

# The New **INTERNATIONAL**

***AFTER KOREA — WHAT?***

By T. N. Vance

***"1984" — Utopia Reversed***

By Irving Howe

***Kravchenko's Testimony***

By Victor Serge

***Lenin's Way — or Tito's***

By Henry Judd

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By Saul Berg

***Verdict on Moscow Trials***

By Albert Gates

***The Liberal in the U. S.***

By William Barton

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**BOOK REVIEW**

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**November-December 1950**

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# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

An Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

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# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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Vol. XVI, No. 6 NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1950 Whole No. 145

## After Korea—What?

An Economic Interpretation of U. S. Perspectives

While the outcome of the Korean war remains obscure at this writing, *immediate* outbreak of World War III is most unlikely. Even if the major antagonists find it impossible to reach a mutually satisfactory compromise, they are unprepared for global combat. The motives that prompted Stalinist imperialism to launch the attack against South Korea on June 25, as well as the motives that led American imperialism promptly to intervene, are well known and require no further analysis here. Nor need we be particularly concerned with the resolution of the many complex political, social and economic problems arising from the liquidation of the Korean war, as these have no real *strategic* significance in the titanic struggle now being waged between bureaucratic collectivism (Stalinist imperialism) and capitalism (American imperialism) for control of the entire world.

It is worth noting, in passing, that the *political vacuum* which existed in Korea (and which was in a sense responsible for the war) will remain. For the war has graphically revealed that an independent political force in Korea can never be powerful enough to achieve sovereignty. A Third Camp does not and cannot exist on any consequential scale in that unfortunate Land of the Morning Calm. Like other "border" areas incapable of inde-

pendent existence, Korea is faced with the unhappy choice of a regime propped up by American bayonets or one controlled by the Stalinist secret police.

What is important, however, for the world as a whole and for the orientation of the independent socialist movement in particular, is the perspectives that flow for the rival imperialisms once hostilities cease in Korea. Is the world to become two armed camps, waiting fearfully for the inexorable outbreak of World War III, or is some type of peace possible? Can the strategic aims of Stalinist and American imperialisms be modified in any significant degree? In a word, will the environment in which the class struggle operates differ in any noteworthy features from that which existed prior to the Korean war? And, if so, what will the consequences be and how can any such new trends be expected to manifest themselves? These are obviously crucial questions for the independent socialist movement and we shall seek to answer them in this and later articles.

THE SPECTACLE OF GROWN MEN mouthing meaningless words about peace is one with which we have become all too familiar in recent years. It has become even less edifying, if that is possible, as a result of the "peace" programs set forth by Ache-

son and Vishinsky amid the nauseating maneuvers of the rival imperialist blocs within the United Nations. Acheson has made it plain that the only program Washington has is to arm to the hilt. Then, when parity of armed forces is achieved, "we can negotiate with the Russians." And this is called a policy, expressed by a "responsible statesman" occupying the lofty position of Secretary of State!

To such a policy even a Vishinsky can reply with telling effect (*The New York Times*, October 14): "Authoritative American spokesmen say that it is only force that can impress the Soviet Union, and that when the United States is so strong as to make the Soviet Union shake in its shoes then, and only then, will it be possible to reach some understanding. What a profound and crude mistake! . . . This is the policy of the diktat, the policy of pressure and imposition, the policy of demands and half-demands, repeatedly presented, pressed, bolstered and backed up by force, a proliferation of military measures, and circles of naval, land and air bases. . . ."

In the course of the same speech, Stalin's Foreign Minister indicated the equally bankrupt "peace" policy of Stalinist imperialism. After complaining that "The policy (of American imperialism) has been changed . . . from the wartime period of cooperation . . . to the postwar . . . tough policy," Vishinsky asks, "Why do you not get back to that situation (of wartime cooperation)? If you do, things might change. I am profoundly convinced that things would change. . . ." To this thinly disguised offer of a deal, American imperialism has repeatedly given its answer: "The Soviet Government cannot be trusted to keep its word."

Mutual recriminations about who changed which policy first only serve

to conceal the basic dilemma, which explains why neither Stalinist nor American imperialism can "trust the other." The wartime alliance between Anglo-American and Stalinist imperialisms was brought about *solely* due to the *superior threat* posed by an aggressive German imperialism under Hitler. In the absence of any such threat, it is impossible for the imperialist expressions of capitalism and bureaucratic collectivism to arrive at any lasting agreement that would permit a peaceful solution of the world's problems.

The conflict between bureaucratic collectivism and capitalism is irrepresible. No matter what pious statements about peaceful coexistence of the two systems are issued by Moscow and Washington, they cannot disguise the fundamental antagonisms that make inevitable a clash for world supremacy. We are long accustomed to the periodic quotations from Stalin, as the occasion demands, about the "peaceful intentions of the U.S.S.R.," and (buttressed by falsified quotations from Lenin) the "possibility of peace between socialism and capitalism."

Now we are treated to a similar disingenuous spectacle by the State Department, over which the same Acheson presides. A popular pamphlet entitled "Our Foreign Policy" has recently been issued. According to *The New York Times* of September 30, the volume constitutes a bitter indictment of Soviet policy, but it also sets out to disprove the "view that the East-West split is one between communism and capitalism." In other words, "The State Department also set out to correct what it regarded as an incorrect impression of the present tension of the world. It is not a question of differing economic systems, said the booklet, but of the *threat of a new imperialist power.*"

"The deepening division between the Soviet-dominated bloc and the free world is not, as some people wrongly think, a conflict between capitalism and communism," it said. 'Among the nations of the free world, in fact, you will find some that are *not capitalist at all*, but have *freely chosen a socialist system.*'

"The conflict is really *between a power-hungry government that is bent on spreading its power by force, terror and every other means and the community of free nations which refuses to be conquered or dominated, or to stand by and see its members swallowed up.*" (Italics mine—T. N. V.)

Thus, the State Department, like Vishinsky, would have us believe that all that is involved is a question of *methods*. That is to say, if Stalinism would relinquish its tactics of force, subversion and violence, then we could have a peaceful world. It is axiomatic that methods flow from the socio-economic structure of a given state, but even if Stalinism employed "democratic" methods acceptable to Washington, American imperialism would still refuse "to stand by and see its members swallowed up." Moreover, by this time it should be ABC, even to the State Department, that what really makes "the threat of a new imperialist power" is the existence of a new ruling class exploiting society in a new manner; namely, the social system known as bureaucratic collectivism. To be sure, this system is the antithesis of socialism and was actually brought to power by a counter-revolution that destroyed the workers state established by the Bolshevik Revolution.

Nevertheless, it is the irreconcilable antagonisms between two economic systems that have given rise to the "East-West conflict" and which threaten to lead us to World War III within

the next decade. Both Moscow and Washington, at bottom, know this, although from time to time each has politically expedient reasons for issuing propaganda designed to convey a different impression. And each has its own reasons for preparing *in its own way* for the inevitable showdown.

STALINIST IMPERIALISM, TO WHICH bureaucratic collectivism has given rise, is a system of slavery and peonage based on nationalized property. It is essentially an "import" imperialism whose aggressive policy is based on the economic necessity of acquiring constantly new sources of labor power, both skilled and slave, and of adding to its stock of producer and consumer goods, and which can feel safe politically only when it has integrated the major centers of world population and production into the system of bureaucratic collectivism. The Stalinist empire, as the same booklet of the State Department points out, has already enhanced its domain since the end of World War II by some 7,500,000 square miles of territory and by some 500,000,000 more people.

American imperialism, on the other hand, is by far the most powerful imperialism to which finance capitalism has given birth. It is an "export" imperialism, inexorably driven by the most rapid accumulation of capital in the history of capitalism to export capital in all its forms in ever-increasing quantities. It is easy-going and bloated but it cannot be indifferent to the huge bites that Stalinism has taken out of the world market. It must first contain Stalinist imperialism and then destroy it.

In retrospect it is clear to American imperialism that it made many mistakes during the war, although the menace of German and Japanese imperialisms was immediate and real,

while the danger of Stalinist imperialism was remote and at best imperfectly understood. To some extent these "mistakes" were unavoidable, for history rarely permits capitalism to function in terms of the long-run interests of the international bourgeoisie. What disturbs Washington, however, is the *postwar* mistake of permitting Stalin such an overwhelming headstart in the armaments race, for the curve of munitions production requires years before it generates real momentum. Indeed, it was not until 1944, despite the destruction wrought by Allied bombing, that American war production exceeded that of Nazi Germany. This lesson is well known in Washington and accounts for the unanimity that greeted the launching of the "national defense" program.

In this connection, the series of articles in *The New York Times* by its Moscow correspondent, Harrison E. Salisbury, is most interesting. Having just returned from a vacation in the United States, Salisbury has found Stalinland to be one of peace and growing prosperity. "The atmosphere of Moscow, and of the part of Russia that I crossed in traveling here from Poland," he says, "is not one of war nor of preparation for war." He concludes his dispatch of October 13 by stating: "What is interesting about the Soviet situation is that as of today, so far as research can determine, there has been no substantial changeover of the economy from its predominantly peacetime aspect to one of preparation for, or anticipation of, war."

We do not wish to impugn Mr. Salisbury's research abilities, or even the facilities made available to him in conducting his research, but the timing of the articles invites the suspicion that they were inspired by more than reportorial zeal and the conclusion is demonstrably false. The facts have

nothing to do with atmosphere, which may well be as reported, but if Moscow today has a "predominantly peacetime aspect" it can only be because the *normal* face of Stalinism is one of a Permanent War Economy. The maintenance of 300 divisions, even if all are not at full wartime strength, the arming of the satellites, the military-technological development of strategic roads, canals, railroads, airports and other means of communication and transportation within the satellite countries, the expansion of the Soviet Navy, especially the submarine fleet, the feverish development of uranium mines, etc., etc., are all indisputable evidence of a war economy.

Since statistics are a "class science" in Stalinland, we cannot say what the precise percentage of the national product spent for war purposes is, but at a guess we would place it in the neighborhood of 25 per cent. Since during the last war only about 50 per cent of the national product was devoted by the Soviet Government to direct war outlays, such a reduction coupled with the fruits of imperialist acquisition and increasing production could well result in some improvement in civilian standards of living. The important point is that for Stalinism the shift from "peace" to "war" is only quantitative, not qualitative, and can be accomplished without upsetting normal routines, either politically or economically.

Moreover, while the ultimate aim of Stalinist imperialist strategy is conquest of the entire world, the immediate aims are clearly more limited. Time, the Kremlin feels, is on its side. It must complete the process of integrating the economies of existing satellites into its own. It needs another five-year plan, or perhaps two, to increase its production and military po-

tential to the desired level of overwhelming superiority, not to mention atomic equality. It must overthrow Tito and eliminate Titoism, in which objective it may have been mightily aided by the recent drought in Yugoslavia that, at last report, has destroyed some 4,000,000 tons of foodstuffs. Then must come the closing of the gigantic pincers on India and, choicest morsel of all, acquisition of all of Germany.

The air of confidence and tranquility with which Stalinist spokesmen face the future is therefore much more than a mere propaganda "trick," a so-called "peace offensive" to lull the decadent democracies into lowering their armed guard so that they will be easy prey for a sudden onslaught. Stalin would welcome a deal with American imperialism, provided that it did not materially weaken his chances of obtaining control of the entire vast Eurasian heartland, for this is the realistic strategic objective of Stalinist imperialism in the next decade. The Stalinist ruling class has everything to gain by postponing the final battle with American imperialism, or so it reasons.

TWO ASPECTS OF CURRENT AMERICAN imperialist policy are most noteworthy. Internally, there is virtual unanimity within the American bourgeoisie regarding the fundamentals of imperialist strategy. The Truman policy of containment of Stalinist imperialism, which is the essential meaning of all major steps in foreign policy in recent years, may be criticized as to the *manner* in which it has been carried out but it is rare indeed that anyone seeks to change the *objective* or the major strategy adopted to achieve this basic purpose. This is reflected in domestic politics by the extreme weakness of the isolationist fringe, an obvi-

ous but nonetheless significant difference from the post-World War I situation. It is apparent that all major tendencies within American imperialism are clearly aware that it would be fatal to permit Stalinist imperialism to control all of Europe and Asia, from the Atlantic to the Pacific and Indian oceans, for if Stalinist imperialism controlled three-fourths of the world's population an insoluble political problem is presented even if in the long run a military victory under such adverse conditions may still be possible.

Externally, despite the establishment of the so-called Stettin-Trieste line and the attempts to establish a comparable demarcation line in Asia, American imperialism has clearly been on the defensive. It is Stalinist imperialism that selects the area and methods of struggle and American imperialism that replies with a thorough improvised policy. Because these *tactical* methods are either generally unsuccessful or incapable of achieving any lasting victory, which is more or less inevitable in view of American imperialism's inability to solve any conflict on other than military terms, there is dissatisfaction with and criticism of specific tactics. This tactical opposition has combined with mounting economic pressures to establish the policy of containing Stalinist imperialism through the mobilization of superior armed force. From parity, which will be impossible to measure, to superiority of armed forces, which may not be easy to achieve, to World War III, which may be difficult to win, is the road on which American imperialism has definitely embarked.

Korea exploded the fallacy that American imperialism could contain Stalinist imperialism through speeches and a business-as-usual (i.e., a defensive) policy. For a brief flurry it al-

most gave rise to its diametric opposite, the policy of the direct offensive which meant seeking immediately a purely military victory over Stalinist imperialism. This, in essence, is the position of the advocates of a "preventive" war and all variations thereof. We do not for one moment exclude the possibility that American imperialism can defeat Stalinist imperialism in an all-out war, featured especially by use of the atomic bomb, but *such a military victory would be politically disastrous*. It is most unlikely, moreover, that the struggle would be short or easy. On the contrary, all available evidence points to a protracted war between two fairly evenly matched antagonists. The consequent economic destruction and totalitarianization of American political life, without even considering the impact on the rest of the world, would make any military victory absolutely worthless. Such a policy then can be only a last resort, to be embraced *only if there is no other hope for survival of the American capitalist class*.

Faced with the failure of the previous "defensive" policy and the impossibility of adopting an overwhelmingly "aggressive" policy, the American bourgeoisie has finally reached a policy that in political terms can best be described as "Neither Peace Nor War." And it is literally true that they do not want peace and cannot afford war with Stalinism! To be sure, American imperialism cannot mobilize the support of the international proletariat, as Trotsky hoped to do when he advanced the identical slogan on the occasion of the Brest-Litovsk discussions, but it can hope to mobilize what is left of the international bourgeoisie.

The policy of "Neither Peace Nor War" will gain time, unless of course Stalinist imperialism reacts by casting

the die for immediate war. This is most unlikely for reasons cited earlier. Naturally, if war does take place within the next few years, then the present breathing spell will have been utilized to overcome the Stalinist headstart in armaments production, or at least to reduce the present disparity, thereby enhancing the prospects of American imperialism for military victory. Above all, allies will be sought and armed in all areas of the world not under the control of Stalinist imperialism. This is, of course, the real meaning of the Atlantic Pact and related policies. The process of reducing British, French and other Western European imperialisms to the position of satellites dependent upon military and economic aid from the United States is a complicated one and takes time. It takes even more time to revive and harness the military power of defeated German and Japanese imperialisms. American imperialism would also like to have the time to conquer the markets of the disintegrating British Empire and to solve a series of other economic problems arising out of the pressure of the most rapid accumulation of capital in the history of the world.

This ambivalent policy is not without its dangers, but there is no alternative for American imperialism. It even contains the hope that the death of Stalin may precipitate a struggle for succession that will greatly weaken or even destroy Stalinist imperialism. Mr. Hoffman of ECA fame is fond of speculating on such a turn of events, and it is said that this is one of the reasons he opposed the militarization of the Marshall Plan which presumably led to his resignation.

No better illustration of the significance of the new policy can be found than in what has happened to the Marshall Plan. Although in the inter-

ests of American imperialism, and part of the policy of Stalinist containment, it did nevertheless eschew military policies and it had made some progress toward improving standards of living in Western Europe and achieving a more rational and integrated economy. Now all this has been abandoned under the impact of the mobilization program. As *The New York Times* correspondent, Michael L. Hoffman, expresses it in his dispatch published on October 13: "Time and again in the past few weeks this correspondent has heard European economic officials of various nationalities say with an actual or figurative shrug of the shoulders that *as the United States seemed to have lost interest in everything except rearmament, each country had better start looking out after itself in economic matters.*" (My italics—T. N. V.) In fact, the article was headlined "Europe's economy edges to autarchy."

The political reception that the new American policy has received in Europe and Asia, especially Asia, is anything but favorable. But it is its economic causes and effects that are the key to the shape of the world after the end of the Korean war.

THE IMMEDIATE ORIGIN OF THE economic pressures that have pushed American imperialism into its new course, which is without historical

precedent for a democratic capitalist nation, lies in the phenomenal expansion of the productive forces during World War II and the virtual maintenance of this level of production *during the last five years*. This development has not only been contrary to the expectations of the bourgeoisie but also, let us admit, unexpected by most Marxists. Here our analysis will be helped by making reference to some statistical measures, even if they are considered as but crude approximations.

We start with the fact that production increased about 12 per cent a year during World War II, from 1939 to 1945. In other words, total output was some 72 per cent higher when the war ended than when it began. This can be seen by examining the figures\* for national income and national product of the Department of Commerce as published in the *Survey of Current Business* (the latest revisions are contained in the issue of July 1950).

National income and product figures are, of course, estimates, but they are the only dollar figures that attempt to portray the productive performance of the economy. Without entering into current controversies among the national income specialists, and granting that important conceptual and statistical problems are involved, we are concerned only with basic trends which are not altered even if the margin of error in the fig-

\*WARTIME GROWTH OF OUTPUT  
(Millions of Dollars)

	1939	1945	% Increase Current Dollars	% Increase Constant Dollars*
National Income .....	\$72,532	\$182,691	152%	84%
Net National Product .....	83,238	202,800	144	78
Gross National Product .....	91,339	215,210	136	72

\*Calculated by deflating the 1945 current dollar figures by the rise in the BLS wholesale price index, which rose from 77.1 in 1939 to 105.8 in 1945—a rise of 37.2 per cent yielding a deflator of 27.1 per cent.

ures is sizable. Fundamentally, gross national product is larger than net national product by the inclusion of capital depreciation and depletion. That is, the net value of current production ought not to include the consumption of capital as this is already reflected in the final prices of commodities on the market. Net national product is larger than national income chiefly due to the inclusion of indirect business taxes and liabilities, i.e., sales and excise taxes, etc., thus affecting the evaluation of government services.

We have based our conclusion about the wartime growth of output on gross national product because, while the BLS wholesale price index is the best single indicator of price changes throughout the economy, it undoubtedly understates to some extent the degree of wartime inflation. A sounder procedure would have been to deflate separately each component of gross national product, but the work involved would not be justified by appreciably greater accuracy in the results. And for our purposes it is of relatively minor importance whether real output increased by 60 per cent, 70 per cent or 80 per cent during the war.

As a matter of fact, the Federal Reserve index of industrial production, which is based on physical volume, tends to confirm our analysis. This index, by far the most comprehensive of all industrial production indexes, rose from 109 in 1939 to 203 in 1945, a rise of 86 per cent. The Federal Reserve index, however, definitely overstates as a measure of total output in wartime because of the relatively large weight assigned to war industries in its composition.

We are therefore content to rest with the figure of 72 per cent as the wartime increase in total output. How

was this huge increase in production achieved? Initial impetus, of course, was provided by the availability of significant quantities of idle resources, including over nine million unemployed. There then occurred a surprising increase in the total employed labor force which, including both the civilian and armed force sectors, rose from over 45 million in 1939 to about 64 million in 1945, a rise of roughly 40 per cent. Even without the armed forces of almost 12 million, the employed civilian labor force still rose by about seven million workers, who worked for longer hours and whose productivity was increased by a huge expansion in productive capacity largely as a result of the enormous government expenditures for plant and equipment. In other words, the wartime expansion in real output was made possible essentially by an increase in capital accumulation and in the supply of labor power, in roughly equal proportions.

