

# Fourth International

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL MARXISM PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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Winter 1976-77

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## In Defence of Dialectical Materialism

A reply to the renegade Sklavos



International Committee statements on the  
Lebanon; the African revolution; against the  
cover-up of the facts about Trotsky's murder



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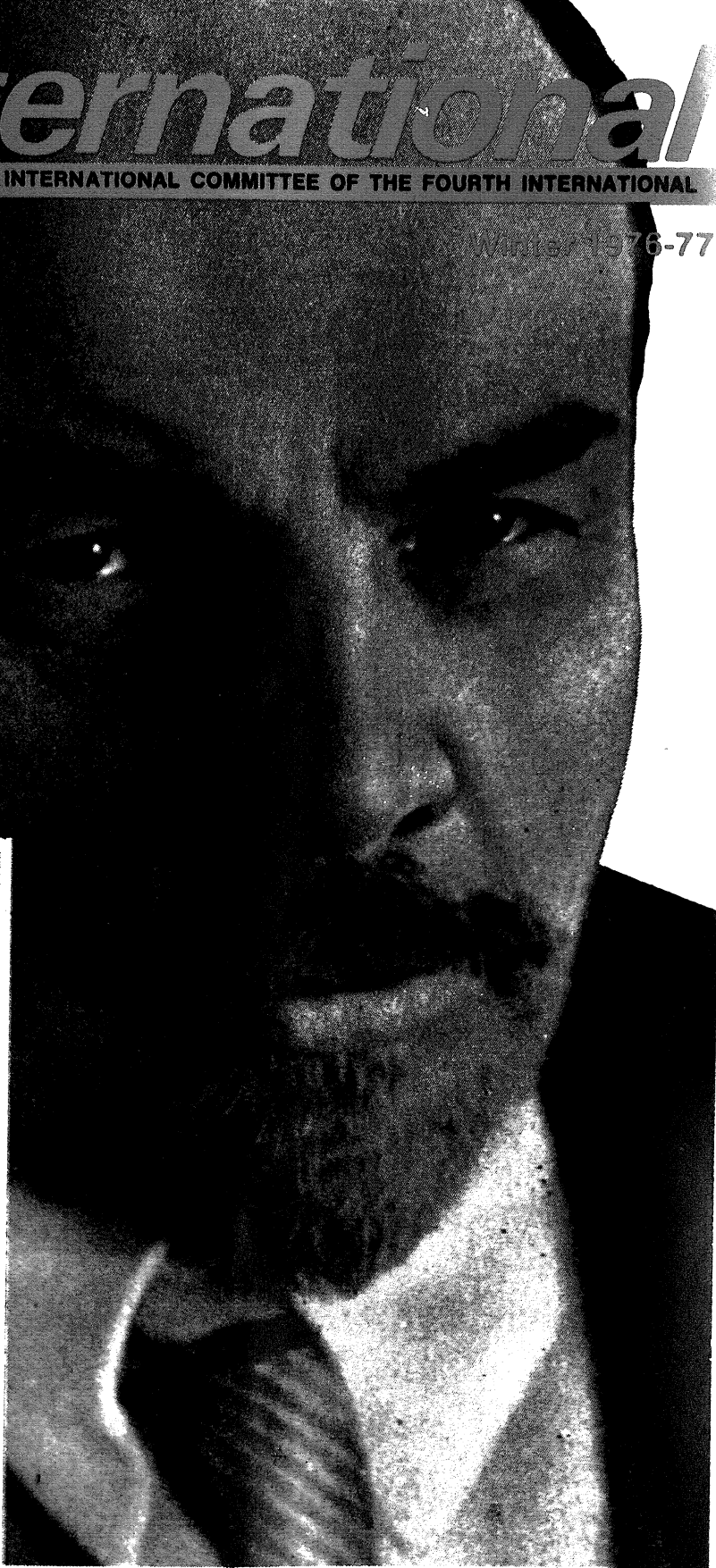
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EDITORS: TOM KEMP, CLIFF SLAUGHTER

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In November 1976 at the 13th Congress of the opportunists who call themselves the Socialist International, Herr Willi Brandt was elected President. He took the opportunity to survey the present state of relations between international Social Democracy on the one hand and the remnants of the Third (Communist) International on the other. Naturally his opinions as such are of no scientific value whatsoever. However they have some importance in one respect. Herr Brandt, whose subservience to monopoly capitalism is probably unequalled anywhere in the world, expressed the opinion that, in addition to the Stalinist centres in Moscow and Peking, there now existed 'a phenomenon which — vaguely and ambiguously — is termed Euro-communism.'

Brandt is referring, of course, to the now open commitment to capitalist 'democracy' of the Communist Parties of Western Europe. The Italian Communist Party, led by Berlinguer, has actually become the main parliamentary support of an Italian government inflicting enormous cuts in living standards on the working masses. These 'sacrifices' are demanded in the name of demonstrating Italian capitalism's eligibility for an IMF loan. Berlinguer's perspective is for a government of 'national unity' stretching from the right-wing Christian Democrats to the Communist Party. He has declared, on behalf of his party, that they are very anxious to avoid creating a constitutional crisis.

The French Communist Party makes a great show of opposition to repression in the USSR, but only in order to get closer to the French bourgeoisie. 'Unity' with the Social-Democrats of Francois Mitterand is the means by which they attempt to do this.

In Spain, Carillo and the Stalinist Party have a policy which is actually to the right of the Socialist Party of Spain. They support the government's referendum in December 1976, along with the other parties of the 'democratic opposition'. They hold out a prospect of peaceful, parliamentary advance for Spain which can only lead to a civil war under the most disadvantageous conditions. They advocate immediately a 'strong-man' government under the vice-president, General Mellado.

Indeed Spain is once again, as in 1936, the arena where Stalinism prepares the most dastardly treachery. On the one side, a series of mass General Strikes has brought the struggle of the working class to the point where the battle for state power is on the agenda and revolutionary leadership is at a premium. On the other, the Fascists, supported by the police, are pouring on to the streets to wreak violence on the working class, as in the Madrid celebration of the anniversary of Franco's death. The response of the working-class youth in the north of Spain to answer these attacks confirms once again that the question of dual power and preparation for power are first on the political agenda. This is the reason for the Stalinists' staking everything on their relations with Christian Democrats and reformists, and tying those under their influence to the

'peaceful, parliamentary road'. The Portuguese Stalinists have already acted on this scenario, and are responsible for the present situation, where the Spinoist right wing is once more not only able to function but is in direct collaboration with the Soares government.

The Stalinists in Britain have less influence in the mass of the working class but will not be left behind in treachery and opportunism. They exert every effort to restrict politics in the working class to mere criticism and pressure against the Labour government, and condemn as 'sectarian' the demand of the Workers Revolutionary Party that the working class bring down the Labour government. Their forces in the trade unions have in effect served to discipline the organised working class behind the TUC 'social contract' with the government.

All this is what Brandt means when he says that Communist Parties 'seem to be willing to expose themselves to the venture of democracy [i.e. bourgeois democracy]. Only a politically insensitive person might say this is of little interest'. This means that Brandt is urging upon capitalist politicians everywhere not to be 'insensitive' and to understand that the so-called 'Communist Parties' are offering their services to capitalism in its deepest crisis. There will be coalition governments as well as reactionary government resting on Stalinist support, as in Italy. And the purpose of these alliances will everywhere be the same: to prevent by all possible means, including violent suppression, the revolutionary taking of state power by the working class.

Now it is possible to see more clearly the role of those revisionists who have concentrated their political attention on the so-called 'united front' of working-class parties. These range from the Organisation Communist Internationaliste in France (OCI) to Mr Ken Coates and the Institute of Workers' Control in Britain. The OCI in 1975 organised its members to hawk a petition round the trade unions and factories calling upon the Socialist Party of Mitterand and the Marchais-led Stalinists to stop quarrelling and work in true unity in the interests of the working class! They did not tell the working class, of course, that the coming together of these two 'great workers' parties' had a counter-revolutionary content and not a revolutionary one. They were preparing all the better to betray the working class.

Trotsky and Lenin insisted long ago that the greatest danger in the necessary tactic of the united front was that a revolutionary party would make the united front its entire policy, and would lose its own identity in the unity by accepting conditions where differences could not be fought out. The OCI is a thousand miles beyond even this danger. They stake everything on a united front before the foundations of a revolutionary leadership have been created. This can only assist in the subordination of the working class to the existing reformist and Stalinist leadership.

A remarkable congregation gathered at the University



of Bradford in September 1976 to discuss the theme 'Is Democratic Socialism Possible?' Prime movers were the University's Chancellor, Sir Harold Wilson, and Labour Cabinet Minister Wedgwood Benn. The English bourgeois socialists were well represented; Sir Richard Acland and the representative of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Mr Ken Coates. Coates brought along his old friend Michel Raptis (Pablo). Wilson was presumably responsible for inviting representatives of Brandt and Kreisky (Austrian Social-Democracy). The platform was completed by an Executive Committee member of the Italian Stalinist Party and a number of centrists from Eastern Europe.

The combination might appear bizarre. It was in fact highly symptomatic of the ideological tendencies being hammered out in preparation for the European revolution. Not only the Stalinists ('Euro-Communists') are to be used to sell the myth of 'workers' democracy'. The revisionists — for whom Pablo is always a front-runner — are playing an essential role also. The dominant theme which will emerge among revisionists, as the remaining Social-Democratic parties break up under the impact of the crisis and mass struggle, will be that of a leftward-moving mass within the Social-Democracy, a kite already flown by Mandel in the heady days of the left in the Belgian Socialist Party, and already carried out through the OCI's associates in 'entry' into the Portuguese Social-Democracy.

Not surprisingly, it is the very same people who have achieved another remarkable 'unity'. This time they find themselves together for the purpose of attacking the International Committee of the Fourth International and the Workers Revolutionary Party. They do so on the basis of defending Joseph Hansen against the evidence which indicts him as an accomplice of GPU agents in the Trotskyist movement. This evidence is now considerable and it is damning. Hansen refuses point-black to agree to a commission of inquiry into his relations with the GPU in the United States and his responsibility for security in Trotsky's household and in the SWP subsequently. He is mobilising the 'unity' of all these elements in order to avoid any inquiry into, for example, how the organiser of Sedov's assassination, Marc Zborowski, entered the US during World War II and what relations he had with the

SWP and why his indictment as a Soviet spy brought no security investigation by the SWP. These and a hundred other matters must be brought into the daylight and investigated.

Yet we find Hansen, Lambert and Mandel all speaking on the same platform to denounce the IC in London in January 1977. Hansen and Mandel are leaders of completely opposite tendencies in the revisionist 'United Secretariat'. Hansen accuses Mandel's supporters in Paris of organising a provocation which permitted the French police to frame and imprison leaders of their French section. The same Hansen defends an almost identical action by the IMG in Britain (Red Lion Square) and Mandel is silent on this contradiction. Hansen, in internal discussion bulletins, accuses Mandel's tendency of completely liquidating their movement in Latin America. Lambert and Just when members of the International Committee opposed any proposals to draw the revisionists, Mandel primarily, into political discussion, on the grounds that the OCI militants were completely convinced of the counter-revolutionary character of Pabloite revisionism. Now Lambert is able to combine with Hansen and Mandel. Why?

Because the enemy is the International Committee, for whom the essential question is the construction of independent revolutionary parties in every country. Those who have adapted themselves to bourgeois democracy find this to be anathema. Their relations with the reformists and with bourgeois public opinion are disturbed. They are genuinely offended and shocked by a movement which takes itself so seriously that security against FBI and GPU agents is a real question. After all, they find it impossible to believe that they constitute a threat to the bourgeois state or to the Stalinist bureaucracy.

There can be and there will be no compromise on this question. The revolutionary programme and perspective of the Fourth International is profoundly historically correct, and is being confirmed more richly every day. The revolutionary movement must be fully armed against penetration by its enemies, and without the inquiry proposed by the International Committee this is impossible. Those who unite against it only seal their own fate the more securely. The revolution will sweep them aside.

# US TRADE UNIONS AND THE CAPITALIST STATE

THE AMERICAN working class is being driven relentlessly into great industrial battles and a historic confrontation with the capitalist state that can only be resolved in the struggle to take power and establish a workers' government. The Nixon August 15, 1971 measures, which ripped away gold backing from the dollar and sent world capitalism hurtling into the maelstrom of uncontrolled inflation, trade war and ever-deepening slump, destroyed forever the relations between the classes which had been based on the post-war boom. With this blow American imperialism decisively undermined the entire basis by which the trade union bureaucracy — the most corrupt in the world — had used the crumbs from imperialism's profits to maintain a relative class peace.

Although this was not the immediate appearance — and revisionism and Stalinism spared no effort to deny the change — the reformist trade-union leaders now faced capitalist masters who could no longer provide reforms and were driven instead to prepare for mass unemployment, bankruptcies and new forms of dictatorial rule aimed at smashing up the powerful and undefeated American labour movement. The new requirements of imperialism meant that the labour bureaucracy was forced to lurch to the right — to take the corporatist road and collaborate intimately with the capitalist state in imposing huge cuts in the social services and massive unemployment to break the strength of the working class. Speaking of the degeneration of the trade unions in Spain, Trotsky provided an illustration of this process in his 'Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay'.

'... The fact that this metamorphosis took place in conditions of civil war does not weaken its significance. War is the continuation of the self-same policies. It speeds up processes, exposes their basic features, destroys all that is rotten, false, equivocal and lays bare all that is essential. The shift of the trade unions to the right was due to the sharpening of class and international contradictions. The leaders of the trade union movement sensed or understood, or were given to understand, that now was not the time to play the game of opposition. Every oppositional movement within the trade union movement, especially among the tops, threatens to provoke a stormy movement of the masses and to create difficulties for national imperialism. Hence flows the swing of the trade unions to the right, and the suppression of workers' democracy within the unions. The basic feature, the swing towards the totalitarian regime, passes through the labour movement of the whole world.'

The American trade union leaders certainly 'understood' about the dangerous 'game of opposition' when they agreed to police Nixon's wage freeze. A. H. Raskin, one of the bourgeoisie's most astute observers of the labour movement, was well aware of this when he wrote in the February 3, 1976, *New York Times*:

'The principal instrument of collaboration was the President's Labour Management Committee, a summit organization, in which George Meany and seven other ranking unionists sit alongside the heads of General Motors, General Electric, US Steel, Alcoa, Mobil Oil, The First National City Bank, the Bechtel Group and Sears Roebuck... The committee became a casualty of labour's realpolitik in the battle over the picket-

ing bill and the larger political battles of a Presidential year. But the frequency with which corporate magnates and union chiefs make common cause in Congress these days on import curbs and on stretchout of environmental time limits indicates that the idea of a shadow economic cabinet is not dead.'

In fact the idea is so much alive that at the Democratic convention the union chiefs, rallying behind Carter, quietly dropped their verbal opposition to an incomes policy and promised that they would accept a national guideline for wage increases provided it is set by Congress or some other 'public' body. The working class has paid bitterly for every lesson learned about the treachery of its corporatist leadership. A few figures will make this clear. Since 1972 real take-home pay for private non-agricultural workers has fallen by more than 5 per cent. Real income today is no higher than it was in 1965, according to Labour Department figures. In fact for unorganised and poorly organised sections of the working class the decline has been far more drastic. Official unemployment figures, which are notorious for underestimating the real extent of the jobless, are once again creeping towards 8 per cent and a 7 per cent figure is now cited by the most optimistic capitalist economists as the best that can be hoped for by the end of the decade.

Nor have the capitalists lost a moment in utilizing the large-scale unemployment to pursue a relentless policy of speed-up in the plants. Productivity in manufacturing has been increasing in 1976 at an 8 per cent annual rate. A good example is the key steel industry which last April was producing only 10 per cent less steel than its September, 1974 peak with 68,000, or 17 per cent fewer workers. In New York City, which has served as the staging ground for the nation-wide attacks on the social services that are being prepared, the bankers have enlisted the co-operation of the labour bureaucracy in the budget-chopping work of the Emergency Financial Control Board. This non-elected, big-business committee has full legal powers to make the ultimate decisions on city finances and to abrogate all contracts signed by the municipal unions. It has already imposed the destruction of 50,000 jobs, ended free tuition at city colleges, forced through a freeze on wages and benefits, attacked every area of the social services from schools and hospitals to the fire department and moved to implement productivity agreements with the bureaucracy. Now backed up in every major decision by the courts, it is using the threat of further layoffs to force wage-cutting agreements on a broad front.

Unemployment has also been consciously used in the depression-ridden construction industry to impose wage cuts and revisions in work rules, again with the full collaboration of the reactionary craft union leadership. The revisionists have interpreted these developments as great defeats for the working class. They are hypnotized by their impressions of an all-powerful bourgeoisie, a labour bureaucracy with an absolute stranglehold over the unions and a working class reduced to passivity for an indefinite period. Thus David Frankel of the Socialist Workers



Party writes in the September 6, 1976 *Intercontinental Press*:

'... at this point the American ruling class is feeling flush with profitable recovery and is intensifying the anti-labor offensive that has proved so successful up to now.'

He then quotes approvingly from the 'Washington Post' to the effect that capitalist governments have been able to impose massive unemployment with no loss of stability and concludes that:

'It remains to be seen how long the imperialist rulers can get away with cutting wages and living standards before they provoke major class confrontations.'

This is to miss everything. In 1974 there were more strikes than in any year since the Department of Labor began keeping records. The massive Teamsters walkout, the nearly five-month struggle of rubber workers and the recent wildcat strike by miners are only a few expressions of the fact that there is no lack of fighting capacity or militancy in the working class. It is not the ability of the working class to fight that is in question but the refusal of its leadership to lead. Strikes and militancy do not suffice under a capitalist crisis in which there is no reformist solution. Only the preparation for the struggle for power to establish socialism can do that and as long as the working class is prevented from taking that political road by its present leaders and their reactionary ties to the Democratic and Republican Parties it finds itself at an impasse in defending its basic rights.

In fact, the fall in wages, the rise of unemployment and the erosion of working conditions are the inevitable shocks which begin to bring millions of workers into confrontation with their bankrupt leaders and the capitalist state. And certainly these partial setbacks have done nothing to solve the problem for the bourgeoisie. They have not only aroused the working class, but the economic crisis has worsened qualitatively. This is not a crisis that can be

solved through a bit more speedup or even wage cuts. American industry is now gripped by an overwhelming accumulation of debt which is exacerbated continuously by a falling rate of profit. Corporations currently owe more than £160,000m to the banks alone. Under these conditions profits go more and more to meet the cost of escalating debt payments.

In addition runaway inflation has now exposed the falling profit rate in the most dangerous manner. New studies of corporate profits show that in real terms they are no higher than in 1965. The calculations were done to include the estimated costs of replacing plants, equipment and inventories under present inflated prices. Had US Steel, for example, figured its real replacement costs in 1974 instead of reporting a net income of £691m its true earnings for the year would have been £3.1m! In effect as plants wear out they must simply be scrapped as the capital will not be available to replace them.

Today only a handful of the biggest corporations are able to sell equity or float bonds. Smaller and medium size business are totally dependent on bank loans, under conditions in which the banks are staggering under the burden of sour loans to the Real Estate Investment Trusts, supertankers, municipalities and the less developed countries. It is now universally admitted that there is no prospect of stimulating the economy or easing the pressure from the debts through a new round of credit expansion. Under present conditions another experience with double digit inflation will shatter business confidence, send costs soaring and sales falling, provoking a new downturn and massive collapses. But without the possibility of new credit thousands of firms face bankruptcy.

Add to this the impact of the world-wide currency and trade war and the threat to US superprofits in the Middle East and Southern Africa from the revolutionary movement of millions of workers and the desperate situation of



Striking 'Washington Post' pressmen lead a march against their indictment by a federal grand jury



*Carter with (from left) General Motors president Estes, Woodcock and Detroit mayor Coleman Young*

American imperialism becomes crystal clear. This must lead to class war at home as the ruling class seeks to break the power of the labour movement to fight. The bourgeoisie has already concluded that it can no longer afford the luxury of non-productive public spending. This is now seen as an insupportable burden placing huge demands on an already insufficient amount of surplus value. This means that the cuts in social services undertaken in New York and other municipalities will pale into insignificance in comparison with what is now required. Massive transfers from the social services and public consumption to the coffers of the corporations in the form of subsidies and corporate tax cuts and incentives are now the order of the day.

This is the meaning of Jimmy Carter's statement that there will be no increase in spending programs if he is elected. Carter, who proclaimed full employment as his number one goal, has now joined Ford in declaring that the £60,000m federal deficit must be eliminated. The crisis is so severe that Carter was forced to drop his full-employment rhetoric before the election for fear of panicking his big business backers. But such policies mean a staggering increase in unemployment and a colossal assault on living standards and this is precisely what the working class faces after the elections. This must go hand in hand with policies designed to whip up racialism and encourage the most reactionary sections of the middle class into frenzied movements against the working class. It requires the buildup of the National Guard, the FBI and the CIA in preparation for police state methods of rule and both Carter and Ford declared that they would do precisely this after the elections.

This drives home the real significance of the treachery of the labour bureaucracy. It has supported and policed every measure taken by the state against the working class. It not only supported Nixon until the Watergate scandal made it impossible for him to continue in office, but pledged its loyalty to Ford after him. Despite a few tactical disagreements over candidates the entire labour bureaucracy lined up behind Jimmy Carter, the Democratic candidate. Except for Temasters leader Frank Fitzsimmons, who is still considering Ford, there was not a single prominent labour official who did not endorse the Georgian peanut farmer, yet to a man they know that he stands for right-to-work laws, wage controls, draconian budget

cuts and the build-up of the secret police and military repressive forces.

It is not at all the backwardness of the American working class which is responsible for the decline in living standards but the historic crisis of the capitalist system and the complete loyalty of the officialdom of labour to it, which provides the ruling class with the time to prepare an even more savage onslaught. In fact, it is clear that every retreat, every betrayal and every postponement of the reformist bureaucracy secures, not only intensifies its crisis, but prepares an even more explosive confrontation with the rank and file. The working class has now had a long and bitter experience with its leadership. They have seen this leadership capitulate on every question and prove itself incapable of defending a single basic right.

In New York City it has signed away jobs and wages and actually joined the Emergency Financial Control Board to participate in the destruction of the right to collective bargaining. When Victor Gotbaum, head of New York's District Council 37, was actually forced to call a hospital strike because of the fighting determination of the hospital workers not to allow lay-offs, he relied on their inexperience to ram through a settlement temporarily saving jobs at the cost of a wage cut. Now hundreds of thousands are being told that they will only save their jobs if they agree to the same slash in living standards. More than 30,000 hospital workers in New York private hospitals struck during the Democratic Convention only to have the left-talking leadership of Leon Davis impose a binding arbitration solution by turning the decision on their wages and jobs over to a board dominated by the government.

In every other municipality of the country the labour leaders have accepted the financial crisis to negotiate similar deals. Most marked, in San Francisco the powerful Central Labour Council backed down on the threat of a general strike and permitted the city to impose a wage cut of thousands of dollars on municipal craftsmen. Certainly, whenever the working class has been given even the smallest opportunity to fight it has demonstrated its militant determination. In April, 1975 when a section of the bureaucracy called a march against unemployment in Washington, tens of thousands of workers booed and shouted the bureaucrats and the Democratic Party politicians off the speakers' platform. This was the surest warning to the bureaucracy that any attempt at a limited mobilisation of the labour movement would lead



immediately to a political clash with the capitalist parties and threaten to break up their reactionary political alliance with big business. Since then, it has not dared to call a single action to mobilise the unions.

Instead the bureaucracy has been desperately attempting to contain industrial struggles and prop up the Democratic Party at all costs. The working class has been through the New York experience and a whole series of bitter industrial struggles as well. Each such struggle has exposed the fear of the strength of the ranks by the union leadership and its total inability to defend the most basic gains. At the *Washington Post* the entire AFL-CIO bureaucracy refused to lift a finger to come to the assistance of striking Pressmen, despite the fact that management was clearly moving to break the union. ALF-CIO head George Meany was quite prepared to see the pressmen arrested, fined and beaten rather than mobilise aid from the labour movement. When the strikers occupied his office at the AFL-CIO headquarters to demand support, Meany's response was to call in the police.

The 'Post' management, with the assistance of the courts, has been allowed to use the strike as a staging ground for future attacks on union rights through the use of injunctions limiting pickets and a grand jury witch-hunt. Even now, as many strikers face the prospect of ten-year jail sentences, the bureaucracy still refuses to come to their support. But the very fact that the Pressmen called such an occupation reveals the growing gap between millions of workers and the labour leadership, which is preparing the way for explosive confrontations. Despite all its efforts the bureaucracy has been unable to hold back big industrial struggles. The Teamster leadership, the most corrupt and gangster-ridden in the American labour movement, was nevertheless forced to call a three-day strike at the beginning of the year because it knew that it could never ram through a cheap settlement. Rather than strengthening the leadership the strike has only built up the confidence of the ranks and encouraged the development of opposition to the Fitzsimmons bureaucracy.

The situation is now so tense that the Ford administration has been forced to step in with investigations of Teamster corruption in the futile hope that it will be able to impose a government stranglehold on the union when Fitzsimmons inevitably loses control. This crisis is hardly unique to the Teamsters. In the United Rubber Workers' Union the same Bomarrito bureaucracy which accepted Nixon's wage freeze and allowed rubber workers to fall far behind inflation was unable to prevent a strike against the Big Four rubber companies. The determination of the ranks to win back everything that they had lost to inflation resulted in a five-month strike in which negotiations remained paralysed with the leadership unable to return with a settlement that did not guarantee an unlimited cost-of-living escalator against inflation. Despite huge stockpiles of tyres and every effort of the bureaucracy to maintain production at smaller companies and limit the effectiveness of the strike, the ranks could not be contained.

The Ford administration did not dare to use the Taft-Hartley Act to force an end to the strike for fear both of the effect on the coming elections and the very real possibility of massive defiance by rubber workers with big support from other sections of the labour movement. In fact, the resistance of the strikers was so powerful that the administration was finally forced to step in through the Labour Department to end the strike by forcing the companies to accept the escalator. Both the Teamsters and the rubber workers' strikes demonstrated how close the work-

ing class is to a political confrontation with the government.

