

Summer 1958

144

A-13

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVIEW

Really Beat?

Why This Generation Acts That Way

THE MEANING OF DE GAULLE

What Price Depression?

"Fuera Nixon!"

Challenge of Soviet Education

Trotsky on National Question



**50
CENTS**

A Milestone

After a year of Los Angeles smog, we have moved back to the oily soot that continually sifts into the caves of the Manhattan cliff dwellers. Whatever the differences between the two cities, we have become firmly convinced that both could stand a good socialist house cleaning.

In New York, as many of our readers already know, such a move is on foot, the first target being Albany. Along with other rooters for socialist unity, we thoroughly enjoyed the three-day gathering in June at the Great Northern Hotel where the Democratic-Republican bipartisan gang were given notice of battle in the coming election.

Unity against the political machines of Big Business was the keynote at the conference. This was sounded the first evening, June 13, by Vincent Hallinan, the Presidential candidate of the Progressive party in 1952, who flew in from San Francisco. Hallinan's speech was a vigorous indictment of the Democratic and Republican parties and a rousing appeal for revival of the Debs tradition of opposing the two parties of private profit and public plunder.

Of special interest was Hallinan's appeal for unity behind such a program among all those who consider themselves socialists. Citing his experience as Campaign Manager for Dr. Holland Roberts in that educator's recent effort in the California primaries, he warned that some of the leaders of the Communist party could be expected to go so far in opposing the announced aims of the United Independent-Socialist Conference as to try to sink the enterprise.

The warning created quite a stir inasmuch as top leaders of the Communist party were present as well as what was probably a maximum number of functioning Communist party members in the New York area.

Although the Communist party leaders had refused to participate in organizing the Conference, showing up only occasionally as observers at the preliminary meetings, and although they had attacked the entire project in the columns of the *Worker*, a CP spokesman called Hallinan's warning "vicious," "a smear," and "hitting below the belt."

The Presiding Committee, headed by John T. McManus of the *National Guardian*, disclaimed responsibility for Hallinan's remarks on this subject, and Murry Weiss, speaking for the Socialist Workers party, pleaded with the Communist party representatives to remain in the Conference, participate in the discussion and join in the effort to reach agreement on a platform and slate.

However, the top CP representatives chose to ignore these guarantees of full protection of their democratic rights and walked out the next morning utilizing Hallinan's criticism as their pretext. Among the delegates we talked with it was the general opinion that the CP leaders intended to walk out any way as soon as they saw they were in a minority and that if they hadn't used this pretext to split the Conference they would have found a different one.

A highly encouraging development, however, was the decision of most of the members of the Communist party to stay and participate in the work. They made excellent contributions to the lively and fruitful discussion that continued Saturday and Sunday. Together with former members of the American Labor party, adherents of the Socialist Workers party, independents of many shadings, and the Young Socialist Alliance, they voted for the draft of the socialist election platform submitted by the Platform Committee; and, putting their loyalty to the spirit of socialist unity above narrower considerations, they voted in principle after

To Our Readers

We have increased the size of this issue of the *International Socialist Review* to 48 pages. To help cover the increased costs, we raised the price to 50 cents — as those who buy the magazine on the newsstands probably noticed.

Our subscribers, of course, get this issue at no extra charge. That's one of the advantages of having a subscription to the ISR.

The money for the extra pages came from supporters who believe that a Marxist theoretical magazine is especially important for the development of the socialist movement in America and who want to see the ISR grow in size and appear more frequently. We hope with them that the ISR can continue down the road to a monthly.

If you would like to see the ISR expand, please send in your contribution to help out.

a day's debate for the full slate of candidates which had been opposed by the CP leadership.

Of the many heartening things about the Conference, one of the main was the demonstration of the capacity of socialists and independents, holding such variegated and even opposing views on important issues, to subordinate their differences for the sake of a socialist electoral campaign. Even more important, in our opinion, was the demonstration of the capacity of the gathering to give free expression to the differing views of the delegates and to listen with attention and interest to what they had to say.

The size of the Conference was impressive. John T. McManus, chairing the final session, announced that the registration from all over the state was more than 700 and that of these more than 500 had attended. Reports since then indicate that participation would have been even greater had hopes been higher in the radical public for a successful outcome.

The Conference was highly representative, the only currents missing being the Socialist Labor Party, which makes it a principle to reject joint action, and the Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation which, like the top leadership of the Communist party, favors working for Democratic candidates who have been endorsed by union officials.

Because of its representative character, the Conference was regarded by the majority of the American radical movement, from what we have observed, as a kind of pilot operation whose outcome could set a pattern for the whole country. We hope that this will prove to be an accurate estimate and that the Conference will finally be recorded in the history books as a decisive turning point in the development of the socialist movement in the United States.

Opportunity Knocks for Borrowers

Sylvia Porter, "distinguished for her remarkable ability to explain complex economic facts and trends in relation to the household," offers a number of useful suggestions in the June 2 *Life* for anyone interested in doing something about the recession.

These include buying a farm near a city, investing in some stocks, setting up a "nest egg in dollars in the bank," bargain-hunting for "autos, appliances, house furnishings and the like," and buying or building a home.

The most effective do-it-yourself project of all, however, is to borrow money.

"I put this one first because there is absolutely no doubt that this is the bor-

rower's era. Since the Federal Reserve Board abandoned its tight money policy in mid-November 1957, sensational changes have occurred in the level of borrowing rates and in America's money markets — all in favor of the borrower of cash. After reaching the highest marks in more than a quarter-century last fall, interest rates have gone into one of the most rapid slides on record. After a painfully prolonged cycle of money scarcity, ample funds are once again available.

"Thus, if you — a businessman, home builder, home buyer, individual consumer — expect to need or want money for important projects in this period, don't miss your opportunity."

Editorial

The Meaning of De Gaulle

ON June 1, the same infamous day that the deputies of the National Assembly abdicated as the democratically elected representatives of the people and made Gen. Charles de Gaulle dictator of France, the *New York Times* described the authoritarian figure "who now bestrides the French scene" as "aloof, inscrutable, mystical . . ." No one could tell what he might portend.

By the following Sunday, June 8, the same influential paper had decided that de Gaulle was no longer a mystery. "What happened can and should be looked upon as proof of the profoundly democratic basis and structure of France, which has triumphed in one of the gravest crises of French history." In the opinion of the *Times* "a moderate, democratic solution has been found, holding good promise for the future."

Yet, to draw a rough American analogy to what happened, we should have to imagine an armed insurrection in the South, an insurrection headed by top generals and backed by racist Bourbons who demand that a General MacArthur, who is in on the plot, be called out of "retirement" and made dictator; moreover, that if their ultimatum is not met forthwith they will start civil war. To show that they mean what they say about using force and violence to overthrow the government, their paratroopers begin seizing cities on the road to Washington, while high naval officials in charge of American battleships openly join the subversive generals.

We should have to imagine further a Congress that agrees to the ultimatums of the fascist-minded insurrectionists and their "aloof" hero, including an ultimatum that he be empowered to scrap the Constitution and write a "new one" in accordance with his "mystical" feeling that "It was I who personified legitimacy." Finally, we should have to imagine Senators and Representatives agreeing to take a "vacation" from Washington until the dictator has had time to reconstitute the government and the armed forces so that they fit in with his "inscrutable" political views. Prominent Democrats and Republicans and even labor leaders offer to

help the General by serving as dummies in a Cabinet while he puts together a "strong" anti-labor government. All this would then be sympathetically described by the most authoritative propagandists of American capitalism as "a moderate, democratic solution . . . holding good promise for the future . . ."

If de Gaulle's accession to power is the "moderate" beginning of totalitarian rule in France, it does not take great perspicacity to forecast what extremes the next stages can bring—should the working class fail to reverse the process. Fearful examples have already been provided in various countries touching the frontiers of France.

It would be a gross error, of course, to think that all is lost, that the working-class political parties and labor organizations have already been decisively defeated and that fascism is entrenched in France. However, the danger of making the opposite error seems at present to be greater. This is to conclude that nothing fundamental or far-reaching has occurred. American partisans of de Gaulle, for instance, argue that all that is involved is the "reform" of an "unworkable" French-type democracy. The General's real aim, they aver, is nothing more sinister than to equip France's "weak" government with a "strong executive" along "American lines." And we can trust a patriot like de Gaulle, who—at the age of 67—has said that he has no ambition to be a dictator.

This reasonable-sounding propaganda serves a most reactionary political purpose.

The subversive conspiracy that brought de Gaulle to power ended the Fourth Republic. It threatened France with civil war. It brought jubilant fascists into the streets. Every French worker mindful of the fate of the Italian, German and Spanish labor movements could not but feel the deepest alarm. Shouldn't labor mobilize at once to save democracy and crush the totalitarian threat in the egg? On May 28, an estimated 500,000 workers demonstrated in Paris.

De Gaulle's first acts in office aimed at allaying the thoroughly justified alarm of the workers. Before his

accession he had praised the "patriotism" of the fascist-minded generals and used their subversive armed insurrection to frighten the Assembly into handing him dictatorial powers; these powers won, he demonstratively shifted stance. To the hearty applause of his well-wishers, he appointed a fifteen-man "advisory" Cabinet, magisterially naming spokesmen from the various political parties except the outright fascists and the Communist party; he similarly designated a "top" advisory four-man Ministerial Council that included Social Democratic chieftain Guy Mollet; and he made a triumphal three-day circuit of Algeria during which he put the brake on the subversive generals who had brought down the Fourth Republic and lifted de Gaulle to power. In the face of "towering" gestures like that how can anyone retain the unbecoming suspicion that the General has designs on the labor movement? Let everyone relax, especially the working class. As Robert C. Doty observed in a June 7 dispatch from Paris to the *New York Times*, de Gaulle the first week in office displayed "surprising and hitherto unsuspected political skill . . ."

It is really not so surprising. The new regime requires time to consolidate its position, time to prepare the repressive apparatus, time to whittle away at those working-class organizations capable of offering resistance.

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Contents

A MILESTONE	66
EDITORIAL:	
The Meaning of De Gaulle	67
WHAT PRICE DEPRESSION?by Arne Swabeck	73
"FUERA NIXON!"by Theodore Edwards	79
THE PROGRESS OF WORLD SOCIALISM	
by William F. Warde	83
REALLY BEAT?by Evelyn Sell	88
THE DEEP ROOTS OF INFLATION	
by Albert Phillips	93
ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION by Leon Trotsky	99
THE WALL BULLETINS SPEAK	103
BOOKS:	
The Challenge of Soviet Education	
by Hilde Macleod	105
For Political Ornithologists	by W. F. W. 106
The First Four Congresses	by Joseph Hansen 107
Dubinsky as Hero	by F. J. Wells 108
Has the Machine Outstripped Us?	
by Robert Chester	109
The Paradox of Colombia	by John Liang 109
Rise of the Africans	by Lois Saunders 110

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WRITING from Paris May 31, *New York Times* correspondent Henry Giniger observed: "The Presidential democracy taken for granted in the United States has only one precedent in France — that instituted by Louis Napoleon — but it is a precedent associated with the death of a republic and of democracy itself."

Another journalist in Paris, David Schoenbrun, noted similarly in the June 8 *New York Times Magazine* that "The manner in which Louis Napoleon came to power is in some ways reminiscent of General de Gaulle's return. General de Gaulle himself has many of the characteristics of Prince Louis Napoleon . . ."

These are accurate observations. Anyone who cares to check them need only read Karl Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Although written in 1852, the book has startling application to the current French events. The top conspirators who worked out de Gaulle's tactics evidently studied the rise to power of the nineteenth-century dictator with some profit even in details. We note, for instance, that Louis Bonaparte on seizing power published a false document, "according to which a number of influential parliamentarians had grouped themselves around him as advisers." The de Gaullists were able to improve somewhat on this fraud, finding parliamentarians actually willing to group themselves around the dictator in a dummy Cabinet of advisers.

More important than such parallels, instructive as they are, is the indication the historic analogy gives about the character of the new regime. The rule of Louis Bonaparte from his coup d'état December 2, 1851, until his fall September 4, 1870, after he brought France to ignominious defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, has become recognized as the prototype of an increasingly common kind of capitalist governmental system. Its main features are the substitution of government by personal decree for government through democratic forms, the balancing of the government between antagonistic class forces, the maintenance of capitalist domination through suppression of the labor movement, the utilization of reactionary, declassed petty-bourgeois elements as an instrument of repression in addition to the police and regular army. This type of rule has become known as *Bonapartism*.

The most significant contributions to the study of Bonapartism were made by Leon Trotsky in the last decades of his life as he observed different forms of it in Italy, Germany, Austria, Spain and the exceptionally complex variant in the Soviet Union. Trotsky called attention to a general trend in its evolution. In the time of the first Napoleon, it played a relatively progressive role as the armies of revolutionary France, under command of the military genius, swept the worst remnants of feudalism from the European continent. By the time of Louis Bonaparte it was already decidedly reactionary. Emperor Napoleon III, as he dubbed himself, was regarded much the way Mussolini and Hitler were three-quarters of a century later. In our epoch, Bonapartism is an outstanding symptom of the death agony of the capitalist system, one of the mortal threats to civilization.

Bonapartism tends to develop through definite stages, moving in our day toward its most malignant form, *fascism*. Fascism organizes the petty bourgeoisie into counter-revolutionary legions and turns them against the working class to pulverize its organizations. Indeed, as we saw in Germany, the tendency is to exterminate whole sections of the population. A Bonaparte, such as de Gaulle, can attempt to smash the working class by use of military force; but even if this succeeds, the proletarian defeat is not so definitive as at the hands of fascism. The middle-class battering ram has neither been used nor shaped; the middle class therefore still remains relatively open to working-class leadership at the first signs of recovery from the military blow. Moreover, in our day the military-police solution is quite hazardous, relying as it does on the traditional peasant composition of the armed forces and the consequent traditional peasant conservatism and antipathy to the city proletariat. Modern armies have a higher proletarian composition than formerly and the peasant is no longer the same—the era of radio and TV has helped to end his former isolation, and the consequences of modern war have broken his once-powerful parochialism. These facts are known by the political strategists of monopoly capital. They are therefore hesitant about plunging the country into civil war *prematurely*; i.e., before the fascist horde has been recruited, organized and tested. The Bonaparte of today, consequently, tries to keep the polarizing class forces in some kind of balance, no matter how precarious, while the fascist recruiting and drilling goes on.

With these considerations in mind, we are better able to interpret de Gaulle's rise to power. His accession marks a qualitative turning point—the end of capitalist democracy in France, the beginning of totalitarianism. This holds true no matter what delays may occur in liquidating the more important conquests of democracy and no matter how moderate may be the opening period of decree rule. Unless the French workers call a halt to the Bonapartist development by vigorously pressing for the alternative of socialism, fascism will sweep France.

HOW could the danger of fascism arise in France after the nightmare experiences in Italy, Germany and Spain? Didn't the Allies fight World War II to make the world safe for democracy? Isn't France one of the freedom-loving countries? Don't the French people enjoy one of the oldest traditions of democracy?

Research into de Gaulle's ego, while undoubtedly of psychiatric interest, can scarcely provide us with satisfying answers to such questions, for whatever we might uncover would say little or nothing about the economic, social and political forces behind his rise to power. These forces in 1958 are obviously different from those that sent the same megalomaniac into retirement on January 21, 1946.

The most general condition for the rise of totalitarianism, of course, is the crumbling of the French empire as one of the consequences of World War II. Syria and Lebanon went. Also, Tunisia and Morocco. A ghastly seven-year war to drag Indochina back from freedom

and independence ended in a withering defeat. The Algerian people have successfully stood off the world's fourth-largest army for four years. A joint conspiracy with Great Britain and Israel to seize the Suez Canal from Egypt by military force ended in a miserable debacle. Bled by thirteen years of exhausting colonial wars following the devastation of World War II, imperialist France is obviously declining to the level of Italy and Spain as a world power. The shrinking of the empire offers us a partial explanation for the attractiveness of de Gaulle's expansive ego to the militarists, colons, fascists and other components of the Bonapartist rabble who find in Napoleonic dreams a convenient escape from reality.

The postwar upsurge of the colonial peoples thus had direct repercussions of enormous proportions on the economic structure and international position of France. These are now beginning to become manifest in full force in the political arena.

The colonial revolution is not the only external force that has affected France's economy and power. Increasing American domination of the world market has hit French capitalism from a different direction. This began with the emergence of the United States from World War I as the earth's dominant power, a process that reached its culmination in World War II.

America's influence on the domestic politics of France has been most pernicious. While smothering French capitalism as a world power, American monopoly capital has assiduously prevented its decent burial. At the close of World War II, the road out for France clearly pointed to a planned economy which would have made possible fruitful economic collaboration between industrialized France and the former colonies. The French workers felt this, and in a series of mighty upsurges sought to put a socialist government in power that would take this road.

Two forces came to the rescue of French capitalism. One was the leadership of the workers themselves; the other was American imperialism.

The Marshal Plan pumped billions of dollars into the prostrate economy while the bellicose Truman "Doctrine" revived political reaction. The Communist party leaders, who had taken posts in the capitalist government to help it through the difficult days at the close of the war, were bounced out as soon as the revolutionary tide receded. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a part of the greatest interlocking military alliance our globe has seen, then brought France into the armaments structure being forged for World War III.

A few illustrative facts will indicate America's role in these years. The U.S. Treasury has been tapped in the past 13 years for a total of \$11 billion in loans and gifts to France. A good part was used to help finance the colonial wars—\$1,619,000,000 going down the rat hole in Indochina alone. Approximately 50 American-manned military bases have been set up in France, including six air bases from which planes loaded with H-Bombs can take off for the Soviet Union. Oil pipelines for military purposes link Bordeaux and St. Nazaire to Metz and the German border. The bases and other military installations cost something like \$1½

billion. Somewhere around 40,000 to 50,000 U.S. troops are stationed in France, as is the NATO "supreme command." Allied military specialists consider France to be the "keystone in the complex structure of command and support that has been evolved since 1949" in Europe. France, in short, has been converted into one of the spearheads pointed at the Soviet bloc.

The extreme emphasis in foreign policy on the preparations for World War III complemented the growth of reaction inside America, and both trends encouraged the worst tendencies in France, helping to pave the way for de Gaulle's return in conditions favorable to totalitarianism.

Finally, the current depression in the United States, with its threat of catastrophic consequences to the French economy, has had its impact on the thinking of French Big Business although the full repercussions of the decline in America are yet to be felt in France. The demand for a "strong government" emanating from France's economic royalists echoes the cries of their forbears in 1850-51. Noting the "bourgeois clamour" at that time, Marx observed: "It was all the more unparadonable that France should be 'without an administration,' seeing that a widespread commercial crisis seemed imminent, and likely to favour the growth of socialism in the towns, just as the ruinously low price of grain did in the country districts."

That the meaning of de Gaulle is well understood in American ruling circles is succinctly indicated in the June 6 *U.S. News & World Report*. "Now, to win the financial support of the Western world for the French franc and for the French economy," says this reactionary magazine, "the Government born of the revolution [counter-revolution is meant] must use its new-found strength to force Frenchmen to live within their means. Prices and wages must be controlled to check inflation. Strikes, often sparked by Communists [and more often sparked by rising living costs], must be halted. More taxes must be collected from Frenchmen. Imports must be curbed sharply even at the cost of slowing down production." In brief, the bankruptcy of French capitalism must be taken out of the hides of the working people.

We can appreciate the enthusiasm of the editors when they exclaim: "For the U.S., a strong and anti-Communist French Government is more than welcome. President Eisenhower last week, asked about his past relations with De Gaulle, said that in past associations he had 'liked him.'"

THE death of the Fourth Republic called attention once more to the cancerous condition of bourgeois democracy in the Western capitalist nations. The decay of democracy in the United States since the end of World War II has been evident in the erosion of Constitutional rights and freedoms, the witch-hunt that developed into the ominous rise of McCarthyism, and the increasing weight in government and politics of the military caste as represented by such figures as MacArthur and Eisenhower. The working people the world over have now been offered another object lesson in how bourgeois

democracy in this period helps pave the way for totalitarianism.

When the military caste in Algeria raised the skull and crossbones on May 13, the bourgeois democrats in parliament responded by setting up their own version of a "strong government," the one headed by Pflimlin. The only force capable of defending France's democratic institutions against the military attack, already openly launched, was the working people. And the obvious way to answer the generals was to arm the people as in the early days of the bourgeoisie when the right of every citizen to bear arms was universally recognized as the first, and, in some situations, the most important of democratic rights. But the Pflimlin government acted to block such a turn of events.

Instead of calling on the people to rise in defense of democracy, including the defense of the legally elected government; instead of utilizing the powers of government to help organize this nation-wide defense, these latter-day representatives of the capitalist class passed dictatorial "emergency" measures of the kind sought by de Gaulle. They even went further, anticipating a later stage of de Gaulle's regime, by including a heavy censorship. At the same time, they continued to send money and supplies to the insurrectionists! These measures were designed to placate, if not facilitate, the uprising on the one hand; while on the other keeping the working class with its titanic force and its socialist inclinations from moving into the arena of struggle.

As the generals threatened Paris with an invasion of paratroopers, the parliamentarians rallied behind Pflimlin, giving him a four to one majority vote of confidence. The champion of bourgeois democracy resigned at once in favor of de Gaulle, as if the vote he had received were a mandate to sell out to the enemy. Coty, the President of the Republic, acting like a de Gaullist conspirator, took similar action, threatening to resign if the Assembly did not summarily abdicate the responsibility given it by the voters of defending democracy. In brief, the bourgeois democrats deliberately sabotaged and blocked the defense of democracy, calculatingly turned power over to the totalitarian general, and, after he was installed, either went on "vacation" or joined the dictatorial regime to help stabilize it as rapidly as possible. Bourgeois democracy, to use Hegelian terminology, had turned into its opposite.

One of the main lessons to be drawn from this is the illusory character of the belief that today's representatives of the capitalist class can be relied upon to defend the great democratic conquests won in the bourgeois revolutions that overthrew feudalism. Genuine defenders of these conquests must now be sought in other sections of the population.

HOW did the Socialist party and the Communist party, the two largest political parties of the French working class, measure up to this task?

On October 21, 1945, when Deputies were elected to a Constituent Assembly, the Communist party won 5,005,000 votes, the Socialists 4,561,000. On the opposite side the Roman Catholics got 4,780,000. The old con-

servative and reactionary parties had virtually disappeared, and along with them the so-called "center" parties. As Schoenbrun, whom we have already quoted, puts it, ". . . the Fourth Republic was unbalanced: a shrivelled right wing, a shrunken middle, and a swollen left wing." On top of this, the French people were armed, in a radical mood after their difficult struggle against the Nazi conquerors and the quisling Petain regime; and the people, headed by the working class, exercised public power through committees that had come out of the underground.

However, instead of establishing a Workers and Farmers Government, for which they had received a clear mandate, the Socialist and Communist leaderships sought to reestablish the old capitalist government. The Social Democratic leadership of the Socialist party did this because, like the Social Democracy in general, it had long been corrupted by the capitalist class. The Stalinist leadership of the Communist party did it because it was already applying what Moscow now calls the policy of "peaceful coexistence"; that is, maintenance of the status quo. In the domestic politics of France, as in the U.S., this signifies maintenance of capitalist rule.

The SP and CP leaders took prominent posts in de Gaulle's provisional government, the better, as "responsible" statesmen, to put over the "no strike" and speed-up policy needed to gain the stepped-up production they called for from the working class. Thus was lost the great opportunity after World War II of establishing socialism in France.