Had the wartime increase in the total labor force largely evaporated with the cessation of hostilities and had the wartime increase in capital been totally unsuited for peacetime use or, to the extent that it was unadaptable, had it not been substantially replenished by new, peacetime accumulations of capital, the level of activity of the economy would have reverted to prewar output, with consequent depressing effects. This did not occur, contrary to many expectations, because government expenditures were maintained at high levels, partly for war purposes, and American imperialism decided to support the recovery of the economies of Western Europe as part of the policy of containment of Stalinist imperialism and as a means of increasing the market for the products of American capitalism. The entire process, of course, was

nourished by the backlog of accumulated consumer demands in the domestic market which, in turn, were supported by the tremendous level of private savings.

THE SAME PROCEDURE THAT WAS used to calculate the wartime increase in output shows that postwar output is currently almost at the levels achieved at the end of the war. It is true that our calculations yield an 18 per cent decline in real output in the last five years, but the decline in the last four years is only 5 per cent. In other words, more than two-thirds of the relatively small decline that has occurred took place in 1946, in the first postwar year before the menace of Stalinist imperialism became apparent to the leaders of the American bourgeoisie. Perhaps a planned reconversion would have averted the decline of 1946 but it must be remembered that the dominant elements within American capitalism at that time were basing all their plans and policies on a return to the status quo ante bellum.

It must be emphasized that the achievement of these extremely high levels of production occurred prior to the outbreak of the Korean war. For example, the Federal Reserve index was at 201 in July 1950 compared with 203 in 1945. Since then it has risen sharply, but at that level it is 14 per cent above 1949 and 5 per cent above 1948, the previous postwar peak. The labor force data show that the wartime peaks have been equaled. For June 1950 the employed civilian labor force was estimated (September 1950 issue of *Monthly Labor Review*) at 61,482,000. When the derived armed forces figure of 1,311,000 is added to this figure, the total employed labor force becomes 62,793,000 or close to the 64 million figure reached in war-

time. There is, of course, the vast difference that the wartime figure included 12 million in the armed forces whereas the current pre-Korean armed forces figure is only slightly over 1,300,000. In other words, more than 9 million have been added to the employed civilian labor force since the end of World War II. These figures help to explain why Washington is so concerned about manpower shortages as the mobilization program unfolds, but they also reveal, in spite of the shorter work week, a goodly portion of the reason why postwar output has been maintained at almost wartime levels.

The other part of the postwar story of high level production and employment is to be found in the extremely rapid rate of private capital accumulation, the figures for which are even more pregnant with meaning for the future than the manpower data. The following tabulation, based on the Department of Commerce data, graphically reveals the picture:

POSTWAR CAPITAL  
ACCUMULATION  
(Billions of Dollars)

Year	Gross Private Domestic Investment	Net Foreign Investment	Total Private Gross Capital Formation
1946	28.7	4.6	33.3
1947	30.2	8.9	39.1
1948	43.1	1.9	45.0
1949	33.0	.4	33.4
1950 est.*	46.0	-2.0	44.0
POSTWAR TOTAL	181.0	13.8	194.8

\*Based on estimates for first and second quarters of 1950 as contained in August 1950 SURVEY OF CURRENT BUSINESS.

Thus, in the five postwar years American capitalists have accumulated on a gross basis about 195 billion dollars, or an average of 39 billion dollars annually. This represents about 16 per cent of the postwar annual gross national product, a truly staggering percentage, especially when we remember that this growth in capital accumulation occurred with the economy already operating at peak levels due to the war.

If we wish to measure the net additions to private capital formation (i.e., the net additions to plant, equipment, construction, and business inventories, or constant capital as Marx would have put it), we have to subtract the postwar consumption of capital from gross private domestic investment. This is a field in which the experts always disagree as it involves depreciation, treatment of business reserves and accounting practices. It is clear that the maximum it can be, using the Department of Commerce figures, is the difference between what is termed "net national product" and "gross national product," or about \$83 billion. This would mean an average postwar annual capital consumption of over \$16 billion, which appears to be excessive, and is accounted for not only by the rapid amortization that was permitted of wartime plants but by the inclusion of "statistical discrepancies" and other uncertain quantities in the figures. It is noteworthy, however, that even on a net basis without any adjustment the annual rate of capital investment in the postwar period is 10 per cent, a rate that has not taken place in peacetime since the 1920's. With proper adjustments, the percentage of net capital formation to net national product would appear to be about 12 per cent annually, which even exceeds the period 1919-1923, the five years following World War I.

All current reports testify to this unprecedented accumulation of capital, the material base for American imperialism. For example, a report of the Securities and Exchange Commission for the second quarter of 1950, which is summarized in *The New York Times* of October 12, states "that the net working capital of United States corporations reached \$73,800,000,000 at the end of June." No wonder, then, that a National Association of Manufacturers analysis of the postwar financing of business, the findings of which are summarized in *The New York Times* of October 16, is able to state: "Retained earnings were an important source of new capital," although this admission is then qualified, "but this resulted from a relatively low level of dividends rather than from high profits." We would not expect the N.A.M. ever to admit that business is making "high profits," but without passing judgment on current arguments between management and stockholders as to the proper distribution of profits, the fact of the matter is that American business has never accumulated such profits as it has in the postwar period.

IT IS PRECISELY THE RECORD ACCUMULATION of capital that makes so interesting the figures for the "net foreign investment" component of national product. Net foreign investment represents the net changes in claims against foreign countries and is affected principally by the net private balance of foreign trade and the net flow of long-term capital abroad. Thus, in the words of the August 1950 *Survey of Current Business*, "The negative balance of net foreign investment—arising from the substantial excess of Government grants over the current export surplus—remained (for the second quarter of the year) at approxi-

mately \$2 billion, at an annual rate."

While perhaps too much significance should not be attributed to the absolute figures, the trend—rapidly accelerating after the end of the war through 1947 and rapidly reversing itself from 1948 to the present—portrays the entire tragedy of modern capitalism in the constriction of the world market and a paucity of opportunities for profitable foreign investment of surplus capital. The most recent figures on the net outflow of private long-term capital show the pathetically low levels to which American imperialism has sunk (from the September 1950 issue of the *Survey of Current Business*):

NET OUTFLOW OF PRIVATE LONG-TERM CAPITAL (Millions of Dollars)	
III Quarter 1949.....	192
IV Quarter 1949.....	147
I Quarter 1950.....	227
II Quarter 1950.....	76
TOTAL.....	642

In other words, a mere 642 million dollars represents the total net export of capital by American imperialism during the past year. For the same period, the net outflow of Government long-term capital amounted to \$162 million, or 25 per cent of the private total. Even on a gross basis, discounting the total inflow of capital into America from abroad, the private total for the past year is only \$1,434,000,000.

With capital accumulation proceeding at the all-time record rates described above, it is clear that the point where the American economy would be choked by surplus capital was rapidly being approached. The Point Four program, in particular, has been designed to establish a climate favorable to the investment of American capital abroad, but Truman has

turned out to be just as fortunate as Roosevelt in the matter of having an aggressive foreign imperialism turn up at just the right time to make all sections of the American bourgeoisie unite in supporting an expanding "national defense" program.

War outlays will more than substitute for the inadequacies of the Point Four program. They will relieve a number of economic and political pressures, although in turn creating others. Just how high they will go remains to be seen, but Secretary of the Navy Matthews is reported in *The New York Times* of October 13 as saying, "the cost of operating the national military establishment alone next year might exceed this year's entire national budget. That would be more than \$42,000,000,000." There will, of course, be differences of opinion within the ruling class as to the degree of preparation that is required. And it makes quite a difference to many industries and many sections of the capitalist class whether, say, 10 per cent or 25 per cent of the national product is devoted to direct war outlays.

An interesting statement of the perspective involved was made recently by Francis Adams Truslow, president of the New York Curb Exchange, as reported in *The New York Times* of September 26: "This war, or time of preparation, is not a specific all-out effort, but is perhaps almost a *new way of living which we must endure indefinitely.*" (My italics—T. N. V.) It should not escape our attention that this "new way of living" will operate on a world scale and that it is only another name for what we have called the Permanent War Economy. Its nature and impact are of the greatest importance, but will require a separate article or articles to analyze in any meaningful form.

T. N. VANCE

# The Constituent Assembly in Russia

## New Study Supports Bolshevik Analysis

There lately appeared a little monograph\* which reports the fruits of an exceptionally thorough study of the 1917 election for the Russian Constituent Assembly. Written by a scholar with an anti-Bolshevik bias, sponsored by Professor Karpovich of Harvard, himself an emigre and an old member of the Right S-R's (Socialist-Revolutionary Party) it is astonishing how the arsenal of facts arranged and analyzed by the author fully supports the classic Bolshevik analysis of the Assembly.

Radkey's work is based on a study of the three previous important investigations, by the S-R statistician, Sviatitski, by Lenin, and, years later, by the Archives of the October Revolution, plus additional material extracted by him from libraries as far apart as Moscow, Prague, Paris, Harvard and Stanford. Some of the returns first unearthed by him are valuable in showing the distribution of political strength in areas not previously accounted for.

The author's willingness to give credit where credit is due, in view of his own expressed fundamental antipathy toward Bolshevism, is indicated by his judgment of Lenin's analysis: "He conscientiously sought in the figures the lessons they contained for his party, whether flattering or otherwise, and his deductions constitute a thorough and penetrating analysis of the results."

What were these results, in brief form? In the election as a whole the Bolsheviks received 9,844,637 votes

and the S-R's, the tremendous non-Marxist populist party, 15,848,004 votes, out of a total of 41,686,876. Thus the Bolsheviks, in an election held shortly after they had led the seizure of power, obtained only 23 per cent of the total vote. On the other hand, parties which claimed to be socialist—that is, Bolsheviks, S-Rs, Mensheviks, Ukrainian S-Rs, etc.—obtained altogether over 80 per cent of the vote, despite the presence of plenty of bourgeois lists to choose from!

Thus the election demonstrated the overwhelming desire of the worker, soldier and peasant masses for a basic social change, but equally demonstrated that in Russia as a whole the Bolshevik Party did not by itself have majority support. But although the peasants were reluctant to transfer their allegiance away from their traditional party, the SR's, they were not reluctant about supporting that left wing of their party which in Petrograd, for example, had participated in the seizure of power, and was everywhere, in the local soviets, advocating support of the new Soviet power.

THE S-R PARTY WAS IN THE PROCESS of splitting at the time the elections took place and Bolsheviks have always pointed to the Congress of Peasant Soviets, meeting several weeks after the Constituent elections and assembling representatives of hundreds of local soviets, as an indication of the way the S-R's actually divided. At this Congress the small Bolshevik minority established collaboration with a Left S-R majority that voted to support the Soviet power. The Right S-R's were

snowed under in two weeks of democratic discussion. The evidence of the Peasant Congress has always been accompanied by the Bolshevik contention that the S-R lists for the Constituent elections, being made up months in advance, in view of geographical necessities, were overloaded with the old public figures of the Party, mostly in the right-wing, and that, therefore, the S-R deputies elected to the Constituent on these united lists were not representative of the views of the peasant voters. In sum the Bolsheviks contended that if the S-R split had taken place in time for separate Left and Right lists to campaign throughout the country, the Constituent would have had a majority coalition of Bolsheviks and Left S-R's. And it is true that if we divide the sixteen million S-R votes in these elections in the same proportions as the Left and Right S-R's divided at the Peasant Congress (about two to one in favor of the Left), the vote of Bolsheviks plus Left S-R's would come to 49 per cent of the total, which, in view of scattered votes and the existence of a few additional small pro-Soviet groups, would give the Soviet coalition an easy majority.

It is therefore gratifying to find that Radkey endorses fully the notion of the unrepresentative character of the S-R lists (p. 72): "The election, therefore, does not measure the strength of this element [the Left S-R's—S. B.]. The lists were drawn up long before the schism occurred; they were top-heavy with older party workers whose radicalism had abated by 1917. The people voted indiscriminately for the S-R label. . . . The leftward current was doubtlessly stronger everywhere on November 12 than when the lists had been drawn up. . . . The writer's judgments are based on his unpublished dissertation, 'The Party of the

Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Russian Revolution of 1917' (Harvard University, 1939)."

One thing that does not occur to Radkey in his study is that the Bolsheviks never recognized the validity of the will of an assembly in which a majority was based on the inclusion of nationality groups that desired independence. The Russian Bolsheviks in the days of Lenin and Trotsky took the principle of self-determination of nationalities seriously. Therefore, to them an insurrection of the *Russian* masses could not be proved a minority coup d'etat by adding to the conservative Russian minority the votes received by nationalist parties in the Ukraine, Armenia, Georgia, etc. These countries were free to secede unless a native movement arose and received the people's support for a program of federation with Soviet Russia.

HOWEVER, WE HAVE INDICATED that the Bolsheviks and Left S-R's probably had the support of a majority of the *entire* electorate, Russian and non-Russian. If one merely eliminates predominantly non-Russian regions, leaving in only the results on Russian areas, including scattered non-Russian minorities within these areas, one finds that the Bolsheviks by themselves now have 26 per cent of the total vote and that our theoretical Bolshevik-Left S-R combined total, calculated the same way as previously, rises from 49 per cent to 57 per cent! In addition, there were two national minority areas, those of the Letts and of the White Russians, where the Bolsheviks had an absolute majority, so that these two peoples would of their own choice have joined and further strengthened the Soviet regime.

On the basis of Radkey's statistical studies it will now appear totally ludicrous if anti-Bolsheviks continue to

\*The Election to the Russian Constituent Assembly of 1917, by O. H. Radkey. Harvard University Press 1950. 89 pp. \$2.00.



claim that the Soviet government of January 1918, based democratically on locally elected soldiers, workers and peasants soviets, which were multi-party in composition, should have considered the Constituent Assembly that then convened, with its majority combination of Right S-R's who no longer represented anyone and minority nationality representatives who wanted independence, as entitled to exclusive sovereignty, partial sovereignty, or any consideration whatever other than the treatment they received. A body that meant nothing laid claim to sovereignty over the Russian people—it could only be dispersed. Actually, despite occasional phrases about Bolshevik "despotism," Radkey can't help admitting the conclusion his studies point to (p. 2): "Lenin dissolved the Constituent Assembly by force. . . . Of more fateful significance was the fact that while the democratic parties heaped opprobrium upon him for this act of despotism, their following showed little inclination to defend an institution which the Russian people had ceased to regard as necessary to the fulfillment of its cherished desires."

PERHAPS EQUAL IN INTEREST to students of the Russian Revolution is Radkey's breakdown of the election results in the various provinces and in various local situations, because of the light it sheds on the tempo of revolutionary development and on the problems involved a month before the election in the armed insurrection spearheaded by the Petrograd Soviet. In the immediate sense the revolution was made by two forces—the workers and the soldiers. The soldiers themselves, like the bulk of the Russian people, were peasants—but peasants with a speeded-up revolutionary education through their disgust with the

war and their contact with the class-conscious urban proletariat. The Bolsheviks never claimed that they needed a sanctified 51 per cent counting of noses in the whole vast, chaotic country to have the right to overthrow the entirely undemocratic hand-picked Provisional Government of Kerensky. Furthermore, they faced the danger that if they did not act in October to satisfy the urgent pressure of the workers and soldiers, and postponed the insurrection until their agitation had penetrated deeper into the countryside, the revolutionary tide in the advanced centers would bog down in demoralization and the insurrection would become impossible. The decision of the Petrograd Soviet to take power, therefore, meant that the workers and the advanced peasants (the soldiers) would take the lead in the nation and complete the development of the rest of the peasantry by actually carrying out *in life* the agrarian reform that the Right S-R's had always promised, but never executed.

In Radkey's figures can be discerned the confirmation of this whole picture with astonishing consistency:

1) Moscow and Petrograd—In each case the Bolsheviks received almost 50 per cent, and the much smaller Left S-R's enough to give the two parties combined a majority. The Right S-R's and Mensheviks in these centers of the whole struggle are naturally almost extinguished, the whole opposition vote going to the bourgeois Kadets (Constitutional Democrats).

2) Rural provinces near Moscow and Petrograd—Absolute majority for the Bolsheviks *alone*, since these provinces are near enough for the workers' and soldiers' agitators to have canvassed them thoroughly. Since there is almost no bourgeoisie outside the cities, the S-R's get the rest of the votes.

3) The Army and Navy (except garrisons, which voted in the provincial elections wherever they were stationed)—The Bolsheviks received an overwhelming majority on the Northern and Western Fronts and in the Baltic Fleet. On the Southwestern and Rumanian Fronts and in the Black Sea they were only a substantial minority—these areas are farther away from contact with the big Russian cities, and also have a much larger proportion of non-Russian soldiers. Except for the nationality parties, the S-R's get the rest of the votes.

4) Esthonia, Latvia, White Russia — Topheavy absolute Bolshevik majority in the latter two and over 40 per cent in Esthonia. These areas were most affected by the agitators in the Northern and Western Armies and were likewise nearer to the revolutionary centers than were other national minority areas. Here, therefore, Bolshevism actually penetrated and conquered "pure" nationalism.

These were the areas where the October Revolution found its strength, but let us not forget that the areas where national minorities voted nationalist were also, in October, centrifugal forces weakening the Provisional Government which had denied them independence. Thus, for example, if we were to take the most important of all, the Ukraine, and divide up its votes in the sense in which they would have had political meaning on the eve of the insurrection, we would have the following:

Nationality parties .....	4,895,529
Bolsheviks .....	859,330
S-R's .....	1,597,363
Mensheviks, Kadets and minor Russian parties....	640,983

When we make our customary appraisal of the majority of the S-R votes as being really Left S-R, we see

that practically the whole of the Ukraine had been opposed to the Provisional Government on the basis of either desire for national independence or support of social revolution. The same held true in Armenia, Azerbaijan and even among the Moslem minorities scattered through the Volga and Ural regions. The sole exception was Georgia, the stronghold of Menshevism, but here the Menshevik vote only serves as a sharp reminder of the total extinction of Menshevik influence among the Russian masses. We find that if we omit Georgia, the Mensheviks received 2 per cent of the vote in all Russia! What a striking indication of the radical polarization of the population! Only five months before they had been the equal of the Bolsheviks in urban voting strength. Now they had been wiped out in what Radkey calls elections unpressured by Lenin's government *in any respect*.

Also striking is the fact that the relations between Petrograd-neighbor-ing provinces-remote provinces are perfectly mirrored *inside* the remote provinces when you examine the relations between garrison town-nearby peasant villages-distant vil-lages. Radkey gives a number of ex-amples of the vote in S-R strong-holds in the "black earth" region. In the town the garrison votes Bolshe-vik, the shopkeepers Kadet or Men-shevik. In the nearby villages the peasants, though thousands of miles away from the center of events, vote Bolshevik because the garrison sol-diers have reached them with their message. As you travel farther away from the town, the S-R's dominate the villages. In *either* case the peasant was voting for the same thing — the agrarian revolution.

The sweep of the revolution was also demonstrated by the total lack

of influence of the Orthodox Church. Everywhere votes for Orthodox lists were almost nil. Even more strikingly, in remote regions of the Urals where the Old Believer sects were strong, the majority of the peasants voted S-R or Bolshevik and boycotted the Old Believer lists, despite their fanatical religious attachment to these sects.

In short, in every sphere the statistics bear witness to the living force of the Russian Revolution. In every sense Radkey's study is a new weapon in the hands of revolutionary socialists with which to defend the October Revolution against either dishonest or misinformed critics.