The recent wildcat strike of miners revealed the enormous political changes taking place in the working class. Beginning as a wildcat of one small local against court fines the strike soon spread until it involved over 100,000 miners demanding a complete halt to all court intervention in the union. The Miller leadership which came to power against the corrupt and discredited Boyle machine with the full assistance of the Nixon administration enjoyed the complete support of the revisionists and the Communist Party because of its fraudulent promises of rank-and-file democracy. The strike was conducted not only against the courts but in total opposition to the union leadership. Not a single section of the Miller bureaucracy gave the strike the slightest support. From beginning to end its strategy was to get the miners back to work. Nevertheless the strike was so powerful and enjoyed such massive support from the miners that the courts backed down completely, cancelled all fines against the union and dropped all charges.

It was hardly an accident that in the middle of the strike Democratic Party candidate Jimmy Carter gave a speech advocating the build-up of the National Guard and other domestic military units. Although the miners returned to work, the success of the first political strike since World War II, conducted in the face of bitter opposition from the government, the court, the employers and the entire trade union bureaucracy, means that nothing will ever be the same in the labour movement again. The rapid exposure of Miller demonstrates the impossibility of defending union democracy without a political perspective for the struggle for power. Whatever its promises a leadership that remains tied to the capitalist state must inevitably come into the sharpest conflict with the real requirements of the rank and file.



Woodcock

Imperialism's situation is so desperate that it has been forced to provoke a confrontation with the powerful United Auto Workers. The Woodcock leadership was instrumental in securing the Democratic nomination for Jimmy Carter and did everything in its power to avoid a strike in the pre-election period. Nevertheless the industry, which faces world-wide trade war and a bitter domestic competitive struggle has made a settlement impossible. Woodcock, who opposes a strike to shut down the entire industry, has been forced to take on Ford and the battle with General Motors still lies ahead. Even while the bureaucracy attempts to contain this struggle, the real



**Workers League demonstration**

preparations of the ruling class against the labour movement have become crystal clear with the decision of the Democratic administration in Detroit to declare a curfew on youth and begin a massive build-up of its police apparatus — all with the complete support of the Woodcock leadership. Certainly there is every possibility that this struggle could get out of the control of the bureaucracy and lead to a political confrontation with the state.

The increasing isolation of the entire labour bureaucracy which lines up more and more against the ranks is now expressed in desperate manoeuvres against union democracy. In both the Teamsters and the miners' union the leadership recognises every manifestation of dissent as containing the possibility of winning massive support and is moving without success to witchhunt it out. In fact every such attempt has only hardened the resistance. In the key electrical industry the bureaucracy has actually gone to the extreme of organising armed goon attacks against the rank and file. Even in primarily white-collar unions such as District Council 37 in New York the Gotbaum leadership has turned to the use of goons at union meetings for fear of the explosive situation developing out of the New York City crisis. At the recent steelworkers' convention in Las Vegas the Abel leadership launched a whole series of witch-hunting attacks against the opposition movement of Edward Sadlowski, which models itself on a programme very similar to that of Miller in the miners union. The Abel leadership, which is identified with a no-strike pledge and is responsible for accepting growing unemployment and speed-up in the industry, is well aware of its isolation from rank-and-file steelworkers and knows that the next economic downturn could create explosive struggles against its continued rule.

No sooner did the rubber strike end than the industry announced attempts to create a committee of union and management officials to limit strikes and hold back the ranks. In every case these measures reveal not the strength of the bureaucracy, but its desperate weakness and isolation. As imperialism's crisis deepens by the hour it is forced more and more to rely on this bureaucracy to police the unions and assist it in imposing the most savage wage cuts, speed-up, unemployment and slashes in the social services. Millions of workers are now going through experiences which must demonstrate to them in practice the bankruptcy of their corporatist leadership and the impossibility of proceeding any further with the labour movement tied to the two capitalist parties.

Both Stalinism and revisionism are attempting to prop

up the bureaucracy and head off the political development of the working class. The Stalinists with their line of 'peaceful coexistence' cover up for that section of the bureaucracy which they consider friendly to detente. They apologise for the betrayals of the Woodcocks, Gotbaums and Millers and work towards resuscitating the Democratic Party with a popular front coalition to contain the working class behind an alliance of the labour bureaucracy and liberal Democrats. In this way they hope to disorient the working class by tying it to a new capitalist political formation and preventing it from fighting for its own independent class demands.

Similarly the revisionists of the Socialist Workers Party have more and more identified themselves with the so-called left wing of the bureaucracy such as Arnold Miller of the miners and the Sadlowski opposition in the steel union. They are bitterly hostile to the development of a political struggle against the bureaucracy in the unions. Their reactionary perspective of restricting struggles to demands for democratic reforms within capitalism marks them as defenders of the capitalist state and its agents within the labour movement. The Miller movement among the miners, the emergence of reform movements such as that of Sadlowski in the steelworkers and similar developments in other important unions reflect the first beginnings of enormous class struggles in the unions. The revisionists and Stalinists will attempt to confine the working class to such reform movements to prevent the development of a revolutionary leadership.

The working class must now inevitably come into a powerful confrontation with the capitalist state and its bureaucratic and revisionist agents. This is creating the greatest opportunities for the Trotskyist movement. The fight to defend the independence of the unions from the capitalist state can only be conducted through the struggle to break from the two capitalist parties and construct a labour party based on the trade unions.

The fight for the construction of a labour party committed to the independence of the trade unions from the capitalist state, the defence of union democracy, defence of jobs, wages and conditions and the fight to nationalise capitalist industry and finance under workers control is the essential preparation for the working class to take the road of a struggle for power and the establishment of socialism. The principled struggle of the Workers League for these policies against Stalinism, revisionism and bureaucracy will now create the conditions for the training of decisive sections of workers as revolutionists.



# IN DEFEAT DIALECTICAL

From a reply by the Central Committee of the Workers Internationalist League, G

## INTRODUCTION

PHILOSOPHY, with dialectical materialism grasped as essentially the *theory of knowledge* of Marxism, has moved to the very centre of the preparatory struggles in the revolutionary movement in recent years, and this is in no way accidental. As Lenin discovered and demonstrated in practice, particularly in 1917, theory and perspectives can become a guide to revolutionary action in a revolutionary situation *only* through a conscious struggle in practice for this conception of dialectical materialism *against* the reduction of Marxism to a dogma, and of perspectives to lifeless and crippling series of prescriptions. In the Trotskyist movement all those revisionist tendencies which operated to liquidate the independent revolutionary parties of the Fourth International opposed the International Committee of the Fourth International on this very question.

As this document shows, there is a single thread of empiricism, rejection of dialectics, through the history of the avowed empiricist Haston, who capitulated completely to the reformist bureaucracy in Britain, through Hansen and Novack, who affirmed that dialectical materialism is no more and no less than 'consistent empiricism', in order to justify their own and Cannon's capitulation to Stalinism and Pabloism in 1961-63, to the open declaration of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) in 1971, that dialectical materialism is not a theory of knowledge, that there is no Marxist philosophy, that there is no economic crisis, etc., in justification of their liquidation in France of the International Committee section into a centrist appendage of the social democracy.

In the period since the split of the OCI from the International Committee, which marked a decisive stage in ridding the Fourth International of Pabloite revisionism, the development to slump has given a profound international revolutionary impetus and significance to the completion of the national-liberation struggles in south-east Asia and now in Africa. Already the first shock waves of the European revolution have pounded the shores of Portugal and Greece, and now Spain is inexorably on the move. Britain, France and Italy are in a desperate economic plight, with

national bankruptcy threatening. The immediate source of these developments, the economic crisis, has completely undermined the post-war capitalist development of Keynesian and reformist international politics. First the financial crisis and commodity speculation and now the slump, and returning financial instability at a much worse level of intensity, have disrupted the situation in which militancy plus left (even 'Trotskyist') phrases and correct historical positions could serve to divide the 'left' from the labour bureaucracy and the Stalinists. As the task is posed of actually providing and developing revolutionary leadership for (and from) the masses brought forward by these changed conditions, the true relation between theory and practice is brought ever more sharply to the front. This is what explains the inevitable pressure of bourgeois ideology within the revolutionary movement itself in a pre-revolutionary and revolutionary period. As the most basic questions of theory and practice are posed, so all the most fundamental bourgeois assumptions and resistances are summoned up, and the revolutionary movement can make the necessary theoretical development and training of its cadres *only* by fighting out fundamental philosophical issues at the most basic level.

This document is part of that fight. It replies to a document by LS, for some years General Secretary of the Workers Internationalist League (WIL) (Greek section of the International Committee), a document which is marked above all by its eclecticism in its method, i.e. by its bringing together without any organic unity or coherent development, of many different and unco-ordinated impressions and criticisms. But it would be a mistake to dismiss it on that account. This eclecticism is itself significant, being a typically middle class reaction to the crisis. Right at the point where all the past conquests of the proletarian revolutionary movement must be at the same time united and negated by positing upon them the living perception of the unity and conflict of the revolutionary crisis and the revolutionary movement today, the petty bourgeois seeks to debate and pronounce upon a series of separate arguments and even incidents. He cannot proceed with the method of dialectical materialism which demands the responsibility involved in starting from the standpoint of the revolutionary proletariat.

Amid all the confusion and eclecticism, however, one theme predominates: the IC's consistent struggle on the

# ENCE OF MATERIALISM

e, Greek section of the International Committee, to the renegade L. Sklavos

*theory of knowledge* of Marxism, the *practice of cognition* as the keystone of revolutionary training is dismissed as idealism, and resort is made to mechanical and objective conceptions, as we had from the Socialist Workers Party and the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste, which leave the door wide open for idealism. In this, LS comes hard on the heels of the renegade Thornett and his group in England. The differences between LS and Thornett are insignificant in comparison to their unity in attacking the IC.

In both cases the objective nature of the revolutionary practical activity of man is the central theme of Marxism which they will not accept. And in both cases, though one 'stresses' the conflict between man and nature and the other the unity between them they fail to understand the dialectical unity, conflict, interpenetration and transformation of man and nature as opposites, and so they can explain history and revolution not as the class struggle but only as the result of a conscious initiative whose origin is utterly obscure, but in any case unrelated to the natural world.

For Thornett the conflict between man and nature is manifested in 'conflict' between the party (theory) and the class (spontaneity, matter) as the source of all knowledge! For LS, political development will be decided by a third condition, by the consciousness which grasps the whole of society in its motion etc. and this consciousness turns out to be 'the revolutionary party' of course.

When LS ventures into the history of philosophy it is only to obscure his own complete break with the development which Marx and Engels made from earlier philosophy. Marx accepted the fundamental premises of materialism and the existence of an objective material world external to, and independent of, and existing prior to, and subsequently reflected in, consciousness. But he rejected the mechanical and contemplative characteristics of earlier materialists, its lack of a theory of reflection (Lenin).

As for German classical philosophy and idealism he rejected its basic epistemological premises: the existence of an independent reality of Idea or Mind, subjective or objective, of which matter was but a reflection or secondary manifestation. But he accepted, through a thorough negation and re-working, the 'rational kernel', the dialectical

outlook and method developed by the greatest of those idealists, Hegel. LS does the exact opposite, as this document shows conclusively.

He combines, in rough and ready fashion to be sure, the *mechanical* characteristics of pre-Marxian, 18th century materialism and the *idealist* foundation of Hegel's dialectical system. When materialism remained mechanical and could not break from the passive contemplation of external nature, this was an inability to break from the standpoint of bourgeois individuality, an inability to adopt the standpoint of the working class as the revolutionary liberator of the productive forces, the standpoint of what Marx called 'socialised humanity'.

When the dialecticians of German philosophy, and especially Hegel, could not break beyond the limits which idealism placed upon their demonstration of the necessity of negativity and transformation through struggle of opposites (so that the dialectic remained purely ideal), this again was the theoretical expression of their inability to adopt the standpoint of that force in modern society, the revolutionary proletariat, whose necessary nature, in unity and conflict with bourgeois society impelled it to overcome the existing conditions. Behind both was a fixed conception of human nature, of individuals condemned either to passive reflection of external fate, or to intellectual impotence through restriction to the sphere of thought only.

Marx's revolutionary negation and synthesis of philosophy, history and economics escapes all those who, like LS, cannot break from this outlook. If Hegel had taken labour, man's social practice, as the condition of existence of all knowledge (through the symbiosis it establishes between man and nature) instead of restricting 'the active side' of man to the activity of *thought*, he would have transcended the socio-economic views of Adam Smith, in which bourgeois society was seen as an eternal and necessary expression of human nature and not as, what it was and remains, a transitory historical formation.

The counterpart of Hegel's justification of the reasonableness of the Prussian state is Adam Smith's assumption of 'propensity to exchange and barter' as the basis of the market economy of capitalism. LS can no more see the working class as a revolutionary force — as against a collection of individuals who conform to the society in which they live — than could Marx's predecessor, so long



# IN DEFENCE OF DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

From a reply by the Central Committee of the Workers International League, Greek section of the International Committee, to the renegade L. Sklavos

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as he rejects the philosophical leap which Marx made. For him, the working class remains a force that can be moved only by some effort of consciousness by a revolutionary party inspired from an ineffable source nobody knows.

LS's insistence on man as a *product of nature* rather than *part of nature* is the expression of this relapse into pre-Marxist philosophy. Such a concept is introduced, its confused definition notwithstanding, in order to rationalise and make as consistent as possible this elimination of Marx's central innovation philosophically: the *objective* and effective self developing nature of men as natural beings. It is not a question of individuals each encapsulating and expressing some human essence, as Feuerbach thought, but each individual man being nothing more, nothing less than 'the sum total of social relations'. ('Theses on Feuerbach').

Thus man had a specific historical reality through the social productive forces, itself a unity and a conflict of productive forces and social relations of production. LS and all those who see the working class only as the passive functioning labourers of the capitalist class, have not only misunderstood Marx's revolutionary concepts of alienation and exploitation. They actually express and help to perpetuate the ideological defences of this alienation. In capitalism men are made necessarily antagonistic to the very productive force which they themselves *are*, but which is obscured and historically frustrated by the capitalist system. In a revolutionary period like our own, this self-acting revolutionary force of the proletariat must be understood, conceptualised, articulated by the revolutionary party through theoretical and practical (strategical and tactical) initiatives which extract the maximum from every development in the working class's own action and from the developing relations between the classes.

These fundamental questions — brought to the fore, we repeat, in this revolutionary period — are precisely the ones LS attacks. At the centre of this is the practice of cognition, which includes the cognition of practice.

To reject this is the most fundamental and decisive form of rejection of the whole line of the International Committee. Once again the fight against Pabloite liquidationism, which first took the form of concessions and then capitulation to Stalinism, came finally to a head with the split from the OCI (1970-1972) and their *rejection* of dialectical materialism as the theory of knowledge of Marxism (cognition). With them, as with Thornett, and now with LS, the rejection of the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge cannot but lead to adaptation to the existing forces as 'necessary stages' etc. The revolutionary party must be liquidated.

Such Trotskyism as remains has only the role of a 'left' commentary on the control and even betrayal of the movement by reformism, centrism and Stalinism. It is but a short step from there to the acceptance of subordinate position in some 'left unity' which props up the Stalinists and reformists. LS's doctrine of 'equilibrium' — a mechanical opposite of the revolutionary 'leap' — is his 'theoretical' rationalisation for this course. His contemplative materialism and denial of the practice of cognition lead him to identify 'opposites' abstractly and mechanically (these opposites are in fact only particular impressions and comparisons or crude combinations of them) and characterises them as 'in equilibrium' so long as they continue to exist.

This is a fundamental question: the source of all *development* in reality is the *conflict* of opposites. These opposites do not exist and develop as separate things in

more or less natural equilibrium, perhaps sensitised by changes in some 'field of force' in which they both exist. On the contrary they *interpenetrate* and eventually are transformed; the conflict and development is effected through the interpenetration. Relative stability or motion in equilibrium is an aspect of this interpenetration, mechanically abstracted by LS in such a way as to eliminate the source of development in all nature and history.

## Materialism and idealism

For all his long-winded avowal of materialism, the outstanding feature of LS's document is the systematic obscuring of the split between materialism and idealism. Again, this is not an incidental matter. He seeks to resolve the age-old ideological problem of all class societies, the relation between thought and matter. This is of course precisely the 'answer' to which fashionable bourgeois philosophy and social science (and their 'left' practitioners) have arrived: there is only science, experience and experiment, problem solving; questions of mind/matter are metaphysical questions, based on definitions to which no meaning can be attached.

Naturally LS cannot appear as the direct spokesman of this ideology. His background is in the Marxist movement; his role is to undermine Marxism from there, from the inside. His conscious choice is irrelevant here. The objectively true fact that there is no *third* ideology between Marxism and bourgeois ideology is what forces into this mould the ideas of all those within the movement who come into conflict with the development of dialectical materialism. And this is why it is such an inestimable advantage to have created, in the International Committee, an arena of struggle where the philosophical positions are out in the open, when the very first shots are fired in a conflict of tendencies.

In the past it would sometimes take years for the revisionist orientations of a tendency to mature and clarify themselves, all the time having a deeply destructive effect on the politics, organisation and education of the Trotskyist movement. To conduct struggle at the level of the deepest questions of method and world outlook, of philosophy, is thus of profound and decisive importance in the training of revolutionary cadres, the building of the revolutionary party and the Fourth International. To have established this is the central theoretical conquest of the International Committee. That is why it is the target of all enemies of the International Committee.

Let us examine a series of statements from Sklavos' document on the most basic question of all in philosophy, the split between materialism and idealism. He writes:

'The incorrect or deficient conception is very widespread which says that idealism is distinguished from materialism by the fact that the former does not accept the existence of the material world as opposed to the latter which accepts it. This may be correct, but the difference which remains there does not distinguish subjective idealism and empirical (mechanical?) materialism from objective idealism and dialectical materialism. The question is not for one simply to accept the existence of the material world and its primacy in relation to man as subject but also to understand the relation itself epistemologically. (There follows a garbled account of the relation of Berkeley [a pupil of Bacon?!] to empiricism.)

This statement represents just the type of confused thinking which Lenin dealt with so decisively in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Through placing all the emphasis on discussions about the distinction between

'dialectics' or 'science' and 'metaphysics' they prepare the ground to minimise and then eliminate the most basic question, a *different* one: the opposition between materialism and idealism. LS goes so far as to say that the distinction materialism/idealism is 'incorrect' or 'deficient', though in the next sentence: 'This may be correct but . . .' (our emphasis). Now this 'but' is just the point! What needs saying is that the dialectical as against the crude metaphysical method can be advanced *only* on the firmest materialist foundation in philosophy! To put it any other way is to introduce confusion on the main question.

Later LS is actually more explicit, taking from Hegel precisely Hegel's idealism. The great conquest of the English 17th-century materialists, carried forward in 18th-century France, was to establish that the source of all thoughts was the external material world, apprehended by the senses. LS uses Hegel, the idealist, as follows:

'He stresses that: "there is nothing in thought that is not in sensation, in experience" is the same as "there is nothing in sensation and experience that is not in thought". Methodologically it is.' (LS, page 57.)

But it most certainly is not 'the same', methodologically or any other way! The principal assertion by the materialists laid down the primacy of matter and the *derived* character of thought. Those who want to place some 'methodological' consideration in a position which permits this principle and idealism to be called 'the same' are attacking the most fundamental bases of Marxism.

The same LS writes that 'materialism answers a straightforward yes' to this question, but that 'there are comrades who want to be materialists but complicate the issue'. His own straightforwardness does not take long to prove itself once he tackles the philosophical questions. Lenin's writings are the best reply on this question. In *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* he writes:

'Engels takes the knowledge and will of man, on the one hand, and the necessity of nature, on the other, and instead of giving any definition, simply says that the necessity of nature is primary, and human will and mind secondary. The latter must necessarily and inevitably adapt themselves to the former.' (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol 14, page 188.)

And again:

'For Engels all living human practice permeates the theory of knowledge itself and provides an *objective* criterion of truth. For until we know a law of nature, it, existing and acting independently of and outside our mind, makes us slaves of "blind necessity". But once we come to know this law, which acts (Marx repeated a thousand times) *independently* of our will and our mind, we become the masters of nature. The mastery of nature manifested in human practice is a result of an objectively correct reflection within the human head of the phenomena and processes of nature, and is proof of the fact that this reflection (within the limits of what is revealed by practice) is objective, absolute, eternal truth.' (Ibid page 190.)

Should LS want to call to his assistance those pseudo-Marxists who claim that the later *Philosophical Notebooks* (Vol 38) 'corrected' these materialist positions, consider the following:

'From living perception to abstract thought, *and from this to practice* — such is the dialectical path of the cognition of *truth*, of the cognition of objective reality. Kant disparages knowledge in order to make way for faith: Hegel exalts knowledge, asserting that knowledge is knowledge of God. The materialist exalts knowledge of matter, of nature, consigning God and the philosophical rabble that defends God to the rubbish heap.' (Page 171.)

'[Quoting Hegel] "When all the conditions of a thing are present, it enters into existence . . ." Very good! What has the Absolute Idea and idealism to do with it?' (Page 147.)

Hegel writes, 'Substance is an essential stage in the

process of development of the Idea' and Lenin says, 'Read: an important stage in the process of development of *human knowledge* of nature and *matter*.' (Page 158.)

'The laws of logic are the reflections of the objective in the subjective consciousness of man.' (page 183.)

'Cognition is the *process* of the submersion (of the mind) in an inorganic nature for the sake of subordinating it to the power of the subject and for the sake of generalisation (cognition of the universal in its phenomena)' (page 194.)

A hundred more could be added.

LS seeks to show that he is 'more materialist' than the International Committee. He is actually an opponent of materialism, the peddler of a basic confusion on this main question which can only lead straight to idealism.

## Contemplation and Cognition

When LS sought to blur the basic distinction between materialism and idealism, he thought fit to refer to the importance of cognition, of the theory of reflection. But when he comes to the point of the attack on the IC on this very question, he is a different man. He passes severe stricture on the IC comrades who conducted the lectures at the 1975 international school for having limited themselves, on dialectics, 'to instruction on the "structures" of thought, or its moments, as described by Hegel. Hegel was the philosopher who elaborated the dialectical method in itself and presented it as separated from every material content.'

This misses completely the 'rational kernel' which Marx and Engels insisted must be rescued from the idealist husk of Hegel's system. Hegel actually demanded a logic 'full of content' and opposed above all a logic empty and separate from this content. The essential reality he recognised was ideal in character but it was not the subjective or individual idea or thought or mind. This *objective* idealism could be the threshold of dialectical materialism, once stood on its feet (and not seen, as by Hegel, as a property of the necessities of logic, a product of *thought*), was the basis of dialectical and historical materialism.

According to LS this setting of Hegel on his feet, the right way up, 'is not a simple matter, but means that dialectics must be found where it exists, in the beginning — in the material world, in nature, in history.' (Page 60.) And again, on the following page: 'The moments of the Idea which Hegel analyses in his *Logic* can and must be found in nature and in history.' (Page 61.)

What is the meaning of this 'must be found'? Is not this precisely the question to which the *theory of knowledge* of dialectical materialism addresses itself? Is it not just this question, of *how* the necessities of nature are reflected in the brain and translated into forms of thought, that constitutes the theory and practice of cognition? It is for this reason that cognition, 'the path of knowledge' (Lenin), is central to the educational work of training cadres. These are the basic principles to be learned for those who must organise *revolutionary* parties, i.e. parties which will know how to reflect and act upon the revolutionary necessities of the class struggle and all its economic, political and ideological forms.

In the opinion of LS not only is this concern with cognition irrelevant, it is idealism. One must rest content with the non-contradictory imprint of external reality on the mind. This will suggest what must be done, and then there will be practice.

In the first place, it is nonsense to think that historical



processes can go through quantitative and qualitative changes only when the potential for these changes has been consciously grasped. Yet this is exactly what LS suggests. With this outlook, it is LS himself who shows that he can never rise to the level of the advance made by Marx (summarised in the *Theses on Feuerbach* 1845). Insofar as LS sees men as active, it is only theoretically, in their consciousness. Insofar as he recognises objective reality, it is only as 'the object, contemplation'. Marx's discovery that objective reality *includes* human practice (and not only when it flows from a scientific recognition and consciousness of necessity) is entirely missed. This is the basic philosophical reason why LS's conception of the revolutionary party is phrased in terms of some higher consciousness waiting for reality to catch up with it. Even though he starts from a position apparently the opposite of Thornett's (LS insists on the unity, and Thornett on the conflict, of man and nature) he must end with the same 'party as theory, working class as inert "matter"'

This amounts to a total rejection of historical materialism. He objects, for example, to the following sentence from a political letter of the Political Committee of the Greek section: 'The break from propaganda cannot be accomplished in our heads, but in the fight of the party and of its youth to mobilise new layers of youth to take part in the Founding Conference in London.' LS, intending to be sarcastic, comments: 'in other words, dialectical materialism must before passing into our heads be in our practice. This is nothing but a capitulation to the spontaneous development of consciousness.' (Page 56.)

But of course it is nothing of the kind! LS can only conceive of dialectical materialism as some fixed body of knowledge and truth; he really does think that a 'break from propaganda can be achieved 'in our heads' and then in practice. He rejects the real process, whereby decisions must be taken about the type of material conditions which will provide the leadership with a real opportunity to place the members in conditions where they will be able to make the difficult break. Whether a correct estimate of such conditions and opportunities has been made, and correct decisions taken on that basis, is tested out *in practice*.

A party which proceeded along the lines here recommended by LS would no doubt celebrate many victories 'in the head' — even a revolution perhaps — but the world would not look any different afterwards. Marx spent a long time telling this to the Young Hegelian 'critical critics' (see *The Holy Family* and *The German Ideology*). In reality, the sequence as understood by LS is *not* Lenin's 'from living perception to abstract thought, and from this to practice' but from contemplation (as with mechanical materialists) to perfected conceptions and thence to practice.

