

HUGO BLANCO, Trotskyist leader of the mass peasant movement in the Cuzco area of Peru, has been hunted down by the army and is now imprisoned without trial. From information received, it is clear that he requires medical attention and his life is in serious danger.

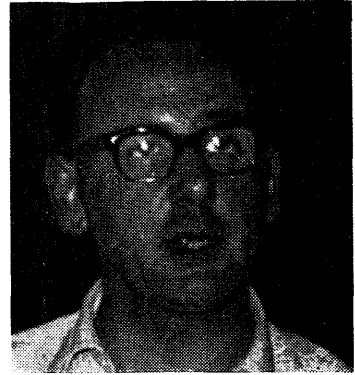
In addition, he has been given no opportunity of seeing a proper lawyer to prepare his defence.

Hugo Blanco has led a powerful movement which has dispossessed the big landlords of the Cuzco area and turned over the land to the peasants. It is in order to repress this movement that he has been arrested.

The duty of the labour movement throughout the world is to demand his release and, as a *minimum*, to ensure through their protests his access to medical treatment and legal advice.

The International Committee of the Fourth International calls upon all labour organisations to organise protests inside their own countries against the action of the Peruvian government. Demonstrations, delegations and telegrams to the Peruvian embassies in all countries are urgently necessary.

The sections of the Fourth International have the duty of initiating these actions in all countries.



Revisionism and the Fourth International

by **Cliff Slaughter**

(Based upon the report on international problems, accepted unanimously by the Fifth Annual Conference of the Socialist Labour League, June 1963, London)

Our Conference meets just before the Convention of the Socialist Workers' Party of the United States, a Convention whose majority will accept a political line opposed to that of the Socialist Labour League, and basically similar to that of the Pablo group in Paris calling itself the Fourth International. For ten years British Trotskyists have condemned the ideas of Pablo and his followers as a revision of Marxism. Concentrating on so-called objective trends towards socialism, the Pabloites accepted the idea that the pressure of the masses would enforce the overthrow of capitalism before the working class resolved its crisis of leadership. Consequently, the existing bureaucratic leaders of the labour movement, or sections of them, would become the leaders of 'deformed workers' states'. Thus the overthrow of capitalism would be achieved without the building of revolutionary Marxist parties in the leadership of the working class. Foremost among those who denounced Pablo's revisions in 1953 was the Socialist Workers' Party, particularly its oldest leader, James P. Cannon. We must therefore take very seriously the decision of the Socialist Workers' Party leadership to seek agreement with the Pabloites.

In this, we do not proceed with any considerations

for the kind of criticism levelled at Trotskyism from the outside, to the effect that continual splits are only a characteristic of sectarianism. Splits have always been necessary preludes to successful class struggles, splits based upon differences of political principle and not upon personal or organisational disputes. The classical examples are the history of the Marxist party in Russia and of the Second International. Advance was only possible by fighting to the end the differences of principle between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, between reformism and revolution. It is not at all an accident that these splits always raise questions which appear superficially to be of a very theoretical and abstract character. The revolutionary party of the working class, Lenin insisted, is characterised above all by its *revolutionary theory*. For the first time in history the overthrow of a ruling class and the victory of a new class is organised deliberately and consciously. In order to grasp its role and be capable of victory the working class needs a scientific theory comprehending all the spheres of the class struggle, enabling the class to base its strategy and tactics on an understanding of the dynamics of the class struggle, whose secret was revealed by Marx. Theoretical differences therefore require the sharpest and most

uncompromising struggle, for they lie at the root of political and organisational deviations. In this respect the history of the Socialist Labour League is interesting. The Socialist Labour League has insisted that no compromise with Pabloism is possible. In order to expose completely the roots of this revision of Marxism, we have advocated a thorough-going discussion of all the disputed questions since 1953, in order that theoretical clarification can be achieved. On the basis of this clarification, the re-organisation of the Fourth International should then proceed. The Socialist Workers' Party has for some years advocated a rapprochement between the two tendencies, leaving disputed questions aside until later. In support of this line they have indicated the need to respond to the great opportunities given to Trotskyism by recent developments in the break-up of Stalinism and victories in the national liberation movement.

This SWP line is in stark contrast to the 'Open Letter' of 1953, published in the SWP's organ *The Militant* as a full-scale denunciation of Pabloism. The 'Open Letter' pointed out that during the French General Strike and the East German workers' uprising of 1953, the Pabloites were completely paralysed by their theory that the existing bureaucracies could play a progressive role. This prevented them from giving a clear revolutionary lead. The 'Open Letter' showed that this paralysis flowed from Pablo's revisionism, and concluded that 'no compromise', either politically or organisationally, was possible. On this basis the split was complete, and since that time the SWP has formally sympathised with groups like the SLL, affiliated to the International Committee of the Fourth International, opposed to the Pabloite 'International Secretariat'.

Such splits in the international Marxist movement can, of course, only be justified by the most basic class betrayals. It is absolutely alien to a Marxist approach to advocate unity now, without a full discussion, between those who split in 1953. We believe there is a very clear reason why the SWP can take this course. In 1953 their own tradition of struggle led Cannon and some of the SWP leadership to reject the capitulation to the bureaucracy implied in Pablo's ideas. However, this split was not carried far enough. If the differences were big enough to justify a public condemnation and a split in the International, they necessitated a thorough-going theoretical analysis of the class roots of Pablo's revisions. The struggle against these revisions could only lay the basis for new advances if it gave the Marxist movement a deeper understanding of the social forces of our epoch which were reflected in Pablo's revisions. It was not sufficient merely to point to the consequences and insist on a split. Because, in the SWP, the process

in effect stopped at that point, the SWP itself remained open to precisely the same influences of world capitalism which produced Pabloism. In recent years the SWP leaders have begun to accept ideas similar to those of Pablo. Influenced particularly by 'de-Stalinisation' and the revolutions in Algeria and Cuba, they developed theories that the revolutionary process would not wait for revolutionary parties to be formed.

It is for this reason that the SWP now advocates a return to the old relationship with the Pabloites. It is not true, as the SWP leadership claims, that the Pabloites have moved closer to a Trotskyist position; on the contrary, the SWP has in fact accepted Pablo's revisionism. In order to avoid a discussion which would reveal the position, and thereby to prevent a clarification of the sources of the split, the SWP has consistently avoided a confrontation of ideas in writing or in conference, and they have now made approaches for agreement with the Pabloites in order to forestall the Conference of International Committee supporters, to meet in the late summer of this year, even though this date was arranged to accommodate a number of sections in other continents, an arrangement of which an SWP leader was aware and to which he raised not a single objection. The indecent haste of this approach to the Pabloites, and the avoidance of a conference of IC supporters, is explained by a number of immediate factors, including: first, the miserable showing of Hansen and Cannon in the short written discussion finally achieved between the SLL and the SWP in late 1962 and early 1963;* second, the critical divisions with the Pablo group, even at top-leadership level; and finally the internal crisis of the SWP leadership, whose right wing, centred on the journal *International Socialist Review*, has recently collapsed, a number of them abandoning the movement. Cannon's letter on the Cuban question, in which he defended Khrushchev's withdrawal of the missiles as a blow for peace—'what else could he have done under the given circumstances?'—revealed the depths of the theoretical decline in the SWP.

The SLL reaffirms its opinion that the Fourth International will be reconstructed only on the basis of the defeat of Pabloite revisionism, of which the SWP leadership is now the leading spokesman. Our last two conferences (1961 and 1962) have elaborated the political positions upon which our criticism of revisionism is based. In the past year, our position on all the disputed political questions has been confirmed by the course of events, while the line of the Pabloites and the SWP has been thoroughly exposed.

* The major documents in this internal discussion will be published in the next few months.

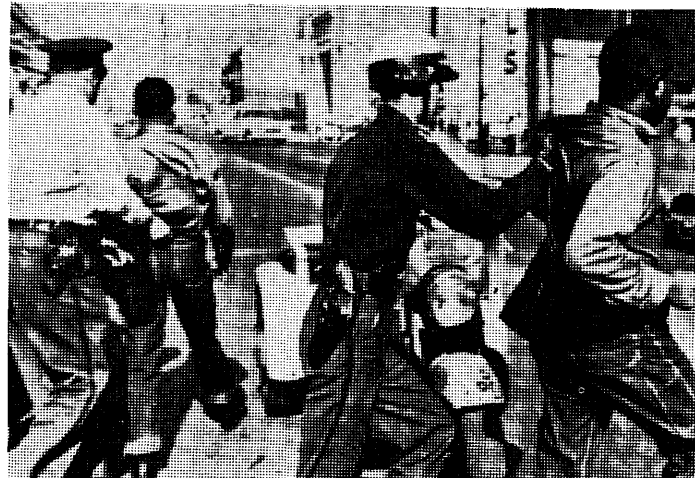
The Advanced Countries

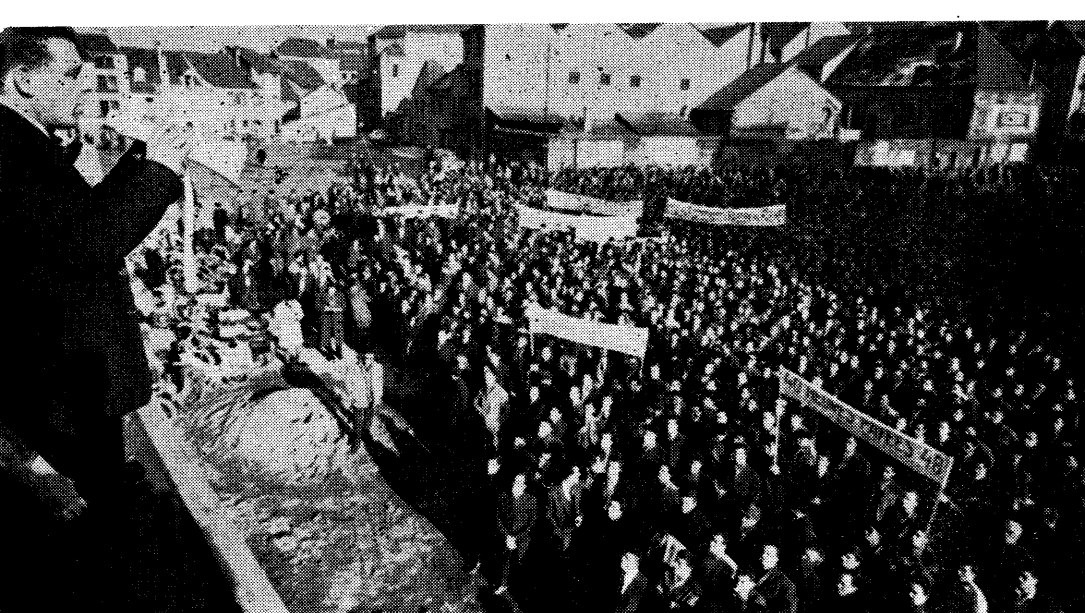
In all the advanced countries the class contradictions have had a sharp expression. In the USA, the struggle in the South against racist segregation has reached gigantic proportions. Kennedy's foreign policy, and the need for US imperialism to establish profitable relations with the newly 'independent' backward countries, have led the US administration to make certain gestures to solve the segregation problem. But Kennedy's token struggle coincides with other factors of enormous strength. The action of the Negro working class has for some time been seeking a way of expression independent of the liberal and pacifist leadership of middle-class clergymen and civil leaders like Martin Luther King and the NAACP. This most oppressed section of the American working class, often paid only half the wages of a white worker, discriminated against by many unions as well as employers, suffering from a very high rate of unemployment, is now determined to fight to a finish, and Kennedy's gestures have had the effect of opening the gates just a little wider for this push against reaction. Birmingham, Alabama is no outpost of the slave era, but one of the biggest modern steel towns in the world. Those in struggle are workers, fighting against modern monopoly capitalism, whose political chief is Kennedy himself. The prime need is a leadership to find ways forward for independent working-class action. Yet in this situation the SWP leadership uses its weekly organ, *The Militant*, to call upon Kennedy to 'deputise and arm the Negroes!' As if to say: let's make Kennedy practise what he preaches. Similarly they criticise Kennedy for hanging back in the serious deployment of Federal troops to enforce de-segregation against the local Birmingham reactionaries. When Martin Luther King and his friends signed some fake agreement with local businessmen to agree to 'progress' in these matters, *The Militant* even here remained unable to thoroughly denounce such class-collaboration, adopting a 'wait-and-see' attitude. Here is an abandonment of the teachings of Lenin and Trotsky, and a perfect example of the consequences of Pabloite revisionism. Tailing behind middle-class leaders like King, the SWP ends up by being able to advocate nothing more than a 'sharpening-up' of the attitude of these liberals themselves, thus joining in the array of forces whose role is to disorientate the Negro masses by perpetuating illusions in 'democratic' capitalism instead of fighting for an independent course of action and the construction of an independent leadership. Dean Rusk, Kennedy and other imperialist spokesmen made their strategy very clear, insisting that unless 'something could be done' about the Negro question, the US was 'fighting Communism with one leg in a splint'.

Recent reports show that, in common with other advanced countries, the USA faces a rapidly mounting problem of youth unemployment. Naturally this is most serious among the Negro workers. It is clear that we have here a general tendency in modern capitalism, connected with the type of mass production now required in manufacturing industry. The new upsurge in the Negro struggle is undoubtedly accelerated by this factor. As in Britain and elsewhere, the new forces for mass revolutionary parties can be largely drawn from the struggles of this new generation, as it finds the old leadership utterly incapable of any struggle even for the slightest concessions. The Negro struggle is only one side, in the USA a vitally important one, of this same struggle to create a new leadership out of the struggle against the monopolies' attempt to impose the burden of their latest problems on the working class.

But from the SWP we have seen no analysis of this unemployment problem. A few news stories was all *The Militant* could muster. That paper gave no impression of any sort of struggle against unemployment in which the SWP was campaigning. And yet even capitalist observers note the persistence of five to six million permanently unemployed because of capitalism's inability to use rationally the most advanced techniques like automation. For all the stress of the Pabloites and the SWP on 'objective forces' making for change, it is precisely in the field of analysis of these objective factors on which revolutionary action can be based that the SWP is weakest. Even the struggles of the US miners in abandoned coalfields like Kentucky, where armed battles took place, could not find their way

US Negro struggle—'fight to a finish'





'Following closely on the Belgian General Strike, the miners strike in France ...'

into the columns of *The Militant* as campaigning issues.

The permanent army of unemployed, the particularly high rate of youth unemployment, and the growing fury of the Negro struggle—all of these provide big opportunities for the construction of revolutionary parties and strike a blow at the revisionist idea that the class struggle has temporarily ceased to have major significance in the advanced countries. It is this revisionist notion, a rejection of the *central* necessity of independent building of parties of the Fourth International, which has made the SWP utterly incapable of intervening in these important struggles.

In Germany and France, in Spain and Greece, the same story can be told, making nonsense of the Pabloite theory that the 'epicentre' of the revolutionary struggle has shifted away from the advanced countries to the backward countries. The Pabloites and the SWP take the continuation of capitalism in the advanced countries to be some natural law, whereas in reality it is a consequence primarily of the betrayal of Social Democracy and Stalinism for 50 years. Revolutionaries have the task of defeating that leadership and equipping the working class for victories, not the task of standing aside and drawing conclusions about the 'epicentre of revolution' having moved elsewhere. This theory is a cowardly retreat into the arms of nationalist revolutionaries in the backward countries, not a development of Marxism.

In Germany, the metal workers, building workers and others, have forced big concessions from the employers; their strikes and threatened strikes have struck fear into the hearts of the German bosses, who for years have dealt with a proletariat only slowly recovering from the Nazi and wartime destruction of a whole generation of militants, organisers and revolutionaries. The German 'economic miracle' is a corpse which everybody can

smell. The Adenauer administration has been rocked by internal divisions and political crises like the *Der Spiegel* affair. In France, the working class shows that even under the semi-dictatorship of de Gaulle they are strong and determined. Following closely on the Belgian General Strike, the miners' strike in France, which called out the support of many other workers, was a mighty demonstration of the power of the European working class. In 1962 the heroic workers of Spain lifted their proud heads and challenged the fascist regime. Their strike won economic concessions but, more important, it opened a new phase of class actions against the Franco terror which will sweep away the so-called 'democratic opposition', that revival of the traitorous alliance of Stalinists and spineless liberals.

In all those countries of Western Europe, including Britain, where the workers have the freedom to vote, Parliamentary elections express in a muffled way the consistent striving of the workers to independent class power. In France, Germany, Italy, Belgium and Britain, the Communist or Social-Democratic parties have received a constant and massive working-class vote in every election since 1945, despite the cynical betrayals of the leaders of these parties. The need for a leadership in these countries which can free the working class for struggle by building revolutionary parties in determined and day-to-day opposition to these agents of capitalism has been clearly exposed. Such parties must base their struggles on the younger generation which suffers most directly from the latest phase of capitalist exploitation, is free from the weight of decades of defeat, has high expectations and a healthy mistrust of the opportunist leaders. To avoid this responsibility is to leave the youth of these countries open to the influence of pseudo-radical propaganda by fascist agents of the ruling classes become more acute, as in Germany, France, Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Belgium and Britain.

In Britain, there is developing a situation where the Labour leadership will be called upon to answer big questions in response to the headlong decline of the ruling class. The term of the next Labour government will be a decisive period for the construction of a Marxist party in Britain. The SWP in its international policy is supporting a group which stands in the way of that task. These are the so-called Marxists in the Labour youth movement in Britain whose primary objective has been to oppose the development of a revolutionary leadership. With their friends in *Tribune*, even after that tendency's pathetic betrayal since Scarborough 1960, they have consistently helped the witch-hunters. These 'Marxists' allied also with the group which characterises the USSR as 'state capitalist' and which left the Fourth International at the time of the Korean war, unable to take up the defence of China against US imperialism. This alliance had only one foundation—the vital one of opposition to the strategy of building a revolutionary party in Britain. Those who are active in British labour politics can thus see clearly the consequences of the SWP line of support for the Pabloites. This opposition to the building of the Marxist party flows inevitably from the emphasis on the so-called objective facts and the conclusion that someone else is going to lead the overthrow of capitalism, that between capitalism and socialism something else will intervene.

In Britain then, the liquidationist position of the Pabloites and the SWP (i.e., their abandonment of the construction of revolutionary parties) becomes an important aid to the ruling class, whose primary interest is to assure the continued domination of the opportunists and bureaucrats over the working class.

We should not forget that the first major political consequence of Pablo's revisionism was capitulation to Stalinism, on the grounds that the bureaucracy, or a section of it, would be forced to the left. The SWP similarly began, especially after 1956, to omit reference to the need for political revolution against the Soviet bureaucracy (they placed their judgment of Khrushchev's intentions higher than the struggle of the Hungarian masses!). They began to talk about 'de-Stalinisation' and 'the fracturing of the Stalinist monolith' as some natural process, rather than the need to build Marxist parties in opposition to the counter-revolutionary policies of Stalinism. Finally, elements in both the Pabloite and the SWP ranks developed the idea that so strong were the 'mass pressures for Socialism' that Stalinism 'could no longer betray'. Cannon's support for Khrushchev over Cuba, and the SWP's condonement of the French Pabloites' similar line last year, are the fruits of this overthrow of principle.

The Stalinist parties of the advanced countries today have reached a new extreme in their capitulation to capitalism, all in the interests of 'peaceful co-existence' and 'peaceful competition', confirming completely their traditional characterisation by the Trotskyist movement as counter-revolutionary. In Britain, where the trade union leaders engage in open class-collaboration on the National Economic Development Council, the Stalinists, following faithfully Khrushchev's line, call upon *the capitalist state* to plan the direction of industry, of research and labour and technicians, to help assure the required rate of growth. In Italy, Togliatti advocates structural reforms which will bring qualitative changes from capitalism to socialism without revolution, and even calls for conditional support for the European Common Market, so long as satisfactory economic agreements are made between the Eastern European countries and the Common Market. Here in the vital sector, in the advanced countries, as the imperialist crisis matures and opens up great opportunities for revolutionary development, the consequence of Pabloite revisionism—a complete disorientation in face of the counter-revolutionary development of Stalinism—is clearest and most dangerous to the working class. The disputes between the Russian and Chinese Stalinists will add to the contradictions between Stalinism and the needs of the workers, and this will begin to receive a confused expression within the Stalinist parties. Only if Trotskyists develop their independent theory and practice will there emerge from this crisis new revolutionary cadres for the working class. We are thus quite opposed to the analysis given by Pabloite and SWP spokesmen, who find the different confused lines of the world's Stalinist parties to be so many 'bits' of Trotskyism, requiring only a 'synthesis'.