SAUL BERG

## Lenin's Way — or Tito's Way?

### *Tito's Revolution Measured by the Principles of 1917*

Writing in June, 1919, Lenin spoke of the newly established Soviet Republic as follows: "A more democratic state, democratic in the true sense of the word, a state more closely connected with the toiling and exploited masses, has *never existed before*."\* Particularly in his polemics against "the renegade Kautsky" written at this period, Lenin emphasized the democratic nature of the Russian revolution and the regime it produced by not only scornfully rejecting the "hypocritical and limited" democracy of the liberal bourgeois regimes which Kautsky had come to support, but, more importantly, by defending the Soviet regime on its own democratic merits and values. Lenin was never content to prove the democratic character of the Workers' Republic by contrast with other régimes; he demanded that it be judged as it actually was, as it functioned and lived.

We are now informed, in certain quarters, that a new Workers' Republic, Yugoslavia, now exists and that socialists the world over should take heart from it. This great new "Workers' State," is in danger, threatened by what these same quarters designate as another "Workers' State," although

\*Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. IX, p. 445, his emphasis.

somewhat degenerated. A devoted, but somewhat naïve Trotskyist comrade from the island of Ceylon who recently visited Yugoslavia and who, in a series of amazingly sycophantic articles put in her bid to the title of "Anna Louise Strong of Yugoslavia," has rung the alarm: "If the genuinely revolutionary forces do not rally to the defense of Yugoslavia, one of the great perspectives opened up for the world working class since the Russian Revolution of October 1917 will be choked out by the falsifiers and revisionists in the Kremlin." (*The Militant*) The cold indifference of the world working class to the plight of Marshal Tito should have made this comrade pause and think twice, but apparently not. The fact of the matter is that these articles of Vivienne Goonewardene, together with other writings of the pro-Titoist elements now to be found in left wing, socialist circles are far more revealing about the authors' thinking, political demoralization and utter lack of comprehension of what constitutes socialism than about anything else.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS ARTICLE is to contrast the structure and functioning of the Russian Workers' State, under the Bolsheviks and Lenin and

Trotsky, with the Yugoslav "Workers' State," under the Yugoslavian Communist Party (YCP) and Tito. An unfair and invalid comparison? Comrade Goonewardene, evidently foreseeing such an effort, warns us that, "To try to discover in the Yugoslav movement the same organizational forms that arose in October 1917 in Russia is to waste time in abstract theoretical argumentation." To be sure, this author does believe in her own rather empty observation since she has assured us in the preceding paragraph that, "The national liberation committees organized by this People's Front [in Yugoslavia] . . . could be defined as Soviet forms." Whether this is the case we shall see later, but no matter—we obligingly accept the observation that slavish imitation of Russian organizational forms is not required to establish a Workers' State. Factory councils in Germany, the shop stewards' movement in England, trade union committees in other lands — Lenin recognized all these as legitimate expression of workers' power. We, too, are interested in the *political and social content* of the forms described, not in their organization or structure. A reading, or a re-reading, of those volumes of Lenin's *Selected Works* (Vols. VII, VIII and IX) dealing with the actual formation and building of the Soviet State in its earliest years, is not only a remarkable and refreshing lesson in what constitutes the life and essence of socialism, *in practice*, but it should prove to be a sobering refresher to those hypnotized by Titoism. The differences between the two régimes "leap to the eyes."

BUT LET US GET DOWN TO PARTICULARS. In what respects do the respective régimes differ? And what evaluation must be made of these dif-

ferences? Why must we reject the conclusion of another Trotskyist, Gerard Bloch, whose writings on this subject are the most ignorant and insolent of all, that, "The attitude toward Yugoslavia can become just as decisive a touchstone for judging revolutionary organizations as was the attitude toward the October Revolution thirty years ago?" (*Fourth International*, July-August, 1950) A contrast between the regime set up by the Russian Bolsheviks, a genuine Workers' State which set out to build a socialist society, and the regime of Tito as it operates and functions today should not only provide answer to the vulgar Titoist worshippers of the so-called Trotskyist movement, but other and more serious comrades of the revolutionary movement engaged in studying this problem.

The nature, feel and quality of the regime set up by any alleged workers' or socialist movement is clearly the essence of the matter. The actual and concrete structure of the regime — its state institutions and organs, its administrative bodies, its constitution and electoral apparatus etc. — must be examined as they are since such an examination offers many clues as to the *direction* in which the regime itself is moving. A socialist analysis cannot avoid judgment on this question of direction, *i.e.*, are the essential requirements for creation of a classless, socialist society being prepared? The testing method has been provided for us by Lenin who, in summing up the objectives of the Russian regime, wrote as follows:

Our aim is to draw the *whole of the poor* into the practical work of administration. . . . Our aim is to ensure that *every* toiler, after having finished his eight hours 'lesson' in productive labor, shall perform state duties *gratis*. . . . (*Selected Works*, Vol. 7) (Lenin's emphasis)

Why this emphasis upon popular taking over of administration by the masses? To begin with, Lenin felt that it was precisely this *lack and shortcoming* among the Russian masses, due to the country's general backwardness, inexperience with democracy and its forms, low cultural level etc., which offered one of the greatest sources of infection and danger to the continued health of the Workers' State. Over and over again in his writings of this period we find him warning and chiding the workers and poor peasants about their unwillingness, or hesitation with regard to the "administration of things and affairs." Take this well-known and characteristic remark of his:

Very often delegations of workers and peasants came to the Soviet government and asked what to do with such and such a piece of land, for example. . . . And I said to them: you are the government, do as you please, take all you want, we will support you, but take care of production, see that production is useful. Take up useful works, you will make mistakes, but you will learn. (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 7, pg. 278.)

His articles and speeches of the period of War Communism, the NEP epoch and after are replete with the same simple theme: run matters in your own interests, depend upon your own initiative, the state is yours, and yours alone is the task of building socialism, etc. There is no question whatever that he was guided by the basic socialist philosophy so brilliantly expressed by Marx and Engels in one of their earlier works which, despite later modifications and changes in both language and refinement of thought, still constitutes a guide to the essence of socialism. After explaining that human progress now demands as a safeguard the appropriation of productive forces, Marx and Engels point out that those who do the "appropriating" will determine its nature.

Only the proletarians of the present day, who are completely shut off from all self-activity, are in a position to achieve a complete and no longer restricted self-activity, which consists in the appropriation of a totality of productive forces and in the thus postulated development of a totality of capacities.

Up until now, all appropriations have only achieved a "new state of limitations." That of the working class, however, must be different:

In all expropriations up to now, a mass of individuals remained subservient to a single instrument of production; in the appropriations by the proletarians, a mass of instruments of production must be made subject to each individual and property to all. (*German Ideology*, pp. 66-97.)

And, contrary to the usual reactionary description of socialism as the crushing of the individual into a dull, grey pulp, as well as to emphasize their previous view, Marx and Engels added:

With the community of revolutionary proletarians on the other hand . . . it is just the reverse; it is as individuals that the individuals participate in it. It is just this combination of individuals . . . which puts the conditions of the free development and movement of individuals under their control. . . . (*ibid.*, p. 75.)

Sufficient, then, to establish this great and yet simple truth regarding the nature of socialism which all too many comrades, disoriented and demoralized by many factors, appear to have forgotten. We note in passing that not a word appears in any of these writings we have quoted to the effect that "nationalization of industry" constitutes the basis for either socialism or a Workers' State!

But we have not yet gotten down to particular cases. Enough of these abstract and ideal generalities. Was there "self-administration on the part of the popular masses in Russia?" Was "socialist democracy the common property of all?" And are both "self-administration" and "socialist democ-

racy" the common property of the Yugoslavian people? This is what concerns us.

PRECISELY HOW DID THE RUSSIAN revolutionists go about the task of realizing Marx's principle of socialism as a free association of producers, themselves directly managing and controlling production? The great instrumentality of popular administration of the new state was, of course the *Soviet*, that most popular and democratic body of the masses whose role Lenin declared to be to ". . . organize and administer the state in every possible way." (*Selected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 134) The Soviets and their related institutions (Councils of National Economy, Executive Committees of local, urban and rural Soviets, gubernia and city Soviets of Workers' Soldiers' and Peasants', Soviets of the Village Poor, etc.) were actual state organs and the "sole form of state power." For Lenin, the Soviets were ". . . the proletariat organized as the ruling class," holding, exercising and maintaining full state power. In an analysis of workers' participation in the country's administrative bodies (December, 1920), Lenin revealed that 61.6 per cent of the following major Soviet bodies directly concerned with production and management of industry was made up of workers: Presidium of Supreme Council of National Economy and Gubernia Councils of National Economy; Collegiums of Chief Committees, Departments, Central Boards and Head Offices; Collegium and individual managements of factories. (*ibid.*, p. 60) It must be borne in mind that all these bodies, committees, etc. formed a part of the vast pyramidal conglomerate of Soviet administrative bodies, elected on a free basis by the masses of people.

In notes entitled, "Rough Draft of

Rules for the Administration of Soviet Institutions" we note once more Lenin's constant concern with popularizing and strengthening the Soviets. This is what he proposed in 1918:

With a view to combating red tape and more successfully discovering abuses and also exposing and removing dishonest persons who have penetrated Soviet institutions, the following rules are established:

Every Soviet institution must display outside as well as inside its premises, in a manner visible to all without having to obtain passes, notices indicating on what days and at what hours the public may attend. The premises in which people are received must be so arranged as to be freely accessible without any necessity of obtaining passes.

The public shall be received also on Sundays and holidays.

The Commissariats for Labor, State Control and Justice shall organize everywhere information bureaus, which shall be freely accessible to all without having to obtain passes and free of charge, and which must also be open on Sundays, the said Commissariats widely to inform the public on what days and at what hours these bureaus are open.

It shall be the duty of these information bureaus, not only to give all information asked for, orally or in writing, but also to draw up free of charge written declarations for persons unable to write or unable to draw up such declarations clearly themselves. It shall be obligatory to enlist for the work of these bureaus representatives of *all parties* eligible for representation on the Soviets, as well as representatives of parties which are not represented in the government, and also representatives of the non-party trade unions and non-party unions of the intellectuals. (*ibid.*, pp. 450-453.)

In other words, the Soviets were bodies functioning as the state power in all fields; bodies to which workers, peasants and other members of the population as a whole could come and present their problems, proposals, etc. to people in whose choice and election they themselves had participated. This was the essence of Soviet democracy. Freedom of press,

freedom of speech, the right of assembly, etc. for the masses of people were exercised through the Soviets and their related institutions. In this article we are not, of course, immediately concerned with the question of what happened to the Soviets, *i.e.*, their death and destruction under the Stalinist regime; we are drawing a contrast between the early days of the Russian Revolution and Yugoslavia today.

And what are the corresponding administrative bodies in Tito's country? We do not demand an aping of the Soviet forms; we do demand that the supporters of Tito, those who insist upon his régime's socialist character, show us a corresponding class institution which, as the "sole form of state power" expresses the rule of the proletariat, poor peasantry and the masses.

*They cannot do this because no such institution or its equivalent exists in Yugoslavia.* On this fact and this fact alone we could rest our denial of the socialist nature of the Tito régime. The total absence of democratic organs of popular rule excludes the possibility of socialism in the country and justifies our contention that Yugoslavia is of the same general type of régime as Stalinist Russia.\* But, we shall hear at once, what of the famous Yugoslavian "Committees of National Liberation?" Don't these fulfill the requirement you demand? Are they not the organs of popular power in the country, cor-

\*A note of warning to those who think that this statement means that the two régimes are exactly alike and parallel in every detail. This is not our thought at all. It is, again, a question of **direction and movement**. The Tito régime follows the Stalinist path of development; it is approximately where the Stalin régime was in the early 1930's and obviously could not have reached the same "perfection" as that of its big brother.

responding to a Soviet system? Let us see about this.

Tito would have us believe this! In an article entitled "The Political Foundations of the People's Democratic System," Interior Minister Georgescu stated that, "Through the organs of the people's power and the new state machine, the people's democratic state can successfully carry out the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat." Appropriating many of the familiar arguments of Trotsky, the Titoist leadership carries on a constant campaign against "bureaucratism" and in favor of a "greater initiative on the part of the masses." Curiously, however, this virulent campaign is directed solely against the bureaucracy of another country, the USSR! There it is an organic disease; in Yugoslavia it is limited to poor administrative techniques or rude and faulty officials of the state.

But aside from this, what of the claim that the "Committees of National Liberation" function as organs of popular power and thereby fulfill the role of Soviets? Is there any truth in this? *Absolutely none*, and we shall quote Louis Dalmas, one of the most serious and staunchest defenders of the Tito régime in evidence. Dalmas claims that since 1942, these "Committees" have functioned as the state power, first in a dual power capacity during the period of nationalist struggle against the German occupation, and later as the full state power itself. But, as Dalmas points out, these "Committees" have undergone an evolution during this process! First, the total purging of all non-Titoist elements, bourgeois and radical. Many socialist comrades, utterly confusing the issue, justify these purges on the grounds that they were directed largely against "bourgeois and monarchist" elements, conveniently ignor-

ing the fact that these elements were already thoroughly discredited and had no support in the country, and the more important fact that Tito wiped out revolutionary socialist, moderate socialist and national minority opposition at the same time, while laying the basis for his one-party state régime. The purges were the means by which the new state base was set up; this was its true function. By November, 1945 (we again quote from Dalmas), the Titoist Popular Front "bloc" was ready to receive 96 per cent of the votes in the election held that month. All was ready for the final and decisive step which emasculated, once and for all, the "Liberation Committees" and made them routine appendages of the new Titoist state.

In 1946, this final operation took place. We again depend upon Dalmas who does not seem to grasp the facts he presents. By decree of the Central Committee of the Yugoslavian Communist Party (YCP), a discussion on the role of the "Liberation Committee" was called to a halt and the YCP "... reorganized our State apparatus as well as all the economic institutions." (*Les Temps Modernes*, March, 1950) Note well that *after* the purge of all non-Party elements, bourgeois or radical, the Party by decree "reorganized our State apparatus." We ask Dalmas and his friends: how could the Party reorganize the State apparatus *if it were not already that State apparatus itself?* If the "Liberation Committees" had been the "organs of state power," as you maintain, how could such a "reorganization" from outside have been possible? The answer is obvious—the "Committees" never held state power, never functioned in any other way than as organs for the YCP. When Tito had used them, he purged them of both their form and content

and "reorganized" them as adjuncts to the new "state apparatus" set up by the Party. After 1946 (or rather, since 1946), the "Committees" have been nothing but political fronts to forward the work of the economic, political and social institutions of the state machinery created by Tito.

LACKING THE BASIC ELEMENT of socialist democracy, *i.e.*, popular state organs of workers and poor peasants—it is only consistent that all other institutions and policies of the Titoist régime should be dominated by the same spirit of bureaucratic totalitarianism. We shall consider some examples of this, without exhausting the field.

Addressing delegates of the Moscow trade unions and factory councils, Lenin spoke as follows:

Your factory committees must cease to be merely factory committees; they must become the fundamental state nuclei of the ruling class. (*Selected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 411.)

And in his famous polemic against Trotsky on the trade union question, consider the role Lenin gave to the unions:

... protection of the material and spiritual interests of the entirely organized proletariat. (*ibid*, p. 9.)

Our present state is such that the entirely organized proletariat must protect itself, and we must utilize these workers' organizations for the purpose of protecting the workers from their own state, and in order that the workers may protect our state. Both forms of protection are achieved by means of the peculiar interweaving of our state measures with our agreement, our coalescence with our trade unions. (*ibid*, pp. 9, 10.)

How is this role fulfilled?

But the trade unions are not state organizations, not organizations for coercion, they are educational organizations, organizations that enlist, that train; they are schools, schools of administration, schools of management, schools of Communism. (*ibid*, p. 4.)

The heart of Trotsky's error, says Lenin, is his failure to grasp that:

... the trade unions are a school of administrative-technical management of production. . . . trade unions are a school, a school of unity, a school of solidarity, a school for learning how to protect one's interests, a school of management, a school of administration. (*ibid*, p. 68.)

According to the program of the Bolshevik Party, the trade unions had a highly significant function to perform:

... the participation of the trade unions in the management of economy and their drawing the broad masses into this work are the principal means of combating the bureaucratization of the economic apparatus of the Soviet government and render possible the establishment of genuine popular control over the results of production. . . . they must eventually actually concentrate in their hands the entire management of the whole of national economy as a single economic unit. (*ibid*, pp. 73-4.)

Workers' Control over production in Russia meant, "control, supervision, accounting and the distribution of goods" by the working class and its institutions. The famous thesis of Rudzutak on the tasks of the trade unions in production, which Lenin defended against Trotsky, outlines in great detail the tasks, powers and responsibilities of the unions as they function side by side with the state economic management bodies. It is much too lengthy to quote here, but we refer our readers who may be interested in studying this account of the functions of a genuine trade union in a Workers' State to Lenin's *Selected Works*, Vol. 9, pp. 23-26.

What is the story regarding workers' control, trade union authority, factory councils, etc., in Titoland? Our informant Dalmas assures us that no conflicts exist between the unions and the various bodies of state planning. In seeking to assure us of the "harmonious relationship" between workers and State, Dalmas gives away the

entire story because, as Lenin explained in his polemics with Trotsky in a backward, unindustrialized, primitive, overwhelmingly peasant country, such as Yugoslavia (Dalmas points out the striking social resemblances between the two countries after their respective "revolutions"), it is impossible to dissolve entirely the sources of conflict between the State and the masses since these sources lie precisely in the general backwardness. Unless Yugoslavia, in a mere five years, has advanced at such an astounding speed toward socialism that all conflicts have been resolved, Dalmas' statement is absurd on the face of it. The simple truth is that the conflicts are repressed and kept down by the bureaucratic and oppressive state apparatus of the régime. In five years, for example, no one has ever heard of a single workers' strike in a single Yugoslavian factory!

But, we shall indignantly hear, what of recent measures regarding workers' control, etc.? Are you not ignoring the many progressive measures taken by Tito, particularly the "epoch-making new law" adopted by the Yugoslav National Assembly (unanimously) which introduced workers' control and management of all industry? According to this law, Workers' Councils are to take over the administration (planning of work, bookkeeping, records, etc.) of the national economy. Workers' Councils, elected by direct secret vote of all workers and employees of factory, mine or other enterprise (so the law says), will be responsible for the appointment of Management Boards on which Trade Union representatives will also sit. This, said Marshal Tito in his speech to the National Assembly, together with the program of decentralization of the state apparatus, marks the "beginning of the wither-

ing away of the state in Yugoslavia." (*Yugoslav Newsletter*, June 26, 1950) It contrasts with the Soviet Union where, as Tito informs us, "Soviet workers take no part in the running of the factories, a function still performed by state-appointed directors." *Voila!*

Our eager critics should think the matter over a moment or two. To begin with, they should at least wait a decent period to see how this newly-adopted law actually looks in practice and in operation. Will critical and oppositional candidates be permitted in the elections? Will they have a press to express themselves in? (There is no opposition press in the country, as Dalmas admits.) Just how will the Workers' Councils function? These, and other questions, cannot be answered yet since no material or evidence exists, but any trained Marxist knows that the complexion of a régime does not automatically change with the passage of a new law.

More important, it has never been our contention that a régime, constructed along anti-democratic and authoritarian lines, moves forward in a constantly hardening line of naked and brutal repression. Particularly when confronted by external threats, such régimes often make concessions to the people and this law is unquestionably an important juridical concession to gain popularity. How it works out, we shall see in the future; meanwhile, we retain all our skepticism, particularly upon examining the law a little more closely than its enthusiastic supporters. The *Yugoslav Newsletter* quoted above declares that, "The bill does not eliminate state functions in the management of the economy completely, but it does, however, render them less inclusive (?); they will, furthermore, be decreased as workers take a growing part in man-

agement." This elastic formulation of "state functioning" is deliberate, indicating the state bureaucracy will manipulate this law as conditions require. It does not mean the end of state management of production, but merely its modification and adaptation because of changed circumstances. This is further illustrated in the remarks of a worker of the Ivo Lola Ribar plant near Belgrade who remarked, according to the government *Yugoslav Bulletin* (July 7, 1950):

We Yugoslav workers are proud that we are the first workers in the world who have been entrusted with the management of the factories, mines and other industrial enterprises we work in. This will without doubt be the basis for new achievements in work.