It is from the same viewpoint that LS presents the role of the revolutionary party. The 'thing in itself', reality, is grasped by some special talent of the party and then told to the working class. 'Thus, political developments are not going to be decided by the relative strength of the classes but by a third condition, by the consciousness which grasps the whole of society in its motion, its necessary birth, its development and the still more inevitable necessity for its disappearance.' (Page 10.)

All the shouting of LS about his assertion of necessity against 'free will' is beside the point. It is the objective character of human social activity that is the question, the key to historical as against mechanical materialism. LS himself, as we have seen, recognises the objective character of human activity only when the humans involved have arrived at an adequate consciousness of the matter upon

which they act. The fact is that the whole of human history — the 'realm of necessity' — has managed to take place without this happening.

LS wants to stress the primacy of nature to such an extent that the qualitative distinctness of men's practice and mode of production of the material means of life is eliminated. He has to push right back to the origins of man his own politics of adaptation to objective developments. To counterpose man as 'product of nature' to 'man as part of nature' makes no sense, except to make the point Lenin does in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, that the world existed before man and then man and the brain emerge only at a determinate stage of the development of nature.

By counterposing 'product' *against* 'part' LS seeks to eliminate the discontinuity within the continuity of man's evolution from earlier species. From the necessity of biological adaptation there *had to* emerge a species (man) who *went beyond* biological to *social-productive* adaptation. This, by the way, does not and cannot mean what LS calls 'the absolute subordination of nature to his needs' (page 3). Such a thing is out of the question.

LS himself actually declares the diametrical opposite of this, which is equally untrue (i.e. undialectical), when he writes: 'Nature, having existed before man, and at the same time his own nature, sets the conditions for what he will produce and how he will produce, therefore determining the general form of his evolution. *It determines the making and development of his tools, of his social relations and in general his history.*' Let us examine this statement.

If this is true, how does man achieve absolute domination over Nature? If nature determines the general form of man's evolution, then we have made the basic and vital point that man cannot be separated from the evolution of the animal kingdom and the universal movement of matter. But if we use this materialist foundation to *blur over* and not to *illuminate* the material content of the specific *social-productive* basis of man's history, as opposed to that of animals, plants, etc., then we are not Marxist but mechanical materialists; and we will end up finding the source of historical change (the 'active side') either in a 'Reason' separate from nature or in biological or geographical factors.

The fact is that dozens of revolutions have taken place, different social systems replaced one another in Europe for example in the last 400 years, without any major or even minor changes in climate or geography, let alone any biological mutations in the human species. Nor did the capitalist system, in the course of its international expansion, stop at geographical obstacles, or produce a different capitalism for exploiting South African Bushmen than for Arctic Eskimos.

Once the hand and the brain etc. have evolved to the point where production and language are possible, it is the productive forces and their relation to the social relations of production which constitutes the key to the development of man's social relations 'and in general his history'. The greater the development of these productive forces, the less the possibility of a given social-economic system suffering extinction because of shortages or natural disasters flowing from the geographical environment.

In other words the degree of dependence of society on the specific features of the geographical environment is not a fixed quantity, but depends on a dynamic (the development of the mode of production) which is not exhausted by the natural conditions from which it first arose. (And this does not mean that the development of relative freedom from natural necessity is a straight line, uninterrupted and without detours).

The effective result of this rejection of *historical* materialism is to eliminate the role of conscious theory and revolutionary practice. Take the following statement by LS:

'Capitalism would not exist and would not evolve if the classes of which it is composed were not in equilibrium. A break in their equilibrium means the destruction of capitalism and the appearance of socialism.'

If equilibrium comprises all states of capitalism short of replacement by socialism, what is the place of economic crisis, relationship of class forces, pre-revolutionary and revolutionary situations? Is a temporary stalemate in the lull before a struggle for power the same 'equilibrium' as that, for example, which reigned after 1850 in Britain? Does not the whole sphere of revolution, of politics itself, lie 'between' LS's equilibrium and 'appearance of socialism'?

The fact is that we are fighting precisely in an epoch where the equilibrium breaks down, i.e. revolutionary situations recur, but the crisis of proletarian revolutionary leadership is unresolved. Resort to 'nature' as that which produces and determines man paralyses the solution of this question. If we take the ABC of philosophical materialism and *stop* there we turn a truth into an untruth. It inevitably leaves 'the active side' to be taken over by idealism, as did the materialism of all those before Marx. Thus LS states the role of consciousness, of the party, in an idealist fashion. This is because for him there is only 'nature' which determines man, and our ideas of nature and its necessity. Thus he concludes:

'Thus, political developments are not going to be decided by the relative strength of the classes but by a third condition, by the consciousness which grasps the whole of society in its motion, its necessary birth, its development and the still more intense necessity for its disappearance. In other words, it is the revolutionary party which will judge (i.e., be decisive), because it can, with its scientific method, overpower the advantages lent to the ruling class by direct control of the economy and possession of state power. The party through abstractions can even better grasp what the ruling class knows empirically, to grasp every serious possibility even before it becomes evident phenomenally and to prepare the working class politically and organisationally, so that under its leadership, the working class can manifest its real strength and initiative.'

There is no question of self-movement of society and of matter, but only a dead and abstract 'strength' of the working class to be awakened or revealed by the 'scientific method' of the party. What LS says later is essentially connected with this false position:

'Man is not a rock or a mountain. He does nothing, in relation to the world external to him, without (the) necessity

passing through his consciousness and being transformed into will . . .'

This is rubbish. As Lenin points out in *What the Friends of the People Are*, the primary subject-matter of Marxist analysis consists of social relations ' . . . which take shape without passing through men's consciousness: when exchanging products men enter into production relations without even realising that there is a social relation of production there.' (Collected Works Vol I, p 140.)

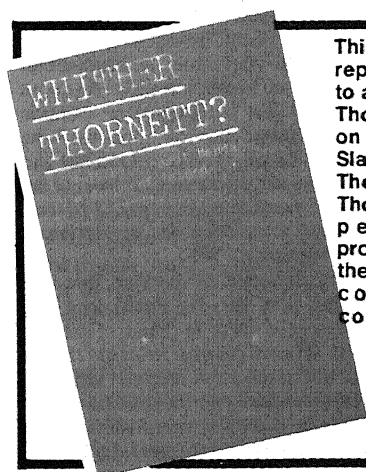
This scientific conception of the subject-matter of Marxist analysis is in complete opposition to LS's capitulation to empiricism. He quotes Hegel to give the impression that Hegel says there is unconscious dialectics in empiricism. A study of the passage in question (para 38 of Hegel's *Logic*, page 62), shows beyond doubt that what Hegel is showing is this: the empiricist, restricting himself to 'the facts' actually ends up using the method and categories of the speculative metaphysics he was trying to get away from. Both empiricism and metaphysics fail to achieve objectivity because they will not take as the source of all development the conflict of opposites within every process, every unity.

The ignoring of this struggle as the source of all development is the essence of LS's position, to justify which he creates a unity without contradiction between nature and man. In politics this will mean a waiting on events, an adaptation to the given relations. Apparently contradicting this, but actually its natural twin, is LS's wrong conception of party as consciousness and scientific method versus matter, the working class (reminiscent of Thornett).

'It is moreover the persistence in the old, its natural resistance to the new, and contradiction which characterise the present situation. The consciousness of the working class formed in the period of the boom (*this is, of course, rubbish: the consciousness of the working class was not formed only in the boom*) is now in the sharpest conflict with the changed conditions which are dominated by the deepest economic crisis, uncontrolled inflation and slump. The resolution of this contradiction, through a struggle, with no mercy, against a dead past, through a struggle which is materialised (?) first of all in the building of the revolutionary party, is the pre-condition for the practical-revolutionary smashing of capitalism and the triumph of socialism.'

Here we see exactly how for LS the 'active side' is transferred to the realm of ideas, sometimes 'materialising' themselves . . . Having rejected the dialectic of Hegel, LS has no difficulty in accepting his *idealism*! He throws out the 'rational kernel' and keeps the mystical husk!

C Slaughter



This book consists of a reply by MICHAEL BANDA to a document issued by A. Thornett, and two articles on Kantianism by Cliff Slaughter and Geoff Pilling. These articles make clear Thornett's differences on perspective and programme, his rejection of the Marxist theory of cognition and his consistent refusal to

## WHITHER THORNETT?

recognise the primacy of being over consciousness. They reveal the neo-Kantian idealism of Thornett, Westoby, Clinton —and show the reactionary political implications of the revisionist method and

outlook. *Whither Thornett?* exposes the hatred of Marxist philosophy and the capitulation of this group to the Stalinist and Social Democratic bureaucracies. It provides irrefutable proof of the correctness of the struggle of the Workers Revolutionary Party to defend and develop the Marxist theory of knowledge.

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# A REPLY TO THE RENEGADE SKLAVOS

THE FOURTH International has entered the most decisive stage of its struggle to resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership of the international working class, its central purpose since its founding in 1938. In its own way the recent reactionary idealist attack by Lefteris Sklavos (Dimitris Toubanis) on Marxist philosophy, the role of revolutionary leadership and the International Committee also makes this apparent.

In September 1975, L. Sklavos, then secretary of the Workers Internationalist League, Greek section of the IC of the Fourth International, was sent at the head of the Greek delegation to the International School for education of Marxist cadres — one of the most significant conquests of the IC. This was preceded, last summer, by the conference of the Greek section, at which the Greek leadership, and in particular LS, the architect of a series of very serious political deviations from the fight against the Karamanlis government and Stalinism, was subjected to the strictest criticism.

L. Sklavos, with the wounds of the conference 'still open', to use an expression dear to him, took part in the international school, and on the third day expressed very sharp disagreements with the educational work of the IC and more particularly with the positions on Marxist method, developed by the comrades of the IC responsible for the school. It was immediately resolved to organise an international discussion on the fundamental questions of Marxism, and its framework was set: before October 31 LS was to set out his views in a document and the discussion was to begin first of all with a meeting of the IC and the central committee of the WIL, during the second half of November.

Upon his return to Greece, LS did everything he could to impede the organised carrying out of this fundamental discussion. He delayed the writing of his document until the middle of December, while he simultaneously proceeded to form an anti-party, anti-internationalist group, preparing the conditions for a split at national, and if possible, at international level and to torpedo in every way the international discussion, this important work for education of Marxist cadres.

On January 15, 1976, when the discussion on the document of LS, 'Monist or Dualist View of History' began in the central committee of the WIL, LS refused to defend his philosophical platform and replaced it with a series of political accusations against the IC and its British section.

The next day (after a comrade from the IC had arrived in Greece for preliminary discussions the previous day) LS resigned from the post of general secretary and from the central committee and the same evening, together with his friends, attempted a provocation against one of the Party offices. After having rejected the CC's call to return to his post and to respect the constitution in order to enable the

discussion to be carried out unimpeded, LS and his close supporters were expelled from the Party.

Since then the only political role of LS's liquidationist clique is provocation, physical attack and the frantic attempt at liquidating the Party in Greece, and on the international level the unprincipled approach to the enemies of the IC of the Fourth International, Thornett and Wohlforth, the renegades from Trotskyism, whom LS had condemned a short time before, and also in his document.

*The rabid attack on the Party began with an idealist attack on Marxist philosophy.* The defence and building of the revolutionary party are founded on the defence and development of dialectical materialism against revisionism. Without Marxist philosophy there can be no revolutionary party. LS's attempt to avoid and impede the philosophical discussion failed. This discussion is starting in the most serious and decisive way, having caught his anti-Marxist document like a mouse in a trap. The fight against his revisionism is becoming an important source of knowledge and development, establishing in the most immediate way the unity of the fight for Marxist philosophy and the fight for the principles of Bolshevism.

In a concentrated form, which reflects the culmination of the crisis of international capitalism, we have here the historical continuation of 1903, of the split between Bolshevism and Menshevism and of 1939-40, of Trotsky's great theoretical and political fight against the reactionary bourgeois philosophy of the petty bourgeois opposition of Burnham and Shachtman, for the building of the Fourth International on the granite of the Marxist theory of knowledge. The orientation given to our movement by Leon Trotsky, a short time before his murder and at the beginning of the World War II, is crystal clear.

'We too, comrade Burnham, cannot yield to cheap innuendos about the philosophy of scientific socialism. On the contrary, since in the course of the factional struggle the question has been posed point-blank, we shall say, turning to all members of the party, especially the youth: Beware of the infiltration of bourgeois scepticism into your ranks. Remember that socialism to this day has not found higher scientific expression than Marxism. Bear in mind that the method of scientific socialism is dialectic materialism. Occupy yourselves with serious study! Study Marx, Engels, Plekhanov, Lenin and Franz Mehring . . . Let the present discussion produce at least this positive result, that the youth attempt to imbed in their minds a serious theoretical foundation for revolutionary struggle!' (*In Defence of Marxism*, p. 98)

'The question of correct philosophical doctrine, that is, a correct method of thought, is of decisive significance to a revolutionary party just as a good machine shop is of decisive significance to production. It is still possible to defend the old society with the material and intellectual methods inherited from the past. It is absolutely unthinkable that this old society can be overthrown and a new one constructed without first critically analysing the current methods.' (*Ibid.*, pp. 93-4)



This momentous order of the founder of the Fourth International, the distillation of all the struggles of Marxism and Bolshevism, remained unfulfilled for decades after the murder of Trotsky. Over 20 years passed before any serious attempt was taken up within the Trotskyist movement for educating cadres on the fundamental philosophical questions. After 1940 (with the exception of the SWP's publication, on Trotsky's suggestion, of three lectures on philosophy by Novack, Gerland and Mentelev) not until 1963 do we have the publication of a pamphlet which takes up the question of method and places it at the centre of the building of the Party: the pamphlet by comrade Cliff Slaughter, 'Lenin on Dialectics'.

This philosophical treatise is the fruit of the long principled struggle of the leadership of the British Section of the International Committee for an international discussion which would draw the lessons of the Fourth International from the historic split of 1953 with the liquidationist Pablo group and their impressionist method, against the unprincipled and undiscussed backsliding of the empiricist leaders of the American SWP into the camp of Pabloite revisionism.

The struggle against the revisionism of Pablo, Mandel, Cannon and Hansen became the basis for a significant development of the revolutionary movement of the IC, especially in the youth.

In the face of new forces thrown into the arena of mass struggle by the growing inflationary crisis, bringing the European revolution once again onto the agenda, with the General Strike of May-June 1968 in France, the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste, until that time a section of the International Committee, subordinated itself to spontaneity. At the pre-conference of the IC in 1970, the OCI came into complete disagreement on the basic question of dialectical materialism, as the Marxist theory of knowledge. And in 1971, at the international youth meeting in Essen, it allied itself with the POUM and the various centrists against the IC, in an open attack on Marxist philosophy, to which it counterposed the Transitional Programme. After its break with Trotskyism, it was inevitable that it also abandoned the programme of Trotsky.

The decisive conflict with the OCI revisionists, bound up with the tasks of the new period opened by the collapse of the Bretton Woods agreements in August 1971, became the source of a tremendous development of the IC. A series of new sections were established in Germany, Peru, Australia, Spain, Portugal. But above all, important educational work was carried out among the cadres and members of all the sections of the International Committee on the paramount importance of philosophical questions in the struggle for the building of mass revolutionary parties.

Thus, when world recession and slump began to shake the economies of the imperialist metropolitan countries, the handful of new renegades, of Thornett in England and Wohlforth in the US, could not fail to express openly their hostility to Marxist philosophy itself.

Thornett, starting from the problems of trade-union policies, and Wohlforth starting from the abandonment of the urgent tasks of revolutionary vigilance in the epoch of our immediate preparation for power, made no delay in attacking the essence of dialectical materialism and transforming themselves into vehicles of the reactionary revival of Kantian idealism and pragmatism.

The renegecy of L. Sklavos takes place on the ground of all the previous conquests of the IC of the Fourth International and starts with an attack on philosophy. This makes

apparent the tremendous progress of the IC itself which now obliges its enemies to begin their attack directly and with no beating about the bush. While Thornett started from the problems in his factory to be led, through his vulgar materialism, to a defence of subjective idealism, LS starts from philosophy to end up with a thousand and one slanders about the situation at British Leyland, Thornett's factory.

This new character of the fresh attack on the IC reflects the rapid development of the revolutionary crisis in Europe and throughout the world and emphasises the conquests of the IC in its long struggle against revisionism, its necessary preparation to resolve the crisis of leadership of the proletariat which is posed in the most urgent way. At the moment when every socio-economic equilibrium is being violently destroyed, in the period when the European revolution, after the tearing down of the 40-year-old fascist regime in Portugal and the overthrow of the junta in Greece, comes to unite with the new wave of the colonial revolution, in conditions marked by the victory in Indo-China, the idealism of the renegade L. Sklavos appears as the super-reactionary attempt, which reflects the needs of imperialism, to dissolve the forces which are building the revolutionary party and the Fourth International.

The significance of the struggle of Leon Trotsky in 1939-1940 is confirmed in the most indisputable way. The struggle for the defence and development of Marxist philosophy lies at the centre of the practical undertaking by the IC of the Fourth International of the tasks of the world socialist revolution.

## LIVING PERCEPTION UNITY OF NATURE AND MAN

The document of L. Sklavos, 'A Monist or a Dualist View of History' is imbued with the unvacillating tendency to dissolve dialectical materialism into the old pre-Marxist mechanical materialism. The whole operation has as its method the most vulgar *eclecticism*, that miserable variety of empiricism which assembles certain sides of reality and often places side by side sentences which refute each other, according to the subjective needs which exist each time.

This eclectic hodge-podge wants to paralyse every struggle to grasp through abstraction the content of the universal movement of matter as a unity, conflict, interpenetration and transformation of opposites. While the revisionist Thornett isolates conflict from these general dialectical laws of the self-movement of matter and makes it his starting point, leaving unity aside, L. Sklavos wants to *wipe out* both unity and conflict and interpenetration and transformation of opposites, as we will see immediately below.

Both with Thornett and LS it is vulgar materialism which leads them into the mire of subjective idealism. In his document LS presents the primacy of nature (at another point, in a characteristic eclectic manner, he will deny every primacy of one opposite in a unity of opposites) in such a way as to cause man as a *particular form* of matter in motion to disappear. The central thesis in his 'Philosophy', as he himself emphasises, is contained in the sentence: '*Marxism does not start from man as part of nature, but before this from man as product of nature.*' (page 18, emphasis in the original.)

## THEORY OF REFLECTION

This distinction and the priority given to man as a product of nature in relation to man as a part of nature, marks the passing from vulgar materialism to subjective idealism. Man is an inseparable part of universal matter in motion. At a certain stage of the development of nature, which existed before man, after the qualitative transition from inorganic to organic matter had taken place, the evolution of the latter led to the species man 'that vertebrate in which nature attains consciousness of itself'. (Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, page 33, Progress Publishers).

Man could not have become a *product* of the material natural world, without being an inseparable *part* of nature. The products of nature are inseparable parts of it. The *unity* of the particular (man) with the universal (nature) lies in their materiality (Engels). Man was not first a product (non-material?) of nature before being a material part of nature. Dialectical materialism does not begin to examine man (or any object) first as a product of nature, leaving the examination of his material subsistence for another time. Marxism starts from the unity and conflict of nature and of man as a particular, inseparable part of universal matter in continual motion. The *condition* for the conflict of nature and man is their material *unity*, just as the *source* of development in this unity of opposites is their conflict. This dialectical relation of man and nature is the most fundamental and immediate basis of man's thought.

Mechanical materialism — and LS — on the contrary, consider as the basis of human thought only nature as such, transforming it into an indistinguishable mass, and are indifferent to the unity and conflict of man with nature, as the starting point of all knowledge. Engels is categorical:

'Natural science, like philosophy, has hitherto entirely neglected the influence of man's activity on its thought; both know only nature on the one hand and thought on the other. But it is precisely the alteration of nature by men, not solely nature as such, which is the most essential and immediate basis of human thought. . . .' (*Dialectics of Nature*, page 231)

The thinking subject's approach to objective material reality, which exists before and independent of him, *begins* with living preception, which is the *unity* of the objective world with the subject *as a material part* of this material world in eternal transformation. When LS denies this starting point, placing man as a part of nature *after* man as a product of nature, he is attacking the *necessary condition* of every knowledge.

'The *condition* for the knowledge of all processes of the world in their 'self-movement', in their spontaneous development, in their real life, is the knowledge of them as a *unity* of opposites.' (Lenin, Vol. 38, page 360, our emphasis).

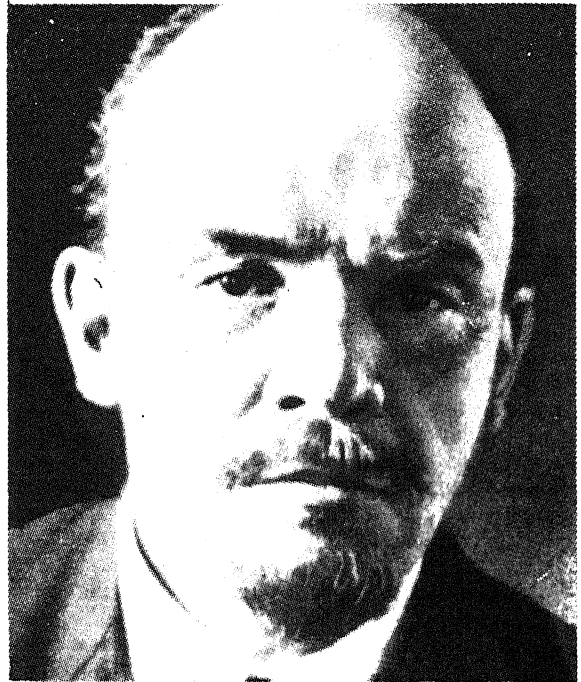
The necessary precondition for knowing the world is to grasp first of all that we are *part* of this world, a material *unity* of opposites with the world and that is why we can come to know it. When LS gives second place to this primary precondition, he denies the essence of dialectics.

'The splitting of a *single whole* (our emphasis) and the cognition of its contradictory parts . . . is the *essence* (Lenin's emphasis) (one of the 'essentials', one of the principal, if not the principal, characteristics or features) of dialectics.' (Lenin, Vol 38, page 359)

The cognition of a whole begins from living perception. We *begin from the single whole itself* to split it and to know its contradictory parts. This single whole is the most essential and *immediate* basis of human thought (Engels) and is the material dialectical unity of two opposites, nature and man, the object and the subject, the universal and the particular. The primary opposite in this unity is nature, the object, the universal.

By considering man as a material part of nature as secondary and man as a product of nature as primary, setting only nature as such as the basis of human thought, LS comes to remove the cornerstone of the materialist theory of cognition: the theory of reflection. He writes: 'Nature moves dialectically anyway and its dialectical motion is *imposed* on thought.' (page 12, our emphasis).

The human brain is an inseparable material part and material product of nature in dialectical motion. Precisely because of this unity, which lies in materiality, the laws which govern the motion of thought are the same dialectical laws of the universal motion of matter. Thought is nothing but the highest form of the motion of matter. This is why Engels said that dialectics is 'the science . . . of all motion. This implies that its laws must be valid just as much for motion in nature and human history as for the motion of thought.' (*Anti-Duhring*, p. 484 Greek edition).



V. I. Lenin

The brain and thought are not something outside nature upon which, like some dead blank paper, nature comes to 'impose' and to leave its stamp. Such a conception is nothing but a vulgarised new edition of the empiricist theory of John Locke.

No: the dialectical motion of nature is *not* 'imposed' but *reflected* in thought. This reflection is not a dead mirroring, a passive phenomenon, but an *active process*, a *practice*, cognition (See Lenin Vol. 38, p.131, Lenin's emphasis on Hegel's phrase 'modern idealism did not dare to regard cognition as a knowledge of the thing-in-itself.'). Cognition has nothing to do with a mechanical imposition of the motion of matter on a *tabula rasa*, the human head.

'Cognition is the eternal, endless approximation of thought to the object. The reflection of nature in man's thought must be understood not "lifelessly", not "abstractly", *not devoid of movement, not without contradictions*, but in the eternal *process* of movement, the arising of contradictions and their solution.' (Lenin, Vol. 38, page 195)

The dialectical movement of ideas reflects the dialectic of nature. In seeing the 'dialectical' movement of nature 'imposed' on thought, LS abolishes not only the dialectic

of ideas but also the dialectic of nature itself, of which man is a part, as the basis of man's dialectical thought.

By abolishing the dialectical materialist theory of reflection and transforming the movement of thought into a dead, passive, mirroring, LS abolishes any attempt to study the development of cognition as a 'concern with the "structures" of thought in themselves.' (page 62)

## COGNITION

The living thinking subject, in approaching objective being, of which it is a material part, is not itself a blank sheet of paper, a *tabula rasa*. It contains within itself *knowledge determined* by past experiences in past conditions. For precisely this reason (that is, because this knowledge represents the essence of past conditions) we have here *abstract* knowledge. Abstract knowledge contains the universal since it is the reflection of the universal movement of matter.

The objective material world, before being reflected in the human mind, is pure being, abstract universality without mediation. To deny the above is equivalent to a denial of the primacy of nature, of the universal, of the objective which exists without being mediated in man, and before being reflected in the human brain and determined.

Abstract universality is the negative, the non-mediated being whose positive is living perception, the mediation of being, the reflection of essence in itself (semblance).

Lenin quotes and comments on Hegel's 'Science of Logic'.

"The truth of Being is Essence." Such is the first sentence, sounding thoroughly idealistic and mystical. But immediately afterwards, a fresh wind, so to speak, begins to blow: "Being is the immediate. Knowledge seeks to understand that truth which Being, in and for itself, is, and therefore it does not halt" (*does not halt* NB) "at the immediate and its determinations, but penetrates (NB) through it, assuming that *behind* (Hegel's italics) this Being there is something other than Being itself, and that this background constitutes the truth of Being. This cognition is mediated knowledge, for it is not lodged immediately with and in Essence, but begins at an Other, at Being, and has to make a preliminary passage, the passage of transition beyond Being, or rather of entrance into it . . ."

theory of knowledge

"passage"

"This Bewegung, the path of knowledge, seems to be the "activity of cognition" (Tätigkeit des Erkennens) "external to Being."