The eventual pay-off was de Gaulle's return to power. In the current crisis the SP and CP leaders gave a repeat performance of the statesmanship they displayed after the fall of the Petain regime. The Social Democracy reached a new abyss, if that is possible, in the vote that half of its deputies cast in the Assembly for de Gaulle. The Social Democratic chieftain, Guy Mollet, capped his previous conduct of the "dirty war" against the Algerian people by gratefully accepting a post in de Gaulle's "advisory" Cabinet. (The CP deputies, let it be noted, on March 12, 1956, cast their votes for "full powers" to Guy Mollet to carry on the war against the Algerian people; and when draftees demonstrated against the war throughout France in April-May 1956, the CP leadership did nothing but denounce the "provocateurs" who tried to stop the movement of troops at Grenoble and Rouen. The CP was hoping that the new Mollet government would respond to the Kremlin's "peaceful coexistence" overtures.)

The role of the CP leadership was even more significant than that of the SP in bringing the Bonapartist dictatorship to power. Since the end of the war, the majority of the workers, especially the key sectors, have followed, not the Socialist, but the Communist party. In the CGT, France's most powerful trade-union federation, the Communist candidates for union office regularly get 60% to 70% of the vote. Duclos and the other CP leaders have long had the possibility, if they chose to exercise it, of setting forces into motion that could have decisively defeated the Algerian generals and their

candidate for dictator, thus safeguarding French democracy. However, in pursuit of "peaceful coexistence" with French Big Business and its politicians, they trusted the bourgeois democrats to do the job. Still worse, through every means at their disposal they tried to influence the workers to put their trust in the Stevensons and Harrimans of France.

This harsh judgment may not seem credible to people who visualize the Communist party as essentially revolutionary, apart from whatever mistakes it may have made from time to time. The evidence, however, does not fit in with this generous desire to see the best in any organization that claims to speak officially in the interests of the Soviet Union.

On May 13, the day of the uprising in Algeria, the Assembly voted on the installation of Pflimlin as Premier. In view of his statement that he would not "yield" to the generals, the CP deputies declared that while they would not vote for him they had "unanimously decided to voluntarily abstain, thus offering the government the opportunity to establish itself." The CP leadership counted on the "firmness" of the Assembly and Pflimlin in face of an armed uprising having fascist overtones.

Pflimlin promptly banned a workers rally May 14 at the Cirque d'Hiver. The CP leadership acquiesced in the ban. Not only that. As a token of their desire for all around "peaceful coexistence," they sent emissaries to help disperse those who might defy the ban.

When de Gaulle encouraged the rebellious generals May 15, *L'Humanité* put out a special edition calling for protests to — Coty! "Multiply the protests to the President of the Republic by the thousands and tens of thousands to save the Republic," said these deployers of battalions of postcards.

On May 16 the CP deputies voted for the dictatorial "emergency" powers demanded by Pflimlin — on account for de Gaulle. Fajon, editor of *L'Humanité* and a member of the CP Political Bureau said May 17: ". . . yesterday was a good day. When de Gaulle and his accomplices launched their assault against the Republic four days ago, they thought they would win without resistance. Their assault failed. It was democracy that won the first big victory."

Commenting on de Gaulle's well-staged May 19 press interview, which was a calculated step forward in his bid for power, the CP Political Bureau declared: "Victories have been won. After five days, fascism has been put in check."

On May 20 Pflimlin tried to give a cover of legality to the subversive uprising in Algeria by conferring special powers on General Salan. The CP deputies voted for this. *L'Humanité* next day carried an editorial signed by Pierre Courtade boasting that through this move the Republic "has not only gained time . . . but has strengthened itself." This theme was repeated in the May 22 issue and Fajon went even further May 23: "Thus the threat has receded."

Two days later, the Algerian generals staged an armed uprising in Corsica. The CP leadership thereupon ventured a timid criticism of the Pflimlin government as

not "energetic" enough in its defense of the Republic, as failing to turn toward the nation.

On May 27, the same day that de Gaulle announced that the Pflimlin government was negotiating with him to take over, *L'Humanité* published Duclos' speech of the day before in the Assembly: "The government is slow in recognizing the state of mind of the Republican nation . . ." After de Gaulle's announcement appeared in the press, Duclos rose to bring his speech up to date. He accurately accused Pflimlin of willingness to yield to de Gaulle. His conclusion? The CP deputies will vote for Pflimlin's proposal to "rewrite" the Constitution.

When Coty openly turned to de Gaulle May 28, the Assembly made a last gesture for democracy, rolling up a new vote of confidence for Pflimlin. The CP Political Bureau estimated the vote as singularly impressive: "Yesterday there were only 165 supporters of de Gaulle in the Assembly, whereas 408 votes were expressed for the defense of the Republic."

Three days later the parliamentary "defenders" of the Republic voted for its hangman.

* * *

The world working class has suffered a serious defeat in France. Reactionary forces everywhere will draw fresh encouragement from de Gaulle's victory. The American imperialists will take it as a favorable omen for stepping up the cold war. But the French workers

are still far from having suffered a definitive defeat. Their organizations have not been crushed. As in 1936, they can mobilize such power as to reverse the present trend.

De Gaulle's program offers no viable solution for the profound crisis in which capitalist France finds itself. Capitalist America blocks the road to a wider share of the world market. The colonial people stand in the way of carving out a new empire. The French workers will resist a slash in their living standards. And not even de Gaulle is mad enough to think he could succeed where Hitler failed in an assault upon the Soviet colossus. The continuing crisis in France thus points to class battles ahead that will give the French workers fresh opportunities to retrieve their positions and to move forward.

The crying need is for a new political leadership of the working class, a leadership capable of organizing a revolutionary socialist party in face of the added difficulties and dangers under de Gaulle. Will the French workers prove capable of accomplishing this task in time? They now face the most crucial challenge in the history of their country. Heirs of one of the world's great revolutionary traditions, they will, we think, show that they are worthy of it. The new regime will depart from the scene in a greater storm than did its Bonapartist predecessor whose dictatorial rule brought on the Paris Commune.

BRAVO

How does one compare the new family of nuclear weapons with the TNT and incendiary bombs of World War II? It is a feeble and inadequate evaluation merely to contrast the physical destruction by blast and heat of which the old and the new weapons are capable. In this sense nuclear weapons produce the same effect as the block-busters of World War II vintage, except that the area of destruction is vastly greater. As we have already pointed out, weapons tests of the past several years have involved explosions fifty times more powerful than all the bombs dropped on Germany throughout two full years of heavy bombardment in World War II.

If we persist in the TNT comparison and estimate the total explosiveness in the world's nuclear stockpiles, we conclude that the new arsenal of Mars contains the equivalent of almost ten tons of TNT for every person on our planet. Yet as the significance of such a staggering statistic begins to make its imprint on one's consciousness, we hasten to add that such a comparison neglects the unique distinction of the new weapons . . .

The killing power of radioactive fall-out far surpasses that delivered by the sledgehammer blast and fiery heat of the direct explosive onslaught which creates it. It has certain characteristics which are brain-numbing in their nature and magnitude.

First, the fall-out from Bravo-type weapons can coat vast areas with a serious-to-lethal mantle of radioactive debris. The Bravo bomb created such a mantle covering 7000 square miles of the earth's surface. That was a 15-megaton bomb of 1954 design, and super-bombs of much higher power are technically achievable. Higher-power Bravo weapons can produce proportionately more radioactivity and thus make for a larger or more intense fall-out. A 30-megaton bomb could spread its lethal dose over 14,000 square miles—an area equal to that of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. The actual blast from such a weapon could, by comparison, knock out the Greater Boston area but leave all the rest of the New England area intact.

Second, the nature of radioactivity is such that it is like a thief in the night. It may strike without warning. Although

the fall-out on the decks of the *Lucky Dragon* was readily visible, it is probable that in a war large areas would be coated with particles which were invisible, thus adding to the hazard. As we have said, human beings possess no sensory equipment to alert them to the presence of even lethal radiation. The unseen and unsensed nature of radioactive fall-out, therefore, makes it a true weapon of terror. One does not need to emphasize the degree to which a civilian population might panic when faced with the silent threat of radiation death.

Third, unlike blast and heat, which do their damage and then disappear from the scene with only secondary effects remaining, the radioactive fall-out persists long after the bomb cloud has vanished into thin air . . .

These three characteristics of fall-out, not to mention the long-term toxicity of such radiopoisons as strontium, combine to make the Bravo bomb an incredible weapon of biological destruction.—Jack Schubert and Ralph E. Lapp in "Radiation: What It Is and How It Affects You."

What Price Depression?

Was the steep decline caused by "severe winter weather" and the "Russian sputniks"? The pundits explain why prosperity is still around the corner

by Arne Swabeck

THE fervent hopes and optimistic predictions of an early economic upturn, so widely expressed at the year's beginning, have gradually faded away. Good evidence to sustain them has been lacking. Temporary fluctuations have suggested the glow of a silver lining, but these served only to illuminate more sharply the downward movement of all major business indices. The "experts" are confounded; uncertainty, confusion and conflicting views predominate.

Some optimism still prevails. But it is an optimism of simple faith rather than one based on facts. In this vein the renowned British economist, Colin Clark, recently assured a New York audience that "there are a number of beneficial factors which will pull the economy upward again." "The recovery," he said, "so far as we can now see, will begin before the end of 1958."

Among the beneficial factors Clark named the "new phase of population growth" in the United States and the American farm problem which "at last appears to be within sight of solution." Predictions based on such an anticipated "solution" can hardly be well founded.

In contrast, a survey conducted by the National Industrial Conference Board frankly admits that operation "at full capacity" for a number of major industries may not occur until the early 1960's. The survey asserts that the boom years resulted in such a build-up of productive capacity that many industries have facilities to turn out products at a rate far outstripping present demands. An example cited is the estimate that

the auto industry has the capacity now to produce 10 million cars and trucks per year. This is double 1957 sales.

But Sumner H. Slichter, professor of economics at Harvard University, flatly rejects any such notion. When interviewed by the editors of *US News & World Report* (April 4), he declared: "The view that we have today a general over-capacity is an illusion."

Admittedly, all bourgeois economists work from the same basic set of relevant facts, and factual material is available in abundance; but they come up with widely different answers. Perhaps the reason is, as pointedly remarked by *The Magazine of Wall Street*: "Many are able, others are superficial and still others are paid propagandists."

Rare indeed is the economist who seeks a deeper insight into the economic process as a whole and attempts to understand its laws of motion and development. Few show any desire to do so, while the great majority are simply engaged in apologetics designed to obscure the realities of class society and to justify the capitalist regime.

Even those who now recognize the symptoms of a serious recession, join with government and Big Business in affirming their faith in the "inherent soundness" of the free-enterprise system. Faith does not impose great mental exertion. All it requires is a few simple homilies such as were contained in a recent address by Arthur F. Burns, former chief economic advisor to the President.

Speaking before the management

conference of Chicago University, Burns declared: "Each setback of economic activity in the past has been succeeded by renewed expansion which, in time, carried our economy well beyond its earlier best performance." In other words, the normal operation of economic laws, under the system of free enterprise, will always project the economy to higher levels. According to Burns, this is the natural order of things, for he assured his audience: "The basic forces that have shaped our extraordinary economy are still with us, and we can reasonably count on vigorous growth in the future."

But it is precisely this contention that requires to be demonstrated. Neither Burns, nor anyone else, has attempted to do this. Moreover, a serious examination of the inherent contradictions of capitalism, now appearing in sharpened form, will prove the opposite to be the case.

In Comparison

Before discussing this aspect of the question, it may be well to take note of the extreme concern about the relative positions of the American and the Soviet economy that now enters more openly into all forecasts emanating from capitalist sources. The deeper the recession here, the more painfully apparent are the tremendous forward strides of Soviet production capabilities. In government and Big Business circles every comparison of these positions arouses apprehension. Soviet economic expansion is viewed as a serious peacetime threat to the moral and political

influence of the United States on other nations.

Burns, whom we quoted above, shares this apprehension. In the address mentioned, he cried out in anguish: "In the present international situation, the continuance of prosperity in the United States is essential — indeed, absolutely essential — to the economic, political and military strength of the entire free world."

This plea brought a crushing rejoinder. It was contained in the latest comparative economic data of the two major powers presented by the chief of the Central Intelligence Agency, Allen W. Dulles. He emphasized the following points:

Soviet industrial production in the first quarter of 1958 rose 11% while, according to the Federal Reserve Board index, U.S. production declined 11%.

The Sino-Soviet bloc in the same period produced more steel than the United States.

Soviet machine-tool output is about double that of the United States, and Soviet economic growth, measured by gross national product, is twice as fast as the American.

The technical competence and progress of modern industrial nations is reflected in the way they apply nature's resources to productive purposes. On this score Dulles could have added a good deal of salient factual material, which is readily available and need not be unearthed by secret intelligence. He could have mentioned, for example, the giant hydroelectric power developments in the USSR, the vast irrigation projects and applications of nuclear energy to peaceful purposes. All these surpass in their integral planning and magnitude similar projects in the United States. To this could be added the tremendous progress of Soviet education, both technical and academic, compared to which American efforts seem puny indeed.

It is significant, however, that the data furnished has primary reference, in both cases, to the dynamic sector of the economic structure — the capital goods industries that turn out the means of production. This sector is the fundamental factor in a sustained economic development. Its condition is a sure reflection of

Monopolized Cushion

One of the "cushions" which capitalist economists have boasted will help absorb the impact of any recession is the savings of the American people. The real score, according to *Labor's Economic Review* (May 1958), is that the rich are sitting on most of the cushion:

"Most of the truly liquid personal savings—in the form of bank deposits, U.S. Savings Bonds, postal savings and savings and loan and credit union shares—are actually held by a small minority of families. A close look reveals that at the beginning of 1958, eighteen million of the total of 57 million families in the United States (consumer spending units) owned only from \$1 to \$499 of these savings; another 14 million families owned none.

"Early in 1957, before the recession began, the average skilled and semi-skilled worker had \$212 in these holdings and 26% had none. The average for unskilled and service workers was \$6; 49½% had none.

"Actually, one-tenth of our families own about two-thirds of all these liquid personal savings."

economic advance or economic decline.

How does the proclaimed "inherent soundness" of the free-enterprise system stand up in the face of these comparisons? Can this telling contrast between the two systems be considered a temporary phenomenon? On the contrary! The continuous and exceptionally high rate of expansion of Soviet industrial production, without interruption by recessions or depressions, is a fact now universally recognized. Recurring economic crisis, on the other hand, is a permanent and inescapable feature of capitalism. The glaring contrast furnishes a concrete example in actual life as to which is superior — the property relations of Soviet society or capitalist free enterprise.

Anarchy Versus Planning

As the contrast between the two economic systems becomes more pronounced it will attract ever greater attention among the peoples of undeveloped countries who see industrialization as a solution to their economic backwardness. Soviet factories humming to the tune of full capacity

production and full employment cannot fail, in the long run, to have a powerful impact upon the unemployed workers in the United States and other capitalist nations. Increasingly it will appear to them as the vital difference between the socialist type of planned economy and the capitalist anarchy of production.

Production in capitalist society depends upon profit, upon the accumulation of capital and increasing opportunities for profitable capital investments. Profits are realized surplus value produced by labor; these are converted into capital and provide the basis for further accumulation. Expansion or contraction of production is determined primarily by profit possibilities and not by social needs; nor is production carried on for the benefit of the society of producers.

Capital is invested in industry in order to build new plants or modernize old ones and to create more efficient machinery and tools that will provide for higher productivity of labor, thus lowering production costs and thereby increasing the magnitude of profits realized. Full utilization of the means of production promotes fresh accumulations of capital. These become available for reinvestment in the process of production and provide the basis for further economic expansion.

But the realization of profit depends also upon increasing markets to absorb the commodities produced. Consumption is supposedly the ultimate objective of production; but in capitalist society consumption is an entirely subordinate consideration. Consumption by the overwhelming majority of the population can remain at a high level only so long as satisfactory profits accrue to the few who are the owners of industry.

During its decades of growth the dynamic process set in motion by the accumulation of capital operated with full force in the American economy. It did not, and could not, maintain a smoothly sustained equilibrium. But it did carry the economy through each low valley of cyclical breakdowns to new and higher peaks of prosperity. A constantly expanding market kept pace with the growing forces of production. It absorbed the rising output and this permitted

the full realization of profits. However, the great depression of the thirties, by and large, marked the end of the growth phase and the onset of capitalist decline in the United States.

The great depression was overcome only by the creation of an artificial market linked to war production and the armaments race. The internal economy did not expand organically as in the past; it had to depend on fictitious means. This restored temporarily the dynamic sector of the economy. Fabulous profits were the fruits of enormous military expenditures, and these promoted an accelerated accumulation of capital. New opportunities for profitable investment drew capital resources into further expansion and the development of more efficient plants and equipment.

The results are now here in plain view for all who want to observe the process of capitalist production objectively. Excess productive capacity shows up to the extent noted by the National Industrial Conference Board, with the many industries having facilities to turn out products at a rate far outstripping present demands. The auto industry has an estimated capacity to produce twice the number of cars sold in 1957. The steel industry is limping along on an output less than 50% of capacity.

Was Marx Right?

Out of the enlarged scale of production arose the exact opposite: curtailment and contraction. Because of the contradictions inherent in this system of free enterprise the dynamic sector of the economy generated the limitations of its own development.

The tremendous expansion of the productive forces engendered by the armaments economy now acts as a fetter on the further movement of accumulation, of employment and of prosperity. There is excess capacity of production while people's needs remain unsatisfied. Factories, mills and mines stand idle, or operate with a reduced labor force, while millions of unemployed workers subsist on relief handouts.

Fully confirmed here is the Marxist analysis of the capitalist mode of

production. From the general tendency of capitalist development — the increase of constant capital (machines and raw materials) at the expense of variable capital (labor power) — Marx drew the conclusion: "The greater the social wealth . . . the greater is the industrial reserve army . . . the greater the mass of the consolidated surplus-population . . . the greater is official pauperism. This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation."

The present economic slump is not the result of miscalculations or mistakes in policy; it is the inevitable outcome of the capitalist mode of production. The forces of production have been developed beyond the capacity of consumption because of the limitations imposed on the latter by the profit system. Profits always tend to race ahead of wages, and wages fall relatively to output and profits, thus restricting the purchasing power of the workers. The capitalist mode of production "comes to a standstill at a point determined by the production and realization of profit, not by the satisfaction of social needs."

This is the essence of the present recession. Whether it is called a recession or a depression matters little; the objective results are the same. It is centered in the dynamic sector of the economy which is related most vitally to its future expansion capabilities. As it deepens, the effects will spread in corresponding measure through the whole economic structure. In other words, the basic forces still counted upon to provide renewed and vigorous growth are now seriously impaired, the smug declarations emanating from capitalist pundits and politicians to the contrary notwithstanding. This very fact gives to the recession a significance far greater than most of them are prepared to admit.

Equally serious is the fact that the economic downturn occurs amid the general decay and crisis of the capitalist system as a whole. Economic decline in Western Europe is now further aggravated by the depressive currents flowing across the Atlantic Ocean. On the world market capitalism no longer wields its former unchallenged control and direction. More than one-third of the world

Let's Pray

In response to a question at his press conference May 28 on whether he sees a "perceptible start" toward economic revival, President Eisenhower offered the following opinion, which we wish to commend for its accurate reflection of the thinking of the monopolists who run the country:

"Well, I say this. This is certain of the little, of the indices that look that way, but just as one swallow doesn't make a summer, I am certainly not going to take, show that a slacking off of the new applications for unemployment insurance and all that sort of thing, that those do not yet, to my mind, warrant a flat prediction that now we are on the upper leg. I want to see a few more things to happen. I say that we are weathering it well, and I believe of course that the prior boom had a great deal, had a lot to do with the recession. Now I think it has largely spent its force. I certainly pray so."

has been definitely withdrawn from the capitalist orbit of exploitation. In what remains — a very much constricted world market, its equilibrium disrupted, its currency system debased — competition tends to grow more and more fierce. Trade barriers and tariff walls, born of competition between nations, now act as obstacles to the necessary free intercourse. These contradictions arise out of a condition wherein capitalist productive forces have long outgrown private property relations and restrictive national boundaries.

The enormous accumulations of capital in the United States, which have saturated the home market, impart special urgency to the search for new outlets for both capital and commodities. But there are few of these in sight. In addition, American capitalism must now meet the competition of the Soviet bloc, particularly in the still undeveloped areas of the world where industrial needs are the greatest.

The exceptional opportunities which once favored the rapid growth of the American capitalist economy are vanishing, never to return. Even the vast market created by production for war and for the armaments race has proved too narrow for the expanded productive forces that it called into being. Aside from its waste of material, of resources and of la-

bor, the armaments economy led to dissipation of the people's real income. A monstrous concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands fabulously enriched the capitalists while the country as a whole became poorer and more fantastically debt-ridden.

For the last twenty years the economy has been sustained very largely by armaments production. Tremendous government expenditures were poured into the country's industrial arteries. Now, however, the indisputable fact remains: While the armaments market absorbed a vast industrial output, even this could not permanently sustain a prosperity level.

The question now arises: where are the new markets to be found which will provide the basis for a genuine upturn and further economic expansion? Without such expansion no economic upturn can reach very high levels. Much less can it have a lasting character. And to provide a basis for renewed economic expansion with an enlarged accumulation of capital, new markets would necessarily have to be of far greater dimensions than those hitherto found. Yet neither the savants of the capitalist school of economics, nor the spokesmen of government or Big Business have seriously posed that question.

Prosperity Went Thataway

In the absence of new and greater markets, is it not reasonable to assume that actual capitalist prosperity will become increasingly illusive? Lacking the stimulus of industrial growth the economy will inevitably sink lower. Production of capital goods now tends to be limited primarily to replacements. Accumulation of capital must, therefore, also proceed on a lower level, tending to restrict the production of surplus value and realization of profit. Opportunities for profitable capital investments are correspondingly diminished.

Serious cutbacks in capital investments have already taken place, and the indications are that this trend will continue for some time to come. *Fortune* magazine (April 1958) re-

ports that between the third quarter of 1957 and the first quarter of 1958 capital spending fell by \$6 billion, and by the end of this year it is expected to be \$9 billion below the 1957 peak.

Figures from the authoritative McGraw-Hill annual survey differ slightly from the above forecast, but they emphasize the same basic trend. For the years 1958-61 the survey estimates that capital expenditures by private enterprise will be about 20% below the 1957 level. Manufacturing industry, the key factor in the economy, is expected to suffer the heaviest proportion of this drop.

Commenting on this survey, *Business Week* points to a major danger raised by the recession: "If the decline in the economy becomes more serious than business is expecting, plans for capital spending might be revised downward even more drastically."

With economic expansion curtailed, the contradictions inherent in the capitalist system of production become more malignant. The working masses go short of the means of subsistence because they have produced too much of them; bankruptcy follows upon bankruptcy; productive forces and production are enfeebled and squandered. On a lower economic level cyclical movements can continue, of course, though most likely with smaller upturns and steeper downslides. The incompatibility of social production with capitalist appropriation thus will become more pronounced.

This seems to be the outlook for the celebrated American free-enterprise system. Judging by the major economic indicators, it is headed for a period of chronic crisis with a number of permanent features and with temporary upturns becoming less significant. Most ominous, however, large-scale unemployment probably will be frozen into the system.

Yet this system counts among its ardent supporters most of the official spokesmen of labor. Their minds are as saturated with the free-enterprise philosophy as are those of the high moguls of Wall Street. It is only about a year ago that George Meany reaffirmed his faith in this philosophy before the Big Business-sponsored

Industrial Development Conference at San Francisco.

Meany's message declared: "American labor believes that private enterprise has been and can be a great force for economic and social progress."

"Little Has Been Done"

To what extent American labor holds to such a belief at this moment may not be easy to determine. In any case, the chances are that the social and political effects of further economic deterioration will, before long, compel new thinking.