This latest extreme example of the consequences of Pabloite revisionism only highlights the sharpness of capitalism's contradictions at the present stage. It is exactly because of this sharpness, the preparation of decisive class struggles, that the theoretical differences now become most acute and must be posed without any confusion or covering up. This theoretical struggle is an essential preparation for the new stage of the class struggle in the advanced countries. The battle against revisionism marches step by step with the struggle in every country to construct revolutionary parties in determined opposition to opportunism and centrism. This is the historic responsibility placed upon Marxists in the advanced countries: to prove in action that our orientation of constructing revolutionary parties is correct. Building the SLL in Britain is fighting in the front line of the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

The Backward Countries

In the backward countries a remarkable feature of the recent period has been the growth of the independent organisation and action of the working class, and in some cases, the sharp posing of the decisive political questions of working-class organisation (India and Cuba). In many parts of Africa this has been the case: in Central and South Africa strikes have necessitated repression by armed force; in Nigeria and Ghana, industrial workers have fought bitter strikes against the bourgeois nationalist governments, despite the claims of some of these to promise an 'African Road to Socialism'; in Algeria and in Guinea, the nationalist governments have been forced to make explicit their opposition to the claims of the working class (Sekou Touré suppressed the teachers' and students' movement as a 'Communist' plot and, only two years after almost 'qualifying' for the label 'workers' state' from the revisionists, has returned to the arms of de Gaulle; Ben Bella ruthlessly took over the Algerian TUC through his own nominees, insisting on the predominance of the peasantry). The mass peasant revolts in Latin America have been joined in the last year by mighty strikes of the urban workers, particularly in Argentina and Chile. In Indonesia, the workers have massively demonstrated their insistence on nationalization of foreign holdings; they are restrained only by the complete subordination of the Communist Party to the Soekarno government. In India, the social-chauvinism of the Communist Party prevents it from leading the struggles which are steadily mounting in a deteriorating economic situation.

All this is in direct contrast with the theories of the Pabloites and the SWP. One of the fundamental bases of Trotskyism is the theory of permanent revolution. Parties basing themselves on these theories are working-class parties; in backward countries only the working class can lead the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. The peasantry needs to be led by a class in the towns which can find the necessary cohesion, discipline and leadership to carry through the struggle to the end. The bourgeoisie in the epoch of imperialism cannot do this. In such countries it is especially important to stress the proletarian character of the leadership in the worker-peasant alliance; unless this battle is fought, there is every danger of petty-bourgeois degeneration of the political leadership.

The Pabloites and the SWP have rejected this outlook, embracing instead the opinion that the peasantry, by its revolutionary actions against imperialism, has proved Marx and his followers wrong. Pablo and his friends now suggest that the working class in these countries is a privileged group, so that the peasantry finds its leaders among intel-

lectuals and others on the run from the towns—a 'Jacobin leadership sui generis'. This is not a theory, but an apology for prostration before the middle-class nationalist leaderships who mislead the peasantry and oppose the independence of the working class. It is in Algeria and Cuba that the consequences of this revision have been most nakedly revealed. In fulfilling his obligations under the Evian agreement with de Gaulle's government, Ben Bella has banned the Communist Party, not out of any opposition to Stalinism but in fear of the development of any centre for independent working-class organisation. *The Militant* not only failed to voice a vigorous protest but even printed without comment the statement of an Algerian government spokesman in 'explanation' of this repressive action. Pablo himself has ended up as a professional functionary in the service of the nationalist government. The Pabloite sections in Europe and the SWP make great play of the need for a campaign of 'support' for the Algerian revolution. But this turns out to mean support for the Ben Bella government; the supply of 'progressive' technicians will somehow preserve Ben Bella from imperialist pressure and assure his taking the road of Castro. All this, the rejection of *any* independent course for the working class or the construction of an independent working-class party, in fact covers up a situation where professions of 'Trotskyism' are nothing but a disguise for sheer opportunism and support of a government which acts against the working class, as in Ben Bella's attack on the trade unions in the name of 'the people', whom he insisted were predominantly peasants. His demagogic appeals to quell workers' demonstrations meet with no criticism or opposition from the Pabloite 'supporters of the revolution'. Here again, the role of Pabloism is to stand in the way of the essential

Evian—scene of Ben Bella's accord with France



construction of revolutionary parties, and thus to contribute to the main need of imperialism in the backward countries, i.e., that the masses remain under the tutelage of petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders, thus preventing their carrying through the struggle against imperialist domination in all its forms.

Recent news from Algeria suggests that a strong section of Ben Bella's government is for the 'Arab Socialism' of Nasser and the United Arab Republic. This amounts to nothing more than a para-military dictatorship, the suppression of all independent class and party organisations, a type of corporatism based on State control of certain sectors of an under-developed economy. The position of the Pabloites now prevents them from taking a principled course on any of these questions, prevents them from fighting for an independent working-class party in Algeria. All their 'theories' of 'Jacobin leaderships sui generis' and the non-revolutionary character of the colonial proletariat are in fact at the service of Nasser, Ben Bella and their governments. The abandonment of the theory of the need for *workers'* parties in these countries and for working-class leadership of the struggle against imperialism leaves them only miserable servants of the colonial bourgeoisie.

Cuba has figured prominently in the disputes between the SWP and the SLL. Here too, Cannon and the SWP leadership have uncritically supported Castro and the July 26th Movement's leadership. They have welcomed the announcement of the formation of the new 'United Party of the Socialist Revolution', a combination of the petty-bourgeois nationalists of the July 26th Movement and the Stalinists, despite the fact that this 'party' would clearly be on the Stalinist model. Cannon called on the Cuban Trotskyists to work as a loyal faction within the new party, without being able to give any details of the rights of minorities in this party, indeed in full knowledge of a statement by Ché Guevara about the nature of democratic centralism on Stalinist lines, as well as denunciations of Trotskyism. Cannon knew too that the Cuban Trotskyists had suffered persecution at the hands of the Cuban administration. At the time the SWP explained these repressions as the actions of some over-zealous Stalinist minor official. But they offer no explanation for the continued existence of these restrictions today. The SWP leadership had access to a report three months ago from Canadian Marxists visiting Cuba which revealed this position. This report made it very clear that the State machine in Cuba functions without control from the mass *in any way*, in the economic or the political spheres. The comrade who gave this report went to Cuba as

a supporter of the SWP leadership's position (and probably remains so); the SWP leadership chose to use other, 'favourable' sections of the report and to suppress these 'awkward' aspects. This speaks volumes for the political role of revisionism in shielding the enemies of the working class and also for the organisational methods which inevitably flow from unprincipled political positions.

One pressing reason for the SWP's concealing these details was the previous course of their discussion with the SLL. We had rejected the claim of Hansen and his supporters that Cuba was a 'workers' state'; it was even referred to as an 'uncorrupted workers' regime'. This new first-hand evidence would have 'complicated' the headlong drive for unification, in which Hansen had already insisted that the recognition of Cuba as a workers' state was 'the acid test'.

An important example in this connection is the speech of Castro on March 26, 1962, later reprinted by the SWP, without comment, for circulation in the USA. This speech, entitled by the SWP, 'Fidel Castro Denounces Bureaucracy and Sectarianism', was occasioned by the dismissal of an old Stalinist, Anibal Escalante, from a prominent position in the State, on the grounds that he acted bureaucratically and promoted people into positions primarily on the grounds of their Party connections. On examining this speech we insisted it was far from illustrating a move by Castro away from Stalinist bureaucratic methods towards Socialist democracy, as the SWP leadership thought. On the contrary, Castro insists here precisely on the independence of the State itself from any sort of control.

'The best revolutionists, the best workers, should be in the nucleus. The party should not weaken itself in order to buttress the state apparatus. *The state apparatus must develop its own officials from the ranks.* It does not have to have recourse to the nuclei in the people's farms, in the co-operatives. It does not have to bring in the official from outside; he should simply be promoted from among the workers.' (Our emphasis.)

'Today an official must have authority. A minister must have authority, an administrator must have authority. He must be able to discuss whatever is necessary with the Technical Advisory Council. He must be able to discuss with the masses of workers; with the nucleus. But the administrator must decide; the responsibility must be his.'

These clear statements on the independent power of the State apparatus were covered with the usual popular demogogy which is hailed by some as 'TV democracy' but which in fact conceals the continuation of a centralised bureaucratic state without soviet or socialist democracy at any time having intervened. Thus Castro says:

'It is not important who governs—what man

governs or what his name might be. Who leads is not important—what man leads or what his name might be. The important thing is that he govern well, the important thing is that he lead the revolution where the revolution should go.'

Briefly summarised, this passage means: 'Fidel knows best.'

For the rest, Castro's speech 'denouncing bureaucracy' (!) consisted of a series of unfavourable comparisons between the Stalinist cadres and those of the July 26th Movement, upon whom Castro leant heavily at that time, and a number of illustrations of the bureaucratic abuses for which Escalante was blamed. Castro summed up this series of illustrations of graft and privileged appointments behind the backs both of the masses and of the central State apparatus as follows:

'We have fallen into a problem of castes, not into one of classes, *companeros*. Let us not give up the principle of class in order to fall into the problem of castes, into that of titles of nobility, into that of privileges, into that of sectarianism, *companeros*.'

It is enough to ask: what has this got to do with an 'uncorrupted workers' regime'? how could the SWP hail this 'great speech against bureaucracy' and not give any accounting of its uncritical support of the conduct of state affairs in the previous months, here so strongly denounced by Castro? Like the Pabloites in Algeria, they are unable to criticise the regime, except where Castro himself decides criticism is in order.

The SWP leadership's insistence on the criterion of nationalization in defining Cuba as a workers' state blinded them to the political implications of Castro's relations with the bureaucracy in the USSR. We have insisted all along in the discussion that the international relations of the Cuban revolution, as well as the historical and class basis of its leadership, must be considered as well as the property relations existing at any given time. Castro's reliance on the Kromlin economically, militarily and to a great extent politically has been a mechanism for betraying the Cuban revolution. The consequence of a failure by the Cuban masses, led by the working class, to break this grip of the petty-bourgeois leadership and the Stalinists, will be either the destruction of the gains of the Cuban revolution by American reconquest, or the reaching of a point where Castro, controlling the State apparatus, will swing to a renewed relationship with US capital. The missiles crisis of Autumn 1962 brought out this issue clearly. Khrushchev's international diplomatic manoeuvres involved the adventurist use of missile bases in Cuba as a pawn for the negotiation of a new deal with Kennedy, and very nearly brought down the Cuban revolution. The prostration of Cannon and the SWP leadership was complete. All they could

do was commend Khrushchev, even calling in as witness those people 'unaffected by imperialist propaganda' . . . Bertrand Russell and Pandit Nehru! The latter was simultaneously engaged in conducting a chauvinistic frenzy in India against the Chinese People's Republic, armed not only by the imperialists but also with MIG aircraft supplied by Moscow!



FIDEL CASTRO:
'It is not important
who governs—what
man governs or what
his name might be'

The Cuban crisis did supply an 'acid test', and it found the SWP to have left far behind the internationalist politics on which it was based. Its formal-logical approach to the definition of the Cuban state, ignoring its class content, its development, its relation to imperialism and to world Stalinism, is the methodological consequence of its political decline. Instead of dealing here with the lengthy discussion on the comparison of Cuba with the European deformed workers' states, we will be satisfied to quote John G. Wright, writing in the SWP internal bulletin itself as long ago as 1950:

'This sociological approach amounts to the following: we set down two parallel columns and in one column we jot down the outstanding characteristics of the Soviet Union as it is today, in 1950; and in this connection we may, if we so desire, take note of its historical origin in what Comrade E. R. Frank labels as the revolution of a "Classic Type".

'In an adjoining column we set down all the buffer states, including Yugoslavia, and see what similarities can be found with the USSR under Stalin—this time without paying any regard whatever to the *historical origin* of what happened in each of these countries, ignoring who carried out certain measures, why and under what circumstances, ignoring just how they were carried out, who benefited thereby and so on.

'And at the end, without weighing any of these diverse factors or evaluating them from the class standpoint and ignoring all the dissimilarities—*especially that of origin*—you conclude that all these similarities constitute an identity. And, therefore, in Eastern Europe, what you have are revolutions of a "new and special type". What has this

in common with our dialectical method? Very little.

‘... We are told that we are poor Marxists unless we apply a sociological method with unmistakable academic whiskers on it. It happens to be the formalistic method of comparative sociology which lays stress on dazzling similarities or “common formulas”, regardless of time and place, class and origin.

‘... Up to now our Trotskyist school of thought has rejected as false the notion of approaching economic factors, singly or collectively, as if they led an independent existence; as if they could be weighed and evaluated at any time and any circumstances separate and apart from their class roots and class content, independently of the methods of economic leadership and finally—what is most important!—independently of the political program and leadership involved. Yet all this appears to fall away in the thinking and argumentation of the “workers-statists”. We are presented with bare facts and statistics of nationalizations. The course of events leading up to them, the entire Kremlin policy with all its twists and turns from Potsdam to 1950, not to mention the wartime policies, evaporate into thin air. All this seems to be without apparent importance compared to the decisive “reality” of nationalizations. Assuredly, this bears little resemblance to our method of thinking.

‘Thus far in the discussion there has been considerable reference to the 1939-40 dispute with the petty-bourgeois opposition inside the SWP. This is only to be welcomed. But from the standpoint of *method* the following must be borne in mind.

‘In evaluating the class nature of the USSR, our opponents of 1939-40 denied completely the role of the economic foundation. The polemic, of necessity, stressed this aspect; the *subjective factors*, their role and importance, appeared to fall into a subordinate position. But, in reality, that was not at all the case. Because all of us, and in the first instance Trotsky, never dealt with Soviet nationalized economy “as such”, but invariably stressed its origins in the proletarian revolution and its subsequent evolution. We took into account all the changes introduced by the Kremlin and concluded that the *qualitative* stage of reversion to capitalism had not yet occurred in their remaining conquests of October.’

(‘The Importance of Method in the Discussion on the Kremlin-Dominated Buffer Zone’, *Discussion Bulletin*, No. 2, April 1950. Emphasis ours.)

One of the most important consequences of the Cuban crisis of 1962, therefore, was that it showed Cannon to have completely abandoned this approach in favour of a crude pragmatism, far removed from dialectical materialism.

Cannon and the SLL

Finally, we take one aspect of the general line of SWP leadership. When the SLL first approached the SWP for a discussion on the disputed questions, Cannon wrote to members of the SWP National Committee that the SLL’s wrong position would eventually be most clearly revealed in the consequences of its suicidal domestic policy. The SLL, said Cannon, had embarked on a sectarian binge, and was heading for the formation of an open party outside the Labour Party. The long experience of Cannon in these matters probably led SWP members to expect his predictions to be confirmed. All that happened in this case, in fact, was that Cannon’s retreat from a revolutionary outlook was fully exposed. The SLL has in fact gone from strength to strength; it has a stronger position in the Labour movement than ever before; it had already at that time fully discussed and decisively rejected the sectarian tendency towards an open party within its own ranks (Behan and others) and no such course has at any time since then been advocated. What was the source of Cannon’s misjudgment? The SLL’s propaganda material at that time (Spring 1961) was primarily concentrated on the struggle which ensued after the Scarborough Labour Party Conference victory for the policy of unilateral nuclear dis-



JAMES P. CANNON

retreat from a revolutionary outlook fully exposed

armament. That victory placed the *Tribune* Left politically in a position of leadership. Gaitskell and the right-wing majority in the Parliamentary Labour Party decided to flout the Conference decision and

they organised a right-wing faction to reverse the decision in trade unions and the Labour Party. The *Tribune Left* abandoned the struggle. In *The Newsletter* we attacked Gaitskell, exposing his 'fifth column' (the 'Campaign for Democratic Socialism'). We exposed the betrayal of the so-called Left, and demanded a recall Labour Party Conference to call Gaitskell to order. This is what Cannon calls 'a sectarian binge'. In fact it was the only possible course for Marxists—determined struggle to isolate and defeat the Right, and an exposure of those who paraded as left-wingers but refused to take up the fight. Those Pabloites whom the SWP now support are still able to collaborate happily with these domesticated left-wingers whose only reason for existence is to mislead into a backwater any members of the Labour Party who come into conflict with the official machine, and to oppose those who want

to construct a revolutionary party. Here, as in all other cases, the drift of the SWP to Pabloite revisionism disarms the vanguard of the working class by making it easier for opportunists to proceed with their work.

This Conference of the SLL reaffirms its determination to proceed along the path of the construction of independent revolutionary parties as the main task for Marxists. All talk of 'reunification' of the Fourth International before political clarification of the split of 1953 is contrary to the Marxist method. Our position remains that the basic prerequisite for a new leap forward in the construction of the Fourth International is the decisive defeat of Pabloite revisionism, including that of the SWP leadership. The SLL supports the forthcoming Conference of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Discussion on the report (extracts)

J. MORGAN: The leaders of the Socialist Workers Party have in the past been in the leadership of a theoretical struggle; they undertook a most important theoretical struggle inside their own party in 1939 and 1940 when they said themselves many of the things that we are now saying to them. Cannon wrote *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, outlining many of the ideas which now have to be said against him. In fact he can be condemned out of his own mouth by quoting pages out of his own book.

It is necessary to link up the ideas of empiricism and impressionism, characteristic of revisionism in the SWP, with the concept of the adaptation to other class forces, the adaptation to the Stalinist bureaucracies for which we have attacked and criticised them. Hansen, for example, claims to start with 'the facts'. I claim everybody starts from the facts, but they draw apparently different conclusions from the facts. What is a 'fact'? A fact is simply, I think, where you stop understanding and gaining knowledge about a situation. Knowledge is a process and the thing is going on all the time, it develops, but you come to a

point where you say, 'I stop here' and you choose to call this stopping-place 'reality' or 'the facts'.

For example, you can look at the history of the 20th century and the working-class movement, and say that there has been one successful revolution, and there have been many, many failed revolutions. Therefore revolution is out of the question. The facts are that all revolutions except one have failed, and because of these facts you say revolution is out of the question and if we choose to have any activity on politics it will be of a reformist or parliamentary kind.

But why stop there? Why simply stop at the so-called fact that only one revolution, or perhaps two revolutions in the 20th century have been successful? Why not go on and try to understand and extend your knowledge, and say: very well, in 1917 the Bolshevik Party came to power; why have other revolutions since then failed? Why weren't the opportunities in Germany taken? Why wasn't the opportunity in China taken in 1927? Why weren't the opportunities after the Second World War (1945) in many western European countries taken? It would be

necessary to go on and extend your knowledge to an understanding of the role of leadership in the working-class movement since 1917, and particularly, of course, the role of Stalinist parties in this.

But if you go on and extend your knowledge in this way, and discover other facts, then, of course, you are drawn inevitably to the conclusion that, since the primary factor which has prevented these revolutions from succeeding is the failure of leadership, then here is a solution, and you are no longer brought up sharp by 'the facts'. You understand reality and you can act upon it. This use of analysis as a guide to action contrasts with empiricist thinking which tends to talk about 'hard' facts, 'brute' facts. Indeed this kind of phrase is very common in the writings of the revisionists: they find the facts to be something unfortunate; the more you find out about the world, the more depressing it appears to become.

The SWP's differences with the Pabloites came out in 1953 and I think the time is significant. The immediate post-war period is characterised as a period of the stabilisation of capitalism, the

temporary stabilisation of capitalism, and it is in this period that the class pressures of capitalist society, the apparent regaining of strength of the capitalist class, began to impinge strongly upon the revolutionary movement. It began to appear to some of them that perhaps after all the capitalist class was too strong to overthrow, and there flowed from this a desire to escape from activity in the old capitalist countries. It is then presented as a fact that it is no longer possible successfully to build a working-class party, a Marxist movement, within the working class of the advanced countries. The SWP now accepts what the Pabloites accepted then, that this impossibility was a 'fact'. It could not be done.