"However, this movement is the movement of Being itself." *Objective significance*

"Essence . . . is what it is . . . by virtue of its own infinite movement of Being." (Lenin, Vol. 38, pp. 129-130.)

The first moment in the passage of knowledge is, as we said, that of the reflection of essence itself in itself, the moment of semblance. The universal is reflected in the particular. 'Sensuous certainty shows in itself the universal as the truth of its object.' (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*) It is precisely this starting point of cognition, the unity and conflict of the particular and the universal, which L. Sklavos denies in his document.

Semblance penetrates, through the self-impulse of the universal movement of matter, abstract essence which we carry within ourselves and is transformed into Appearance. Appearance is the showing of essence. Essence comes into existence. The most recent section of our

abstract knowledge, and that most related to semblance, is activated. The unity of essence and existence is actuality (see Vol 38, page 156). Here, with the unity and conflict of essence and existence, we have the actual thing itself.

Up to here, we started from a single whole, the unity of objective-subjective, to split it into its contradictory parts; semblance, appearance, actuality are subdivisions of essence which are determined by essence itself (Vol. 38, p. 130)

From the moment when semblance is reflected within us, the knowledge we already have enters a process of change. The semblance (cause) penetrates our old defined knowledge (effect) and accumulates the conditions which will give the substance for the leap towards the new abstract notion (new cause). The cause disappears into the effect and the effect into a new cause. Here, quantity is transformed into quality. The first negation is completed and the process of the negation of the negation begins.

Notion is the highest point of the approach of thought to universal self-movement of matter. 'Concepts (notions) are the highest product of the brain, the highest product of matter.' (Lenin, Vol. 38, p.167). Now here, our subjective self-impulse begins to overcome the universal self-movement of matter. 'Subjectivity is the *impulse* to destroy this separation (of the idea from the object).

The abstract notions will be combined, through syllogisms, into the theoretical idea, from which the practical idea will be formed. Now through our material practice, dialectical notions will penetrate universal matter in motion and the thing-in-itself will be transformed into a 'thing for us', leading us to a new living perception.

## ETERNAL CHANGE OF ESSENCE OR DEAD EQUILIBRIUM?

The study of the development of cognition, of the laws governing the movement of dialectical notions, the passage of one into the other and their transformation into material practice which changes the world, the scientific knowledge of the contradictory process with which man continually reproduces and continually develops his relations with the material world, are the philosophy of Marxism, dialectical materialism.

Lenin, reading Hegel materialistically, writes on dialectics: (Vol. 38, pp 253-254)

"Dialectics in general is "the pure movement of thought in Notions" (i.e., putting it without the mysticism of idealism: human concepts are not fixed but are eternally in movement, they pass into one another, they flow into one another, otherwise they do not reflect living life. The analysis of concepts, the study of them, the "art of operating with them" (Engels) always demands study of the *movement* of concepts, of their interconnection, of their mutual transitions).

"In particular, dialectics is the study of the opposition of the thing-in-itself (Ansich), of the essence, substratum, substance — from the appearance, from 'being-for-others'. (Here, too, we see a transition, a flow from the one to the other: the essence appears. The appearance is essential.) Human thought goes endlessly deeper from appearance to essence, from essence of the first order, as it were, to essence of the second order, and so on without end.

'Dialectics in the proper sense is the study of contradiction in the *very essence of objects*: not only are appearances transitory, mobile, fluid, demarcated only by conventional boundaries, but the *essence* of things is so as well.' (Emphasis in the original)



Eternal change and development not only of appearances but also of essence is the basis of dialectics. L.Sklavos replaces it with his famous 'theory' of 'equilibrium' (pp. 8-13), the passive perception of 'motion in stationariness' (p.8). The culmination of his eclecticism is revealed in that the *same* paragraph which ends with the phrase 'motion in stationariness' begins with the sentence 'Equilibrium is not stationariness.'(!)

LS's attack on the principle of the universal *unity* of the world, which lies in its materiality, and the secondary place he gives to man as a part of nature, now leads him to his attack on the principle of universal development, whose source is the *conflict* of opposites.

'... the universal principle of development must be combined, linked, made to correspond with the universal principle of the *unity of the world*, nature, motion, matter, etc.' (Lenin, Vol. 38, p.256, emphasis in the original).

Man is an inseparable material part of nature and his *conflict with nature has its source in the fact that he is part of the eternal motion of nature itself*. For LS, whose 'Marxism' does not start from man as a part of nature, man's conflict with nature is not a part of the universal motion of matter nor does it have its source in this, but in his innate tendency to preserve his existence: 'What moves man in his practice and theory is the tendency, innate in every form of matter to preserve its existence...' (p3)

However, material forms are not only born and *preserved*, but they are simultaneously *destroyed*, otherwise the permanent motion of universal self-moving matter would not exist: '... evolution has to be understood *more exactly*, as the arising and passing away of everything, as mutual transitions.' (Lenin, Vol. 38, p.255-256).

LS's idealistic assertion that 'what moves man in his practice and theory is the tendency, innate in every form of matter, to preserve its existence', and not the movement of nature itself, of which he is a part, leads him to cancel out and thus mutually to neutralise Motion and Equilibrium.

## MOTION AND EQUILIBRIUM

The door to LS's nirvana of equilibrium opens with the magic words:

'The answer that one of the two opposites (note: in a unity of opposites) is "stronger", or "dominates", is not dialectics... The supposed "domination" of the one opposite belongs not to reality, but to imagination... quality exists only because the opposites are in *equilibrium*. The domination of the one opposite over the other means negation of quality, an interruption, transition.' (p.8 emphasis in the original).

LS's 'theory' is not so original. The vulgar materialist of the Thornett clique, Westoby, wrote, distorting comrade G.Healy's '*Notes for a Study of Thornett's Philosophy*':

'The philosophical nucleus of his document is centred on the unity and conflict of two *essential opposites* (our emphasis) of Man and Nature, of thought and being.'

In the same way, LS writes:

'Everything can have at least two determinations, *equally essential* (our emphasis) and true. Every determination can be supported against its opposite with arguments of equal value and well-founded. Only dialectics which grasps the opposite determinations in their unity, gives the solution to the contradiction and stops the futile game of sophistry. This is why Lenin says about dialectics: "In brief, dialectics can be defined as the doctrine of the unity of opposites".'

The IC and particularly comrade Mike Banda's pamphlet 'Whither Thornett' has shown how mechanical materialism, by separating man from nature and placing

the two opposites parallel to each other and of equal weight, leads to subjective idealism.

If, in every unity of opposites, both opposites are equally essential, then the most basic principle of materialism, which regards nature, the objective, being primary and determinating in relation to its opposite, man, the subject, consciousness, is abolished. Here is revealed the true meaning of the proclamations LS makes elsewhere about the primacy of nature: here we have the classic mechanical levelling of every difference and quality in nature, the removal of every difference and determinating relation between Being and Consciousness.

Without the primacy and superiority of one opposite in a unity of opposites, no change is possible and no change can take place. The opposite which is primary itself, under certain conditions, is transformed into its opposite, into a secondary opposite. The difference between the absolute and the relative is itself relative. The absolute is transformed into a relative and the relative into an absolute. Mechanical materialism, which considers nature to be a dead indistinguishable mass, is unable to grasp change and development, through the conflict of opposites which are in a unity, and resorts to some external cause which gives the impetus.

In seeking to demonstrate that it is 'devious' to put the emphasis on one opposite, LS makes good misuse of Engels' 'Dialectics of Nature', the target of all the revisionists' attacks. He makes two basic references to the 'Dialectics of Nature' on the subject of equilibrium and movement: one from p. 71 and the other from p. 246. On page 12 of his document, he quotes in isolation the following extract from Engels:

'All motion consists in the interplay of attraction and repulsion. Motion, however, is only possible when each individual attraction is compensated by a corresponding repulsion somewhere else. Otherwise in time one side would get the preponderance over the other and then motion would finally cease.'

Just before this paragraph (p.71), Engels writes:

'Hence the basic form of all motion of approximation and separation, contraction and expansion, — in short, the old polar opposites of *attraction* and *repulsion*. It is expressly to be noted that attraction and repulsion are not regarded here as so-called "forces", but as *simple forms of motion*, just as Kant had already conceived matter, as the unity of attraction and repulsion'. (emphasis in the original).

Also just before the subtitle 'Motion and Equilibrium', Engels returns to attraction and repulsion and says:

'The whole theory of gravity rests on saying that attraction is the essence of matter. This is necessarily false. Where there is attraction it must be complemented by repulsion. Hence already Hegel was quite right in saying that the essence of matter is attraction and repulsion... The transformation of attraction into repulsion and vice versa is mystical in Hegel, but in substance he anticipated by it the scientific discovery that came later... *Hegel shows his genius even in the fact that he derives attraction as something secondary from repulsion as something preceding it.*' (our emphasis). A solar system is only formed by the gradual preponderance of attraction over the originally prevailing repulsion. (*Dialectics of Nature*, p.244)

It has already been made clear that for Engels, in the unity of the simple, basic forms of motion, the unity of attraction and repulsion which is the essence of matter, there is a *primary opposite* and a secondary one. And not only this: at a certain stage of development of universal matter in motion, the primary is transformed into secondary and the secondary into primary.

We return again to p. 71 of '*Dialectics of Nature*' and we will show that LS misuses the extract from Engels for his own purposes, to prove that supposedly every movement

would stop if one opposite predominates in a unity of opposites. After the quote from Engels, which LS places on p. 12 of his document, on the next page 72 we read:

'However, it appears here that there are still two possibilities for all motion to cease at some time or other: by repulsion and attraction finally cancelling each other out in *actual fact* (our emphasis), or by the total repulsion finally taking possession of one part of matter and the total attraction of the other. *For the dialectical conception these possibilities are excluded from the outset.* (our emphasis). Dialectics has proved from the results of our experience of nature so far that all polar opposites in general are determined by the mutual action of the two opposite poles on each other, that the separation and opposition of these poles exists only within their mutual connection and union and, conversely, that their union exists only in their separation and their mutual connection only in their opposition. This once established, *there can be no question of final cancelling out of repulsion and attraction* (our emphasis) or of a final partition between the one form of motion in one half of matter and the other form in the other half, consequently there can be no question of mutual penetration (Note: in the book. In the sense of mutual equalisation and neutralisation) or of absolute separation of the two poles.'

It is crystal clear that LS mobilises Engels against Engels and dialectical materialism. While Engels speaks about a primary and secondary opposite in the unity of attraction and repulsion, while he states that 'there can be no question of a final cancelling out of repulsion and attraction', LS wants to turn him round and make him say that if there is primacy and predominance of one opposite, if the opposites are not in equilibrium, then . . . every movement stops!

Now let us come to the important section of the '*Dialectics of Nature*' entitled 'Motion and Equilibrium' (p.246). It begins with the sentence: 'Equilibrium is inseparable from motion.' At this point the English translation (p.246) contains a footnote, which does not exist in the Greek Anagnostides edition, which says that at precisely this point Engels noted in the margin: 'Equilibrium is *predominance* of attraction over repulsion' (our emphasis).

Equilibrium is inseparable from motion, because it exists in this unity of two opposite basic forms of *motion*, attraction and repulsion, where the *predominating opposite* is attraction. Equilibrium itself is incomprehensible without the *predominance* of one opposite (attraction) in a unity of opposites (attraction and repulsion) as simple forms of movement). For LS equilibrium is the mutual cancelling out of the opposites. In the unity of motion and equilibrium itself, for LS there is nothing primary. However, Engels is perfectly clear:

'The individual motion strives towards equilibrium, *the motion as a whole* once more destroys the individual equilibrium (our emphasis) . . . all equilibrium is only *relative* and *temporary*.' (emphasis in the original, p246).

In the unity of the *universal* motion of matter and the individual equilibrium to which the individual form of movement tends, the primary, the absolute, the eternal is the universal movement of matter and the secondary, the relative, the transitory is every equilibrium. Every equilibrium is born, preserved and is destroyed by the universal movement of matter. But no equilibrium can stop the universal movement of matter even for a moment.

The fossilised world of LS with its 'innate tendency to preserve its existence' and its equilibrium, transforms every transition and change into a mysterious puzzle.

The application of these philosophical views to the class struggle gives birth to 'miracles'. The same equilibrium existed before the seven-years' dictatorship, during it and after its fall! Karamanlis is equated to the junta! The equilibrium of capitalist society is preserved until its

armed overthrow and the imposition of the dictatorship of the proletariat! One wonders if in between LS's 'equilibrium' and socialism there is any room for the development of the economic crisis, for rearrangements of class forces, for the development of pre-revolutionary situations and for the transition from a pre-revolutionary to a revolutionary situation before the armed insurrection and the destruction of the bourgeois state.

Today we are fighting in an epoch precisely where every equilibrium is being overthrown and the revolutionary crisis is maturing at a rapid pace, revealing in a sharp and urgent way the unresolved crisis of revolutionary leadership of the proletariat. It is precisely this reality which the document of LS wants to fossilise, 'in equilibrium', like another head of Medusa.

## MOTION AND TRANSITION

For LS, motion is nothing but a succession of interrupted states of equilibrium: 'quality exists only because the opposites are *in equilibrium* (emphasis in the original). The domination of one opposite over the other means negation of the quality, an *interruption, transition*'. (our emphasis)

'Equilibrium is not stationariness but on the contrary a condition of movement and change. We have everywhere "motion in equilibrium"' as Engels writes in *Dialectics of Nature*, motion in stationariness.

'A determined body, a certain quality moves. Quality is immobility and the path of its motion the same. But at the same moment the motion on a path, external motion, and simultaneously, internal motion is the negation of immobility and equilibrium, the negation of determined quality, of the form of matter and at the same time of the form of motion peculiar to it. Beyond a certain limit, the internal and external motion interrupt the internal and external equilibrium, and the form of matter, together with that of motion change.

'Matter is always a certain form, as is motion. *Every form represents stationariness, moment, identity, unity, etc.* (Our emphasis). Motion as motion is incomprehensible outside its forms, incomprehensible outside its motion.' (p.9)

Since 'form represents stationariness' and the transition from one form of matter and motion to another means 'interruption', the whole of motion is transformed into rests which are interrupted to be succeeded by other rests.

The consideration of movement as a succession of stationary states is characteristic of mechanical materialism. Lenin copies Hegel's critique of this conception of motion:

'If we speak of motion in general, we say that the body is in one place and then it goes to another; because it moves it is no longer in the first, but yet not in the second; were it in either it would be at rest. If we say that it is between both, this is to say nothing at all, for were it between both, it would be in a place, and this presents the same difficulty. But movement means to be in this place and not to be in it; this is the continuity of space and time — and it is this which first makes motion possible.' (Vol. 38, p.259).

After this, Lenin adds:

'Movement is the presence of a body in a definite place at a given moment and in another place at another, subsequent moment — such is the objection which Chernov repeats...

'This objection is *incorrect*: (1) it describes the *result* of motion, but not motion *itself*; (2) it does not show, it does not contain in itself the *possibility* of motion; (3) it depicts motion as a sum, as a concatenation of states of *rest*.' (Vol. 38, p.259.)

Form does not represent dead repose. It is something finite. 'Finite?' observes Lenin, 'That means *moving* to an

end!' (Vol.38, p.110, Lenin's emphasis). Form is not something passive, it is not itself devoid of activity.

'Form is essential. Essence is formed. In one way or another also in dependence on Essence ... Matter is not the *Ground* of Form, but the unity of Ground and Grounded ... Matter is the *passive*, Form is the *active* (tatiges) ... Matter must be formed and Form must materialise itself ...

'Now this, which appears as the activity of Form, is equally the proper movement of Matter itself...' (Vol. 38, p. 145, emphases in the original).

For LS, motion is represented by a line with interrupted sections. Something analogous was expressed in ancient times with the phrase 'the flying arrow rests' and Aristotle gave the answer: 'the error arises from the assumption that "time consists of the individual Nows" of many interrupted moments, rests, unities, as LS would say (see Vol. 38, p.260). But without the continuity of space and time motion is impossible (Vol. 38. p.259)

'Motion is the essence of space and time. Two fundamental concepts express this essence: (infinite), continuity (Kontinuität) and punctuality (denial of continuity, DISCONTINUITY) Motion is the unity of continuity (of time and space) and discontinuity (of time and space). Motion is a contradiction, a unity of contradictions.' (Vol. 38, p.258)

LS sees motion *only as discontinuity* and not as the unity of *continuity and discontinuity*. This is why, according to his document, *transition* and *interruption* are the same thing. Very characteristic is the way he sees movement in 'A Brief Report from the International School' which acts as a prologue to the document:

'In the field of consciousness *revolutionary* motion in the material world finds its reflection in dialectical materialism, the theory which studies the opposites in their unity, conflict and their mutual transformation into their opposite, that is leaps.' (Our emphasis.)

First of all we observe that the dialectical motion of the material world is referred to as 'revolutionary', implying that it is carried out through revolutionary leaps and second, in the list of general dialectical laws of the self-movement of matter, *interpenetration* is missing: only unity, conflict and leaps exist.

The universal movement of matter does not advance only through leaps. Leaps, the interruption of continuity, of the gradual, exist and are possible because their opposite exists — the gradual, continuity. The one opposite is in unity with the other opposite, conflicts with it, penetrates into it, is *transformed* into its opposite. Without transition, that is the interpenetration of opposites, the transformation of opposites is not possible. The general dialectical laws of the motion of matter (unity, conflict, interpenetration, transformation of the opposites) are an inseparable whole.

It is necessary to recognise the law of interpenetration of opposites in unity with the other laws of the dialectical movement of nature, in order to grasp *the interconnection of all forms of matter in motion*, as the condition for the study of the transition towards the transformation of the opposites, the interruption, the leap.

By making every continuity disappear and seeing discontinuity exclusively, by making gradual changes disappear and recognising only leaps, LS destroys every interconnection of the forms of universal matter in motion. His unchecked eclecticism, which often goes beyond the limits of the ridiculous is the vivid appearance of this attack on the universal, all-sided, vital connection of all the forms of matter and on the reflection of this interconnection in human notions. The world is broken up into a mixture of particularities which man picks out, according to his needs, and assembles in more general categories

('induction'), in order to use them 'in the form of principles', 'productively', in 'investigation and interpretation of phenomena in other fields' (p.8)

This is how LS openly defends the empirical method of induction — of the ascent from the particular to the general and from there to the particular — in order to prepare his attack not only on Marxism but also on *every* abstraction and science.

## PARTICULAR AND GENERAL

'At every stage of his practical activity, man generalises *inductively* and systematises the experience he has drawn in certain fields, in order to use his generalisations subsequently in the form of principles, *productively* as a guide in the investigation and interpretation of phenomena in other fields. Intellectually, it is with these principles that he tries to penetrate, and actually does penetrate, phenomena, to arrive at the thing-in-itself, the essence. Together with induction, production, as well as deduction are contained in all the sciences, the partial ones and philosophy.' (p.3)

These words from 'A Monist or a Dualist View of History?' by LS sound like the echo of the voice of Wohlforth in his libel 'The Workers League and the International Committee'.

'We always begin from a concrete, a particular. The dialectical process never begins from a universal.'

It is clear that LS after Wohlforth, comes to unite with the revisionist camp of all those who proclaimed Marxism to be 'consistent empiricism' from Jock Haston in the 40s, to Novak and Hansen in the 60s, up to the latest 'philosophical' attack of the Greek Pabloites of the 'Workers Struggle' against the WIL and the IC.

The Marxist theory of knowledge does not distinguish the particular from the universal, it does not set the particular, separated from the universal, as the starting point of cognition.

To begin with what is the simplest, most ordinary, common, etc. with *any* proposition: the leaves of a tree are green; John is a man; Fido is a dog, etc. Here already we have dialectics (as Hegel's genius recognised). The *individual* is the UNIVERSAL. Consequently, the opposites (the individual is opposed to the universal) are identical; the individual exists only in the connection that leads to the universal. The universal exists only in the individual and through the individual. Every individual is (in one way or another) a universal. Every universal is (a fragment, or an aspect, or the essence of) an individual. Every universal only approximately embraces all the individual objects. Every individual is connected by thousands of transitions with other *kinds* of individuals (things, phenomena, processes), etc. *Here* already we have the elements, the germs, the concepts of necessity, of objective connection in nature...' (Vol. 38, p.361)

Cognition begins, as we have said, from the unity of opposites, of the individual and the universal. When, after process of interpenetration, the leap is made from Living Perception to Abstract Concept, from there on the syllogisms will connect the individual, the particular and the universal in many ways before reaching the negation of the Abstract Concept, the Theoretical Idea, which is not 'merely an abstract universal, but a universal which comprises in itself the wealth of the particular, the individual, the single' (see Vol.38, p.99).

Engels has already answered the mechanical materialist Haeckel on his talk about induction as the starting point of scientific knowledge:

Individuality, particularity, universality, these are the three determinations in which the whole "Doctrine of



Notion" moves. Under these heads, progression from the individual to the particular and from the particular to the universal takes place not in one but in many modalities and this is often enough exemplified by Hegel as the progression: individual, species, genus. And now the Haeckels come forward with their induction and trumpet it as a great fact against Hegel that progression must be from the individual to the particular and then to the universal (!), from the individual to the species and then to the genus and then permit *deductive* (Engel's emphasis) conclusions which are supposed to lead further. These people have got into such a deadlock over the opposition between induction and deduction that they reduce all logical forms of conclusion to these two and in so doing do not notice that they (1) unconsciously employ quite different forms of conclusion under those names, (2) deprive themselves of the whole wealth of forms of conclusion insofar as it cannot be forced under these two, and (3) thereby convert both forms, induction and deduction, into sheer nonsense.' (*Dialectics of Nature*, p. 226).

## POSITIVE SCIENCES AND PHILOSOPHY

LS, like commonsense, does not recognise in scientific research any means other than the above elementary forms of syllogism, and indeed in chronological order, first induction then deduction (or production).

From the beginning of his document he presents the work of the secondary positive sciences as operating on a purely empirical basis: 'The partial sciences work with *abstractions which are inferred directly from sensuous objects*.' (p.7, our emphasis).

Such a conception leaves the dialectical relation between the positive sciences and philosophy — more concretely Marxist philosophy — completely in the dark. The sciences do not select and work merely with the *immediate* abstractions of empirical facts, leaving it to philosophy 'to use their abstractions in order to infer from them more general categories' (p.7). They do not stick to the raw facts which are also abstractions 'the result of the *first* approximation of our brains to the essential inter-relations, laws of motion, the contradictions of the eternally changing complex world of matter . . . of which they form part' (see 'Opportunism and Empiricism', *Trotskyism versus Revisionism*, vol. IV, p. 82).

In reality, *every* thought, including natural-scientific thought, moves from living perception to abstraction and from there to practice, that is dialectically. The movement of every thought is dialectical because *every* thought reflects the motion of the objective material world.

The research of the positive sciences follows a dialectical course, the reflection of the dialectical course of the world, nature and history. This conception of LS of the sciences constitutes another attack on the *Dialectics of Nature*.

If we regard the positive sciences as working only with abstractions which are assembled directly from sensuous objects, we open the door to philosophical idealism which sought to introduce physics at the beginning of our century through the window of the revolution.

'The phenomena of radio-activity, which have led to the necessity of thinking of the atom as a complex system of still utterly "unimaginable" particles, can be directed against materialism only by a desperate specimen of a vulgar materialist who recognises as matter only that which he can feel with his bare hands. But this is sensualism, not materialism. Both the molecule, the ultimate chemical particle, and the atom, the ultimate physical particle, are inaccessible to our sight and touch. But our organs of sense, though

the instruments with which knowledge begins are not at all, however, the last resort of knowledge. The human eye and the human ear are very primitive pieces of apparatus, inadequate to reach even the basic elements of physical and chemical phenomena. To the extent that in our thinking about reality we are guided merely by the everyday findings of our sense organs, it is hard for us to imagine that the atom is a complex system, that it has a nucleus, that around this nucleus electrons move and that from this there result the phenomena of radio-activity . . . The human brain is a product of the development of matter, and at the same time is an instrument for the cognition of this matter: gradually it adjusts itself to its function, tries to overcome its limitations, creates ever new scientific methods, imagines ever more complex and exact instruments, checks its work again and yet again, step by step penetrates into previously unknown depths, changes our conception of matter, without, though, ever breaking away from this basis of all that exists.' (Trotsky, *Radio, Science, Technique and Society*, pp. 7-8, New Park Publications)

The more the natural sciences penetrate the study of matter in motion, the more that decadent bourgeois philosophical thought tries to use the new discoveries about matter to 'demonstrate' that matter does not exist. Every progress of science in the conquest of nature is accompanied by a philosophical struggle against materialism. But materialism must also change its form with every epoch-making discovery in the area of natural sciences. (See Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach.)

LS, by lowering the natural sciences to the level of empiricism, wipes out their historical movement towards dialectical materialism.

'Modern physics is in travail. It is giving birth to dialectical materialism. The process of childbirth is painful and in addition to a living healthy being there are bound to be produced certain dead products, refuse fit only for the garbage heap'. (Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, p.326 of the French edition — end of the chapter 'The revolution in the sciences of nature'.)

Engels wrote:

'Dialectics divested of mysticism becomes an absolute necessity for natural science which has forsaken the field where rigid categories sufficed which represent as it were the lower mathematics of logic, its everyday weapons. Philosophy takes its revenge posthumously on natural science for the latter having deserted it . . .' (*Dialectics of Nature*, p. 205).

'Natural scientists allow philosophy to prolong an illusory existence by making shift with the dregs of the old metaphysics. Only when natural and historical science has become imbued with dialectics will all the philosophical rubbish *other than the pure theory of thought* — be superfluous, disappearing in positive science' (*Dialectics of Nature*, p.210. Our emphasis)

The abstractions assembled directly from sensuous objects, raw empirical facts, do not suffice for the natural sciences. Only higher abstractions of a developed theory can lead to the scientific investigation of the facts.

