

SOCIALIST YOUTH REVIEW

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AN OPEN LETTER ON THE AYD
by James T. Farrell

100 YEARS OF THE
COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

Editorials, Films, Book Reviews,
and other articles

PUBLISHED BY _____

10c THE SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE

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SOCIALIST YOUTH REVIEW

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NOTES

The article by James T. Farrell on the AYD was written at a time when the drive against that Stalinist front organization reached its peak. Though the specific subject is an old one, the general problem of the socialist attitude towards the legal rights of totalitarian Stalinist organizations is becoming of paramount importance.

Comrade Farrell comes to grips with these problems in his article and presents views which are shared by the Socialist Youth League.

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In the next issue of SYR we hope to have a letters-to-the-editor column. Readers are invited to send in suggestions and criticisms of the magazine. Also, articles that are of a discussion nature will be considered for publication.

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A new editorial staff for SYR has been elected and is planning a larger and technically improved magazine. The increased size of the magazine will allow for more articles topical political problems.

The editor and business manager are comrades Gertrude Blackwell and Jack Henry.

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The deadline on articles and letters for the next issue is May 31. Articles should be mailed to:
Gertrude Blackwell
Editor, Socialist Youth Review
114 W. 14 St. (3rd floor)
New York, N.Y.

Business correspondence should be mailed to Jack Henry at the same address.

* * * *

The increased number of pages, beginning with the next issue will necessitate a boost in the price of the magazine, from ten to fifteen cents.

The AYD

II

By JAMES T. FARRELL*

New York City
May 5, 1947

Mr. Melvin Mencher
Editor
The Window
The University of Colorado
Boulder, Colo.

Dear Mr. Mencher:

Permit me to thank you for your letter of April 14th, and for the confidence you express in me by asking that I present my views on the AYD controversy to your readers. I am answering your request in this open letter.

You ask me the following questions: ". . . do you think that groups influenced by the Communist Party should be allowed to function once their identity has been established? Do you think there is any possibility of liberals changing the complexion of a Communist front organization? Or do you feel, with the president of the university, that any group with many Communists should be banned from the campus and from influencing youths?"

Your questions are posed too generally. You are really asking me what I think about the action of President Stearns of the University of Colorado in rescinding the charter of the AYD. I have read the report issued by the committee which investigated the AYD. This committee has, obviously, worked with care. It has attempted definitely to base its conclusion on facts. However, it has not clearly posed questions. Likewise, President Stearns did not go to the heart of the issues involved. Thus, he partially motivated his action by characterizing the AYD as "a front for a foreign dominated ideology." This phrasing is confusing. To be more precise, all Stalinist innocent organizations are a front for an international apparatus which works in secret. This organization or apparatus is controlled by the Kremlin. It uses any and all ideologies. There can be no doubt but that the AYD is Stalinist controlled. It is the Young Communist League under a new name; it uses the language of liberalism and American nationalism instead of that of Marx and Lenin. But to describe it as "a front for a foreign dominated ideology" permits its members and defenders to answer charges made against them by evasiveness. They can

*Mr. Farrell is a well-known novelist, short-story writer, and essayist. His works include the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy; *The League of Frightened Philistines* (criticism, 1946), and his latest novel *Lemard Clare* (1946).

throw quotations from Thomas Paine in the face of critics. Those who control the AYD have no great need to concern themselves with their critics. They cannot make followers out of their critics. They are concerned with their followers, and with those naive and misinformed young people who can be made into followers. The action of President Stearns helps them more than it hinders them. It permits them to present themselves as suffering progressives who have the interests of the whole American people dear to their heart. In addition, to ban Stalinist front organizations amounts to a confession of impotence and bankruptcy. It implies that one lacks the confidence to fight Stalinism in the open and on the basis of principles.

The best description I know of the Communist parties of the world is that used by Ruth Fischer—"the Russian State parties." Innocent organizations are instruments of the Russian State parties. Thus, these groups are really a front for an internationally organized apparatus. Their purpose is to serve the needs of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. They are progressive only to the extent that the foreign policy of the Soviet Union can allow progressive action. These organizations allegedly fight for alleged progressive aims in many countries, but, at the same time, they remain silent about or else they openly defend the existence of slave labor and of concentration camps in the Soviet Union. They attack American or British imperialism, but only as a means of concealing Russian imperialism; they defend freedom of speech in every corner of the world, except in those places where freedom of speech is inconvenient to Generalissimo Stalin; they attack many crimes and injustices in the west (and these should be attacked) but they attack none of the crimes and injustices perpetrated by the rulers of the Soviet state. *They are Russian nationalists.* As such, they should be exposed and characterized. If they are innocent dupes, it should be remembered that while naivete and innocence can be charming in children and young girls, it is inexcusable in politics. "Neither a nation nor a woman" wrote Karl Marx, "can be forgiven for the unguarded hour in which a chance comer has seized the opportunity for an act of rape." Nor, in the last analysis, can a Stalinist dupe be forgiven for the unguarded moment when his mind has been raped by a misapplied quotation from Marx or Lenin or Jefferson or Paine or Lincoln. But at the same time, it is meaningless to ask Stalinists to admit what they are when it does not serve their purpose to do so. One can only press them with blunt questions, describe their tactics and in that way, isolate them.

These remarks more than suggest the answers I will give to your questions. These questions are not well posed. They should be more specific and more clear. For instance, in your first question, you use the phrase "groups influenced to some degree by the Communist Party." Monolithic parties which are totalitarian from top to bottom do not influence

merely to some degree. Either they influence to all degrees, or else, they influence on all vital questions which directly concern their own aims, and they create the illusion of democracy by allowing dupes to talk about that which is secondary or irrelevant to the main issues. But at the same time, I am opposed to the banning of the Communist Party. As a member of the National Board of the Workers Defense League (which is one hundred per cent free of Stalinist influence), I voted for a resolution which has publicly placed the Workers Defense League on record as opposed to any banning of the American Communist party. To ban the Communist party and its front organization will be to endanger all free anti-Stalinist liberal, radical and revolutionary voices in America. One can be sure that the masters of the Kremlin are not worried that their minions in America might suffer the loss of free speech. In one way or another, these masters have taken care of the free speech of their dupes and agents. The banning of Stalinist organizations will only give these organizations the moral credit they need in order to fool people. During the War, the American Stalinists pursued an out-and-out Wall Street line. This fact needs to be erased from the public mind. If you ban them, you will tell many people that they are really the champions of progressive aims and of the workers. And that is what they wish people to think. Then, if they have become established as such champions, they can state that as the leaders of the vanguard of Human Progress, that there is progress in Poland, in Hungary, in Russian occupied Germany, in Yugoslavia, in Roumania, in Bulgaria and even in Siberia which Henry Wallace seems to consider to be more or less like the American wild west of Bronco Billy. The reactionaries who attack the Stalinists as socialist revolutionists are really preparing the ground for reaction in America. They are turning a real force and danger into a demon. The best way to establish reaction is to turn men into demons of the imagination. Then, you slay the demons and you use this pseudo-accomplishment as the means of placing your political power firmly in your own hand.

Yes, it is possible for liberals to change the complexion of a Communist front organization. All they need to do in order to achieve this fine aim is to convince Generalissimo Stalin that he should order such a change. If liberals can so convince Stalin, then, they can change the complexion of Stalinist front organizations. However, it should be added that many in Russia who tried to change Mr. Stalin's mind are now either dead or else they are in jail in Henry Wallace's new wild west.