To be sure, the labor leaders are even now seriously concerned about the growing unemployment. It cuts deeply into union membership rolls and causes them to react more critically than is usual for them. A recent meeting of the AFL-CIO executive board even complained that neither the Republican Administration nor the Democratic Congress is living up to its responsibilities to halt the recession.

"Little has been done," says the executive board statement. "As a result the nation is threatened with a depression. Employment, production and purchasing power have dropped month after month since the recession started last summer." The statement demanded measures to place more purchasing power in the hands of consumers, including an immediate tax cut and extended unemployment coverage.

The charge levelled against both Republicans and Democrats is entirely true, of course, and a good deal could be added to what the labor bureaucrats have said. *The Magazine of Wall Street* (January 4, 1958) wonders whether the Administration is actually aware of the recession or misjudging its real meaning; and the magazine goes on to remind its readers: The Eisenhower Administration is the one that "ignored, misjudged or long minimized the significance of Russian advances in weapons and science."

The President has let it be known that he "refuses to be panicked" about the recession. Like the Great Engineer who occupied the White

House at the time of the 1929 crash, he sees prosperity just around the corner—or very nearly so. Eisenhower's advice has been no more profound than that of Herbert Hoover. But the views and the attitude of the President differ in no essential respect from those of the whole Republican Administration. For example, when secretary of commerce Sinclair Weeks appeared recently before the House Appropriations Committee, he was asked to comment on the current economic recession.

"I am glad to," replied Weeks, "I don't know why we have to be concerned. This is no depression or even a recession, but just a business lull caused by the Russian Sputniks and the recent severe winter weather." One Democratic representative retorted: "Thank you, Mr. Secretary. You have given us a good illustration of the kind of thinking in this Administration on the problems of our people."

But spring came; the birds started singing. Yet, despite the demise of the first two Sputniks and the arrival of warmer weather, the recession, or the depression, continued its slow, grinding, but unmistakably downward, movement.

It is by now quite evident that the Republican Administration will take no effective steps to relieve the unemployment situation. The pleas of the official labor leadership barely command a polite hearing. But what has the Democratic Congress done? Talk about anti-recession measures has been plentiful, but action has lagged woefully behind the promises made. Proposals for extended unemployment compensation for the millions of jobless workers have been so whittled down as to become practically meaningless. There has been no lack of debate about a reinvigorated system of education, with federal aid for a major school construction program; but to date not one solitary dime has been spent. Tax-cut proposals have been dropped for the time being.

Appropriations actually passed by Congress either represent accelerated spending for projects already authorized, or else they are of the type based on the "trickling down" theory. A good example of the latter is

the \$1.8 billion housing bill. Whether it will serve to promote home building is rated doubtful; its only certain provision is the guarantee of loans by mortgage brokers at a higher rate of interest. Indeed, this record leaves no room for hopeful expectation. The kind of thinking in the Democratic Congress on the problems of the people does not rise to higher levels than the kind of thinking in the Republican Administration.

This is not surprising. The monopoly capitalists, who own and control the means of production, dominate not only the economic life of the nation, but all the levers of government as well. In the words of the author of *America's 60 Families*: They are the real government, "the government of money in a dollar democracy."

These dominant monopoly owners have no objection to government intervention in economic affairs. The only question that is of moment to them is: For what purpose, and for whose benefit does the intervention occur? Massive government spending for armaments, for war and for other imperialist ventures, is perfectly acceptable to them. It is an integral part of their cold-war policy which they are determined to continue at all costs. But the directors of monopoly concerns are bitterly hostile to spending for public-works projects; they make sure to keep these on a beggarly scale. Measures to place more purchasing power in the hands of the consumers is not their idea of government function. Such measures would tend to favor wages and salaries and consequently endanger profits. Demands for full employment are similarly suspect. The capitalist entrepreneurs know only too well that this tends to strengthen labor's bargaining position, which is the farthest from their intention. Their primary concern is the working principles of capitalist economy. And the existence of an industrial reserve army of unemployed workers is precisely what prompts them to view this recession as a "healthy readjustment."

In this the Bourbons of big industry see their opportunity to re-establish the indispensable norms of capitalist production. Translated into terms of practical reality, their kind

of readjustment means to impose upon the workers such a standard of wages and working conditions as will assure continuation of the fundamental source of power and profit for the free enterprise system.

Can You Afford a Depression?

These are danger signals to the American workers. For them the present recession, or depression, is far more serious than has so far been admitted. The unfolding attack from the employers, added to the ravages of unemployment and inflation, is the greatest threat to their standard of living and working conditions since the days of the great depression.

Recognition of this danger has been evident in some trade-union circles, but it has not led to effective action. While several major unions have succeeded over a period of time in maintaining the escalator clause for wage increases in their contracts, as a safeguard against the rising cost of living, the need for a shorter work week without reduction in take-home pay never got beyond the stage of resolutions and indorsements. It became popularized in the demand for a thirty-hour week at forty hours' pay. But the union bureaucrats, who enjoy the privileges and the handsome emoluments of their official positions, have now deserted the idea of the shorter work week to which they once pledged support—this at a time when it is most bitterly needed to counter the blight of growing unemployment.

Objections to the shorter work week without reduced pay comes from the owners of industry, of course. Their professional apologists join the chorus: The demand is unrealistic, they say; business cannot afford it! In their opinion only the interests and profits of business, of the wealthy corporations, are to be taken into account, and not the interests of the people. Following out this logic, the corporations have proceeded arbitrarily to lay off millions of workers and reduce the average work week of those still employed, below the normal forty hours. But the effect of this arbitrary action is that the

wage standard threatens to fall below the subsistence level.

Facing this situation, what are the workers to do? They cannot give up their right to work. It is the only serious right that is still left to them in a society based upon exploitation, and they constitute the only force which can safeguard this right. When the market is saturated by overproduction, the only rational measure to maintain the right to work and relieve unemployment is to spread out the work that is to be done among all who are in need of a job. And the only way to maintain the standard of living, established through years of struggle, is to insist that the take-home pay remains unimpaired even when fewer working hours are required.

Adopting this as a policy would have a salutary effect on the whole trade-union movement. One could hardly think of a better antidote to the dangerous division so easily fostered between employed and unemployed workers. Making the work to be done the common concern of all would promote solidarity and mutual responsibility.

Objections to the shorter work week without reduced pay can be met effectively by very simple answers; and the answers are irrefutable. The richest country in the world can well afford a job for all who are willing and able to work. It can afford a decent standard of living for all who are engaged in producing the necessities of life for the nation. No rational society can afford to do less.

Today the American home market is saturated because of the limitations imposed on consumption by the profit system. But the people in the major parts of the world cry out for goods and for technical means to build industry and thereby elevate their standard of living. They want trade and they need trade. Extended trade relations with the capitalist world are sought by the Sino-Soviet bloc. And who would doubt that acceptance by the United States could serve measurably to relieve unemployment here?

The growth of Soviet industry, instead of diminishing the USSR's dependence on world economy, has in-

Road to Where?

When questioned by reporters April 23 about his prediction of an economic upturn in March, President Eisenhower replied:

"... I must say this: That I am not trying to be a Pollyanna and just say, 'Everything is lovely, and that's that.' There is still a lot of agonizing reappraisal every day, if you're going to stay on the job here. Now, people come in and blithely say, 'Have a tax cut.'

"Well, no one starts — stops to think about this: Defense is expensive, and is growing more expensive, and we have got to be ready to pay those defense costs for the next forty, fifty years, possibly . . .

"So, I say: You have got to look down the road."

creased it. Soviet industry depends on trade to a greater extent than ever before. And it has been made amply clear that the Soviet Union seeks extended trade especially with the United States. It desires to obtain machinery and manufactured products, and it is prepared to enter into mutually satisfactory long-term trade agreements.

An even greater quantity of products from American industry could find a market in the People's Republic of China. It needs huge quantities of industrial and farm machinery to build up a modern economy. Emerging out of centuries of oppression, the revolutionary people of China have embarked on a program of industrialization to overcome the backwardness of the past and to lay the foundation for a society in which they can become masters of their own destiny. These people have asked for diplomatic recognition for their republic from the United States; they have asked for long-term credits to facilitate trade.

Credits are available in the United States. Then why are these not granted? What stands in the way of extended trade relations with the whole Soviet orbit? Only the cold-war aims of the Big Business government in Washington, and its opposition to the economic development of the non-capitalist world. With these policies the American workers can have nothing in common. On the

contrary. Support of extended and active East-West trade would serve their own best interests. It would provide a positive and fruitful alternative to the reactionary demand of the trade-union bureaucracy for increased arms production, because such trade relations would tend to ease cold-war tensions.

As a means of alleviating the fearful consequences of unemployment here, the American workers would have much to gain by support of a program of free and unfettered East-West trade. It could provide many jobs producing the goods that the people in other lands want and need. Certainly, it would be preferable to dependence on an armaments program. Support by the workers of such a program would be in perfect accord with their need to defend their right to work. Without a doubt, it would find a hearty response from the workers in the non-capitalist world, and this would tend, in turn, to strengthen the bonds of international working-class solidarity.

The American workers cannot submit to conditions of everlasting insecurity, chronic unemployment and a life of bare subsistence. These are not conditions of their making. Such conditions grow inevitably out of the capitalist relations of production. It is the capitalist rulers who are unwilling to grant the workers the right to a job that affords them a decent living. They are callously indifferent to the needs of the people arising out of the calamities generated by their own system. Only the capitalist ownership and control of the means of production stands in the way of the economic well-being that the richest country in the world can and should provide.

When the workers realize the full import of this situation and make up their minds to fight for remedial measures, they will not hesitate to demand: "If you, the owners of the great industries created by our labor, are incapable of maintaining production to satisfy the needs of the people, then let these industries be nationalized. Let them become national property, with the workers in control of production, and with production for use instead of for private profit."

"Fuera Nixon!"

Cries of "Little Rock" went with the stones hurled at the Vice President. But much more than that is behind the hot reception given a "good will" tour

by Theodore Edwards

THE current epoch of declining capitalism and rising socialism holds no end of surprises for American Big Business and its representatives. Last October, with the Soviet sputniks, came the shocking realization that the U.S. is lagging behind the Soviet Union in certain spheres of technology, science, and education. Seven months later, the Vice President, on a good-will tour of Latin America, was all but ridden out on a rail.

Editorial comment in the capitalist press is indicative of the reaction among capitalist circles. "We need some shock absorbers to help us withstand sudden surprises," said James Marlow, Associated Press news analyst. The Los Angeles *Mirror-News* spoke of "the same stunned, unbelieving surprise of a healthy man who has just been told that he has cancer . . . If it were a matter of life and death, where could we recruit an anti-Russian mob for a demonstration, except Formosa and Korea? Maybe. We're in bad trouble abroad . . ." Senator Morse spoke of "a major foreign-policy setback." Walter Lippmann called for a Congressional investigation of the men responsible for planning Nixon's tour and called it "a fiasco" and "a diplomatic Pearl Harbor."

Reaction in other sectors was somewhat different. Negroes no doubt found special pleasure in the fact that cries of "Little Rock" went with the stones hurled at the Vice President. Workers seemed to get a kick out of the fact that it happened to Nixon, whom they regard as a McCarthyite at heart.

In all fairness to Nixon, it must be said that what happened to him was not his personal fault. He tried in every way to make friends with the ordinary man and the students in Latin America. He smiled, he waved, he kissed babies, laid wreaths on national monuments, mixed with rural folk and primitive Indians, and put on all the charm and folksiness he was capable of.

Perhaps the tip-off that this routine was not going to work this time was the remark made by a sullen bystander in Montevideo at the very beginning of the tour. Watching Nixon put on his act, this Uruguayan shouted: "Why do you grin and wave like that when the cost of living keeps going up and up?"

When Nixon appeared unannounced at the Montevideo University Law School, he was confronted by Ricardo Yelpo, representing the Uruguayan Student Federation. Yelpo demanded: "Why does the U.S. support dictators in Latin America, such as Batista of Cuba?" Nixon sat down with the law student and tried to explain it through an interpreter. He referred to the "non-interference policy" of the U.S. government in Latin-American affairs and counseled patience. "Democracy," he said, "comes only by evolution," and he cited Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia as recent examples.

Yelpo's question continued to haunt Nixon. "Guatemala," "Batista," and "Little Rock" — these were the placards and shouts that greeted him throughout his tour. The garbage, eggs, pebbles, and spit with which he was decorated emphasized the

main slogan "Fuera Nixon!" "Throw the Bum Out!"

Many Latin-Americans repeat Yelpo's question with genuine puzzlement in view of the big pretense made by the U.S. government at being the sterling defender of democracy against all forms of totalitarianism. "But why, why?" Fifteen Venezuelan air-force officers, who fled to Colombia in January this year after an abortive attempt to depose dictator Jiménez, are quoted as asking, "Why does the U.S. government support dictator Jiménez of Venezuela?"

A jet-fighter pilot, trained in the United States, like most of his kind, said: "You know, the idea of this revolution with us really started in the United States. That is when we got to know your democratic system and democratic ideas and we got the notion that our country, too, needs freedom. So, you see, it's all your fault." To be sure, their getting such notions was completely unintentional on the part of the U.S. State Department.

The answer to the question asked by Yelpo and the fliers is to be found in the economic relationship between American monopoly capital and Latin America. The twenty republics south of the Rio Grande are cheap sources of raw materials, lucrative outlets for manufactured goods, and a paradise for super-profiteering.

Directly owned U.S. companies in Latin America monopolize more than 30 per cent of its exports. Fabulous profits are drained northward each year from an investment that in 1955 amounted to \$7 billion. Profits be-

fore taxes were \$2½ billion in 1955, an average rate of profit of 33 per cent! Of this amount, \$680 million were sent home, while only \$350 million of new U.S. capital flowed back into Latin America, leaving it on the short end by \$330 million. (The rest of the profits was reinvested on the spot or paid to local governments as taxes.)

The Latin-American governments have pleaded with the U.S. monopolists and their government to help diversify their economies, to raise indigenous standards of living through at least partial industrialization. The economic royalists of the Dollar Republic have remained deaf to the pleas. They are interested only in high-profit cash crops and minerals. The Latin-American countries continue to be cursed with one-crop economies. Their peoples, still engaged mainly in agriculture, subsist on primitive levels, the average annual income still below \$500 a year.

Latin-American countries are so dependent upon the U.S. economically that Congress, if it so desired, could topple almost any dictator in Latin America by the mere threat of changing import quotas or imposing higher tariffs. Latin America was the first area of the world economy to feel the recession in the United States. Decreased economic activity north of the Rio Grande signifies decreased exports for Latin America, negative trade balances, inflation, and the threat of social and political upheavals. Whenever the U.S. sneezes, it is said, Latin America catches pneumonia.

Brazil is in the throes of what has been termed "one of the worst economic crises in its modern history." In the past year the cruzeiro dropped to half its former value. Of the current harvest of 19 million bags of coffee only 10 million bags are expected to be sold. Once more, to keep up the price, coffee will be burned in locomotives.

Argentina and Uruguay are hard hit by drops in wool exports and by growing trade deficits. Bolivia, Peru and Mexico are suffering from the drop in prices of cotton and non-ferrous metals. (Washington, moreover, has still further depressed the price of cotton by dumping its surplus on the world market.) Colombia has

unsaleable coffee in storage. Venezuela finds U.S. restrictions on oil imports hard to take.

To compound these troubles, highly vocal American businessmen, agitated over the competition of "foreign" goods, are pressing for smaller import quotas and higher tariffs. Latin-American governments, on the other hand, are urging lower tariff and quota barriers, and, against the opposition of the Administration, are seeking price stabilization agreements.

The fresh difficulties brought on by the "recession" prompted Nixon's tour. As the *New York Times* commented: "While none of the governments presumably expect specific promises and Mr. Nixon probably will not be prepared to make them, the Latin-Americans are looking for some form of reassurance. Psychologically, this could go far, for the time being."

Nixon's first diplomatic objective was to do something about the growing trade relations with the Soviet bloc. Colombia has begun to sell coffee to the Soviet Union. Brazil exchanged 400,000 bags of coffee for 14 sea-going vessels and 27,000 tons of steel rails from Czechoslovakia. Argentina agreed to purchase \$30 million worth of industrial equipment. And so on.

The "good neighbor" businessmen find Soviet—Latin-American trade ominous. It gives the most graphic and palpable demonstration of the economic successes possible through the nationalization of the means of production; and, by suggesting an alternative to capitalism, has a potentially revolutionizing effect on the Latin-American masses.

The opening up of trade with the Soviet bloc cannot solve Latin-American economic difficulties. It is too small in volume. The Soviet bloc countries are short in precisely the kind of goods needed by Latin America. Nor can these countries afford as yet to subsidize the industrialization of Latin America. The solution lies elsewhere.

The knotty problems confronting the Latin-American peoples in their fight against poverty and oppression can be illuminated by considering Cuba and the recent events there. Of the twenty Latin-American countries, only Mexico, Argentina, and

Brazil have shown appreciable signs of industrial development. Cuba in many ways is typical of the rest of the Latin-American "republics." Fundamentally, the problem is the same everywhere: A semi-colonial, raw-material-producing economy, economic dependence on the U.S.; more or less open political domination by Wall Street.

The Case of Cuba

A country the size of Pennsylvania, Cuba grows sugar cane for the U.S. The harvest season, the so-called zafra, lasts from the middle of January until the middle of March or April, a period of from 60 to 120 days. During the zafra, half a million Cubans toil for 60 hours or more a week, at \$3 to \$4 a day. Following these 60 to 120 days of labor comes the "dead season." Most of the labor force is laid off until the next zafra. For the next nine to ten months, the Cuban economy barely idles along. Of the total labor force, one-half to one million Cubans work only a maximum of four months out of the year. Their estimated average annual income is less than \$400 a year.

The trade unions are dominated by the government, put under receivership at will. Mujal, secretary of the Cuban trade unions, is hated as much or even more than Batista, the American-backed puppet ruler of Cuba. Amply supplied by Washington with tanks, jet planes, and "anti-riot weapons" for "purposes of hemispheric defense," Batista has ruled Cuba with a terror that compares with that of the Nazis in occupied Europe.

Daughters and wives are raped in front of husbands and fathers, families burned at the stake; arson, whippings, bayonetings, castrations, are everyday occurrences. The police hardly bother to make arrests or prefer charges. Anyone suspected of fighting this butcher's tyranny is pumped full of lead and thrown into a ditch. Racketeers, hired killers, torturers make up the governmental apparatus of this bloody satrap. Mayer Lansky and associates, one of the Big Six of the American underworld, were put on the government pay roll and have turned Havana

into the biggest gambling center of the Western Hemisphere, eclipsing even Las Vegas, Nevada.

General Tabernilla, head of the Cuban army, owns a chain of discount houses, selling electric appliances and household goods at cut-rate prices. General Tabernilla can undersell any merchant of Cuba because his son, commander-in-chief of the Cuban air force, flies in merchandise in military planes at government expense and without bothering about customs or tariff formalities.

All classes of Cuban society oppose Batista's rule. "Outside of government circles, it is difficult to find anyone ready to say a kind word for General Batista." "Just about every Cuban met was convinced that General Batista remained in power because of the support of the U.S. embassy in Havana and the U.S. State Department." These are typical comments by American reporters.

It is not difficult to discover why Big Business supports Batista. The answer comes right out of the horse's mouth. On April 4, the *Wall Street Journal* noted: "There is little doubt that many American businessmen here are pro-Batista. One puts it very succinctly: 'You can do business with Batista.' Although many admit he may not be the soul of honesty, they ask: 'What Cuban regime ever has been accused of honesty?'" This statement leaves little to be desired in the way of clarity. It is matched only by the observation of Ward Cannel in the *New York World-Telegram* that "a democratic government would mean more people to pay off when tax exemptions and other revised laws for business are needed."

Acting for Big Business, Washington props up dictatorship in Cuba and elsewhere because a dictator is more economical to maintain and insures a higher rate of profit. With arms supplied free under the heading of "foreign aid," the tyrant protects an \$800-million American investment in Cuba by making war on his own people, suppressing their yearnings for freedom and their ambitions for economic betterment.

Liberal landowners and merchants, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the

intellectuals, the peasant masses, the rural and urban workers, all seek an end to this "rule of the tommy gun." Fidel Castro, the leader of perhaps the most radical wing of the middle-class revolt against Batista, is the lawyer son of a liberal landowner in Oriente province. Dr. Grau San Martin heads the most conservative section of the middle-class opposition, counting on Batista-organized "elections" and "legal methods" to change the tyranny. Former president Prio, whose corrupt administration paved the way for Batista's seizure of power in 1952, now exiled in Miami, heads a less conservative faction. Like Castro, he believes in economic sabotage, terrorist activity and conspiratorial coups as means of ousting the present government.

Prio and Castro are divided on whether or not a military junta is to replace Batista, who the provisional president shall be, and what is to happen to Castro's guerrilla troops in case of victory. Castro has indicated his willingness to disband his forces provided that the regular army is purged of torturers and headed by a man he can trust not to become another dictator. Instead of a military junta, Castro wants a "provisional government, whose heads are to be elected by some 60 Cuban civic bodies, like the Lions, Rotarians, groups of lawyers and doctors, religious organizations."

Like the other middle-class opposition groupings, Castro has one eye cocked towards Washington, trying to win its favor by assurances that he is dead set against nationalization of foreign holdings. "Nationalization can never be as rewarding as the right kind of private investment, domestic and foreign, aimed at diversifying our economy." His program of liberal-bourgeois social reform is pared to the bone: (1) immediate freedom for all political prisoners, (2) freedom of public information media, (3) reestablishment of constitutional guarantees, (4) elimination of corruption in Cuban public life through establishment of an adequately paid civil service, (5) an intensive campaign against illiteracy, (6) land reform — adjustment of owner-tenant relations ("We will support no land reform bill, however, which does not provide for the

just compensation of expropriated owners."), (7) speedy industrialization and raising of employment levels.

Castro's main method of struggle is reminiscent of the medieval peasant revolts: "Our immediate task is the burning of Cuba's entire sugar cane crop . . . Cuba's principal source of revenue . . . If the cane goes up in flames, the army will grind to a standstill, the police will have to disband for none of them will get paid: and the Batista regime will have to capitulate . . ."

The burning of the sugar-cane fields has been supplemented by sabotage of communication and transport; terroristic acts carried out mainly by student youth, such as bombing crowded public places, cutting electric power cables, gas mains, attempted assassinations, etc. The seething ferment among the Cuban intellectuals and urban petty bourgeoisie reached such proportions toward the end of March that Castro issued a call for "total war" — which presumably included a call for a general strike, although there is some question about that.

The general strike was a failure. The workers of Havana, mostly Negroes, have suffered a long series of sell-outs by capitalist politicians. They are justifiably suspicious of a program that ignores even their immediate demands and denies them any say in the future government of "Lions, Rotarians, groups of lawyers, doctors," etc. Castro's methods of struggle appear designed to subordinate struggles by the workers. Moreover, Castro has repeatedly rejected any Communist support. The Communist party of Cuba, the Partido Socialista Popular, with 20,000 members, issued a manifesto on March 13, calling for a coalition government, a trade-union movement free of government control, higher wages, land reform, lower prices, and a better deal from American-owned utilities companies. Castro hastily rejected such support.

The May 4 *Worker*, voicing the opinion of American Communist party leaders, said in an article entitled "Next Steps in Cuba, Unity against Tyranny," that "[In Venezuela] IT WAS ONLY WHEN THE OPPOSITION PARTIES UNITED

LAST SUMMER — THE CAPITALIST PARTIES AND THE COMMUNISTS — AND ORGANIZED JOINT STRUGGLE THAT WHAT SEEMED AN INVINCIBLE DICTATORSHIP BEGAN TO TOTTER AND WAS QUICKLY OVERTHROWN.