## ABSTRACT AND CONCRETE

LS's empirical view of the sciences is aimed precisely to destroy every concept of scientific abstraction and dialectical understanding. For him there are only the elementary forms of conclusion and the experiment in the laboratories of the positive sciences. For the investigation of the nature of these concepts as such we do not have some 'spectroscope' of grey matter (p.40). Marx, however did not feel the need for such an original instrument.

'In the analysis of economic forms neither the microscope nor chemical reactions can serve us. Both must be replaced by *the strength of abstraction*' (*Capital*, Vol.I, p.12 of the CPG edition, our emphasis).

Without continually higher abstractions we cannot advance from the semblance of phenomena to their essence. As Marx said, if semblance coincided with essence there would be no need for science.

The concrete itself, as Trotsky told Shachtman, 'is a combination of abstractions — not an arbitrary or subjective combination but one that corresponds to the laws of the movement of a given phenomenon.' (In Defence of Marxism, p.147, Trotsky's emphasis).

Having attacked the scientific value of abstraction, LS, like Thornett, comes to attack the I.C. and the WRP for concerning itself with 'abstract work of philosophy as a thing-in-itself.'

'And today how can we call the concern with "structures" of thought in themselves philosophy, something that happened at the international school? . . . A concern with philosophy as a thing-in-itself, outside its material content, is really empty words and mysticism.' (p.62)

For LS 'every reference to method which does not extend to our experience is incomprehensible and therefore sterile' (p.62). This is a vulgar restatement of Plekhanov's view of dialectics which 'is taken as the sum total of examples . . . and not as a law of cognition (and as a law of the objective world),' as Lenin observed (Vol.38, p.359, emphasis in the original).

To 'consciously hold the unity of the ideal form with its material content', to which LS refers (p.41), simply means not proceeding beyond the semblance of phenomena, through higher abstractions, to the essence, to the conception of the general law of change of every form of movement of matter and its reflection in human thought.

To this attack on every scientific abstraction, Engels gives an insurmountable answer in 'Dialectics of Nature', the book-bugbear of every revisionist:

'Abstract and concrete. The general law of the change of form of motion is much more concrete than any single "concrete" example of it'. (Dialectics of Nature. p.222)

The investigation of this general law of dialectical movement is possible only to man, while the other activities of the understanding exist in animals as well.

'Understanding and reason. This Hegelian distinction, according to which only dialectical thinking is reasonable, has a definite meaning. We have in common with animals all activity of the understanding: induction, deduction and hence also abstraction . . . analysis of unknown objects (even the cracking of a nut is a beginning of analysis), synthesis (in animal tricks) and as the union of both, experiment (in the case of new obstacles and unfamiliar situations). In their nature all these modes of procedure — hence all means of scientific investigation which ordinary logic recognises — are absolutely the same in men and the higher animals. They differ only in degree (of development of the method in each case.) The basic features of the method are the same and lead to the same results in man and animals, so long as both operate or make shift merely with these elementary methods.

'On the other hand, dialectical thought — precisely because it presupposes investigation of the nature of concepts themselves — is only possible for man and for him only at a comparatively high stage of development . . .' (Dialectics of Nature, p.223)

## REJECTION OF LEAPS

LS limits all the activity of human understanding only to what it has in common with the rest of the animals. The human brain is the highest product of universal matter in motion, in which matter is organised in such a way that 'nature attains consciousness of itself'. Human thought reflects the universal motion of matter and simultaneously

the social activity of man, the form of movement of matter with which man produces and reproduces his material life.

LS, exactly like the vulgar materialists of the type of Vogt, Molescot and Buchner, wipes out every qualitative difference between the higher species of the animal kingdom and man, the leap itself which intervened.

The rejection of the unity, conflict and interpenetration of opposites inevitably leads to the rejection of their transformation, the break in continuity, the leap. In considering every change a leap, L.S., like Thornett and Wohlforth, ultimately wipes out leaps themselves. The talk about the 'revolutionary' movement of the material world, identifying qualitative and quantitative changes, always winds up at the evolutionary conception of motion, at the dissolving of the leap into gradualism — and in the political sphere to reformism and trade-union spontaneity.

LS first isolates the one opposite, discontinuity, from the unity of discontinuity and continuity which constitute motion, only later to dissolve discontinuity into the continuity of the biological evolution of man from preceding species.

The replacement of dialectical materialism by metaphysical materialism of the bourgeoisie is necessarily accompanied by the abandonment of historical materialism, the continuation and extension of the Marxist theory of cognition to human society and history.

## METAPHYSICAL OR MATERIALIST VIEW OF HISTORY?

LS sees the conflict of man with nature in a primitive mechanical way, merely as the struggle for biological survival, since 'what moves man in his practice and theory is the tendency, inherent in every form of matter, to preserve its existence'. He writes:

'Nature does not give man its wealth without resistance. Man, in order to survive, is obliged to take up an offensive stand against nature and to fight to tear away its wealth. Historically the ruling class has been identified with the blind forces of nature counterposed to man which deny him the right to live. The active activity of man on nature becomes intensely apparent also in the active political activity of the proletariat against the ruling class. In this sense the proletariat represents not only itself but defends mankind. And mankind must exist fighting against everything which denies it this right. From this standpoint, the ruling class constitutes a force of historical reaction, it contains the passive resistance of the old in the face of the formative, progressive activity of man.' (p.10)

And this is called . . . a monist view of history!

We cannot see man's conflict with nature merely in terms of the struggle for biological survival, Darwin's 'struggle for life'. The development of organic matter led to the appearance, through the evolution of preceding species, of a species, man, who advanced beyond mere biological adaptation to a socio-productive adaptation.

Engels attacked both those who see nothing in organic nature except the 'struggle for life' as well as those who transferred this conception to human society, obliterating the difference between man and the rest of organic nature:

"The struggle for life". Until Darwin, what was stressed by his present adherents was precisely the harmonious cooperative working of organic nature, how the plant kingdom supplies animals with nourishment and oxygen, and animals



Engels



Kant



Hegel

supply plants with manure, ammonia and carbonic acid. Hardly was Darwin recognised before these same people saw everywhere nothing but *struggle*. Both views are justified within narrow limits, but both are equally one-sided and prejudiced. The interaction of bodies in non-living nature includes both harmony and collisions, that of living bodies conscious and unconscious co-operation as well as conscious and unconscious struggle. Hence, even in regard to nature, it is not permissible one-sidedly to inscribe only "struggle" on one's banners (do you hear, Mr Thornett?). But it is absolutely childish to desire to sum up the whole manifold wealth of historical evolution in the meagre and one-sided phrase "struggle for existence". That says less than nothing. (Do you hear, Mr LS?)

'Let us accept for the moment the phrase "struggle for existence" for argument's sake. The most that the animal can achieve is to *collect*; man *produces*, he prepares the means of life, in the widest sense of the words, which without him nature would not have produced. This makes impossible any unqualified transference of the laws of life in animal societies to human society. Production soon brings it about that the so-called struggle for existence no longer turns on pure means of existence, but on means of enjoyment and development. Here — where the means of development are socially produced — the categories taken from the animal kingdom are already totally inapplicable . . .' (Dialectics of Nature, p.308, emphasis in the original).

Man comes into conflict with nature by developing productive forces (tools, techniques, more generally the sum-total of the ability man has developed to deal with and change nature). In order for the productive forces to be developed, men combine together with determined relations, determined *social production relations*, which correspond to a certain level of development of the productive forces. This structure of social relations becomes the basis upon which political, legal, etc. institutions are upheld, and to which certain forms of social consciousness correspond.

At a certain point in their development, the productive forces come into conflict with the framework of production relations. This conflict is the motive force of social revolution.

In the above extract from the LS document, the two main classes in capitalist society are nowhere connected to their material *social* basis, the unity and conflict of productive forces and production relations. Just as with Thornett, the class struggle is isolated from its material social basis and transferred directly to a mythical conflict of man

and nature, where nature is personified anthropomorphically in the ruling class and transformed into something passive, and where the working class is identified with man as a biological species.

Just above the paragraph quoted, LS makes the separation into class as follows:

'The classes are distinguished from each other, but not in the sense of relative strength. The working class is distinguished from the ruling class as the active factor in history. It is in the historical sense, insofar as it acts consciously, the active opposite in relation to the passive.' (p 10.)

Further down on the same page it will be explained that this 'active' character of the working class is only 'potential' and that the working class, before the Party breathes consciousness into it, 'is in practice obliged to react after the fact' to 'the political initiatives' of the otherwise passive ruling class . . .

This prosaic mythological representation of the class struggle systematically refuses to connect the class to concrete phases of the development of production, according to the first of the three basic discoveries of historical materialism. As Marx wrote to Weidemeyer — and before him the bourgeois historians and economists had described historically, the class struggle and their economic anatomy:

'What I did that was new was to prove (1) that the existence of classes is tied only to concrete historical phases in the development of production, (2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, (3) that this dictatorship itself constitutes only the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society' (Marx-Engels Correspondence).

The 'potentially' active working class of LS is nowhere connected with the development of the *productive forces*. Thus its historical role which arises from its position within the mode of production is wiped out. The proletariat appeared as a historical social force only with the development of the productive forces from the time of the industrial revolution.

'If the class struggle is not seen on its material social basis of the conflict of productive forces and production relations, then the "socialist possibility which springs INEVITABLY (emphasis in the original) from historical necessity" (p. 45), becomes the object of metaphysical faith in the victory of the working class — mankind over nature — ruling class . . .'

LS says at one point (p.47) that 'it is the crisis of



capitalism which contains the necessity of socialism, yes, but at the same time it provides its *material basis* (possibility) the development of the productive forces, among which the most important is the working class itself.'

Vulgar materialism cannot help transforming history into a mystical delirium. Thornett separates society from nature, the particular form from the universal motion of matter and winds up seeing history in a distorted way, as being made from the caprices of isolated individuals. LS levels society and nature, after separating man as a part of nature from man as a product of nature, and ends up at the anthromorphism of the 'blind forces of nature' in the person of the ruling class as the 'passive opposite' which 'take the political initiatives' since it has the 'supervision of its problems'.

## NATURE AND SOCIETY

Causing man as a *social* being to disappear into man as a *biological* species also appears clearly in the following extract from the LS document:

'Nature, having existed before him (note: before man) and at the same time his own nature, sets the conditions for what he will produce and how he will produce therefore determining the general form of his evolution. *It determines the making and development of his tools, of his social relations and in general his history*' (p.31 our emphasis)

To say that nature determines 'the general form of development' of man means to recognise something very basic, man's unity with the whole development of organic and inorganic matter in motion. But if we remain there and use this truth to hide the *social-productive* basis of man's history in opposition to the character of the history of the rest of the animals, etc., then we transform a truth into a delusion and the Marxist conception of history into a naturalist conception of history. What distinguishes man from the animals is that man transforms nature and nature transforms him through *social* production and reproduction of his material life. 'The most that the animal can achieve is to *collect*; man *produces*, he prepares the means of life, in the widest sense of the words, *which without him nature would not have produced.*' (*Dialectics of Nature*, p. 308, last emphasis ours.)

When LS sees nature as 'determining the making and development of his tools, his social relations and in general his history' this is no different from those supporters of the naturalist conception of history who sought the cause of historical changes in geographical-climatological factors and biological mutations.

'But it is precisely *the alteration of nature by men*, not solely nature as such, which is the most essential and immediate basis of human thought . . . The naturalistic conception of history, as found, for instance, to a greater or lesser extent in Draper and other scientists, as if nature exclusively reacts on man, *and natural conditions everywhere exclusively determined his historical development*, is therefore one-sided and forgets that man also reacts on nature, changing it and creating new conditions of existence for himself. There is devilishly little left of "nature" as it was in Germany at the time when the Germanic peoples immigrated into it. The earth's surface, climate, vegetation, fauna and human beings themselves have infinitely changed, and all this owing to human activity, while the changes of nature in Germany which have occurred in this period of time without human interference are incalculably small.' (*Dialectics of Nature*, p.231).

The naturalist conception of history is proclaimed by LS to be 'the unconditional principle of materialism, of

Marx-Engels, of Feuerbach and all the preceding materialism' (p.24). By eradicating the qualitative difference between nature and one of its particular forms, society, the decisive gap between dialectical materialism and all the previous materialism is bridged. The history of philosophy is levelled out, together with the history of mankind.

## HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

The misuse made in the LS document of the history of philosophy, from the ancient Greeks to Bacon, Kant and Hegel, and up to Marx and Engels, demands a particular, analytical answer. Here we will limit ourselves to certain important points.

First of all, on the open defence of mechanical materialism:

'In the beginning is nature. This beginning, in the way mechanical materialism understood it, was insufficient — but not wrong. To be sure it is *closer to the truth* — that is the notion of the self-movement of matter — than the concept of the idealists "man determines nature".' (p. 3 our emphasis.)

This position is diametrically opposed to Lenin's well-known phrase:

'Intelligent idealism is closer to intelligent materialism than stupid materialism. Dialectical idealism instead of intelligent; metaphysical, undeveloped, dead, crude, rigid, instead of stupid.' (Vol.38, p.276)

This observation of Lenin's does not at all signify his conciliation with idealism or forsaking the principles of his book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Throughout Lenin's work, particularly in Volume 38, both materialism and idealism are conceived in their historical connection, *conflict* and continual *negation*, as moments of the development of knowledge.

'Philosophical idealism is *only* nonsense from the standpoint of crude, simple, metaphysical materialism. From the standpoint of *dialectical* materialism, on the other hand, philosophical idealism is a *one-sided*, exaggerated, *überschwengliches* (Dietzgen) development (inflation, distention) of one of the features, aspects, facets of knowledge into an absolute, *divorced* from matter, from nature, apotheosised. Idealism is clerical obscurantism. True. But philosophical idealism is ("*more correctly*") and "*in addition*") a road to clerical obscurantism through *ONE OF THE SHADES* of the infinitely complex *knowledge* (dialectical) of man. (Vol. 38, p.363, emphasis in the original).

On p. 36 LS protests about the 'sterile negation' of the Stalinists who (like Hansen and Novack, we would add) see dialectical materialism as originating in straight-line, one-sided development from the previous materialism. To this one-sided-evolutionary concept of the history of philosophy, LS counterposes his own eclectic-evolutionary conception to which 'all philosophies have contributed', thus wiping out *contradiction* from the development of philosophy, the *conflict* of materialism and idealism as a source of development. This leads him, too, to say like Novack that mechanical materialism is 'insufficient but closer to the truth' than idealism, *dialectical* idealism included.

The fundamental bad luck of metaphysical materialism, as Lenin says is its inability to apply dialectics to the theory of reflection. Man and his thought stand, separated, parallel to and in 'equilibrium' with his opposite, nature and its laws which are imposed on him from the outside.

Hegel surmounted the bisection of Object and Subject,

by analysing reality as a single whole in its contradictory parts. LS, in his unchecked attack on abstraction, presents Hegel as the philosopher 'who elaborated the dialectical method as such and presented it divorced from every material content', and that he was occupied with the 'structures' of understanding, its 'moments' as a thing-in-itself (p. 40).

This is nothing but a crude distortion. As Lenin says:

'What Hegel demands is a Logic, the forms of which would be *gehaltvolle Formen* (forms with content), forms of living, real content, inseparably connected with the content.

'And Hegel draws attention to "Thoughts of all natural and spiritual things", "to the substantial content . . ." (Vol. 38, p. 92.)

Hegel in fact attacked Kant's subjective idealism for this reason, because he separated the forms of thought (*Denkformen*) from the objective natural and spiritual things, which these forms *reflect*.

As Engels says, in *Ludwig Feuerbach* (p. 11, Progress Publishers), Hegel accepts *reflection* in the theory of cognition, that is that thinking reflects the things which exist outside of it and independent of it. With the difference that, as an *objective idealist*, he regards things, the objective world, as the dialectical realisation of the Idea (God). *Not* of individual consciousness, the mental activity of the isolated subject. The dialectical method is not presented, as LS maintains, divorced from every material content, but in fact is inseparably tied to every material and spiritual content, which of course for him represents nothing but the appearance of the Absolute Idea. Dialectical materialism came into being by turning Hegel's dialectical idealism upsde-down materialistically, through *conflict*, through contradiction. It embodies the highest achievements of all previous philosophy — including previous materialism.

LS is opposed to this leap. Hansen, equally opposed on the same subject, spoke about Marxism as 'consistent empiricism' as 'empiricism systematically carried out to the end'. LS's conception of mechanical materialism as 'insufficient, but closer to the truth', means nothing but that Marxism is 'sufficient mechanical materialism'. The gap between dialectical materialism and all previous materialism, which LS wants to bridge, is nothing but the most principal question: the question of *revolutionary practice*.

## NECESSITY AND FREEDOM

In the long section of the LS document entitled 'Necessity and Freedom' an attempt is made at an improbable distortion to serve the subjective needs of LS to show the comrades of the International Committee and the CC of the WIL as subjectivists, dualists, supporters of free will.

All the arbitrary and eclectic comments about letters of the PC, on the lessons from the Founding Conference of the Young Socialists in Greece, cannot hide what was the most controversial question: will we break with the philosophy of passiveness of metaphysical materialism, on the line traced in Marx's 'First Thesis on Feuerbach', or not?

'The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism — that of Feuerbach included — is that the thing (*Gegenstand*), reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object (*Objekt*) or of contemplation (*Anschauung*) but not as *human sensuous activity, practice*, not subjectively. Hence it happened that the *active* side, in contradistinction to materialism, was developed by idealism — but only abstract-

ly, since, of course, idealism does not know real, sensuous activity as such . . .' (Marx, Theses on Feuerbach).

LS wants to disorient the discussion by putting — in precisely the same way as the Pabloite 'Workers Struggle', in its attack on the WIL in issues Nos. 39, 40, 41 — the question: 'from things to sensation and thought, or from thought and sensation to things?'

The question is put as a smokescreen, with characteristic charlatanism. We had told LS and we repeat here, what our unvacillating insistence of the 'First Thesis on Feuerbach' means:

'Of course the objection can arise, in defence of Feuerbach, that in the process of our activity on objects we know their properties only inasmuch as they on their side act on us. In both cases *sensation* precedes *thought*; and in both cases we first *feel* their properties, and only then *do we think* about them. But this is something Marx does not deny. For him the heart of the matter was not the indisputable fact that sensation precedes thought, but the fact that man is originally incited to think by the sensations he feels in the process of his activity on the external world.' (Plekhanov, *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*. p.32)

Man is not an object forsaken in a corner of the universe who *passively* accepts the forces of nature, then thinks about the material which he accepts passively, makes theories which he puts into practice. If we regard the process of cognition in this way, passive sensation — theory — practice, then we idealistically place theory *before* practice. However *we feel through our practice*. In the beginning is practice. The process of cognition itself is practice, the practice of cognition. The transforming of nature by man constitutes the most essential and *immediate* basis of human thought (Engels).

'Man himself confronts the matter of nature as a force of nature. He puts the natural forces which belong to his body, his arms and legs, his head and hands, into motion in order to appropriate the matter of nature in a form useful for his own life. By acting, with this movement, upon nature which is outside of him and changing it, he changes his own nature at the same time.' (Capital, Vol I, p.190, CPG edition).

The social practice of man as an integral part of nature, is primary throughout the development of his knowledge and is the criterion of truth of this knowledge. This is the meaning of the thesis in 'The German Ideology' by Marx-Engels that 'man always had before him a historical nature and a natural history'. Nature changes man and man changes nature.

LS is in such a hurry to prove that 'the interaction of man with his external environment cannot in reality explain anything' (p.33) that he falsifies Engels himself in the quote from the 'Dialectics of Nature' p.34 which he copies, in his own way, on p.23 of his document. In reality the extract is as follows:

'The specialisation of the hand — this implies the *tool*, and the tool implies specific human *activity*, the transforming reaction of man on nature, production.'

The word 'activity' which we emphasise is missing from LS's copy, while 'transforming reaction' he puts in capital letters. At the moment when LS himself makes the word 'activity' disappear by sleight-of-hand, and leaves *only* the word reaction, he accuses the IC and the CC of the WIL of seeing man's activity only as activity and not also as reaction to the needs set by nature.

We never regarded man's activity to be a manifestation of his uncontrolled free will (or 'first will', as LS's play on words would barbarically have it.) What we said and we repeat is that man's activity is not passive or merely a biological reaction to external stimuli, but precisely, action and at the same time reaction, specific human activity, the transforming reaction to the needs of nature,

through social production which produces things which nature could never have produced on its own, without man's intervention.

In Vol.38, Lenin put the following phrase of Hegel's into capital letters:

IN HIS TOOLS MAN POSSESSES POWER OVER EXTERNAL NATURE ALTHOUGH AS REGARDS HIS ENDS, HE FREQUENTLY IS SUBJECTED TO IT. (p.189).

And shortly afterwards he notes:

'Historical materialism as one of the applications and developments of the ideas of genius — seeds existing in embryo in Hegel' (p.190).

Hegel was able to give the seeds of historical materialism because he introduced the criterion of practice into the theory of knowledge. Lenin writes the following — a scandal for LS:

'... Marx, consequently, clearly sides with Hegel in introducing the criterion of practice into the theory of knowledge; see the Theses on Feuerbach... Alias: Man's consciousness not only reflects the objective world, but creates it.'

'The notion (— man), as subjective, again presupposes an otherness which is in itself (— nature independent of man). This notion (— man) is the *impulse* to realise itself, to give itself objectivity in the objective world through itself, and to realise (fulfil) itself... i.e., that the world does not satisfy man and man decides to change it by his activity.' (Vol. 38, pp 212-213).

The universal motion of matter in its highest product, man, passes into his *subjective impulse*. Necessity is transformed into freedom, without *disappearing* into freedom. The development itself of relative freedom through natural necessity must not be seen as a straight line, without turnings back and windings or without interruptions of the continuity.

In man, nature attains consciousness of itself. The Thing-in-Itself becomes known, because the practical-critical activity of man transforms it into a thing-for-us. The whole process of the transformation of the thing-in-itself into the thing-for-us is none other than cognition... LS openly rejects this when he protests that his following position was called objectivism:

'To accept objective necessity, the thing-in-itself and to pronounce that this can and must be known, in order to be transformed through practice into a "thing for us".' (p.20).

Here it is very clear that the previous metaphysical materialism leads to idealism: starting from sensations as *passive supervision* of the outside world, we can and do know the thing-in-itself first, and *then* with our practice we change it into a thing for us'.

The relation between theory and practice is idealistically turned round: *first* man contemplates the world and discovers the truth and *then* he changes it. This line, which runs throughout the whole document, is the direct historical continuation of the conception of Greek Archeiomarxism: 'First education and then action'. The line of liquidationist propagandism.

This vulgar materialism, which starts from passive contemplation, leads to subjective idealism of Kant and the neo-Kantian epigones: the conversion of the thing-in-itself into the thing-for-us is cognition, which 'ends the Kantian ungraspable "thing-in-itself"'. (Engels, L.Feuerbach, p.21).

## THEORY AND PRACTICE

The idealistic inversion of theory and practice by LS begins with a thoroughly objectivist view: 'theory and practice have the same objective content' (p.21). LS wants

to rub out every *difference*, every *contradiction*, every *conflict* between theory and practice, in the name of their unity, just as Novak of the SWP and the OCI. And he even attempts to bring to his defence Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism!*

The whole extract he quotes (on p.21 of his document) has a different content from that which LS wants to impart to it. Lenin reads the bourgeois professor Levy as follows:

'A. Levy is therefore essentially right when he says that in Marx's opinion there corresponds to man's "phenomenal activity" "an activity of things", that is to say human practice has not only phenomenal (in the Humean and Kantian sense of the term), but also an objectively real significance' (our emphasis)

Marx had criticised Feuerbach, in the 'First Thesis', that 'He does not see human activity itself as objective (gegenstandlich) activity', that is as motion of matter. Human practice is not simply 'appearance', behind which a thing-in-itself is hiding, ungraspable according to Kant. According to Hume, the very idea of a thing-in-itself behind the appearance (and from human activity as appearance) is *inadmissible* and metaphysical. Here Lenin criticises the sceptical and agnostic dispute of the cognisability and the existence of the 'thing-in-itself'. He never says that the reflection of things in motion and the things in motion themselves are one and the same thing, that 'theory and practice have the same objective content'.

Ideas are the highest products of the motion of matter, organised in a particular way in the human brain, they are not matter. Lenin criticises Dietzgen because he identifies thought, of which ideas are the classified products, with matter. 'That thought and matter are "real", i.e., that they exist, this is correct. But to say that thought is material, this is a wrong step in the confusion of materialism with idealism'. (*Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, p.153 of the French edition). LS retreats to the level of the vulgar materialist school of Moleschot and Buchner, who considered thought to be an secretion of the brain just as bile is an secretion of the liver and which ends up in the liquidationist confusion of materialism and idealism.

Theory *reflects* social practice, which is a part of universal motion of matter. Marx extensively analyses this relation between abstract categories and material reality, in *Grundrisse*.

'In the succession of the economic categories, as in any other historical social science, it must not be forgotten that their subject — here, modern bourgeois society — is always what is given, in the head as well as in reality, and that these categories therefore express the forms of being, and the characteristics of existence, and often only individual sides of this specific society, this subject, and that therefore this society by no means begins only at the point where one can speak of it as such; this holds for science as well. (*Grundrisse*, p.106)

However the motion of abstractions can reflect the motion of material reality only because the abstraction is the *opposite* of that which it reflects, in *conflict* with it. It is very important that we understand this.

'For example, the simplest economic category, e.g. exchange value, presupposes population, moreover a population producing in specific relations; as well as a certain kind of family, or commune, or state, etc. It can never exist other than as an abstract, one-sided relation within an already given, concrete, living whole.' (*Grundrisse*, p.101)

On this contradiction and the conflict between every abstraction and that which it reflects, Lenin says:

'We cannot imagine, express, measure, depict movement, without interrupting continuity, without simplifying, coarsening, dismembering, strangling that which is living. The representation of movement by means of thought always makes coarse, kills — and not only by means of thought, but



also by sense-perception, and not only of movement, but every concept.