It is clear, then, that I do not favor a policy such as that of President Stearns. At the same time, I would also remark that I think the position taken by Mr. Brian Wadsworth, in the spring issue of *The Window* is dangerous. Mr. Wadsworth wants the AYD and other Stalinist organizations out in the open so that he can expose them. But for what?

the betterment of that world. But they should, at the same time, know that as long as they are students, they are or they should be trying to develop the most wonderful of all human instrumentalities—the human mind. And if they do, perhaps they will realize that the arm-chair Machiavellianism of Stalinist dupes offers neither the road to insight nor to action that will contribute towards making the world more free,

He does not tell us. There is lynch spirit within the law, and lynch spirit beyond the law. One should be aware of both. The two students who defend the AYD in the spring issue of *The Window* talk of programmes in a language of empty generalities: their articles could have been written by Earl Browder in the days when he was the "beloved leader" of the American people and the twentieth century edition of Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine and Abraham Lincoln. But Mr. Wadsworth has no programme. Why does he want to expose the Stalinists? Because they are not American? But they are Americans! Because they express a foreign ideology? But their language and formal ideology is coming from the same source as his. And there are injustices in America. There is race prejudice. Labor is exploited. America is perhaps the freest country in the world today, *but it is not free enough*. It must be more free. The *sine qua non* for opposing Stalinism is to fight every injustice in America. Then, one can attack, with principles, the inhuman policies of Stalinism all over the world. Then, and then only, will one's attack on slave labor and concentration camps in the Soviet Union have the convincing ring of principles. The answer to the AYD is an independent student group which dares to face and discuss every question, which bases itself on its own members and not on a central organization in New York City, and which really seeks to help students to become mature, independent, and fearlessly direct in their effort to think, to learn, to prepare themselves to take their place in the world we know. Against such an organization, democratically run, and *with complete local autonomy*, the AYD cannot stand a chance of winning influence. Of this, I am convinced. The Stalinists and their reactionary enemies are really alike. If one points out that there is Jim Crow in America, an out-and-out reactionary will answer by declaring that there is slave labor in Russia. If one points out that there are concentration camps in the Soviet Union, the Stalinoid liberals will evade the issue by talking about Girdler and Talmadge. The Stalinists so act that the bitterest reactionaries in America can pose as champions of freedom: these reactionaries so act that the Stalinists can come forth with the same pose. They are both threatening to eliminate all independent voices, and to clear the field for a struggle between themselves. They are gradually forcing on the public mind a false either-or proposition. They use different emotional words of appeal, but they have the same authoritarian type of mentality. To think, to act, to try and contribute towards making a better world, one must be free of both influences. Students can best learn to be free by forming a free and open organization which is controlled by its own membership, and which does not fear to raise, to study, to discuss any and all valid questions. This is the way to create free minds. Only free minds can fight authoritarian minds. Students should be interested in the world in which they live. They should try to contribute towards

and towards fighting for peace and plenty. James Connolly, the Irish revolutionist and national martyr, once remarked that unity is a good thing, but that if unity must be achieved at the cost of principles, then it is not worth the price. Unity with Russian State parties is not worth the price more than is unity with Eugene Talmadge.

STALINIST POLITICAL CIRCUS

It is easier to go through a maze than to keep track of the Communist (Stalinist) Party changes in line.

Below, we quote from articles about Roosevelt and his politics published by the Stalinists, which should at least indicate the fabulous flip-flops which mark the whole history of Stalinism. Unfortunately, we have only enough space in this issue to merely indicate the web of lies and contradictions in which the Stalinists have been caught up.

"Roosevelt's policies, as is already evident, are policies in the interests of the bankers and big industrialists and against the interests of the toiling masses. The dictatorial powers already taken by Roosevelt -- already a step toward fascization-- are being used against the toilers.....this is the anti-working class program of Roosevelt."

(Statement of the Central Committee, Daily Worker, March 30, '33)

"At the same time a more insidious form of fascism is being foisted on the people, represented by the logical evolution of the National Recovery Act and Roosevelt's assumption of power never attained by former Presidents in time of peace."

(New Masses, January 2, 1934)

"Meanwhile, it is already being amply demonstrated that the attacks of the Reactionary Republicans and their stooges on Roosevelt's peace proposals is standing the Nazis in good stead."

(Daily Worker, editorial, August 19, 1939)

"Mr. Roosevelt, you....with the applause of the Republicans, connived to bring Chamberlain and Hitler together for the Munich betrayal of Czechoslovakia."

(Daily Worker, editorial, October 30, 1940)

"Hooverism had driven the country as close to hell as a nation may approach and still remain a democracy, and then a new President (Roosevelt) took office. Right then, at the very beginning, the people knew he was their man."

"Better than most men, Franklin Roosevelt knew that American Democracy was a living, vital, and revolutionary ideology."

(New Masses, article by Howard Fast, April 24, 1945)

"....we know that we are a better people because Mr. Roosevelt was at the helm. We are a better people because somehow and sometime all of us have partaken of his wisdom. And somehow his greatness has seeped into the very fiber of our lives and of our beings. The man will shine in the national memory as long as the nation lives."

(New Masses, April 24, 1945)

EDITORIALS...

WE CAN'T WIN WITH WALLACE

The Wallace Third Party movement has tremendously increased its support in recent months, particularly among students and national minorities and to a lesser degree, among a section of the labor movement. This is due, not so much to "Wallace's" "program," as to the bankrupt politics of the other two capitalist parties. Wallace has successfully channelized the discontentment arising out of the Truman Administration's draft proposal, the Palestinian betrayal and the increasingly reactionary labor legislation of both the Democrats and the Republicans.

This development, though it contains some encouraging signs, is also an unfortunate one. It is encouraging in that it reflects a growing and active disillusionment on the part of youth and labor with the shoddy, capitalist politicians of the two major parties. It is unfortunate in that this discontentment is being deflected by a movement which has nothing better to offer.

WHAT DOES WALLACE STAND FOR?

Wallace's "program" is primarily a negative one. He and his leading backers are quite ready to draw up a long list of accurate grievances against the policies of the Truman administration and the Republican Party. But what does Wallace concretely offer in his domestic program? He tells us that he is against monopolies. Wonderful! So are a lot of people. But if he is going to break up monopolies what does he plan to put in their stead? On this, he has said little, except to emphasize his faith in the "system of free enterprise!" How it is possible to maintain capitalist free enterprise today except on a monopoly basis, the Wallaceites have not explained. What Wallace's proposal actually boils down to is that we go back to the good old days of horse and buggy capitalism. We fail to see anything progressive in this.

Wallace also tells us that he is against religious discrimination and Jim Crow. But talk is cheap. Every politician plays on the healthy democratic sentiments of the American people with noble sounding declarations in every election year. Witness Truman's Civil Rights Report. Talk is cheap. How conveniently have Wallace and his cohorts forgotten his record! A cabinet member in the Roosevelt government for thirteen years, his actions then belie the promises he offers now. As Secretary of Agriculture, he was largely responsible for the criminal policy of plowing under crops, and the killing of every third pig when "one third of the nation was ill-fed, ill-housed and ill-clothed."

He makes fine speeches now about racial equality. But what a contrast all this talk is to the Jim Crow Department of Agriculture which Wallace proudly headed. Wallace must be judged by his record when in office, not by the vote-getting promises made so freely when out of office.

No candidate deserves even a second thought from anyone, unless he makes clear his stand on foreign policy. The age of isolationism is properly dead. What happens in London, Paris, Moscow, or Singapore vitally affects the well being of the mass of American people.

Insofar as Wallace has committed himself at all, he is committed to defending and apologizing for the reactionary politics of Stalinist imperialism. He has come out, not for One World, but for Two Worlds: one under the hegemony of American imperialism, the other dominated by Russian imperialism. Aside from the utopian absurdity of the practical aspects of this proposal, it reveals the Wallaceites' willingness to subject masses of people to the monstrous oppression of Russian totalitarianism, on the one hand, and the slightly more subtle exploitation by American big-business interests, on the other.

The Wallace movement is a contradiction in its domestic "program" and is still more inconsistent in its support of capitalism at home and Stalinism abroad. It is consistent only in its basic anti-working class and anti-socialist character.

FOR AN INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY

The American people need a Labor Party. Not a fake Third Party like the one that Wallace and his Stalinist inspirers offer, but one based upon the needs and aspirations of labor and genuine progressives. An Independent Labor Party which will break from the politics and influences of the traditional capitalist parties and consistently oppose reaction in Washington as well as in Moscow. A party which can transform the American government from its present status as servant to big-business, to a Workers Government which will serve the interests of the broad mass of people -- the workers, the farmers and the youth. It is only such a party that can fill the vacuum in American politics today.

Editorial

AGAINST THE MARSHALL PLAN

If the abstract meaning of the Marshall Plan is economic aid for the devastated nations of Europe and food for their hungry peoples, then no socialist - or any person with a spark of human feeling - could oppose this plan. However, the Marshall Plan as the Abstract Idea has little in common with the Marshall Plan as a reality. The only meaningful way in which the plan can be discussed is when placed in its social context. Only then, is it at all possible to get an accurate picture of the Marshall Plan: its motivations, aims and consequences. "Motivations" are important to uncover, as they give us a better insight into the Plan, facilitating an analysis of it and predictions as to its results.

It should be clear that the European Recovery Program is not motivated by humanitarian considerations. The plight of the millions of starving peoples today in China and India has not produced any Marshall Plans for those nations. In Truman's original address to congress on the plan, and in the subsequent congressional hearings and speeches, it has been adequately demonstrated that the Marshall Plan is an attempt to stabilize American capitalism.

This stabilization is to be accomplished through two basic techniques. First is the industrial aid designed to re-establish American markets in Europe and, secondly, through food loans to the hungry people, to destroy the popular base that Russia has demagogically built for its own imperialist interests among the European working class, particularly in France and Italy.