Entrusted? By whom? The state, which can recall its trust at will, can it not? The whole move must be greeted with the utmost skepticism and distrust. It emanates from above (the state), and has no deep roots below (the workers and their independent institutions). Furthermore, such a law enacted without a simultaneous creation of a democratic atmosphere, having freedom of discussion and expression, guaranteed rights to a critical and oppositionist minority among the workers, an opposing press, etc., can have little meaning. That basic proletarian democracy which does not exist in all the institutions of the state or party or class cannot be suddenly injected, from above, into one of the institutions.

PEOPLE'S COURTS AND RELATED JUDICIAL bodies were one of the features of the Russian Revolution. In these courts, the trade unions played the leading role as a study of the Soviet decree, "Regulations Governing Workers' Disciplinary Comrades' Courts," November 14, 1919 (Code of Laws No. 537) will indicate to the student of

revolutionary law and discipline. Particularly in questions of labor discipline (desertion, lateness and absenteeism, etc.), the trade unions themselves were considered to be the only correct manner in which justice and firmness could be properly administered. Contrast this with the basic juridical system prevailing in Yugoslavia, as described in the *New York Times*: A "People's Assessors" system has been instituted. Lower courts now have two "People's Assessors" sitting together with a state-appointed career judge. The lists of nominees for "People's Assessors" were drawn up by the party (YCP), and then presented to the labor unions for approval by a show of hands. It should be added that in the field of civilian law and application of justice, this same type of court—a typical state court—exists, in contrast to the "Workers' and Peasants' Courts" which the Bolsheviks established in addition to and apart from the above-mentioned Workers' Disciplinary Courts.

The story of the Red Army is too familiar to bear repetition here. Its method of democratic organization, election of officers, etc., have often been commented upon, particularly during the revolutionary days of Trotsky's leadership. Suffice it to say that by contrast, the Yugoslavian army, with the Marshal himself at its head, can stand no comparison and is organized exclusively after the Stalinist model in the Soviet Union. Resorting again to our chief source of information about Yugoslavia, Louis Dalmas, we cite his remarks that the "Liberation Committees" have no control or power, according to constitutional law, over either the army or the police (*Les Temps Modernes*, April, 1950, p. 1833). Both these institutions are under the centralized authority of the respective top state bodies and minis-

teries. We note in passing that the UDBA, State Secret Police, has 40,000 recognized members, according to Dalmas.\*

WE COME AT LAST TO WHAT IS PERHAPS THE KEY and most telling contrast of all: the question of the Party. It is not necessary here to review the decisive significance the Party had for Lenin, or the development of the Russian Revolution. What concerns us is the role Lenin felt the Party should play in strengthening the Workers' State and building socialism. Perhaps it is no better summed up than in his speech on "The Party Crisis," where he simultaneously warned that a split between the Party and the Russian trade unions in which the Party was in the wrong would certainly result in the overthrow of the Soviet government in Russia:

Communism says: The vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party, leads the non-Party masses of the workers, educates, prepares, teaches and trains the masses (the "school" of Communism), first the workers and then the peasants, in order that they may eventually concentrate in their hands the entire management of the whole of national economy. (*Selected Works*, Vol. IX, p. 35.)

The Party was, in other words, the driving force behind the Revolution and the animating factor in all the new, untried institutions created by this event. Vanguard though it was,

\*For the sake of brevity, we are omitting many other secondary features such as differentials in wages, the role of specialists, etc. We cannot avoid a comment, however, on the claim that the various nationalities within the Federated Republic (Croats, Slovenes, etc.) enjoy full freedom within the framework of the Federation. Dalmas, less naive than others on this point, refers to various "rights" transferred down to the federal republics by the House of Nationalities; he does not imply, as do others, that among these "rights" is the most fundamental right of all: that of the right of separation and secession from the Federation. It simply does not exist.

in the sense that it expressed the roundest, clearest and most far-sighted point of view on the great social and economic problems of the day, it could not possibly exist apart from the workers and peasants who had made the revolution. Precisely at a moment in 1921 when Lenin felt the Old Guard of the Party was already tending to become a "privileged veneer" in the country, he proposed a new influx of proletarians into the Party because this was the source of health and life. At the same time, democracy, freedom of discussion, the countering of opposing or varying viewpoints, etc., were considered absolutely vital. Here is an example of how opposing groups within the Party were treated, during the period of the Party's greatest creative vitality:

... We started the widest and freest discussion. The Platform of the "Workers Opposition" was published in 250,000 copies in the central organ of the Party. We weighed it up from all sides, we elected delegates on the basis of this platform, and finally we convened this congress ... (*ibid*, p. 130.)

Or, to again illustrate the organic ties between Party and mass, consider Lenin's remarks on "Purging the Party," written in September, 1921, when the Party underwent a review of its entire membership:

In some places the purging of the Party is proceeding mainly with the aid of the experience and suggestions of non-party workers; these suggestions are being heeded, and the representatives of the non-party proletarian masses are being treated with due consideration. This is the most valuable, the most important. If we really succeed in *this manner* in purging our Party from top to bottom, "without respect for persons," the gains for the revolution will really be enormous.

The toiling masses have a fine instinct for the difference between honest and devoted Communists and those who arouse a revulsion of feeling in one who obtains his bread by the sweat of his brow, who

enjoys no privileges and who has no "open door to the chief."

Purging the Party with the aid of the suggestions of the non-party toilers is a great thing. It will give us important results. It will make the Party a much stronger vanguard of the class than it was before; it will make it a vanguard that is more strongly linked with the class. . . . (*ibid*, pp. 253-294.)

What a pitiful picture Marshal Tito's monolithic morass makes by contrast!

As long as our revolutionary Party leads them (the masses—HJ), no one will be able to effect such a change (return to capitalism—HJ). And none of the leaders would try to do so, for they are leading a people and a Party from which Comrade Tito and the other leading comrades emerged. As long as Tito's heroic heart is beating, as long as the hearts of his comrades from the period of struggle for the development of the Party are beating, etc., etc. . . . (*On New Roads of Socialism*, Milovan Djilas, Belgrade, 1950, p. 14.)

The Byzantine tone, the nauseous glorification of the chiefs and lesser chiefs, the air of infallibility, the emphasis on the all-exclusive role and leadership of the Party—all are characteristic of that vast historic phenomenon we associate with Stalinism; counter-revolution, not revolution. Let us review briefly the history and nature of the Yugoslavian Communist Party, again utilizing our chief source of information, Louis Dalmas.

Tito has headed the YCP since the year 1937; thirteen years as chief of the Party. He succeeded to the leadership during the period of the infamous Moscow Trials and was reputed to be one of the staunchest and most loyal of Stalinists. That is to say, he was trained, educated and rose to power as a bred-in-the-bone Stalinist; his entire political and personal psychology and way of thinking was—and remains—Stalinist. More important, as Dalmas recognizes (*Les Temps Modernes*, March, 1950) he has brought along

with him to the summits of state power a group of supporters and loyal admirers who have worked hand in glove with him for a dozen years or more. A majority of the present Political Bureau of the YCP has held this post for a dozen years or more, through all the developments and events calmly following, without dissent or opposition, the leader who expresses their own cravings and desires. The whole history, evolution and methodology of the YCP is typically Stalinist—periodic purges of unknown and voiceless “enemies,” glorification of the top leadership, concealment of any and all disagreements from the masses. It is a Party completely without the illuminating history of any serious discussion or disagreement, comparable to the famous discussions of the Russian Bolshevik Party. It always wears the same face, same leadership, same unanimity.

What constitutes the support and composition of this party? Undoubtedly, a section of the working class and the poor peasantry—particularly if the Titoist state has given them certain responsibilities and privileges such as we have indicated throughout this article. More important—and perhaps the driving force behind its unquestioned social dynamism—is the youth—working class, middle class and peasant youth alike. The illusion of glorious prospects of development (including, for some, their material realization in the form of absorption into the State machine); the appeal to national pride in all forms; the release from parental and family restraint, etc.—all these factors have made it possible for Tito to rally much of the nation's youth and energy behind him.

As for the true Party, the top Party, this consists of the old and tried cadres with twelve to fifteen years of Stalinist-cum-Tito training behind it; the

army and police officers; the diplomats, journalists, official ideologues; and, most recent of all, the newly formed cadres running the nationalized industries, state stores and organs of distribution, state collective farms, etc. All have in common one thing: they hold, manage, control and direct the levers of command. This is the true portrait of the Party of Tito.

THE CONTRAST WE HAVE DRAWN HAS had one simple objective: to deny the contention of those who find a progressive parallel between Yugoslavia today and the early Workers' Republic of Russia and who call the land of Tito either socialist, democratic or proletarian. By no means do we claim to have drawn a final or detailed outline of the new state itself. One could, for example, write quite a revealing study of the foreign policy of Titoism, not merely detailing the peculiar diplomatic history of the regime but—and this is infinitely more important—analyzing the internationalist propaganda of Titoism and its approach to the international workers' movement. Again, a striking dissimilarity would become clear. The revolutionary, internationalist propaganda of the Bolsheviks, directed toward aiding and supporting the spread of the revolution, cannot be contrasted with the sickly, narrow-nationalist and bureaucratic approach of the Titoists and their foreign press. Throughout all of it (and there is a good deal of it!) runs the same thread and theme; protect *our* regime from Stalin and his Comintern; save *our* State; do not let them destroy us. Its appeal is an effort to mobilize popular support for the preservation of the Titoist bureaucracy, their government and their privileges. It has not a single genuine internationalist tone in it, and is thoroughly demagogic.

In drawing our conclusions, we must also warn against any idea that we have tried to draw a black-and-white picture of contrasts between Russia and Yugoslavia. Not at all. The very fact that, for example, Lenin's writings of the period are filled with the harshest criticisms against his own regime indicates how clearly he understood the vast gap between ideal and reality. Bureaucratism, lack of popular initiative, already existent tendencies on the part of the Old Guard to demand privileged positions and conditions—all these well-known features were not only conscious to Lenin's mind, but his various proposals, some of which we have mentioned, were put forward in order to remove these distortions of the Workers' State. To a great extent, what is involved is the “spirit of the matter,” which influences the direction and development. The Soviet Republic was permeated by the spirit of popular democracy and all its numerous institutions likewise. Lenin, both political and spiritual head of the Republic, set the pace

and tone in his writings, speeches and proposals. Regardless of what happened later, the direction in which the new Republic moved was socialist.

The complete absence of any popular democracy, socially, politically and administratively, indicates for us that the direction in Yugoslavia is away from socialism and Workers' Statism. It is not a regime in which the masses are the ruling class. Those who think in terms of a popular evolution of the regime along democratic lines with a relaxation of restraint are the most deceived of all. Since the regime is founded upon a *denial* and *destruction* of popular state organs, self-administered by the masses, it must follow that it can never make such a leap as the turning over of state power to such organs as would negate its own continuation. The regime, in a word, must seek self-perpetuation; *i.e.*, must retain, strengthen and eternally hold on to that state power which it now has in its grasp. This is the essence of the matter.

HENRY JUDD

## Verdict on the Moscow Trials-II

### Accused Indicts Accusers Before Dewey Commission

(Concluded from last issue)

We come now to the testimony of Vladimir Romm, the journalist, who testified that he received instructions from Trotsky personally in the Bois de Boulogne in the latter half of July 1933, or perhaps at any time between July 24 and October 31, 1933. Trotsky produced evidence that he was not in Paris at all during this period. He arrived in France on July 24, 1933, disembarked from the ship “Bulgaria” which brought him from Turkey, and went by motorboat to

Cassis, from which he proceeded direct to St. Palais, spending one night en route and remaining at St. Palais without interruption until October 9, 1933. Neither could Romm have seen Sedov in Paris during the second half of July, 1933 as he claimed because Sedov was not in that city during this period, having gone on to see his father and mother and he did not return to Paris until the last day of July or the early part of August. Romm's testimony was false and so was everything else that followed in

the trial based on this testimony. In addition, neither Sedov nor Trotsky ever knew Romm!

How did it happen that the GPU slipped up on this one, too? It evidently deduced from the fact that Trotsky's baggage was addressed to Paris and several members of the entourage had gone on to the nation's capital—a diversion deliberately decided upon by Trotsky and his party—that Trotsky must have actually gone to Paris. They did not check to see whether this was so. As a result Trotsky was able to present a complete file of letters, depositions, articles, and other material evidence to show that Romm was a liar, rather, that the GPU had invented the whole business of a meeting with Romm.

The testimony of Valentin Olberg that he was sent to Russia by Sedov and Trotsky to organize the underground and terrorist activity, was even more interesting. It appeared credible because he did in fact have contact with Sedov, exchanged letters with Trotsky and was known by other members of Trotsky's organization in Germany. But everything else in his testimony was false according to letter files of that period.

Olberg pretended to be a Left Oppositionist and as such volunteered, because of his knowledge of Russian, to act as secretary to Trotsky in Turkey. Trotsky inquired of his friends in Berlin about the worthiness of this person. He received a letter from Franz Pfemfert and Alexandra Ramm, close friends, though not Trotskyists, on April 1, 1930, stating:

... Olberg made the most unfavorable impression it is possible to conceive. . . . I had already taken a seat in my workroom . . . when he asked a few such tactlessly formulated questions that I had to answer with a few counter-questions: When did you come to Germany? (Answer: I have been living here for a

long time.) What is your occupation? (Answer: I worked until January with the editorial staff of the *Imprecorr.*) I really already had enough. I was painfully impressed by the fact that a man who had just left the service (whole discharges for the purpose of rationalization) and therefore until now had been at least passively . . . a Stalinist, was changing so quickly, and trying with all signs of a sensation-hungry journalist to explore confidential matters about T. and the Opposition in general . . . O. has no business there (in Turkey) because within twenty-four hours he would prove himself an unbearable burden to you; certainly later too. Because he would work up his visit into "volumes," if indeed he didn't work it up into reports to the GPU.

This was enough for Trotsky, who thereafter shunned the suspicious Olberg. Sedov, on his part, would not permit Olberg to know where he lived. The latter had already lied to people about his associations with the Trotskyist movement and was completely untrusted by Trotsky's Berlin friends. It is therefore not strange that Olberg should show up as a star witness in the trials, for he had all the qualifications for being a GPU spy.

Olberg did in fact make trips to Russia. How did he manage to get past the borders of this closely guarded country? He had a Honduran passport which he used to travel to Russia in order to kill Stalin on Trotsky's orders! Where did he get the passport? Through a Tukalevski, director of the Slavonic Library of the Prague Foreign Office, and through the aid of his brother Paul Olberg. Valentin asserted that his brother Paul was "an agent of the Fascist secret police." Why wasn't Paul called as a witness? He was in Moscow, and from the indictment it was clear that he was in jail, "still being investigated." It would seem that if the GPU had a real case and not a trumped-up one, Paul Olberg would have been put on

the stand to give testimony on how he got this Honduran passport for his brother Valentin, what connections he had with Trotsky, if any, and so on. Even so, it is still left unexplained how the GPU, perhaps the world's most skillful forger of passports, did not detect that Valentin had a faked passport upon entering Russia not once, but twice. The conclusion is inescapable that Olberg was an agent of the GPU and everything surrounding his testimony a rank swindle.

In the light of the above citations, it is no wonder that the "Summary of Findings" of the Commission of Inquiry was a stinging rebuke to the Moscow Trials. We trust that our readers will bear with us as we reproduce this Summary which in simple declarative terms asserts Trotsky's and Sedov's innocence of at least twenty-one of the basic charges of the Kremlin prosecutors. In finding Trotsky and Sedov innocent, the Commission established the innocence of those defendants who were Lenin's lifelong friends and political associates. Here then is the summary referring to the main accusers and the charges against Trotsky and Sedov:

"Independent of extrinsic evidence, the Commission finds:

#### "CONDUCT OF THE TRIALS

"(1) That the conduct of the Moscow Trials was such as to convince any unprejudiced person that no effort was made to ascertain the truth.

(2) While confessions are necessarily entitled to the most serious consideration, the confessions themselves contain such inherent improbabilities as to convince the Commission that they do not represent the truth, irrespective of any means used to obtain them.

#### "THE CHARGES

(3) On the basis of all the evidence,

we find that Trotsky never gave Smirnov any terrorist instructions through Sedov or anybody else.

(4) On the basis of all the evidence, we find that Trotsky never gave Dreitzer terrorist instructions through Sedov or anybody else.

(5) On the basis of all the evidence, we find that Holtzman never acted as go-between for Smirnov on the one hand and Sedov on the other for the purpose of any terrorist conspiracy.

(6) We find that Holtzman never met Sedov in Copenhagen; that he never went with Sedov to see Trotsky; that Sedov was not in Copenhagen during Trotsky's sojourn in that city; that Holtzman never saw Trotsky in Copenhagen.

(7) We find that Olberg never went to Russia with terrorist instructions from Trotsky or Sedov.

(8) We find that Berman Yurin never received terrorist instructions from Trotsky in Copenhagen, and that Berman-Yurin never saw Trotsky in Copenhagen.

(9) We find that David never received terrorist instructions from Trotsky in Copenhagen, and that David never saw Trotsky in Copenhagen.

(10) We find no basis whatever for the attempt to link Moissei Lurye and Nathan Lurye with an alleged Trotskyist conspiracy.

(11) We find that Trotsky never met Vladimir Romm in the Bois de Boulogne; that he transmitted no messages through Romm to Radek. We find that Trotsky and Sedov never had any connection with Vladimir Romm.

(12) We find that Piatakov did not fly to Oslo in December, 1935; he did not as charged, see Trotsky; he did not receive from Trotsky any instructions of any kind. We find that the disproof of Piatakov's testimony on



this crucial point renders his whole confession worthless.

(13) We find that the disproof of the testimony of the defendant Piatakov completely invalidates the testimony of the witness Bukhartsev.

(14) We find that the disproof of Vladimir Romm's testimony and that of Piatakov completely invalidates the testimony of the defendant Radek.

(15) We find that the disproof of the confessions of Smirnov, Piatakov and Radek completely invalidates the confessions of Shestov and Muralov.

(16) We are convinced that the alleged letters in which Trotsky conveyed alleged conspiratorial instructions to the various defendants in the Moscow Trials never existed; and that the testimony concerning them is sheer fabrication.

(17) We find that Trotsky throughout his whole career has always been a consistent opponent of individual terror. The Commission further finds that Trotsky never instructed any of the defendants or witnesses in the Moscow Trials to assassinate any political opponent.

(18) We find that Trotsky never instructed the defendants or witnesses in the Moscow Trials to engage in sabotage, wrecking and diversion. On the contrary, he has always been a consistent advocate of the building up of socialist industry and agriculture in the Soviet Union and has criticized the present regime on the basis that its activities were harmful to the building up of socialist economy in Russia. He is not in favor of sabotage as a method of opposition to any political regime.

(19) We find that Trotsky never instructed any of the accused or witnesses in the Moscow Trials to enter into agreements with foreign powers against the Soviet Union. On the con-

trary, he has always uncompromisingly advocated the defense of the U.S. S.R. He has also been a most forthright ideological opponent of the fascism represented by the foreign powers with which he is accused of having conspired.

(20) On the basis of all the evidence we find that Trotsky never recommended, plotted, or attempted the restoration of capitalism in the U.S. S.R. On the contrary, he has always uncompromisingly opposed the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and its existence anywhere else.

(21) We find that the prosecutor fantastically falsified Trotsky's role before, during and after the October Revolution.

#### "CONCLUSIONS

(22) We therefore find the Moscow Trials to be frame-ups.

(23) We therefore find Trotsky and Sedov not guilty.

John Dewey, *Chairman*

John R. Chamberlain

Alfred Rosmer

E. A. Ross

Otto Ruehle

Benjamin Stolberg

Wendelin Thomas

Carlo Tresca

F. Zamora

Suzanne LaFollette, *Secretary*

John J. Finerty, *Counsel,*

#### *Concurring*

Against these memorable findings of the Commission of Inquiry, the Stalinists except for some vulgar rantings, have never been able to offer the slightest refutation. They are *the* verdict on the Moscow Trials!