[Capitalized in the original.] . . . The Cuban Communists . . . have emphasized two points as indispensable for victory: unity of all opposition forces and the organization of mass struggles . . . The Communists have . . . opposed both terrorist tactics and mere electioneering because both in different ways fail to grapple with the main problem: organizing the workers, peasants and other sections of the population for their immediate economic and political demands as the springboard for a powerful, united movement that can end the Batista tyranny.”

The Overturn in Venezuela

The reference to Venezuela is instructive. In Venezuela the revolution started with unrest and unsuccessful coups among the air-force and army officers. Then the intellectuals and students entered the arena with demonstrations and manifestoes. Only when a general strike call was issued by the united opposition parties, including the Communist party, did the majority of the officer caste see the handwriting on the wall and join the revolution. Dictator Jiménez fled. With the help of the army, the secret-police building was stormed. The national security police and the police force of Caracas were put out of action or dismissed.

While the fighting was still raging in the streets of the capital, a five-man military junta was formed. It included Colonels Romero and Casanova who had helped crush the New Year's Day revolt of the air-force and army officers. Although there were some objections to Romero and Casanova, the united opposition parties, including the Communist party, quickly agreed to turn the power over to the military junta, provided only that two civilians, an industrialist and a university professor, be added.

The head of the junta, Admiral Larrazabel, head of the Venezuelan

navy, immediately assured the U.S. oil interests that all international obligations would be honored and that oil holdings would not be nationalized. The U.S. State Department at once granted recognition to this “coalition” government.

The *Worker* is correct in stating that organized joint struggle by the united opposition parties, including the Communists, overthrew the regime. A “coalition” government of sorts was established. There is talk of elections being held later this year. But the fulfillment of the “immediate economic and political demands” of the working masses, such as democratic trade unions, higher wages, land reform, lower prices and a better deal from American-owned companies, is another matter.

The union of middle-class and working-class forces for the purpose of setting up a coalition regime committed to social reform — this is the program advocated by the *Worker* and by the PSP in Cuba. What happens if this is achieved can be predicted with considerable assurance, for it has happened many times before.

In Venezuela, for instance, if the reactionary officer caste, at present in an uneasy “coalition” with a couple of civilians supposedly representing the united opposition parties in the government, does not stage an early coup — as they are undoubtedly being encouraged to do by the imperialist oil interests right now — then the stage will be set for a repetition of the 1945-48 experience in Venezuela, the Guatemala experience of recent times, of Cuba in the thirties and in the forties, and so on.

In Venezuela in 1945, the Democratic Action party, a liberal capitalist reform party, came to power on the crest of a popular upsurge. A series of economic and social reforms were initiated. But, as Ward Cannel observed, “a democratic government means more people to pay off when tax exemptions and other revised laws for business are needed.” Graft and corruption appeared in the government. The liberal politicians used the government as the best lever for the accumulation of private capital. And the army officers plotted.

American monopolists are frugal people, always looking for ways of

cutting overhead expenses. They are also nervous people, afraid of reforms getting out of hand. Accordingly, in 1948 the government of President Gallegos was overthrown by a military junta that installed Jiménez. As Gallegos observed the day after his removal, “U. S. petroleum companies and local reactionary groups were responsible for the coup.”

Before dictator Jiménez there was dictator Gomez. In Cuba, before Batista, there was Machado. We are familiar with the recent examples of Guatemala and British Guiana. The cycle of a short period of liberal reform followed by a long period of dictatorial rule can be traced everywhere.

How can lasting democratic regimes be established when each country is economically dependent on scheming Wall Street monopolists, who arm and support dictatorial machines? Haya de la Torre, leader of the APRA, main prop of the reform regime in Peru, says: “We must not confuse economic imperialism of the U.S., of which we approve, with political imperialism which we oppose.” But how can economic imperialism be separated from political imperialism which is its logical and inevitable outcome?

Castro says: “Nationalization can never be as rewarding as the right kind of private investment, domestic and foreign, aimed at diversifying our economy.” Rewarding for whom? The U.S. imperialists will not aim at diversifying Cuban economy. It isn't profitable.

Nor can democracy be established in Latin America unless the economic power of the monopolists is broken; that power cannot be broken unless Wall Street's holdings are nationalized. The *Worker* says that the main problem is “to organize the workers, peasants and other sections of the population to fight for their immediate economic and political demands.” The PSP of Cuba spells out these demands as a coalition government, democratic trade unions, higher wages, land reform, lower prices, and a better deal from U.S. companies. But what confidence can one have in such a coalition government guaranteeing lasting democracy?

The Latin-American workers, as well as workers elsewhere would do

(Continued on page 111)

Progress of World Socialism

Survey of the movement since 1848 proves that the defeats have been episodic; the rate of victories is rising and growing in impact

by William F. Warde

"The working class climbs up steps that it hews for itself out of solid rock. Sometimes it slips down a few steps; sometimes the enemy dynamites the steps which have been cut; sometimes they cave in because they are cut of poor material. After every fall one must arise; after every slip down one must reascend; every step destroyed must be replaced by two new ones."
—LEON TROTSKY. ("Manifesto for the Fourth International," March 1934.)

I.

The greatest changes in history take place when one universal grade of social organization gives way to the next, as feudalism, for example, was supplanted by capitalism. Our generation is living through a far more fundamental transformation of society in which international capitalism is being displaced by the movement toward socialism. This revolutionary process has already been going on for more than a century and is far from completion—much farther, indeed, than most of us desire.

The vast expanse of events involved in the changeover from one social system to the next extends over many decades and even centuries, and embraces peoples in various stages of development. The fundamental features of this prolonged process cannot be seen in correct proportion and perspective except from an elevated and far-ranging viewpoint.

These two articles aim to survey the entire span of the world movement for socialism through its successive stages from the emergence of Marxism in the middle of the nineteenth century to the present time. Whatever one's attitude toward its

results and prospects, it would be difficult to deny the fact that the socialist movement has made considerable headway in the world over the past century. History *does* move forward; society is being reconstructed, whether or not the ways and means are to one's liking.

There is a qualitative difference in the fundamental trends of social development between the middle of the nineteenth century and the middle of the twentieth century. When socialism first came on the scene in the 1840's, the principal movement of society revolved around the continuing rise of world capitalism. For the rest of the century, and even after, it looked to almost all people as though this would persist indefinitely. But around the second decade of the present century this trend met with a sharp reversal. Capitalism received its first big setback—and since that time the main currents of social change have been flowing through socialist channels.

The course of human life today is shaped by the struggles arising from this transition from capitalist, and even pre-capitalist institutions, to the new and higher economic system of socialism. This anti-capitalist revolution has to be viewed and understood in its entirety, not in bits and pieces. It is the mightiest of present-day realities. It unfolds step by step, sometimes leap by leap, according to its own independent rhythm. This world revolution of the working people holds everything in its grip and, directly or indirectly, decisively affects the destinies of every one on this planet.

It is one of the two basic determi-

nants of historical development in our time. The other is the counter-revolution headed by monopolist imperialism. The contest between these two giant forces is world-wide, all-embracing, uninterrupted. Which is the stronger of the contending camps? The definitive answer to this question has yet to be given. But a partial verdict has already been rendered by the net results of their struggles over the last hundred years.

Despite its occasional glacier-like motion, its defeats at this stage or retreats in this or that area, on a world-historical scale the advancing socialist forces have gained irretrievably at the expense of the receding sustainers of capitalism. It is especially important for American socialists to appraise this fact at its proper value; because it appears otherwise if one's gaze is focussed upon the United States alone at the immediate stage of the relations between the opposing forces of capitalism and socialism within this country. Such a nationally limited outlook is inadequate and misleading in judging the progress and outcome to date of the contest between the old order and the new.

It may appear for a while that the anti-capitalist revolution sweeping the rest of the modern world will bypass the United States. This is one of the most firmly fixed illusions prevailing around us. To counteract and dispel this illusion, it is essential to comprehend the interrelations and interactions of this irresistible movement of social revolution within the world network of nations.

Although the degree of its participation varies from one stage to the

This is the first of two articles based on lectures given by William F. Warde at the 1957 session of the West Coast Vacation School.

next, it is impossible for any country to remain completely aloof from this mighty transition. Each nation is subjected to the historical force of the anti-capitalist struggle and functions as a component and contributory part of the whole process. Each national segment of world society plays a specific role in promoting or retarding the advance of this universal movement. These roles differ from one generation to another and from one phase of the anti-capitalist struggle to the next, as we shall see.

But there is an unbreakable connection, an uninterrupted interaction between the total world process and its many national units. These reciprocally influence and modify each other's course of development. The international movement and its individual national sectors are not factors of equal weight in the whole. In the last analysis, however resistant or isolated any of its parts, the world revolution—or its converse, the imperialist counter-revolution—will intervene. The collision of these opposing forces and its results are decisive in determining the evolution of contemporary society on a world scale as well as the evolution of different continents and countries.

This influence may be exerted indirectly at a given stage. Today for example it appears that the world revolution has nothing to do with the United States. And yet its effects can be seen in the impressive impact the Russian Revolution—the Soviet Union and its achievements for better or for worse—is having upon American life. Here is a revolution which occurred forty years ago in a distant land—and yet through the policies of our imperialist government its pressure determines how much civil liberties the American people may enjoy, how big the military budget is, how much taxes we must pay, etc.

Even though the United States itself has yet to approach the portals of the socialist revolution, its development elsewhere is felt all around us. The Third Chinese Revolution is a part of that world revolution and only three years after its victory it collided head-on with U.S. imperialism in Korea and involved this whole country in war.

This overriding power of the world revolution has increased from one decade to the next and will continue to do so.

A Zigzag Course

Much grief, confusion and perplexity has been provoked among socialists by the fact that the progress of the anti-capitalist forces has been so erratic and uneven. This may run counter to our personal desires but it conforms to historical precedent. History does not provide any examples of a smooth and harmonious replacement of one universal social structure by another. Quite the contrary. The Western World had to pass through the Dark Ages of over five hundred years in order to advance from Greco-Roman slavery to the threshold of feudalism.

The next great social transition—from pre-capitalist to capitalist society—showed how complex, difficult, and prolonged such a process can be. The revolutionary developments which brought capitalism into being began during the sixteenth century in the maritime nations of Western Europe. It took four centuries more before they completed a circuit of the advanced countries and conquered the globe.

During these four hundred years the struggles against the pre-capitalist order spread from one country to another and from one continent to another in an extremely irregular manner. The major upheavals which mark the forward march of the capitalist revolution started with the revolts in Germany in the sixteenth century. These were crushed so thoroughly that the German people could not rise again for three centuries. However, the next attempts, the Dutch and the English bourgeois revolutions in the seventeenth century, proved successful. So did the American and French revolutions of the eighteenth century and the American Civil War of the nineteenth century.

Moreover, the new claimant to supreme power, the bourgeoisie, was not uniformly victorious throughout this era of its rise and, even where triumphant, did not always carry

through all its class aims. In the United States, the capitalists did not win national supremacy in the first revolution; they had to share power with the slaveholders—and it took a second revolution to crush these rivals. In Germany the bourgeoisie did not rule in its own right until the Hohenzollerns and the Junker landlords were overthrown in 1918—and then the industrial workers were already knocking on the doors of power. In Russia it was still worse for the capitalists; they did not achieve sovereignty there at any time. After having been held back by the Czarist-landlord regime up to 1917, they were thrust aside and eliminated by the victorious worker-peasant uprisings.

There can be no duplication of pattern between the course of the movement which established the capitalists in power and the movement which is dispossessing and replacing them. The historical conditions and the specific social forces at work are vastly different. Moreover, the pace of history has speeded up. It took less time for capitalism to supplant feudalism than it did for feudalism to take the place of slavery. And it will take still less time for the socialist forces to get rid of capitalism.

But the same general historical causes that made the transition from the old order to the new so irregular and contradictory in the past still prevail. The oncoming forces of socialism have to contend with all the inherited unevennesses of social development in the world. The proletarian revolution not only has to cope with fierce resistance from capitalist elements but also with the economic and cultural backwardnesses of the pre-capitalist areas where the majority of mankind live. These conditions have created enormous, unexpected, and still unresolved problems for the advance of socialism where capitalism has already been abolished as in Russia, Eastern Europe and China. These difficulties in turn have had their influence upon the progress of the socialist movements in the more advanced countries.

The zigzag path of the world revolution will emerge more clearly in

our review of the stages it has passed through.

The first major historical period of the proletarian movement extended from 1848 to 1917. These sixty-nine years were essentially devoted to assembling and preparing the first forces for storming the citadels of capitalist power. During this time the methods and ideas of scientific socialism were developed and disseminated and contended for supremacy in the ranks of labor; the first programs of the workers parties were formulated; the initial cadres of the socialist ranks were recruited, educated, trained and sent into battle on elementary issues of the class struggle; the first trade-union and political organizations of the working class were built.

This preparatory period was itself broken up into two distinct stages, each with its own characteristics and subordinate phases of its own. The pioneering years stretched from 1847 to 1878.

The Pioneer Period

Capitalism creates the conditions and forces for the socialist movement: the necessary technical basis, science and the working class itself. That is its major contribution to social progress. It also provokes the working class into action and is the involuntary promoter of the class struggle. A strong and stable proletarian movement against capitalism could not therefore arise until capitalism itself had attained a high degree of maturity.

In its conscious form, the anti-capitalist movement of the industrial working class is little more than a hundred years old. Socialism did not pass out of its prenatal state until 1848. It was born in Western Europe, the most advanced sector of world society at that time. The existence of a distinctive, scientifically guided proletarian socialist movement can be said to date from the outbreak of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions of that crucial year.

Its infancy was attended by two very different types of events. One was theoretical and programmatic. This was the publication of *The Com-*

unist Manifesto early in 1848 which first set forth the principles and aims of the scientific socialists. The other was practical and political. This was the betrayal and crushing of the popular uprisings by the forces of reaction in Western Europe.

The budding socialist and labor movements there suffered heavily from these setbacks throughout the 1850's. Then in the sixties a steady rise in labor organization, accompanied by a patient and persistent work of ideological clarification and socialist propaganda by the first Marxists in the mass movement, bore its fruit. This culminated in the formation of the First International in 1864 under the inspiration of the Marxists.

The activities of the First International are little known even in socialist circles today. But they were considerable. The First International led the fight for the extension of the franchise in England and for progressive labor legislation. It stimulated trade union organization in many countries. It supported strikes and rallied the European workers to the progressive sides in the American Civil War and the Franco-Prussian War.

The center of the First International was England. When the British labor movement became stagnant, conservatized and corrupted and when the first working-class bid for power, the Paris Commune, was suppressed in 1871, the ensuing dampening of revolutionary energies led to the disintegration of the First International. It was formally dissolved in 1878.

Like all pioneer efforts, this first assemblage of the forces for socialism had great limitations and obvious defects. But these were not so significant as its enduring results. These achievements can be summed up under four headings.

First was the work of ideological clarification accomplished through it by its Marxist wing. Today Marxism has no serious competition in the field of socialist theory. But this was not so in the beginning. None awarded scientific socialism its present preeminence; it had to fight hard to win it. Marxism contended against a host of rivals, each of which claimed

to be the gospel of emancipation. Among these were Lassalleism, Proudhonism, Bakuninism, Utopianism. Some of these schools of thought are now completely forgotten, although they then loomed large in the consciousness of the advanced workers. For example, Marx's two future sons-in-law, LaFargue and Longuet, were troublesome apostles of the petty-bourgeois socialism of the Frenchman Proudhon before they became Marxists. Marxism triumphed over all rival ideological tendencies during this period.

The second accomplishment was the elaboration and application of specific working-class programs on a socialist basis. Nowadays the essentials of such programs are handed over to the younger generation ready-made. But a host of questions such as the nature of the state, the relation between the political movement and trade-union struggles, the attitude of revolutionary socialists toward reform measures, toward civil and national wars, had to be thought out and fought out before they became an accepted part of the working-class arsenal.

Third was the establishment of the practice and tradition of international working-class organization and action. The First International gave living proof that the international solidarity of the working class could be effective and fruitful. The term "internationalism" is in the dictionary and the song *The International* was written thanks to the influences of the First International on world culture.

Fourth was the education of the first cadres of socialist leadership. Never since then has there been lacking a continuity of revolutionary socialist leadership on an international scale, however small and scattered it has been at certain times and in certain countries.

Era of the Second International

Trotsky once characterized the period of working-class activity covered by the First International as essentially an anticipation. The *Communist Manifesto*, he said, was the theoretical anticipation of the modern

labor movement. The First International was the practical anticipation of the labor associations of the world. The Paris Commune was the revolutionary anticipation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin later characterized the Third International as the international of action which had begun to put into practice Marx's greatest slogan: the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The historical bridge between the International of *anticipation* and the International of *action* was the Second International. This can be tersely characterized as the International of *organization* which raised broad masses of workers to their feet in a number of countries, organized them into trade unions and political labor parties, and prepared the soil for the independent mass labor movement.

This latter part of the preliminary period of the world revolution started at a much higher level than the first, since it was based upon the further advances of capitalism and the achievements of the earliest stage. It was launched with the reconstitution of the various national socialist groupings into the Second International in 1889.

The principal positive features of the movement from 1889 to 1914 were developed under the banner of the Second International. This new movement, unlike its precursor, was avowedly Marxist from the first in inspiration, doctrine and leadership. It was formed under the supervision of Engels himself and his closest co-workers on the continent.

Through the Second International, European socialism passed beyond the stage of propaganda through limited cadres and undertook the task of acquainting millions of workers with socialist ideas. Marxism not only became popularized on a national scale in Germany but became an indispensable part of every progressive person's education.

During this period socialism first became a mass influence, a power of the first magnitude in the electoral and parliamentary fields as well as in the trade unions of Western Europe. For the first time proletarian socialism began to play a major role in determining the course of modern

history, a small payment on what it was destined to do.

Germany displaced England as the foremost country in labor's advance. Its working class was not only the best organized but the most class conscious, the best tutored in theoretical questions. The most capable theoreticians of Marxism flourished on German soil: Kautsky, Mehring, Rosa Luxemburg, and others. The axis of the Second International revolved around Germany and France where the socialist forces likewise made big strides.

These imperishable achievements of the Social-Democratic era were interwoven with conspicuous shortcomings. First of all, the movement was for the most part localized in the industrialized countries of Western Europe. Outside that central area — with few exceptions — the socialist movement did not get beyond the infantile stage of sects or propaganda groups. The colonial areas which embraced the most of mankind were extremely backward and passive.

Moreover, as socialism acquired a mass scope in the advanced capitalist countries, in its upper layers it tended to take on a more and more conservative and reformist bias. Revolutionary zeal, purpose and perspectives receded as imperialism expanded and the union and party officialdoms consolidated their positions and privileges. These reformist practices and policies found their theoretical formulation at the turn of the twentieth century through the classic revisionism of Eduard Bernstein. Bernstein repudiated the revolutionary theory and outlook of Marxism and saw capitalism becoming peacefully transformed step by step into a social democracy. This exponent of the right-wing tendencies in the Social-Democracy was answered in an equally classical way by his clearest-sighted opponent among the left-wing leaders, Rosa Luxemburg. It is interesting to note that the crucial theoretical and practical problems of socialist development were most thoroughly threshed out among the Germans throughout this period.

Third, the type of party dominant in the Second International was not that of a disciplined combat party but rather a loose federation of diverse groups and heterogeneous

tendencies united for parliamentary purposes. These organizations were not envisaged by the right-wing and centrist leaders as means for conquering power through mass action but as machines on the bourgeois model for garnering votes and posts in the established setup.

Shattering of Two Illusions

While moving forward, each epoch in history, and in the labor movement as well, commits inescapable errors and nourishes its characteristic illusions. We can single out two of these in the thinking of Marxists during that period. One was the conception that the Social-Democratic organizations as they existed were adequate to lead the workers to the conquest of power.

The other was the expectation that the proletarian revolution would first occur and triumph in the highly industrialized countries where socialism made its debut. Marx expected the French to begin the social revolution; the Germans to continue it; the English to complete it. But this forecast was upset by unforeseen events. The actual course of development of the world revolution took an unexpected twist. Reality, as it has the habit of doing, turned out to be much more complex and contradictory than the most far-sighted social theorists could anticipate.

Both of these illusions were shattered by mighty events. The fatal weaknesses of the Social-Democratic parties were exposed when the First World War broke out. These weaknesses in turn exposed the flaws in the expectation that the Western European workers would initiate the socialist revolution. The Russian Revolution, which exposed the fatal weaknesses of capitalism there, demonstrated that this honor belonged to the workers of Eastern Europe.

The Social-Democratic era did not culminate in the triumph of the working class over the capitalists; it dishonorably sneaked off the stage of history in the triumph of the imperialists over the working class. The surrender of the right-wing leaderships of the German and French Social Democracies to the war ef-

forts of their respective imperialist governments were the most stunning blows ever to hit the socialist movement. The socialist and labor cause had experienced serious setbacks and severe defeats before, such as the crushing of the Paris Commune. But these had been primarily caused by an unfavorable balance of forces supplemented by the immaturity of the movement and the inexperience of its leadership.

The decision of the party bosses in August 1914 to go along with their armor-plated imperialisms was something different. It was much more than a physical defeat; it was an internal betrayal at the decisive hour of danger which produced a moral, ideological, and political rout.

The main factors responsible for the treacherous behavior of the Social-Democratic bigwigs have been thoroughly analyzed and documented and are well known to radical circles. The party and trade-union bureaucracies had become corrupted and conservatized by their capitalist environment in the preceding period. When the day of decision arrived, they aligned their lot with their ruling class, abandoning their responsibilities as socialist leaders, disarming and disorienting the ranks, and leaving the workers in the lurch.

Their action was not entirely unanticipated. A number of prominent left-wing figures like Rosa Luxemburg had long feared such an eventuality. Trotsky had written as early as 1906 in his book *Results and Perspectives*: "The work of propaganda and organization among the proletariat . . . has its own intrinsic inertia. The Socialist parties of Europe — in the first place, the most powerful of them, the German Socialist party — have developed a conservatism of their own, which grows in proportion as Socialism embraces ever larger masses and organization and discipline increase. Social Democracy, personifying the political experience of the proletariat, can, therefore, at a certain juncture, become an immediate obstacle on the way of an open proletarian conflict with the bourgeois reaction. In other words, the conservatism of a proletarian party in limiting itself to propaganda, can, at a certain mo-

ment, impede the direct struggle of the proletariat for power." Prophetic words!

However, the workers as a whole, and even some of their most resolute leaders, were unprepared for the suddenness of this surrender. When Lenin first heard the news that the German Socialist leaders in the Reichstag had voted for the war credits, he refused to believe it, suspecting a trick of capitalist propaganda.

Those who have been so dismayed and disheartened by the revelation in 1956 of the betrayals of the Stalinist bureaucracy had their predecessors in the millions who were stunned and demoralized in 1914. It took almost three years for the workers movement there to recover from its prostration and despair.

Then as now, there were no lack of faint hearts to lament, or bourgeois commentators to gloat, that all was lost. Marxism, they said, had been proved bankrupt; socialism had failed to make good its promises; nationalism had turned out to be stronger than internationalism, which was only a Utopian dream; the working class was incapable of dominating and directing the affairs of the nation; these, fortunately or unfortunately, should be left to other and more capable hands and heads. These arguments and conclusions have been the same for the past hundred years; only the circumstances and their advocates change.

To be sure, appearances were temporarily on the side of the disillusioned and dejected. But the further development of events was on the side of the revolution. Here and there, scattered through the world, were stalwart scientific socialists and working-class militants who had knowledge and conviction enough not to place confidence in the invincibility of capitalism or to undervalue the potential of its working-class adversary.