The ability of American capitalism to effectively rebuild the European economy is negated by several factors inherent in the capitalist system itself. The plan means a tremendous initial investment in Europe which may never pay dividends should the Stalinists succeed to frustrate the plan through their political influence in the working class of Europe. Without such dividends the Marshall Plan could only succeed in hastening an economic collapse at home. Secondly, we must remember that capitalism is a competitive system. The individual capitalist in America competes with other native capitalists for domestic and foreign markets, and competes on the world market with foreign capitalists. To significantly rebuild the capitalist economies of Europe would mean the revival of a European capitalist class which would eventually become a competitor of, and threat to the security of American capitalism.

That is, in brief, the dilemma of American capitalism today in relation to aid for Europe: effective economic assistance is self damaging in the long run; no aid means the immediate loss of necessary markets and sources of raw material.

The only "guarantee" that Washington could have today that even the inadequate aid now proposed would stand the American capitalists to any good, would be its assured hegemony over Europe's political life. Wall Street would have to reduce Europe to a semi-colonial status. There is no other way that American capitalism could protect its interests from competing Russian imperialism, from the ambitions of a renascent European bourgeoisie, and from the economic and political aspirations of the European working class.

It is not necessary to point out where capitalist politicians have openly said that the Marshall Plan means the economic and political subjugation of Europe. Imperialism always parades as the benefactors of mankind, not its oppressor. Our understanding of the general nature of capitalism and the specific needs of American big business monopolies today, reveals the Marshall Plan as a more subtle extension of the imperialist pattern.

As socialists, our opposition to the Marshall Plan flows from our basic criterion of how this plan will affect the independence, and the living standards of the European working class. We are opposed to any plan which is used as a weapon against the independence of the working class. We do not believe in imperialist plans that are used as a means of perpetuating capitalism, a system which means a constantly decreasing standard of living for all working people.

A SOCIALIST APPEAL

The trap is being set.

The war hysteria is being consciously manufactured by the "men of state" to enlist mass support for conscription and war. The Marshall speech, the Byrnes speech, and the Truman address on "The State of the World" are all part of the same pattern for war.

The fight of the socialist Youth League against conscription is part of our fight against all forms of imperialism - at home and abroad. It is part of our fight against American Dollar Diplomacy which is attempting to subjugate the entire world under its dollar shaped heel. It is also part of our socialist struggle against the rapacious imperialism of the Russian state; a state which in its practices and ideology has betrayed every socialist concept.

Youth cannot afford to sit on the sidelines. It must actively participate in the fight for human dignity and freedom. That fight must not be translated into support for either stalinist or American imperialism.

The battle for human dignity and freedom is synonymous with the fight for a socialist America. A socialist America in a socialist world where factories produce for useful consumption --- not for armies, wars and profits; a world where the masses of people determine their own destiny, not where it is dictated by the interests and needs of a selfish few. This fight is much more than a moral one. It is a fight for our personal existence and the continued growth of human culture.

We must not remain mere spectators.

* * * *

The above three editorials, plus the article of clippings from the stalinist press, have been stapled together and may be ordered by individuals, groups or any youth or party units for distribution in front of schools and youth meetings. The price is six dollars per thousand copies, which is the cost of publication.

Thousands of copies have already been distributed and great interest has been evoked.

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DEMOCRACY, SOCIALISM AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The relationship between democracy and socialism is a problem that has become primary for the socialist movement. The rise of dictatorship in Russia has become for many liberals and intellectuals, proof of the ultimate tendency of proletarian dictatorship towards elimination of economic democracy and individual rights.

The Socialist society as seen by Marx is historically conditioned. By this we mean that such a society is only possible once techniques of production are developed to a point where the struggle of man for existence is outmoded. For, so long as scarcity exists, the desire to appropriate the production of others will exist. The strong will seek to enslave the weak and reap the fruits of their labors. Slave society, feudalism and capitalism viewed as class societies rested on the struggle between classes for that which was produced.

ECONOMIC BASIS OF SOCIALISM

A classless society can maintain itself only when productive techniques are so developed that material struggles will become subsidiary to other aspects of living. The existence of such a society wherein production is at such a high level, means several things. It means an abundance of leisure and consequently a human and cultural development unparalleled in history. Contributions to art, philosophy and science have come for the most part from groups which have had the leisure time to develop non-productive pursuits. "Time is the father of all culture".

Such a development of technology would mean that the struggle for the necessities of life which has dominated all of human existence would subside in importance. The class struggle would no longer be necessary. Witness the example of a subway train. When there are not enough seats, passengers push each other around. More subway guards are needed to open and close the doors. When there are plenty of seats, however, the situation is quite different. There is no mad scramble for seats. Passengers don't push each other. Less subway guards are needed. To project this example to the historical level, only in a highly productive economy where there is plenty for everyone, can we think of the possibility of a socialist society. The struggle for the means of existence, i.e., the class struggle, will be outmoded.

THE DEGENERATION OF THE RUSSIAN WORKERS STATE

Russia, at the time of the revolution, was a backward country, whose productive level, compared to that of an advanced capitalist nation, was insignificant. The material basis for a classless society in Russia simply did not exist and could not be developed within Russian boundaries. The Bolshevik party which led the Russian Revolution was well aware of this situation. That is why they based all their aspirations for Russia on a victorious

revolution in an advanced country, specifically Germany. Lenin hoped that the Russian revolution would light the fires of proletarian revolution throughout Europe. Indeed, the period following the Russian revolution was one of intense revolutionary struggles outside of Russia. These struggles failed. The defeat of the European revolution following World War I, insured with it the defeat of socialism in agrarian, isolated Russia.

WHAT IS BOLSHEVISM?

There is another aspect to the question of democracy and socialism which developed within the socialist movement. This problem can be summed up as Bolshevism. The degeneration of the Russian revolution was not caused primarily by the economic backwardness of Russia, according to the theoreticians of the Social Democracy, but was inevitable for quite different reasons. It was, they claim, a natural outgrowth of Bolshevism which is essentially undemocratic in nature. Bolshevism, for them, is a conspiratorial, monolithic tendency which aims to seize state power undemocratically and establish, not the proletarian dictatorship (a misnomer according to them), but a dictatorship of the Bolshevik party. This is social-democratic mythology not historical fact. The reality is that Bolshevism is antithetical to stalinism in theory and action. There is no inherent continuity between the two.

The first point we must establish is the difference between the stalinist and bolshevik concepts of the party. The latter concept of the revolutionary party rests primarily on the necessity of the party to be prepared for all eventualities. The party must combine those aspects of centralism which will afford its effectiveness in action, and those aspects of democracy which will provide for a rich and fruitful ideological life within the party. This means that minority differences on policies, tactics and theory which arise within the party must be given freedom to influence the rest of the party. The history of the Bolshevik party was one of discussion and controversy. Minority tendencies existed within the party on most of the important questions. It was for this reason that bolshevism made outstanding contributions to revolutionary theory and practice.

BOLSHEVIK CENTRALISM AND DISCIPLINE

The question of how much centralism and discipline is to exist in a revolutionary party cannot be answered in a formula. In Lenin's "What Is To Be Done" he states that the high degree of centralism, the rigid standards for party members, the necessity for the strict discipline which he outlines for the Russian party should be modified when applied to a democratic country. The Bolshevik Party in Russia was subject to close surveillance by the Tsarist police. For years a Russian police inspector sat as a member on the central committee of the Bolshevik Party. Under these conditions it was not possible to have all party affairs discussed openly. All members of the party could not be familiar with each other. It was necessary, for example, to give leading committees the power of co-optation, i.e., the power to appoint a member to a committee without an election.

ROLE OF THE BOLSHEVIKS IN THE REVOLUTION

The relationships of the Bolshevik Party to the revolutions of 1917 give little credence to the totalitarian myth. The first revolution occurred in February. The Tsarist government was overthrown and was replaced not by one government but in actuality by two. One was the provisional government which was a coalition of bourgeois parties and eventually of all other parties except the bolsheviks. The masses who had overthrown the Tsarist autocracy established their own councils in the factories, the army and the rural regions. These were the soviets. Much of the actual work of administering government was performed by the soviets. A state of dual power existed. The Provisional Government had not been elected. It simply stepped in to fill a vacuum.

The Bolsheviks raised three slogans: "All Power to the Soviets", "A Constituent Assembly", and "Land, Bread and Peace". By September, the soviets in Petrograd and Moscow, the leading industrial centers of Russia supported the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets". Neither the Mensheviks nor any other party supported this slogan. The Provisional Government repeatedly promised and repeatedly delayed the convocation of the constituent Assembly, which when it finally met after the Revolution was no longer representative of the sentiments of the Russian people.