#### V

As we have said above, the trials determined the way in which the Mexican hearings would develop. In the very nature of the charges in-

vented by Stalin, the testimony of Trotsky could not but encompass political history and theoretical ideas and disputes surrounding them, his personal biography, relations with the opposition and answers to questions which did not bear directly upon the issues of the trial. In this way, "The Case of Leon Trotsky" is even more fascinating for the way in which a series of new pictures are taken of him. The questions and answers cover a broad field of politics and history, and often draw out of Trotsky expressions of his personality not otherwise obtainable in the ordinary course of political relations with him. It is this which is so striking as one reads the developing testimony. And we shall present these pictures in the manner of successive slides which emphasize the above remarks.

Could Trotsky have been an agent of a foreign power for the purpose of accepting their aid in assuming leadership of the Russian state? In the bourgeois conceptions of power this would be reasonable. History is full of such examples—the ruling regime of one nation assisting a specific group of the bourgeoisie to power in another country. Is this consistent, however, with a socialist policy? Beals, the Commissioner who resigned during the hearings and under dubious circumstances, tried to insinuate this with a question relating to the Brest-Litovsk treaty. If Lenin's government was ready to cede territory to Germany in order to retain power "would not your attitude be the same," asked Beals, "that you would sacrifice Soviet territory if it enhances the return of your group to power to implant the socialism which you believe more correct?" To which Trotsky replied:

I believe that the only way possible to materialize the ideas of socialism is to win the masses and educate the

masses, win them to the vanguard and to create a new regime by their will, their conscience, their devotion to their ideals. That is the only possibility. I have no others. The other means, which contradicts this education of the masses, is doomed beforehand. If I enter into relations with fascists and the Mikado, I am not a socialist, not a revolutionary, but a miserable adventurer. And if this accusation is proved to be true and correct, then I lose all. What can I have, except the power of my ideals for socialism? I compromise my aim, my ideal, myself. It is so contrary to all my Marxist education, to all my past—forty years' work in the masses and through the masses—if I can conceive of the possibility of such an indictment. When I read this book (The Verbatim Report of the Moscow Trial—AG) for the hundredth and first time, I have the impression of reading Dostoyevsky.

One of the questions which repeatedly arose in the hearings was that of democracy and bureaucracy. The Commissioners were not Trotskyists, and with the exception of Otto Ruehle, a biographer of Karl Marx, and Alfred Rosmer, were not socialists. They were, however, deeply concerned with what happened to the Russian Revolution, the post-revolutionary regime and the growth of bureaucraticism. To this problem Trotsky gave several answers. They are not complete answers, of course. The very subject remains today in a state of investigation, study and analysis. But Trotsky provided some evidence of the direction of his thought in the matter, answers which came spontaneously to his lips. In reply to a question on whether the bureaucratic degeneration had its roots in the early years of the revolution, Trotsky stated:

During Lenin's time? Yes, I can only repeat what I said. I believe we did what we could to avoid the degeneration. During the Civil War the militarization of the Soviets and the Party was almost inevitable. But even during the Civil War I myself tried in the army—even

in the army on the field—to give full possibility to the Communists to discuss all the military measures. I discussed these measures even with the soldiers and, as I explained in my autobiography, even with the deserters. After the Civil War was finished, we hoped that the possibility for democracy would be greater. But two factors, two different but connected factors, hindered the development of Soviet democracy. The first general factor was the backwardness and misery of the country. From that basis emanated the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy did not wish to be abolished, to be annihilated. The bureaucracy became an independent factor. Then the fight became to a certain degree a struggle of classes. That was the beginning of the Opposition. For a certain time the question was an internal question in the Central Committee. We discussed by what means we should begin the fight on the degeneration and the bureaucratization of the state. Then it became not a question of discussions in the Central Committee, but a question of the fight, the struggle between the Opposition and the bureaucracy. That was the second stage . . .

Later on in the hearings, a repetition of this discussion became inevitable. The following exchange took place between Mr. Finerty and Trotsky.

FINERTY: In the Socialist State, Mr. Trotsky, the state controls the forms of production, does it not?

TROTSKY: Yes.

FINERTY: The sources of production and the methods of production?

TROTSKY: Yes.

FINERTY: And in order to have an effective control, the state itself must employ technicians. Isn't it then inevitable in a Socialist state that the bureaucracy will grow up automatically?

TROTSKY: What do you name a Socialist state? The Socialist state is a transitory form which is necessary to prepare to build up the future Socialist society. The Socialist society will not have any state.

FINERTY: I understand that. But in the intermediate form of the Socialist state, you have an inevitable bureaucracy.

TROTSKY: It depends on two factors which are in connection with one another. The productive forces and the

power of the country. It is the function of the new regime to satisfy the material and moral needs of the population. Secondly, and what is connected with it, the cultural level of the population. The more the population is educated, the easier it is that everyone can realize the simple functions of an intermediary regulation of distribution. The bureaucrat in a cultivated, civilized country has not the possibility of becoming a half-god.

FINERTY: Demi-god.

TROTSKY: Demi-god, yes.

FINERTY: What I mean is this: It is obviously impossible in a Socialist state, as an intermediary organization, to have a democratic control of industry. I mean, a truly democratic control. It must be a bureaucratic control.

TROTSKY: I repeat, the relationship between the bureaucracy and the democracy depends—the elements of bureaucracy are inevitable at the beginning, especially because we inherited all the past, the oppression and misery of the people, and so on. We cannot transform it in twenty-four hours, this relationship. Here the quality is transformed into quality. The relationship between them depends upon the material prosperity and the cultural level of the population. . . . I cannot accept that formula as a Marxist. The first period of the Socialist state is the victory over the bourgeois state. That is the formula of the Marxists—until the time we have reached a state to satisfy freely, as with a *table d'hote*. The rich people have a *table d'hote*, wines and jewels. It is not necessary to have a dictatorship when you have a *table d'hote*. On the contrary, everybody gets the same things, especially the ladies. When the table is poor, everybody forgets whether it is a lady or a man. He will take all he can. Then it is necessary to have a dictatorship. The reason for the existence of gendarmes is the misery of the people. In other words, the economic condition has a basic influence on this question. . . . A few moments later, the examination takes on a somewhat different and extended form:

RUEHLE: I would like Trotsky to express himself on the basic differences between administration and democracy.

TROTSKY: In two words: It is the difference between—

RUEHLE: (through interpreter): Rather, bureaucracy.

TROTSKY:—servant and collectivity. A cooperative, a workers' cooperative organization has also administrators, but they are not demi-gods, simply functionaries. The chief of the GPU is not a simple functionary. He is somewhat of a demi-god, or three-quarters god. (laughter) It depends upon the quality of the members and upon their general cultural level.

FINERTY: Then, Mr. Trotsky, whether or not it is an inevitable incident of a Socialist state, or a variant of a Socialist state that there be a bureaucracy, there is a tendency, unless it is controlled that the bureaucracy will grow up.

TROTSKY: The growth of bureaucracy in the Soviet Union is the reason of the backwardness of the Soviet Union and its isolation.

GOLDMAN: The result.

TROTSKY: Result, yes. If the workers of Germany had won power in 1918 during their revolution, the economic combination of Soviet Germany and Soviet Russia would have given formidable results on the economic and cultural basis of these two countries. This terrible bureaucracy could not have a place in the Soviet Union. It is not a Soviet Union of an abstract principle. The material factors and the ideological factors are determinant. I am sure that the proletarian dictatorship in a more cultivated and civilized country would have an absolutely different appearance; and the notion of the dictatorship would have a different sound to our ears, in a more cultivated country.

DEWEY: And Russia, the Soviet Union, was a backward and undeveloped country, historically?

TROTSKY: Yes.

DEWEY: Then, in the Soviet Union, it was necessary that the bureaucracy grow up.

TROTSKY: Yes, insofar as the Soviet Union remained isolated. With the help of more advanced peoples it could have—or could shorten the period of bureaucracy and attenuate it.

One can see from the above discussion, that the highly important question of the single party or multiple parties under a workers' state would

arise as well as other general questions of democracy. Trotsky had informed the Commission of the early fight of the Left Opposition against the bureaucracy, its first demand for the secret vote inside the Party, in the Soviets, the trade unions and different enterprises. Mr. Finerty then asked: "You advocated the secret vote beginning with, I believe, 1926-27?"

TROTSKY: Then, freedom of speech, discussion and criticism against the bureaucracy. Then, the abolition of the civil paragraph in the penal code, by which the bureaucracy tries to stifle the workers, the more critical workers. That is the gradation of the measures which we proposed in our platform.

What about the question of parties? Dr. Dewey drew attention to "The Revolution Betrayed" where Trotsky had stated that classes are heterogeneous, are torn by inner antagonisms and arrive at "the solution of common problems not otherwise than through an inner struggle of tendencies, groups and parties." And Dewey asked: "Now, when you wrote that, then you had become convinced of the necessity of different parties?"

TROTSKY: The development of the Russian proletariat consisted in the struggle among three parties, the Menshevik, the Social Revolutionary and the Bolshevik. The Bolsheviks won the overwhelming majority during the Civil War, and in spite of that we permitted the existence of other parties. Only when the Civil War began, when the most decisive elements of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionary took part in the Civil War on the other side of the barricades, we prohibited them. It was a military measure, not as a permanent step.

After some important digressions to which we shall return, Mr. Finerty took up the above question once more in order to help the Commission understand more fully the views of its witness.

FINERTY: Restating what you said earlier this morning, in reply to Dr.

Dewey, would you think that the two-party system in Russia or the Soviet Union, would have a tendency to restrain bureaucracy?

TROTSKY: The two-party system?

FINERTY: Yes; make democratic control more possible?

TROTSKY: I believe it is a bit of an abstract question in the sense that we cannot introduce two parties under the dictatorship of the Stalin oligarchy. It is necessary to prepare the arena for two parties—I don't know, maybe three or four. It is necessary to smash away the dictatorship of Stalin. It can only be done by an upheaval of the people. If this upheaval—if this new political upheaval is successful, the masses, with these experiences, will never permit the dictatorship of one party, of one bureaucracy.

It is tempting, indeed, to continue these exchanges, for they contain important ideas relating to quintessential problems of the present-day socialist movement, especially in view of the development of Titoism and the hasty rush of support which has come to him from the self-styled "orthodox Trotskyists" of the Fourth International. But space requires us to hasten on. The question of the nature of the Russian regime, whether it was a new class or merely a caste as Trotsky maintained, arose almost spontaneously in the hearings. The point is of extreme importance in view of the development of the theory of bureaucratic collectivism by the Workers Party and later the Independent Socialist League, which assigns to the Stalinist regime the attributes of a new class and the alternative theories of state capitalism, characterizing the regime as a capitalist class, and finally, the theory of a degenerated workers' state, giving the regime the cognomen of caste. It is at least interesting to observe Trotsky's modified and provisional views. As will be seen from his expressions they did not preclude the theory of bureaucratic collectivism at all. Up to

that point and even at the opening of the last war, Trotsky still adhered to the old theory, but did not close the door to a possible third alternative development.

FINERTY: Well, the dictatorship, whether for better or worse, is a dictatorship?

TROTSKY: Formally, yes. But my opinion is that in Norway, where the Government is Socialist, we have a genuine dictatorship of the shipowners. The state is governed exclusively by the shipowners. The Socialist government is a decorative ornament in this instance.

FINERTY: Now, I understand that your belief is that even such a democratic organization of the Communist Party and of the Soviet government as was possible within the limits of the theory of dictatorship (Dictatorship of the Proletariat—AG) has been set aside by Stalin through the means of the bureaucracy.

TROTSKY: Transformed into its contrary; not only changed, but transformed into its contrary.

FINERTY: Into its contrary?

TROTSKY: Yes.

FINERTY: In other words, it has become a purely bureaucratic government?

TROTSKY: Defending the privileges of the new caste, not the interests of the masses. Because, for me the most important criterion is the material and moral interests of the masses, and not only constitutional amendments. It is important, but it is subordinated in my conceptions to the real material and moral interests of the masses.

DEWEY: Might I ask one question? Just on what you said, did I understand that you hold that these privileges have reached a point where there are class divisions in the Soviet Union.

TROTSKY: It is difficult to get a strict social formula for this stage of development, because we have it for the first time in history, such a social structure. We must develop our own terminology, new social terms. But I am inclined to affirm that it is not a genuine class division.

We again ask that our readers note carefully the language used by Trotsky: "difficult to get a strict social formula . . . we have it for the first time in history, such a social structure

. . . we must develop our own terminology . . . I am inclined . . ." Later on, Commissioner Stolberg asked:

STOLBERG: In your book, "The Revolution Betrayed," you insist that a new class is developing in Russia. You called it a caste. You do not speak of the class struggle—you speak of social antagonism, and so on. Is that because you accept the Marxian concept of the division into classes only in the sense in which they differ functionally, in reference to the means of production? Or do you believe that under Socialism there can be no valid practical basis for classes in the sense that no group can exploit another group? Because you say a caste might become a class if capitalist measures are really introduced. My question, is, can a caste become a class simply because through every means of political and cultural administration it exploits a great many people?

TROTSKY: I answered a simple question in this manner, that the social organism of the Soviet Union is unique. We don't have other examples. That is why it is very difficult to apply our notions, our sociological notions based on the past, to new formations. But I tried to do it with the necessary correctness. My idea is, that the ruling caste in the Soviet Union is an intermediary body between the small bureaucracy and the new ruling caste. It depends upon the events on a national as well as an international scale, whether this intermediary body will desire also to smash away the present basis and will be transformed into a new ruling class. The tendencies exist.

STOLBERG: Yes, but your conceptions of a ruling class—

TROTSKY: It is the forms of property. When they introduce an inheritance of their privileges, it will be a new ruling class.

Here again you observe Trotsky's extremely careful approach to the problem precisely because it was a new one and previous historical experience could not provide answers to the question of what this unforeseen phenomenon was. This was the year 1937. Much has happened since that time to enforce the conceptions developed by the ISL on the character

of the Russian regime and its approach follows closely the pattern expressed by Trotsky with considerable more certainty than he did. The intention of these remarks is not to declare that Trotsky would have adopted the ISL position of Russian society as a bureaucratic collectivist order, but they do reaffirm that the phenomenon is new and that old criteria could not provide a consistently accurate answer to the question: what is this social order?

Other questions of a more general nature brought interesting answers by Trotsky.

STOLBERG: Do you believe Socialism is inevitable?

TROTSKY: In so far as human progress in general is inevitable. By a cosmic catastrophe our basis for Socialism can be destroyed. In that general sense of world determinism, it is not inevitable. But in the sense of human progress, it is inevitable.

STOLBERG: I would like to ask one more theoretical question—or do you have other questions to ask, Doctor?

DEWEY: Go ahead.

STOLBERG: The class struggle, in the Marxian sense, is generated by the dialectic. The thesis today is capitalism; that it creates the working class—that is, the antithesis—and finally the Socialist revolution which is the synthesis. That is the Hegelian conception. Now, how will this dialectic work in the classless society in which there will be only the thesis and no antithesis?

TROTSKY: I hope, and my every hope is, that this perspective, that the course of thesis and antithesis will arise in our new socialist society, but not on a material ground—on the appetites, the human appetites—but on the ground of our ideological interests, of the arts, the sciences, philosophy, and so on. It will be an interestless—

FINERTY: You mean 'disinterested'?

TROTSKY: —permanent fight of human beings on this new, very high level. There is so much in "The Case" worthy of quotation that selection becomes difficult and somewhat arbitrary. But at least three additional

references are of exceptional interest. On the nature of a revolutionary international organization, it was unavoidable that reference should be made to the bureaucratization of the Comintern.

**RUEHLE:** Were you of the opinion that the specific methods of the Russian Revolution must be schematically and compulsorily carried by the Comintern into the rest of the world, and there become the ruling form of the class struggle?

**TROTSKY:** No. It was not the opinion of Lenin and myself. You can find in Lenin's speeches in the Congresses of the C.I. many severe and forceful characterizations of the idea that we Russians could impose our methods and our form of organization on other nations. In his last speech, in the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, Lenin devoted a certain part to this question. It was also my opinion that it is absolutely impossible to command the workers' movement from Moscow by telegraphic orders to sixty nations. This impossibility became more and more evident and the method of command was supplemented by the method of corruption and of bribery. One of the important differences—it was one of the important questions—of the fight since 1924 between Stalin and myself was where we protested against the bribery of the leaders of the workers' movement in the foreign country.

Finerty asked Trotsky a direct question on the subject of sabotage, whether it would not have been a practical political measure for discrediting and overthrowing the Stalin bureaucracy. Trotsky made the unequivocal reply:

No. From my Marxian point of view every progress is based upon the development of the productive forces of mankind, and of the nation in that case. Now, the overthrow of the bureaucracy by the people is possible only on a higher political cultural level of the people. It is necessary to raise the people, and not push them into the depths. By the disorganization of economy, we could create only the basis for social reaction. How can we hope then to vanquish the bureaucracy?

One final reference. It was certain

that the Commission would make reference to the Menshevik trial of 1931 and Trotsky's attitude toward it. Stolberg asked the question and Trotsky made an honest admission of error. He replied:

I must recognize that I took the trials seriously. It was a great error. I was in Prinkipo—it was in 1931—absolutely isolated from any political milieu. I had no illusions about the justice of the Soviet Union at that time, but on the other hand I knew that the Right Wing Mensheviks, such as Maisky, the present ambassador in London, such as Vyshinsky, the prosecutor, such as Troyanovsky, the ambassador in the United States—they genuinely took part in the struggle in the Civil War against us. I admitted that it was possible to know about a plot of such a kind as was discovered. I didn't study the trial at that time. I was very busy with my history of the October Revolution, and I admitted that the trial was more or less correct. It was a great error on my part.

## VII

The final session was the high point of the hearings. It was devoted to Trotsky's closing speech, and lasted for five hours. The speech, 115 pages long in the book, is one of Trotsky's greatest orations. With a skillful employment of the dialectic and logic, he examines the evolution of the Stalinist terror, the evolution of the system of frame-up trials, the stupid amalgams of the GPU, the brutality of the regime, the contradictions of the evidence, the factual blunders, the coarseness and rudeness of the prosecutors, in the first instance the vulgar Vyshinsky, and finally ends with the charge that Stalin had murdered the old guard of the Bolshevik Party, Lenin's companions and comrades. A reading of the speech makes a powerful and lasting impression upon the reader. But it was even more exciting to hear this speech at the hearings. This was the dramatic moment.

None of the audience had ever heard Trotsky make a speech. They knew by his reputation that he was one of the greatest orators in the history of the world labor and socialist movement. Now they had the opportunity to hear him and to observe, even if in a modified way, his tremendous power. Trotsky read his speech in English while sitting at his table. One could feel his great nervous tension and sense his desire to rise and walk and gesture, as he developed theme after theme to refute the verdict of the trials. Listening to Trotsky speak, one could hear the rising inflections, sharp emphases, brilliant timing and great irony as he made one telling point after another.

When he finished, the hushed audience suddenly broke out into cheers and applause. They knew they had witnessed a rare event, a moment of historical greatness.

If the Russian trials and those of its satellites are received by the world today with the scorn they deserve, a great deal of the responsibility for this new enlightenment on Stalinism is due to Trotsky and his fight against the Moscow Trials.

Trotsky once said that Stalin could not let him live. The knowledge that Trotsky was writing his biography, the fear of Trotsky's living during the period of the war and of the Hitler-Stalin pact would impel the latter to seek his life. We find it necessary to add an even more important reason which, in our opinion, supersedes the others. The Moscow Trials, organized for the purpose of wiping out the generation of Lenin, fell short of its aim. The trials had boomeranged! Trotsky was still alive and it was he who created the grave world doubts on their authenticity; it was he who finally established that they were

stupid and bungled frame-ups. Trotsky was not handed over to his Kremlin executioners as they had hoped. Trotsky alive was a permanent danger to Stalin. He had to die and for that purpose the entire machinery of the vast Russian state and its GPU was mobilized. Then the devil's deed was accomplished. If it robbed the international working class of the outstanding figure since the time of Lenin, it established also that Stalin was the mortal enemy of the working class.