And in that lies the *essence* of dialectics.

And precisely *this essence* is expressed by the formula: 'the unity, identity of opposites'.

Theory is a body of dead abstractions from living movement, it contains the abstract essence of conditions which have passed. Practice is living, movement, present, immediate reality. 'Practice is higher than (theoretical) knowledge, for it has not only the dignity of universality, but also of immediate actuality.' (Vol.38, p.213, emphasis in the original).

The dead is preserved within the living, the past within the present. There is *continuity* between the past and the present. But at the same moment there is also *conflict, the break in continuity, discontinuity*. Unity of continuity and discontinuity, movement. It is this movement, through the conflict of opposites, which LS denies, the 'theoretician' of the perception of 'equilibrium' from every point of view.

Theory and practice are not opposites in equilibrium, parallel, without a primary and secondary, with the same objective content. We always start from the living present,

the primary opposite, practice, and posit this living perception on the body of our dead abstractions, we make their contradiction and their conflict sharp, we grasp through this active practice the new as a guide in our new material practice, the new living perception. If theory and practice are fused into the same objective content, as LS would like it, then it is of no importance if we start from living practice to change our old theory or if we start from our theoretical schemata to impose them like moulds on reality.

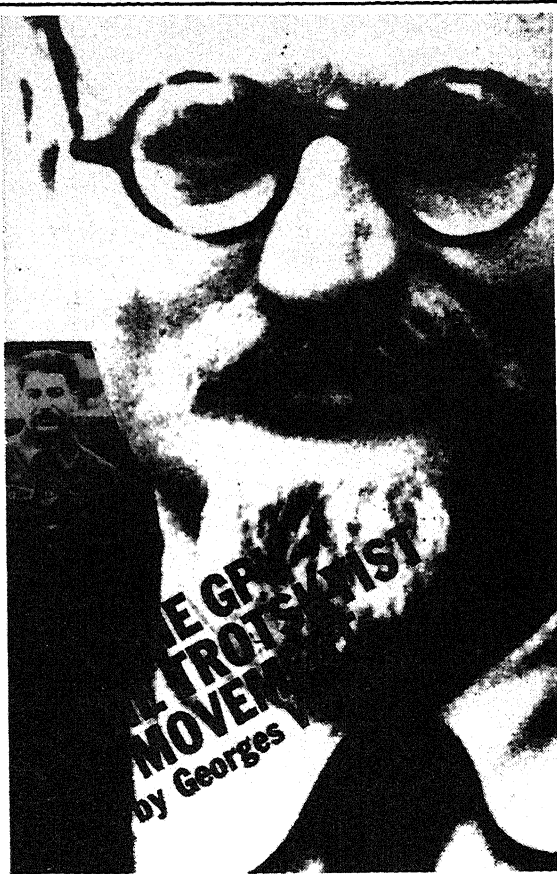
It was pragmatism, that reactionary bourgeois philosophy that wanted to fuse theory and practice in what it called 'experience'. In the political sphere the fusion of theory and practice, the disappearance of all conflict between them leads straight to the liquidation of the practice of the Party into a propagandist practice, clinging exclusively to the interpretation of the immediate successive experiences of the working class. A 'practice' which is nothing but abstract schematic interpretation and a 'theory' which is nothing but the arrangement of given empirical facts on the level of spontaneous (bourgeois) consciousness.

# THE GPU IN THE TROTSKYIST MOVEMENT

by Georges Vereeken

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# THE RENEGADE SKLAVOS

SINCE THE collapse of the military junta in Greece, the Workers' Internationalist League of Greece (WIL), section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, has made great strides in the building of the alternative working class revolutionary leadership. They have attracted into the Trotskyist movement hundreds of workers, youth and students, as the Greek proletariat recovers from the treachery and betrayals of the Stalinists.

The government of Karamanlis is and can only be a regime of crisis and instability, a Bonapartist regime dependent primarily upon the ability of the Stalinists to continue to 'discipline' the working class and peasantry to bourgeois order. There is no going back to the iron grip of the colonels' junta without a new civil war bloodily to defeat the workers and peasants. There is no 'democratic' way out of the economic and cultural problems of a backward and parasitic economy.

In the revolutionary struggles ahead everything depends on the building of the revolutionary party, which prepares for the conquest of workers' power. Opportunists of all kinds swing between sectarian and propagandist characterisations of the Karamanlis government as a continuation of the junta on the one hand (which would paralyse the movement) and pathetic democratic illusions on the other. The revolutionary party must fight all these tendencies outside and inside the movement and elaborate the strategy and tactics for power.

The leadership of the WIL has been constructed in the struggle to develop this strategy. This has meant a fight against a tendency to capitulate to the Stalinists (which called upon the split Stalinist factions to 'unite!') and against the characterisation of the Karamanlis government as 'the junta'. The leadership of the Greek section, after participating in the IC discussions which fought out these questions, is now engaged in organising and conducting a pre-National Conference discussion throughout the organisation. In the midst of this preparation, the Central Committee of the WIL was confronted on Friday, January 16 with a letter from its secretary, comrade L. Sklavos, that he was resigning both his secretaryship and his membership of the Central Committee, to which he had been elected at the last conference. This letter was delivered to a CC meeting called to continue the discussion on his own document, and from which he absented himself.

For two reasons, which are inescapably correct, the CC of the WIL demanded that L. Sklavos withdraw the resignation and continue as secretary and on the CC. First, the pre-conference discussion was opened, in that every question was open to full discussion in the party; there was no possible need for any leading comrade to resign his position in order to fight for his line; Sklavos like every other comrade must carry through to the conference the responsibilities for which he had been elected by the whole membership at the previous conference.

Second, Sklavos had already, in accordance with the decisions of the IC (see below) submitted a lengthy document on Marxist philosophy, the discussion of which was

only now beginning. The pre-conference discussion at the IC level gave comrade Sklavos, as well as every other comrade, complete facilities for presenting any views whatsoever on political, philosophical and organisational questions.

Conference is the highest body of the WIL, in accordance with the democratic centralist practice of Bolshevism. But L. Sklavos could not wait for the highest body of the party to decide. He resigned from the leadership. And when requested on the following day to withdraw his resignation he completely refused.

The IC had already dealt extremely patiently with L. Sklavos's contribution on questions of philosophy. When L. Sklavos first raised differences on these matters (September 1975) the IC agreed (with L. Sklavos and the Greek section in support) on the following timetable: LS's offer of submitting a document by October 31 was accepted; on this basis, the IC and the CC of the WIL meeting together would begin the discussion in late November; this was to be the agreed and sole framework for the discussion; any subsequent steps must be by decision of the IC (Resolution of the IC 27.9.1975 appended). All signatories (including L. Sklavos representing the Greek section) committed themselves to oppose all splits and to facilitate the discussion.

Even though comrade LS broke these decisions, the IC persisted in arranging for the discussion. LS circulated and discussed his document with non-members of the IC and CC of the WIL and worked to organise a faction around himself, before any further IC and CC discussion.

He submitted one-half of his document (untranslated at that point) only just before the IC meeting of December 14, 1975. It was then resolved to arrange translation, with discussion to begin on January 3 and 4 between the IC and the CC of the WIL. The second half, however, did not arrive until January 1. As soon as translation was complete, though not before any reply could be prepared, a comrade from the IC visited Greece (January 15, 1976) for discussion preliminary to the IC-WIL meeting.

Having already broken the agreement, LS now proceeded on a campaign of open disruption. The CC of the WIL, as well as the IC, had accepted the discussion of his views on philosophy, but he now (January 16, the day after the visit to Athens of an IC member) announced political differences with the IC, i.e. a new platform of attack on the IC, and resigned from his leadership positions.

This is in complete conflict with democratic centralism, which demands that such differences must first be fought out on the leading committee of which the comrade concerned is a member. In a preconference discussion, such a comrade may take views into the party as a whole, but such action does not require his resignation. In view of this, the CC of the WIL demanded that LS withdraw his resignation. This action was absolutely correct. They made this appeal to LS even despite the fact that on the evening following his resignation, he had mobilised a factional grouping together with non-party disruptive

elements and engineered a provocation in one of the party's offices.

When LS was requested to resume his leadership positions he was also asked to give an undertaking not to violate the constitution or to disrupt the work of the party. On this condition, he was guaranteed every right to fight for his positions up to and including the conference. The first concern of the CC was, absolutely correctly, to exclude all provocations and organisational disputes so that the political discussions could proceed.

At this point, LS and his supporters were forced either to accept discipline and face the full political and theoretical issues up to the conference, or to attempt full-scale disruption. They chose the latter course, engineering a provocation on the same evening. On this breach of the constitution and deliberate disruption, the CC was compelled to act. It did so with all responsibility and expelled LS and his closest supporters who organised the disruption. In the following two days the whole membership, at specially convened branch meetings, endorsed the actions of the CC. Despite their actions, those who politically supported LS have been given every right to bring their case to the CC if they sign the undertakings previously placed before LS. Those who do not do this, of course, have the right to appeal to the party conference against their expulsion.

The IC, meeting on January 25, 1976, fully endorses and supports the resolute action of the Central Committee of the Greek section. Only a leadership which fights for democratic centralism will be able to carry out the revolutionary tasks posed by the crisis in Greece. The IC fought over many years to correct the serious political errors of LS; and in the centre of these struggles, the Greek leadership was built. When LS developed his philosophical differences, denying the conflict of opposites as the source of development, he took a course which was calculated to destroy all that had been built in Greece. Eclecticism is substituted for dialectics.

In essentials, he wanted a theoretical rationalisation for opportunist adaptation to the national political milieu, dominated as always by 'democratic' opportunism. For this it was necessary, just as it was for Wohlforth and Hansen in the United States and Thornett in England, to build up a smokescreen of lies and slanders about the

'intervention' and 'bureaucratic' dictatorship of the IC and the WRP leadership. LS's resignation and disruption was designed to do exactly this. His conduct was a continuation of his previous opposition to publishing in Greece the material of the IC on Wohlforth.

All sections of the IC, already forewarned by the work on Security and the Fourth International which followed the struggle against Wohlforth, are warned to be vigilant and completely firm against all such disruptions. They are not accidental, on the contrary, they are characteristic of the period in which we now fight. Trotskyism has been successfully wrested from the hands of agents and those who capitulated to agents through theoretical neglect, political adaptation, and organisational softness. The middle-class propagandists, who want Trotskyism tied to the coat-tails of the reformists and Stalinists, grow more and more hysterical and resort to sheer provocations, because they hate being politically defeated; they are caught like rats in a trap.

For this reason, no one should be surprised if this handful of enemies of the IC came together quickly, even though in the most recent past they have made the most bitter denunciations of each other. Wohlforth joins Hansen, despite the most vitriolic political exchanges between the two. Thornett publishes and sympathises with the 'treatment' of Wohlforth, rediscovered friend of the SWP. LS in Greece turns to Thornett to build up his position against the IC, even though the burden of his 'philosophy' document is that the IC does not go far enough in denouncing the renegade Thornett on basic questions of materialism!

What unites all these gentlemen is this; the maturing of the world revolution leaves less and less space between the IC, the world revolutionary party, on the one hand, and the demands of the ruling class that this leadership be broken up, on the other. It is an inexorable logic which drives those who disrupt the party in Greece and attack the IC in Britain and the US. The IC appeals to any comrades in Greece who have been confused by the actions of Sklavos to return to the WIL and participate in the pre-conference discussion, in which all political positions will be discussed.

January 25, 1976

#### RESOLUTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

1. The International Committee, meeting on September 27, 1975, heard a report from the international cadre school, and in particular, the situation in the Greek delegation. Comrade Sklavos said he had differences of opinion on the running of the educational work at the school. He said he had differences with the positions put forward on Marxist method by the IC comrades responsible for the school. He asked for a discussion. This was agreed at once.

The IC proposes to prepare and organise the discussion on these questions in the following way. The differences are at the level of the IC and the discussions must be regulated by the IC itself. Comrade Sklavos will submit to the IC by October 31 a written document for the IC Internal Discussion Bulletin, and will have the right also to present his differences verbally at the meetings of the IC. The first of these will be held jointly with the Central Committee of the Greek section during the second half of November 1975.

The IC will reproduce and circulate to all sections, including the Greek section, copies for discussion, and make arrangements with the sections for translation into other languages. The IC will prepare and circulate a reply to Comrade Sklavos's document. This discussion in the IC sections must be organised and conducted as a fundamental discussion. From

this date in the Greek section, it must in no way whatsoever be the vehicle of any factional divisions or irresponsible talk of 'splits'. Both sides pledge themselves to work together immediately against any such developments, should they occur. The leadership and the membership must ensure that the unity and work of the section are in no way impaired by the discussion and differences revealed by it.

The IC, together with Comrade Sklavos and the Greek delegation to the international cadre school, accept this procedure and framework for the discussion. Any further step in the discussion must be a decision of the IC.

**Signed 27.9.1975 by representatives of sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International including L. Sklavos (Greece).**

2. The International Committee resolves to begin immediately the translation of the document outlining Cde. Sklavos's differences with the majority of the IC. This document will be circulated for discussion among IC members and CC of the WIL of Greece only and will be discussed on January 3 and 4 at the meeting of the IC and CC of the WIL.

**Agreed unanimously 14.12.1975**



# ONCE AGAIN:

# THE OCI AND PHILOSOPHY

By A. Dragstedt

THE FRENCH revisionist group, Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) published in its paper *Informations Ouvrières* No. 754 an obituary of the German philosopher Martin Heidegger. It was the OCI which split with the International Committee of the Fourth International in 1971, denying the existence of Marxist philosophy and asserting that only 'the method of the programme' was necessary. With this method they venture, in this obituary, into the history of philosophy. They show that for them, theory has degenerated into hack-work, helped along by a plebeian turn of phrase. With this method they are making their way into a unity of undifferentiation with the Socialist Workers Party.

Since, by their account (as well as that of the SWP), the struggle for philosophical clarity is gratuitous within a revolutionary party and is in no sense at its centre, the career of a man whose thought was seminal for most of the best as well as of the worst of non-Marxist philosophy of this century provides occasion only for a sneer, on the grounds that there would be nothing to be learnt from it. In their straightforward world, there was philosophy (until 1845) and then there wasn't any more. The development of Marxist thought is reduced to the intervention of *programme*, ending in 1938 with the foundation of the Fourth International and its *Transitional Programme*.

It is amazing, if one realizes the extent to which the OCI has turned the 1845 *Theses on Feuerbach* into a shibboleth which grants access to Marxism, that this 'end of philosophy' is misquoted: 'Philosophers have (only) interpreted the world in various ways; the point (now) is to change it'. (11th thesis) The OCI's translation omits 'only' because for them there is no need to continue to struggle for an interpretation of the world, whereas for Marx it isn't even possible to change the world without interpreting it: one can only *join* it in one of its modes, by accepting some of its methods as do both individual terrorists and reformists, however widely they differ pragmatically. To change it (first and foremost, to change the mode of production), one must grasp through revolutionary practice its laws of motion in order to comprehend the emergence of the revolutionary opportunity.

Although Marx was not in a position in 1845 (*The German Ideology* and *Theses on Feuerbach*) to more than sense this aspect of revolutionary praxis and had some lessons to learn about those laws, the OCI can glibly insert a 'now' into Marx' text because they cannot accept the fact that he is making a theoretical statement instead of invoking a 'Programme'.

Clutching its spurious 'now' the OCI seeks to discharge itself of the obligation to proceed by generating perspectives based on the law of value through which a revolutionary party must establish its claim to class leadership by its comprehension of the objective requirements of capital. Instead the OCI generates a strategy based on the manoeuvres and crisis within the existing leadership of the working class. For Marx, philosophy had always been

theoretically inadequate because of its failure to grasp social relationships as a function of the given mode of production, and thereby as changeable. Remedying such a theoretical inadequacy was *always*, not merely *now*, the point.

Such a conception as that of the OCI, of how the working class learns and organises its historical experiences, implies that its Bolshevik leadership would never be expected to face serious theoretical tasks even though it might have to make sharp tactical turns. Since history is in a straight line for the OCI, the revolutionary party can also blandly proceed, serenely putting one foot's heel to the toe of the other. Evidently, there would be no occasion for a confrontation with Heidegger, a mere 'ideologue of death'.

Neither the origins nor consistency of his thought would be topics of concern for a party which can simply banish undialectical method with the back of its hand. Nor is the problematic reception of his thought by 'Western bourgeois society' a problem for the OCI any more than the unquestioning reception of his abstract enemies within Logical Positivism and Ordinary Language. All such controversy must be declared to be mere sound and fury. But then one wants to know by what criterion some arguments are allowable as 'the method of the programme', and the rest disqualified as 'philosophy'. Sublating philosophy was a partly theoretical question for the Eleventh Thesis, at least.

Since it is the limitations of Heidegger which can provide us with an important lesson, we shall ignore his achievement, though it is really greater than that of any other non-Marxist thinker in opening paths to the philosophical tradition, 'setting a light behind the greats', illuminating the philosophical bases of the development of modern science. Precisely if we allow that he did lead philosophy out of the 'sticky air of epistemology' (as he put it), do we then see what steps he failed to take.

The rationale of his espousal of Fascism (contributing mystically earthy and sentimental nationalistic articles to popular journals of the Nazis, wearing an SA uniform at Heidelberg, repudiating his Jewish colleagues and teacher) must be fully comprehended even in order to assess the claims that he 'broke' with the Nazis. One may grant that it was an act of bureaucratic malice that enrolled him in the Volksturm of 1945, but his 'break' was the same right-wing rejection of the populist aspect of Nazism which characterized the abortive conspirators of July 1944.

Heidegger's support of the 'deep inner truth' of national socialism (as he was still writing in the 1950's) was based on his assessment of the primacy of technology over social relationships. *Das Kapital* should have been called *Die Maschine*, he wrote. For him the 'worker' was reduced to the ego-less indeterminacy of mass man and obliterated as a revolutionary force. (The 'one-dimensional man' spun out by his student Marcuse represents another version of the same concept.)

Heidegger's phenomenological training never equipped him to form dialectical concepts like 'mode of production' which do not have an empirical generation (even in the reflexive and attenuated sense which is valid within phenomenology) so he could only, as he confronted historical reality, project the demoralization of the workers' movement into the future as a new ontological datum, rather than showing it to be the historically conditioned result of the laws of motion of a mode of production.

He could say of Marxism that it had the deepest comprehension of history (which is the only thing he ever said about it), but he never carried out what might seem to be the programme of investigation posed by such an admission, though he had roamed so widely within historical spaces.

Hence, Heidegger remained fundamentally bound to the constraints of just that philosophical method which he had devoted his life's work to 'destructuring'. Historical change remained utterly opaque, and a 'profound word' was whisked out of the etymological pun file: World War II was nothing but a *geschick* ('fitting'/'sent'). But this is just where all that bourgeois social science that admits such questions still stands.

The OCI works itself up over Heidegger's thesis that 'science does not think', which it glosses as the statement, 'it isn't thanks to science that humanity succeeds in seizing the objective reality of nature, of society, and of thought itself', and Heidegger is classified as an obscurantist immersing thought in 'the enigmas of poetry or old mysteries of religion'.

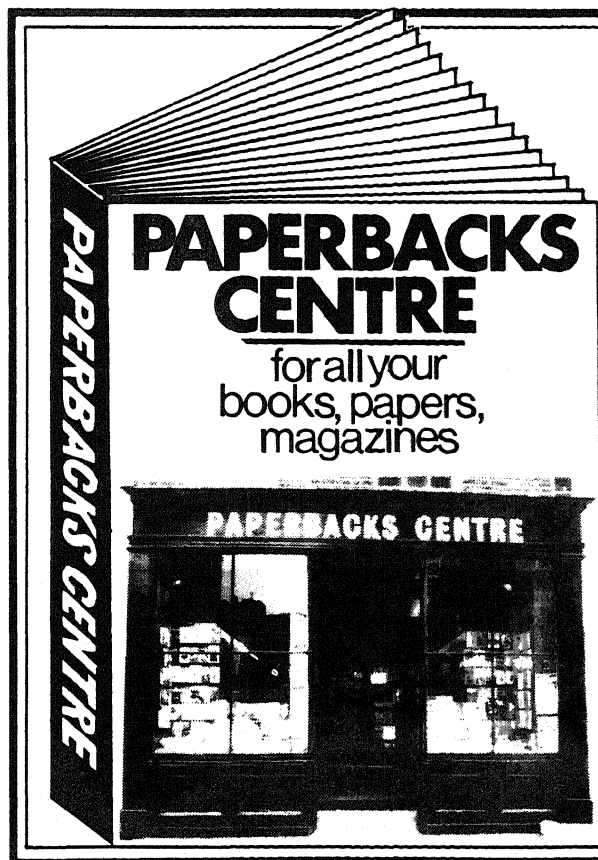
Their attack is significant not for its infantile vulgarity but because their fury is aroused just at the point that Heidegger reaches the threshold of dialectic. He means by his distinction between 'thinking' and what goes on within

science to specify something analogous to Kant's distinction between Reason and Understanding. But Hegel was able to take this particular achievement and reforge it as the dynamo of his dialectic. This is all just mystification for the OCI, because they operate with the sterile rationalism of the bourgeois disdainers of Hegelian philosophy.

The fact that Heidegger was led to a truly obscurantist contempt for formal logic and all the accomplishments of Understanding is just his inability to pass over the threshold, since it is precisely dialectical Reason which can allow formal logic to reign over all deductivity without fearing any harm from it. And even in his own terms, it is manifestly false that science proceeds without 'thinking'.

Throughout the history of science, there have recurred crises of methodology which have only been resolved by a philosophical leap and turn to principles (from the Pythagoreans' discovery of incommensurability). So in an important sense, the OCI's scurrilous dismissal of Heidegger rates him too high: his consistency and methodological rigour is not called concretely into question. As a result, they can only flee in panic before his compelling genius at displaying the appearance-forms of bourgeois consciousness.

The OCI may imagine that their 'method of the programme' is insulated from bourgeois ideology by a Chinese wall. A Bolshevik organization cannot, however, protect its theoretical machinery from rust without taking on the most sophisticated expressions of argument which are current and giving itself an account of why they are the way they are, and what their relationship to dialectical materialism is: such a battle is an indispensable form for the party's theory.



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## BOOK REVIEW

by Tom Kemp

## SOCIALIST OPPOSITION IN EASTERN EUROPE. THE CZECHOSLOVAK EXAMPLE by Jiri Pelikan.

Translated by Marian Sling and V. & R. Tosek. *Allison and Busby, London 1976. 222 pps. Paper £2.95; hardback £5.25.*

JIRI PELIKAN tells us little in this book about the views he held or the role he played as a loyal Stalinist functionary or why he threw in his lot with the 'reformers' in Czechoslovakia. He was, in fact, for more than ten years the President of the International Union of Students — the arm of the Soviet bureaucracy in the student movement — and from 1963 to 1968 was the head of Czechoslovak TV. In other words, he is no ordinary oppositionist, but for a long time was a member of the privileged caste in Czechoslovakia and also necessarily identified with its policies.

He does not, in this book at any rate, make it clear when he became disillusioned with the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy which he was supposed to be implementing as a 'student' leader — of mature years — and then as controller of one of the most powerful instruments of propaganda, television. He does not tell us how he was able to survive the repression in the leading ranks of the Communist Party in the period 1949-53: was it because he saw nothing wrong or simply that he kept his mouth shut? In the factional struggles after Stalin's death he appeared as an opponent of Anton Novotny, the arch-Stalinist in Prague, and as a supporter of Alexander Dubcek in the events of 1968.

The significance of this factional struggle can be found principally in relations with the Soviet Union. A wing of the Czechoslovak bureaucracy saw in the upheavals after 1956 an opportunity to win greater independence from Moscow in much the same way as the leaderships of the Italian and more recently the French Communist Parties have tried to do. This did not mean any break with the essential tenets of Stalinism, which, indeed, Pelikan is unable even to identify. The Prague party leaders were, however, haunted by the show trials of 1949-53 based on unfounded charges concocted by the KGB and carrying off some of its most prominent members. In 1954, after Stalin's death, they instituted an inquiry and, subsequently, factional differences on this question and on the rehabilitation of victims split the leadership. Notably, it brought one section into collision with the Moscow bureaucracy, frightened by the Hungarian Revolution and the upheavals in the world communist movement and wanting to bring so-called 'destalinisation' to a halt. By this time, 1964, manifestations of opposition broke surface among students, youth and intellectuals in what up to then had been regarded as, next to East Germany, the most docile and Stalinist country in Eastern Europe.

It is evident from Pelikan's own account that although this opposition took a 'socialist' form its main content was national, a revolt against Soviet influence and control.

The anti-Novotny wing in the Party leadership looked to these new forces for support in gaining greater independence from Moscow and in forming its own policies to deal with growing economic crisis and the cultural ferment then beginning. The factional struggle sharpened and in December 1967 Leonid Brezhnev agreed to the ousting of Novotny. Alexander Dubcek, a compromise

candidate, later took over the Party Secretaryship and at this time Pelikan could be classed as one of his supporters. New factional groupings then formed inside the Party to face a rapidly developing situation of political revolution known as 'the Prague Spring'.

The task of the Dubcek leadership was to attempt to hold back and canalise this enormous movement and prevent the overthrow of the bureaucracy. A section of the Party leadership, the unconditional supporters of Moscow, regarded this policy of manoeuvre and partial concessions as too risky and in August 1968 the Warsaw Pact forces moved in. Dubcek and his close supporters were carried off to Moscow and under duress signed an agreement calling for 'normalisation'.

A number of Party leaders, including Pelikan, considered this was a surrender and wanted to continue the fight — not for the political revolution but to contain it by purely national means, i.e. without Soviet intervention.