ROLE OF THE OTHER PARTIES

The policy of the other parties both bourgeois, peasant and working class was notoriously undemocratic. The Provisional Government, which was not an elected body, suppressed the peasants' seizure of land from the large land owners, and refused to recognize the legitimate democratic nature of the Soviets. It delayed the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. It provided a forerunner of the Stalinist Moscow Trials technique by framing the Bolsheviks as "German Spies". It pursued an imperialist war policy when the overwhelming majority of the people wanted peace.

The peasant supported Social Revolutionary party split in two. The split was mainly due to the policy of the provisional government in arresting peasants who seized the land. The Right-Wing Social Revolutionaries supported the Prov. Govt.; the Left-Wing opposed the policy of the party leadership. It was the Left-Wing which collaborated with the Bolsheviks in the November Revolution. The majority of the peasants for obvious reasons supported the left-wing. Thus the November revolution was essentially a socialist revolution whose key slogans were those of elementary democracy which rallied around it the majority of the workers and peasants.

When the Constituent Assembly was finally convoked it was no longer a Constituent Assembly. Electoral lists which had been prepared months before, gave no cognizance of the split which had occurred in the Social Revolutionary Party. The majority of the peasants who supported the left wing of the party were recorded as voting for the right wing. At the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly, which occurred a few days after the Soviet Revolution, Lenin and Trotsky presented the Assembly with a document calling on them to recognize the power of the Soviets. When this unrepresentative, undemocratic body refused, it was disoanded.

The early days of the Revolution saw no suppression of other parties that propagandized against the government. The first active steps against other parties were taken only when they joined the forces of counter-revolution who were organizing in the South. It was admitted in the Menshevik party Congresses in 1918 that many sections of their party had joined the counter-revolution.

It was after the Civil War, when the rigors of War Communism were barely over, when the European Revolution had evidently failed, when thousands of worker militants had died at the front when conditions were so bad that in some sections of the country cannibalism prevailed, that degeneration began to seep through the party apparatus. Lenin began to speak of Russia as a bureaucratically deformed workers state. The terrible material forces of history had begun to make themselves felt despite the heroism of the Bolshevik-Leninists.

STALINISM FLOWED FROM THE DEFEAT OF BOLSHEVISM

Today we see the final product in the Stalinist police state. Before Stalin could consolidate his power, however, he had to exterminate physically the leading cadres of the Bolshevik party including Lenin's Central Committee. Stalinism was physically incapable of co-existence with Bolshevism. He had to distort all Bolshevik theory including the concept of the Party. The Communist Party is similar to Lenin's party only in name. No opposition is tolerated. There is no freedom of discussion, no ideological life.

RESPONSIBILITY OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

If we are to discuss blame at all, and it is not always fruitful to do so, then the failure of the Russian Revolution lies not with the Bolsheviks but rather at the hands of those who betrayed the European Revolution. It was the German Social Democracy who suppressed the German Revolution. Under the orders of Noske, the Social Democrat, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were murdered and the German revolution destroyed. It was the European Social Democracy which supported the first World War and supported the intervention in Soviet Russia. The Social Democracy today has gone further into the imperialist camp than anyone would have dreamed twenty years ago. Leon Blum calls himself and his party "The trustee of French capitalism". The French Socialist party supported the action of the French government against the national struggle of the Indo-Chinese. The imperialist betrayals of the British Labor Party bear little repeating. The German Social Democracy, numbering nine million organized workers, allowed Hitler to step into power without a demonstration. That is the record of the self-righteous democratic critics of Revolutionary Socialism.

THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY IS THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

Bolsheviks believe that the essence of socialism is the fulfillment of all types of Democracy. The trend toward Fascism in present day capitalism leaves little hope for democracy under the

status quo. The Workers Party and the Socialist Youth League have continued to fight for democracy in the only way which can succeed; by continuing the socialist struggle. Those who consider themselves "trustees of capitalism" have abandoned not only the struggle for socialism but the struggle for democracy as well.

Gertrude Blackwell

R o s a L u x e m b u r g o n :

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The party of Lenin was thus the only one in Russia which grasped the true interests of the revolution in that first period. It was the element that drove the revolution forward, and, thus, it was the only party which really carried on a socialist policy.

It is this which makes clear, too, why it was that the Bolsheviks, though they were at the beginning of the revolution a persecuted, slandered and hunted minority attacked on all sides, arrived within the shortest time to the head of the revolution and were able to bring under their banner all the genuine masses of the people: the urban proletariat, the army, the peasants, as well as the revolutionary elements of democracy, the left wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The real situation in which the Russian Revolution found itself, narrowed down in a few months to the alternative:—victory of the counter revolution or dictatorship of the proletariat — Kaledin or Lenin. Such was the objective situation, just as it quickly presents itself in every revolution after the first intoxication is over, and as it presented itself in Russia as a result of the concrete, burning questions of peace and land, for which there was no solution within the framework of bourgeois revolution.

....And he who tries to apply the home-made wisdom derived from parliamentary battles between frogs and mice to the field of revolutionary tactics only shows thereby that the very psychology and laws of existence of revolution are alien to him and that all historical experience is to him a book sealed with seven seals.

from "The Russian Revolution"
by Rosa Luxemburg

100 YEARS OF "THE MANIFESTO"

The Communist Manifesto was written one hundred years ago this month. It was published a few months later, in 1848. It was the first manifesto of scientific socialism, that is, its first programmatic statement, and yet, its most important sections appear to have been written yesterday. After one hundred years, it still provides important directives in the struggle for human emancipation.

Its young authors, Marx was 29 and Engels 27 at the time of its writing; had separately but simultaneously worked out their ideas, each drawing from a different tradition but both reaching the same conclusions. The ideas of Marx, stemming from the French Revolution and the Rights of Man, and those of Engels from the development of English industry---- the French Revolution and English industrial growth, the two great historic transformations from which the history of modern bourgeois society dates. Beginning with the best products of the bourgeois revolution, Marx and Engels were able to go far beyond it and far beyond anyone of their time or since. In paying tribute to the Manifesto we must not forget, in passing, to admire the genius of its authors.

The Manifesto includes in succinct programmatic form all of the basic ideas of socialism. If one merely takes time to give flesh and blood to its skeleton form, to expand on each of its compact ideas, the result will be --- with a few corrections --- a textbook of all that is important in Marxism. Corrections are important in the few secondary, though important, passages of the Manifesto which have become antiquated. Marx and Engels, in their joint preface of 1872, were able to point to some of these. They felt, however, that they no longer had the right to alter the original form or text of the document since it had already become a historical work. That was 25 years after its publication; today, after 75 more years have passed, passages of the Manifesto have receded still further into the background. It is important to understand which of its ideas still retain their original validity and which have lost their force and consequently require amplification or alteration.

THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY

The materialist conception of history which is used with such skill in the Manifesto has completely withstood the test of events. Despite the abundance of hostile criticism directed against it, it remains the only scientific interpretation of history. It is directly responsible for the accuracy of prediction, the true test of a science, which we can find in the record of applied Marxism over the past hundred years.

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle". So begins the Communist Manifesto. This concept of class struggle remains the most important conclusion drawn from the materialist interpretation of history and the first consideration necessary to any analysis of any problem. This postulate, based on existing conditions and not invented by the authors, has become both an issue and a factor in the class struggle. As an issue, the existence of the class struggle has been denied by the ruling class. As a fact-

or, the recognition of class struggle by the working class puts the existing struggle on a new and higher level and makes its prosecution intelligent and controlled. Marx and Engels proved that "common welfare", "national unity", "eternal moral truths" are meaningless phrases. He empirically established the struggle for material interests as driving forces of history. The reactionaries and liberal democrats were joined in their attacks on this theory, by the labor fakers and later by the Stalinists, who by class conciliation, "popular Frontism", and support of warring imperialist countries sought to revise this basic principle of Marxism. But today, at the height of the epoch of imperialism and wars, which brings all social contradictions to the point of greatest tension, the Communist Manifesto has its supreme theoretical triumph.

The anatomy of capitalism as a specific stage in the economic development of society was given by Marx in its finished form in Capital (1867). But already in the Manifesto the main lines of the future analysis were sketched: the payment for labor as equivalent to its cost of reproduction, the appropriation of surplus value by the capitalists, competition as the basic law of all social relations; the ruination of all intermediate classes; the concentration of wealth in the hands of an ever diminishing number of property owners at the one pole, and the numerical growth of the proletariat, at the other; the preparation of the material and political preconditions for the socialist revolution.