What shall we say to the new generation of proletarians and students in this dreadful period of human history when the world and its people are face to face with a new world atomic war, when civilization itself is threatened with chaos and barbarism? We can think of nothing better on this commemorative occasion of Trotsky's death than to say with him as he did in his New York Hippodrome speech on February 9, 1937 which was read to a large audience:

If our generation happens to be too weak to establish socialism over the earth, we will hand the spotless banner down to our children. The struggle which is in the offing transcends by far the importance of individuals, factions, and parties. It will be severe. It will be lengthy. Whoever seeks physical comfort and spiritual calm, let him step aside. In time of reaction it is more convenient to lean on the bureaucracy than on the truth. But all those for whom *socialism* is not a hollow sound but the content of their moral life—forward! Neither threats, nor persecutions, nor violations can stop us. Be it even over our bleaching bones, the truth will triumph. We will blaze the trail for it. It will conquer! Under all the severe blows of fate, I shall be happy, as in the best days of my youth, if together with you I can contribute to its victory. Because, my friends, the highest human happiness is not the exploitation of the present but the cooperation of the future.

ALBERT GATES

# "1984"—Utopia Reversed

## Orwell's Penetrating Examination of Totalitarian Society

That George Orwell's "1984" is a work of major significance, as a political document if not as a novel, and that it is probably the best delineation of totalitarian society we have, is by now clear to anyone who has read the book. It is a book written from the total energy of an aroused man, with all the passion and percipience at his command; a book clearly the product of fear, as there is every reason it should be; a book which, in addition to its public relevance, has a distinct undercurrent of personal tragedy. There is a kind of woeful rightness in the fact that Orwell died shortly after completing 1984, that it shows the strains of his harsh and exacerbated impatience. Whatever one's disagreements with Orwell's politics, and they are numerous, one must honor a writer who with his last breath kept pleading with modern man not to let himself be reduced to an ultra-modern slave.

"1984" is limited in scope: it does not investigate the genesis of totalitarianism, nor the laws of its economy, nor the prospects for its survival; it merely presents a paradigmatic version of its social life. Orwell's profoundest insight is his insistence that in a totalitarian society man's life is completely shorn of dynamic possibilities. The end of life is completely predictable in its beginning, the beginning merely a manipulated preparation for the end. There is no opening for that spontaneous surprise which is the token of, and justification, for freedom. For while the so-

ciety itself may evolve through certain stages of economic development, the life of its members is static, incapable of climbing to tragedy or dropping to comedy. Human personality, as we have come to grasp for it in class societies and hope for it in a classless society, is obliterated; man becomes a mere function of a process.

The totalitarian society, whether of the fascist or Stalinist variety, thus represents a qualitative break from Western history and tradition. There have been unfree societies in the past; during the Middle Ages there was hardly anything of what we would now call democracy. Yet it was then possible for an occasional group of scholars to create an oasis of relatively free intellectual life (free not by our standards but in relation to the society of the time). The totalitarian society permits no such luxuries: it offers a total "solution" to the problems of the 20th century, that is, a total distortion of what could be the actual solution.

FASCISM MAY INDEED BE, as Marxists have said, a final decayed form of capitalism, and Stalinism a bastard society arising during that decay as a result of the failure of socialism; but such descriptions, while essential, do not exhaust the problem. Fascism and Stalinism have more in common with each other, despite the difference between their property relations, than either have with capitalism or any past form of Western society. Unlike previous societies, both forms of totalitarianism enter the historical scene completely reactionary, without even the faintest, most ambiguous contribu-

tion to humanity; both utilize modern technology to suppress freedom to an extent not merely unthought of, but actually impossible, in previous societies. *They leave no margin*, no Church in which sanctuary is possible for the thief, no Siberia where the revolutionist can freeze and starve but also study, not even a private life to which the dissident can retire in humiliation and despair. When Winston Smith rebels in "1984" the state apparatus not only destroys him, it first forces him to believe he was wrong to rebel.

The social horror of "1984" is to some extent the product of Orwell's imagination, but the power of that imagination derives from the fact that it is based on, extrapolated from reality. There are no telescreens in Russia but there could well be: nothing in Russian society contradicts the "principle" of telescreens. The fictitious telescreen is horrible precisely because it is so close to reality; imaginative fictions stir us because they are distorted and thereby more distinct versions of our experience.

Usually the utopian novel, such as Bellamy's "Looking Backward," is unbearably dull because its benign vision of the future is fatally marred by its author's limitations of sensibility: his utopia reflects the damage class society has done to him. But in Orwell's case, where he is writing an inversion of the utopia novel, a portrait of what one critic has called the *unfuture*, there is no such problem: if too often we envisage the good society as a surfeited bore, we have plenty of training in imagining its opposite.

I have said that the totalitarian society is qualitatively different from anything we have known in the past, and that, I imagine, may evoke a cer-

tain uneasiness from readers who have heard such remarks used as justification for the "lesser evil" theory of politics. But such uses of a valid observation are unjustified. If the totalitarian society is crucially different in kind from its predecessors, it is also organically related to them: it is the ultimate issue of the failure of traditional or liberal capitalism. There is here, so to say, an example of the historical dialectic spinning furiously in reverse, and consequently the more we are impressed by the horror of totalitarianism the more clearly should we see the inability of liberal capitalism to forestall it. What Orwell's book makes clear or should make clear if people thought about its meaning, is that even if there were once a possibility for a modulated social solution, there is no longer such a possibility; we are truly in an apocalyptic situation: history, and not any disposition toward extreme formulations, forces us to say that it is now all or nothing. "1984" is the face of nothing.

II

The accuracy with which Orwell has observed the essential qualities of totalitarianism is remarkable. His book is not really a novel: Smith and O'Brien and Julia are not credible human beings. Seldom are they characters involved in dramatic action, too often are we told things about them rather than shown their interior experience in depth. But that does not really matter, since there is no reason to read "1984" as a novel. Exactly what genre to assign it to I don't quite know, but that doesn't really matter either.

There are first the incidental accuracies, the accuracies of mimicry. Take, as an example, Orwell's imita-

\* 1984, by George Orwell. Harcourt Brace, 314 pp. \$3. Reprinted as a Signet book, 25¢.

tion of Trotsky's style in "The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism" by the villain of Oceania, Emanuel Goldstein. Orwell has here caught something of the rhetorical sweep of Trotsky's grand style, particularly his inclination to use scientific references in non-scientific contexts ("Even after enormous upheavals and seemingly irrevocable changes, the same pattern has always reasserted itself, just as a gyroscope will always return to equilibrium, however far it is pushed one way or another.") Or consider how well Orwell has noticed Trotsky's fondness for the succinct paradox through which one may sum up the absurdity of a society: "The fields are cultivated with horse plows while books are written by machinery." Or consider how well Orwell has noticed the revelatory detail of the authoritarian institution: that grey-pink stew, surely familiar to anyone who has ever been in an army, which Smith eats for lunch; that eternal bureaucratic stew. . . .

On a profounder level than accurate mimicry or particularized observation is Orwell's grasp of the distinctive social features of totalitarian society. Here he tends to write abstractly, as a sociologist rather than novelist, but still with great penetration.

ONE OF THE MOST POIGNANT SCENES in "1984" is that in which Smith, trying to discover what life was like before Big Brother's reign, talks to an old worker in a pub. The exchange is unsatisfactory to Smith, since the worker can remember only stray bits of disconnected fact and is quite unable to generalize from his memory; but it is extremely apt as a bit of symbolic action. The scene indicates that one of the most terrifying things about totalitarian society is that it systematically destroys social memory,

first, through the forced disintegration of individual experience and, second, through the complete obliteration of objective records. The worker whom Smith interviews remembers that the beer was better before Big Brother (a not insignificant fact) but he cannot really understand Smith's key question: "Do you feel that you have more freedom now than you had in those days?" To pose, let alone answer, such a question requires a degree of social continuity and cohesion, as well as a complex set of value assumptions, which Oceania has deliberately destroyed. For in such a society there is no longer a sense of the past: man is deprived of his ancestors.

The destruction of social memory becomes a major state industry in Oceania, and here of course Orwell is borrowing directly from Stalinism which, as the most "advanced" form of totalitarianism, is infinitely more adept at this job than was fascism. (Hitler burned books, Stalin has them rewritten.) The embarrassing document disappears down memory hole—and that is all.

Orwell is similarly acute in noticing the relationship of the totalitarian state to culture. Novels are produced by machines, a considerable improvement over the Russian "collective novel" of two decades ago. The state anticipates and supplies all wants, from "cleansed" versions of Byron to pornographic magazines. That vast modern industry of prefabricated amusement which we now call "popular culture" is an important state function. And meanwhile language itself is stripped of those terms which connote refinement of attitude, subtleties of sensibility. As one character says: "Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak [the official dialect of Oceania] is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we

shall make thought-crime literally impossible, because there will be no words with which to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed will be expressed by exactly *one* word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten. . . . The whole climate of thought will be different. In fact there will be no thought, as we understand it now. Orthodoxy means not thinking—not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness."

With feeling as with language. Oceania seeks to destroy spontaneous affection because that, too, is subversive. Smith, in one of the book's finest passages, thinks to himself: "It would not have occurred to [his mother] that an action which is ineffectual thereby becomes meaningless. If you loved someone, you loved him, and when you had nothing else to give, you still gave him love. When the last of the chocolate was gone, his mother had clasped the child in her arms. It was no use, it changed nothing, it did not produce more chocolate, it did not avert the child's death or her own; but it seemed natural to her to do it."

The totalitarian state destroys social memory. It makes all of life a function of its operation. It frowns upon those luxuries of feeling which are the essence of human response to unavoidable tragedy. And worst of all, it destroys private life.

### III

So far as I can see, there are only a few errors in Orwell's book, and most of those flow from the fact that his totalitarian society is more *total* than we can at present imagine. None of them is completely indefensible; they are errors at all because they drive valid observations too far.

In Oceania the sex instinct, particularly among members of the Outer Party (the lower bureaucracy), is virtually obliterated. (I *do* make allowance for the fact that Orwell's method is dramatization by exaggeration.) One of the most harrowing bits in the book is Smith's recollection of his sexual relations with his former wife, a loyal unthinking party member: she would submit herself regularly once a week, as if for an ordeal and resisting even while insisting, in order to procreate for the party.

Now there is a point to this: in Russia there has been a noticeable restriction of sexual freedom. But we must distinguish between a Stalinist attempt to develop more reliable child-bearing units among the masses and a presumed tendency to sexual prudery among the upper social layers. So far as we know, the Russian ruling circles do not indulge in the kind and amount of perversion which prevailed among the top Nazis, but it is hard to believe that there is not a good deal of sexual looseness among even the Stalinist machine-men types.

We know from the past that the sexual instinct can be heavily suppressed. In Puritan society, for example, sex was viewed with some suspicion, and it is not hard to imagine that even in marriage pleasure was not then a conspicuous consequence of sex. But it must be remembered that in Puritan society the suspicion of sex was based on a rigid morality universally accepted, on a conception of the supreme good: men mortified themselves enthusiastically in the name of God. In Orwell's Oceania, however, there is no similar exalted faith; in fact, such faith is looked upon with suspicion, for what is wanted is mechanical assent rather than intellectual fervor or enthusiastic belief. It

therefore seems hard to imagine that the lower bureaucrats of the Outer Party would be able so completely to discard sexual pleasure; it seems more likely that in the insufferable boredom of Oceanic life there would be a great hunger for sexual activity, if only in order to gain a moment of excitement. Orwell anticipates this point by informing us that sexual promiscuity in the Outer Party is punishable by death. But to forbid promiscuity is not yet to quench the pleasure component of sex itself.

The point has a more general significance. A reactionary society can force people to do many things which are against their social and physical interests and which may cause them acute discomfort and pain; it can perhaps accustom them to receive pain with passive resignation; but I doubt that it can break down the fundamental physiological distinction between pleasure and pain. (No doubt, to anticipate an objection, there are situations when pleasure and pain intermingle, but they are nonetheless distinguishable human experiences.) Man's biological construction is such as to require him to need food and, with less regularity or insistence, sex; society can do a lot to dim the pleasures of food and sex but it seems most unlikely that it can destroy them entirely. We may consequently expect the animal component of man to rebel against social constrictions which deny such fundamental needs, even when his consciousness has been corrupted and his mind terrorized. No doubt, this objection to Orwell's view of sexual life in Oceania has its limits, for there are times when, apparently, instinct can be completely controlled or numbed. (Why, for example, did not the Jews who were led to Hitler's gas chambers make some ges-

ture of rebellion, even with the foreknowledge that they would be destroyed if they made it? Perhaps because they had been drained of the capacity for initiative; perhaps because they feared torture more than death.) In any case, I think that while Orwell is right in suggesting that totalitarianism inhibits sexual freedom and creates a psychic atmosphere which mutilates sexual pleasure, he has exaggerated the extent to which men can be driven to discord and renounce their basic animal drives.

MORE IMPORTANT IS ORWELL'S CONCEPTION of the social role of the proles, or workers, in Oceania. As he sees it, the proles are actually better off than members of the Outer Party: they are allowed greater amounts of privacy, the telescreen does not bawl instructions at them or watch their every movement, and the secret police seldom bothers them, except to remove a talented or independent worker. Presumably Orwell would justify this conception of class relations in Oceania by saying that the workers as a class have become so helpless and demoralized that the state need no longer fear them. Now we have no right to say that this never *could* happen, but we must also observe that it has not yet happened. Neither the Stalinists nor Nazis have felt sufficiently secure to relax their surveillance of the workers; in Russia the tendency has actually been toward increasing domination of the workers' lives.

Orwell's conception of the workers' role in a totalitarian society can also be challenged on more fundamental grounds. The totalitarian state can afford no luxuries, no exceptions; it can tolerate no group outside its constantly exercised control. It must al-

ways scour every corner of society, searching for dissidents and once more implanting its dogma; anything less would be the beginning of its collapse. It is in the nature of a totalitarian society that it is constantly in a process of *self-agitation*: it is always shaking and reshaking its members, testing and retesting them to insure its power. And since, as Orwell himself says, the workers, demoralized and brutalized as they are, remain the only source of possible revolt in Oceania, it is precisely they whom the state would least let alone.

FINALLY, THERE IS ORWELL'S extremely interesting but unsatisfactory view of the dynamics of power in a totalitarian society. As Orwell presents the party oligarchy in Oceania, it is the first ruling class in history which dispenses with ideology. O'Brien, the representative of the Inner Party, says "The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power." The Stalinists and Nazis, he remarks, came close to that view of power, but only in Oceania has all pretense to be serving humanity—that is, all ideology—been discarded.

Now it is true that all social classes have at least one thing in a common: a desire for power. The bourgeoisie has sought power, not particularly as an end in itself (whatever that vague phrase may mean), but in order to be free to engage in a certain kind of economic and social activity; that is, bring to climax the tendencies of capitalist production. The ruling class of the new totalitarian society, most notably in Russia, is different, however, from all previous ruling classes in this respect: it does not think of political power

as a distant means toward a non-political end, as the bourgeoisie did to some extent, but rather as its essential end, for in a society where there is no private property the distinction between economic and political power means very little.

So far this seems to bear out Orwell's view. But if the ruling class of the totalitarian society does not think of political power as a channel to economic expansion and social domination, what does power mean to it? This is, of course, an extremely difficult and complex problem, and those who say that the end of power is power are not contributing anything remarkably profound. For one thing, we may say that many of the objectives for which previous ruling classes sought power can now, in the totalitarian society, be found in political power itself. In bourgeois society political power does not necessarily mean social status, economic wealth, industrial initiative, financial opportunity; in totalitarian society, or as we have called its Stalinist version, bureaucratic collectivism, all of these reside within political power.

But there is something else. No ruling class, at least within Western society, has yet been able to dispense with ideology. (True, there have been ruling classes which did not claim to be ruling for the good of humanity; instead, they might speak of the glory of the nation. But the glory of the nation can ultimately be referred to the good of humanity.) All ruling classes feel a need to rationalize their power, to find some presumably admirable objectives in the name of which they may (often sincerely) act. This they need to win followers, to bind their country with some common outlooks, and to give themselves a measure of psychological security.

Can one, then, imagine a ruling class completely devoid of these props to power? I doubt it. It is true, for example, that among the Russian bureaucrats there has undoubtedly been a great increase of cynicism; few probably believe that they are now directly building socialism with or without the whip; but there must still be some vague assumption, even if only a cynical one, that somehow what they are doing has in it an element of the good. Otherwise they would find it increasingly difficult, perhaps impossible to sustain their class morale.

And the same thing must be true for Oceania's rulers. That they cling ferociously to power; that they do not rule in order to help humanity in any way; that many of them become cynical about their ideological pretensions; that others of them rationalize their power in terms of a theory of benevolent despotism—all this could be credible. But one cannot believe that a modern ruling class, in a *mass society*, as all modern societies must be, could survive if it frankly and openly declared itself in the manner of Orwell's Inner Party.

#### IV

Shortly before his death Orwell wrote: "My novel '1984' is *not* intended as an attack on socialism, or on the British Labor Party, but as a show-up of the perversions to which a centralized economy is liable . . . I do not believe that the kind of society I describe necessarily *will* arrive, but I believe . . . that something resembling it *could* arrive." This seems to me satisfactory not only as a statement of Orwell's intention, but as a description of the book's actual slant. However, since certain socialists have expressed an uneasy feeling that Orwell may be saying that an Oceania may

arise, not merely from Stalinism, but also from a genuine socialist effort, I wish to consider—and accept—"1984" on those terms as well. My point is simply this: even if Orwell had meant it in this way, there would be no cause for alarm or anger; we have no right to assume that we have the future tucked away in our vest pockets.

There was a time not so long ago when socialists tended to think of the transition from a class to a classless society as largely an "automatic" process dependent on an expansion of the means of production; I do not say that anyone wrote it out so bluntly (though I imagine that if you took the trouble to look you could find examples of that too) but rather that this was the prevalent cast of our thought. This is something I don't want to argue about: I *know* it to be a fact. It was, I think, largely an inheritance from the corruption of the revolutionary movement during the mid-1920's by the early form of Stalinism and also perhaps by Zinovievism.

It is a way of thinking that is now impossible to any mildly intelligent person. As one reads again Lenin's "State and Revolution," one is repeatedly struck by how extreme—almost, if you wish, utopian—is his democratic bent, his insistence that the masses of people can achieve sufficient maturity and knowledge to serve as autonomous and responsible members of a free society. Some of his most withering sarcasm is reserved for Kautsky and Bernstein when they contaminate their vision of the socialist future with bureaucratic outlooks received from the capitalist present. But while one can only admire Lenin's complete democratic aspiration and brush aside with impatience all the ignoramuses and fakers (mostly fakers; cf., Mr. Shub) who portray him as

the first modern totalitarian, one also feels that much of what he wrote about the immediate transition from class to classless society is either inadequate or, more often, based on a particular involvement with backward Russia which does not apply elsewhere. Lenin's emphasis, for example, on centralism, while undoubtedly relevant to a country like Russia, is not mechanically to be transposed to other countries. His admiration for Marx's formula that the Paris Commune "was not a parliamentary, but a working corporation, at one and the same time making the laws and executing them," must now, I think, be questioned, even though this particular formula has been sacrosanct in the Marxist movement. The notion of checks and balances within a government, within *any* government but particularly one which has concentrated in itself social and economic power, seems rather more sensible than it once did. I recall myself often sneering at the checks and balances in the American constitution as being "merely" a device to ward off popular rule during the post-revolutionary period in America; no doubt, it was that, but it wasn't that "merely"; it was also a rather sensible means—within the limits of the class society established at the time—to prevent dangerous concentration of power.