In that same prophetic pamphlet in which he had foreseen the surrender of the reformist leaders, Trotsky had observed: "The possibilities of a war on European territory have grown enormously . . . A European war, however, means a European revolution." Lenin and his closest associates hammered away on the same

theme after August 1914. The Lenins and Trotskys, Luxemburgs and Liebknechts were looked upon as fanatics completely out of touch with reality or as relics of the past who clung to outworn dogmas. But the dialectical method of Marxism enabled them to foresee that the very war, which had laid the working class low, would later compel it to rise to its feet again. Out of the imperialist war would emerge the conditions for the proletarian revolution. They not only predicted but prepared for its coming.

So it happened, although not precisely as they expected.

The Most Relevant Lessons

Many important lessons can be learned from a review of the Social-Democratic era. There are two of particular relevance to the present crisis of world socialism.

One is the capacity the working class has shown from 1848 to the present day to absorb the hardest blows and snap back after a while from the most terrible defeats. "This old anvil laughs at many broken hammers."

The irrepressible vitality of the hosts of labor is no mystical quality; its resilience and stamina spring from the material conditions of life in modern society. Capitalism creates the working class and depends upon it, as a parasite depends upon its host. Yet it cannot satisfy the demands or solve the problems of the working force it exploits and oppresses. Even in good times workers display their discontent and protest against insecurity by strikes and similar demonstrations; at more critical turning points their will to combat capitalism and cut through to a better life flares into uprisings and revolutions.

Labor draws its inexhaustible strength from the indispensable part it plays as the principal force of production, the creator of all wealth and profit. It enhances that strength by its growing industrial organization, by its political formations, by its cohesiveness and solidarity in struggle, by its developing awareness of itself as a decisive social power of

growing importance compared to other classes. Finally, labor asserts itself as the only creative force in society that carries the future along with it as it rises.

The most significant fact about the ups and downs of the socialist movement over the past century has not been its defeats. The bourgeoisie of England and America also experienced many repulses during their rise. These are inescapable for any ascending power. More important has been the ability of labor to learn from these attacks, to recuperate from their effects, surge forward and gain new ground from which it is seldom pushed back. This is no less true of the American workers than any others.

Carl Sandburg once wrote a short

poem entitled *Upstream* that is appropriate to this point:

The strong men keep coming on,
They go down shot, hanged, sick, broken,
They live on fighting, singing, lucky as plungers.
The strong mothers pulling them on . . .
The strong mothers pulling them from a dark
sea, a great prairie, a long mountain.
Call hallelujah, call amen, call deep thanks.
The strong men keep coming on.

So it is with the men and women of labor. They are the strong people of the modern world; they keep coming on; and nothing can stop them in the end.

But strong people need not only strong hands and stout hearts but also good heads, if they are not to be duped and misdirected. The second great lesson the Social-Democratic era transmitted to our generation is the paramount importance of leadership and program. Without the right kind of party and policy the strongest sections of the working

class can go astray and become terribly wounded. Capitalist reaction cannot be outwitted, overcome and ousted from power by the workers, and the ordeal of transition from capitalism to socialism be shortened, except through the agency of a Marxist leadership which is cool in calculation and bold in action.

Some today have forgotten this lesson; others have still to learn it. But the significance of leadership as a prime condition for success in struggle is one of the most precious acquisitions of socialist experience. It was paid for by the bitter disillusion of 1914. And then, its necessity was affirmed in the most positive way by the victorious intervention of the Bolshevik party in 1917 which opened a new and brighter chapter in the progress of world socialism.

Really Beat?

"We live in a terrible world. We do not know when the big blast will go off and, boom, we will be no more."

by Evelyn Sell

THERE seems to be an unwritten law in America that every generation must be labeled. The "Lost Generation" of World War I was followed by the "Socially Conscious Generation" of the thirties. Various tags have been placed on the present generation — those who grew up during World War II, fought in the war that wasn't a war at all but a "police action," and are now on the roller-coaster ride of an up-and-down

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American economy. This has been called the Brain-Washed . . . the Waiting . . . the Go . . . the Silent . . . and, finally, the "Beat Generation."

Bewailing the apathy of today's youth, *Time* and *Life* called them the "Silent Generation" because the young people in America seemed completely content to let the world go by while they sought regimented living in a ranch house with a swimming pool. In a symposium of college professors in the *Nation* last year, the same criticism was voiced. College students were characterized as "earnest but dull . . . the mass

of college students lead lives of quiet enervation . . . many undergraduates acknowledge no heroes, profess only lukewarm admirations, shun causes, are suspicious of joinings and flinch from commitments." The professors (and *Time* and *Life* before them) were appalled at the "indifference to either politics or reform or rebellion . . ." which they noted in "our intellectual elite. In twenty years they will run the most powerful nation on earth."

The spokesmen of the present group who "run the most powerful nation on earth" are worried not about the next set of rulers so much

as the next set of "ruled." Science fiction writers enjoy describing mythical lands where the masses are drugged into political apathy, where the dictators mold the thoughts and actions of their workers through TV. We do not live in such a push-button world as yet. We live in a world where wars—even atomic wars—must be fought by people who believe in what they are fighting for. Those who "run the most powerful nation on earth" need a generation of Americans who acknowledge heroes like McCarthy, admire brink-of-war diplomacy, believe in capitalism, like nothing better than to fight in another and another and another "police action."

That is where the apathy hurts— young people shun, to a great extent, commitments to socialist actions but they also shun committing themselves to new Koreas, to economic insecurity, to witch-hunts. Most young people play it cool—to both sides. They are nursing their passion, waiting (in the unemployment lines), watching (uprisings throughout the world), listening (to reports of the poisoning of our atmosphere by nuclear tests).

But there are other young people who do not withhold their passion, who live fast and furiously, at fever pitch. They commit themselves totally— some to motorcycles and endless races down the roads of America, some to drugs and the sensations of "flipping," some to the exotic intellectuality of Eastern philosophies, or to defiant homosexuality, or promiscuous heterosexuality. They are the loud-mouths of the generation. They attract the spotlight. Books are written about them. Magazines photograph and describe them. Movies are made about them. But at bottom they are not so different from their more silent brothers and sisters. They share a deep-going rejection of the values of our society and a fervent stressing of the value and importance of the human being as a person.

The label "Silent Generation" failed to win popular acceptance. Now, however, writers claiming to speak for their kind have adopted a name for themselves that seems to be catching on. In 1952, the same year that *Time* and *Life* wrote of

"The Silent Generation," John Clellon Holmes published an article in the *New York Times* entitled "This Is the Beat Generation." Since then the phrase has gained popularity and notoriety through the literary successes of writers such as Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg. Kerouac has not only hit the best-seller lists with his *On the Road*, he has become touted as the spokesman of the people of whom he writes: people who live on the bum; who restlessly seek their "kicks" in modern jazz, marijuana, fast cars and faster motorcycles, crime, defiant sexual amorality, Zen Buddhism; who have as their heroes James Dean, Dylan Thomas, Charlie Parker; who say to each other, "We gotta go and never stop going till we get there." "Where we going, man?" "I don't know, but we gotta go."

These are the "hipsters," the Beat Generation. Kerouac calls them "seekers." What are they seeking? "God," answers Kerouac; "I want God to show me His face." Kerouac defines Beat: "Beat means beatitude, not beat up." The hipster is one who is on the beat, in tune with things, in the know, a cool cat who takes drugs and then says, "But, man, last night I got so high I knew *everything*. I mean I knew *why*." In his second published novel *The Subterraneans*, Kerouac writes that they are "hip without being slick, they are intelligent without being corny, they are intellectual as hell and know all about Pound without being pretentious or talking too much about it, they are very quiet, they are very Christlike."

The real hipsters, the actual "pros" of the Beat Generation, are numerically very small. The select group is swelled, however, by the curious and the bored and the sometimes rebellious who like to season their suburban solid-citizen safe lives with a dash of bitter-sweet Bohemianism.

The rest of the world lives in Squaresville. The squares don't dig anything. They wear Brooks Park suits, drive MGs, hunger after the dollar and are "burned alive in their innocent flannel suits on Madison Avenue amid the blasts of leaden verse & the tanked up clatter of the iron regiments of fashion & the nitroglycerine shrieks of the fairies

of advertising & the mustard gas of sinister intelligent editors, or . . . run down by the drunken taxicabs of Absolute Reality . . ."

This last is from Allen Ginsberg's *Howl*. In this poem he mourns not only the wasted lives of the squares but also that of the hipsters "who drove crosscountry seventy-two hours to find out if I had a vision or you had a vision or he had a vision to find out Eternity . . ."

John Clellon Holmes, in an *Esquire* article, defines "beat" in this way: "Everyone who has lived through a war, any sort of war, knows that beat means, not so much weariness, as rawness of the nerves; not so much being 'filled up to here,' as being emptied out. It describes a state of mind from which all unessentials have been stripped, leaving it receptive to everything around it, but impatient with trivial obstructions. To be beat is to be at the bottom of your personality, looking up . . . [The] conviction of the creative power of the unfettered individual soul stands behind everything in which the members of this generation interest themselves . . . a generation groping toward faith out of an intellectual despair and moral chaos in which they refuse to lose themselves."

The letters *Esquire* printed in response to Holmes' article speak for themselves:

From Connecticut: "This is the Beat Generation, all right. Dead-beat!"

From Pennsylvania: "I know I am speaking for a lot of young men who just want to be left alone and not continuously bugged by people who don't take time to know us . . . I, too, am searching for something, I don't know what, but it's there inside of me."

From Maryland: "I'm tired of hearing us called freaks, renegades, and generally inferior human beings . . . The Beat Generation you refer to is made up of a minority of people who have used the times as an excuse for their shortcomings."

From New York: "We live in a terrible world. We do not know when the big blast will go off and boom, we will be no more. So we must live for today, for tomorrow may never come. That is why we must live fast. We have simply got

to get all our living in while we can. In other days, people could plan their lives . . . Today, however, while we must keep part of ourselves aware of the future and must plan for it, the rest of us, unfortunately, have to be aware that there may be no future and we had better live now and not then. This is a terribly morbid philosophy, but perhaps the only one that keeps us from degenerating altogether."

From Nebraska: "How can you have the gas to lump all the teenagers into one glob? Generations as a group do not exist. They are a myth perpetrated by know-it-alls with the magic key to our mysterious youth's minds . . . so they believe."

From New York: "Now to separate the different phases of our so-called Beat Generation: There are Rock and Roll teen-agers, and the mentally hip, us. The R&R's like wild parties, fast cars, crime, violence, fighting, drugs, sex and death, if you like. They are uncluttered and primitive. Our group—the cool—we have a goal. We are striving to find beauty in a world that shuns it.

"Our feelings are not gutty; they are cool. We do not depend on the bizarre, and crimes without object are not ours. We consider physical violence and argument very square. We enjoy continental coffee shops and the like . . . Our feelings can well be described in one word, indifferent, indifferent to the world of squares which surrounds us . . . The statement 'They refuse to lose themselves,' is the most profound part of your article."

Who Belongs

In this letter the writer touches the problem of definition. Who belongs to the Beat Generation? Is the hipster clothed in the motorcyclist's black leather jacket, or does he wear the gray flannel of disillusioned Madison Avenue sophisticates, or does he slouch in a San Francisco bar in nondescript working clothes? Although the bickering is considerable over what is a "real" hipster, these three groups are usually included in discussions of the Beat Generation: the gangs (leather

belted, sideburned, jeaned and garri-son belted), the Bohemians (replete with drugs, sex, jazz, poetry and knapsack), and the sorrowfully se-date suburbanites who wander down among the dregs of society for relief from the routines of ordinary middle-class life.

The latter group can be considered more as "fellow travelers" than the hard core of hipsterism. An article in the *Reporter* calls them "people who are merely curious, who want to see the vision but not be in it, who have a contempt for Squaresville but live there, who dig jazz but don't live it."

The Bohemians and the juvenile gangs "live it." There is no well-paid job or middle-class security for them to run back to when the last musician has played the last note or the last rock is thrown by the last standee of a rumble. They are in deadly earnest about "being with it." In writing about the juvenile gangs, John Clellon Holmes shocked many when he said, "Even the crudest and most nihilistic member of the Beat Generation, the young slum hoodlum, is almost exclusively concerned with the problem of belief, albeit unconsciously. It seems incredible that no one has realized that the only way to make the shocking juvenile murders coherent at all is to understand that they are specifically moral crimes . . . Such crimes, which are no longer rarities and which are all committed by people under twenty-five, cannot be understood if we go on mouthing the same old panaceas about broken homes and slum environments and bad company, for they are spiritual crimes, crimes against the identity of another human being, crimes which reveal with stark and terrifying clarity the lengths to which a desperate need for values can drive the young. For in actuality it is the *longing* for values which is expressed in such a crime, and not the hatred of them. It is the longing to do or feel something meaningful, and it provides a sobering glimpse of how completely the cataclysms of this century have obliterated the rational, humanistic view of Man on which modern society has been erected."

Holmes points out that what the juvenile gangs are turning to, in their search for a code of ethics, is

one of the oldest types of human organization, the tribe. The inviolability of comradeship, the high regard for personal courage, the oath to present a united, fighting front to the rest of the world, the concept that you and your brother belong and the others are all enemies to be destroyed or circumvented—these are the morés of the primitive tribe.

What Holmes does not point out is that these are also the ethics of the capitalist society we live in drawn out to their most crude and saddening extremes. In trying to find his way in this world he never made, the juvenile gang member responds to the society that condemns him, "O.K., you made the rules. I'll go you one better." In a class society, where one group is constantly engaged in struggle against another, the juvenile gangs plot rumbles, one gang against another. In a society that fosters prejudice, the juvenile gangs make raids on the "sheenies," or the "niggers," or the "wops," or the "japs." In a society of permanent war, the gang member has his own versions of flame throwers, bazookas, bombs and grenades.

The third group included in the Beat Generation is the Bohemians. In *The Social History of Art*, Hauser writes of the difference between the Bohemians of the romantic and naturalistic periods. What he says of the latter could be published about the hipster today in *Playboy* or the *Nation*:

"The bohème was originally no more than a demonstration against the bourgeois way of life. It consisted of young artists and students, who were mostly the sons of well-to-do people, and in whom the opposition to the prevailing society was usually a product of mere youthful exuberance and contrariness . . . [they] parted from bourgeois society, not because they were forced, but because they wanted to live differently from their bourgeois fathers. They were genuine romantics, who wanted to be original and extravagant. They undertook their excursion into the world of the outlaws and the outcasts, just as one undertakes a journey into an exotic land; they knew nothing of the misery of the later bohème, and they were free to return to bourgeois society at any

time. The bohème of the following generation, that of the militant naturalism with its headquarters in the beer cellars . . . was . . . a real bohème, that is, an artistic proletariat, made up of people whose existence was absolutely insecure, people who stood outside the frontiers of bourgeois society, and whose struggle against the bourgeoisie was no high-spirited game but a bitter necessity. Their unbourgeois way of life was the form which best suited the questionable existence that they led and was in no sense any longer a mere masquerade."

It is the Bohemian artist of the Beat Generation who has established his headquarters in San Francisco. That city is being hailed by some as the Paris of this generation; and the "San Francisco School" of art is lauded as the fountainhead of a renaissance in American art today. Those associated with this school include Kerouac, Ginsberg, Rexroth, Ferlinghetti.

Most San Francisco poets and writers are in the ranks of the longshoremen, migratory agricultural workers, seamen, and others whose work keeps them on the move. Allen Ginsberg, for example, makes a trip to the Arctic and then has enough money to go to Mexico and Europe for a while. Jack Kerouac, after achieving a minor success with a novel years ago, became disgusted with the New York literary life and said, "I have to make my choice between all *this* and the rattling trucks on the American road. And I think I'll choose the rattling trucks . . ." He chose the trucks and the odd-job life of the lumpen-proletariat. Young writers of the San Francisco school don't debate the theoretical questions of the class struggle in Bohemian coffee shops—they engage in that struggle on the picket line. They don't join the picket line to soak up atmosphere—they work at the place being struck.

The ranks of this artistic proletariat have been swelled by the conscientious objectors who were quartered nearby during the war. The anarcho-syndicalist traditions of the once powerfully influential IWW have reasserted themselves somewhat as the disillusionment with Stalinism has grown. Add to this a

strong anti-war movement and you have the political temper of the San Francisco Bohemian climate. The school has been aptly termed "the new anarchist Bohemianism."

All the publicity about the school has resulted in a tourist invasion into the Bohemian life of the city. In a "fanzine," *RUR*, put out by David Rike of Berkeley, California, it is explained that the Beat types "aren't pleased about all the publicity since that means commercialization, the turning of North Beach into a tourist hang-out, higher rents, and the coming in of all sorts of squares, and week-end Bohemians and out-right gawkers. With commercialization, their bars are no longer places where you know you can meet all of your friends at since they are now squeezed out by the tourists who simply have to dig these cuh-razy people they read about in *Life*, *Playboy* and *Esquire*. The rents have gotten so high that even Lawrence Ferlinghetti has moved out of the Beach and down to the Potrero Hill district, besides numerous other persons. And the squares; you know the type, they have a nice Respectable job, white-collaring it somewhere, during the day, but wow, man, they gotta be with the Crowd and be Hip and, like that, so they don their turtle neck sweater, sandals, and frisco jeans and drive out to the Beach in their MGs (discreetly parking them in some dark alley, of course). But that's the way things go here in America."

As Hauser pointed out, the bohème consists of both artists and students. Student beats usually refuse to admit any ties to either the slum hood or the arty hipster. During a discussion held by the Young Socialist Club in Detroit, the question was asked by one of these Beat-type students, "Is this movement progressive or reactionary?" The consensus among those present was that the movement is progressive in that it questions and rejects the capitalist philosophy of life. Its reactionary features consist in the inability to do more than reject, in the lack of understanding of the social forces spawning the movement.

The observation was made during this discussion that young people generally are beginning to seriously

question the status quo, that they are restlessly turning this way and that in search of a guide to life in keeping with the ideals of democracy. The youth of the thirties went through the same process of questioning and seeking. The answers came then in the shape of the powerful upsurge of industrial unionism, which rallied to its struggle the youth, the intellectuals, artists and middle class of that day. The present generation seeks but has not yet found such an answer.

A word much in popularity among students today is "humanism." Over and over they insist on their belief in humanist principles. One of them said to me, referring to a mutual friend, "He is what I call a *real* socialist. He really believes in helping people. When he talks about sharing the wealth he really means it. I don't know if you're a real socialist. You call yourself that but I don't know how you really feel about other people."

David Rike made the following observations about the Beat types: ". . . they want a Change; they want to be able to Dig-the-Scene as human beings, before there isn't any Scene to dig at all. If it was October, 1956 and we were in Hungary, they'd be behind the barricades with the Freedom Fighters and participating in the Workers' Councils that sprang up. Some of them would very much like to be down in Cuba, with Castro. And, on Easter Sunday of this year, a lot of them were marching in the pouring rain in front of the AEC offices in Oakland, protesting nuclear tests.

"H-Bomb protests and maybe they'll, in the future, come out and give support to strikes and labor struggles, especially when there might be students scabbing . . . Deep Down, they're Waiting. Waiting for something like Spain, 1936; or Berlin, 1953; Budapest, 1956; or maybe even San Francisco, 1934 or Oakland, 1946 . . .

"When I first dug the Beach and the Beat-types more than a year ago, I noted that they appeared to be no more than Pachucos who read books, had social consciousness, and didn't resort to violence so readily. This isn't coincidental, because as intellectuals, they play a vanguard role

in Awareness. In Hungary, 1956, things got started by mass action on the part of the students, but when the chips were really down and the Russians moved into Budapest, it was the young workers from the factories who were manning the barricades, chucking molotov cocktails at tanks, and directing actions in the Workers' Councils. And the Beat-types have the potential for doing the same thing in this country."

The middle-class "fellow traveler," the juvenile hood, the Bohemian—this is the Beat Generation. And yet there is one other member of this group that is included as a kind of minister without portfolio, the Negro. Norman Mailer and Herbert Gold in magazine articles have stressed the relationship between the Negro and his struggle in society and the hipsters. In fact, the argument is that to be a hipster is to be a white Negro. Mailer has written that when the Bohemian and the juvenile delinquent came face to face with the Negro the "hipster was a fact in American life."

This kinship with the Negro is often expressed. Kerouac writes, "At lilac evening I walked with every muscle aching among the lights of 27th and Welton in the Denver colored section, wishing I were a Negro, feeling that the best the white world had offered was not enough ecstasy for me, not enough life, joy, kicks, darkness, music . . ." Highly romanticized, yes, but indicative of the bond between the Beat Generation and the Negro—two groups who are forced to live on the edges of society. The most obvious bond between them is their common language and their common responsiveness to jazz. Hip, cool, man, beat, to be with it—these terms originated among and through those who created and those who dig jazz.

The members of the Beat Generation are spread across America (and, if the reports are accurate, it seems they may even exist in England's Teddy Boys, Japan's Sun Tribers, and in Russia). The dominant characteristics of the group have emerged and crystallized since the end of World War II. The exact number is difficult to determine although Norman Mailer has estimated that 100,000 Americans are conscious hipsters and

No Recession Yet

Stockholders have been the last to feel the effects of the economic decline. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, first-quarter cash dividends this year hit a new peak, topping by a "slight margin" even the fabulous level of last year.

millions more are Beat and don't know it, or refuse to admit it. Holmes' *Go* was published in 1952 but it wasn't until several years later that books such as his became popular, touted and commented upon in large-scale fashion. By the time *On the Road* was presented to the public, growing numbers responded to sentiments expressed in these works with, "Yeah, man, that's the way it is. You're hip, you're hip."

What we see today is not a qualitative change in the phenomena of the Beat Generation but a growing recruitment to its ranks. Young artists and students turn to a Beat way of life as an expression of their revulsion against capitalist society and their indetermination about what to do about it. They are caught in the vacuum caused by the relative apathy of the working class and its failure as yet to take the road to independent political action.

And their literary spokesmen say, "Man, don't bug me about dope. What hallucinations could I have that could compare with the reality of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Don't get horrified at my little crimes—stealing cars to play chicken, cutting up a few people here and there. What could I do that could compare with World Wars and the theft of security and shelter and sustenance from millions? Don't tell me I live a crazy life, man. What's more insane than sealing up food in caves or dumping it in the ocean when millions are starving? What's crazier than laying off tens of thousands of workers when they want to and could be producing cars and refrigerators and clothes and homes?"

"Don't stop me from living it up. I'm me, you're you. You get your kicks your way; I'll get mine my way. So don't push me into the organization, man. I'm not one of the bunch. Each one of us is something

beautiful and wonderful. Cherish each little spark, let each blaze up in his own way. Don't smother anyone under the ashes of conformity.

"Don't tell me to live in Squaresville—the squares themselves know that underneath the slick suburban surface there's a sickness that can't be cured and every sweet dream of love and tenderness is long gone. Don't give me the-little-wife-and-sweet-kiddies-around-the-fireplace bit. Man, like that went the way of dodo-bird things like free enterprise, the horse and buggy and the worship of tree spirits. We're living in the now—and the now is changing so fast we have to run faster and faster just to stay in one spot!"

"So, don't hold me back. I gotta go and keep going till I get there; where? I gotta find out where—and I can't find out if I can't go, go, go, if I'm caught like those 'who chained themselves to subways for the endless ride from Battery to holy Bronx on benzedrine until the noise of wheels and children brought them shuddering mouth-wracked and battered bleak of brain all drained of brilliance in the drear light . . .'"

Those who gasp and raise their eyebrows over the antics of the hipsters see only the negative, run-away-from-it-all, self-destructive aspects of this group. "Why don't they live *normally*?" the raised eyebrows ask.