But, of course, when we come to ask the revisionists for the objective analysis of the facts behind their conclusions, what do we get? We get extremely vague things, like 'inevitable left-wing tendencies', 'mass pressures', things which are firstly very vague and hardly at all the things which you would be likely to call 'hard facts'. Secondly, these 'facts' are completely devoid of class content. There is nothing in them at all about the class nature of the societies they are talking about, the class nature of the forces they represent. In spite of their constant talk about mass pressures, they have really failed to understand the significance of *class* pressure. They fail to understand it because they themselves are, of course, good examples of the consequences of the pressure of alien classes upon the working-class movement, upon the revolutionary movement.

So we can see, I think, these things which the empiricists call 'facts' are not reality at all. You do not look around and see facts which everybody sees, and simply draw different conclusions from them. What you see in fact, if you are somebody like Hansen, are not facts at all. You do not see reality. You see only appearances, you become victim of illusions, mirages which dominate the mind because of the domination of the ruling class. The revisionist is no longer capable of serious, scientific thinking, that is to say, Marxist thinking. He is no longer capable of seriously sifting

through the material of scientific knowledge of society. At some point he stops. He stops and says: it is not possible to build revolutionary movements in the major capitalist countries. He stops there because he is bending under class pressure, and that is the obstacle which prevents him from going on, and that is why the revisionists, despite the past record of some of them, are no longer able to say and do the kind of things that they were able to say and do in 1939 and 1940.

CYRIL SMITH: I would like to emphasise once more that the fight against revisionism is not something separate from the day-to-day work of the Socialist Labour League. The fight which we have taken up against the Socialist Workers Party leadership, and against Pabloism, is an integral part of the movement, because the Socialist Labour League is itself subject to all the same pressures as are exerted on and are responsible for the betrayal of principles and the departure from the methods of Marxism which we have seen in these other parts of the world movement.

When we look at the political and theoretical decline of the cadre of the Socialist Workers Party, many of whom were trained by direct contact with Trotsky himself in the '30s we must avoid seeing it simply as something that has happened to a few individuals, and instead understand it as a part of our own history, part of the development of our own movement. It is only if we look at it in this way, and see its connection with the life of the Socialist Labour League itself, that we will really be able to fight revisionism and to take up the root of the ideas against which we fight, because the way in which this tendency looks at theory is quite alien to the whole idea of Marxism.

Particularly if you listen to the Pabloite leaders who express revisionist ideas in a much more sophisticated way than the same ideas heard from the United States, it is clear that they look at the works of Trotsky as ideas to be kept on the bookshelf, a set of ideas, a set of theoretical equipment, which has got to be applied to a set of facts, something quite apart from it, as and when required. So then, if the facts

look a bit different on a particular day of the week then you have to find some other way round it.

For us, the fight against revisionism does not mean simply the ability to say correct things on this or that subject. That isn't really the question for us. This fight is a part of the whole development of the movement itself, for example of the Socialist Labour League, because the Socialist Labour League is not just a British movement. We're not something which developed simply in this country out of certain problems facing the working class in this country. We represent the continuation of an international tradition going back through the struggle of Trotsky for the Fourth International, through the Left Opposition in the '20s which fought against the development of Stalinism inside the Russian party first of all, through Lenin's fight for the Third International, the fight of Bolshevism against revisionist trends inside the Russian party and in the international Social-Democratic movement, back to the basic fight of Marx and Engels to develop a working-class leadership internationally in the 19th century. Our work today in every form, our form of organisation, our methods of fighting for our ideas and developing the activity of the movement in this country, are a continuation and a development of that tradition. When we take up the fight in the British labour movement, we use these methods. We don't start from scratch every time a new situation comes along. That's not to say that we apply them in a fixed way, as if they are something which Marx or Lenin or Trotsky wrote down as permanent recipes.

Theory has to be defended against revisionism because theory is the distilled experience of the working-class movement. The fight against revisionism is itself part of the fight to build working-class leadership in a practical, as well as in a theoretical way. The point has been emphasised many times that the basis for the degeneration of the SWP leadership lies in the fact that they didn't pay heed to Trotsky's exhortation in the 1939-1940 fight against Shachtman, that they should beware of American pragmatic methods, that they must develop the basic ideas of Marxist

philosophy if they were really going to keep at bay the methods that represented the methods of American imperialism in the American labour movement.

They didn't take this up; they never really developed theory. They repeated throughout the '40s and part of the '50s some of the ideas put forward by Trotsky, and criticised the Pabloites when they clearly departed from those ideas. But they did not enrich these ideas, they did not develop them in any way; and it is no accident that Pabloite and SWP spokesmen today treat as something of a joke the concern of the SLL with problems of dialectics. For these people, Marxism is already laid down and nothing need be done about it. All you have to do is to apply it.

I want to say something else on the question of method, in relation to this question of what is a workers' state. People ask: what's the criterion for a workers' state? They want to know how to identify a workers' state if they happened to meet one. They want a list of characteristics—so many legs, colour of eyes, and so on—and they could then look at it and see if it fitted the description.

But for us, when we refer to the countries of Eastern Europe, or to China, and particularly to the Soviet Union, as workers' states, we are not just presenting them with a medal. We are not just giving them a grade. We're talking about their relation to the world revolution. We are saying something about the way in which the working class must fight to overthrow capitalism, and that's why for us the question of how they came to be what they are now is an essential part of our definition. The way that the Socialist Workers Party leaders, for example, talk about Cuba, is to separate the characteristics of the state as it is now; they work out what percentage is nationalized and so on, although they don't go in to any great detail even on these questions, and in addition we have seen that they very often neglect to mention evidence which does not fit in with any argument which they want to put forward. For example, they choose to guard Castro's political position. When such objections are raised, they are dismissed as irrelevant. One Pabloite spokes-

man reacted very strongly in a discussion with our National Committee when somebody said that Castro had never written any Marxist works. He said, 'you don't make a revolution with books'. As it happens, this is quite untrue, for the revolutionary movement can only develop through the building of a conscious leadership, which must be based on developing theory, on books representing the needs of the working class in its fight to overthrow capitalism.

None of this enters into the revisionists' analysis of Cuba. They look at the characteristics of this particular country and they say, 'well, if you call China a workers' state, why not Cuba?'

We look at the Chinese revolution and when we say we think China is a workers' state, we don't leave it at that. We want to say a lot more about the nature of the leadership of the Chinese revolution, the role that it plays in the world Stalinist movement, all kinds of other things about it. If comrades look at the way in which Trotsky analysed the Soviet Union as a workers' state in *The Revolution Betrayed*, they find not a single-sentence definition, but a whole page of various characteristics of the Soviet Union in its history, in its development. Perhaps, he concludes, people will say this isn't much good as a definition. To these people he ironically apologises but insists that this is the description of the actual process.

I think that the method of empiricism, which other comrades have talked about, leads to this way of looking at things, which separates the theory and the principles of the movement from the real struggle to develop the overthrow of capitalism and to develop the power of the working class. It puts these as two quite separate things and in fact, in doing so, completely emasculates the whole of Marxism. What this leads to is simply an adaptation to the existing leaderships of the labour movement: those leaderships which have held back the working class and which are in fact responsible for the continued existence of capitalism, of imperialism, and all that that involves for the conditions of the working class today.

Unless you develop Marxism in

this way, in a theoretical and practical way, in continuing the fight against revisionism, you will mentally adapt yourself to these other tendencies in the movement. You can't do anything else because you are left with acceptance of 'the fact', that is to say, the domination of those who are in control at the particular time.

We do not look at the fight in this way. For us it is a fight for leadership: a struggle against revisionist tendencies is essential to the whole meaning of Marxism. One leading I.S. member addressed our National Committee for almost an hour on 'entry' into Social-Democratic parties without once mentioning the fight against the bureaucracy in those movements. Instead, the perspective was to sit inside these movements and wait for things to develop, for something to turn up. He had a systematic theory of how the working class was going to go through various grades from right-wing to left centrism, and at each stage the Marxist must find out what grade had been reached, and deduce what he ought to be doing and to be saying at that particular moment. In our opinion, this adaptation to the bureaucracy results from the failure to develop Marxist theory and to fight for the leadership of the working class, to see theory as being part of that fight for leadership, the key to that fight for leadership.

ROBERT BLACK: I would like to say a few words on the nature of revisionism, what in fact the SWP and the Pabloites are revising. All the disputes in the international labour movement have not been so much about how capitalism can be overthrown, as who is going to do it, because the class which is going to do it determines the nature of the struggle. The dispute with the Second International was over the nature of the overthrow of imperialism. The Kautskyites put forward the theory that in fact it needn't be overthrown at all because the imperialists, by rationalising the capitalist production system would in fact remove its contradictions and leave the working class the beneficiaries of imperialism. Well, this theory was rapidly knocked on the head by the First World War.

But this theory, like all others, did not automatically disintegrate; although Lenin's theory on the need for a Bolshevik party was correct historically, it was only accepted by a tiny fraction of the proletariat in the first two or three years of the war. Kautsky's theories were accepted by the majority of the Social-Democratic members and functionaries and continue to maintain a grip on the working class to this day. Theories do not disintegrate on their own, mechanically, but only in struggle. This was proved by the degeneration of Stalinism, for the simple reason that the ability of the leadership to develop the theories disintegrated and the movement collapsed with it.

On the dispute within the Third International, once again it was on who was going to carry through the world revolution. Stalin said 'leave it to me'. We know the results. The basic nature of the dispute in the '20s and '30s was over socialism in one country. Could state power be maintained and socialism built in Russia alone? This is what Stalin envisaged. By the early 1950s he began to envisage communism in one country, let alone socialism. This is the theory of Stalinism, that by the growth of productive forces in one state or group of states, capitalism would disintegrate automatically. Once again this theory has been proved false by history, by experience, and once again these theories haven't collapsed by their own free will. Communist Party membership in this country at the moment is stable, and and it is stable over a large section of the advanced capitalist countries, simply because these theories aren't being defeated in struggle. They still stand because no alternative theory has been put forward in struggle. It is no good proclaiming theories in the abstract and demolishing Stalinism as we all may be able to do from this platform. We must be able to defeat them in struggle.

This leads to the position of the SWP. They too have a theory about the transition to socialism; that this is no longer the job of the proletariat as a class. It's the job of privileged bureaucrats in that class and other classes that may show revolutionary fervour at particular times in particular countries.

The dispute about what is 'a fact' is of great relevance here, because to use Hansen's terminology, it is a fact that at certain times in history, the peasantry have in fact attacked the state, or attacked certain aspects of the state and also capitalist production, certain aspects of capitalist production, the urban aspects of capitalist production, more vigorously than the proletariat. The Mexican revolution is an example, where workers' battalions were recruited to put down Zapata's peasant revolution, but this as a fact doesn't negate the fact that economically, through an economic analysis of capitalist production, the proletariat is the only class historically able to overthrow capitalism.

Now, Hansen, though he talks about the resurrection of the peasantry as a revolutionary class which is able to lead a revolution, nowhere goes back to the basic economic analysis of Marx and shows how this premise is contained in or developed from the works of Marx. He seems to tag it on as an afterthought and then makes it the centre of his whole orientation towards the world movement. Now if we go back to the works of Marx, nowhere can we find any justification or support for the view that the peasantry can have an independent existence as a revolutionary class. In fact, Marx shows quite clearly in his attack upon the ideas of Proudhon and other early socialist theorists, that the peasantry in essence must tend toward a bourgeois mode of production, because they are private accumulators of property and wish to accumulate more property. This is a tendency of the petty-bourgeoisie to wish to become big bourgeoisie; and how this class can independently turn suddenly towards socialism is something never envisaged by Marx, Lenin nor Trotsky. They all considered that the petty-bourgeoisie as a class could be won for the revolution in struggle, led by the working class, once again with the emphasis on struggle, not on abstract polemics.

The revision by Hansen and Pablo of this fundamental idea that the peasantry is not in its essence a revolutionary class leads to a revision of the whole basic tenets of Marxism,

because once you overthrow the basic economic foundation of Marxism, the fundamental confrontation of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, you must therefore overthrow all the concepts which flow from this original proposition. If, in fact the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are not antagonistic classes in a historical sense, therefore, the state is not a weapon of oppression of the ruling class; this might explain the SWP's call to Kennedy to intervene in the Negro struggle in the South. It also leads to the SWP's position on Algeria, where they are satisfied to publish uncritically Ben Bella's statements on workers' control.

The Pabloites in Britain have recently published Ben Bella on workers' control. It is full of fine-sounding phrases on what the workers can do in each enterprise, but it finally ends up by saying that a certain man sent along from the state, undefined, will have authority over the workers' actions. And this is supposed to be a Marxist organisation, publishing this sort of material uncritically, without any attempt to analyse what is the state in Algeria, what are its historic and class origins. These origins are essentially bourgeois. It was a French state, a French-owned state, and the state machine is in no way being destroyed. It is being supplemented by petty-bourgeois elements in the indigenous population. This is the character of the Algerian state, and this is the state that is going to supervise 'workers' control' in the Algerian factories and other enterprises.

From the rejection of the proletariat as a revolutionary class there follows the denial of the need for a revolutionary party, and this is the logical conclusion, the end-product of the revision of the Pabloites. Having denied silently the economic analysis of capitalism carried out by Marx, they must conclude by rejecting the process and the instrument by which capitalism is to be overthrown. Their acceptance of 'facts' is a freezing of the historical process. They look around them and think, these are the facts, the things that confront my senses at this moment, and think this is reality, therefore, we have to do something

about it.

Marx in *The German Ideology* said that the laws of capitalism can be deduced empirically, but it's one thing to deduce the laws of capitalism empirically from observation and analysis of phenomena. It is another thing to freeze those facts and to say that they cannot change. That is empiricism. Marx collected data empirically. But collecting empirical data is not empiricism. Empiricism is a philosophic method that accepts facts as they are, as being immutable and unchanging, and this, of course, is a completely non-materialist conception of history. It is mechanistic, and therefore it rules out completely the role of human consciousness in the process, because if things are what they are, then we can't intervene and must adapt ourselves to it. The party as the highest expression of human consciousness is rejected completely. Therefore, on the basis of Pablo's conceptions, he should wind up his press, his centre and everything, and just retire into oblivion and watch the historical process take over.

TOM KEMP: I think it is evident that when Marxists discuss differences which arise politically in the movement, they should try to seek the social basis for these tendencies and differences. Why do they arise? After all, any political party or tendency is the expression of particular class forces, and the type of organisation, the type of programme which the party or tendency has is designed to enable that class, or section of a class to carry out particular tasks. There are parties which represent the working class in capitalist society, which have no intention, whose leaders have no intention, of changing the social order, of overthrowing the capitalist state, and parties of that kind can, of course, have an organisation which is based upon parliamentary methods, winning parliamentary elections, etc.

Parties which have a democratic centralist organisation, parties of the Bolshevik type, don't grow up accidentally. They grow up to carry out certain tasks which history presents to the working class in capitalist society. That form of organisation is reetermined by the end to over-

throw the capitalist state, to carry out a revolution. Lenin's quarrel with the Mensheviks was a very deep-going quarrel, because this question of party membership and party organisation was inseparably linked with the perspective which the people who put forward the views about alternative organisation had, of the coming revolution in Russia. The Mensheviks could exist with the loose type of organisation they proposed, because they envisaged a more or less protracted period after the overthrow of Tzarism in which capitalism and bourgeois democracy would exist in Russia, in other words, their organisation was determined by their belief that the coming revolution was to be a bourgeois-democratic revolution led by the bourgeoisie. And Lenin fought for the Bolshevik Party, with its method of organisation and discipline, because he foresaw that this revolution was bound to pose the question of workers' power to the working class.

Remember, however, that he didn't see this task as clearly in the years of the growth of the Bolshevik Party as it was to appear to him in 1917, in fact there is the question that one of the people attacked by Lenin in the years before 1914, was Trotsky, who at that period was putting forward in many ways a more correct prognosis for the historical course of development in Russia. That was the basis, of course, upon which Trotsky joined the Bolshevik Party, where he saw in 1917 that his prognosis of the Russian revolution, which differed fundamentally from the Menshevik one, led necessarily to the adoption of the Bolshevik method of organisation. His conversion, then, was an entirely understandable one, an historically necessary one, and didn't represent any sort of psychological kink of Trotsky's, as the enemies of Trotskyism put forward.

So, when the Socialist Workers Party not only refuses to consider this historical tradition, when it fears even an investigation of its own immediate past, it is clear that it is seeing the task of the working-class movement, the task of its own organisation in a new light. If it abandons the conception of building the revolutionary party, if it seeks alliances with all sorts of other

trends, then it must be seeing the revolution in a different way, or it must be abandoning the idea of the necessity of a proletarian revolution altogether. Maybe it hasn't openly come out along these lines, but that is the tendency which necessarily follows from the abandonment of the task of building a revolutionary party on a world scale.

This in effect is what the Pabloites have already done. Their tactic of 'deep entrism' means virtually that they abandon any possibility of carrying out the overthrow of capitalism in the coming period, or the coming decade, that if capitalism is overthrown, it will be, as they believe, through the existing leadership of the working-class movements, and it will be a long time, decades or even centuries, before any possibility of a healthy workers' state can arise after this revolution comes into being.

These are some of the revisions, then, which are bound up with the evasion of a historical discussion, an evasion of any real theoretical discussion by the Pabloites and by the Socialist Workers Party.

Finally, on the question of the character of the workers' state. The comrade who spoke earlier dealt very well with this point, but when one reads the press of the Socialist Workers Party and the Pabloites now, one is expecting to hear almost week to week that some other states have been elevated to the rank of workers' states. It certainly seemed for a period a few months ago that it could only be a question of time before the Algerian Republic reached this elevated rank, and there has been a moving towards it and moving away from this conclusion on a purely pragmatic basis, according to what Ben Bella has done or said in the previous week or two, in the pages of *The Militant*. But if Cuba is accepted as a workers' state on the lines laid down in the documents of the Socialist Workers Party, it will only be a matter of time before the necessary attributes of this state can be assembled for Algeria, and if Algeria, why not go off to some other parts of the world and see if some of the attributes aren't being assembled there too? There is Sekou Touré's Guinea, which the Pabloites a couple of years ago virtually did promote to the rank of

a workers' state for a very brief period. There is Egypt. There is Burma, where only recently the National Revolutionary Council laid down a programme called Burma's Way to Socialism as the policy of the Burmese government. It has in recent months nationalized, or is proposing to nationalize, a number of capitalist enterprises, American and British owned, in Burma—oil wells, banks and other enterprises. They have already been nationalized, or are going to be nationalized. You have a government which says it's going to work to create a socialist Burma. You have a 'socialist' programme adopted by this government, so here are many of the kind of things which the Socialist Workers Party sees in Cuba as constituting a workers' state, already present in Burma. Perhaps when they learn about this, they'll begin investigating the Burmese question. In fact, if Burma had been an island 80 miles off the American coast, instead of being in S.E. Asia, it probably already would have been promoted to this rank.

MICHAEL WOOD: At a time when imperialism is suffering from a deep-rooted crisis and there is a resurgence of working-class struggle throughout Europe, the struggle against revisionism in the Trotskyist movement and for revolutionary Marxism must become the slogan of the day. It is precisely at this period that the role of revisionism presents the greatest danger to the working class and its eradication from the international movement becomes all the more necessary.

I think that one of the most important things that has emerged from this struggle is the exposure of the empiricist method adopted by the Pabloites and SWP revisionists, and the abandonment of dialectical materialism. This method is illustrated really by the 1961 Political Resolution of the SWP where a number of facts, or what they call main determinants, are listed very much in the style of Pablo, like, for example, the Colonial Revolution, de-Stalinisation, the growing strength of the workers' states, and so on. In place of any serious analysis of the economic and class contradictions

of these processes, or any attempt really to relate them to one another in a scientific way, facts are simply added together impressionistically, so that the SWP gets a boost from the feeling that things are going their way.