CAPITALISM LOWERS LIVING STANDARDS

The proposition in the Manifesto concerning the tendency of world capitalism to lower the living standards of the workers was at one time subjected to a barrage of criticism. It is no longer even necessary to show the false basis of these attacks; the depression of 1929 and the subsequent war have proven the point, not only beyond all doubt, but beyond all apology. The only basis on which American capitalism has been able to achieve even a semblance of stability is in its role as imperialist exploiter of foreign continents.

The Communist Manifesto predicts and describes the commercial and industrial disorders of capitalism. The revisionists, during a period when capitalism was still experiencing rapid growth and development, stated that the rising trusts and cartels would bring an end to capitalist crises by assuring a controlled market. Here too, history has reinforced Marxian theory in answering its critics.

THEORY OF THE STATE

"The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." With this succinct formula the Manifesto scientifically appraises the modern state. History nods its head. The "freedom" granted under any of the so-called democratic states, is freedom for bourgeois rule. The different methods of bourgeois rule arise out of different needs of the ruling class at different stages of development of the economy and the class struggle.

#Marx later differentiated between labor and labor power.

"EVERY CLASS STRUGGLE IS A POLITICAL STRUGGLE"

"Every class struggle is a political struggle", says the Manifesto to. Later it adds, "The organization of the proletariat as a class is consequently its organization into a political party". "Pure trade unionism" has long tried to ignore these historical laws. In the United States where purely economic unionism has been the traditional philosophy of the working class, the trade unions are now being forced into politics. The turn of economic events, the increasingly evident inability of capitalist industry to solve its own problems, and the mounting intervention of the government in the economic problems of the country, are forcing the unions into politics. But for the unions to enter politics by merely participating in the already existing bourgeois political arena is not enough. To accomplish anything, even only to defend their existing standards, the unions will have to give up their policy of supporting candidates of the capitalist parties. What is in order is "the organization of the proletariat as a class --- its organization into a political party." We might add, if only for emphasis -- its organization into an independent party-- an independent labor party. Already many union militants are coming to see this as a necessary next step for American labor.

The proletariat cannot conquer power within the legal framework established by the bourgeoisie. "Communists openly declare their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." Reformism sought to explain the postulate of the Manifesto on the grounds that the movement in Marx's time was immature and that democracy had not yet developed adequately. The fate of the Italian, German, and Spanish "democracies", to mention a few, is adequate testimony to the bankruptcy of reformism.

SOCIALISM IS INTERNATIONAL

Marxism has always taught that the international development of capitalism predetermines the international character of the proletariat revolution. On this point the Manifesto says, "United action, of the leading, civilized countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat." While any examination of world capitalism today will prove positively that this is even more true today than in 1848, the Stalinists have proved it negatively by their futile attempt to build "socialism in a single country", a backward country at that. What has emerged from that attempt is of course not socialism but its opposite: a bureaucratic society of poverty and slavery.

Compare, also, the section of the Communist Manifesto which predicts the withering away of the state under socialism with all that we know about the direction of Russian development under the Stalinists. Far from withering away, the state has grown into a monstrous oppressive instrument. The Stalinists have tried to explain this fact in many ways but the Manifesto is unequivocal. "When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character."

Despite the fact that two world wars have killed millions and almost destroyed western civilization and that a third world war, which might easily finish the job, appears on the horizon, most people still look upon the "The workingmen have no fatherland" slogan of the Mani-

esto as nothing but an agitational chibboleth. How unfortunate this is can be described only by the actual state to which man and culture have been lowered by imperialist war. What the Manifesto offers on this problem can be classified better as advice than as a slogan. When the working class takes this advice, it will, by acting in a truly internationalist spirit against war and imperialism, finally remove itself and all of humanity from the vicious capitalist circle of wars and depression s.

THE BASIC VALIDITY OF MANIFESTO TODAY

These are the things in which the Manifesto continues to give us irreplaceable directives. They are the burning problems of the struggle for emancipation. It is a brief work, but what other can be compared in this respect with it? This does not imply, however, that after one hundred years the Communist Manifesto needs no corrections. The Manifesto requires corrections, and additions, but these can be made adequately only if done in accordance with the method laid down in the original work itself.

Marx and Engels taught that no social system departs from the arena of history before exhausting its creative possibilities. The Manifesto condemns capitalism for retarding the development of the productive forces. During that period, however, as well as the next few decades, capitalism only hindered the growth of the productive forces in a relative sense. Had a socialist society been organized at that time, it would have been possible to increase the tempo of growth of the productive forces many times over. But this is not to say that they were not increasing under capitalism. It was only much later that the productive forces under capitalism began an actual decline and capitalism was transformed from a relatively reactionary social system to an absolutely reactionary one. The last war already wiped out a goodly portion of the accumulated capital of mankind, and the next war, if allowed to occur, threatens to destroy even the possibility of maintaining any kind of civilized existence. Marx and Engels believed that capitalism would be overthrown before its decline had reached this stage. The transformation, having already taken place, and forcing us to make this amendment only serves to emphasize the need for fundamental change that the authors of the Manifest taught.

THEORY OF PROGRESS

In this connection it is necessary to reevaluate the theory of progress developed by Marx and Engels and implicit in the Manifesto. Realizing that the basis for the complete emancipation of man was the development of technology to the point where a society of plenty for all was possible, they saw as progressive anything which satisfied this prerequisite; i.e., anything which raised the level of the productive forces. But now that this condition for socialism has been attained, by and large, by the tremendous development of modern productive forces on a world scale, we must beyond it to another essential prerequisite for the socialist revolution: the consciousness of the working class and the prosecution of the class struggle to its logical conclusion. The level of the productive forces is no longer the main criterion. Now, in order to judge whether something is progressive, we must first determine its effect on the class struggle. In the last war Trotsky's defense of Russia was based upon the fact that Russian nationalized economy was able to expand the productive

forces while capitalism could not. That is what he meant when he said that Russia, though a degenerated and oppressive system, was progressive nevertheless. He was wrong because he did not take into account sufficiently the effect of Stalinism on the consciousness of the working class and consequently its effect on the possibility for successful revolution.

Although the Manifesto's prediction of proletarian revolution remains valid, it errs in the historical dates which Marx and Engels thought would mark the beginning of the revolutionary period. This error flowed from an underestimation of the future possibilities latent in capitalism and an overestimation of the revolutionary maturity of the proletariat. The revolution of 1848 in Germany opened up the possibility of a vast future capitalist ascension instead of becoming the first stage of the socialist revolution. The Paris Commune of 1871 showed that without a conscious revolutionary party the proletariat cannot wrest and hold power. Since then, the prolonged period of capitalist development and prosperity brought about not the education of the revolutionary vanguard, but rather the bourgeois degeneration of the labor aristocracy which became in turn an important brake upon the proletarian revolution. Later, by preventing the revolution in Western Europe, this aristocracy was largely responsible for the isolation of the Russian revolution and facilitated the rise of Stalinism. Each of these results assumed a motion of its own and became a cause of the further postponement of the revolution. However, the authors of the Manifesto could not have possibly foreseen these developments.

The Manifesto saw capitalism as the kingdom of free enterprise. It did not draw the necessary conclusions about the growth of monopoly. This was later done in Marx's "Capital." Even more recently Lenin in his "Imperialism" brings the analysis of this aspect of the development of capitalism up-to-date.

THE PROBLEM OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

Marx and Engels predicted the wholesale liquidation of the middle classes. They pictured this process as a proletarianization of craftsmen, petty tradesman and peasants. But as a matter of fact, capitalism has ruined the middle classes at a much faster rate than it has proletarianized them. The growth of technology at one and the same time crushes the middle class and engenders chronic unemployment among the proletariat. This chronic unemployment and the declassing of whole sections of the population, both middle class and workers, is one of the most brutal aspects of capitalist decline. On the other hand the growth of technology has created the so called "new middle class" of technicians, administrators, and commercial employees. We must recognize this however as an artificial preservation of petty bourgeois strata.

THE MANIFESTO AND PERMANENT REVOLUTION

The Manifesto erred in foreseeing a successful bourgeois revolution in Germany which it spoke of as but "a prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution." The revolution of 1848 revealed that under the more advanced conditions of countries which come late on the bourgeois scene none of the bourgeois classes are capable of

bringing the revolution to its termination. The bourgeoisie is too tied to the land-owning class and fears the masses; the petty-bourgeoisie is too divided and in its top layers too closely dependent upon the large capitalists. As evidenced by the more recent history of such countries as Russia, China, India and Spain, as well as Germany in 1848, under such conditions society can only be purged of its feudal remnants if the proletariat freed from the influence of the bourgeois parties can assume hegemony over the peasantry and establish its own dictatorship. This supplementation of Marxism was made by Trotsky and his theory of the "permanent revolution."