Wouldn't it be the negation of all personal worth, wouldn't it be really self-destructive, really horrifying if they did live by the rules of a society where war, depression and the suppression of the individual have become normal? If they didn't thumb their noses at a moral code that no longer satisfies the needs of our changed human relations?

The Beat Generation does more than reject a world they never made and don't want. They are seeking for a world worth living in. Their search has led them into blind alleys so far, it is true, but over and over again, they affirm, "There must be an answer to the whys and wherefores of life. Maybe the next kick I go in for will reveal the truth behind it all. The answer is somewhere. I'll find it . . . in my own way . . . in my own time."

The Deep Roots of Inflation

Study of the long-range trend suggests that rising prices, despite the dips, are a built-in feature of capitalist economy

by Albert Phillips

ONE of the major historical and theoretical characteristics of healthy and expanding capitalism was its ability to constantly cheapen commodities. Through the "heavy artillery" of its low prices it was able to batter down the "Chinese Walls" of backward nations and "create a world after its own image."¹

But it is not only in regard to conflict with other social formations that the cheapening of commodities is important. Within the confines of the system itself, from the point of view of the individual capitalist or capitalist nation, it is the peaceful means of capturing a larger share of the internal market in the first instance, and of the world market in the second. More important than the capture of a larger share of a given market was the expansion of the indeterminate market. Along with the lowering of prices went a tremendous expansion of production and accumulation of capital. Along with the concomitant growth of the proletariat and the sharpening of the class struggle came an increase in real and money wages, a shortening of hours, and a general improvement in living standards. Thus on the whole, the period associated with falling prices is also of necessity an epoch of internal expansion of the market for capital goods and for consumer goods despite the periodic crises.

We note that on a social scale the cheapening of wage goods increased

1. *Communist Manifesto* (Kerr ed.; 1911), p. 19.

This is the first part of an article submitted to the INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVIEW for discussion by those of its readers who are interested in the problem of long-range inflation. Albert Phillips is a Detroit trade unionist.

relative surplus value; and, in addition, by lowering the cost of capital goods a countertendency to the falling rate of profit was set up.

In his own way Joseph Schumpeter, one of the foremost non-Keynesian economists in the bourgeois world, recognized the central importance of this feature of capitalism when he wrote that "Experience tends to show, however, that neither capitalism itself nor the social institutions associated with it, democracy among them, can work with efficiency and with comparative smoothness except on a falling trend in prices."²

As a long-range movement, however, the period of capitalism associated with a falling trend in prices ended with the close of the nineteenth century. It has since that time been replaced by a secular inflationary tendency which has been accelerating until today it threatens to break out of control on a world-wide scale and bring the capitalist credit structure, and with it the bourgeois mode of production, crashing about the ears of the bourgeoisie.

Secular inflation is indeed not the antipode of the stagnation manifested in the thirties; it is a different but equally dangerous indication of the underlying sickness. The flush of the inflationary boom is not a sign of health but a warning as in tuberculosis of impending disaster. It is a form manifesting the basic contradiction in capitalism, the declining rate of profit, through the operation of which capital itself becomes the ultimate barrier to capitalist production.

That the bourgeoisie senses the

2. Schumpeter, *Business Cycles* (McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., New York, 1939), II, 465.

fatal character of the disease, although it is incapable of either explaining or treating it, is evident in the continuing debate which is taking place all over the capitalist world. The dispute is dominated by the intellectual offspring of the depression, the Keynesian and neo-Keynesian advocates of a "mild" and state-managed inflation as the antidote to stagnation.

Despite their dominant position, they too are at loggerheads among themselves. In itself this is not surprising, for it was after all Keynes himself who wrote: "Lenin is said to have declared that the best way to destroy the capitalist system was to debauch the currency. Lenin was certainly right. There is no subtler, no surer means of overturning the existing basis of society than to debauch the currency. The process engages all the hidden forces of economic law on the side of destruction, and does it in a manner which not one man in a million is able to diagnose."³

The fact is that the inflationary process is developing according to its own laws, and is close to the stage feared by Keynes. It is beyond the point of serving as an instrument for encouraging production while at the same time providing a relatively painless way of extracting more surplus value from the working class.

The dispute itself has developed some ironic twists. In England the Keynesian leadership of the trade-union movement has condemned the government for failing to sufficiently stimulate investment in capital

3. As quoted by Prof. M. Bronfenbrenner in *Post-Keynesian Economics*, edited by K. Kurihara (Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, N. J., 1954), p. 31.

goods.⁴ On the other hand Sir Dennis Robertson, an advocate of mild doses of inflation, has recently stated the necessity of accepting stagnation in the accumulation of capital, since growth, in his opinion, can be achieved only at the expense of further inflation.⁵ This is an extremely important empirical conclusion to which we shall return. But on this side of the Atlantic it is mostly the Keynesian welfare-state economists, along with labor leaders like Reuther, who hold that there is too much investment,⁶ and that the cause of inflation can be found in "administered prices" designed to permit expansion of capital from internal sources.⁷ It is the spokesmen for Big Business, on the other hand, who hold that there is insufficient capital growth, that productivity is not rising fast enough, and that profit margins are being squeezed.⁸

The growing bewilderment of the economists is over the character of an inflation which defies their universally accepted axioms. Inflation continues despite a falling off of demand. It develops even with the growth of excess capacity in many important industries. It is accelerating even in the teeth of increasing unemployment.⁹ In short, it defies the rules of their textbooks which teach that inflation occurs because of lack of goods to supply effective demand.

Nevertheless, the majority of economists who testified at the Congressional hearings in Washington in June and July of 1957 were able to convince themselves, despite their acknowledged bewilderment, that high wages are at the bottom of the present inflation.¹⁰ More typical today in the long run are those who lay blame equally on "big labor" and

Big Business for the inflationary spiral.¹¹ Thus, while many of the Keynesians have stressed wages, some have emphasized administered prices and some have pointed to both, it is noteworthy that they have not referred to the role of the government and the government debt. Only some of the more unreconstructed elements among the bourgeoisie, who as yet fail to accept the irrevocably increasing role of the state in the capitalist economy, have pointed an accusing finger in this direction.¹² As could be expected, it has been the labor bureaucracy and welfare-state economists like Dr. Edwin G. Nourse who have defended the role of the government against all comers.¹³

This "oversight" becomes rather glaring when we note that taxes take, directly or indirectly, more than a third of the average worker's income and close to 50% of corporate profits; that one out of every eight persons is employed by the government; that one out of every five dollars of the country's assets is in government property (even excluding federal highways and military equipment); that one out of every 20 dollars in all business sales is made to the government; that the \$72 billion federal budget for 1958 is three times greater than all corporation net profits in 1956. It is worth observing too that 88 cents out of every budget dollar is directly or indirectly related to war. Facts such as these indicate why capitalist politics has become

ever more inseparable from capitalist economics, just as politics in general has become increasingly intertwined with economics.

We are not in this article concerned with weighing the class bias at the bottom of the differing evaluations of the cause of the inflation, although, as we shall indicate below, the approach which equates wages with that of profits and interest as equal causes is factually untenable. Nor are we presently concerned with the manner in which Reuther, in his proposal to reduce the demands of auto workers if the corporations reduce prices, accepts the crudest ideology of the ruling class. We are for the moment more interested in the fact that the opposing elements proceed from a common acceptance of the capitalist system. This is the basis of the confusion.

If we were to compound all their explanation for inflation, even though each might contain a measure of validity, we would not be much further ahead. The inability of the economists to agree on the cause has led the National Planning Association to declare that the difficulty lies in insufficient facts.¹⁴ But the reality is that American bourgeois economists above all others are slowly strangling in a bog of statistics. It would take pages simply to list the periodicals, the special studies, and the newly formed groups which are pouring out statistics by the yard. The major difficulty is that the figures deal with static relations, mathematical equations for equilibrium situations, or with short-run trends. Only a few economists of stature have cared to tackle the long-run developments, because here a selective theory is necessary and any theory that goes below the surface is dangerous to those who would uphold capitalism. Men like Simon Kuznets, Joseph Schumpeter and the Englishman Colin Clark are in a decided minority. It is not accidental that Schumpeter reluctantly found his investigations leading to the conclusion that capitalism is doomed.

After we have established the secular movement of prices over the past 150 years, we shall then be in position to ask why capitalism in

4. *New York Times*, August 20, 1957.

5. *New York Times*, September 7, 1956.

6. Report made by Leon Keyserling, former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers to President Truman, for the Conference on Economic Progress (of which Reuther is a member). The report also condemned the cutback in military expenditures. *Detroit News*, September 9, 1956.

7. Statement adopted by the AFL-CIO Executive Council. *New York Times*, August 15, 1957.

8. Dr. Ralph Robey, *A New Force for Inflation* (pamphlet issued by the National Association of Manufacturers). Robey is the NAM's chief economist.

9. *New York Times*, June 27, 1957. See also Prof. Sumner Slichter, *New York Times*, August 8, 1957, and Arthur Krock, *New York Times*, June 7, 1957.

10. *New York Times*, June 6, 1957, for example. Economists involved were Walter Heller of the University of Minnesota, William J. Fellner of Yale, Paul Samuelson of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

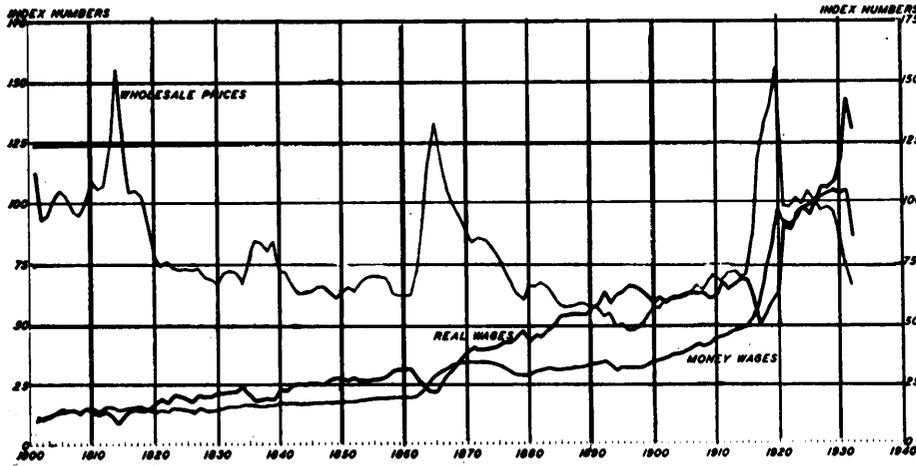
11. For example, Dr. Edwin G. Nourse of Brookings Institute, another former Chairman of Truman's Council of Economic Advisers. In an address before the National Citizens Committee to Curb Inflation, he attacked "tricky gadgets" such as administered prices fostered by Big Business and the escalator and annual improvement-factor clauses demanded by labor. *New York Times*, June 25, 1957. In testifying before the Kefauver Committee he also attacked as inflationary the demand for a shorter work week with no reduction in pay.

12. For example, General Douglas MacArthur, now president of the Sperry-Rand Corporation. In remarks at a meeting of stockholders he declared that the threat of taxation is greater than the danger of war with the Soviet Union. *The Freeman*, January 1957.

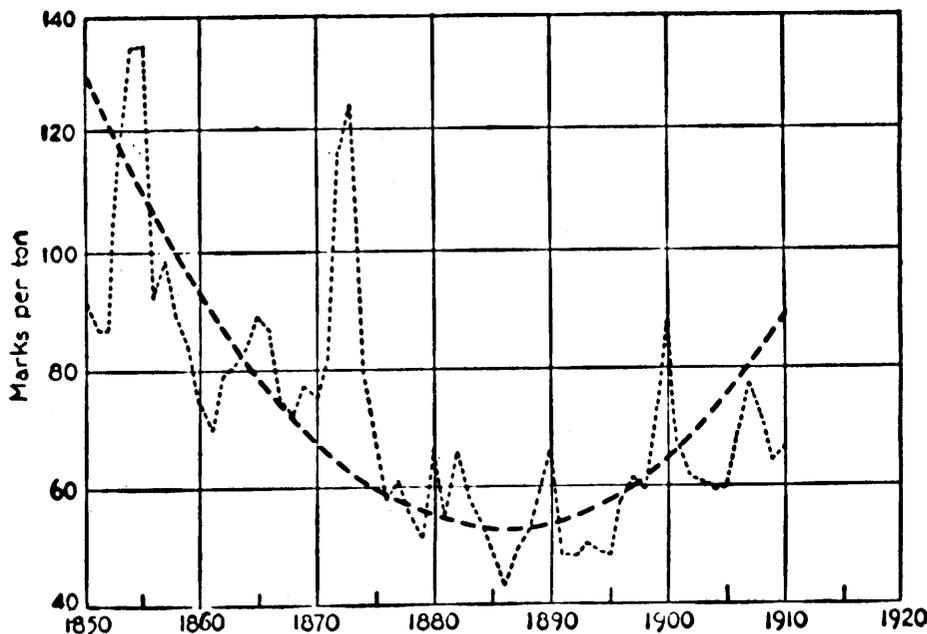
13. An editorial "Strangling the Welfare State" in the August 1957 *United Auto Worker* boasted: "Only a few weeks ago the labor movement and the liberal Democrats were defending the President's budget against Congressional cuts." This budget contained the greatest peacetime appropriations for armaments in American history. Dr. Nourse, in testifying before the Kefauver Committee, defended the policies of the Eisenhower administration while attacking labor's demand for a shorter work week.

14. *New York Times*, April 1, 1957.

Movement of Wholesale Prices and Weekly Wages, 1800-1932



Prices of Pig Iron, Germany, 1850-1910, Original Data and Primary Trend Line



the twentieth century is no longer capable of the achievements of a progressive and expanding economy; why it is no longer capable of simultaneously lowering prices, increasing both monetary and real wages, shortening the work week and thereby expanding the market and increasing production at a growing rate.

The major fact with which our discussion begins is that the course of

prices, beginning roughly with the end of the eighteenth century, shows a clear downward slope after allowing for temporary oscillations, generally associated with wars in the upward direction and with crises in the downward swing. Contrary to those who attempt to trace the inflation from 1939, or 1947, or 1954, the general upward movement in prices begins roughly with the end of the nineteenth century, the be-

ginning of the epoch of the death agony of capitalism.

We present a graph of the movement of prices in the United States from 1800 to 1932¹⁵ to which we add data below to bring it up to date.

If this graph were to be transformed in the manner generally used by statisticians to develop trend lines; i.e., after smoothing the series with a moving average plotted on a Gompertz curve, it would show a concave parabola. We give as an example the curve developed for the price of pig iron in Germany, 1850-1910, by Dr. Simon Kuznets.¹⁶

We have selected this commodity because the curve of its price movement is relatively typical of the great number of key commodities which were analyzed by Kuznets for most industrialized countries.

In our first graph, if we take 100 as the index figure for 1800, by 1895 wholesale prices dropped to around 45, then began their rise and by 1900 reached about 52. If we extend the series beyond the years shown in the graph, with 1900 as 100, the rise came to 265 in 1947.¹⁷ A further extension made in terms of the purchasing power of the dollar with its index at 100 in 1939, shows it down to 49.8 in April of 1957.¹⁸ In the eighteen-month period through September 1957, the cost of living went up 5.6%, probably the steepest inflationary movement in any period not directly associated with war.¹⁹

Thus the slope of the parabola for the total movement of prices over the entire period would be somewhat different from that shown for pig iron in the more limited period. The downward slope from 1800 to 1895 would be more gradual, as would the rise to 1939. After that the angle of the slope would begin to move upward in an increasingly sharp manner.

There are some additional aspects of the first graph which are of in-

15. Harold G. Moulton, *Income and Economic Progress* (Brookings Institute, Washington, D.C., 1935), p. 107.

16. Kuznets, *Secular Movements in Production and Prices* (Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, 1930), p. 153.

17. Harold G. Moulton, *Controlling Factors in Economic Development* (Brookings Institute, Washington, D. C., 1949), p. 280.

18. Statement by George M. Humphrey, Secretary of the Treasury, before the Senate Finance Committee. *New York Times*, June 19, 1957.

19. *New York Times*, September 25, 1957.

Index of Prices 1890-1911

Average	U.K. (Board of Trade)	U.K. (Sauerbeck)	France (Réforme Economique)	Germany	U.S.A. (Bureau of Labor)	Canada (Dept. of Labor)
1890-99	100	100	100	100	100	100
1900-09	104	111	109	115	118	115
1910	113	118	118	128	132	125
Sept. 1911	—	122	126	139		

terest. In the first place we note that in the later period the upward oscillations go higher while the downswings do not drop as low as in the earlier period. For example, with 1900 as 100, the index figure for the lowest point in the depression years of the thirties stands at 123. This again clearly emphasizes the character of the underlying long-range pull.

Secondly, we should note that although there is undoubtedly some variation in the dates and the angles of slope, the general form of the movement is valid for the entire industrialized world. The Kuznets studies referred to above bear this out as does the chart which is presented below.

In the third place it is important to observe that the secular upward swing began before war preparations and the state debt became a major factor, thus underlining the fact that the tendency to inflation is rooted directly in the nature of capitalist production as such. In contrast to World War II, there was no real economic mobilization for World War I even in Germany. "In 1913, Germany's military expenditure, which had then been very considerably increased as compared with previous years, amounted to approximately . . . 4% of Germany's national income."²⁰

In order to emphasize the sharp breaking point, characteristic of the turn of the century before the state debt began to become an important factor, and in order to illustrate the world-wide nature of the movement of prices, we introduce figures for this period from another source.²¹

[See price index table above.]

20. Fritz Sternberg, *The Coming Crisis* (third impression; John Day Co. Inc., New York, 1947), p. 97.

21. J. A. Hobson, *The Evolution of Modern Capitalism* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1916), p. 460.

It will be noted that the two countries showing the greatest inflationary leap, Germany and the United States, were the two most actively accumulating capital and expanding production in this period. It is worth repeating that preparations for war did *not* play any role, nor did the state debt. In any case it would seem clear that the inflationary process began with the twentieth century and not, as the bourgeois economists would have it, with 1939 or 1947.²²

Prices of finished commodities, of course, despite their importance as the manifestation of underlying developments in production, are not the only matters which concern us. There are other allied characteristics of nineteenth century capitalism which are in sharp contrast to that of the twentieth century. These are commonly known, and for the present we need do no more than mention their existence in the context of this article. We have indicated that not only was expanding capitalism able to lower prices, but simultaneously to expand the market, to expand production, profits and the accumulation of capital, to absorb lowering of the hours of work, and to increase both real and money wages over the long run. And while we deal mostly with American capitalism, the same general tendencies can be observed throughout the industrialized world.

In England during the early 1800's, for example, hours of work went as high as 19 to 20 a day, and 90 to 100

22. A major attempt at secular analysis was made by the Russian economist Kondratieff in the early twenties. He attempted, however, to link production and prices in a series of 50-year repetitive cycles, with the cycles unrelated as to upward or downward direction. His methodology was criticized by Trotsky as well as by Russian specialists in economics. The consensus seems to be that no statistical basis exists for his cycles, at least so far as production is concerned. However, some bourgeois economists have tended to recognize them or to seek them, at any rate, in terms of price series alone. Schumpeter has attempted to use these Kondratieffs, but primarily in relation to his theory on the role of innovators in capitalist progress. Kondratieff himself was exiled to Siberia in 1930 as the alleged head of a "subversive" Workers and Peasants party.

a week. In 1842 the work day in the English mines was 14 to 15 hours a day, not only for men, but for women and children. In 1840 the normal work week in Massachusetts textile mills was 84 hours. By and large the campaign for the 10-hour day lasted until the middle of the 1890's.²³ On this question, as with that of wages, the rate of advance depended upon the state of organization and militancy of the working class. We are at the moment, however, more interested in demonstrating the relative economic viability of capitalism in the nineteenth century.

Wages, both real and money, showed a slow but steady increase. With money wages at 11.0 in 1801, by 1900 they reached 32.6; with real wages at 9.8 in 1801, by 1900 they reached 58.1.²⁴

The value of manufactured products, including the period which witnessed the greatest drop in prices, increased in millions of dollars from 1,019 in 1849 to 13,000 in 1899,²⁵ thus indicating the expanding character of capitalism in this general area as well.

How then can we explain the qualitative change in character between the capitalism of the nineteenth and of the twentieth century as it is summarized in the dramatic change in the direction of prices? It is my contention that the explanation lies in the falling rate of profit along with the positive effects of the class struggle; and that the growth of debt, including state debt, and the growing intervention of the state in the economy are increasing contributory effects rather than prime causes.

The rate of profit depends, as we know, upon the relationship between constant and variable capital. It tends to fall as the organic composition of capital goes up, assuming that the rate of surplus value remains constant. Thus in considering the actual course it is not enough simply to establish that constant capital increases over variable. Two other ratios must be considered. In the first

23. Florence Peterson, *Survey of Labor Economics* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1947), pp. 418-21.

24. Moulton, *Income and Economic Progress*, op. cit., pp. 181-2.

25. Harold Faulkner, *American Economic History* (fifth edition; Harper & Brothers, New York, 1943), p. 404.

place there is the ratio of the proportional change in the organic composition of capital to the resulting proportional change in labor productivity. In the second place we must watch the ratio of this change in labor productivity to the resulting increase in relative surplus value, achieved through a fall in the price of wage goods, a consequent fall in money wages, and a consequent rise in the rate of surplus value.²⁶ As far as the second ratio is concerned, the effects of the class struggle cannot be separated from the purely economic result.

Let us turn our attention first to the ratio of the proportional change in the organic composition of capital to the resulting proportional change in labor productivity. Dr. Simon Kuznets, after a careful and lengthy study concludes that "The information scattered in the histories of industries seems to indicate that the ratio of net returns to capital invested is larger in the early periods of growth. When a branch of production is just beginning to develop successfully . . . the returns to the pioneers are, in proportion to the size of the actual investment, much larger than later on, when the industry achieves bulk and stability. The chief reasons for these large returns during early growth seem to lie in the rapid rate of technical change, rapid improvement of the product, and lowering of costs."²⁷

We are struck by the similarity between the findings of Kuznets and the comments of Marx: "This opening period [extension of manufacture into industries dominated by old-time handicrafts or manufacture], in which the machine is achieving the conquest of its sphere of activity, is of decisive importance owing to the extraordinarily high profits which can be made at such a time. These profits do not only form a source of accelerated accumulation; for they also attract into the favoured sphere of production a large part of the additional social capital which is being constantly created,

and is ever on the lookout for new investments."²⁸

The following examples constitute prima facie evidence that the leap in labor productivity far outdistanced the proportional change in the organic composition of capital. The first example is taken from the cotton industry of England.²⁹

Price of Yarn 40 Hanks to the lb.

	Shillings	Pence
1779	14	0
1784	8	11
1799	4	2
1812	1	0
1830	0	6.8
1860	0	6.3
1882	0	3.4

We note first that the marked and continuing decline in prices illustrates in microcosm the general course of price tendencies in the nineteenth as against the twentieth century. But in addition, in commenting on the table, Kuznets points out that the rate of decline in the cost of capital and labor per unit of production has been diminishing, and whereas for the first 51 years the cost of yarn 40 hanks to the pound declined 96%, for the next 50 years it declined only 50%. That is, the increase in labor productivity tends to decline in proportion to the organic change in the composition of capital.