Again the Algerian and Cuban revolutions are seen as simply static, unchangeable facts, rather than phases in a unified but contradictory process. Facts like these are nowhere analysed in the light of objective requirements of imperialism in this epoch, which is the only way in which things like Algeria can be understood. With this sort of approach, the SWP leadership altogether loses sight of the role of human consciousness in the class struggle, and the relationship between theory and practice. Objective situations, and the 1961 resolution was a good example of this, are reflected simply passively in their writings, and really only commented upon. Nowhere are they appraised from the point of view of the concrete political tasks that the SWP should have been prepared to undertake in the coming period. It is in this way, as always, that the Marxist movement is reduced to inactivity, by the impressionistic and uncritical assumption that what have always been considered basically reformist elements in the labour movement, can play a revolutionary role under the impact of these so-called irreversible trends.

The same empiricist method has appeared to inspire the SWP in its dealings with the Pabloites. Ever since 1953 they have been content to characterise these particular revisionists by reference only to surface phenomena and impressions. Apart from the bureaucratic organisational measures characteristic of Pabloism, Pabloism is regarded by the SWP simply as a political programme which can contain good or bad elements, and if sufficient agreement apparently is reached on the programmatic points, unity is assured with them. No questions of political method, or of the social and historical roots of revisionism, are raised at all in these circles. No attempt is made in the way of discussing past history, past experiences, to maintain any kind of historical and theoretical continuity in the

movement.

I think we should remember that Edward Bernstein, the most thorough-going revisionist, applied precisely the same method to political events that Hansen is applying now. He discovered one morning a number of facts which appeared on the face of it to falsify some of Marx's predictions about capitalism. Isolated and disconnected as they were, these facts—that the proletariat was not getting poorer and that it was not being driven to revolt, and that capitalism was not slowly approaching the abyss of its downfall—were all good reasons for Bernstein for jettisoning the dialectical method and confining the Social-Democratic party to campaigning for reforms within capitalism. But Bernstein failed altogether to look at these facts he collected in their concrete relationship with capitalism as a whole. He made no sort of analysis of this kind. Thus we see that the empiricism into which Hansen has descended has quite a long history.

As opposed to the empiricist method of Bernstein and Hansen, the dialectical method insists that facts of this kind must be considered as moments in a whole unified process, developing in a contradictory way, that is through class and economic contradictions. They have to be analysed seriously by the revolutionary movement.

Further, a dialectical dynamic interaction has to be established between the Marxist vanguard and this reality, including the working-class movement. Theory has to be applied constantly as a guide to action, not for the purpose of simply commenting on reality and explaining it, but as a method of seeking all the time concrete tasks for the movement. The Marxist vanguard constantly has to test and enrich its theory for this purpose again and again, through practical, revolutionary struggle. This is something of which the SWP leadership can no longer be considered capable, in my opinion.

JOHN WILTON: I would like to say a few words on the question of empiricist method which has been raised in the whole of this discussion, and which stems in fact from

Hansen's open avowal that he is an empiricist, justified by his claim that empiricism as a philosophical method leads directly to dialectics. I think here we have a case where we can see the total theoretical bankruptcy and capitulation to idealist philosophy of the revisionists. This is shown by their claim that empiricism leads to dialectics: in this they in fact completely divorce the question of philosophical method, and in this case empiricism, from the whole historical social development, through class struggle, of human history. And I think it is important to see this, that empiricism in fact does not just drop from the skies on to the head of Thomas Hobbes, dropped by some philosophical pigeon, but in fact developed with the emergence of the capitalist class empirically, bit by bit as it were, from within feudal society. It is no accident that particular philosophical methods grow with the development of particular classes.

To give an example from the history of this time, the English Civil War: nobody got up like Lenin did and said after October, 'Now we are going to build a socialist society'. Cromwell never got up and said, 'We are going to construct capitalism.' If he had done he would not have been an empiricist. But Cromwell was a typical empiricist. He was blown hither and thither, sometimes further than he intended to go in the first place.

Now, if we take the method itself, Hansen claims this leads to dialectics, quite ignoring, of course, the development of Hegel's philosophy for a start. I think we must examine what we mean by empiricism.

We have seen this method in relation to our political work, but Hansen talks about it as a general method at the beginning of one of his contributions. I think one of the best analogies I can think of for empiricism, which is looking at things as bits, separate factors, as things, not in interconnection, part of a developing process. You separate our facts and you contemplate them, you sit back and you look at them, and say, 'Aren't they pretty,' or 'Aren't they nasty,' as the case may be.

The usual empiricist procedure is to look at the world and divide it up

into separate 'facts', rather like cutting up a cake into separate slices. And when we have examined each slice very thoroughly to see what it is like, then we try putting the cake together again to get an idea of what the world as a whole is like. But if anybody ever tries cutting up a cake and then putting the slices back in again, he will find a hole left in the middle, and this in fact is what happens with empiricism. You get a hole left in the middle, and into that hole you can stick anything—you can stick 'the weltanschauung', you can stick 'the life force', you can stick Jesus Christ, according to taste.

In fact, it leads directly to mysticism, and religion, and philosophical idealism under whatever badge the investigator happens to fancy at the time. We can see this with our revisionists here, when they make great stress on so-called trends, and currents. It is no accident that these people use terminology directly derived from the weather, which is a thing they cannot control. Nobody controls the weather. They are blown hither and thither by winds and currents, until they form a school of sort of 'Meteorological Marxism', which has no relation with materialism whatsoever.

An alternative procedure for the empiricist is to take all the separate parts, or a few of them, and construct a working model. These models or definitions are like geometrical theorems. Hansen, for example, arrives at what he calls economic criteria for the model definition of a workers' state, and proceeds to go on a world tour, fitting this model on to the various

states. It a bit sticks out here, you either ignore it, or you try and push it into place, or you wait for it to go away.

This is what he does for Cuba. Now the interesting thing about this is that in the documents, particularly when discussing the French comrades' analysis of the Cuban regime as a workers' and peasants' government, he attempts to project back this argument and see it as a revision of the International's definition of the states of Eastern Europe and China in 1948. It might seem at first sight, just looking at the documents, that there was something in this; that, in fact, if you were going to say that Eastern Europe is a deformed workers' state, or Hungary, or Poland, according to certain criteria, like nationalization, monopoly of foreign trade, and so forth, you have got to apply the same criteria to Cuba. But this is a typical example of the empiricist method, because it takes criteria based on one situation and circumstance, and then automatically takes this working model and sticks it on to other states, quite apart from the historical development of the regimes in Eastern Europe, where you had a bureaucratic establishment of deformed workers' states, but where the bureaucratic establishment was in fact led by parties, the Communist parties in those countries, which had a base in the working class, however deformed their theory was, and where the whole development was part of the position of the Soviet bureaucracy under the pressure of world imperialism in the development of the world war.

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The contradictions of British capitalism

by Tom Kemp



THE prolonged upsurge in the capitalist world economy over the past 15 years has seen no basic alteration in the structure of British capitalism. In fact, because a number of the major capitalist countries have been modernising their industrial apparatus and growing rapidly, the comparative prosperity of these years has concealed a continued relative deterioration in Britain's world economic position.

Most of the problems of British capitalism today arise from, or are connected with, the underlying structural weakness and inflexibility of an outmoded economy. These showed themselves in the period between the wars in excess capacity, the decline of staple industries, loss of markets, industrial stagnation, a weakening of the international position of the pound and mass unemployment. The fact that these symptoms largely disappeared in the years after 1945 indicated no solution to the problems which had produced them. Instead these problems now showed themselves in different ways, or were completely hidden for the time being by the favourable world conditions which restored profitability and did therefore make possible a higher

rate of investment and growth than before the war. However, despite the much-vaunted acceptance by the state of responsibility for directing the economy as a whole, policy-makers have been unable or unwilling, even under these comparatively favourable conditions, to carry out the major changes and adjustments which alone could have enabled British capitalism to improve its competitive position in the capitalist world market. Rather has it continued to lose ground to more rapidly growing and dynamic rivals; advantages retained from its one-time monopolistic position in the world economy and imperialist stranglehold on underdeveloped areas have been whittled away. Consequently, now that the world boom of capitalism seems definitely to be coming to an end, the room for manoeuvre which these initial advantages offered, while still not gone completely, has considerably narrowed down. In its new period of decline, still relative, but likely to become absolute, the employing class has no alternative to a more determined effort to increase the exploitation of the workers in Britain and in those other parts of the world—whether or not nominally independent—which fall within the circuit of exchange of British capitalism.

The end of the boom

The great investment boom of the fifties, which took off from, and is still partly sustained by, the high level of arms production made necessary by the Cold War, is now coming to an end. Repeated recessions and growing unemployment have long made this evident in North America. The signs in Europe now point the same way: towards declining investment opportunities, a lower rate of profit and consequently a slowing down in growth in production and trade.¹ The time may now be at hand when the economic cycle on both sides of the Atlantic will again be synchronised.

The building up of new means of production, for which there was greater scope in Europe (and Japan) owing to war destruction, the general technological lag and the abundance of labour power, fed the boom, which could thus go on for a decade or two without a problem of markets appearing. But the essential conditions for the continuance of this expansion have been undermined as a result of its own progress. The making good of war damage, the modernisation of the infra-structure as well as of industrial equipment, and the building up of industrial capacity are no longer likely to make such huge demands on the output of the investment goods industries (Dept. I in the Marxist terminology). The possibilities of exploiting the new post-war technologies are reaching their end. The reserves of

1. As A. R. Conant puts it, 'evidence suggests that for the first time since the war the productive capacity of industrial countries may now exceed current and prospective demand: should this prove generally true, it would involve a check to the pace of expansion and perhaps eventually lead to depression'. *Westminster Bank Review*, Feb. 1963. The old voices of the fifties, proclaiming the indefinite extension of the boom, have been stilled for some years.

labour-power are no longer available and will have to be created artificially. At the same time as investment flags and costs rise the output which is seeking a market continues to expand. The stimulus given to Western Europe by the wider market of EEC is now tapering off. On the world market the fall in primary product prices relative to those of industrial goods begins to have serious consequences which are only held in check by draughts of American economic and military 'aid' to the underdeveloped countries. Industrial enterprises throughout the capitalist world now face a struggle for turnover more intense than at any time since the war. At the same time, the profitability of new investment tends to decline.

Capitalism is thus facing an inevitable pincers movement—from the side of markets and the side of profits—which arises from its own contradictions. The signs point, therefore, to a slowing down, and probably a reversal, of the expansionary trends of the recent past. The old problems will re-assert themselves and, in the new process of struggle, weaknesses will be exposed. The years ahead are likely to see, in Europe as well as in the United States, sharper and more frequent recessions which may turn into severe slumps heralded by Stock Exchange collapses. It will be a testing time for economic policy, but it is also likely to impose the need for inroads to be made into the concessions which the working class has won during the boom and for the gearing of its organisations into the machinery of the capitalist state. The understanding of the probable new turns in economic development is therefore directly relevant to the tasks of working-class leadership, baring the inadequacies and treachery of the old leaderships and revealing the need for Marxist organisation.

Britain's peculiarities

Not only can British capitalism not escape the full effect of the new trends, but it also has to face the long-standing problems inherited from the past. Its situation through 1962 and 1963, despite the prevailing high level of unemployment for the post-war period, was not yet characterised by general overproduction and trade depression, nor, indeed, by a recession analogous to that of 1957-58, though some of the symptoms may be similar. The most evident strains reflect a long drawn out crisis of inadaptability in the face of rapid technological change, and a deterioration in Britain's world economic position, which falls with special weight on the older, now declining industries and areas.

The effect so far on other industries is mild and indirect; indeed, they still continue to expand and to experience conditions of relative prosperity. Until the international conditions ripen for a conjunctural crisis the palliatives so far applied by the Tory government could yield some results. On a world scale the expansion has so far not ended, it has merely been checked. It is this continued expansion which enables exports to grow and prevents severe pressure building up against sterling. But it also heightens the contrast between Britain's merely nominal economic growth and general malaise and her rivals, who have behind them a number of years of rapid growth and increasing

competitive potential. If even in time of expansion the British economy stagnates, what will be its fate if a general crisis of over-production should occur?

A distinction thus has to be drawn between this latter type of crisis, the conditions for which seem to have been prepared in the capitalist world economy as a whole, and the peculiar problems of the British case. These can be summed up in the unfavourable comparison between the growth of industrial production and productivity in Britain and that in her main rivals, and in her declining share in world trade in manufactures.² Failure to modernise the industrial structure and to invest adequately in the 'growth' industries associated with modern technology; failure to build up the foreign

2. See the two articles on Imperialism in *LABOUR REVIEW*, Vol. 7, No. 2; also 'The Course of Capitalist Development' in *LABOUR REVIEW*, Vol. 6, No. 2.

exchange reserves to a 'safe' level consonant with the maintenance of sterling's role in world finance, and thus recurrent balance of payments crisis; the anxiety of ruling circles at the apparent success of the Common Market and the belated and panic-stricken attempt to enter—these are major symptoms of the underlying problems which are in the forefront of public discussion. But, if a distinction must be made between the classic 'crisis' and the special problems of Britain, they, too, arise from general characteristics of the capitalist mode of production as they have worked themselves out in particular geographical and historical conditions. In contrast to those who build their analysis exclusively on the recently-acquired characteristics of capitalism, it is necessary to look at the essential and enduring features of its mechanism without which the so-called 'changes' or 'mutations' cannot be understood.

How capitalism works

Capitalism lives by exploiting the working class. By its ownership of the means of production the capitalist ruling class is able, collectively, to extract a surplus from living labour power. Capitalism expands and develops as long as it is able to go on finding markets for the realisation of this surplus. That markets imply the existence of means of money payment is obvious. Capitalism produces commodities for sale in the market. Unless this can be done at a profit capitalism loses not only its motive for production, but also its motive for expansion. Expansion means accumulation; that is, the use of part of the surplus value for the building up of more means of production, or, to put it another way, the transformation of the living labour, represented in the surplus, into 'congealed labour power', or means of production. If accumulation is made possible by the extraction of surplus value, profits, it requires the expectation of an adequate return, or rate of profit, to result in this accumulation actually taking the form of addition to means of production, or investment. Strictly, therefore, because of the possibility that some part of the accumulation may go into money hoards which no longer participate actively in the extraction of the surplus, it does not necessarily imply expansion. Clearly, however, under capitalism there is no growth without accumulation, no accumulation unless surplus value is both extracted and realised.

The result of accumulation expands the real form and the actual stock of 'capital' in existence. The technological conditions of production—mechanisation, increase in scale—and of the market—competition, drive to lower costs and raise profits—tend to result in a more rapid growth in the proportionate

value of constant capital to variable capital. As the surplus is extracted only from living labour power which figures as variable capital, the rate of profit thus tends to fall as the organic composition of capital rises.

The *tendency* for the rate of profit to fall, which is expounded in the third volume of *Capital*, is inseparable from the operation of capitalism, even though, in practice, it is only on certain occasions that it manifests itself in an actual fall. It is through this tendency, and its counteracting forces, that we are taken by Marx to the heart of the dynamic of capitalism. But for this very reason, the whole process is of the most complex kind which permits of infinite variation in its practical working out. As a *tendency*, however, it is continually present in capitalist economy though frequently it is successfully counter-acted by forces which act in the contrary direction. But these forces, however powerful they may on occasion be, are a response to the continuous pressure bearing down on the profit rate which capitalists experience and they do not themselves give rise to laws. What they do, then, is to keep the way open for continued accumulation and investment. When they flag, and they are by nature temporary or impermanent, so the outlets and incentives for additional investment are closed down.

Since capitalism is based on profit, the rate of profit governs investment decisions. High and rising profits will encourage expansion through the additions made to investment and thus to production and, through qualitative improvements in techniques, have a still further effect in raising the productivity of human labour. When profitability falls so does

new investment, and with it the rate of growth in the economy; production and productivity grow more slowly or may even fall. The secret of sustained growth under capitalism is normally a continued high rate of investment which will only be maintained as long as profit rates are considered, by capitalist investors, to give them a sufficient rate of return, when risk and other factors are taken into consideration. Moreover, while expansion creates the capital available for new investment, this new investment, so far as it raises the organic composition of capital—and even assuming that markets are found for the increased output—tends to bear down on the profit rate. On the other hand, although stagnation and decline are accompanied by the absence of new capital formation, and may even see the destruction of existing capital stocks, they may open the way for renewed expansion based upon anticipated increase in the profit rate.

It will be seen, therefore, that it is in the nature of capitalism to grow unevenly. This is true over time: periods of high investment bring about an inevitable reversal by squeezing profit rates; periods of slow capital formation, or actual destruction of capital, through slump, war or even natural disaster, may prepare the way for a new spurt forward. It is also true as between different sectors within a national economy and between different parts of the world economy. Account can thus be taken of the unevenness of growth characteristic of capitalism including the co-existence of declining and expanding industries and the different rates of growth displayed, over the same period, by different capitalist countries.

It is necessary to add to this that while surplus value is only created in the 'productive' sectors of the economy, it is divided up between different sections of the capitalist class—some of whom appear as money capitalists (bankers, financiers, stock brokers), some as occupied in realising surplus value (trade, administration, advertising), some in maintaining the general political and ideological conditions for preserving this mode of production (state apparatus, legal system, education) and others in a purely parasitic role. For a given capitalist class as a whole, some part of the total surplus value of which it disposes will be derived from the exploitation of productive workers in their own country, some from the exploitation of workers and peasants in other countries (whether or not politically independent). The existence of the latter circumstance, known to Marxists as 'imperialism', has fundamental importance for the understanding of capitalism in the 20th century since it has provided one of the necessary conditions for the continued expansion of capitalism and for the counteracting of the tendency for the rate of profit

to fall.³ Capitalists in the epoch of imperialism have the choice of investing at home or in other developed or underdeveloped countries where the rate of profit may be higher. Subject to the national state rivalries which flow from the historical development of the bourgeoisie and find expression in tariffs, colonies, restrictions on trade and investment, special privileges, concessions, etc., favouring particular national groups and interests, capitalism is a world system. The different component states are related to this through history and their economies are shaped by the relationship which has thus developed with the world market.

The structure of British capitalism has been shaped by its head start in industrialisation and the powerful position in world trade and finance, coupled with vast imperialist possessions, built up during the 19th century. Despite the pressures of the present century these circumstances still show themselves in the deep involvement of the City of London with the financial activities of the whole capitalist world market, the continued role of Britain as an overseas lender with big accumulations in other countries, and the semi-privileged position or favoured connections in many traditional markets.⁴

3. There is plenty of evidence of Britain's technical weaknesses and the failure of the pattern of her exports to adapt itself rapidly enough to the changes in world market demand. Carter and Williams, for example, in *Industry and Technical Progress* report that many firms shocked them by their 'ignorant complacency' towards technical progress, others were ill-placed to command the resources (and in part the human ability) necessary to begin that progress'. C. Freeman has spotlighted the smallness of British business outlays on scientific and technical research compared with those common in the U.S.A., in *Economic Review*, May 1962. T. Barna has shown in a number of studies how British exports are much less in line with changing trends in world demand than those of her industrial rivals—one of his articles demonstrating this appeared in *The Times* on the 1963 Budget day. Every bourgeois publicist and businessman knows what the problems are. Even Macmillan knows what they are and has proclaimed that the Tories, if returned to office, will 'help the nation to adapt itself to the continuous changes of the modern world, in fact to modernise Britain' (interview in *The Director*, May 1963), although they have conspicuously failed to do this after 12 years in office. The real barrier to economic growth and technical advance is capital itself which, in Britain, for historical reasons, does not permit that development of the productive forces which, under different conditions, capitalism in other countries (France, Germany, Italy and Japan) is still capable of.

4. As the Bank of England put it, sterling 'retains the lead as an international business currency and is still equipped with a more extensive network of banking establishments and connections than any other currency'. Evidence to Radcliffe Committee.