Although the Manifesto describes the process whereby capitalism draws into its arena the backward and uncivilized countries of the world, it contains no reference to colonial and national struggles. This is so because its authors, in expecting the socialist revolution in western Europe to take place in the immediate future, also foresaw by virtue of this, the automatic solution of the problem of national liberation and self-determination.

The Communist Manifesto includes ten demands for use in the period of the direct transition from capitalism to socialism. In the 1872 preface to the Manifesto, Marx and Engels called these demands antiquated in part. The necessary correction is that the "proletariat cannot simply lay hold of the ready made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes." After the Paris Commune, Marx saw the Commune as the type of state needed by the proletariat. With the Russian revolution this type of state took an even more definite form as "Soviets". Given this correction, the demands put forth in the Manifesto are completely applicable today. In our own program we speak of workers' control; without these demands there can be no revolutionary program.

The Communist Manifesto has been more than a theoretical guide in our struggle. It has been, and remains today, a living force in history. In its own time it served as a call to arms; it was an organizer in the formative period of the proletarian movement. Throughout the whole history of that movement it served as a teacher. It is in that capacity that we find it most useful today.

Justin Graham

The latter part of the above article is of a discussion nature and should not be viewed as an official SYL position. We feel that several points in the article are not well taken. Particularly the paragraphs dealing with Marx's theory of progress. In our opinion comrade Graham does not correctly estimate the importance which Marx and Engels did attach to the role of consciousness in history and more specifically to the role of political consciousness among the working class as a prerequisite for a successful socialist revolution. Also, Graham states in his article "the effect (of modern capitalism) upon the level of the productive forces no longer is the main criterion." This we feel is incorrect.

The point is that modern capitalism cannot raise the level of production on a world scale without producing wars and ever deepening crises. It is precisely because we are concerned with the level of production that we can no longer look upon capitalism as being even a relatively progressive economic system. Only a socialist economy today can attain sound stability and give a tremendous impetus to the growth of the productive forces.

Our readers are invited to present their own ideas on this question to the Socialist Youth Review. --The Editors

MOVIES

THE FILM OF ITALIAN NATIONAL LIBERATION

by James Fenwick

The Great Drought of Italian fascism lasted for twenty-two years. That after nearly a quarter of a century the barren tree of Italian culture again broke into leaf, is of more than passing interest. One of the most striking aspects of this renaissance has been the appearance of several noteworthy Italian films.

These films, of which "Open City", "Shoeshine", and "To Live In Peace", are the best examples, derive from the national liberation movement. They bear a relation to it similar to the relation of the Russian film masterpieces of the early 'twenties to the revolution of 1917. In the recent Italian films are mirrored all the strength of the resistance movement, and all its weakness. They are art products of an epoch of historical decline, moving, sometimes brilliant but of necessity limited by the nature of the forces producing them.

What is immediately striking about these films is their realism. The shooting has been done, for the most part, not on sound stages, as is done in Hollywood, but from life itself. Authenticity is almost immediately established. In one moment we have been transported to the campagna, to an ancient hill town, to a bombed-out city. People are equally real. The range of human types is greater. In the three pictures named they include a range not found in the US pictures. Further, the people involved are more real: women are not the uniformly enameled, effete dolls of Hollywood. They are taken from life. Working-class women are portrayed as they live—pregnant, without makeup, generous, petty, ragged, whatever their conditions may be.

The plot is more real—that is, it has been taken from life, it draws in more normal types—not the criminal caste who furnish so much of significant living for US movies, the moral problems posed are higher and the stakes are greater—they are usually life or death itself.

The moral problem of "To Live In Peace" is posed by the dangers involved in harboring two American soldiers during the German occupation. This is much the same theme of the Swiss film, "The Last Chance". This basic situation (somewhat humorously treated in, "To Live In Peace") creates an atmosphere in these films which is much more significant in analysing these movies and explaining the psychology of our times than the involutions of the plot itself.

In all three of these movies there is a sense of flight. In "To Live In Peace" and in "Open City" it is from the Germans. In "Shoeshine" it is from the reform school, that microcosm of the totalitarian society scaled down for juveniles. This fact of flight is similarly dominant in the previously mentioned Swiss film, "The Last Chance", and in the sensitive Swiss study of a child, "Marie Louise". This flight assumed not only an objective character (there is real flight) but takes on the character of an internal compulsion, an inner malaise.

Linked to this, but somewhat different, is a continuous anxiety

which gnaws at almost all persons in these movies-- anxiety over discovery, anxiety over death, anxiety over a lover, anxiety over an air-raid--anxiety in a thousand and one forms. Undifferentiated anxiety.

There is likewise a pervasive pessimism. In "Shoeshine" it is epitomized by the inevitable tragedy of the end, from which there is no way out. In "To Live In Peace" it is contained in a sentence by the peasant father who already feels the coming of another war.

Pervading most of these Italian films is also a feeling of hopelessness of human effort. The rewards of acts of courage and self-sacrifice are either non-existent or disproportionately small. Or else the bad win, the hunter and the hunted both perish, or persons-- especially children--innocent in everything except that they are members of the human race are brought down to destruction.

Another characteristic of these Italian films is a religious tone, gained not by an expression of religious feeling but by the physical presence of priests. The form, not the content.

These emotional states well convey the climate of the resistance movement and of the post-resistance society. Viewed as a whole these films reflect the limitations of the resistance movement and its contradictions. In that sense the dead-end of the post-war society revealed in "Shoeshine" is a logical sequel to the heroic epoch of the resistance portrayed in "Open City". "Shoeshine" is the tragedy of the black market, which sums up the economic impasse of post-war capitalism. The parallel social decay is symbolized by the death of a child, normally the most protected individual in society, as a result of having become caught up in black market operations.

The characteristics of these films can be most clearly seen when they are compared with the early Russian revolutionary films. The dynamism of the latter, though twenty-five years have elapsed, is striking. This is not to accuse the Italian films of lacking revolutionary finale. They articulate the times, and they bear their own emotional charge. That is not the least demand of a modern film. The comparison is made to explain what these films show of our epoch.

Why has Italy been able to produce several pictures capturing in all its fullness the tumult of our times? First, these films are able to draw upon experiences and emotional deaths which are not available in the United States because a war was not fought on its own soil. Apparently available in Italy, also, was a Satlinist or Stalinized intelligentsia ready with a program for filling in the cultural vacuum which followed the vanishing of fascism. Their restricted "leftism" accounts for a great deal of what is good in the films-- and more of what is bad. Why France with a genuinely significant movie tradition, has produced no films of a character comparable to the Italian ones during the post-war period is worth speculating upon. One factor can well be the presence of a large non-Satlinist intelligentsia resident from before the war. The Stalinists were not able to gain the field by default, as, it seems probable has happened in Italy.

That Switzerland could produce some exceptional movies can be ascribed, among other things, to an objectivity possible because of her almost unique position in Europe, which permits her to remain uncommitted amid the imperialist struggles. Another factor in the success of Italian films is her technical poverty, which forces the use of real locales and perhaps influences her employment of so many non-professional actors.

There is one country in Europe where the greatest films of the times lie waiting to be called to life. That country is Germany. In the three brief years alone between El Alamein and the last rubble heap in Berlin, Germany endured an epic catastrophe whose grandeur and whose pity possess all the elements of the deepest tragedy. Whether that tragedy will ever be committed to film depends upon the evolution of political events in the next few years.

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NO PEACE FOR ASIA

If the present post-war period is suffering from a shortage of anticipated "disillusionment" novels, such as engulfed the country after the first war, it most certainly is not suffering a similar shortage as regards diaries, private journals, official reminiscences and unofficial ramblings of every journalist who happened to board a ship or plane bound for some corner of the world. The great bulk of these books disappear on the 15¢ counters of second-hand bookstores to a most well deserved fate of oblivion. There are a mere handful that do not merit such a fate, and one of them is Harold R. Isaacs' record of post-war Asia, most adequately entitled, "NO PEACE FOR ASIA". The name of Isaacs should not sound strange to those familiar with Marxist literature. Besides being the co-translator of Trotsky's "Whither France", among other things he is the author of what is perhaps the best book to date on the Chinese revolution: THE TRAGEDY OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION. Trotsky thought sufficiently of this book to write the introduction. No neophyte journalist, Isaacs has been a newspaperman for 18 years, seven of which he spent in the Far East. What is more, he has been a genuine student of nationalist and Marxist movements, and he is able to combine a wealth of experience with theoretical clarity. His latest book is written in a more popular vein than the previous one, and it is to be hoped that the larger audience at whom he is evidently aiming will materialize. But that does not mean that his ideas are diluted; except in one possible instance, to which I shall refer later, is there any doubt as to the genuinely internationalist and socialist approach that Isaacs offers as a solution to the complex problems of peace in Asia or for that matter in the entire world.