Our second example, taken from America, deals with steel rails produced by the Carnegie Steel Company.³⁰

	Average Monthly Cost per Ton	Price Received At Works
1875	\$57.00	\$66.50
1878	38.00	42.50
1883	34.00	37.50
1888	28.00	29.83

The continued decline in the price of steel, along with the decrease in the rate of decline, are evident here as well as in the first example. It will be rewarding to refer to these figures when we later discuss the modern steel industry in relation to price tendencies. It is also important to note that while using only his per-

sonal resources, Carnegie in the 11 years from 1889 to 1900 was able to finance the expansion of production from 322,000 tons to 3,000,000. At this point there appears yet another similarity between the theory of Marx and the empirical findings of Kuznets, who says that "the funds available for the expansion of an industry decrease in relative size as the industry grows . . . the rise of a new industry or the revolutionary expansion of an old one implies a considerable new investment. Capital must be provided either from the returns of the industry concerned, or from the returns (or possibly capital) of the other industries. Considering for the present only subsidies from the outside, it seems clear that the funds available relative to the size of the subsidized industry are greater in the earlier periods than later on."³¹

The key phrase here is the availability of profits relative to the size of the capital to be expanded. Measured in terms of the accumulation of capital, the tendency of the rate of profit to decline is the Marxist way of saying that the amount of profit available, relative to the existing stock which is to be expanded, tends to lessen. In the third volume of *Capital* Marx points to the necessity of the accumulation of capital in geometric fashion in order to overcome the declining rate. But it is precisely the declining rate which cuts into the possibility of geometric expansion, unless there are qualitative leaps in the productivity of labor relative to the proportionate increase in investment in capital goods, a relationship which came into being in the era of the Industrial Revolution and which ran its course by the end of the nineteenth century.

No one can for a moment today imagine that one individual, however rich, would be capable of undertaking expansion such as Carnegie carried through. But we must leave for later consideration the effect of the ever-widening search for sources of capital upon the creation of fictitious capital and debt, as well as the growing need to socialize credit and debt through the mechanism of the banks and the state itself. We leave also for later comment the effect of the declining rate of profit on the possi-

26. I am paraphrasing Maurice Dobb's succinct statement on the decisive ratios in his review of *The Theory of Capitalist Development* by Paul Sweezy. He is critical of Sweezy's underconsumptionist approach. *Science and Society*, Summer 1943, p. 273.

27. Kuznets, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

28. *Capital* (Everyman's Library; E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc., New York, 1932), I, 484.

29. Thomas Ellison, *The Cotton Trade of Great Britain*, as quoted by Kuznets, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

30. Louis Hacker, *The Triumph of American Capitalism* (Simon & Schuster, New York, 1940), p. 418.

31. Kuznets, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

Cruel Dilemma

Persons "already overburdened with debt but seeking still more credit are becoming more common these days," according to *Business Week* (May 31). But requests from reliable borrowers are "way down."

Consequently, "finance companies are faced with this cruel dilemma: With the 'good' applicant holding back, the companies must either resign themselves to doing less business—or they must deal with poorer risks."

bility of a new industrial revolution under capitalist auspices.

Before we begin our discussion of capitalism in the twentieth century, some additional comments illustrating the character of the previous century will prove of value, above all now that the movement for a shorter work week with no cut in pay is coming to the fore. Marx, in the course of his debate with Weston, wrote: ". . . I propose calling your attention to the real rise of wages that took place in Great Britain from 1849 to 1859. You are all aware of the Ten Hours Bill, or rather ten and a half hours bill, introduced since 1848. This was one of the greatest economic changes we have witnessed. It was a sudden and compulsory rise of wages, not in some local trades, but in the leading industrial branches by which England sways the markets of the world . . . Well, what was the result? A rise in the money wages of the factory operatives, despite the curtailing of the working day, a great increase in the number of factory hands employed, a continuous fall in the prices of their products, a marvellous development in the productive powers of their labor, an unheard of progressive expansion of the markets for their commodities . . . I proceed to state that from 1849 to 1859 there took place a rise of about 40 per cent in the average rate of the agricultural wages of Great Britain . . . Despite the Russian War, and the consecutive unfavorable harvests from 1854 to 1856, the average price of wheat, which is the leading agricultural produce of England, fell . . . This constitutes a fall in the price of wheat of more than 16 per cent simultaneously with an average rise

of agricultural wages of 40 per cent."³²

Such a combination of developments as Marx has described is unthinkable today, although it was not, as we have earlier indicated, unusual in the nineteenth century. The key here remains the "marvellous development" of the productive power of labor *in proportion to the investment in capital*.

Nevertheless, as we have observed, there would seem to be even in the nineteenth century a tendency for the ratio, established by the proportionate increase in the organic composition of capital to the increase in labor productivity, to increase. To use more current terminology, it might be said that the marginal efficiency of capital has tended to decline, the capital coefficient has tended to increase, or the capital-output ratio has tended to go up.

Harold Moulton of the Brookings Institute declares: "The fact that prices as a whole declined during the nineteenth century suggests that the general increase in productivity was more than sufficient to meet the increasing cost of wages."³³ The statement is somewhat lopsided, since it tends to focus attention on wages as the major factor in price scales. Nevertheless, with this proviso, it points to the second decisive ratio with which we began our discussion, the ratio of the change in labor productivity to the resulting increase in surplus value. Here the facts indicate a growing tendency toward inflexibility — a tendency for both real and money wages to rise along with the shortening of the work week.

Thus the bourgeoisie entered the twentieth century with gradually increasing pressure exerted on one side by the falling rate of profit and on the other by the widening organization and resistance of the working class. The economic result is inflation.

The alternatives available to the capitalist rulers would seem to boil down to either crushing the resistance of the working class, or developing a new industrial revolution

32. Karl Marx, *Value, Price and Profit* (edited by Eleanor Marx Aveling; International Publishers, New York), pp. 16-18.

33. Moulton, *Controlling Factors in Economic Development*, op. cit., p. 282.

which would produce a great qualitative leap in the productivity of labor in proportion to capital investment. The latter alternative would permit them to temporarily overcome the tendency to a declining rate, and would open the possibility for a new period of expansion. Is a new industrial revolution under capitalist auspices possible? The answer, which will be developed in the second part of this discussion article, is a clear negative.

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On the National Question

How should Russia act toward other Soviet nations?
An early discussion illuminates a crucial issue of today

by Leon Trotsky

"A" is a member of the Young Communist League. A capable and devoted young revolutionary, he fought as a volunteer in the Red Army. However, his Marxist education and political experience are to some extent inadequate. "B" is a better grounded comrade.

* * *

"A" Of course, nobody can object to the resolution of the Twelfth Congress on the national question.* All the same though, this question was brought up artificially. For us Communists the national question is not of acute importance.

"B" Why do you say that? After

*For the text of this resolution, see J. V. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Lawrence and Wishart, 1936, pp. 279-287. (Trans.)

One of the most acute issues today in the Soviet bloc is the national question. Its explosiveness has been demonstrated in the 1953 uprising in East Germany, the 1956 revolution in Hungary, and Poland's bid for independence. It lies at the heart of the continuous strain in relations between Yugoslavia and the Kremlin. Trotsky's writings on this subject are consequently of the greatest timeliness, representing as they do the views of the pre-Stalinist regime. The student of Soviet affairs will not miss the reference in this article to the anti-Marxist attitude on the national question evident in sections of the government apparatus. This attitude was among the alarming signs of the growth of bureaucratic tendencies which led Lenin to form his famous bloc with Trotsky against Stalin.

From the viewpoint of Marxist methodology, Trotsky's article is of considerable interest in its treatment of the relations between a particular and general concept and their connection with living social and political forces. The contradiction between the

all, you've just declared that you agree with the resolution, haven't you? Yet the main idea of this resolution is that the national question does not exist for the benefit of the Communists but the Communists exist to solve the national problem as a constituent part of the more general question of the organization of man's life on earth. If, in your self-education study group, with the aid of the methods of Marxism, you have freed yourself from various national prejudices, that is, of course, a very good thing and a very big step forward in your personal development. But the task confronting the ruling party in this sphere is a more far-reaching one: we have to make it possible for the many millions of our

national question and the class struggle is shown to be only apparent. The concept of the class struggle, Trotsky demonstrates, is barren and abstract unless it includes a correct appreciation of the national problem.

Trotsky's insight can be judged by his observation: "After the land revolution has been completed the national question will not disappear. On the contrary it will only then come into the foreground. And responsibility for all shortages and shortcomings, all injustices and cases of lack of attention or harshness in relation to the native masses will be attributed in their minds—and not without reason—to Moscow." This has received most vivid confirmation in recent years in Eastern Europe.

Trotsky's article appeared in PRAVDA May 1, 1923 under the title, "Educating the Young and the National Question — A Commentary in Dialogue form on the Resolution of the Twelfth Party Congress." It was reprinted in Trotsky's WORKS, Vol. XXI, Moscow, 1927, from which Leonard Hussey made the present translation for the INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVIEW.

people, who belong to different nationalities, to find through the medium of the State and other institutions led by the Party, practical living satisfaction for their national interests and requirements, and thereby enable them to get rid of national antagonisms and prejudices — all this not at the level of a Marxist study group but at the level of the historical experience of entire peoples. Therefore there is an irreconcilable contradiction between your formal acknowledgment of the resolution and your statement that for us Communists the national question is not of great importance. Thereby you testify that you do not acknowledge the resolution, or, to put it bluntly — in a purely comradely spirit and without meaning any offense — you do not grasp the political meaning of the resolution.

"A" You misunderstood me.

"B" Hm . . . hm . . .

"A" All I meant to say was that the class question is for us Communists incomparably more important than the national question. Consequently, we must keep a sense of proportion. I am afraid, however, that the national question has recently been very much exaggerated by us, to the detriment of the class question.

"B" Perhaps I have again misunderstood you, but in this statement you have just made it seems to me you have committed another and even bigger mistake in principle. The whole of our policy — in the economic sphere, in the building of the State, in the national question and in the diplomatic sphere — is a class policy. It is dictated by the his-

torical interests of the proletariat which is fighting for the complete liberation of mankind from all forms of oppression. Our attitude to the national problem, the measures we have taken to solve it, form a constituent part of our class position, and not something accessory or in contrast to it. You say that the class criterion is supreme for us. That is perfectly true. But only insofar as it is really a class criterion; i.e., insofar as it includes answers to all the basic questions of historical development, including the national question. A class criterion minus the national question is not a class criterion but only the trunk of such a criterion, inevitably approximating to a narrow craft or trade-union outlook.

"A" According to you, then, concern about solving the national question; i.e., about forms of coexistence of national groups and national minorities, is just as important for us as the retention of power by the working class or of the dictatorship of the Communist party! From such a position it would be easy to slide into complete opportunism; i.e., to subordinating revolutionary tasks to the interests of agreements between nationalities.

"B" I feel, I have a presentiment, that I'm going to find myself today among the "deviators" . . . Nevertheless, I'll try, my young friend, to stick up for my point of view. The whole of the problem, as it faces us today, if we formulate it politically, has this significance for us—how, i.e., by what measures and methods of action, by what approach, can we maintain and consolidate the power of the working class in a territory where many nationalities live side by side, with the central Great Russian nucleus, which formerly played the role of a Great Power amongst these nationalities, constituting less than half of the entire population of the Union? It is precisely in the process of developing the proletarian dictatorship, in the course of our entire State-building activity and our daily struggle to retain and strengthen the workers power that we are at this moment being faced more urgently than ever before with the national question in all its living

reality, its daily concrete manifestations in State, economic, cultural and everyday life.

And just now, when the Party as a whole is beginning to present the question in this way—and it cannot be presented in any other way—you (and unfortunately not you alone) declare with naive doctrinaireism that the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is more important than the national question. Yet it is precisely for the sake of the dictatorship of the proletariat that we are now in practice going more deeply (and shall in the future go still more deeply) into the national question. What is the meaning of the contrast that you make? Only people who do not understand the significance of "National Factors in State and Party"* can present the question in this way. And, in any case, all those who adopt a nihilistic or contemptuous attitude to the national question will eagerly seize upon such a formulation as yours. To turn one's back on the demands and interests of the formerly oppressed small nationalities, especially those which are backward and consist mainly of peasants, is a very simple and perfectly easy thing to do, especially if this sort of lazy indifference can be covered up with general phrases about internationalism, about the dictatorship of the Communist Party being more important than any and every national question . . .

"A" As you please; but presenting the question in this way seems to me to be bending over backwards in an impermissible extent in the direction of the backward peasant borderlands and thereby incurring the risk of doing very great harm to the proletarian center upon which our Party and the Soviet power rely. Either I have understood nothing of what you have said, or you really are deviating towards the backward, predominantly peasant nationalities.

"B" Here it is, we've reached it at last—my peasant deviation; and I expected as much, for everything under the sun, including political mistakes, has its own logic . . . "A deviation in favor of the backward,

*The title of the Twelfth Congress resolution under discussion. (Trans.)

peasant masses"—but did you hear what the Twelfth Congress had to say about that?

"A" About what?

"B" About the mutual relations between the proletariat and the peasantry—about the "link?"*

"A" The "link?" What's that got to do with it? I'm absolutely in agreement with the Twelfth Congress. The link between the proletariat and the peasantry is the basis of everything. The question of the link is the question of the fate of our revolution. Whoever is against the link is . . .

"B" Yes, yes. But don't you think that the dictatorship of the working class and of our party is more important for us than the peasant question and, consequently, than the question of the link?

"A" How so?

"B" It's very simple. We, the Communist party, the vanguard of the proletariat, cannot subordinate our social-revolutionary aims to the prejudices, or even to the interests of the peasantry, which is a petty-bourgeois class in its entire tendency. Isn't that so, my left-wing friend?

"A" But, pardon me, that sophistry—that is quite a different matter and has nothing to do with the question. The link is our basis, our foundation. Lenin wrote that without the link with the peasantry we should not attain socialism; more than that, without the achievements due to the economic link that Soviet power will inevitably be overthrown.

"B" That's it, precisely. Therefore—you'll agree, I think?—it is absurd, politically illiterate, to counterpose the link with the peasantry to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Of course the dictatorship of the proletariat is the basic idea of our program, the basic criterion of our State and economic constructive work. But the whole point is that this very dictatorship is unthinkable without certain definite mutual relations with the peasantry. If you separate the link with the peasantry from the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, you are left, so far as the given historical period is con-

*The alliance between the working class and the peasantry. (Trans.)

cerned, with an empty form, a meaningless abstraction.

"A" I don't disagree with you but what has this got to do with our subject?

"B" It is very directly and closely connected. In our Soviet Union the link with the peasantry naturally presumes not merely a link with the Great Russian peasantry. We have a large non-Great Russian peasantry, and it is distributed among numerous national groups. For these national groups each national, political and economic question is refracted through the prism of their native language, their national-economic and folk peculiarities, their national mistrust which has its roots in the past. Language is the most basic, most broadly embracing and deeply penetrating instrument of the link between man and man and so, between class and class. While in our conditions the question of the proletarian revolution is, as you acknowledge, above all a question of the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry, this latter question amounts, more than fifty percent, to the question of relations between the more advanced and influential Great Russian proletariat and the peasant masses of the other nationalities, which were mercilessly oppressed in former times and still remember very well all that they suffered. What's wrong with you, friend, is that all your would-be-radical, but essentially half-baked, nihilistic arguments strike not only at the national question but also at the fundamental question of the link between the workers and the peasants.

"A" But, look here, there was the time when our army went into Georgia to drive out the Menshevik agents of the imperialists without waiting to be asked first by the people concerned, which meant a plain breach of the principle of self-determination. And there was the time when our army advanced on Warsaw . . .

"B" Yes, of course, there were those times, and I remember them very clearly and don't disavow them in the least. But there was also, not just times, but a whole period when we confiscated from the peasants all their surplus and sometimes even

what they needed themselves, by means of armed force, not shrinking from the most extreme methods.

"A" What do you mean by that?

"B" What I say. The revolution not only seized the peasants' surplus, arms in hand, but also introduced a military regime in the factories and mills. If we had not done this in a certain very acute and grave period we should have perished. But if we were to wish to apply these measures in conditions when they are not called for by iron, inexorable necessity, we should perish still more surely.

This applies also, of course, to our policy on the national question. Revolutionary self-defense required at certain moments a blow at Tiflis and a march on Warsaw. We should have been pitiful cowards and traitors to the revolution (which includes both the peasant question and the national question) if we had balked at the empty fetish of the national "principle," for it is perfectly obvious that there was no real national self-determination in Georgia under the Mensheviks: Anglo-French imperialism held unrestricted sway there, and was gradually subjecting the whole of Caucasia and menacing us from the south. In the national question, as in all others, what matters to us is not juridical abstractions but real interests and relations. Our military invasion of Transcaucasia can be justified and has justified itself in the eyes of the working people insofar as it dealt a blow at imperialism and established the conditions for real, actual self-determination for the Caucasian nationalities.

If through our fault the masses of the people in Transcaucasia should come to look upon our military interference as an act of conquest, then this interference would thereby be transformed into a very great crime — not against the abstract "principle" of nationality but against the interests of the revolution. Here we have a complete analogy with our peasant policy. The confiscation of peasants' surplus produce was a very harsh thing. But the peasantry accepted it as just, even though after the event, insofar as they were convinced that, as soon as conditions permitted, the Soviet power would

go over to the fulfillment of its basic task — all-around easing of the lives of the working people, including the peasants.

"A" But still, you can't deny that the class principle ranks higher for us than the principle of national self-determination. After all, that's A.B.C.

"B" The realm of abstract "principles" is always, my dear friend, the last refuge of those who have lost their way on this earth. I've already told you that the class principle, if you understand it not idealistically but in a Marxist way, does not exclude but, on the contrary, embraces national self-determination. But this latter we also understand not as some supra-historical principle (on the model of Kant's categorical imperative) but as the aggregate of real, material conditions of life that make it possible for the masses of the oppressed nationalities to straighten their backs, to advance, to learn and to develop, getting access to world culture. For us, for all Marxists, it must be beyond dispute that only a consistent; i.e., a revolutionary application of the class "principle" can ensure the maximum realization of the "principle" of national self-determination.

"A" But didn't you yourself say, in explaining our Transcaucasian intervention, that revolutionary defense takes priority with us over the national principle?

"B" Possibly I did, even probably. But in what conditions and in what sense? In the fight against the imperialists and Mensheviks, who transform national self-determination into a metaphysical absolute, insofar as it is directed against the revolution — while they themselves, of course, trample upon national self-determination. We answered the sorry heroes of the Second International that the interests of the defense of the revolution mattered more to us than juridical fetishes; the real interests of the oppressed weak nationalities are dearer to us than anything else whatever.

"A" But what about the keeping of Red forces in Transcaucasia, in Turkestan, in the Ukraine? . . . Isn't that a breach of national self-determination? Isn't there a contradic-

tion there? And isn't this to be explained by the fact that the revolution is for us higher than the national question?

"B" When the working people of those countries understand (and when we do everything we can to help them to understand) that these forces are on their territory only to ensure their security against imperialism there is no contradiction here. When these forces indulge in no insult to the national feelings of the native masses, but on the contrary, display purely fraternal care for them, there is no contradiction here. Finally, when the Great Russian proletariat does everything it can to help the more backward national elements of the Union to take a conscious and independent part in the building of the Red Army, so that they may defend themselves first and foremost with their own forces, then that must mean the disappearance of even the shadow of a contradiction between our national program and what we do in practice.

All these questions will be solved, of course, not only as a function of our good will, but it is necessary that we display the maximum good will for their genuine solution in a proletarian way . . . I recall that I read two years ago some reports by a certain former Czarist general in the service of the Soviet power, about how the Georgians were frightful chauvinists, how little they understood Moscow's internationalism, and what a lot of Red regiments were needed to counteract Georgian, Azerbaijanian and every other sort of Transcaucasian nationalism. It was quite obvious that in the case of this general the old-time forceful Great Power attitude was barely disguised under the new terminology.

And there is no point in hiding sin: this general is not exceptional. In the Soviet administrative machine, including also the military machine, tendencies of this kind are powerful to an extreme degree — and not only among former generals. If they were to get the upper hand, the contradiction between our program and our actual policy would inevitably lead to a catastrophe. That is why we have raised the national question sharply, so as by concentrating all

the Party's efforts to eliminate this danger.

"A" All right. But nevertheless how do you explain the fact that those very comrades who fully grasp the significance of the link with the peasantry, take up at the same time, as I do myself, a much more reserved position where the national question is concerned, regarding this question as exaggerated and pregnant with the danger of distortions in favor of the backward borderlands?

"B" How do I explain such a contradiction? Logically it is to be explained by the fact that not everybody thinks things out properly. But a logical explanation is not sufficient for our purpose. The political explanation is that the leading role in our Party here is played — and in the immediate period cannot but be played — by its Great Russian kernel, which through the experience of these last five years has fully taken to heart and thoroughly thought out the question of the relations between the Great Russian proletariat and the Great Russian peasantry. By simple analogy we extend these relations to the whole of our Soviet Union, forgetting, or insufficiently taking into account, that on the periphery of Russia there live other national groups, with a different history, a different level of development, and — what is most important — with a mass of injuries they have suffered.

The Great Russian kernel of the party is, in the main, as yet inadequately aware of the national side of the question of the link, and still more inadequately aware of the national question in its entire scope. From this there also derive the contradictions of which you speak — sometimes naive, sometimes stupid, sometimes of a flagrant character. And that is why there is no exaggeration in the decisions of the Twelfth Party Congress on the national question. On the contrary, they answer to the most profound needs of our life, and we must not only adopt them but develop them further.

"A" While the Communists of the Great Russian center carry out a correct policy in Great Russia, surely there are in the other parts of our Union local Communists who are carrying on the same work in dif-

ferent national circumstances? This is merely a natural and inevitable division of labor. The Great Russian Communists must and will fight against Great Power chauvinism, while the Communists of the other nationalities fight against their own local nationalism, which is directed, in the main, against the Russians.

"B" What you say contains only part of the truth, and half-truths sometimes lead us to completely false conclusions. Our Party is not at all a federation of national Communist groups with a division of labor according to their respective national features. If the Party were so constructed, that would be extremely dangerous.

"A" I am not proposing any such thing . . .

"B" Of course you aren't. But your idea could be developed towards such a conclusion. You insist that the Great Russian Communists must fight against Great Power nationalism and the Ukrainian Communists against Ukrainian nationalism.

This recalls the formula of the Spartacists at the beginning of the war — "The main enemy is in your own country." But there it was a matter of a struggle by the proletarian vanguard against its own imperialist bourgeoisie, its own militarist state. There this slogan had a profound revolutionary content. Of course, the task of the German revolutionaries was to fight against Hohenzollern imperialism, not to expose French militarism, etc.

It would, however, be a complete distortion of perspective to transfer this principle to the constituent parts of the Soviet union-state, for we have a single army, a unified diplomacy and, what is most important of all, one centralized party. It is perfectly correct that those best fitted to combat Georgian nationalism are the Georgian Communists. But this is a question of tact, not of principle. The root of the matter is the need clearly to grasp the historical origins of the Great Power, aggressive nationalism of the Great Russians and of the defensive nationalism of the small peoples. It is necessary to appreciate the true proportions between these historical factors, and this appreciation must be the same in the mind of the Great Russian and

of the Georgian and of the Ukrainian, for these very proportions do not depend upon the subjective approach — local or national — but correspond (and must correspond) to the real balance of historical forces. The Azerbaijanian Communist working in Baku or in the Moslem countryside, the Great Russian Communist working in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, must have one and the same conception where the national question is concerned.

And this uniform conception must consist in a non-uniform attitude to Great Russian and to Moslem nationalism: in relation to the former, ruthless struggle, stern rebuff, especially in all those cases when it is displayed in the administrative and governmental sphere; in relation to the latter — patient, attentive, painstaking, educational work.

If a Communist on the spot shuts his eyes to the national question in its full scope and begins to fight against nationalism (or, often, against what seems to him to be nationalism) by summary and oversimplified

methods, intolerant negation, persecution, denunciation, etc., then he will perhaps gather round him active, revolutionary, “left” young people, subjectively devoted to internationalism, but he will never furnish us with a lasting and reliable link with the native peasant masses.