British capitalists depend in part, or a section of them depend, upon the continuance of these historically-derived advantages of British finance capital. Part of their earnings comes from capital invested overseas, or from activities in world trade

and finance which represent a return on investment involved with the circulation of capital or its realisation rather than on the ownership of directly productive industry.⁵

British capitalism and the world market

These special features of British capitalism have a bearing both on its strength and its weakness at the present time, but they also contribute their share to the contradictions with which it is beset. Despite the heavy financial costs of the Second World War and the subsequent loss of direct political control of imperial possessions, Britain still retains immense assets from the past. Applying what was learned in the 19th century at home the British ruling class has pursued in the former Empire a policy of tactical withdrawal from untenable positions, while retaining as far as possible the more tangible material advantages bound up with investment and trade. The unrivalled facilities and world-wide connections and experience of the City of London have made it possible to retain for itself, and for sterling, a considerable role in world finance and, for the institutions which compose it, one which is lucratively rewarded. It is true that the position cannot be compared with that of pre-1914 and it is now constantly under challenge from European centres as well as New York. However, there can be no doubt, the financial position of Britain in the world economy stands far higher than its position as an industrial exporter. Some critics have pointed to this discrepancy in no uncertain manner.⁶ If there is a conflict between these two aspects of British capitalism seen from outside, the divergent interests of the world of finance—deeply involved in international deals—and that of the world of

industry are equally manifest. No doubt their representatives, as two sections of a single class between whom innumerable ties of personal interest and intimacy run, have basically similar needs. On matters of policy, however, the present delicate position of the pound means that a dilemma exists which gives rise to incipient tension between these two great parts of the capitalist class. For that part which can roughly be designated as the City the axis of policy must be the preservation of sterling as a sound currency: that means a watchful eye on the reserves and the use of deflationary monetary instruments whenever they seem to be in jeopardy. What jeopardises them is anything which tends to cause a deficit in the balance of payments sufficient to provoke an accelerated loss through the withdrawal of foreign funds from London. Care for the pound has been the root cause of the stop-go policy in which the government has alternately increased Bank Rate, and taken other measures, to check the drain on the reserves and then done the reverse to re-animate the internal economy, withering from an excessive dose of deflation.

The vagaries of credit policy, based on financial considerations and devised in the interests of the City of London, have done a good deal to slow down industrial expansion in Britain over the past decade. Not only have the repeated periods of credit squeeze discouraged much industrial investment which might otherwise have taken place, not only has there been uncertainty arising from these switches in policy, but the investment put in hand, sometimes with state support, during the periods of credit relaxation has embodied some major misjudgements.⁷ To safeguard the export trade the

5. One study puts 'the present value of private investment overseas' at £7,000 million as against £4,000 million in 1939. But this makes no allowance for increase in the value of pre-war investments. Such figures invariably understate the full value of such investments; a figure of £10,000 million is likely to be nearer the truth as the approximate value of British-owned assets overseas. Against this must be set government short-term indebtedness (mostly to U.S.A.), short-term liabilities to foreigners (say, £1,000 mn.) and foreign (mostly American) capital in Britain of some £2,000 mn.

6. Thus the American Professor Kindelberger ends an article which deals with Britain's position in foreign trade with the words, 'a country which has lost its capacity for technical change cannot have its currency serve as an international unit of account in a world of technical change'. *Lloyds Bank Review*, July 1962, p. 28.

7. A classic case is the steel industry which early in 1963 was working at only 70 per cent capacity, largely because of the big expansion which took place with state support in 1960-61. This was at a time when politicians, like 'economists', were looking around for something to 'expand', perhaps with the hope of catching up continental rivals. There then took place 'a wide array of misjudgments of specific demands: how much steel would be needed, for example, for ship-building, structural steelwork, the oil industry at home and still more abroad, tinsplate containers for food packing, coalmining and railways. The competition of plastics, aluminium and ferro-concrete was underestimated', D. Burn, *Lloyds Bank Review*, April 1963,

home market has been restrained: but the result has been adverse for total output, for unit costs and for competitiveness in the world market.

Down to the middle of 1962 the economic policy of the Tory government, responding to pressures from the City of London, had accepted that a too rapid internal expansion, by causing imports to rise ahead of exports, was the main danger against which to safeguard. It received its final form in the 1962 Budget of Selwyn Lloyd, only to be followed within a few months by a 'new course' in economic policy. The whole previous year had been dominated by discussion of the Common Market, following the government's decision to apply for entry. The rapid

growth of the member countries had, indeed, created a situation of growing prospective difficulty for British industry. The rapid growth of Europe meant that its rivals were equipped with a growing proportion of the most modern, cost-reducing plant and machinery. The slower investment rate in Britain—taking the average of industry as a whole—placed her industry at a disadvantage in the increasingly competitive markets of the world. It was hoped, then, by getting inside the Common Market, both to link the economy to a rapidly growing group of countries and to prevent the damage to trade likely to result from tariff discrimination.

A 'new course' in economic policy?

As a preparation for entry, and to cope with increasing economic problems at home, the government embarked on a new policy of gearing up the economy for faster growth through the National Economic Development Council and the National Incomes Commission. Just as significant, however, was the jettisoning of the Selwyn Lloyd policy and the adoption of a more 'expansionist' programme. Taken together these moves can be seen as representing a new alignment of forces within the ruling class, with greater representation for the interests of industry, as against the City, and a more concerted attempt to restore and increase the profitability of industry and enable it to catch up with its foreign rivals. This tendency towards 'expansionism' was rendered increasingly necessary, in any case, by the sharp worsening of the industrial situation which took place in the autumn of 1962. Before long Lord Hailsham announced that the era of automatic 'full employment' had come to an end. In his Budget speech Maudling proclaimed that there was no contradiction between an expansion of the home market and the increase of exports. The decision, through tax concessions and increased expenditure, to pump an extra £250 million into the economy drove home the point. What the effect will be remains to be seen. The trends in world trade make it likely that real pressure against sterling will not build up until 1964, while the improvement in business likely to follow the Budget measures will provide the Tories with a 'prosperous' background for the general election.

By the time that the Budget for 1963 had come round Britain's bid to enter the Common Market

p. 6. The general moral of this article, whose author is a one-time *Times* leader-writer and now adviser to the AEI electrical combine, is that there has been inadequate concern with the pattern and quality of investment.

had been rejected, but it is unlikely that this has yet made any fundamental difference to internal economic policy. It does make it more imperative to increase the efficiency and profitability of industry in preparation for intensified foreign trade competition. An indispensable part of this process, recognised and accepted by worthy Fabians and 'responsible' trade union leaders, is the reduction of the share of wages in the national income.⁸ For the government decisions bearing on this desired end have to be taken politically and in line with the assessment it makes of the relationship of class forces. It would be easy to rush to the conclusion that an early and frontal attack on working-class standards must be made, but a moment's pause suggests that such a move would not be intelligent or likely. Unemployment has not yet undermined the fighting capacity of the working class, which has behind it long years of steady work and regular, if not substantial, increases in money wages. It would be folly to wage big struggles against this class so long as possibilities exist of achieving the same end through less costly and dangerous means. The elaboration of such means, we may assume, has formed the substance of week-end colloquies at

8. This is one of the main practical proposals which issues from the Fabian pamphlet in the humorously named series 'Socialism for the Sixties' by J. R. Sargent, entitled *Out of Stagnation*. As he is writing a recipe for raising the rate of growth under capitalism his major concern is, very logically, how the rate of profit can be increased. In the short run, at least, that means that the share of wages in the national income must contract, with the promise that they will rise, in real terms, at some stage in the future. In other words workers are asked to create more capital for the boss in order that, whatever the real wage, he will be able to extract still more surplus value from them in the future and compete more effectively with his foreign rivals on the world market.

Chequers and of the business of Cabinet meetings and all the informal gatherings at which ruling class strategy is hammered out. As a start, no doubt, the employers and their political representatives will have made a careful assessment of the crisis of leadership in the working-class movement and have drawn the necessary conclusions.

Indeed, the absence of a serious challenge from the official leaderships of the working class is what enables British capitalism to face its contradictions without losing its traditional aplomb. The existence of a 'loyal opposition' is of inestimable value to the directing class. It means the willingness to create an atmosphere of national unity in any period of crisis. It provides an alternative programme for the solution of these contradictions with the tacit understanding that no frontal attack will be launched upon the foundations of the system. In the day-to-day running of affairs it brings in representatives of labour as trusted advisors, team-mates or loyal critics. The men of the right-wing apparatus of the Labour Party and trade unions have retained their leadership of the class precisely through their ability, over the years, to win concessions for their members. Their position, in fact, depends upon the ability of the system to yield such concessions. They draw their sustenance, and what social importance they have, from the organisations of the working class; they are of value to the ruling class only so long as they retain such support. For the labour bureaucracy control of the apparatus is not enough; they have to win the support of the working class and for that they must appear, at times in deeds, as well as in words, as its champions. They must, as far as possible, disguise their policies of class collaboration with talk of prudence, restraint and responsibility. And they must cherish the integrity of their organisations however deeply they may be drawn into practical co-operation with the state or the

employers.

Economic stability and expansion have strengthened all the traditional reformist and revisionist illusions which grew up in the period of British capitalism's imperialist prime. They have been cloaked by time-serving intellectuals in new verbal garb borrowed from the latest fashions in bourgeois sociology. A semblance of reality has been given to these claims by the ability of organised workers to win wage increases without big struggles in a period of full employment. The increased involvement of the state in the economy, the improvement of social services and the diversification of working-class consumption in line with improvements in technology have provided further arguments that capitalism has 'changed'. But these changes have not altered its basic structure or deflected its governing laws from their course. Exploitation, far from having disappeared, has become more methodical and more rational. In the centres of the newer industries the consumption of labour power exacts a ruinous toll from workers in the prime of life; no satisfaction is offered by the work itself, for which the wage provides the unique incentive. While the material gains of the working class, on the most generous assessment, have been modest indeed—partly made possible by systematic overtime and the increasing tendency for married women to work outside the home—the inequalities in income and wealth have become markedly greater in the past decade. The share of wages in the national income has remained constant. To base policy on the so-called 'changes' to the neglect of the essential nature of capitalism and the needs of the exploited class within it binds the working class to the interests of capital. The new varieties of revisionism, which provide a theoretical gloss for the pragmatic actions of the right-wing trade union and labour leaders, are by nature and purpose anti-working class.

The crisis of leadership

The conditions which gave reformism and revisionism a new lease of life in practice and produced a new crop of theories are now passing away. Indeed, those conditions, in the post-war world, were exceptional and transitory; if that is true of world capitalism, confronted by a hostile world system and faced with the loosening of its grip on the less developed countries, it is true above all of Britain. Not only does Britain manifest all the general contradictions to which capitalism is prone, but, as has been seen, it has problems of its own which arise because of the adverse changes which are taking place in its relationship to the capitalist world market. As these contradictions mature, therefore,

the objective conditions for this strengthening of reformism, and thus for the continuation of the present role of the labour bureaucracy, will disappear. In fact, there are signs that they are already doing so. The crisis of British capitalism, therefore, must penetrate into all levels of the labour movement, including the summits of the bureaucracy.

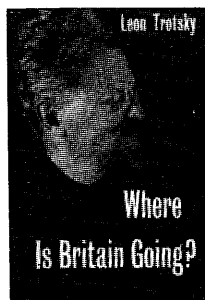
The way in which this bureaucracy is trained and recruited, the traditions and organisational functions to which it is heir, do little to make it a sensitive register of social currents. Only a few exceptional figures sense even the premonitions of impending change. Their lack of conscious theory, or even of imagination, incapacitates most of them from under-

standing that the conditions for their own dominance in the movement are being undermined.

These limitations make them all the more valuable for the ruling class which will helpfully provide the theory and strive to manipulate these leaders to accept the kind of policy which the bourgeoisie hopes will enable it to master its problems. But if the labour bureaucracy is to be manipulated to deal with the increasingly difficult problems which will arise, new policies will be required. The form of these policies is already apparent: a more formal integration of the trade unions into the institutional framework of capitalism at local and national level. This makes necessary and possible the strengthening of the powers of the trade union officials as against shop stewards and the rank and file. Only through such a streamlining of the unions, with the consent of the bureaucracy, can policies of wage restraint, rationalisation and employer-worker co-operation be put over in industry. Such a policy aims, in fact, to integrate the worker into the enterprise; but it involves, also, a selective process within the working class itself—the creation or maintenance of privileged layers while others are underpaid, undertrained and discarded as too old, unemployable or undisciplined. To meet the exigencies of competition and technological change industrial discipline needs to be placed on a new footing; to use the existing trade union apparatus is the most immediately economical method of achieving this end. Trade union leaders who are prepared to accept such policies, including the holding back of wages to benefit capital by favouring a higher rate of profit and therefore of new investment, are described as 'forward-looking'. The principles of trade unionism, that is as autonomous organisations of the working class, are meanwhile subjected to bitter attack. The meaning of the current propaganda against the trade unions is clear. It says that if the bureaucracy does not co-operate in integrating them into the institutional framework of capitalism then this will have to be

done compulsorily, by destroying their autonomy. At the end of this road, of course, lies the fascist-type corporation or labour-front.

The contradictions of capitalism do not work themselves out as an automatic, impersonal process beyond human intervention. At the centre, in any case, is the struggle of the classes, and here the role of conscious leadership can be all-important. As the conditions for the successful operation of right-wing policies are undermined, as the bureaucracy is being called upon to operate policies which are detrimental to the interests of the working class to help solve the problems of capitalism, so the opportunities for the posing of alternative policies and winning rank-and-file support become greater. Such policies must be found in the present-day needs of the working class and cannot be posed abstractly as a programme somehow to 'solve' the economic crisis of British capitalism, after the pattern of the Labour Party leaders. These needs, however, elementary as they may appear, pose fundamental questions: in short, the fitness of the capitalist class to rule. Out of the contradictions of a system which lives by the exploitation of a class comes the historical justification for this class to emancipate itself by making itself the ruling class. The problem of power is not posed continuously, far less consciously, by the class, though it is inherent in the objective situation. The factor of conscious leadership is therefore all-important in bringing to the foreground issues which can take the class, or substantial sections of it, forward to a struggle for power. Such a task involves going through a variety of experiences with the class, 'patiently explaining' every turn on the road. It means exposing the old, bureaucratic leaderships, breaking down barriers between political and trade union action, warning against centrism in its Stalinist and 'left-Labour' versions and taking every possibility of initiative which the situation presents.



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The class struggle in Britain

The following resolution, together with a resolution based on the preceding article by T. Kemp, was adopted unanimously by the Fifth Annual Conference of the Socialist Labour League, June 1963. Certain slight alterations have been made in accordance with the requirements of general publication.

CAPITAL v. LABOUR IN BRITAIN

1. The political necessities flowing from the economic problems of the British capitalists are clear. They must increase the rate of exploitation sufficiently to offset the trend of the rate of profit to fall, dominant in the past year or two. This can only be done if the organised strength of the working class in the factories is broken. This strength stands in the way of the full rationalised use of the investment in techniques now being undertaken; it obstructs the ability of capital to locate its industry wherever it finds the most easily manageable labour force; it might, if not broken now, create bonds of solidarity which prevent the capitalists from allaying their problems by moving to favoured areas either within nations or internationally.

2. In this strategy of the employers, the trade union and Labour leadership have a central role. While the resistance of the class is broken, the trade union and Labour leaders must help in the disciplining of the working class, particularly of its militant industrial wing and of the working-class youth. The struggles of our epoch raise immediately the problem of power, and so the integration of the trade unions into the state, and of the Parliamentary Labour leaders more closely into the bureaucratic and militarised state, are necessary instruments. Both must collaborate in the security preparations of the capitalist state: hence their enthusiastic support for the Radcliffe report and the witch-hunt in the ETU. The fight against the youth movement is equally a part of this struggle, as is shown by the part it plays in leading the only political fight against unemployment. This tendency for the trade union and Labour bureaucracy to serve the bourgeois state and the employers as direct agents even in a period of attacks on the workers will be a general feature of the immediate period ahead. The problems of capitalism are such that the customary type of reformist compromise of British bargaining is acknowledged to be impossible. Fabian spokesmen, and the secretary of the TUC, Woodcock, have explicitly stated that a fall in labour's share of the national income will

be necessary if the British economy is to survive and achieve the 4 per cent rate of growth asked for by NEDC. The co-operation of the TUC on this body, an example of an international trend which includes the Stalinist unions, is for the purpose of enforcing the discipline or 'co-operation' necessary for this reduction, as well as helping the state in the various ways in which it must intervene in the economy. The trade union leaders may carry out this collaboration under the cloak of a more reasonable and planned direction of social and economic policy, in the manner of all reformists, but in fact it prepares the way for brutal attacks by the employers, the encouragement of extreme right-wing tendencies, and the eventual attack on trade unionism itself. While the trade union bureaucrats get closer to the state, the capitalist class will prepare itself for strike-breaking and terrorising the working class.

It is important to encourage the most ruthless working-class opposition to the public appearance of fascist and racialist tendencies like the groups of Mosley, Jordan and Fountaine. But it would be a mistake to regard these groups as necessarily the form in which fascism will appear as a weapon of the ruling class. Within the labour movement itself, policies of class collaboration and integration into the capitalist state can develop a 'left' or 'radical' wing of the corporatist kind. Ideas of producer-consumer councils, 'abolition' of the trade unions, anti-intellectualism, and the 'dignity of manual labour', pseudo-radical opposition to parliamentarism—all these are ideas which could be used to mobilise the petty-bourgeoisie in a time of crisis. The development of resolute and firm working-class policies against the monopolies and banks is the only way in which the middle strata can be won as allies. The struggle to unite employed and unemployed, and particularly to build a trade union and political relationship between youth and the labour movement, are indispensable preparations for this political struggle.

There is no room in the present situation for left reformist movements. Tendencies within the unions and Labour Party, like Cousins and Wilson at different stages, will lean on the left sections of the movement

for their own purposes and to head off the real trend to the struggle for power. The job of Marxists is to campaign in such a way as to expose their treachery and in the process create the necessary leadership in struggle against them.

3. The proposals for 'Workers' Charters', the move by the employers to introduce rigid control in the docks, the search for agreements which result in a reduced but more docile labour force (printing, Fords, hosiery industry), are the type of mechanism by which the employers hope to operate through the union leaders to discipline the working class. In all industries, speed-up and revised piece rates are being pushed through in the knowledge that the union leadership will not fight the problem as a general one. Instead, leaders like Woodcock even dress up their betrayal by appearing 'liberal' in permitting 'local autonomy' in settling wage rates; in effect they are condoning the break-up of trade unionism to permit the employers to split up the labour market in such a way as to get the maximum advantage of the reserve army of unemployed. Even the NEDC only contemplates jobs being found for 200,000 of those out of work, and so anticipates a permanent unemployed force of at least 500,000. The bureaucratic leadership will collaborate in keeping this force separate from the organised, employed workers and at the disposal of the most mobile of big capital. The trade union leadership thus serves the monopolies both politically and economically.

4. The flaw in the employers' and labour bureaucracy's strategy lies in the very basic contradiction of capitalism as a system. The hoped-for period of growth through disciplining cannot be won without big class struggles. What the ruling classes require is a major change in the relationship of class forces in British industry: they need to undermine the expectations and destroy the methods of struggle built up on the basis of the special position held by Britain in the world economy for the last century or more. The class struggles within industry and the political struggles within the Labour Party must be seen from this standpoint. There is crisis in both these spheres because the employing class and the bureaucracy which serves it cannot act scientifically and in a planned way. Their methods of organisation, struggle and ideology are the outgrowth of a whole past phase of class relationships in Britain. They respond to the present necessities for capitalism in ways which necessarily create critical situations, giving great opportunities for the working class to act decisively. The problems of the British economy are so acute, and the relation between capital and its political agents so full of contradictions, that the problem of power is in fact continually posed, provided there can be built a leadership which consciously understands the changes in class relations and is able to advance a programme which demonstrates to the working class in struggle, the essence of this struggle for power as it arises in the fight for its immediate needs.

5. The campaign against unemployment, and the inseparable fight in the Labour Party for socialist policies and against bans and proscriptions, is the focus of this struggle. Around it are clustered the fight against redundancy and speed-up, for shorter hours and the ending of overtime working. In the course of building this movement we are building also a revolutionary internationalist movement in the youngest generation of British workers. This generation, drawn into the struggle against youth unemployment, hated and feared by the bourgeoisie for its confidence, high expectations and lack of 'discipline', already drawn into political activity by the youth movement, is the objective basis for the prospect of working-class advances in the construction of a revolutionary party related to every section of the working class. Around the campaign against unemployment, for the throwing out of the Tories, and for nationalization, will be built the basis of the new mass leadership in the trade unions, a process which will be helped by the parallel one of left developments within the Stalinist party, which is also encouraged by the campaigning of the youth.