POWER IS, IN ONE SENSE, a neutral mechanism, an end for which every social class aspires; but it is also, and always, a danger, as is tacitly recognized by the Marxian formula that in the classless society the state will "wither away" and there will no longer be repressive organs. No doubt, there is truth in the view that to reach a stateless society it is necessary to use power, to win it and extend it; but at the same time we must not forget that the

habits of social domination, even when exerted by a progressive class or by real or assumed representatives of that class, are likely to give rise to character structures that will resist the withering away of the state in the name of which power is to be assumed. Similarly, we are now, or should be, somewhat suspicious of the centralism often associated with the transitional period from capitalism to socialism; not that a high degree of economic centralism is unavoidable if the material prerequisite for socialism, a high standard of living, is to be achieved; but rather that with economic centralism must come social and political decentralization, the sharing of power by different, conflicting groups within and near the working class. Just as one of the main factors making for democracy within capitalist society is the fissures created by the conflicts of various strata of the ruling class, so in a transition regime democracy is more likely to be preserved if there are substantive fragmentations of power. What is wanted is not, as one often hears, that the state "allow" the workers to strike, but rather that the workers, through trade unions and cooperatives, have enough social and economic power that the state could not prevent them from striking. The people always need protection from the state; the workers from a workers state, too.

These remarks are terribly cursory and, as such, open to misreading, but I make them not in order to present any sort of rounded view on the difficult problem of the transition to socialism, but merely to indicate an opinion that that transition is not guaranteed in any sense, not even guaranteed by the fact that "we," the good people, the good socialists might undertake it. The effort to build so-



cialism rests ultimately not on any economic development, indispensable though an increase in productivity and the consequent possibility for leisure and plenty may be; it rests, not with the famous "unleashing of the productive forces," but rather with a conscious experiment in social relations. The experiment is impossible without the productivity; but the productivity does not yet insure the success of the experiment.

Marx said that with socialism human history would first begin; it is a pregnant remark, suggesting that the final purpose of socialism is to allow men, within the context of a limiting natural world, to determine their own destinies. But they must *determine*;

they must act; they must choose. Seen in these terms, socialism is not merely a necessity but also a gamble: it means a great concentration of power and resources, and all the dangers that come from such a concentration. Misused, distorted by an inadequate conception of its purpose and its continuous ethical content, the effort to build socialism may conceivably be twisted into something as horrible as "1984." What Orwell seems to be telling us is that it need not be if there is a sufficiently high level of human consciousness, that the experiment rests finally on that high level of human consciousness. I see no reason to disagree.

IRVING HOWE

## Measuring Kravchenko's Testimony

Concluding the Diary of Victor Serge—VII

### Koka, Kravchenko

July 6, 1946. Visited Natalia this morning. The big, empty garden. A young American girl with rather fixed, staring eyes opened the iron door. Natalia was lying down in her room, which has metal doors and a large metal shutter covering the window, and which is white, bare, dark, sad as a convent cell.

N. was stretched out on the low bed, quite thin, her head covered with a light gray shawl; also seemed like a sick, exhausted woman, but one whose determined chin and alert glance would not give in at all. Her complexion is sickly, her skin shriveled. She had aged a great deal in a few weeks.

Suddenly, while speaking to her, I felt myself worried for her life. Without reach of her hand, on the dresser,

a little black Browning. Jeannine<sup>4</sup> was interested in it. "Is it real?" "Oh, yes, my dear," said N. with her weak laugh and her touching smile, on the edge of tears. "She will be a very pretty girl," she said and she insisted that she go get a banana in the dining room. It was very somber, very sad.

N. does not suffer from anything serious. Becker<sup>5</sup> takes care of her; a harmless operation, about which she spoke to me, may be necessary. What is in reality gnawing at her is an immense mourning, infinitely more vast than that for L. D., whose death only consummated it, a mourning for an epoch and an innumerable multitude. And since I am doubtless the only one who really shares it with her, our conversations are precious to us, and I moreover avoid touching on the num-

4. Serge's young daughter.

5. Austrian émigré doctor.

berless dead. They appear in spite of us, the tomb of a generation is always there.

This time it was because I had spoken of the magnificent love poem *Tvoya Pobeida* [*Your Victory*] by Margarita Aliguer and because we recalled Ossip Emilievitch Mandelstam,<sup>6</sup> who disappeared in prison. . . . Then Olga Davidovna Kameneva, Trotsky's sister, who was Kamenev's wife. (I happened to meet her in the old days; tall and with a mannish face, she strikingly resembled L. T. Directed VOKS<sup>7</sup> for a while. . . .) N. said, "At the beginning of the war she could still be found in that inferno of a concentration camp for the wives and children of those who had been shot located 25 miles from Moscow, where the material and moral misery reached an infernal degree. . . . Did you know Koka, Rakovsky's daughter? She was also sent into that hell—she, she, a child!"

I had met Koka two or three times with Panait Istrati in '27. She was probably around 17 (the daughter of Rakovsky's wife by a first marriage, I believe). Extraordinarily refined and good-looking, a statuette of a young girl with a face of porcelain so white that it seemed transparent, a broad forehead and light gray eyes. She was not very interested in political matters. Her early marriage to the excellent poet Josef Utkin was a real love match. It didn't last. Utkin, in giving in to the official directives, lost his talent and became a second-rater. He died at the front of disease, I believe. The punishment of Koka was a gratuitous crime, the most absurd of the state crimes, committed because she

6. Poet, author of *The Stone* (1913) and *Tristia* (1922). His essays in *Egyptian Stamp* (1928) are also very highly regarded.

7. Bureau for the maintaining of cultural relations abroad.

was the step-child of the great R., whose honesty and whose years of suffering she was acquainted with. . . . "Purity is treason!" I left: before my eyes the image of the tortured Koka.

We discussed the book by Victor Kravchenko, *I Chose Freedom*, a success in New York, and were in full agreement on it. K. tells of the persecution of the technicians, his colleagues which he was witness of, and against which—he says—he protested. He is lying; protests were impossible, even inconceivable. If he escaped proscriptio it was because he was actually an accomplice of the political police. . . . The proof of it is that years later he was sent on a mission to America. . . . The fellow appears to have been only a frightened and self-interested conformist who "chose freedom" only very late, when the choice was without danger, probably when he had been invited to go back.

The only voices that tell the truth about the USSR, that are able to speak today, are those of men of this stripe. Naturally in his book there is not the slightest defense of socialism. He passes over to the other side, that's all, and doctors up his biography. . . .

Mexico, November 15, '46

My dear Herbert,

I have just finished Kravchenko's book—with a sort of nausea. Everything is true in startling fashion, but we knew all that before, and several have written about it, described it, before this gentleman. Whatever the fabricated character of the book may be, the portrait of himself which the author signed—in facsimile!—is that of the young Stalinist careerist of an unfortunate period.

He was 21 in 1926, when the Thermidor began; he was a member of the Soviet Youth but he was not interested in being aware of or of under-

standing the political crisis which was shaking the entire country. The foregoing is hardly believable; it appears that he was one of those komsomols who howled for the death of the Opposition, a conformist worried solely about his own career. Then, until his escape in the United States, he remained a careerist even while he was persecuted, while all his colleagues and comrades disappeared, many of them worth infinitely more than he, a persevering careerist who ended by inspiring confidence even in his persecutors.

I know the atmosphere which he describes, and I cannot doubt that this gentleman conceals a great many things. He constantly strikes poses, takes pity upon this person and that, ascribes courageous interventions to himself, but he does not say anything about his long, devoted complicity with the regime which he hated.

It was impossible to have the career which he did, to inspire the confidence which he inspired, without having had a hand in a mess of abominable jobs, of denouncing, inventing sabotage, of voting for all the requested death sentences.

On all that, silence—which is to say, not a single bitter cry of conscience. And his attitude toward the women whom he loved and whom he left with a sweet resignation whenever his career demanded it—as if he had not been able to do anything else! Russia is full of couples who struggle to rejoin each other after having been separated, consciously sacrificing a little more advantageous post for another one in order to do it. Similarly Russia is full of people who resist totalitarianism in numerous ways, more or less concealing it from each other and, willy-nilly, sacrificing; in any case sacrificing a career.

K. justifies his escape in the U. S.

—abandoning his wife and his old parents to the worst sort of persecution—by a vow to say the truth. I cannot help believing that this fine explanation is an afterthought, or that it is only partially true. For he has not reflected upon a single problem, he has not studied a single instant of the history of which he was a frightened witness, he does not reveal the slightest critical vision. It is simply the testimony of a fugitive who during his whole life has thought only of himself. And his fundamental objective, after a short period of uncertainty, was to live better in the U. S.

It is another sign of the times that the floor has been given over to such characters with neither ethics nor faith, with neither intellectual vigor nor courage. Nevertheless, the information which he gives upon forced labor is important.

In regard to this, I maintain, in some theoretical articles which I am sending to Paris, that the existence of penal manpower of around 20 million adults is the essential trait which we have to take into account in defining this *anti-socialist* regime. I reason as follows: Privileged population, enjoying conditions of existence analogous to the civilized average, 15 per cent (in '36; actually, appreciably less, as a consequence of the war) or 7-8 per cent of the adult population. (This estimate was that of L. T., myself and several others after careful cross-checking.) Penal manpower, 15 to 20 million, which is around 15 per cent of the adult population, double the number of the privileged population. The fluctuations of these percentages are secondary, they define a social structure.

The penal manpower constitutes a sub-proletariat "in rags" which has literally "nothing to lose but its chains..." and its condition is below

that of the slave or the serf. This is the new sociological fact. The owner of slaves or of serfs was interested in the preservation of his property. In Russia, particularly, traditional patriarchal habits softened the conditions of serfdom. Law and custom always assigned limits to slavery and often set conditions for possible emancipation. The immense agglomeration of Stalinist concentration camps is, on the con-

trary, outside the law, beyond the ban of society, benefiting from neither a single tradition nor a single known law. They are slave-pariahs and, naturally, it is proper to give a new name to this social category....

My best to you both, my dear Herbert.

VICTOR SERGE

(Translated and annotated by James M. Fenwick.)

## The Liberal in the United States

### Offering a Point of View for Socialist Discussion

That political type which calls itself "liberal" in the United States today is admittedly very disturbed. An article in the *New Republic* of March 6, 1950 was entitled "Liberal Cachexia: Its Cause and Cure," with "cachexia" defined as a "condition of ill health with malnutrition and wasting of the body." One distinguished literary figure strenuously tries to show that "The Liberal Imagination" still has validity, while another literary person squirms to maintain some of his liberalism as he finds much to extoll in the ideas of a Metternich as part of a "Conservatism Revisited."

The most apt picture of the current status of many American liberals was unwittingly portrayed by one of the accepted intellectual spokesmen of a large school of present day liberalism. Max Lerner, writing in the *New York Post* on April 3 about the convention of Americans for Democratic Action, declared: "Where can liberals go? That has been the persistent question of the past five years, since FDR's death. It is hard to live life without father. It is hard to take part in a drama that has no hero." The rest of the article

was favorable to the ADA Convention (without "father" or the "hero") which decided against formal allegiance to the Democratic Party. Lerner favored this move, but it was apparent that he would have been much happier if there were still the party dominated by FDR, with no ADA necessary.

"A condition of ill health with malnutrition," and the pressing need for a "father" — these are the diagnoses of two of the more hopeful partisans of American liberalism, writing during the days of "their" Fair Deal Administration (and, incidentally, well before the Korean war began). Yet, they both claim some vigor and optimism for their side. For socialists to delight in their cachexia would be, indeed, a petty victory. It is much more our task to understand and explain it, and trust that the still remaining optimism provides a meaningful background for the reception of such explanation. For, the varied set of politicalized individuals usually included under the rubric "liberal" in this country at this juncture are the group to whom socialist appeals must primarily be directed. They in-

clude not only the better elements of the political public but also, for better or worse, both the leadership and the most politically-interested elements of the rank and file of the labor movement.

MUCH OF THEIR CURRENT DILEMMA is part of the ambiguity of the term which they have chosen as their political label. What is a liberal, and who should be included within the liberal domain? Many an extreme Hooverite rugged-individualist considers himself a "liberal." A book called "The Liberal Tradition," published several years ago, finds the author equating liberalism with a combination of the doctrine of "natural rights" and a private property economy, plus the feasibility of a tie-in with "Catholic collectivism." It is obvious that liberalism is a huge umbrella covering a multitude of political tendencies. In the not too definitive world of political terminology, it is surpassed only by "progressive" in vagueness. An essential beginning for the extrication of any discussion from some of this ambiguity is the realization that there are at least three logically separate dimensions of liberalism; they may be historically connected, but must be analyzed as distinct items.

The first, and most usually presented dimension, is what might be considered the "liberal ideal" — the basic philosophy of liberal values. The author of the cachexia article lists the following tenets: diversity of human goals, freedom of choice, altruism, belief in the social nature of man. Peter Vierick, author of "Conservatism Revisited," considers accurate Metternich's designation of the liberal as a "presumptuous man" who believes he is a better judge of human actions than are absolute formulae or

tradition. The author of the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences article on "liberalism" states essentially the same thing, although he adds some philosophically romantic overtones: "Its [liberalism's] postulate, the spiritual freedom of mankind, not only repudiates naturalistic and deterministic interpretations of human action, but posits a freer individual conscious of his capacity for unfettered development and self-expression." If we ignore the comment about "determinism," which is not relevant to a discussion of recent liberal doctrine, we have here a general statement of the ideal — the free man, varied in his potentialities but individually and collectively in control of the different facets of human destiny. As an ideal, it is something which liberals hold in common with socialists, anarchists, and various other "radical" ideologists, all of whom spring from the same intellectual heritage. The differences among them have been matters of analysis and program.

One of the best general declarations of faith in liberal values has been made by John Dewey (though he did not specifically use the term): "The foundation of democracy is faith in the capacities of human nature; faith in human intelligence and in the power of pooled and cooperative experience. It is not belief that these things are complete but that if given a show they will grow and be able to generate progressively the knowledge and wisdom needed to guide collective action."\* With the typical Deweyian emphasis on "intelligence," which is very similar to the Marxist emphasis on "consciousness," this is very close to the ultimate basic ideal of socialists. But, more important for this discussion, it is a statement of

\*John Dewey, *Intelligence in the Modern World*, p. 402.

essential creed to which most of the varied political elements who consider themselves liberals can subscribe.

But how can such a set of criteria distinguish, for instance, between John Dewey and Thomas Dewey? The typical contemporary American liberal has at least one other distinctive characteristic — the second dimension of liberalism as a political concept. The earliest liberals were those who asked for regular, but slow, social-political-economic changes, as opposed to the more stand-pat conservatives. That type of identification has carried to this day. There is a prevailing picture, at least in this country, of a political continuum on the basis of attitudes towards modifications. On the one end are the "reactionaries," who want to "go back," followed by the conservatives, the liberals, and, at the other end, the "radicals," who desire more quick and drastic change.

The application of this dimension engenders more confusion in contemporary political thinking. Are Fascists and Stalinists radical or reactionary? They are both, depending upon what is to be described by the particular slogan used. In any case, either term hardly communicates any substantial idea of the nature of such political movements. But, in the case of the contemporary American liberals under discussion, the change continuum is the best classificatory device. By their own identification and the attitudes of others, they are those political people who desire more alteration of the going political-economic fundamentals than the conservatives, less than the socialists. They are, to use a general locating device, more or less New Deal partisans, with New and Fair Dealism representing in essence, the desired gradual change. American Social-Democrats are cur-

rently hardly distinguishable from this liberal type. As vague as such a classification system may be, it is the best around for pinning down the politics under consideration, much better than the set of philosophical ideals which the New Deal liberal holds in common with so many political rivals.

As yet, nothing has been said about any specific economic political ideas. These are the third dimension of liberalism. The ideas propounded are in historic continuity with the original ideal, and concomitant with the accepted position on the change continuum. But, they too must be separately analyzed. As will be shown, the political program that has developed is often in conflict with the philosophic ideal. The planks of the contemporary American liberal platform, stated and implicit, will be considered in the context of historical developments and the political answers to them of those who descended from early traditional liberalism.

The original political-economic ideas of liberalism were enmeshed with the liberal philosophic creed and the desire for gradual change, within the setting of the transition from the medieval to the modern world. If the ideologists of the Enlightenment of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and their successful followers of the nineteenth were pleading for freedom from both tradition and authority, included was the "economic freedom" of the rising bourgeoisie from the restrictions of the remnants of feudal arrangements and the mercantilism of the absolute monarchies. The world they extolled was one of free competition in both ideas and economic life, with the state an occasionally intervening umpire to see that the system was not seriously upset. The self-reliant business entre-

preneur would compete against his rivals (none, presumably, getting too large) in a market with an automatically adjusting mechanism. Politics was to be under the jurisdiction of a parliamentary system, with wide suffrage and the fullest exercise of civil rights. The debates of the parliamentary representatives were analogous to the competition of economic units; the "decision" in either case was to come from the natural harmonious interplay of the mildly conflicting elements.

Later, differences appeared among liberals on the question of state intervention, even in the classic liberal homeland of Great Britain. People like John Stuart Mill asked for state protection for the maintenance of the liberal order, while Herbert Spencer thought he found further justification in Darwinism for complete laissez-faire. But, the common ground of the self-reliant, competing equalitarian man, competing in both the markets of ideas and of commodities, was central to all. The British Liberal Party was the best organized expression of the combined tenets of liberalism in the mid-nineteenth century; interestingly, the most persistent point of conflict between Gladstone's party and Disraeli's Conservative Party was the dispute over free trade versus protectionism and Empire expansion.

The label has little meaning in Europe today. It was Beveridge, a British Liberal Party spokesman, who proposed an all out state-operated plan for social security and full employment before the victory of the Labor Party in 1945. On the continent, liberalism, sometimes as a party title and sometimes as a political ascription, has been connected with bourgeois parties that are strongly for church-state separation and, usually, for measures to secure more economic competition (resulting in a "little unemploy-

ment"). Ironically, their closest cohorts on the latter point in Britain are in the Conservative Party, and in the United States usually in the Republican Party.

From the above account, the term "liberal" has little relevance to European politics today, and appears to be seldom used in debate. It remains popular mostly in the United States as anything but a name. It is generally associated with New Dealers, who are actually further from the original liberal political-economic program than Robert Taft. The latter is more an advocate of freedom from state intervention in the economic sphere and the supremacy of the legislature in the political. Whether New Dealers are more liberal in terms of the fundamental liberal philosophical ideal is not known. They are clearly more liberal only in relation to the continuum of change. Their actual program is thus a product of political-economic developments in American history and the varying doctrines that have accompanied them.

THE ORIGINAL DICHOTOMY IN AMERICAN POLITICS between the Jeffersonians and Hamiltonians is well-explored; especially since the early writings of Charles A. Beard, the former have been associated with small farmers, the latter with the growing commercial bourgeoisie. Jefferson's Democrats stood for a limited Federal Government, Hamilton's Federalists for a more active one with many facilities for aiding commerce, such as a National Bank. We thus have the American peculiarity of the bourgeoisie as the proponent of a quasi-mercantilism, and their agrarian opponents much closer to the early European liberals. However, both groups were more in line with early liberal doctrine than with any other prevailing

political program of the time.

Jefferson's party in office adopted many measures which assumed strong powers for the Federal Government. But, its ideology and its program, in opposition to that of the Federalists and the later Whigs, were more along the lines of faith in the self-reliant and self-governing citizen and individual economic unit. The later "revolution" of Andrew Jackson further accentuated the idea of the plebian agrarian as fit to be the governing group. He was free not only from too much control, but also free to administer the government if his party won.