The story of the Far East is the tragic unfolding of an uninterrupted series of double dealings, broken pledges, bloody suppressions, and shattered aspirations - almost always culminating in mass murders. Every major country is involved, and nowhere else is better demonstrated the monstrous hypocrisy with which the imperialist powers attempt to mask the yawning gap that separates official declaration from actual policy. The peoples of the Far East soon learned the real meaning of the Atlantic Charter and "Four Freedoms". Where the inhabitants had fought the Japanese vigorously in the hope of realizing their own nationalist dreams, they were the more bitterly disillusioned by the incontrovertible fact that the United States was not particularly interested in them for other than imperialist reasons. The defeat of "reaction" and "fascism" in Asia was followed by: 1) The brutal crushing of the national independence movements in Indonesia and Indochina, by British, Dutch and French troops using American material; 2) the handing over of Manchuria and the Kuriles to Russia; 3) the imprisonment of anti-Japanese peasant leaders in the Philippines; and 4) the division of Korea between the United States and Russia over the protests of the Korean people. Can anyone doubt why Isaacs found that the dominant post-war emotion in Asia was a deep and bitter disillusionment?

The most detailed and stimulating sections of the book deal with the struggles for independence in Indonesia and Indochina. News of this phase of recent history has only trickled back to

the Western countries thanks to the cooperation of the imperialist powers on matters of censorship. Consequently, much of the material that appears in this part of the book is new. It was only with the start of full scale warfare that the press releases began coming through; actually the Southeast Asia peoples have been struggling for their freedom for decades, even centuries. When the Indonesians, attempting to arouse sympathy in the breasts of their fellow humans who were so casually slaughtering them, scrawled over the walls of the occupied cities: "We are fighting for the inalienable right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" -- they were given the answer of tanks, airplanes, heavy artillery, all stamped USA. When their shocked protest reached the citadel of democracy in Washington, they were given another answer: the State Department requested the British troops (who were then responsible for the maintenance of "law and order" under the terms of the Potsdam Agreement) to remove all the USA insignia from the weapons. So with a bottle of OD paint, the U.S. government solidarized itself with the Indonesians' struggle, recalling no doubt, the Spirit of '76 to the minds of many democrats.

Some valuable statistics are furnished, if further proof were still necessary at this late date, of the beneficial results of imperialism for the people who are "de-burdened". 93% of the Indonesian population is illiterate; 97½% receive 20% of the national income. Indo-China under the "protection" of democratic France has 3 times as many prisons and concentration camps as hospitals. The salary of a qualified Indonesian engineer is 3½ times less than that of a white janitor of the University of Hanoi! Long before Lidice, the French troops utilized the method of wiping out an entire town as a measure of reprisal. These and similar facts lay the groundwork for the tremendous and universal support among the masses of the nationalist movement. The Japanese occupation gave a huge impetus to the development of these independence movements. In Indochina, French administration officials collaborated with the occupying Japanese; the Viet Nam independence movement went into the interior and from there conducted raids for arms and built up a rather effective military force which was to come in handy later. The role of young people -- the youth -- in these nationalist movements is a powerful one. One of the most moving descriptions in the book is that of a meeting of young Indonesians full of enthusiasm and ardor, fighting against almost insuperable odds, yet burning with courage of their convictions, and sure of eventual victory. Perhaps a small portion of this feeling can be conveyed by the following excerpt:

They packed the ornate empire-style theater in Hanoi to listen to the reports by young partisans newly arrived from the South. They crowded the stalls, young taut men and women, an unlikely audience in this setting built by Frenchmen for Frenchmen. The young man from the south spoke alone on a platform against a simple backdrop of a huge Viet Nam flag. He told of clashes and exploits around Saigon making his words glow with that fine inspiration that comes only when men see things by their own inner light. On the enemy he poured scorn. "We are inferior to the French in the matter of arms," he said. He paused a long instant and then added, "Also in the matter of cowardice!" The youthful audience roared. "Blood will flow across our country," he soberly

(continued on page 32)

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CAPITALIST ANARCHY VERSUS SOCIALIST PLANNING

The earliest form of production is that carried on for the immediate personal consumption of the producer himself. Such production is typical of small self-sufficient communities in which the division of labor between the various trades (such as hunting, fishing, agriculture, weaving etc.) is accomplished either according to custom or through deliberation. To this category belongs the society of the North American Indian at the time of Columbus, for example.

A far higher form of production is that carried on for the purpose of selling the result of the process on an organized market, in other words what Marxists call commodity production. Such production is typical of communities which have transcended their local limits, in regard to production and achieved a national or even international division of labor. The highest form of commodity producing society is capitalism and especially the so-called free or democratic capitalism of the United States.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PRIMITIVE AND CAPITALIST PRODUCTION

The primitive Indian community had to divide up the productive tasks it undertook in satisfying its needs among a few hundred persons at the most. Because the community was so small and because its organisational problems were so simple and unchanging, this division could be accomplished either by custom or by the conscious plan of the community. In a modern society, such as that of the United States, however, the division of labor (between steel producers, coal miners, auto producers, farmers, etc.) must be achieved between millions of men living hundreds of miles apart. The mechanism for achieving it in the right proportions, is neither custom nor plan, but rather the laws of market competition or what Marxists call the law of value. For instance, if too many producers enter the shoe industry and too few enter the coat industry,too many shoes, too few coats.... the price of shoes falls, the price of coats rises, some producers are forced to transfer from the shoe industry to the coat industry until prices are righted and the correct proportions are achieved.

In the one case, in primitive society, man's productive relations are determined by his consciousness. In the other, in commodity production what men shall do in production is determined by social laws and forces beyond their control and usually beyond their understanding.

The purpose of this social force, the law of value, is to plan and direct the productive activities of men in a society which has grown so complex that men do not do this themselves. Without this direction, production would have been impossible during the last hundred and fifty years of modern capitalism.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CAPITALIST COMMODITY PRODUCTION

The highest form of commodity production is modern capitalism. The immediate distinguishing marks of this form of

commodity production are first, that a separate and distinct class of wage laborers arises who have no productive property and consequently are forced to sell their labor power, to work for a wage in order to live, and secondly that production is carried on no longer merely for the purpose of sale but for the purpose of sale at a profit.

The cellular unit of capitalist production is the individual factory or work-shop. Within the factory, capitalism is characterized by the strictest dictatorship of the capitalist over the laboring producers. He (or his hirelings; engineers, supervisors, foremen, etc.) has complete control over the labor he has hired, directing it in this or that activity as he sees fit and completely excluding the laborers from the intellectual or mental processes of production. Any attempt of the laborers to participate in the management of the factory, i.e., in the direction of their labor, the capitalist attacks as an interference with the rights of private property, as it certainly is.

Thus capitalism brings about not only a division between different types of labor (shoe-making, cotton planting, mining etc.) but also between the mental and manual aspects of production itself.

THE SEPARATION OF MANUAL AND MENTAL LABOUR

"The separation of the intellectual powers of production from the manual labour, and the conversion of those powers into the might of capital over labour, is, as we have already shown, finally completed by modern industry erected on the foundation of machinery." Capital, Vol. 1, pg. 432.

The worker spends the largest single part of his life in the factory. The factory regime, which compels his attention to a trivial and atomised aspect of production having little or no intellectual content, (on the assembly line this is carried to its highest point) must make him one-sided, lower his sensibilities, make him less a man and more a machine. The bureaucratic regime within the factory, inevitably reproduces itself outside the factory in many other spheres of bourgeois society. In bourgeois parliaments it is not labourers, but rather bourgeois "friends of labour" who represent the working class as a general rule. In the labor movement, union leadership becomes a profession for which one prepares at a university. The separation of manual and mental labour is reproduced outside the factory.

The individual factory or workshop is the cell of modern economic life, but in order for economic life to be carried on there must be an exchange and proportion between the cells. Thus sooner or later, the capitalist is called forth from this sphere where he is all powerful to enter another, the market, where he in turn is subordinated by the law of the market.