6. The Labour 'left' and the Communist Party advance demands against unemployment which do not differ from those of the TUC and even of the government itself. This is not surprising in view of the international policies of a Stalinist rapprochement with imperialism and the record of the Labour left in face of the right-wing offensive in the Labour Party since the Scarborough conference in 1960, when their bankruptcy was finally exposed. CND has commanded the general support of those who wanted to fight against the government's war preparations, but its leadership has capitulated to opportunist politics of the 'pressure' type precisely when the class struggle indicates the orientation to a class which can in fact overthrow the government. In this way the CND leaders have taken the royal road of pacifism everywhere and at all times, i.e., a capitulation to the bourgeoisie, once faced with the necessities of the class struggle. In all of these cases, however, the acuteness of the objective contradictions and the necessity of bitter struggles over conditions of work, pay and unemployment, provide a great opportunity for the exposure of false leaders and to the leadership by Marxists of the mass movement. While the Communist Party and the Labour spokesmen of all shades call for the direction of industry to areas with high unemployment, we combine a call for nationalization and a Labour government with fighting demands on the trade unions for elementary defence—unity of the unemployed and employed, union membership for youth and other unemployed, no overtime when men are out of work, local insistence on the employment of youth, vigorous campaigning around local conditions in the labour exchanges. In this way we build the unity and confidence of the workers as a class, and this is directly counter to the strategy of the employers and their agents, who want the class divided into localities, into generations, into skill grades, into well-paid and poorly-paid, into employed and unemployed.

7. The fact that nationalization under workers' control can be raised successfully at this stage is indicative of the sharpness of the class struggle in Britain in basic economic terms, despite the muted forms it has taken in recent years. The further fact that the leader of the Labour Party makes pronouncements which raise the nationalization issue publicly only confirms the directness and relevance of this issue and of the whole question of working-class power. This has, in fact, been posed in Britain and all Western Europe since 1945. In this period, in all the Western European countries, the workers, though deprived of leadership, have expressed electorally the striving for power. In none of these countries can governments have continuity or avoid crisis without relying on the social-democratic and Stalinist leaders to frustrate this striving for power. Our task is to provide a conscious lead for this striving, to show that every partial struggle can become a preparation for workers' power, that

industrial and political struggles are only separated by the ruling class and its agents.

8. Both the Labour 'left' and the Stalinists are incapable of a political lead on the issue of unemployment. They are tendencies rooted in a past period of the aftermath of working-class defeat and have retained their hold on the militant sections because of the persistence of some strength in British imperialism since 1939. The depth of the present crisis, which is not a temporary but a deep historical one, finds all the bureaucracies and those political trends who are their apologists, working on a basis which drags them into crisis along with the social system. The campaign of the youth against unemployment and against the witch-hunt, and the construction of the revolutionary party in this struggle, is the historical ground of the defeat of these opportunist and centrist tendencies in the British labour movement.

THE WORK OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

1. Our conference in 1962 raised very sharply the problems of leadership. These problems were posed very concretely before us: how could we begin to face up to the enormous responsibilities of the working-class struggle in Britain. Only a revolutionary party with communist methods of organisation could carry through the struggle in the labour movement against the witch-hunt of the right wing. Only a movement which saw this fight against the witch-hunt in all its political meaning as the preparation and education of a new generation of proletarian revolutionaries would suffice. For the Socialist Labour League this meant establishing leadership in the mass movement, creating a relationship between Marxists and the labour movement as a whole which would lay the basis for a mass revolutionary party of the working class.

In our own ranks, the crisis in the British working class was and is reflected. Routine and propaganda forms of activity, the result of a social-democratic environment in a powerful imperialist country, had to be consciously opposed at every turn. Our Area Conferences in late 1962 were the continuation of our National Conference discussion, enabling us to tackle concretely problems of branch leadership and local campaigning. This proved an invaluable preparation for the unemployment campaign in 1963.

2. The revolutionary party is based on revolutionary Marxist theory. Reformism and the bureaucratic types of organisation which it always works through, are opposed to theory, since they accept the possibility of working within the existing system without fundamentally questioning it. Routine and bureaucratic methods of work in the SLL are only a variety of these social-democratic adaptations to the system. But the struggle for a party based on revolutionary theory is not only a 'theoretical' question. The problem poses itself in a

number of concrete tasks. A Marxist analysis of the economic and political situation enables us to proceed from the objective needs of the working class. We are able to start with the need to fight on certain central or key questions, such as unemployment and the witch-hunt. The connection between them is not abstract, not just a question of making propaganda explanations. In the course of fighting the witch-hunt, we build and train a generation of young revolutionaries who take their place in action as the leaders of the class struggle against unemployment. The high point of this process was the campaign for the lobby on March 26.

3. In the SLL branches, the main question is to train branch officers who can tackle problems in this Marxist, revolutionary way. By starting from the political necessities, fighting for a political line and all the decisions which flow from it, we lay the basis for solving in struggle the various organisational problems, we draw into the construction of the party comrades working in various fields. Just as the campaign against unemployment and for socialist policies has drawn together the militant sections in the trade unions and to a certain extent in the Communist Party, so, within the League, the work of all comrades must be centred on these main campaigns. All our work in the Labour Party and trade unions will fall behind, fall into routine, unless it is consciously transformed in tune with the main political requirements. But this, again, boils down to a series of concrete decisions which must be fought for. The witch-hunts must be fought in every way, in every constituency and in every trade union organisation. On the one hand, the unemployment campaign, led by our comrades, brings questions of socialist policy right into the organisations of the Labour movement. On the other, all our comrades must

learn how to utilise every contact in the labour movement to provide new openings for the campaign. In the unemployment campaign, it has been shown that, even in very adverse conditions, our campaigns have shown the possibility of mobilising masses of hitherto politically inactive workers, particularly young workers, against the government and against the reformist leadership. The national and local leadership has the task of grasping consciously each stage of this concrete development, in which the revolutionary youth is winning the leadership of the working class, and constructing the revolutionary party in the process.

4. On this basis, every local campaign requires creative thinking to work out every aspect of the implications of our political struggle. Every section of League construction—education, the collection of finance, recruiting, the sale of literature, handling of security, planning of work in other organisations—must command detailed political preparation. In our area conferences we discussed the training of branch leadership to carry out these tasks. We prepared for these conferences by actually planning work on these various aspects in the branches beforehand, instead of discussing purely formal resolutions and taking formal decisions.

Branch leaders must take the responsibility of this political preparation. If the League is to grow in proportion to the needs of the working class, we must regard every present member as someone to be trained for such branch leadership. Our comrades are constantly involved in political meetings, in propaganda activities, and in leading the battle against the witch-hunters. Branch leaders must handle all of these very concretely. Every political intervention, such as a visit to a trade union branch on behalf of the unemployment campaign, or a series of Labour Exchange meetings, must be politically prepared in small meetings beforehand. Comrades must explain how to analyse and use the weakness of the enemy, the tradition of working-class struggle, and how to work on current political events for propaganda purposes. Difficulties and problems must be thought out and anticipated by leadership. Without stifling initiative, branch officers must learn how to prepare all our comrades politically, in an all-round way, for the tasks they undertake. Such an understanding is the basis for overcoming the day-to-day difficulties which arise. These 'difficulties' are only the stages of development of the working class itself, struggling towards conscious organisation. We are part of that struggle, the most important part because of Marxist consciousness. But that consciousness, Marxist theory, is a science that develops only through struggle.

5. Wherever a number of comrades work in the same industry or trade union, they must be organised to campaign on League policy. This, too, is the responsibility of local as well as national leadership. Out of the unemployment campaign we are building the nucleus

of future powerful trade union factions. Here also constant *political* preparation is necessary. The first responsibility of our trade union members is to the revolutionary party, which leads the working class in its interests *as a whole, as a class*. This means that we begin from the struggle for political power and the construction of the Marxist party. In our trade union work we fight around our political policies in all their implications, including those for particular industries. In this way, we are against all tendencies, such as syndicalism, which see trade union or industrial work, as a sphere of the class struggle which is a law unto itself. It is clear that here, too, the construction of branches of the League which fight to carry out the political line of the League, is the first task. This will give unity and meaning to the day-to-day work in the trade unions and the factories. Our political campaigns are the real answer to the problems which are constantly posed by industrial militants. How do we build rank-and-file movements? How can we ever defeat the trade union bureaucracy? How can we fight redundancy? Only the construction of the League in the fight for the political line corresponds to the real needs of the workers in the trade unions, and the work of our trade union factions must flow from this.

6. Recruitment to the Socialist Labour League is a vital question, a great test for our members, and particularly for local leadership. Every step forward in our campaigns in the labour movement will be followed by a lapse into inactivity and disillusionment unless in every area we increase our membership, thus making possible a series of continual leaps forward in national and local campaigns. Every action in the class struggle involves new layers of workers, particularly among the youth. Our work with contacts must be very systematic. For example, when we organise for the maximum mass participation in a particular demonstration or meeting to defeat the right wing, branch leaders must prepare, both before and after, the allocation of members to particular contacts so that they can learn the maximum from each event. Because our Marxist theory is an accurate guide to the needs of the class, we are able to lead workers into struggles which educate them very quickly. This explains the wide support for the campaign against unemployment. We have surpassed the recruiting target set at our Area Conferences, and we must now undertake systematic contact work and recruitment. At the same time, we must combat the tendency to neglect members once they are recruited. In many branches, once a new member is admitted, it tends to be assumed that he is now convinced, and it is simply a matter of loading him up with work to whatever degree he is willing. This shows a completely false attitude to our movement. All our activity, and the tasks allotted to every comrade, must have a conscious political basis. Local leadership must show all members how to think through the connection between our revolutionary international politics and the concrete tasks of the branches.

7. The campaign against unemployment brings our comrades into constant struggle against other political tendencies in the labour movement, as outlined in earlier sections of the resolution. Our comrades, even very inexperienced ones, must fight the left reformists, Stalinists and others, as well as the official right-wing machine. All of these are part of international opportunist and revisionist trends. A successful fight against them can only be waged if we ourselves are carrying through the struggle at international level. This is the meaning of our fight for Marxist theory within the international Trotskyist movement.

For example, the campaign against unemployment is providing many big opportunities, as has done our

campaign in the ETU, for recruiting many members of the Communist Party. Only if we have successfully fought for Trotskyist ideas inside the ranks of the Fourth International can we provide the alternative leadership which these CP workers seek as the crisis of Stalinism deepens. There must be an all-round struggle for Marxist theory and explanation of the international discussion, for this is part of the same process as our campaigns on unemployment and against the right wing—the struggle to construct a revolutionary internationalist party leading the new generation of the British working class.

**Adopted unanimously by SLL Fifth Conference
June 1963**

Note by the Editors

The Fifth Annual Conference of the Socialist Labour League in June 1963 completed its work barely two weeks before the onset of the profound governmental crisis sparked off by the 'Profumo scandal'.

During the boom of the 1950s, not only the old reformists but many 'New Left' and other revisionists peddled theories of 'new capitalism', able to maintain full employment, meet an expanding market, and resolve the classical contradictions of the capitalist system. These people condemned Marxists as doctrinaire victims of outdated slogans and formulae. All talk of class struggle, of mass unemployment, of violence, of dangers from racialism, was seen by them as only the ravings of 'mindless militants'.

Such people will find it difficult to explain, let alone to intervene in the present crisis. In the aftermath of a winter of unemployment and of the Profumo scandal, there has been revealed a world

of organised violence and racialism for the protection of investments in property. Millions of people are able to see the true nature of capitalism and its ruling class. In Britain and in the United States, where the Negro struggle is breaking the bonds of liberal leadership, the class war is being fought on the basic issues of jobs and housing—so much for the 'new capitalism'!

The conference documents reprinted here were written some months before the 'Profumo crisis' and before the Negro struggle in the United States reached its present level of intensity. Yet the concentration of these conference reports and resolutions on the basic class relations of modern imperialism made possible agreement on a perspective which has been richly confirmed by these subsequent developments. The revisionists, on the other hand, find themselves confounded by the violent turn of the political situation.



Stockholm, April, 1917: Lenin's party en route to Russia. Lenin in centre (with umbrella). Zinoviev and son on extreme left.

Review article *by A. Banda*

Organizing for victory

Northern Underground: Episodes of Russian Revolutionary Transport and Communications through Scandinavia and Finland 1863-1917. By Michael Futrell. Faber, 32/6.

This book covers a very revealing and instructive aspect of Bolshevik history. The reader is treated to an initial surprise in finding it to be dedicated to the memory of two Bolsheviks—Shlyapnikov and Furstenberg (alias Hanecki). The author first establishes the historical continuity of the Northern underground, through Scandinavia and Finland, into Czarist Russia, a continuity which reflected the changing needs of an ever-changing revolutionary movement.

It must be appreciated, however, that in those days of pre-World War I Europe, such 'complications' as passports, visas and sureties, hardly constituted a problem. Freedom of movement was practically unhindered with the one dishonourable exception of Czarist Russia. Here, amidst all the barbaric survivals of the past, there functioned the most enormous and *modern* engine of oppression—gendarmes, hangmen, informers, reactionary laws, courts, jails, pogroms and well-established places of exile. So it was not surprising that there was a continuous exodus of voluntary and involuntary exiles to Europe. They settled in colonies, often very closed-in communities, in all the capital cities of Europe. This movement, which commenced about the middle of the last century, culminated in a great wave of refugees after the defeat of the 1905 revolution in Czarist Russia. And they were not just Russians, but Poles, Georgians, Finns, Letts, Estonians, Jews—all the oppressed of Czarist Russia. They were sympathetically received in Europe by Liberals and Social-Democrats alike.

Towards the end of the century, two new factors came into prominence, factors which were to make a permanent impression on the Russian revolutionary

movement. The first was the growth of the Social-Democratic Labour movement in Western and Central Europe (later to advance into Scandinavia and eastwards into Russia), under the impetus of the work of the first two Internationals. The second was the development of movements for national self-determination the world over and in particular in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and in Czarist Russia.

The activity of each of these two new factors was engendered and heightened by the ever-increasing penetration of capitalism into new parts of the world. The old society was undermined, the peasantry being the main sufferers. New classes sprang up—in particular a new and often concentrated working class and a capitalist class usually employed doing menial services for the greater Western imperialists of France, Britain, Germany or Belgium.

The anti-Czarist movement quite naturally reflected these changes, throwing up new movements and parties, each in turn more or less reflecting the needs and interests of a particular class or part thereof. One of these new parties was the Russian Social-Democratic Party, a party still in its formative stage (before the split of 1903 into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks) but based on the new Russian working class. Many of its leaders lived in emigration.

BEFORE THE 1905 REVOLUTION

Our first acquaintance with this organisation in the book is in the person of a certain M. Vecheslov (later a Menshevik) in the year 1898. It concerns the illegal transport of literature into Russia. The Swedish Social-Democrats (including Branting, later a Prime Minister) and trade unionists helped *all* the Russian emigre organisations without discrimination. However, that attempt suffered a setback and it was not until 1901 that this 'line' was re-opened by

Vladimir Smirnov (later a prominent Bolshevik). He chose the labyrinthine passages between the thousands of little islands known as the Aaland Islands, which lie on the Finnish side of the Gulf of Bothnia. Smirnov, then a student, successfully enlisted the services of Finnish and Swedish sympathisers. In 1902 he had to change to the Zilliacus line.¹ Old Konni Zilliacus, a colourful Finnish nationalist, smuggler and gun-runner, had his own axe to grind, for his homeland was then ground under the heel of the Romanovs. Smirnov also found help from a new source—the Swedish Young Socialists, then under the leadership of Hinke Berggren. They rendered yeoman service to the Russian socialists, by then split into rival factions. He arranged the transport of comrades, organised hospitality for the hundreds of penniless refugees from 1905, and helped make the arrangements for the 4th Congress of Russian Social-Democracy held in May 1906 at Stockholm.

Another route into Russia was via the Northern waters of Norway to Russia. Here, the Russian and Norwegian populations of the fishing settlements in the region of Vardo and Kirkenes in the Arctic circle barely respected national boundaries. Sympathetic Norwegian Social-Democratic smugglers provided hospitality and even printed for the Russians.

At the dispatch end of these pipelines were, of course, the emigres—Lenin and his 'staff'—Zinoviev, Krupskaya (Lenin's wife) and Lilina (Zinoviev's wife). Krupskaya, however, handled the organisation of the 'mail'. She held the threads that ran at first from London, and later from Poland and



N. K. KRUPSKAYA, 1869-1939:

Lenin's wife, secretary and collaborator. After Lenin's death supported joint Left Opposition. Capitulated to Stalin. Threatened with blackmail by Stalin. Wrote 'Memories of Lenin' under scrutiny of censor.

Switzerland to Russia via the Northern routes and via Poland (where Piatnitsky was in charge), together with caches of literature in the major ports of Europe, and during the Russo-Japanese war as far abroad as India and China. Meticulously and painstakingly Krupskaya checked and cross-checked

the dispatch and delivery of every letter, cheque and packet, sent detailed instructions to her agents about the technique of using the post. Year in, year out, she carried out these assignments for the Party.

Finland proved to be an excellent intermediary stage to Russia. Enjoying special constitutional privileges within the Czarist empire and affording a sympathetic protection by Finns, even from judiciary and police officers, Russians were able to work 'less illegally' than in Russia proper. There were facilities for conferences, meetings, schools and even printing, if taken in moderation! Finland and especially Helsinki and the regions on the doorstep of St. Petersburg were therefore a bridge-head to Russia. In charge at that end was Krassin.

The 'mail' used to be driven straight into the Finland station at St. Petersburg on trains manned by Finnish crews. Here it was picked up by Bolshevik railway mechanics and disposed of. At other times it was dropped off a few stations before the Russian border and then smuggled across the borders by other forms of transport. Another expedient was to utilise the convenient situation of the estates of wealthy relatives of Bolsheviks like Burenin and Ignatyev,² properties which lay athwart the frontier. Funds were raised from tours made by Gorky and from Burenin's charity concerts, from expropriations and marriages. Subordinate to Krassin and in charge of the armed fighting organisation of the Bolsheviks was Burenin, posing as a pianist and amateur impresario. He set up an explosives training centre for the Bolsheviks in Finland, but this school fell in the police dragnet during the ebb of the revolution in 1906-7. Krassin and Burenin were arrested and Lenin had to flee, very nearly losing his life crossing to a ship over thin ice.

AFTER '1905'

The defeats of 1906-7 resulted in the temporary defections of Krassin, Burenin and Smirnov and the slow rise of factional fever amongst the emigres. Though this sometimes impeded the organisational activity of the party Lenin was able to restore its proper functioning and the Morozov windfall came in very handy.

The communications with Finland were re-opened by Tomashevsky in 1908 but the Polish route of Piatnitsky was preferred. In 1908, however, Kobetsky settled in Copenhagen and opened a direct mail service for Krupskaya for Lenin's new paper *Proletary*. Lenin seems to have checked on the work at Kobetsky's end when he was at the Copen-

1. He owned a shipping 'line' (one or two craft), which were used for smuggling propaganda and arms. Father of the British Labour MP of the same name.

2. Ignatyev for instance was married off to an heiress of the Moscow millionaire Morozov. The money became available only later, in the dark days of 1907.

hagen Congress of the 2nd International in 1910.³ Here Lenin made a bloc with the left socialists of Scandinavia, Finland, France and Germany, beginning a great labour which was to culminate in the setting up of the Third International.

By 1912, however, conditions had so eased in Russia as to permit the publication of *Pravda* in that country, although it was sometimes forced to change its name in order to continue publication. Lenin and his staff were between 1912 and 1914 resident in Austrian Poland. However, the outbreak of World War I changed all this. Lenin had to move to Switzerland once more and the Russian *Pravda* could not be published. In addition, all communications via Eastern Europe were disrupted by the active war fronts in that region. Once more, Northern Europe with its neutral states became a vital communications base.

WORLD WAR I

This is when we meet Shlyapnikov, a Bolshevik metal worker, who had spent many years working in factories in Europe. He slipped out of Russia to Stockholm. From then on constant change of identity, his knowledge of a few European languages,



A. G. Shlyapnikov
(Alexander Belenin)
(1885-1937 or 1943)
Commissar for
Labour. Led
Workers'
Opposition.
Capitulated to
Stalin. Died in
prison.