The Civil War completely changed the political pattern. The new Republican Party combined many of the previous beliefs and personnel which were part of the traditions of both Hamilton and Jefferson. Its leadership came from northern capitalists and western farmers, with probably some appeal to the working class because of its anti-slavery record. It became the dominant party, associated with vigorously expanding capitalism-laissez-faire, in terms of opposition to government controls, but wholeheartedly addicted to large scale government subsidies. The Democratic Party became, almost automatically, a vague sort of protest party, with its strange combination of Southern Bourbons, northern municipal political machines, and some "liberal do-gooders" already evident. That type of liberal held the traditional Democratic Party line on low tariffs, but added such reform ideas as civil service. Its best intellectual spokesman was probably the snobbish founder of the *Nation*, E. L. Godkin, and its successful political hero was Grover Cleveland. Its leading cohorts tended to agree with just about all of the going setup, if some of the crudities be removed. Strangely, the only mass appeal came from the

city machines, who were hardly in complete agreement with the national program.

But, there were vigorous protests against the Leviathan of monopoly capitalism. Besides the infant labor and socialist movements, which were not very influential, leading source of opposition to the concentrated wealth of capital and its political agents came from the mushrooming agrarian Populist movement and the muckraking journalists. The agrarians were traditional Jeffersonians in their emphasis upon the needs of the small property owner and their desire for more direct democracy (popular election of senators); they were state interventionists, opposed to laissez-faire, in their call for income tax legislation and federal regulation of railroads. The muckrakers' exposures of the "trusts" were aimed at uncovering the most blatant evils that required government regulation (like the Pure Food and Drugs Act) and at using government action to restore the competition that the trusts were curtailing. In summary, those "liberals" (from the standpoint of the change continuum) were both trying to regain some of the world of the small entrepreneur by governmental action and to prevent the large combines from committing their most flagrant anti-social acts. Except for the few who became socialists, the only thing they could find that resembled a systematic set of political-economic ideas was Henry George's Single Tax. The most important political leader was the "political circuit rider," William Jennings Bryan. To keep the record straight, the ideology of that era did produce one of the most able and courageous of American political figures, even if limited by his acceptance of that ideology, in Robert LaFollette Sr.

BY THE TIME THE "PROGRESSIVE ERA" of the turn of the century had reached its zenith, the two basic ingredients had become differentiated. One was the restoration of the place of the small businessman, the other was the idea of regulation of accepted economic concentrations. The election campaign of 1912 saw the two tendencies clearly expressed by the leading candidates. On one side was "Bull Moose" Theodore Roosevelt and his most characteristic spokesman Herbert Croly, the founder of the *New Republic*. Croly insisted that bigness in the economy was here to stay, and the task of liberals was to see that it was properly controlled and directed. Though TR, who was his own best public relations man, had proclaimed himself the "trust buster" during his terms of presidential office, his history, personality, and expressed beliefs fitted in perfectly with the idea of strong government paternally regulating and cooperating with big business (his "big stick" imperialism did not seem to have extended to his third party). The naive, with all good intentions, of the Progressive movement of that time was illustrated in that so many accepted as their hero the man who had, in derogatory fashion coined the appellation "muck-raker."

Woodrow Wilson's 1912 campaign, buttressed by the "Curse of Bigness" ideas of Louis Brandeis, was primarily a series of exhortations to return to the small property ways of the fathers, with large scale monopolistic capitalist concentrations prevented, rather than merely regulated. His administration, at first, actually made some attempts along these lines, though the growth and power of the biggest business organizations were not appreciably curtailed. In any case, World War I stopped Wilson's "New Free-

dom" in mid-air, and its leader then tried to utilize Jeffersonian principles as the form of the United States' new found world leadership, with the results that are so very well known. The distinction between Crolyean and Brandeisian liberalism, noted by many writers, is hardly appreciated by most contemporary liberals of all stripes, though it provides an excellent key for the understanding of their own stands.

The Twenties were the culmination of both the two original tenets of American political life in an Indian Summer atmosphere. The Federal Government greatly assisted business, though accounts of Teapot Dome scandals overaccentuate some of the cruder aspects of that aid. Here was Hamiltonianism at its apex. On the other hand, the rugged individualism proclaimed by business spokesmen was in full accord with the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian faith in the self-reliant individual. The frenzied stock market inflation seemed to offer some outlet to the would-be small capitalist who was blocked by the ever huger economic combines from becoming a small entrepreneur.

THE DEPRESSION, OF COURSE, ENDED THAT WORLD. The New Deal government which followed nurtured the contemporary American liberal who is the subject of this article. Despite a few feints at trustbusting, the Franklin Roosevelt policy, like that of his fifth cousin at the start of the century, has been mostly Crolyean. From the NRA, through the war-time boards, to the post war full employment plans, it has been big government in an alliance with big business—an alliance that has been alternately harmonious and shaky. Both the need to keep the economy going in difficult circumstances and to placate the varied ele-

ments that have made up the New Deal political base have compelled some governmental control over big business that was not always popular with the latter, as well as the granting of more rights to some population groupings outside the business community. But there has been just about no gesture in the direction of any economic structural change, with the isolated exceptions of economic islands like TVA which remain small scale intrusions. The Truman administration has carried on in the same way.

With that program has gone a vast increase in the power of the executive arm of the government. The contemporary New Deal liberal has thus been aptly called by Professor C. Wright Mills an "administrative liberal." It is the contention of this writer that the current cachexia of many liberal ideologists, their frequent abandonment of the liberal philosophic ideal (as well as the defensive reaffirmation of it by some), during the time of Fair Deal electoral success, is directly attributable to their full acceptance of administrative liberalism. The American Social-Democrats have, generally, also submitted to that frame of political thought. Critics of New Deal liberals are discerningly correct in charging them with a prevailing desire to be dependent on the government, though some of those critics are either romantically adrift with their hopes of return to a Brandeisian world of small scale economic competition, or even more opposed to the liberal ideal in their plans for creating a political system under the more direct domination of large capital. The father image has become so strong that even the growth of the labor movement, won through hard organization and bitter struggle, becomes, in much liberal propaganda, an administrative gift from the White House.

Several sets of attitudes feature the contemporary New Deal liberal ideologist. He has been part and parcel of the push toward an administrative state. This has not been merely another case of adjustment, but something in which he has often been in the forefront. It was the New Deal that extended executive power in spectacular fashion, most of it along lines warmly applauded by the New Deal liberals. The result has been a series of autonomous administrative agencies without any usual legal check. From the time the war agencies became staffed with dollar a year men, many liberals have been upset by the dangers of administrative power. Even the Supreme Court, the much maligned conclave of the "nine old men," has become a conceivable bulwark against executive usurpations of civil rights. But, most New Deal liberals still seem satisfied with exerting pressure for staffing the agencies with more of "their" people. They rarely seem aware of the potential monster they have helped create and have no over-all plans for dealing with it. Nor do they seem to realize that their slogan of a "welfare state" can, as interpreted by some of its protagonists, further extend the administrative type state.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION, which for the first time in this article we will identify with the more unpopular but technically near-synonymous concept of bureaucratic operation, has permeated those liberals who are leaders of organizations outside the government, particularly the labor leaders. As has been earlier mentioned, their propaganda on the history of their organizations will emphasize the extent to which they owe their strength to the beneficence of FDR and his administrative col-

leagues in the NLRB at least as much as their organizations' spade work and struggle. Taking over the theme of administrative behavior, they fight rivals within these organizations less by open political argument and example, or even by the old method of the strong arm, and more by simple administrative fiat. If this has been most prominently used against the

Stalinists up to now, the difficulties of the powerful International Ladies Garment Workers Union in the New York City AFL, because the former did not support the Democratic Party in the 1949 municipal election, gives an inkling of how the most respectable can be hurt.

(Concluded in next issue)

WILLIAM BARTON

## BOOKS IN REVIEW

### "Marginal Utility" Socialism

THE ECONOMIC THEORY OF A SOCIALIST ECONOMY, by Burnham P. Beckwith. Stanford University Press. 1949. 444 pp., \$5.00.

Needless to say, the economic theory of a socialist economy is still to be written. And when it is, it will not draw very heavily on Mr. Beckwith's effusion, despite the publisher's blurb that, "It is the first scientific treatise on Socialist economy to be published in book form in any language." It is also rather doubtful that future socialist economists will be impressed with the author's self-appraisal, contained in his preface, that, "There will be more articles and books written on Socialist economics than have ever been written on Capitalist economics, and in that long series the present work will still rank as a pioneer study."

The interesting thing about the book is not that it found a publisher given its title, or that it carries nonsensical marginal utility theory to absurd lengths, but that it is written by an admitted Social Democrat (author of *The Modern Case for Socialism* under the pseudonym of John Putnam) who applies marginal utility theory to socialism in the interests of "individual freedom in a Socialist state" and winds up erecting a system that fairly blossoms with bureaucratism. It is therefore not accidental that Beckwith joins other marginal utility "socialists," such as Oscar Lange, in exhibit-

ing marked Stalinoid and Stalinist traits.

That Beckwith identifies Stalinism with socialism, or at least a form of socialism, may be seen from the very first page of his introduction where he pontifically states: "Not only is there need for a comprehensive and acceptable statement of economic theory which may serve as a basis for the management of the U.S.S.R. and the other states apt to come under the control of the Socialist movement in the course of this century, but there is also a need for an outline of the new society to aid propaganda for Socialism." Or, still better: "By its success the Soviet Union has greatly strengthened the case for State Socialism." In discussing economic planning (to which he is opposed), the author shows how little he knows about the reality of Stalinland and its economy of slavery and peonage when he writes: "The fourth and least undesirable form of arbitrary planning is one in which both rationing and military control of labor have been abandoned and national planning of goods to be produced alone remains. At this stage, *both workers and consumers are free individuals, controlled only by wage and price changes*, the effect of which upon profits and losses is disregarded. *It is this fourth type of arbitrary planning that exists in the U.S.S.R. today.*" (My italics—D. F.).

To be sure, Beckwith's random remarks on Soviet Russia are not germane to his analysis, but the bureaucratic features of the system he proposes are. This is not to say that economic planning (so long as commodity production domi-

nates) should not be assisted by properly constituted market relations, but socialism cannot exist if the economy is controlled by the necessarily haphazard and bureaucratic forces of the market place. The following concepts are basic and indicative of the morass into which the author's fundamental approach leads:

1. Wherever possible prices (fixed by the seller) are to be used as "the ideal instruments of economic control." Good, but there is an important exception: "In the case of labor, however, the general principle that all prices should be quoted by the seller is inapplicable. The price of labor cannot be fixed by the workers. . . . It is important to note that wages ought not to be determined by a bargaining process between representatives of labor and representatives of the employing organization. The entire power to fix wages should be entrusted to the employing trust, and the latter should follow precisely the same procedure in fixing wages that it follows in fixing other prices." That is, "experts" in each industry will carefully measure the supply of and demand for labor (labor power) and fix wages in such a manner as to bring about that delicate balance dear to the hearts of the marginal utility school. Clearly, the bureaucrats are to have a field day and the necessity of the workers having organizations, both trade union and political, to defend them from "their own" experts under socialism has not occurred to Beckwith. But that is precisely one of the important lessons of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution and was so recognized by Lenin in the famous debate on the role of the trade unions.

2. While "pure democracy" is advocated as one of the "five basic principles of Socialist organization," the others being "perfect monopoly," "complete centralization," "authority from above," and "functional organization," there is a startling bit of genuflection to the intellectual snobbery characteristic of the true bureaucrat. In the midst of his exposition of the superiority of majority rule, universal suffrage, proportional representation, initiative and referendum, unicameral legislature and other attributes of socialist political life, there suddenly intrudes this classical statement: "No measure should be adopted which does not have popular approval,

but it would be highly desirable to fix educational and native intelligence requirements for all candidates for public office at such a level as to eliminate up to 90 per cent of the population." (My italics—D. F.) Of course, "an aristocracy of ability must be subject to popular control; otherwise it will be liable to favor its own material interests at the expense of the remainder of the nation." (sic!) And who will decide the requirements that are to permit 10 per cent of the population to rule the remaining 90 per cent (under socialism, be it remembered!)? Shades of all the exponents of the theory of the elite and the super-race! No wonder, therefore, that the very valid concept that democracy requires an educated electorate is carried to the preposterous conclusion that: "It is as ridiculous to say that a nation like China or India or Russia or Mexico should be democratic as it is to say that a child should display the intelligence of an adult." It must be admitted, however, that not all adults display intelligence superior to a child's, especially Beckwith when he attaches to the above-quoted sentence the following footnote: "This was one of the great errors of the Russian minority Social Democrats (Mensheviks) in 1917."

3. Again, in his discussion of the advantages of centralization of control (which are hardly debatable), there is an outcropping of the bureaucratic mind. For example, "Popular election," says our pundit, "is a much less efficient method of selecting capable executives than appointment from above." Hence, keep the list of candidates on the ballot to an absolute minimum. The national legislature of the United States (under socialism) should consist of "not more than 100." It is therefore not surprising that Beckwith calls for "the elimination of all local self-government."

4. It is in his argumentation for "authority from above," which turns out to be neither more nor less than a broadside against shop democracy, that our "democratic socialist" reveals the authoritarian limits to which his bureaucratic approach inevitably leads. ". . . the election of executives by their immediate subordinates is likely to destroy or dangerously weaken the discipline necessary in all organizations." The second objection really sounds like a brochure from the N.A.M., with a bow to Stalin. We

quote in full: "A second objection is that industrial democracy of this sort may result in the workers' spending too large a portion of their time in committee meetings, election campaigns, and other activities incident to shop politics. Soviet Russia tried shop democracy and found that it consumed too much of the workers' time and attention." Comment would be entirely superfluous. Then, of course, shop democracy may result in the election of less capable men "with a personality pleasing to others," or it may "make more difficult the centralization of control advisable in a Socialist economy." Lastly, shop democracy may tempt a small group to place its welfare against the "working class as a whole." As a concession to popular demand, however, "If a large group of workers and Socialist theorists continue to desire shop democracy after the revolution, every effort should be made to experiment with it on a large enough scale and over a long enough time to determine its real merits."

5. As a final illustration of how easy it is to succumb to the current bureaucratic mores, let us take the question of leadership. After emphasizing the importance of wise leadership and controlling that leadership (factory managers) through "the principle of measurement and publicity," executives are admonished to concentrate their time and efforts "upon the most important problems of the unit under their control" and to delegate responsibilities to subordinates wherever possible. It follows, therefore, that leading executives must have plenty of time in which to reach "unhurried and carefully-thought-out decisions." All of this is sound and is meant in a constructive manner. Then comes the crusher! "Visitors must be ruthlessly denied the privilege of seeing him (the important executive)." Is it any wonder then that Beckwith's "socialism" brings visions of a secret police and, in its own way, no doubt against the best intentions of the author, provides a theoretical justification for a form of bureaucratic collectivism?

Unfortunately, lack of space prevents a detailed exposition of the absurdities inherent in applying marginal utility economics to a socialist economy or in the author's own contradictions in applying this worn-out bourgeois theory. Some basic theoretical points, however,

require some comment, however brief.

Naturally, the author, as an avowed socialist, has to justify his abandonment of the Marxian labor theory of value which he does in two ways: (1) the labor theory of value is unsound and unnecessary and of no "help in the solution of the practical problems of a Socialist economy"; and (2) the marginal utility theory is the perfect tool for developing the operational principles governing the administration of a Socialist economy. Thus, "a Socialist government," says Beckwith, "does not need a new system of economic theory to justify or guide its conduct. In large part, it merely needs to adopt orthodox economy theory and take positive steps to change this grossly inaccurate description of Capitalism into a living Socialist reality. *This involves changing facts to fit a theory, not changing theories to fit facts. Socialism is inevitable because only a Socialist state can change economic facts as it will, because it alone can assume full control over all economic activity and make it conform with the ideal pictured by the great neoclassical economists.*" (My italics—D. F.) From this gibberish it is only logical to state that "Marx will be replaced by Marshall as the chief guide to the solution of the economic problems of a Socialist economy."

Apparently, therefore, Alfred Marshall did not apply his own theories properly when he was engaged in his lengthy defense of the capitalist system. Beckwith will apply them, as they should be, to a socialist system. But Beckwith is still an admirer of Marx, or at least of his "theory of economic evolution." If, by this expression is meant Marx's materialist method or his interpretation of history, Beckwith is guilty of ignoring one of Marx's basic contributions to economic science, expressed in innumerable works and very succinctly in the preface to the second edition of *Das Kapital*, where he states: ". . . Political Economy can remain a science only so long as the class-struggle is latent or manifests itself only in isolated and sporadic phenomena." The marginal utility theory was developed in the latter part of the nineteenth century when it was no longer possible for bourgeois economists to permit any vestige of classical theory to weaken their apologetics in defense of capitalism. It has been totally useless in solving any of the practical problems of

capitalism and it cannot be applied to any of the problems of socialism, even if one believes that market prices will have a function to play under socialism—as they should until production has been so increased as to permit the direct distribution of free goods.

The labor theory of value, of course, was developed by Marx as an analysis of capitalism and permitted discovery of the basic laws of motion governing capitalist society. It has *general* validity, however, in analyzing any society in which the production of commodities is predominant. It will therefore be applicable in the early period of socialism to the extent that production and exchange of commodities prevails. This is in a sense unconsciously admitted by Beckwith when, in advocating unequal wages, he points out that "they enter into costs and help to determine the volume of production and the demand for each good." This thought follows by more than 200 pages the notion that "The basic defect of Marxian value theory is that it does not prescribe any technique for deriving prices from labor time."

As for the subjective theory of value, on which marginal utility theory is based, this is hardly salvaged as a workable tool by coining the concepts "utilitum" and "disutilitum," i.e., the use value obtained by an individual in the process of consumption. This, too, is implicitly recognized by Beckwith when he states: ". . . individuals vary widely in their capacity to enjoy life and feel pain. This means that the same price would represent different amounts of marginal utilitum for different individuals. . . . This is a defect in market prices which it is impossible to eliminate since it is impossible to discover the exact amount of pleasure or pain experienced by different individuals. However, sound prices always represent *average* marginal utilitum and disutilitum since among any large number of people the variations tend to cancel out." And how will "sound" prices be determined? Naturally, by equating supply and demand.

There is, therefore, really nothing new in Beckwith's approach, except his emphasis on controlling production (of price goods) through equating marginal profits and losses. This is admittedly something that cannot be done under capitalism because prices clearly cannot be based on marginal costs. If they were,

then in industries producing at decreasing costs (which covers most manufacturing industries) only losses would result. Why, then, marginal costs should control production under socialism is not at all clear, nor how prices can at the same time be governed by supply and demand.

We are also at a loss to see how the right to demand work (although a good socialist principle) is consistent with Beckwith's schema for determining prices and controlling production. In fact, one of the few worthwhile thoughts in the book is the notion that under socialism a worker should have the right to go to any factory or place of work and demand a job (for which he is fitted) which management would be forced to give at the prevailing wage rate. This, however, does not flow from any possible application of marginal utility theory. There are, of course, other interesting ideas in the book. It is rather difficult to write over 400 pages, even if they are in the constipated style usually associated with doctoral dissertations, without an occasional constructive idea. But such ideas as merit further study are totally unrelated to the marginal utility theory.

Perhaps the explanation for this discrepancy is to be found in the fact that for all of his definitions, many of them quite acceptable, the author really does not understand the essence of socialism. If he did, how could he picture (as he does on more than one occasion) the possibility of war under socialism? A workers state, of course, might find itself engaged in a war with capitalist countries, but a workers state is not socialism, but only a step on the road to socialism. Socialism can exist only on an international scale. Nationalization of the basic means of production is, of course, a prerequisite to the establishment of socialism. But the socialist movement, in addition to stressing the fact that genuine democracy is a *sine qua non* of socialism, must also now emphasize that socialism requires establishment of a true international division of labor, for only in this manner can poverty and ignorance be eliminated. In other words, there are three essential ingredients of socialism—nationalization of the basic or decisive means of production, democratic control of the economy, and a high standard of living throughout the world.

DUNCAN FARLEY

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