CAPITALISM IS PLANLESS

As soon as he steps out of the factory and into the market where the relations between the different factories are determined by exchange of their products, it becomes apparent that capitalism

is a system of contrasts. Within his factory the capitalist is a firm believer in economic planning, and planning of the most dictatorial and exclusive type. But outside the factory, to the contrary capitalism is planless or to be more specific it is not planned by men, but rather by impersonal economic laws. "The same bourgeois mind which praises the division of labour in the workshop, life-long annexation of the labourer to a partial operation, and his complete subjection to capital, as being an organisation of labor that increases its productiveness -- that same bourgeois mind denounces with equal vigour every conscious attempt to socially control and regulate the process of production as an inroad upon such sacred things as the rights of private property, freedom, and unrestricted play for the vent of the individual capitalist." Capital, Vol. 1, pg. 391.

SUCCESSFUL PLANNING REQUIRES WORKERS CONTROL OF PRODUCTION

A successful planned economy cannot be achieved as long as the working class is excluded from the direction and management of production, i.e., as long as there is a sharp division between the mental and manual aspects of production. Planned economy requires the estimation of the needs and capacity of thousands of workshops and factories, and the setting up of the proper relations and ratios between them. The task would exhaust the capacities of any small group of government bureaucrats no matter how expert they might be. While in the earliest phases of planned economy such groups would undoubtedly play an important role, every plan they originate for any individual shop would have to be subjected to discussion, revision or rejection of the workers in the shop who will judge the plan on the basis of their knowledge of the shop's productive capabilities. Furthermore the central planning boards themselves must be elected by and controlled by the producers themselves, i.e., the working class, on the basis of general programs they will put forward for the development of the economy. It will be possible for the working class to control the general aims of the plans of engineers, chemists, physicists, economists even if the workers may not themselves be thoroughly acquainted with engineering, chemistry, physics and economics, just as the capitalist class employs and controls scientists who manufacture atom bombs without understanding very much about the principles of nuclear physics.

BASIC INCOMPATIBILITY OF PLANNED ECONOMY AND CAPITALISM

It is of course obvious that such a system of planned economy can only be accomplished once society has destroyed the control of production exercised by the individual capitalist, i.e., once his private property in the means of production have been taken from him and made the collective property of the producing classes. In other words, the major means of production: factories, railroads, ships, mines, etc., must be collectivised and operated under the control of the working class. That is the first step toward socialism.

Such a program of workers control of production can only succeed if the working class raises its cultural level to meet the tasks the problems of society place before it. The first prerequisite of a higher cultural level is a shorter working day. Under capitalism, a

labor saving machine results in unemployment. Under the management of the working class it will result in more spare time for the laborer. Furthermore from the first day of the planned economy, each worker must strive to inform himself about where the raw materials used in his factory come from and where the finished products go, to familiarise himself with the bookkeeping system of his factory, and finally to understand the basic production problems of the entire economy. The more leisure time he has to inform himself on these matters, and the better informed he is, the less and less will be the difference between mental and manual labor.

As the working day is reduced, as the antagonism between and struggles in production disappear, as production becomes something men undertake of their own free will and not because they are compelled to, the need for foremen, special supervisors, speed-up men, etc., and all those whose job it is under capitalism to sweat profit out of the worker, will disappear and society will save the expenses of maintaining a special class which the present exploitative society makes necessary.

SOCIALIST PLANNING VERSUS STALINIST PLANNING

A planned economy without the democratic, socialistic control of the working class is indeed possible, but such planning will only replace the productive problems of capitalist society with others. In Stalinist Russia we have an example of a bureaucratically planned economy. Since there is no political democracy and since there is no workers control of production in the individual shop, the plan must be made and applied by a small privileged class of bureaucrats.

First of all this class encounters the greatest difficulty in correctly estimating the capacities and needs of the various industries and factories. Consequently, mistakes are constantly being made in the plan, and the system goes through period after period of acute shortages, plan failures and economic crises. Furthermore as long as the laborers are excluded from the management of production and confined to the dull, boring, emotionally and physically exhausting manual labor of the factory, he will work only under compulsion. Thus an antagonism arises between the different classes of special labor supervisors who must struggle with the working class to sweat the last ounce of labor from them. Production is not at the will of the producers but can be maintained only through a constant struggle between them and their exploiters.

The expense of maintaining a large class of such supervisory personnel is more than the Russian economy can stand, and the economy is consequently doomed to low living standards for the vast mass of the producers. Stalinist Russia resembles Socialism in its economic life only in one single outward superficial formal aspect. The means of production have been nationalised. But not a single one of the other aims of Socialism has been achieved. This is inevitable, since the Russian state excludes the working class from any control over the economic life of the country at every point with in and without the productive process.

Only a planned economy organised and carried on by and for the producers whose productive efforts are being planned can hope to successfully organise production on a new basis, i.e., production according to the needs of the producers, in which they engage co-operatively and of their own free will. Only such an economy can be called socialist. Only such an economy can solve the present crisis of society.

For several generations, in spite of occasional frictions, the capitalist mode of conducting economic life, i.e., by a rigid dictatorship within the factory, by the law of value without, met with no serious obstacles, and indeed mankind made no little progress under it. Today, however, it must be evident that the bourgeois system has entered a crisis.

First the economic laws under which capitalism operates no longer function as they should. Instead of bringing about the necessary proportions between the different industries, these laws now act to bring about greater and greater disproportions, resulting in depressions, unemployment, periods of relative overproduction and underproduction, monetary crises in the form of inflations and deflations, in other general economic dislocations which contrive to make capitalist production more and more difficult.

Secondly capitalism is marked by increasing antagonisms and open struggles, between the different classes in the productive sphere. In every important industry, both labor (in unions) and capital (in management associations) are organized in separate and distinct class organizations for the waging of this struggle. In many industries (such as the automobile and maritime industries) there is only an uneasy truce. In the coal industry, production is halted several times each year while the workers and owners test their strength. That the majority of capitalists and workers still believe that their antagonisms are ultimately reconcilable does not hide the fact that no matter what short term truce is reached, larger and larger numbers are involved in more and more of these struggles every year. But the process of production calls for cooperation between men. Any system of society which can only create greater and greater antagonisms in production, cannot organize production efficiently and has outlived its historical usefulness.

SOCIALISM - THE ONLY ROAD

Under capitalism, production is for the purpose of sale at a profit. What shall be produced and in what quantities it shall be produced, is not determined by men but rather by the economic laws of motion of the capitalist economy. The failure of these laws makes necessary a planned economy in which the producers themselves determine what and how much shall be produced in accordance with their needs.

concluded. "In this blood we must write the words: AN INDEPENDENT VIET NAM!" There were songs sung like a litany, and then the young people poured down the steps and across the marble lobby and out into the night, where lights shone on the cornice of the buildings, adorned at ten foot intervals with clusters of Viet Nam flags."

There are many other sections of the book important enough to spend a little time on. The "test tube" situation in Korea is one of the most potentially explosive centers in the Far East and at the same time one of the most revealing as concerns the real aims of the major world powers. In this land of 25 millions the imperialist conflict between the United States and Russia is reproduced in miniature. Where Japan ruled for 36 years, the U.S. Army now faces the Russians along a predetermined border and the pledges of independence made to Korea by the Big Three at Cairo are all but forgotten. Said a Korean to Isaacs: "We spent long hard years learning Japanese.....Now we must learn English or Russian.... When shall we be able to learn Korean?" The answer to that question was being gradually learned by the Koreans however, as it was similarly to be learned by the Indians, Indonesians, etc.

A brief, but nevertheless valuable summary of British imperialism in India as well as a review of the bankrupt reactionary feudal regime of Chiang Kai Shek and the criminal betrayal of the Chinese revolution by the Stalinists form other important sections of the book. There is an excellent analysis of Russia as an imperialistic national state, and comparisons are drawn between the revolutionary foreign policy of Russia in the days of Lenin and Trotsky with the imperialist policy of today. One example will here suffice to demonstrate the point that Isaacs clearly makes; under Lenin, the Soviet Union was the first foreign government to sign a treaty with China renouncing certain "rights" and annexing nothing; under Stalin, Russia moved in and occupied Manchuria. Isaacs correctly renounces the idea that nationalization in itself is a progressive phenomenon. On the other hand, he denounces the United States and England as basically incapable of introducing the necessary factors that will put an end to imperialist war. He is a bit hazy in any characterization of the last war as imperialist, but the issue is not mentioned at all and the conclusion that one must form from the contents of the volume certainly offers no contradiction to the idea. This seems to me rather petty, in view of the correctness of the author's approach to every question with which he does deal. This approach is itself quite clear. We cannot look to either the United States or Russia as they are at present constituted for a solution to the problem of war. Only a new social system with the power in the hands of "the great masses of labor and people at large, who have the most to gain from change", together with the oppressed of every part of the globe may yet be able to stem the rising tide of complete and total destruction.

Marty Young

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