L. B. Krassin
(Nikitich)
(1870-1926)
Chemical
engineer and
diplomat.

together with his working skills and the good sense of a worker, enabled him to survive this whole period up to the October Revolution. Others were less fortunate. Alexandra Kollontay (once a Menshevik) caught up in her anti-war work was expelled from Sweden to Denmark. In 1915 she moved to Oslo. Bukharin was sent by Lenin via London to re-inforce Shlyapnikov who picked him up in London. In London he found funds from Litvinoff. Money also began to come through from Lenin.

In the meantime, the courier service to Sweden was working with the help of the Scandinavian socialists. The growth of a powerful left wing in Norwegian and Swedish social-democracy also came

to the aid of the Bolsheviks in other ways. They supported Lenin at the Zimmerwald Conference.⁴ In turn Bukharin and Kollontay wrote in their journals, *Stormklockan* (Swedish) and *Klassenkampen* (Norwegian) in their support. In 1915 Kollontay attended the Norwegian SD Conference. In the winter of 1915-16 and again in late 1916 she visited the US on lecture tours. The rest of her time was taken up attending to the Bolshevik mail.



A. Kollontay
1872-1952
Led Workers'
Opposition.
Capitulated to
Stalin. Soviet
diplomat.



N. I. Bukharin
1888-1938
Leader of Right
Opposition to
Stalin. Shot.

In 1915 the Stockholm group seems to have been strengthened with the arrival of Piatakov and Eugenia Bosch. Karl Wick, a Finnish socialist, was attracted to these Russians and he enlisted the help of Kilbom. In the summer of that year Shlyapnikov went up north, made a trial run of parcels through Haparanda-Tornio, scouted the Norwegian arctic route and returned to Stockholm. In October, leaving the others in charge, he went to Haparanda again, slipped over the frontier (quite a story in itself) reverted to a Russian passport and took a train to Petrograd. Here he carried out his assignment, which was to set up a Petrograd Bureau for the Central Committee in exile, organised a system of couriers to pick up literature arriving in Southern Finland and made a brief check over the work in Moscow and Nizhni Novgorod. But soon the police were hot on his trail and he had to return in February 1916 to Sweden. Transport continued with police disruptions at the Petrograd end (Lenin's sister was jailed from July to October 1916) and problems at Stockholm—shortages of cash and Bukharin's polemics with Lenin.

Swedish police surveillance of the political activity of Bukharin and his group increased, and in March 1916 he and others were expelled on trumped-up charges. They were forced to move to Norway. The expulsion arose from the activities of the left Swedish Social-Democrats who held a workers' peace congress in March 1916. In another part of the same building in which this congress was held, the Russians held one of their own regular meetings. The police leapt at the oppor-

3. See Maisky's otherwise incomplete memoirs for an interesting account of Lenin's work at this Congress.

4. On September 1915, 38 delegates representing the working class of 11 nations, assembled in conference. They issued the anti-war Zimmerwald Manifesto.

tunity, framed the left Swedish socialists and the Russians together, clapped the prominent Swedes in prison and expelled the Russians. The author deals in great detail with this case since its repercussions were later to be known to the labour movement as the Kruse-Keskula case.

The neutral states during that war teemed with agents of the rival belligerent powers, agents of the various socialist and nationalist movements illegalised by their governments for refusing to support the imperialist war, fiddlers and black marketeers of every nationality dealing in contraband. Often the imperialist go-betweens went in the guise of social-democrats and they fished for contacts in each others' camps. There were also genuine do-gooders in this world of intrigue and they were often and quite understandably taken for agents. In the thick of this the Bolsheviks had to live and function. In the circumstances too, it was inevitable that some of the strands of the complicated webs spun by these agencies got snarled up with one another.

Keskula was an Estonian nationalist and a very able one at that. But he also happened to have been a Bolshevik organiser in the Baltic states in 1905. Turned nationalist, he was as Machiavellian as Zilliacus the Finn had been. (Estonia, Keskula's homeland, was like Finland also part of the Czarist Empire at that time.) Due to his Bolshevik past and the suspicion that he was a German agent he had to work through agents in his relations with them. He obtained the confidence of the not incorruptible Bogrovsky, Shlyapnikov's deputy in Stockholm. He also had a direct agent, a fellow Estonian, Zifeld, in Lenin's circle in Switzerland. Keskula helped the Bolsheviks through these agents with money and it seems printed some of their literature unknown to them. Sometimes too, it seems, he turned out faked Bolshevik literature. He was however able to conceal most of this activity from investigation.

To finance his private project of an independent Federation of Baltic states he obtained 200,000 to 250,000 marks from the German government. (He incidentally 'repaid' the sum to the Germans after the war at the height of the inflation!) Another instrument (not agent) of Keskula was the do-gooder, Danish journalist Kruse. Kruse was a friend of the Bolsheviks. When Keskula caught Bogrovsky pocketing money given to finance Bolshevik publications he got Kruse to denounce him to the Bolsheviks. This made Bukharin prick up his ears.

So later when Bukharin and company were so unceremoniously bundled out of Sweden Bukharin thought Kruse had denounced them to the Swedish authorities, a presumption based on certain coincidences which did not lend themselves to such arbitrary conclusions. That the decision to expel

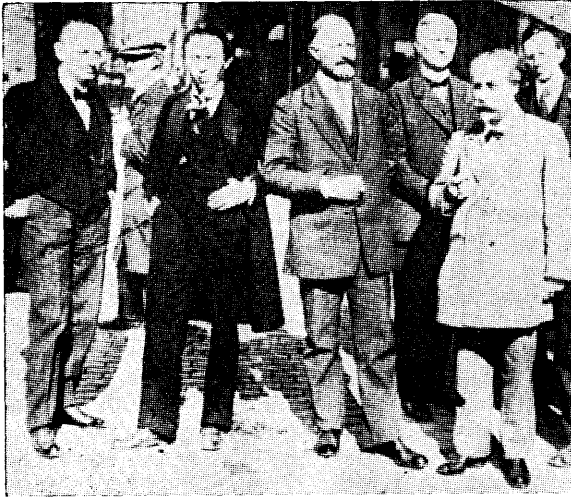
them, however, was the work of pressure from the German government and/or the work of Keskula, independently of Kruse, cannot be excluded. At that time there was great pressure being put on Sweden by Germany for a 'more sympathetic' neutrality. The Swedish conservatives responded favourably, and as is usual in these circumstances the Swedish left socialists were the only ones who seriously resisted this move. Hence the persecution of the latter by the police. Since the Bolsheviks were the mentors of the left socialists they too were considered a hindrance and were thrown out. This more anti-Russian foreign policy of Sweden could have pleased Keskula as one more nail in the Czarist coffin, though at a price. He seems to have dropped out of sight soon after this affair.

Shlyapnikov was not expelled along with the others as he did not indulge himself in public political activity like them, with the single exception of an intervention at the November 1914 Congress of the Swedish Social-Democracy, where he denounced the social patriotism of the German party. To add to the difficulties of 1916, there was no money and the 'mail' was irregular. So he spent from June to September of that year travelling to the US, where he succeeded in hawking some papers on the condition of Russian Jewry, for the sum of \$500. He returned to find Bukharin with his passport and identities mixed up, trying to get a ship to America. After straightening out that problem he turned his attention to Russia.

In October of that year he travelled to the North, crossed the frontier on skis, travelled south, getting arrested on the way and escaping. With a Finnish passport he crossed to Petrograd and found the city party bureau decimated. So he set it up again with himself, Zalutsky (another worker) and Molotov (then a student) on it. The courier service was restored and money raised from Gorky. In those winter months unrest was evident amongst the masses. Defeats at the front, hunger at home and intolerable exploitation in the factories exploded into the March Revolution of 1917.

THE MARCH REVOLUTION

Shlyapnikov soon found himself at the head of the metal workers' union in Petrograd and was elected to the EC of the Petrograd soviet in March and on to its propaganda committee. The line of the Party Press under his guidance was to elect representatives to the Provisional Government. In fact they had no line. Confusion reigned. The next thing they knew was that Stalin and Kamenev returned from exile in Siberia and, exercising their prerogatives as Central Committee members, seized control of *Pravda*. They commenced a line of collaboration with the Provisional Government. Their editorial regime antagonised the Petrograd working



May 1917: Founding Congress of Swedish Left Socialist Party. L. to r. Furstenberg, Radek, Kolarov, Lindhagen, Kirkov, Höglund.

class. As Shylapnikov remarks, the enemies of the Petrograd workers 'smiled maliciously', while the workers themselves grew indignant and demanded the expulsion of the editors.

Lenin and his party secured through the good offices of the Swiss Social-Democrats permission to travel through Germany in a sealed train. They travelled via Denmark, Sweden and Finland to Russia. The party stopped off in Stockholm where a reception was held by Swedish socialists in their honour. Here Lenin had to leave behind Radek and Furstenberg, who were refused permission to enter Russia, and they constituted themselves a kind of press bureau for the Bolsheviks.

THE APRIL THESES

Lenin struck Petrograd like a thunderbolt and it seems it was half expected. He called for an end to the war and an end to collaboration with the Provisional Government, an end to left-faking, especially in the ranks of the Bolsheviks. The editorial board was cleaned up and the sights set for the taking of the power. This aroused the hatred and hostility of all property-lovers, and before long the Russian press was baying for the blood of the Bolsheviks. Finally, in July 1917, the Provisional Government, buttressed by the Menshevik, Socialist-Revolutionary and Kadet (capitalist) parties, the militarists and the re-introduction of the death penalty at the front, summoned up its last remaining strength for a major offensive against the Germans. As everyone expected, that offensive collapsed but the Bolsheviks were made scapegoats. Rumours of the Bolsheviks being German agents grew to fever pitch. Leaders of the Petrograd soviet were arrested and Lenin and others had to go into hiding.

It was now that the celebrated 29 telegrams 'proving' Lenin's 'guilt' were published. These were telegrams exchanged between Lenin and his agents, Furstenberg (Hanecki) and Kozlovsky. From that day on, so-called experts have fastened on these and have succeeded in proving exactly nothing. However, what interests us here is that the author has done some very interesting and original research into this same problem.

And what has he uncovered? That Furstenberg was held in the highest confidence of Lenin, having collaborated with him up to 1915; that Furstenberg had resided in Denmark since June 1915 when he arrived from Switzerland, having moved there from Poland on the outbreak of war. That he had established a trading company in Copenhagen, called Handels-og Eksportkompagniet A/S with himself as chairman of the board of directors. However, the interesting part of the business, it now transpires, is that the entire declared capital for that business was put up by Parvus and Sklartz. Now Parvus was a notorious central European social-democrat whom Lenin himself would not touch with a barge-pole, because of the extent to which he was compromised with the German ruling class. That is all.

The author has also tracked down some of old Furstenberg's business exploits and everything points to a thriving trade having been plied by him in drugs, medical supplies and 'rubber goods' of every description. They were bought from German dealers in Copenhagen and smuggled to Sweden where they were purchased by Russian governmental representatives. This contraband, of which there was an acute shortage in Russia, naturally fetched very high prices and, it is *presumed*, the profits (or what was left of them after squaring the touts and other 'technicians') *might* have helped the party finances.

Austrian state archives allege that a certain Swiss acted as liaison between Switzerland and Scandinavia in 1915-16 but failed to identify him. Much later on, in October 1917, it seems that the Bolshevik Party Central Committee had to reject offers of money from Karl Moor, a Swiss social-democrat; while in the summer of 1917, another Swiss socialist, Gustav Mayer, working for the German foreign office, fished around Radek and Furstenberg in Stockholm.

All in all that summer of 1917 must have been a hectic one. For at the same time the counterparts of the German agents, the French and British 'socialist' agents, Albert Thomas and Henderson, strove might and main in Petrograd to keep the Russian workers in the war. They were all too late. Three months later the Bolsheviks were at the helm of state.

A story well told, sympathetic to its subject and full of lively anecdotes.

Other books

Post-war France

De Gaulle Before Paris. By Robert Aron (translated by Humphrey Hare). Putnam, 35/-.

'I knew that de Gaulle was intelligent, but I never would have thought he could succeed in so splendid an undertaking.' It is with these words, said to have been used by Marshal Petain when his rule was nearing its end, that Aron aptly closes this account of the 'Liberation' of France. His book throws some light on the nature of this 'splendid undertaking' and the way in which it was carried out: that is, the assumption by de Gaulle of the historical task of assuring the continuity of the bourgeois state in France.

Aron writes less as a sympathiser of de Gaulle or Petain than as one keenly concerned with the preservation of bourgeois institutions in France both from working-class revolution and from the encroachments of foreign powers. While Petain did his best to preserve the administration during the German Occupation by accepting the necessity for collaboration, so, across the Channel, de Gaulle built up an alternative team, prevented the establishment of a military government after the Normandy landings and asserted the historical claims of the French state against the inroads which the Anglo-Saxon powers may have made. He had, of course, to fight to ensure that it was *his* team that was recognised and not a refurbished Vichy administration. His circle of immediate followers, the original Gaullists, saw to it that they received the full fruits of office. The story told in this book of the ousting of the Vichy sub-prefect of Bayeux is instructive in that respect.

De Gaulle's role is illuminated by the methodical way in which he prepared the administrative take-over, but also by the amount of detailed planning carried out by his subordinates. This was certainly no one-man affair. The Gaullist team in London and Algiers had prepared for every possible eventuality embodied in laws and ordinances and they arrived in France with trunk

loads of documents, circulars and posters to convey them to the population. They were able to assume, by the time that the landings took place, that they would experience little opposition from their Vichy predecessors, who were also equally anxious to ensure the continuity of the state power. 'The great merit of Gaullism, considered objectively,' writes Aron '—and every Frenchman must agree about this—is that before it actually came to power it had planned in minute detail the institutions necessary for the avoidance, or at least the limitation, of disaster . . . France might easily have awakened to find herself subject to AMGOT, civil war, or Communism.'

But Aron forgets in these words facts upon which his narrative from time to time casts a little light. He forgets that 'every Frenchman' did not agree about this. He forgets that many Frenchmen had guns in their hands and little desire to return to institutions which ensured the dominance of the bourgeoisie. He should have said that most French bourgeois were agreed about this—those who had flocked into the streets of Paris or Lyons to greet Petain and who, in a matter of weeks, were to show the same enthusiasm for de Gaulle. They recognised in both, at the given moment, the protector of their property and position. The smoothness of the transition should have surprised no one; Petain and de Gaulle may have had different methods—and whoever was on the winning side was irrevocably bound to eliminate the other physically—but they served the same class interests, the same state ends.

As for the Frenchmen who did not agree, they suffered a misleadership and betrayal which mocked all their hopes and sacrifices. Aron wrongly believes that there was a threat of revolution from the Communist-led partisans in 1944—or perhaps he only feigns to believe it. Whatever local militants may have believed, the leaders of the Communist Party had no intention of preparing for power. In fact, they

also accepted the restoration of the bourgeois state—the democratic Fourth Republic—as the natural limitation on their action. That they wanted a position inside this state was, of course, true and fully conformed with the needs of Soviet foreign policy. Thorez as de Gaulle's Vice-Premier drumming up more production from the under-nourished miners while black-marketeers waxed fat—the situation which prevailed in 1945-46—was the inevitable outcome of the policy already applied during the 'Liberation'. The Gaullist moves were at this time precautionary. Specially-trained officers followed the Allied armies to scent out signs of revolution.

Wherever a maquis liberated an area by its own actions special action had to be taken to forestall the establishment of popular rule. Outbreaks of popular justice directed against notorious collaborators and racketeers were smeared as 'mob rule'. On the history of the resistance and its part in the 'Liberation' this work gives only a very limited and prejudiced view. After all there was a revolutionary insurrection, open or incipient, in many areas of France in 1944; an insurrection which would have made de Gaulle's task of maintaining the continuity of bourgeois institutions impossible had it been permitted to develop. If professional military judges, appointed and trained in Algiers, had not rapidly appeared on the scene revolutionary justice ('whose procedure and sentences bore little relation to jurisprudence', says Aron) would have prevailed. Likewise, if Thorez and Duclos, trained in Moscow, had not rapidly appeared to resume their old function of holding back and controlling the working class, de Gaulle could never have accomplished his 'splendid undertaking'. T.K.

Soviet bureaucracy

The Kremlin Since Stalin. By Wolfgang Leonhard. Oxford 1962, 42/-.

Wolfgang Leonhard was originally a member of the international

apparat. He accompanied Walter Ulbricht to Berlin in 1945 where he worked to establish a regime that would be subservient to the Russian bureaucracy. The story of his experiences and his ultimate defection to Titoism can be found in his earlier book 'Child of the Revolution', reviewed in an earlier issue of Labour Review. Actually Leonhard was not so much a child of the Revolution as of its 'bureaucratic posterior' who was thoroughly versed in the theoretical methods of Stalinism. This method somewhat limits the value of his latest book.

Briefly Leonhard identifies 'internationalism' with the domination of the Russian bureaucracy. His revolt from this domination took the form of an espousal of 'National Communism', a reaction not uncommon in Eastern Europe where it has often taken the form of an alliance of sections of the Stalinist bureaucracy with remnants of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie, particularly those connected with the small-holding peasantry. This alliance can often gain the support of the working class in their struggle for the democratic control of the economy.

The trouble with the theory of National Communism is that it substitutes a national approach to socialism for a true internationalism based upon the international force of the working class in opposition to world imperialism. The effects of such an approach can be seen in 'The Kremlin Since Stalin' where the author identifies the Statement of the 81 Parties with a supposed swing of the Russian bureaucracy towards internationalism. Subsequent events including the Sino-Soviet dispute have shown the inadequacy of such a view.

As a chronicle of events this book is useful, for it is well documented from Soviet sources; and his training in the Comintern school has given the author a sharp eye for the finer nuances of official Soviet publications. One thing that emerges from this chronicle is the empirical nature of bureaucratic thinking. Ideas are scrapped and new plans initiated in a very hand-to-mouth manner, measures on agriculture and industrial decentralisation being examples of this.

Empiricism is also implicit in the

author's method when he tends to split the bureaucracy up into sections: Army, Secret Police, Party Apparatus, etc., and then speculate upon the more 'liberal' tendencies of this or that section. This is a favourite trick of professional sovietologists in whose hands it becomes an endless parlour-game in which rumour and speculation take the place of political analysis.

Using this method the investigator tends to lose sight of the bureaucracy as a whole; as a social caste parasitic upon the nationalized property relations established by the Revolution, and increasingly coming into conflict with the need to develop and extend those relations beyond the borders of the national state. This is the main failure of Leonhard, but an understanding of this failure can be of service to Marxists in the struggle in their own movement against those who, using the same empiricist method, talk glibly about sections of the bureaucracy 'projecting a revolutionary orientation' as a cover for their compromise with Stalinist and petty-bourgeois policies.

D.P.

Disarming the working class

Unarmed Victory. By Bertrand Russell. Penguin Special, 2/6.

The widespread belief that Bertrand Russell is opposed to nuclear weapons is totally wrong. As he made perfectly clear in an earlier book ('Has Man a Future?'), he believes that all weapons of mass destruction should be in the hands of a supreme World Authority. As long as only the United States possessed the bomb, this condition existed.

Russell's anti-bomb activities, therefore, date from its acquisition by the Soviet Union. He says, in 'Unarmed Victory': 'When these (H-bombs) came to be possessed by both sides, it became obvious that nothing desired by any government could be achieved by nuclear war.' (My emphasis—G.G.)

Moreover his pleas in this book to the Cubans, Russians and Chinese to make any and every concession, contrast sharply with his advice to the West when they had the H-bomb

monopoly: 'I think it is absolutely necessary to be firm on what we consider vital interests. I think it is more likely that you will get genuine co-operation from a certain firmness rather than merely going to them and begging them to co-operate.' (Speech in House of Lords, 28.11.45.)

Russell is, in fact, an ardent supporter of capitalism as such. He speaks of Marx's 'spite and hatred'. He regrets the loss of the 'comparatively civilised usages of the nineteenth century'. As for the working class—'their poverty in the early days of industrialism was only a temporary phase.'

He was opposed to the Chinese Revolution—'When the Communist Revolution took place in China, I felt desolated.' His desolation, it transpires, was due to the destruction of 'delightful and admirable old traditions'.