This is very clear from Pelikan's account of these events in which he argues that the Dubcek delegation should have rejected the diktat. He calls their surrender 'an irreparable mistake which for a long time will burden the prestige and future of socialism in that country'. Apart from the rhetorical flourish about 'socialism', however, this means that he thinks that the Dubcek leadership could have survived and that it was the best alternative. This is made clear in the text, where he argues that the Soviet bureaucracy would not have been able to enforce its policy and that, in the face of 'world public opinion' it would have been 'compelled to agree to a solution acceptable to both sides'! It is the difference over the Moscow terms which distinguishes Pelikan from Dubcek. True, those who thought like him found themselves hounded and victimised, threatened with death and forced to flee the country — but that hardly suggests that Moscow was in a mood for compromise.

The texts from the opposition, which make up half the book, are mostly at least three or four years old now and only a selection of those published in French. They are basically on the same political line as Pelikan himself. In other words, they are looking for a specifically Czechoslovakian, national road to socialism. They implicitly accept the policy of 'socialism in one country'. There is no understanding of the ideology of Stalinism nor any break with it.

The nearest Pelikan himself gets to explaining the degeneration of the Soviet Union is that it was a result of the coming to power of the working class first of all in a backward country and the setting up of a one-party regime. This is tantamount to saying that Lenin and the Bolsheviks should not have taken power because they did so prematurely. It ignores all the history of the struggle against Stalinism by Trotsky and the Left Opposition. It is a purely fatalistic view of history which only turns a few of the bureaucracy's pluses into minuses but employs precisely the same mechanical methodology.

Pelikan says nothing about the social roots of Stalinism

either in the Soviet Union or in the Eastern European countries; he still wears the same blinkers that were provided when he enjoyed the favours of the bureaucracy of which he was a member. He cannot admit that it was the failure of the revolution to spread, not the fact that it came first in a backward country, that accounts for the Stalinist degeneration.

He remains profoundly nationalist, with all the petty-bourgeois political prejudices of the bureaucracy, still retaining illusions about its capacity to reform itself and depart peacefully from the historical scene. He supports détente, the current international policy of the bureaucracy. He claims to believe that the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries really intend to take power (peacefully, of course). The working class hardly gets a look in on his pages. He does not even want to build a party in Czechoslovakia but only a Socialist Movement of Czechoslovak Citizens (NB, not workers). The documents in this book faithfully reflect these limitations.

Although he criticises the regime of Gustav Husak for its repression of party members who supported Dubcek, depriving them of their posts, hounding them from their jobs and so forth, has he really burnt all the bridges? While claiming that Husak has played the card of unconditional support for Moscow, he says: 'This does not mean that in the event of the fall of Brezhnev or substantial changes in Moscow he will not try to switch camps and place himself at the head of a movement which would aim at making Czechoslovakia independent of the USSR'. He does not tell us what his own position would then be.

It is apparent that the question of independence from Soviet domination is the really crucial one as far as Pelikan is concerned. The main objection he has to Husak's regime is its subservience to the Soviet bureaucracy, from which follows its inability to carry out 'democratisation' and rule with majority support instead of against the mass of the people as at present. When he speaks of 'a spontaneous outburst of discontent' it is as though he shudders at the thought.

He reveals his real fear of revolution and of independent action by the working class. 'It cannot be ruled out' — that means he really prefers it — 'that the socialist opposition will, with the help of the masses, *exert such pressure on the leading group* (emphasis added) that the latter will be forced to compromise and will gradually disintegrate into its various tendencies eventually isolating the conservative and reactionary tendencies and leading the liberal wing (sic!) into a form of alliance with the socialist opposition'. Likewise he sees, in the Soviet Union, 'a moderate wing' prepared for reforms and compromise.

Even more indicative of his position is the statement on page 101 which says:

*'The experience accumulated in the USSR and more particularly in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia demonstrates that far-reaching political transformations are only possible when they are advocated by forces within the ruling Communist Party, even though the initiative may emanate from the population. Only a combination of pressure from the masses with the activities of the political core of the Party and the institutions can create the conditions for political and economic reforms of fundamental importance and for a genuine democratisation of the system. This is borne out by the example of the Prague Spring in 1968' (the emphasis is in the original, but it would have been made in any case, though for opposite reasons).*

He goes on to say that movements among the rank and file which have no support from an opposition within the Party are bound to fail. His policy is entirely one of reforms and pressure on the bureaucracy; the belief in a



Jiri Pelikan

reforming wing which will do the job which he has absolutely no confidence that the working class can do for itself. His position is fundamentally hostile to Marxism in general and to Bolshevism in particular; such a man would not only be against the building of revolutionary parties in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union but would give objective support to the bureaucracy in opposing them.

Yet it is Jiri Pelikan who, for a whole period, was boosted by the revisionist Organisation Communiste Internationaliste in France and offered the hospitality of its newspaper and its public platforms, even after he had made some of the statements quoted here. Regretfully, its organ, *La Vérité*, (Feb. 1976), reviewing his political autobiography, had to admit some of his errors, expressed in that volume even more grossly than in the book now being reviewed. It included an attack on Trotskyists for dogmatism and intolerance and a clear argument in favour of the self-reform of the bureaucracy. Nevertheless, the review concluded by saying that Pelikan would be speaking at an OCI meeting to be held in the following month!

It is not surprising either, that such 'oppositionists' as Pelikan are held up for admiration in the columns of *The Times*. The organ of the British bourgeoisie is perceptive enough to know that capitalism has nothing to fear and much to gain from the activities of Pelikan and his friends. It is working-class, revolutionary Marxist opposition in the East European countries and the Soviet Union which strikes terror into the hearts of the bourgeoisie just as it does into those of the bureaucracy.



# ASSAD TALKS PEACE, PREPARES NEW WAR

1. The revelation that British mercenaries are fighting with the Christian fascist forces in Lebanon highlights the class character of the civil war. On one side there is the Lebanese bourgeoisie which is backed by all the forces of reaction: the Syrian bourgeoisie, Zionism, US imperialism, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the dogs of war from Angola, Rhodesia and Vietnam.

On the other side are the Lebanese workers and the Palestinian fighters expressing the strength and indomitable spirit of the Arab revolution. There can be no question of the responsibilities of the international working class. It means rejecting the deliberately-created confusion that the war is over 'religious issues', and giving unconditional support to the Lebanese workers and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in their struggle for self-determination.

2. The Arab League 'peace initiatives' and the repeated Syrian 'ceasefires' should fool no one. Behind every diplomatic manoeuvre the Damascus butchers have consolidated their military line-up with the Christian fascists and the Falangists. In the past 16 months there have been no less than 53 'truces' in a war which has claimed 36,000 victims.

3. The Syrian régime is now working through the fascist forces and right-wing Moslem elements to smash the resistance of the Lebanese leftists and the PLO. The aim is to take the first steps towards a partition of Lebanon.

Syria is desperate to revive the role of the traditional Moslem political leaders, in a bid to keep the leftists out of the picture when it comes to a 'peace' carve up. This trend is evident from both rightist and Syrian information media, and has been clearly underlined by the leftist Press and radio in Beirut. One instance of this policy has been the liquidation of the leftist enclave of Nabaa, a largely Shi'ite suburb cut off in the rightist-dominated eastern area of Beirut.

According to the Beirut daily *Al-Anwar*, which is printed in the rightist-held zone, the collapse of Nabaa stemmed from an agreement between Rifaat Assad (the Syrian president's brother and head of the Seraya Dafa'a, Syria's praetorian guard of loyal troops) and Ahmad Safwan, a Shi'ite gang leader. Safwan is reported to have prompted a number of pro-Syrian Shi'ite leaders to adopt this agreement, which called for Nabaa to become a 'neutral zone', drive out 'foreign elements' (the Palestinians and leftists) and declare its total support for the Syrian initiative. The suburb fell completely to the rightists over the past few days, largely due to this 'fifth column' of pro-Syrian Shi'ite figures. Meanwhile the people of Nabaa have been fleeing to west Beirut in droves, carrying with them what they can in the face of rightist atrocities. The rightist command is now giving out 'looting licenses' to Christians who want to go and take their share of the pickings in the liquidated suburb, which once housed 200,000 people.

4. The fall of Nabaa concentrates the attention of the Syrians and the fascists on Tel al-Zaatar refugee camp. It has been shelled, rocketed and mortared for more than nine weeks. It has been without food and medical supplies and last week its water was cut off. The 20,000 inhabitants have withstood every attempt by the rightists to crush them. The International Red Cross evacuation has been discontinued because Christians opened fire on a convoy wounding a driver and hitting patients lying in the back of open trucks.

The rightists talk openly about crushing the camp and massacring its inhabitants, the practice they have already carried out at Maslakh and Quarantina in January, in Jisr al-Pasha camp last month and at Nabaa last weekend. The inhabitants of Tel al-Zaatar have issued a statement that they have no intention of surrendering in spite of the enemy blitzkrieg.

Following a joint Palestinian-leftist meeting nationalist leader Kemal Jumblatt said: 'We are not concerned with talk about the settlement any more. The war looks like being a long one, as long as Syrian forces remain in Lebanon encouraging the rightists.' (August 11, 1976.)

5. While the heroic resistance of the camp goes on, so the crisis in Assad's régime grows deeper. It is now clear that the Soviet Union has been forced to take some public steps against the Syrian government in the form of an arms squeeze. This is a belated, half-hearted and a cynical gesture to gather some political credibility among 'third world' countries. ('Major break between Syria and Russia', *Financial Times*, August 9, 1976.)

It does not materially alter the military capacity of the Syrian forces on the ground in Lebanon, who had two months' notice of this diplomatic move and have built up all the supplies they need for the foreseeable future.

6. To give added muscle to his brutal terms, Assad has stated unequivocally that the presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon is 'not negotiable'. This makes a complete mockery of the previous statements of the Syrian régime promising withdrawal of troops from towns like Sofar. Exploiting the passivity of Iraq, the cowardly neutrality of Egypt, the collusion of Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Kuwait and the open support of Israel, Assad has been preparing for an all-out war against the PLO-Leftist Alliance.

Unable to defeat the PLO, whose roots lie all over the Mid-East and not in Lebanon alone, Assad wants desperately to crush the Lebanese left. The Lebanese left — as *The Economist* admits — 'though smaller than the PLO is potentially more frightening to the surrounding Arab governments'. (*The Economist*, July 24, 1976.) Assad's decision to isolate the left was further encouraged by the talks on July 19 and 20 between Saudi King Khaled and Egypt's Sadat. These talks avoided the issue of Lebanon and gave a tacit endorsement to Assad to proceed against his enemies.

On July 22, Assad made his extremely belligerent speech blaming the civil war on the PLO which encouraged the Maronites to synchronise their attacks against the PLO-Leftist enclaves on the eastern and northern perimeters of the Christian quadrilateral in central Lebanon.

7. The Christian militia who were on the defensive after the massacres at Quarantina and the military defeat at Damour in January have made a rapid come-back. The reasons for this are obvious. While the PLO was being hemmed in, blockaded, bombarded and starved of supplies by the Syrians, the Maronites were being lavishly equipped by Israelis and Syrians with modern mechanised armour and weaponry. This has enabled the Maronites to outmanoeuvre and outgun the PLO in mobile battles in open country.

Imperialist sources no longer conceal the extent of this support. The Israelis, who recently abducted in international waters a Greek ship carrying weapons to the PLO, have shown an unusual generosity in building up the military potential of the Falange and the Tiger militia.

*Time* magazine, for example, quotes a Lebanese Christian soldier saying 'I prefer the Israelis to the Palestinians' and gloatingly reports:

'Jerusalem, too, wants to see the Palestinians crushed. Earlier this year, the Israelis began surreptitious shipments of small arms to Jounieh, the Christians' chief port; now the shipments include heavy Soviet-made weapons captured by the Israelis in past wars — among them T-54 tanks, armoured personnel carriers and 120mm and 130mm artillery.

In addition, some Christian troops have been brought to Israel for training. The Christian debt to the Israelis is such that a Christian leader says: "In the end, we may find that we will have to choose between Syria and Israel". (*Time*, August 2, 1976.)

8. It was these weapons — supplemented by brand new Soviet armoured cars lent by the Syrians — that were used to besiege Tel al-Zaatar and entomb hundreds of Palestinian women and children. It is these weapons which are now being used for a new offensive to open the road from Jounieh to Damascus and massacre more Palestinians — while Assad talks 'peace'. The more Assad supports Franjeh, the more Franjeh cuddles up to Rabin! Behind Assad's public exhortations to prevent the partition of

Lebanon he is conniving with Christian rulers who are carrying through a *de facto* partition by 'cantonising' the country into religious zones.

The only way to frustrate this reactionary plan is for the Lebanese left to fight for a programme of socialist expropriation of all land, banks, and industry and their operation under the control of Christian and Moslem workers and the annulment of all rural debts. Failure to carry out this policy will only strengthen the sectarian divisions and help consolidate the Christians around Franjeh, Chamoun and Gemeyel.

Although the Maronites have superior equipment, powerful allies, unlimited supplies and operate on well-protected interior lines their victory is by no means assured. They are split amongst themselves and this was bloodily revealed recently in a gun battle between the Falange and the Tiger militia resulting in ten dead and scores injured. This disunity stems from the heroic and unyielding resistance of the Palestinian and Lebanese workers who have shown at Tel al-Zaatar that the word 'surrender' does not occur in the vocabulary of the Palestinian revolution.

9. Time is not on Assad's side. The longer he negotiates, the greater is the economic burden of the Syrian peoples who have to sustain the cost of occupation. The more he conflicts with the PLO the greater is the hostility of the Syrians who cannot see the logic of Syrian Moslems fighting Lebanese Moslems to prop up a Christian regime which daily moves closer to a Judaic Zionist dictatorship.

The Lebanese civil war has reached an extremely critical stage. The PLO has been forced to the negotiating table although it has not been militarily defeated. Its future depends not on the outcome of negotiations in Damascus, but on the support which it receives from the Arab and European working class. We call on all workers to demand:

- **Immediate withdrawal of Syrian troops!**
- **Black all Syrian transport!**
- **Victory to the Palestine Liberation Organisation!**
- **Hands off the Lebanese workers!**
- **Build sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International in the Mid-East!**

August 10, 1976

# VALUE STUDIES BY MARX

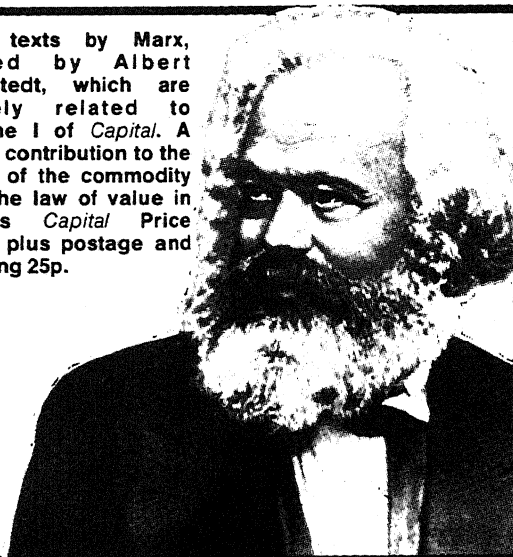
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# OUT WITH SYRIAN TROOPS!

1 The International Committee of the Fourth International salutes the heroic struggle of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the Lebanese working class to smash the United States-Syrian-Falangist-Zionist conspiracy against the Arab revolution and the cause of Palestinian self-determination.

2 The ICFI repeats its warnings that the treacherous bourgeoisie has no intention of releasing its hold on Lebanon. With the tacit complicity of one section of the Arab bourgeoisie and the cowardly neutrality and diplomatic skulduggery of the others, the brutal Assad regime is still hell-bent on suppressing and starving out the P.L.O. and the Lebanese working class.

3 Despite assurances of 'peace-keeping forces' and 'binding cease-fires' the pan-Arab forces have shown little or no enthusiasm to restrain the Syrian army or force it out. Only a token force of Libyans has so far arrived and they have not moved beyond Damascus. Meanwhile the Syrian army — aided by the crack regiments of the Jordanian Army — is pouring artillery and armour into the Bekkaa Valley and trying to cut off Beirut from the Port of Sidon in the hope of strangling the supply of food and medicine to Beirut. Within Beirut it relies on its fifth column of Al Saiqa to attack the P.L.O.

4 Despite the propaganda of Damascus that the Falange is being disarmed, the events of the last few weeks confirm in the bloodiest way that the reactionary fascists and sectarians in the Falange have increased their firepower and logistics with the overt and covert help from the Syrian army and air force.

5 But the arrogance and cynicism of the Syrian bourgeoisie have received a severe jolt from the P.L.O. and the Lebanese left. Any hope that Assad could repeat the brutal repression of King Hussein against the Palestinians in September 1970 has been dissipated by the diplomatic, strategic and tactical skill of the P.L.O. leaders, the inexhaustible courage and self-sacrifice of their followers and the manifest reluctance of the Syrian soldiers to fight their Lebanese and Palestinian brothers.

7 Every phase of this war, which began in April 1975 with the planned massacre of Palestinian men, women and children by the Falangists in a Beirut suburb, constitutes an eloquent and damning indictment of the Stalinist policy of peaceful co-existence and an irrefutable confirmation that imperialism can and will be defeated only through the armed struggle of the working class and poor peasantry. As in Vietnam, so in Lebanon.

8 The ICFI, in calling for the complete victory of the P.L.O. and the Lebanese working class, points out that this struggle requires a consistent and implacable struggle against the duplicity of the Soviet bureaucracy who try to restrict the struggles of the colonial peoples in the strait-jacket of detente. That is why the Soviet leaders have attacked the civil war in Lebanon, supported the Syrian intervention which has increased the bloodshed and integrates this into its policy of detente. As *Soviet News* — the

press release of the Soviet Embassy — stated on the Soviet-Syrian joint communique:

'When studying questions concerning the international situation, the two sides noted with satisfaction [*sic*] that the process of detente was deepening under the impact of the forces of socialism and national liberation. They favourably assessed the results of the European conference and noted that guaranteed security of the Continent of Europe "will facilitate the normalisation of the situation in other parts of the world as well, including the Middle East." (*Soviet News*, June 8, 1976) (Our emphasis).

Nobody should therefore be fooled by Kosygin's crocodile tears for the Palestinians in his recent statement in Damascus, nor should anyone be surprised by the incredible cynicism contained in the statement of Moscow's *Radio Peace and Progress*:

'Every shot fired in Beirut today serves imperialism and Zionism, which have long been looking for a way of transferring the centre of gravity of the Middle East crisis directly into any Arab country and of silencing the groans of those under the yoke of Israeli occupation with the bullets of an Arab civil war' (*Radio Peace and Progress*: 16.30 GMT, June 10, 1976.)

Translated into any language the message of Moscow is as clear as it is slanderous: the P.L.O. and all those who oppose the traitor Assad and his Falangist minions are agents of imperialism!

This bureaucratic amalgam is the direct product of Soviet policy which is to subordinate the inalienable rights of the Palestinians to another diplomatic horse-deal in Geneva based on the criminal resolutions 242 and 338 of the United Nations. The implications of this policy are too serious to be glossed over for one moment and must lead into an irreconcilable conflict with the Palestinian people. Let Radio Moscow speak:

'A peace settlement requires satisfaction of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinians, the removal of Israeli troops from all Arab lands overrun in 1967 and guarantees that all the states in the area, including Israel, will have an opportunity to develop independently. Obviously there is a connection between the Lebanese crisis and the unsettled situation in the Middle East.' (*English broadcast from Moscow to North America 2300 GMT, April 11, 1976*). (Our emphasis)

Obviously! This broadcast was made on the same day the P.L.O. representative — Muhammad Ash-Sha'ir — arrived in Moscow!

What this statement reveals is the immeasurable cynicism of the Soviet bureaucrats and their hostility to the real interests of the Arab peoples which can be secured only through the voluntary and revolutionary unification of the Middle East by means of the socialist revolution. Soviet policy is the same in Palestine as it is in Lebanon. In Palestine, Kosygin demands the peaceful co-existence of the racist and theocratic state of Israel with the Arab oppressed.

In Lebanon Kosygin wants the Maronite Falange thugs and murderers to live amicably with the survivors of the many massacres such as Qarantina and Ain Rumaneh. This policy directly strengthens imperialism and Zionism



**PLO fighters**

and facilitates the anti-national and anti-working-class conspiracies of the Arab bourgeoisie. The Palestinian people's rights, we say, are not negotiable. Their legitimate aspirations can only be secured through revolutionary struggle and not diplomatic compromise.

**9** Israel is an outpost of imperialism carved out of the Arab homeland with the sword of blood and terror. Only the violent revolutionary overthrow of the Zionist ruling class by the Arab and Jewish workers and the setting up of a secular, democratic, socialist Palestine with full rights for all its citizens regardless of race or creed can and will bring peace to the Middle East. Only through the construction of a section of the ICFI in Palestine can this objective be realised. Israel and Palestine cannot co-exist.

Those who preach that they can be the enemies of socialism and the Arab revolution.

**10** The ICFI supports unconditionally the call of the P.L.O. for a campaign in the European working-class movement to force the Syrian army out of Lebanon. The revolution in Lebanon is inseparable from the struggles of the Arab peoples all over the Middle East. It is the real front-line today which will decide the future of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.

A victory for the Syrian counter-revolution would be a crushing blow which could have incalculable effects on the Arab and near-Eastern working class. Zionism would feel encouraged to move into South Lebanon and even occupy Beirut. The Jordanian King and his Saudi allies would then press for further accommodation with Zionism, precisely at the time when Zionism is being threatened internally by Arab and Jewish workers.

These are the menacing implications of Syrian victory. But this is far from assured. On the contrary, time is running out for President Assad while the forces of the Lebanese and Palestinian revolutions are growing daily and reflecting the enormous strength of the international working class. The splits within the Maronite ruling

group are clear indications that the blows struck by the Left and P.L.O. are having a telling effect.

**11** The call of Yassir Arafat for volunteers from the Arab world to fight against the Falange-Syrian axis must not go unanswered. The ICFI endorses this call and urges all workers to take industrial action to stop the transit of Syrian goods and bombard the Syrian embassies and consulates with telegrams and resolutions demanding the immediate and unconditional evacuation of Syrian forces.

We also call on the working class to demand that the Soviet government stop supporting the Syrian regime diplomatically and militarily so long as a single Syrian soldier remains on Lebanese soil.

In conclusion the ICFI declares its undying confidence in the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people and Lebanese workers who in the past have frustrated the attempts of the Ottomans, the French and the British imperialists to smash their struggle. As the P.L.O. statement of May 21, 1975, states:

'Let it be known to our masses that the Palestinian revolution having learned from its experience and bloody hardship in Jordan will know how to defend itself and its masses . . . It will not allow any conspiracy against it to succeed.'

The ICFI calls on all its sections to fight determinedly in the working class to defend the Arab Revolution and to secure the victory of the Palestinian and Lebanese working class and peasantry against the reactionary forces of the Syrian bourgeoisie. The revolutionary struggle of these fighters and comrades is our greatest inspiration to build the new revolutionary leadership.

- **Withdraw Syrian troops now!**
- **Hands off the Lebanon!**
- **Down with Stalinist diplomacy and peaceful co-existence!**
- **Victory to the PLO and the Lebanese working class!**

June 16, 1976



# ***Withdraw Syrian Troops Now!***

## ***Victory to the PLO!***

1. THE International Committee of the Fourth International salutes the heroic 21 month struggle of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the Lebanese working class against the counter-revolutionary forces of the Assad government, the Maronite right-wing and the Israeli Zionists.

The International Committee of the Fourth International honours and mourns all those thousands who fell in the fight for the cause of Palestine and the Lebanese left against the Syrians and rightists. Their struggle and ideals are shared by us and their sacrifice will remain a shining inspiration to Trotskyists everywhere in their struggle to overthrow imperialism and establish socialism.

The uncompromising resistance of the Palestine revolution has once again shown that neither diplomatic intrigues nor imperialist military adventures can defeat the will of the Palestine people to self-determination and their determination to end the partition of their homeland.

2. The International Committee of the Fourth International unconditionally supports the Palestine revolution and fights for its complete victory against its Zionist and imperialist enemies and its treacherous allies in the Arab national movement. The struggle for the victory of the Palestine revolution is an inseparable part of the worldwide socialist revolution which is powerfully expressed both in the colonial and advanced capitalist countries today.

Every victory for the Palestinian people and their vanguard — PLO — is a major blow against the imperialist efforts to turn the Middle East into a springboard for the war against the Arab people and the USSR and a powerful gain for workers in the imperialist nations.

3. Conversely, every defeat, setback and betrayal of the Palestinian revolution strengthens Zionism and imperialism and accentuates the danger of war. Peace in the Middle East — and the world — can be assured only through the triumph of the Palestine revolution and the expropriation of imperialist property and wealth throughout the Arab world.

4. For this reason the International Committee of the Fourth International calls on the international working class to give every possible support to the struggle in the Lebanon to secure the withdrawal of Syrian forces.

These forces, 24,000 strong, do not serve any progressive purpose and are aimed at the heart of Palestinian freedom and independence. They have killed and maimed thousands of Palestinian guerrillas and Lebanese workers and youth and occupied the most fertile areas of Lebanon not to prevent partition or 'separate the combatants' in the Lebanese civil war, but to effect a compromise with Zionism and the US imperialists on the backs of a broken PLO.

Under the pretext of forming a confederation of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and PLO to resist Israeli invasion threatens the reactionary Assad regime sought to force the PLO to accept a ghetto state on the West Bank under the dominance of the Jordanian Monarchy — the bitter

enemy of the PLO and the instigator of the September 1970 massacres of Palestinians.

The precondition for such a federation was to be the military control of the Lebanon and political control of the PLO by Assad's government.

5. In the early stages of this conspiracy the Syrian capitalists had the support of the most conservative section of the Arab national movement — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Jordan — who sought to curb the Arab national feeling against the US and Israel after the October 1973 war and assure the success of Kissinger's diplomacy. Following the Sinai Treaty these regimes together with Egypt wanted to conclude a lasting treaty with Israel at Geneva which would have meant the complete repudiation of Palestine's legitimate rights to self-determination and the recognition of a racist, anti-Arab regime.