It is from this standpoint that Russell intervened in the recent crises in Cuba and on the Sino-Indian frontier. He sees the danger of war not from any conflict of incompatible social systems, sparked off by the contradictions of decaying imperialism, but arising instead from the absence of 'sane men in the seats of power', from 'a lack of understanding of the feelings of an opponent', from 'insane paranoia', 'infantile codes of muscle-armed prestige', etc., etc.

Earl Russell's separation of nuclear war from all other political questions (nuclear war 'transcends' them) leads him to seek a solution for one crisis after another, none of which can be explained or foreseen, by a series of desperate telegrams urging various leading statesmen to save the world.

Invariably, these 'solutions' involve a strengthening of the positions of imperialism. Hence, Russell's cable to Castro reads: 'I ask you humbly to accept the unwarranted American demands.'

And, though he sees that US policy towards Cuba is based solely on the desire to overthrow the Cuban government for the benefit of American profiteers, and although he quotes 'The Guardian' of January 12, 1963, which reports Dean Rusk as saying that no American commitment to abstain from invasions of Cuba was in existence, Russell still

regards the outcome of the Cuban crisis as 'on the whole, satisfactory'.

It is the rejection of a consistent materialist conception of history as a struggle of class forces that leads Russell to view world events either as a bewildering series of crises caused by man's stupidity or as the working out of peculiar 'rules' that come from nowhere. ('Since the third century B.C.,' he says, speaking of China, 'the rule has been that, after a period of internal unrest, a strong government emerges which gradually loses its strength giving place to a new cycle of anarchy and order.')

What is more serious, however, is that some people in the Marxist movement have tended to view the empirical blindness of this bourgeois philosopher as being in some way 'progressive'. Having adopted his method themselves, they view events 'as they happen' instead of in the process of developing class struggles—hence they too begin to consider Khrushchev the saviour of the world—(Russell's telegram to Khrushchev read: 'I should like you to know of my personal feeling about your solving the Cuban crisis. I have never known any statesman act with the magnanimity and greatness that you have shown over Cuba and I wish you to be clear that every sincere and honest human being pays you homage for your courage.')

Marxists in Britain, however, know very well that the Pacifist movement is an obstacle to peace. At the height of the Cuban crisis the pacifists were either paralysed completely, or else devoted their main energies, in alliance with the Communist Party, to preventing a turn towards the labour movement.

A good comment on this breed was made by Christopher Caudwell: 'The bourgeois pacifist occupies perhaps the most ignoble place of a man in any civilisation. . . . He sits on the head of the workers and, while the big bourgeois kicks him, advises him to lie quiet.' (Studies in a Dying Culture.) G.G.

1939 and all that

The Appeasers. By Martin Gilbert and Richard Gott.

The authors, two Oxford-trained historians, seek to show that the

pre-war Chamberlain government, was 'unpatriotic'. This government's repeated concessions to Nazi Germany helped build Hitler up to the point where the German ruling class swallowed Austria and Czechoslovakia in 1938. In August 1939, Germany's invasion of Poland finally forced even the 'appeasers' to declare war on Germany, by the invoking of the Anglo-Polish Defence Pact.

In sharp contrast to Chamberlain, Halifax and Simon, the authors portray Churchill and Eden as the men of principle, defenders of freedom and the rights of small nations, etc. This theme of the authors turns history into a story of 'goods and bads', thus concealing the class interests involved in the 1939-45 world war, reflected in the differences in tactics between sections of the British ruling capitalist class.

However, the numerous official documents and extracts from press and private conversations do show one thing: wide sections of the British monopoly bosses had a great sympathy for fascism, as a means of crushing the working class in times of great crisis. The differences between Churchill, Eden and Vansittart, on the one hand and the Chamberlain government, on the other, were mainly over how much economic elbow-room Germany should have and whether former colonies should be returned as concessions. (Of course, the millions of Africans involved were never consulted either by the 'appeasers' or the 'patriots'.)

The murderous horrors of fascism inflicted on millions of trade unionists and Jews did not enter any of these protagonists' calculations. Lloyd George, the 'liberal' capitalist, said: 'I only wish we had a man of his (Hitler's) calibre in our country today.' Had not Churchill himself said in 1926 to Mussolini, 'If I was an Italian I should be fascist as well?'

Although the authors say: 'The Communist menace excused many things' they still do not explain the reason for the 'appeasement'. The Cliveden set, around the Astors, were all in favour of Germany marching East on Russia—as outlined in Hitler's 'Mein Kampf'. Sympathy for fascist methods was reflected through the columns of the whole of

the capitalist press.

But side-by-side with all this the ruling class was preparing for war. The re-armament programme began in 1935 when Hore-Belisha began 'modernising' the army. The British ruling class could appease German monopoly capitalism at the expense of other capitalist countries only so long as there was no direct threat to British imperialist interests. When this became imminent the Chamberlain government launched into war on behalf of British imperialism.

H.F.

Industrial discipline

The Use and Abuse of Trade Unions. By Arthur Bottomley. Ampersand, 3/6.

Right-wing Labour MP, former member of the Labour government, Arthur Bottomley has written a dull and boring booklet. Naturally, it is a small work. Mr. Bottomley has few ideas on the trade unions. Those he has are of the type that make a labour leader welcome in employers' circles.

In the first part of his booklet, Bottomley has strung together some meagre references to past events which are passed off as a resumé of the history of trade union organisation. The second part is a contribution to the Cold War and to the witch-hunt against militancy in the trade unions today. Bottomley blames the class struggle on evil men.

'The Greeks put ruthless, dedicated men into the Trojan horse to take their enemies by stealth,' he writes. 'Today, Communists employ the same strategem against trade unions of the free world so as to use them for their own ends.' According to Mr. Bottomley, the Communist Party is not alone in supplying ruthless men, dedicated to trouble-making.

'A feature of recent years is the emergence of Trotskyite groups—militant Marxists who have broken away from the party—and are active in the motor industry, ports, building trades, engineering and so on.'

The 'Communist-led trade unions' and the Communist parties are not, of course, the militant bodies such as this servant of the imperialist Cold War describes them. Certainly the British Communist Party

is becoming less and less deserving of the attack that it places industrial agitation above 'what should be the prime purpose of a *bona fide* political party—the return of candidates to local council and to Parliament'. Really, in the light of the 'British Road to Socialism' the Communist Party is most undeserving of the criticism that it is not a *bona fide* reformist party.

Trade unions developed through a 'natural unforced growth', is Mr. Bottomley's ignorant conclusion. In his booklet there is not the least breath of air from the real history of trade unions—a history of struggle.

He readily blames the workers themselves for the repressions they suffered in the past. In this way he comments on the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union which swept the country in the 1830s. When the workers then organised to fight intolerable conditions, the tyranny of employers, courts and army were let loose on them with greater fury. Bottomley, naturally, comes down on the side of the oppressors. The victims were to blame. 'The declared policy of the National Consolidated to bring about a national strike naturally aroused considerable opposition and reaction.'

Mr. Bottomley has no use for General Strikes. In fact, he really has no use for trade unions at all, except to discipline the working class, in a society where state, employers and workers have common interests.

His book has a smell of Moral Rearmament about it. 'The bad employer and the bad workman are enemies of society,' he tells us. 'The role of the trade unions in a free society,' he writes, is not just one of 'bargaining' with the employers for more pay, shorter hours and better conditions. He sees more important tasks for them to perform. Not in assisting to change society. Oh no! The trade unions must 'strengthen the national economy by improving standards of workmanship and productivity'.

With 'responsible leadership' and working for this, 'trade unions can and do wield enormous influence in the councils of industry and with governments'. The 'use' of trade unions is thus to orderly govern sections of the working class so that

they conform to the economic relations, institutions and ideology of capitalist society in the way Mr. Bottomley does so thoroughly himself. **W.H.**

'Industrial Relations'

Nationalisation—A Book of Readings. Edited by A. H. Hanson. George Allen and Unwin, 45/-.

British Wages Councils. By F. J. Bayliss. Blackwell, Oxford, 25/-.

These books are concerned with two important features which are commonly held to distinguish the 'mixed economy' from pure capitalism and to mitigate the harsher features of the latter system. Both these institutions have, in fact, arisen out of the failure of 'free enterprise' and the subsequent need for government intervention in industrial relations; both have been adapted to serve the interests of capital, yet about the functioning of both there is a great deal of misunderstanding based on inadequate knowledge which these books go far to remedy.

A large number of books on nationalization has appeared in the last few years, most of them either apologies for the existing nationalized industries or proposals for alternative, more 'modern', forms of public ownership. Hanson's book is neither; it is a study in the ideology of nationalization and attempts to trace, by means of representative extracts from books, reports, pamphlets and speeches, the origin, development and final accommodation of the contemporary confusion of thought about nationalization.

It is more than a mere collection of essays; the items included under each topic have been skilfully selected to show how much of the current 'new thinking' on nationalization has arisen out of problems unconnected with, and irrelevant to, socialist principles. An early chapter on 'Motives for Nationalisation' establishes that, with the exception of iron and steel (quickly denationalized) none of the industries taken into public ownership after 1945 were nationalized from any motive that could be termed socialist; they represented 'rescue operations' and the full implications of this, in terms

of attitudes to personnel selection, finance, parliamentary accountability and industrial relations, are revealed in subsequent chapters.

Bayliss' book is the first full-length study of wages councils—the 'independent' bodies which have been set up in 60 or more industries to establish legal minimum wages. The generally accepted theory of wages councils is that they are introduced by a neutral government where trade union organisation is not sufficiently advanced to impose voluntary collective bargaining and the negotiation of realistic agreements; state support is, in these circumstances, seen as an interim measure in order to make possible the development of negotiated agreements.

In fact, as Bayliss shows, wages councils have not infrequently been brought into being because of the weakness of employers' associations and, far from encouraging the unionisation of workers, such councils have, for a variety of reasons which are fully discussed, hampered this. Moreover, governments have been reluctant in recent years to abolish wages councils, even when it would appear that voluntary agreements were viable, since these bodies have provided a useful weapon in the wages freeze, enabling the government to influence the wage rates of three and a half million workers.

These are important books in a field in which so much worthless rubbish is now being published; even the busiest trade unionist should find time for the first two and the final chapters in the former and the last chapter in the latter. All engaged in industries subject to the decisions of wages councils should read the whole of Bayliss' study.

J.P.

Prisons and prisoners

Oscar Wilde: The Aftermath. By H. Montgomery Hyde. Methuen, 30/-.

Wilde was sentenced in 1895 to two years' hard labour, and this book is concerned with his suffering under the harsh penal regulations. After 14 months of solitary confinement, picking oakum and sewing mailbags, he was on the verge of insanity. His

petition for release in 1896 is a moving statement of the effect of the system on any prisoner. He writes of 'isolation from all human and humane influences' and his fear of 'absolute and entire insanity' while his eyesight, hearing and general health deteriorated. His petition, a true statement of his condition, was refused.

Wilde's 'Ballad of Reading Gaol' expresses his two-year torment, his hatred of a prison system which broke his health and spirit (he died in 1900 at the age of 46). He recognised the destructive nature of the system and the sadistic bent of many of the warders in the application of the crank and treadmill punishments. 'It is not the prisoners who need reformation. It is the prisons,' he says in a letter.

The author of this book incribes it to 'those who have toiled in the cause of penal reform'. Strange complacent talk this at the present. Things have changed little since Wilde's day, as we see the way 'justice' and punishment are handed out in the Profumo affair, or the way our police and warders handle suspects and prisoners. So if we are hopeful about our legal and prison system, events at the moment serve as a useful corrective, and the author, an MP, may be having second thoughts. His book does, however, serve as a useful account of the last years of Wilde's life in prison and after, when he was hounded out of British society. **G.W.**

Modern Japan

A History of Japan. By Malcolm Kennedy. Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 42/-.

Consider Japan. 'Economist' Correspondents. Duckworth, 15/-.

For two centuries after their first experience with Westernism the feudalists of Japan pursued a policy of seclusion, understanding that wider contact with the outside world could only destroy the bases of their rule. By the end of that time, however, the conditions had been largely prepared for the breakdown of feudalism and, with the Western powers now battering on the doors, a revolution from above took place which

opened up the conditions for the rapid development of capitalism. Within the next few decades the basis for the spectacular rise to world industrial and political power was being laid. But the break with feudalism had not been hard and fast. It was, at first, capitalism without a bourgeoisie, and the nature of this transition to capitalism left its mark through the subsequent history of Japan, particularly in the field of politics.

Although Kennedy provides a useful record of these events, there is little discussion of why they happened. His interests are mainly political and military or naval; the social and economic background, though not neglected, is handled without real understanding. One suspects that his military, business and journalist experience in Japan confined his contacts to those with members of the ruling class whom he came to consider very much as English public-school-educated gentlemen of different physical appearance. Of the peasantry and its way of life there is little in this book, of the rapidly-growing 20th century working class even less. On the other hand there is plenty about the governmental changes and military adventures of the period. His interpretation is mainly posited on the view that 'fundamentally the Japanese and their national traits remain unaltered'.

Despite the space devoted to politics, little light is cast on the relations between government, business interests and the Army before 1945, though he agrees that 'industrial expansion was serving to encourage a new form of imperialism, a struggle for control of markets and of industrial raw materials'. While he is happy to see the Japanese adopt hearty Western ball-games he evidently deplores the influence of Marxism. It is therefore difficult for him to criticise the mass repressions. And, while on one page he notes with approval that the labour movement was subsequently 'diverted into more constitutional channels', only two pages later he speaks of the regime under which it was operating as 'a Japanese version of Fascism'. Again, what he means by fascism here is not clear, since real analysis is lacking.

In the final chapter he deals briefly with Japan's economic revival and expansion in the '50s, which he attributes to 'a combination of good fortune—arising from international developments—skilful management, hard work and readiness to face unpleasant facts'. It is at this point that the 'Economist' Correspondents take over. Very definitely in their mind is a comparison between the post-war experience of Japan and that of Britain. Whether for lack of space, or lack of recognition of its importance, little attention is paid to the historical foundations or the differences. There is the implied assumption that because the Japanese economy grew rapidly in the period, British capitalism, by adopting similar methods, could have grown at the same, if not, a faster rate.

At the same time, it is clear from the evidence presented in this volume that Japanese capitalism has benefited from some special advantages. For one thing, a number of the growth industries of the '50s have sprung directly from the war-stimulated industries of 20 years before: from range-finders to transistors and cameras. Then, not only did war destruction, or lack of new investment, sweep a way for profitable new capital formation with American assistance, but the stimulus of Korean War demand proved invaluable. It put firms in possession of funds for new investment and furnished the economy as a whole with foreign exchange. The expansion was then on. There was a continuous heavy build-up of the industries producing means of production and a shift of labour power from old-style unproductive activities to the new growth points. The home market for all kinds of products thus grew, but the heavy investment outlays would clearly not have been possible if the whole capitalist world economy had not been growing too. As it was, the special advantages of Japan enabled her capitalists to do rather better than any others in this period of apparently endless expanded reproduction.

No doubt the outsider is struck by what seems wide, and often wild, departures from what passes for orthodoxy elsewhere—the apparent unconcern about the possibilities of inflation, for example. The 'Econo-

mist' observer, steeped in Keynesian-thinking, is apt to give these policy measures too much credit. He does recognise that the past period has been more favourable to profits than to wages. The obvious question is what happens as profitable opportunities for the re-investment of capital diminish—and that question is tied up with the problem of markets which, with a country so dependent upon exports, means the willingness, as well as the capacity, of other countries to buy more and more Japanese goods. What has to be remembered is that Japan is inextricably part of the capitalist world economy. In terms of growth though not in income per head, she is a favoured part of it. The prospects of continued growth at the recent rate in Japan thus leads back to the prospects of world capitalism and to problems which this short book does not examine. As supporters of capitalism its authors err on the side of optimism, though here and there doubts break through.

These books pose the question of the need for a clearer Marxist analysis of the Japanese case. Although both of them speak slightly of Marxism, they are aware of the challenge from this direction. Perhaps some enterprising publisher will one day introduce to English readers some of the Japanese Marxist studies of capitalist development which have appeared since the war.

T.K.

God in Russia

Religion in the Soviet Union. By Walter Kolarz. Macmillan, 50/-.

The wealth of information which this book contains about the history and present position of the churches and sects to be found in the territory of the Soviet Union makes it an invaluable reference book. Kolarz writes as a believer who holds that 'there is a thirst in the human being for the supernatural' and thus as an opponent of all forms of materialism. He is also an enemy of the Soviet regime, which he identifies with Communism or Marxism. The mass of information which he assembles has therefore been selected and interpreted in line with these presuppositions.

It is true, of course, that Stalinism

was not able to put an end to religion, for the very good reason that it was unable to create the material conditions for its disappearance or provide a satisfactory way of breaking down the influence of religious teaching. Whether as persecuted or half-tolerated sects or as accepted institutions the old religions, as well as some recent ones, have survived and even flourished in the Soviet Union. In any case, the Stalinist bureaucracy came to understand that the churches could, under certain conditions, be made to serve its purpose. The restoration of a privileged position to the main branch of Orthodoxy was accompanied by the rise of the Stalin cult which itself owed much to the imagery of the Church. At the same time, there was no more faithful votary of this cult than the Orthodox clergy itself. Relations between the state and particular churches, such as the Armenian, have been dictated exclusively by opportunist political considerations. While official ideologists preach atheism, it has become part of the whole dead creed which the bureaucracy requires to maintain its social rule.

Kolarz is broadly right in suggesting that the decline in religious observance in the Soviet Union is probably no greater than it has been in a number of other countries in which industrialisation has taken place. The general secularisation which has taken place is scarcely greater than in many countries in which the bourgeoisie still rules. The great strongholds of religious belief remain in the rural areas and particularly in the more backward parts of the USSR. But it also wins adherents from the urban proletariat whose lives seem to be governed by the arbitrary whims of fate. The faults of Stalinist nationality policy

have likewise contributed to the continued hold of national churches or religions in many regions. The persecution of believers has followed a political pattern and the regime has always been ready to tolerate, or even support, religion when it has seemed in its interests to do so.

In short, the rule of the bureaucracy, its oppressive and arbitrary methods, the privations imposed by its policy and its lack of principle in dealing with religions and religious people have, in practice, proved propitious for the survival of religion rather than for its disappearance. These facts, and not the universal need for faith or the actual vitality of religion, as Kolarz believes, account for his being able to find such a wealth of material to fill his book, despite all the difficulties in the way of obtaining such information. When Marxism is applied to the analysis of Soviet society, as well as to the religious ideas and institutions it secretes, the conclusion must be that for millions of Soviet citizens religion still provides a consolation for the heartless world of the here and now.

Kolarz thinks that the lessons of his study for believers is that 'the inability of the West to live up to religious standards is the surest means of allowing Communism to spread to other parts of the globe before it has fully spent its force in its country of origin'. Rather can it be said that religion has only survived in the Soviet Union because it is not yet a socialist society and that the desperate attempt of the churches in the capitalist world to adopt high-sounding social reform objectives cannot conceal the fact that the roots of their influence lie in the alienations men experience in the class-divided society to which they are inextricably bound. **J.C.**

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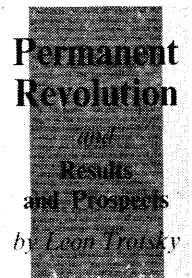


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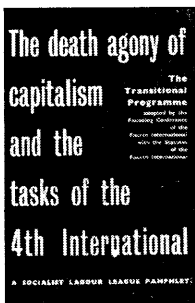
The Draft Programme of the Communist International by Leon Trotsky

This is part of the author's criticism of the draft programme submitted by the Executive Committee of the Third (Communist) International to the 6th Congress of the Comintern which was held in July 1928. The manuscript of that criticism was written by Trotsky during his exile in Alma-Ata (Central Asia). It was sent to the Congress in Moscow together with an appeal for reinstatement into the party from which he had been expelled a few months before by the Stalinist faction in 1927. Stalin and his supporters had invented the theory of 'Socialism in one country', which was made party policy in 1925 and converted into an article of faith to be defended by the world institutions of Stalinism. It is this theory which Trotsky criticises in these pages. 64 pages, 1/-

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