6. The Syrian-Jordanian conspiracy was and still is supported by the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy, which despite periodic criticism of the Assad government, has explicitly recognised the right of the 'state of Israel to exist'. It is only because of the diplomatic and military support of the Moscow Stalinists that Assad has been able to sustain his long and bloody offensive against the PLO. Despite repeated appeals from the PLO leaders — Abu Iyyad and Arafat — the Moscow Stalinist bureaucracy has never deflected from its reactionary policy of 'peaceful coexistence' which has become a synonym for bloody repression and genocide against the Palestinians.

The International Committee of the Fourth International denounces this bureaucratic complicity as a betrayal of both the Arab peoples and the defence of the USSR and calls on the Russian working class and Communist Party members in Europe to demand that the Soviet government breaks this alliance and supports the PLO.

7. Syrian intervention was also prompted by another and more significant factor: the close alliance of the PLO and the Lebanese working class in a common defence against the Maronite ruling class of Lebanon. As the economic and political crisis worsened, the unity of the PLO and the Lebanese left was cemented in bloody battles in defence of workers' rights and against the monopoly of political power by the Maronites. The national question became indissolubly connected with the social problem facing Lebanese workers and Palestinian refugees. The question of the Syrian Jordanian confederation could be solved only to the extent that the PLO-Lebanese left alliance was disrupted and smashed.

8. The Assad government's strategy — based on a rapid offensive — has failed to achieve its main aims. In the first phase the Syrian army was severely beaten in the mountains and in the port of Sidon. Unable to defeat the PLO the Syrian army isolated sections of the PLO's main force in the mountains and besieged them in Sidon and Tripoli while the Maronite forces, defeated in January, were rebuilt and unleashed on the PLO and Lebanese left in Beirut.

Lavish supplies of heavy weapons from Syria and Israel enabled the Maronite fascists to conduct systematic massacres in N'baa, Jishr el Pasha and finally in Tel Al Zaatar, besieged for 55 days. Far from terrorising the working class and PLO these acts of barbarism have inspired an even more tenacious resistance whose highest points were reached in the September-October fighting in the mountain towns of Aley and Bahmdoun when the second Syrian and rightist offensive was stopped with heavy casualties which ran into four figures.

9. The open instigation of the Maronite fascists by the Syrian Baathists was deliberately organised not only to drive out the PLO and Lebanese Left from Beirut, Tripoli and Sidon but to enable the Zionists to gang up with the rightists in the South to attack PLO positions and nullify the 1969 Cairo agreement. As the Syrians pressed in on Aley, right wing forces, armed and trained by the Zionists and backed up by Israeli artillery, attacked PLO and Lebanese Left forces in the Marjeyoun area. Israeli incursions increased and the prospect loomed of an Israeli occupation up to the Litani river. The Israeli government, encouraged by the Syrian invasion, even let it be known that it would not tolerate any intrusion by an Arab peace force south of the Litani and were prepared to retaliate if the PLO returns to its southern bases, adding menacingly, that it would do so 'if invited by the people of the South' — clearly a reference to the Maronite fifth column.

The sudden and unexpected reconciliation between Egypt and Syria effected in Cairo will not lessen the danger of war in the South nor lessen the attempts of the Syrian Baathists to repress any new attacks against Israel. Only the complete withdrawal of Syrian troops will enable the PLO to function freely in its southern enclave. At present the Syrian army, unable to resist the tide of popular feeling is allowing the PLO and leftist troops to return to the south but there is evidence to indicate that the Syrian secret police is trying to control political activity. The demand of the Syrian peace-keeping force leaders that all heavy weapons be surrendered is a further attempt to whittle down PLO activity.

10. The uncompromising struggle of the PLO and Lebanese workers was completely vindicated. The thousands of fighters slain by rightists and Syrian soldiers had not died in vain. As the editorial of the PLO weekly journal *Falastin Al Thawra* predicted on October 5:

'The fascists, the Kfour front (Syrians), Tel Aviv and the US are trying to repeat in Lebanon the bitter experience of Palestine. Once again hostile forces want to liquidate the revolution which refuses to yield to the Zionist-American projects. In 1970, they attempted to do the same thing, but the savage massacres committed by Hussein in Jordan would not force the revolution to kneel.'

'On the contrary, our people's national steadfastness foiled the Rogers initiative . . . We in the Palestinian Revolution have decided to hold out, to fight in defence of our people's right of self-determination, and to save them from protectorate, subjugation and containment . . . Although some Arab rulers seek to turn this revolution into another agent's card at the tables of bargaining and treachery, our revolutionary decision will smash the conspiracy because our people believe in their revolution and are determined to achieve victory.' The tenacious and unyielding resistance of the PLO and the belief in ultimate victory — epitomised in this editorial — forced the Damascus traitors to make an agonising reappraisal of this invasion.

11. At the height of the Syrian offensive — Sadat on behalf of Iraq and Algeria made a secret trip to Riyadh and

urged King Khaled to exert maximum pressure on the Syrians to stop their attack or face the prospect of an Iraqi-Algerian intervention in Lebanon on the side of the PLO. To the pressure of the three Arab states was added the threat of King Khaled to withdraw financial and diplomatic aid if the Syrians did not agree to a six-sided summit in Riyadh. Assad, confronted by implacable enemies and treacherous allies, was forced to submit.

The results of the Riyadh mini-summit held immediately after masked a humiliating climbdown for Assad in Lebanon and a change of game-plan for which neither Assad nor the Saudis had originally planned. The power of the Palestinian revolution had made itself felt.

Faced with the prospect of an all-out war by Syria against the PLO after the Aley battles, the Arab bourgeoisie decided to force a settlement rather than face a Palestinian uprising outside Lebanon as a consequence of such an attack. Under the terms of the Riyadh summit the Syrian troops were allowed to stay in Lebanon — but the decisions regarding the disposition of these forces were divided between the Syrian-selected President of Lebanon Sarkis and the Arab League Military Command.

As the IPS correspondent reported on October 19: 'This means that the high stakes which Syrian President Hafiz Assad played in his ambitious Lebanese adventure have been lost, and that he has failed in his costly and dangerous undertaking . . .' The PLO did not win the war — but neither did the Assad reactionaries. Assad's aim to control the PLO and to physically control the Lebanon were thwarted.

The diplomatic and political defeat at the hands of the PLO and the Saudis forced Assad to save face by sacking his chief of staff and intelligence head — Hikmat Shehabi — a leading spokesman of Syrian policy in relation to Lebanon and PLO. But the sacking of Shehabi cannot prevent the full implications of political reverses in Lebanon creating serious difficulties for President Assad.

The Cairo summit following on the Riyadh mini-summit stabilised the last cease-fire, upheld the 1969 Cairo agreement which gives the PLO the right to launch attacks on Israel from the border area and ratified the decision of the Riyadh summit to send in a 26,000 strong peace-keeping force to separate the combatants in both leftist and rightist areas. It also authorised the force to dissolve the rightist and leftist militias while allowing the PLO to carry only light weapons.

On Tuesday Nov 9th, the advance guard of the largely Syrian 'peace-keeping force' began to carry out its task under the terms of the Riyadh and Cairo Summits.

12. The unopposed entry of Syrian troops and tanks into the Maronite strongholds while it prevents temporarily a recrudescence of civil war cannot, in any way, solve the political and economic problems which gave rise to it in the first place.

Nor will the occupation of Lebanon redress the suffering and hunger of the Palestinian refugees and Lebanese poor. The Syrian capitalists who tried to take pragmatic advantage of the Lebanese crisis are now forced to make a virtue out of harsh necessity — and protect the forces they wanted to destroy.

It is now freely admitted in Beirut that Yassir Arafat's intransigence at Riyadh forced the Arab League to stipulate that Syria change its attitude to the rightist Maronites and treat the rightist areas in the same way as the leftist-held Muslim areas.

The attitude of the PLO summed up by the IPS Press agency is one of guarded optimism. As a PLO source said: 'No we cannot trust the Syrians. But we believe the battle

is now a political one, not military. The Egyptians and Saudis told Assad to stop and he did.'

This set-back for the Arab reactionaries is inseparably linked to the defeat of Ford in the US presidential election by Carter backed by a strong pro-Zionist lobby. It means that the corner-stone of Syrian policy vis-a-vis Palestine and Israel has been destroyed. As the 'Voice of Palestine' commentary noted on November 4:

'In the Arab context, the defeat of the Ford administration is significant for two important reasons:

'First through Kissinger, Ford has acted out an elaborate charade which had a destructive effect on Arab cohesion and solidarity. The Palestinian, Lebanese and Arab peoples have paid a high price for the mesmerization of certain Arab leaders by the illusion that the President of the United States had become a friend of the Arabs . . .

'Secondly: Ford's defeat means that American moves in the region will be resumed sooner or later, but the delay which is likely in the execution of US policy will inevitably provide an opportunity for Arab nationalist and progressive forces to confront the American offensive in its new form.'

The election of Carter — as the PLO commenary points out — is no great political gain for the Palestinians. Behind the Carter regime stands a powerful pro-Zionist lobby determined to support Zionist aggression in the Mid-East and violently opposed to the Kissinger-style diplomacy. The election combining with a worsening of America's trade and investment position will signify an intensification of the war preparations of US imperialism all over the world and particularly against the colonial world. In the front rank of this battle-front stands the PLO and the Arab working class.

The International Committee of the Fourth International pledges its continued support to the struggle of the PLO and Lebanese workers against the conspiracy of the Syrian capitalists and their imperialist backers. The attempts of the Arab bourgeoisie to secure a compromise with Zionism at the expense of Palestine has not only failed but has now created the conditions for a new war with Israel.

The Israeli bourgeoisie faced with the growing opposition of an undefeated Israeli and Arab working class is trying desperately to create a new war crisis and divert the justified hatred of the workers into a blind alley of war. They want to avenge the defeat of October 1973. Such a war would begin where the last one left off — and would involve the major powers.

As the Wafa (PLO Press Agency) commented: 'More

than that, Ford has promised Israel new and fearsome weapons systems, some of them not yet in production, such as a new form of fire bomb which, in the words of a US officer, 'does interesting things to mechanical parts and people'. Carter, evidently not satisfied with that, has said that the Ford-Kissinger administration has not extended enough military aid to Israel. All this gadgetry, naturally, is not meant simply for independence day parades in Jerusalem, but rather for use against Arabs.'

To defeat this aggressive conspiracy is the responsibility of Jewish and Arab workers alike. Only by the unconditional victory of the Arab peoples against Zionism, the overthrow of the racist Israeli state and the creation of a democratic socialist Palestine can end the menace of another war. In this struggle the Arab ruling class can and will play a treacherous and cowardly role, vacillating between imperialism and the Arab workers and peasants. This is the unquestionable lesson of the Syrian invasion of Lebanon.

The International Committee of the Fourth International states categorically that the indispensable condition for the security of Lebanese workers and Palestinian refugees today is the immediate withdrawal of the 24,000 troops, tanks and weapons of the Syrian army.

The liberation of the Arab nation from imperialism and the definitive defeat of Zionism cannot be entrusted to the reactionary Arab capitalists and landlords. This task can and must be carried out by the Arab and Jewish workers under the leadership of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

The International Committee of the Fourth International calls on all its sections to give full support to the PLO and organise in every country a powerful campaign to expose the war plans of imperialism and publicise the heroic struggle of the PLO and Lebanese working class.

We appeal to the Arab and Jewish workers to unite in a common struggle to overthrow Zionism and build the independent revolutionary leadership under the banner of Lenin and Trotsky, the banner of world revolution.

- **Withdraw Syrian troops from Lebanon!**
- **Long live the Palestine Revolution!**
- **Down with Anglo-US imperialism**
- **Down with Stalinism — protector of Israel!**
- **Down with Zionism! For a Socialist democratic state of Palestine!**
- **Build the International Committee of the Fourth International in all Arab Countries and Israel!**

November 12, 1976

# VICTORY TO THE AFRICAN REVOLUTION

THE UPSURGE of the black South Africans against the racist Vorster regime is the latest development of the world revolution.

The brutal murder of at least 140 Africans in the slum township of Soweto (plus over 1,300 injured) is not a sign of the strength of reaction, but of its weakness and fear. These are official figures. Some estimates are three or four times higher.

The days of supremacy of the white racists are numbered. Soweto in 1976 is not the same as Sharpeville in 1960. Imperialism is now reeling under the blows inflicted on it all over the world, particularly in Indochina, Angola and Mozambique. Smith in Rhodesia and Vorster in South Africa know the end is near. Just as the combined strategy of the United States, the Zionists and the Arab bourgeoisie has been unable to smash the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the Arab masses in Lebanon, so the military force of the murderous South African police state will not succeed against the African workers. But the ruling class is never so ferocious as when it is cornered. That is why unarmed children have been mown down with sten guns. That is why Vorster has authorised his police to 'use any means necessary to restore order'.

In the face of such reaction, the pleas of the British Communist Party in the 'Morning Star' for South African and world churchmen to intervene are not only mealy-mouthed, but downright counter-revolutionary. The oppressed masses of the world will never be free until they break from religion and the servile message of pacifism, which means accepting the dictates of the ruling class without fighting back. The schoolchildren of Soweto are moving away from the grip of men like the Anglican Dean of Johannesburg who has pleaded with Vorster to 'Hear us, before it is too late . . . Maybe it is too late!' Too late for what? Too late to stop the revolution which both the Church and Stalinism fear more than anything else!

South Africa is a key economic and military base of world imperialism, producing some 70 per cent of the world's gold. The desperate need to try to preserve capitalist rule in the African continent is what has driven US secretary of State Henry Kissinger to seek a deal with bourgeois black African leaders like Joshua Nkomo. His talks with Vorster in West Germany this week are part of the same counter-revolutionary process.

The British working class must declare itself unequivocally on the side of the African masses and the African National Congress against the Vorster regime and all its allies, including the British Labour government. The Labour government has consistently supported the fascist Vorster. The present Prime Minister, James Callaghan, used his veto in 1974 when he was Foreign Secretary, to save South Africa from expulsion from the United Nations. He also permitted a 'goodwill' visit to South Africa by the British Navy, the biggest peacetime naval operations since the war between Britain and South Africa.

British companies like Rio Tinto Zinc are rewarded with double tax relief by the Labour government for investing in Namibia, illegally and brutally occupied by the South African regime. The British government even assisted reactionary mercenaries to get to Angola to fight with the South African-backed forces against the Angolan revolution. It now refuses to extradite those reactionary thugs who escaped the vengeance of the Angolan revolution and acts brazenly as the friend of fugitive war criminals and the enemy of the African peoples. And the recent parliamentary outburst by prominent Labour leader Robert Mellish on immigration inflamed and encouraged every racist bigot and fascist in the land.

All this completely vindicates the demand of the Workers Revolutionary Party for the working class to force this Labour government to resign, and for a general election fought on socialist policies.

- Break off all diplomatic relations with Smith and Vorster!
- Arm the African workers!
- Nationalise all British firms operating in South Africa without compensation and under workers control!
- A complete embargo on all arms sales and capital exports to South Africa!
- **Build the International Committee of the Fourth International!**



Joshua Nkomo



# STOP THE COVER-UP OF FACTS ABOUT TROTSKY'S MURDER

ON THE eve of the 36th anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky, the International Committee of the Fourth International issues a call to all socialists throughout the world:

Be on guard against a fresh campaign of lies and slander to bury the real circumstances of the GPU plot to murder Trotsky. It is being whipped up by the anti-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party of the United States. Its aim is to preserve the 36-year conspiracy of silence by Joseph Hansen and George Novack of the SWP.

Whilst they knew the facts about Trotsky's murder and interrelated crimes by the GPU, they suppressed them from their own party and their co-thinkers in other countries. Since such deliberate actions aided the GPU and nobody else, we have no hesitation in designating them as the accomplices of the GPU. By their silence they allowed some of the main organisers of the assassination to escape scot free.

The case against Hansen and Novack was made out in *Security and the Fourth International*, published in August and September 1975 from hitherto suppressed evidence located in the US Library of Congress, the US National Archives and the court records of New York State.

The case against the accomplices of the GPU is irrefutable. Certainly neither of them have even tried fact for fact to refute it.

The indictment presented against them by the International Committee on January 1, 1976, still remains unanswered more than six months later because they cannot answer it. By their continued silence, their guilt is compounded.

The charges outlined in the indictment state:

1. *Joseph Hansen has suppressed from the Trotskyist movement for 35 years details of his personal contact with a GPU agent known as 'John' in New York in 1938. This contact was uncovered by the International Committee in 1975 in previously unpublished US State Department records in Washington DC. The evidence showed that 'John' was one of the aliases used by Dr Gregory Rabinowitz, the GPU chief who masterminded operations in the United States aimed at murdering Trotsky.*
2. *Hansen and Novack have suppressed sworn testimony of Thomas L Black before a US Senate committee in 1956. Black testified that GPU agents were installed in Trotsky's household at Coyoacan, Mexico. Hansen, who was ostensibly in charge of Trotsky's security, never conducted an investigation to discover the identity of these agents.*
3. *Hansen and Novack continue to this day to defend GPU agent Sylvia Franklin as an 'exemplary comrade'. They both know that she used her position as the late James P Cannon's most private personal secretary to obtain letters, minutes and internal documents for the GPU. They defend her completely although the International Committee has produced evidence showing that a New York grand jury named her as an unindicted co-conspirator with Laurenti Beria in a Soviet spy trial in the US in November 1960.*
4. *Hansen has set out to disguise and minimise the GPU spy role of Floyd Cleveland Miller. He entered the SWP in the*

*late 1930s as an undercover Stalinist agent where he climbed to a top position in the party's seamen's faction. He was able to report to the GPU on the movement of Trotskyist seamen during the war.*

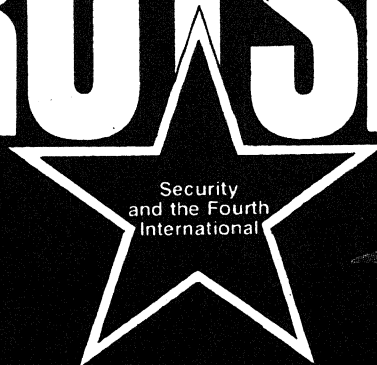
5. *Hansen and Novack vehemently oppose any investigation of the role of Robert Sheldon Harte, the young guard sent down to Mexico by the SWP headquarters in April 1940. It was Harte who opened the gate to the Stalinist murder squad who almost killed Trotsky and his family on May 24, 1940.*
6. *Hansen and Novack refuse to explain how Stalin's top anti-Trotskyist agent, Mark Zborowski, was brought from war-torn France to the United States in 1941. Zborowski was brought over principally with Novack's help, even though his activities in the French Trotskyist movement were clouded with suspicion. Trotsky was warned about Zborowski and he at once fought to establish his political bona fides. But when all the evidence emerged from Congressional and court testimony about his GPU spy role, Hansen and Novack did absolutely nothing to expose him — apart from one halfhearted piece in the weekly *Militant* (April 6, 1956) and a miniscule footnote in one book. Zborowski masterminded the murder of Trotsky's son Leon Sedov and the assassination of Trotsky's secretaries Rudolf Klement and Erwin Wolf and the NKVD defector Ignace Reiss. Hansen has never lifted a finger to unmask the activities of Zborowski although all the information was on his doorstep. He dismisses the International Committee's revelations as 'a dry well'. (International Press, November 24, 1975.)*
7. *Hansen and Novack have refused to reply to the security questions raised by Trotsky's guard Harold Robins in his open letter to the SWP national committee (December 23, 1975). Because they have no answer to this charge sheet, Hansen and Novack are desperately trying to create a diversion.*

By the end of this month they have promised a list of signatures defending their conspiracy of silence and slandering the International Committee of the Fourth International. The signatures are the fruits of the work of one 'Mr Benson' who has been scouring the continents dredging up the worst anti-Trotskyist, anti-communist and renegade elements. Many have signed — like Ken Coates of the Bertrand Russell 'Peace' Foundation, for example — without even reading the scrupulously researched material.

There is a compulsive frenzy about this new turn in the slander campaign. It has definite social origins in the raging crisis of world imperialism and the forward march of the international working class. At this historic juncture Pabloite revisionism, in all its many splinter groups, is liquidating and preparing to shed the last vestiges of its lip service to Trotskyism. Behind the smokescreen of the slander campaign against the International Committee they are preparing to join the forces of the counter-revolution.

During the 1976 Democratic Convention at Madison Square Garden, Hansen's Socialist Workers Party handed

# HOW THE GPU MURDERED TROTSKY



'How the GPU Murdered Trotsky' is a unique historical document brilliantly presented in three colours in magazine format.

The book was compiled by the International Committee of the Fourth International following a six-month investigation of the circumstances surrounding the assassination of Leon Trotsky, Lenin's co-leader of the Russian Revolution and founder of the Red army.

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In tracing the history of murder, provocation

and disruption by Stalin's undercover agents inside the Trotskyist movement, the book unearths their accomplices — Joseph Hansen and George Novack of the Socialist Workers Party (USA) who have conducted a 36-year conspiracy of silence to shield known GPU agents, cover up their crimes and suppress the truth from coming out.

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out leaflets headed, 'Hear the Socialist Alternative'. It invited delegates to come to the SWP's bookshop — described as a 'Socialist Open House' — where they could 'stop in and browse through the bookstore and talk with the socialist candidates'.

This appeal was addressed to an imperialist, bourgeois party whose reactionary delegates included such figures as Governor George Wallace and Mayor Richard Daley. Having lobbied presidential candidate Jimmy Carter and his racist, big business entourage, the SWP has no choice but logically to pursue this policy and go to Kansas City and lobby delegates to the other bourgeois party, the Republicans. Here they can talk about 'socialist alternatives' to Ronald Reagan, Barry Goldwater, the Rockefellers and ex-President Nixon's backer Bebe Rebozo.

The 'Democratic orientation' is the abandonment of the struggle for a US labour party and any struggle to build independent revolutionary leadership in the working class.

Since the moment of its origins in the United States, the Trotskyist movement has rightly condemned the Stalinists' attempts to subordinate the working class to the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties. This has been flagrantly thrown overboard. Licking up to the bourgeoisie at Madison Square Garden is absolutely in line with Hansen's policy of calling Federal troops into Boston.

In western Europe, Hansen's bedfellows in the Ernest Mandel groups are plotting the same counter-revolutionary course. Mandel, who is soon to become Professor of Economics at Cambridge University, is seeking a unity with the French Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU). The PSU is a rump conglomeration of centrists and renegades like Yvan Craipeau who were thrown out of the Trotskyist movement just after the war for their right-wing abandonment of Trotskyism.

The merger will bring the Mandelites back into personal alliance with the oldest political liquidator of them all, Michel Pablo (Raptis). What of the Fourth International to which Mandel fraudulently claims allegiance? 'What difference do labels make? If in the political arena we encountered political forces which agreed with our strategic and tactical orientation and which were repulsed only by the historical reference and the name, we would get rid of it in 24 hours.' (*Politique Hebdo*, June 10-16, 1976).

This political degeneration and liquidation is the culminating point of a process which was set in motion at the time of the Pabloite revisionist 'reunification' in 1963. It was not carried out, as they claimed, to 'strengthen' Trotskyism, but to pile on the confusion, stifle the building of revolutionary parties and prepare the conditions for today's blatant betrayals. They have clung together on only one basis — to fight the International Committee of the Fourth International as the only independent revolutionary force leading the struggle to develop Trotskyism.

The struggle for the continuity of this history since 1953 belongs to the International Committee of the Fourth International. It can be proven from the record. On March 14, 1960, Comrade Gerry Healy, then national secretary of the Socialist Labour League, predecessor of the Workers Revolutionary Party, wrote to Hansen. (This was before

the split with Hansen in 1963.) Healy's letter was prompted by publication of Isaac Don Levine's book: 'The Mind of an Assassin', which gave details of the GPU spy role of Professor Mark Zborowski, known in the Trotskyist movement as Etienne.

He infiltrated the Trotskyist headquarters in Paris where he masterminded the assassination of Trotsky's son, Leon Sedov, Trotsky's secretaries, Erwin Wolf and Rudolf Klement, and the NKVD defector from Stalinism, Ignace Reiss. Referring to Levine's revelations, Healy wrote:

'There is so much that has to be explained and it requires very full treatment by us. I think, Joe, we need a full discussion on the whole matter and I will be glad of your observations.'

'Is Levine right on the question of Etienne? If he is, then it is necessary for us in the not-too-distant future to have a very real examination of the whole international ramifications of the Trotskyist movement.'

'I say this without any panic whatsoever, but there are things which take place which cannot be explained.'

This letter, along with a letter to Hansen on the same subject written by the late James P. Cannon, were subsequently stolen by the FBI from the SWP's 'open house'. They turned up earlier this year when the SWP took action to have other correspondence returned.

In spite of Healy's explicit and deliberate intervention Hansen did nothing to launch an investigation into Stalin's top anti-Trotskyist agent who was living on his doorstep. On the contrary, he continued his conspiracy against the truth emerging.

When the International Committee published its findings on Zborowski in August and September 1975 in 'Security and the Fourth International' Hansen said they were a 'dry well'. (*Intercontinental Press*, November 24, 1975).

When Hansen and Novack produce their new slander, the lines of political demarcation will be drawn sharper than ever before. It will make public the unbridgeable gulf between the anti-Trotskyists and refugees from the class struggle in the swamp of Pabloite revisionism, and the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Not all the signatures drummed up by 'Mr Benson' at the Bertrand Russell 'Peace' Foundation, the Institute for Workers' Control and the Democratic convention can stop the building of the world party of socialist revolution. The GPU's immense slander-machine could not stop Trotsky and it won't stop the International Committee which fights in his footsteps.

The International Committee must zealously accept the historical responsibility to press the campaign in every country to unmask the accomplices of the GPU and build revolutionary parties based on the history, traditions and principles of Trotsky's Fourth International.

We re-present our indictment of Hansen and Novack. We accuse them of being accomplices of the GPU. In shielding known GPU agents, in suppressing evidence of their crimes, in throttling any attempt at an investigation of GPU activities, they aided and abetted the GPU. We re-submit our call for an international commission of inquiry along the lines of the Dewey Commission to which the International Committee will submit its evidence and to which Hansen and Novack can make their answers.

July 17, 1976

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