“A” But it is just the “lefts” in the border republics who call for a more revolutionary, more vigorous solution to the agrarian question. And, after all, isn’t this our main bridge to the peasantry?

“B” Undoubtedly the agrarian question, above all in the sense of the abolition of all remnants of feudal relations, must be settled everywhere. As we now have an already firmly established union-state, we can carry through this settlement of the land question with all the resoluteness that it calls for; of course the settlement of the land question is a most important task of the revolution . . . But the abolition of landlordism is an act that is carried out in one blow, once and for all, whereas what we call the national question

is a very lengthy process. After the land revolution has been completed the national question will not disappear. On the contrary it will only then come into the foreground. And responsibility for all shortages and shortcomings, all injustices and cases of lack of attention or harshness in relation to the native masses will be attributed in their minds — and not without reason — to Moscow. It is necessary therefore that Moscow, as the center of our Union, should be the invariable initiator and promoter of an active policy permeated through and through with fraternal attention to all the nationalities that make up the Soviet Union. To speak of exaggeration in this connection is truly to show complete lack of understanding.

“A” There is a good deal of truth in what you say, but . . .

“B” Do you know what? Just you read over again the resolution of the Twelfth Congress now that we’ve had this talk, and then perhaps, one of these days, we’ll discuss these matters again.

The Wall Bulletins Speak

A sampling of opinion in China's factories showed the value of free expression in finding weak spots

WHEN the new Chinese government temporarily relaxed its attitude toward free expression of opinion, the criticisms that came from workers indicated a good deal of dissatisfaction with the bureaucratic attitudes and practices that interfere with the development of socialism in China.

The form of “suggestion box” used in the plants, factories, mines and

This report is from our Hong Kong correspondent.

public enterprises was a “Wall Bulletin,” opinions of workers being written out by hand and posted for everyone to read. A study of reports about the criticisms in the Peking *People’s Daily* from October 16 to November 4, 1957 reveals some interesting facts.

In the Wusan factory at Liouning in Northeast China 5,870 sheets, including 15,426 suggestions, were posted within one week.

In Chungking, in the 21 largest factories and mines, which employ

more than 100,000 workers, 70,000 sheets, including 240,000 suggestions, were posted from September 15 to October 15.

In Harbin, 400 enterprises listed 990,000 suggestions; while in 49 factories and mines of Tangshan the score was 403,500.

In the Nanking Electronic Tube factory, the workers set up four “Platforms for Democracy.” These included a variety of opinions. Over a 50-day period, 3,000 bulletins, in-

No Discrimination?

Charles Abrams, chairman of the New York State Commission Against Discrimination (SCAD), charged last week that the economic decline is wiping out many of the gains made nationally by minority groups over the past decade. Few would put it so strongly, but none dispute the figures. One out of every seven Negro workers in the nation is now unemployed, in contrast to one out of every 14 Whites. So far, discriminatory practices are not a

direct issue in most discharges. The newness of Negro jobs is the big reason. The Negro did not begin to extend his position in industry until the manpower shortage of World War II and made further gains in the tight postwar labor market. So when recent layoffs reached into the 10-year to 15-year seniority group, Negro gains were wiped out in many plants.—*Business Week*, May 17.

cluding 9,000 suggestions went up on the walls.

Complaints centered around four issues: (1) unwieldy organization, low efficiency and "more administrators than places"; (2) poor management and a bureaucratic attitude among the administrators; (3) lack of democracy in the election of workers representatives; (4) low pay.

Under (1) the workers at the Shenyang Screw plant in Mukden noted that the work schedule for 1957 was the same as in 1955 but that the administrative staff had increased by about 42%. Some jobs which could be done by a single person were now shared by two. Sections of the staff worked only two hours a day.

At the Shih-ching-shan Steel Works in Peking it was observed that formerly the administrative staff had held the view that plant expansion or increased production required only a "proportional" increase in the number of administrators. However, in 1949 there were only 343 administrators; that is, 8.85% of the number of workers; while in August 1957 the staff had grown to 1,975, 17.14% of those on the production line.

Another instructive example was offered by the workers at the National Chinling Electric Works. An undue proportion of skilled workers had been elevated to management positions. There were only 12 eight-class skilled workers in the plant; nine of them were shifted to administration. A similar situation existed in regard to lower classes of skill. In this plant, which needs skilled workers, the administrative staff had reached 37.42% of the number of workers.

Under (2) a case of bureaucratic mismanagement was noted in relation to the Chungking Steel Company. A company branch was ordered by the Ministry of Metallurgy to obtain steel from the Anshan Steel Company, which happens to be located in the Northeast where Chungking was sending its steel.

At the Harbin Union Machine Shop, rejects due to poor management reached 30% of total production.

At the Heilunkiang Food Company only 60% of production met inspection standards.

The general opinion about the administrators was voiced by the *People's Daily* itself (October 10): "The working attitude of some cadres is simple, rough and rude. They do not go deeply into the masses and do not pay attention to their own tasks."

Under (3) the workers of Changchung No. 1 Auto Works reported a revealing case. Not only did they have no part in electing a delegation to the Provincial Congress of Advanced Workers. They did not even know such a delegation existed. In demanding an explanation from the plant manager and from the president of the union, they pointed out that "the Congress of Advanced Workers merely serves the purpose of exchanging and improving technical experience. To achieve this aim it is necessary to consult with the workers and to act under their control. We have heard a lot about the party's line on mass work; what does it mean when this method is applied in electing a delegation?"

Under (4) a bulletin at the Shih-ching-shan Steel Works noted that "the average wage of the workers is about 70 yuans a month; in fact only workers in the sixth class and

up can earn this much and the majority of workers are below sixth class. Therefore, we would suggest (1) that the housing allowance for workers should be subsidized by the state; (2) that wages of cadres should be cut."

In response to the demands, the leadership of the Chinese Communist party has granted concessions such as simplifying the administrative set-up in some places, reducing the number of administrative posts, and even sending administrators back to production.

At the Shenyang Mine Machine Shop, 21 administrative branches were reduced to 13 and the list of 1,158 administrators was cut to 648.

At the Shenyang Screw Plant, 19 branches were reorganized into 11, reducing the administrative staff by half. The reorganization is expected to make possible an increase of 15% to 20% in labor productivity.

A pay-roll saving of 140,000 yuans a year is projected through the reorganization of the Peking Shih-ching-shan Steel Works.

The National Chinling Electric Works decided to reduce its 28 administrative branches to 18 and the percentage of administrators from 37.42% to 9.87%.

As for the improvement of living conditions and the need for greater democracy, the heads of the Chinese Communist party admit that these problems exist. They also acknowledge that although reforms have been started they are far from offering the final solution. The trouble is, according to the officially voiced opinion, that the party cadres do not fully understand the essence of the mistakes and their causes and therefore learn neither from their own experiences nor from the criticism of the masses.

However, as we can see even from the carefully filtered criticisms that appeared in the *People's Daily*, the Chinese workers have a fairly clear idea of the nature of the mistakes and who is making them. They also appear to be forming opinions as to what should be done about the mistakes. In the further development of such sentiments lies China's best hope for reaching the socialist goal without undue delay.

The Challenge of Soviet Education



by Hilde Macleod

THE CHALLENGE OF SOVIET EDUCATION, by George S. Counts. The McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York. 1957. 330 pp. \$6.

That the Soviet Union has outstripped the United States in the production of scientists, engineers and technicians, is an acknowledged fact now deeply disturbing the American ruling class. Professional educators are castigated for losing the "battle of the class rooms" and are hard put to explain why a country, only forty years ago one of the most illiterate on earth, has been able to attain superiority in a field so vital to survival of the "free world." A frantic word battle is raging about the best means to regain top position. At this timely moment one of capitalism's most renowned educators, one who has made a life-long study of Soviet education, has published his fifth book on the subject, in which he admits that the "challenge" is "in every chapter."

In his description of the Soviet school system, Counts' emphasis is on regimentation of the student, the suppression of freedom and human dignity. If these charges represented the whole truth it would be difficult to see how Soviet education could constitute a challenge. Dr. Counts grants, since he must, the great attainments in Soviet scientific education. Nevertheless, he attributes Soviet success to what is commonly called "brainwashing." He insists that such a thorough job of this has been done that any idea of a change to liberalism is naive and a grave underestimation of the powerful "poison" in this system of indoctrination.

With quotations from Lenin, torn out of context, Counts seeks to establish the hoary thesis that Stalinism is the continuation of Leninism—in education as in other fields. He even goes so far as to include the slave-labor camps in the educational system!

Counts finds the source of all these

evils, naturally, in Lenin's "amoralism." To "prove" this, he leaves out any reference to the bloc Lenin and Trotsky formed against Stalinism; and, of course, Trotsky's continuation of the fight against Stalinism is not considered.

This labored attempt to discredit Soviet education stands in strange contrast to Counts' former views. In the 1920's both he and John Dewey, the outstanding social-minded educators in America, welcomed the originality and freedom and vitality of the Soviet experiment in education.

For any student seeking an explanation today for the astounding advances in Soviet education, it is rewarding to review this vital experiment. Many besides Dewey and Counts wrote enthusiastically about their observations. Carleton Washburne said in *Remakers of Mankind*: ". . . as an example of what can be done in recreating human society through organized, well thought out education toward a definitely envisaged goal, Russia is an inspiring example to the rest of the world."

Professor Harry F. Ward declared in his book *In Place of Profit*: "This consciousness of being a social creator, this certainty of direction, is the core of the dynamic imparted to the individual by the Communist system."

Maurice Hindus wrote of the remarkable wide-scale awakening of vigorous personalities under Soviet education.

Scott Nearing had this to say in *Education in Soviet Russia*: ". . . in all my experience (22 years of teaching) I have never seen anything that paralleled the educational work that I saw going on in the Soviet Union." A Soviet teacher told him, "Go into any of our classes and you will find an interest and enthusiasm that the old system never aroused."

S. D. Schmalhausen in *The New Road to Progress* wrote: "The children in Soviet Russia are more alive intellectually, more curious minded about

the problems of nature and the predicaments of life than any comparable group of children in . . . America . . . even at the elementary school level (they) conduct themselves with high seriousness, talk out vigorously . . . They feel themselves passionately part of a great social experiment."

Around 1930 Dr. Frankwood Williams, psychiatrist, specialist in juvenile courts and human relations, made two trips to the Soviet Union, one a ten-thousand mile journey from one end of European Russia to the other to see what "those crazy Russians" were doing in his field of mental hygiene. What he saw astonished him and left him "deeply stirred." His political naïveté, his confessed belief that radicals were "half-crazy" people adds a piquant note to the lively picture he gives of a new and superior society in the making.

"If you wish to understand the educational system in Russia," wrote Dr. Williams, "you will not learn by studying the educational system; you will learn by studying the social system . . . until we understand this in all its significance . . . we shall understand nothing in regard to Russia . . . The Russian school is honest in its relationship to the civilization in which it exists . . . First the child has a purpose and to carry out his purpose, he needs the school. Second, he is fully aware that he is wanted, even more that he is needed and there is a place for him in the social scheme of things . . . Life does not confuse and terrify him for the reason that the principles upon which the social system is based—no exploitation, mastery of the world through knowledge, united effort in the interests of all—are easily comprehensible to him . . ." (*Russia, Youth and the Present Day World*, pp. 150-57.)

To realize what a tremendous overturn, what an explosion of creative fervor followed the revolution of 1917, the dark background of social conditions

before the revolution must be visualized. Not only were more than sixty per cent of the people illiterate, but the masses were still living under an oppressive yoke. The lot of peasant women had improved little since the time of Catherine II. Much of the tempestuous mass character of the campaign to eliminate illiteracy was spearheaded by these liberated women. Their long suppressed energies burst forth in a mighty torrent of passion for education and culture.

Counts, who saw at first hand the stupendous creative forces released by the revolution, does not attempt to deny the fact of a "truly remarkable triumph." "The writer," he admits, "knows of no school in history that ever achieved a comparable record of growth."

What Counts fails to recognize is that the dynamism released by the revolution, although smothered by the heavy, corrupting hand of Stalinism, was never entirely extinguished. Planned economy calls for an educated people, not merely literate, but educated in the most modern techniques, particularly in the natural sciences. So the schools had to teach such subjects and teach them well. Critics such as Counts try to explain this without giving any credit to the new social relations in the Soviet Union.

Like some others, he attributes the roots of the early freedom of the 1920's to pre-revolutionary educators such as Tolstoy and Ushinsky. They had a "sublime faith in the people and their potentialities," says Counts, in contrast to the Bolsheviks who, "while professing love of the people and concern for their welfare, cherished little faith in their powers of mind and heart . . . did not believe that the people could or should play an active role in the building of the ideal society." (p. 21.)

Thus, if we are to believe Counts, the spirit of Soviet education stems not so much from Marx and socialist ideas as from the heritage of the old Russian autocracy, tempered somewhat by humanistic ideas developed after the liberalization of the serfs.

In describing the schools of the early days, Counts paints an attractive picture despite his antipathy to the Bolsheviks. He admits that "at the very beginning . . . the apostles of individual freedom and popular control enjoyed a measure of tolerance." The first comprehensive statement of Soviet educational principles, published in 1919, commanded such favorable attention that Counts reports he considered translating it into English.

Counts admits, moreover, that Stalin was to blame for abolishing such progressive features as the Unified Labor School and the polytechnical school; that Stalin was responsible for the reversion to the Czarist-like emphasis on examinations and school marks, harsh rules of conduct and a variety of re-

wards and punishments. "So great have been the changes in the realm of curriculum . . . moral emphasis, methods of teaching, concepts of discipline and pupil-teacher relationships that the observer would be justified in concluding that a revolution or counter-revolution had taken place. Indeed, certain of the ideas and practices of today would have been regarded as counter-revolutionary in the early years of the Soviet regime." (p. 58.)

For this complete overturn, Stalin found "It was even necessary to execute most of the old Bolshevik leaders and send millions to forced labor camps." (p. 110.)

And yet Counts can blandly state that Stalin expressed "the basic philosophy of Bolshevism far more faithfully than his predecessor!"

Counts disregards the concessions granted since the death of Stalin. Tuition fees have been abolished for higher, secondary and academic education. Co-education has been restored and the promise has been made that by 1960 schooling to the age of seventeen will be compulsory.

These concessions have been wrenched from the Stalinist bureaucracy by a Soviet people, intellectually invigorated through the development of backward Russia into a first-class modern power. They feel that Stalinist backwardness, as in other fields, has become a brake on further educational progress.

Counts' answer to the suggestion that such reforms can be made permanent and extended is "what the party gives the party can take away." He seems to agree with the general view in capitalist circles that the Soviet advances in the natural sciences are due to the

iron discipline of a despotic rule. ". . . the Soviet program," he says, "is suited to the values and purposes of a totalitarian state."

In contrast, a recent study of Soviet education by Dr. H. L. Dodge and Norton Dodge insists that in the USSR the "whole society is structured to encourage a boy or girl to climb as high on the educational ladder as he or she is capable of. [As a result] very little talent is wasted."

Not only is education free but students are allowed maintenance stipends. Teachers are highly trained in their particular fields and an enormous effort is made to educate future teachers. Education has high priority in the allocation of public funds.

Other reports from the USSR indicate that the attitude of young people toward education is in startling contrast to the attitude young people commonly take in America. They evidence a tremendous drive for knowledge. They read avidly, not comic books, but serious cultural works. They have a real appreciation of the value of pure research. The finest stores in the large cities are the bookstores and they are always crowded. At the same time, physical education and competitive sports are encouraged.

Contrary to Dr. Counts' contention, it would seem that the progressive aspects of the Soviet educational system are an outgrowth of the progressive social foundation established by the revolution of 1917. As Dr. Frankwood Williams said nearly thirty years ago, to understand the Russian school system it is necessary to understand the social system.

For Political Ornithologists

MEMOIRS OF A REVOLUTIONIST, by Dwight Macdonald. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, New York. 1957. 376 pp. \$4.75.

Dwight Macdonald is a bird that will fascinate students of political ornithology. He has varicolored plumage, lays many eggs but hatches few, eats his young, constantly preens himself and is fond of viewing his reflection in the water. He never perches long in the same spot.

In 1941 he observed: "The swing back to bourgeois values . . . has caught up almost all the old intellectual leaders of the left. Lewis Corey, whom we once looked to as the outstanding Marxist economist, has discovered 'the industrial capitalist virtues—however imperfectly realized—of production for welfare, democracy and peace' (*Nation*, May 19, 1941). Louis M. Hacker, once the 'coming Marxist historian,' has also discovered the virtues of 'industrial' as against 'finance' capitalism (as Hitler

did years ago) and now regards Rockefeller as 'a great industrial innovator' who 'conformed to the pattern of the enterpriser of classical economics' (*Nation*, Dec. 7, 1940). Sidney Hook, once the leading Marxist philosopher, has swung away from Marx towards John Dewey and celebrates all kinds of extremely vague beauties in capitalist bourgeois democracy (*New Leader*, passim). John Dos Passos, the 'irresponsible' chronicler of the last war, flies to England, fittingly accompanied by Thornton Wilder, to help the bell-cose P.E.N. Club win this one. Max Eastman, the hero of the old *Masses* trial, the gay rebel, the original American Trotskyist, writes war propaganda and publishes an attack on socialism which Wendell Willkie implores every good American to read and which is the low-water mark to date in such affairs for vulgarity and just plain silliness (*Readers Digest*, June, 1941)."

In 1957, after flitting through the cor-

ridors of Luce journalism, liberalism, pro-Stalinism, Trotskyism, anarchism, pacifism and humanitarianism, Dwight Macdonald is calling for "the revival of a true, principled conservatism." In his pretentiously titled book "flighty Dwightie" gives a lively review of these political transformations and gyrations. The bulk of the volume consists of essays on political topics and personages mostly written during his libertarian

phase when he was conducting a one-man band in his magazine *Politics*.

Unfortunately he didn't include his article on "The Treason of the Intellectuals" published in *Partisan Review* in 1939 which castigated the ex-radical writers who were shrilling the pipes for the Second World War. It was one of his truest and most memorable contributions to radical journalism.

W.F.W.

The First Four Congresses

by Joseph Hansen

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL 1919-1943 DOCUMENTS, Volume I 1919-1922, selected and edited by Jane Degras. Oxford University Press, New York. 1956. 463 pp. \$9.60.

This book deserves careful study by everyone interested in the application of Marxist theory to politics, particularly as it applies to the difficult problem of building the socialist movement. For students of the history of the Communist International it is a most welcome and useful compilation of the key documents of the highly important first four congresses.

The work of these international gatherings is scarcely known today. I dare say that most rank-and-file members of the Communist party have never heard of the discussions and decisions. Socialists in other sections of the radical movement, more given to following their own inclinations in reading, generally have a better acquaintance with this period. But even here, it must be regretfully admitted, ignorance outweighs knowledge.

The reasons for this anomaly are not difficult to ascertain. Translations of the material in the early twenties were few, incomplete and scattered; they are rarities today. It might seem that the Communist party stood to gain by compiling the documents, publicizing them, and supplying commentaries on them, as it has with innumerable other topics. But, alas, in the volume at hand Stalin's name appears only twice, once in the appendix, where he is listed as a member of the large executive committee elected at the Second Congress, and once in a note by the editor that although the future dictator was supposedly a delegate at the First Congress "there is no evidence, either in the records of the congress or in the accounts written by participants and observers, that he took any part in its meetings."

Some of the leading participants, such as Zinoviev, Radek, Bukharin and Trotsky, whose names appear throughout, were finally murdered by Stalin as "fascist mad dogs." Since the Kremlin's

secret political police made out that the criminal bent of these figures and some of their wrecking activities extended back to the first days of the Soviet Union, it was scarcely in the interest of the frame-up to publicize what Stalin's victims were really doing and what they were really interested in at the time.

Finally, Stalin's policies were in absolute contradiction to those worked out at the first four congresses. An example can be cited that is still of current interest, involving, as it does, Stalin's efforts to sow illusions first in the League of Nations and later in the United Nations:

"The so-called League of Nations is nothing but the insurance contract by which the victors in the war mutually guarantee each other's spoils. For the bourgeoisie, the desire to re-establish national unity, to 're-unite with the ceded parts of the country,' is nothing but an attempt of the defeated to assemble forces for new wars. The reunification of nations artificially torn apart is also in accordance with the interests of the proletariat; but the proletariat can attain genuine national freedom and unity only by means of revolutionary struggle and after the downfall of the bourgeoisie. The League of Nations and the entire post-war policy of the imperialist States disclose this truth even more sharply and clearly, everywhere intensifying the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of the advanced countries, accelerating the destruction of petty-bourgeois national illusions about the possibility of peaceful coexistence and of the equality of nations under capitalism." (From the *Theses on the National and Colonial Questions* drafted and introduced by Lenin at the Second Congress.)

Of special interest is the picture that emerges from these documents of the Leninist team of leaders at work. A common stereotype of today is that one or two great men—Lenin, or Lenin-Trotsky (or Stalin!)—completely dominated the scene. When the genius spoke, that was it; the rank and file plunged at once into the brilliant course thought up to meet the emergency. The

truth is that these top leaders, who were indeed dominant in intellect and political acumen, found themselves at home in a minority. Even with the prestige of having successfully led a revolution they were hard pressed at times to get a majority on crucial questions. Moreover, majority backing did not always coincide with correct estimates; they made errors, some of them of considerable consequence. Lenin, for example, against the opposition of Trotsky, favored a military counterattack on Polish territory, a campaign that ended in a costly defeat for the Soviet Union.

However, these men, thoroughly trained in Marxist theory and practice, the hardest of schools, knew how to collaborate in a common cause. Their teamwork at the first four congresses of the Communist International is a shining example of how such contrasting types as Lozovsky and Bukharin, Radek and Lenin, Zinoviev and Trotsky were able to combine their knowledge, experience and various skills in the difficult work of assembling a capable new revolutionary leadership, the central task that faced these meetings of socialist-minded delegates from all over the world. The human material itself, it should be added, was somewhat refractory despite the admiration and respect displayed for the leaders of the October Revolution and their achievements.

How the Leninist team saw the immense problem and how they tried to solve it cannot but be of absorbing interest to socialists of today, who see themselves faced with an analogous problem following the disintegration of the Communist International under the influence of Stalinism.

At the First Congress, held in Moscow, March 2-6, 1919, the main target was the bureaucratized leadership of the Social Democracy. The delegates reviewed the debacle of the Second International due to the leadership's policy of supporting the various capitalist governments in World War I. This had splintered the Second International irremediably in 1914. A major split occurred between the sections supporting the Allied and those supporting the Central powers. A less conspicuous but even more fateful division occurred between the national patriots of both sides and the internationalists, who reaffirmed their revolutionary socialist solidarity across the imperialist trenches. The latter tendency had moved toward the formation of a new international organization during the war years; the First Congress brought this process to its consummation by founding the Communist International.

Great hopes were held of an early success for the new polarizing center. The insurgency of the European masses was in evidence throughout the continent, above all in Germany. Radek said at a later congress that the belief in an immediate world revolution was even shared by such imperialist statesmen

as Lloyd George and Clemenceau. The formidable question that faced the First Congress was "Can a brand new leadership, competent enough to lead the revolutionary upsurge to success, be forged in time?"

No thought was entertained, of course, that the old leadership of the Social Democracy might be reformed. Had the experience of 1914 not been enough to destroy such an illusion, the current role of the Social Democracy in blocking the development of the working-class revolution was more than sufficient. Another possibility, of considerable appeal to leaders less realistic than the seasoned Bolsheviks, was the direct action of the raw masses. From their own bitterly won experience, however, the founders of the new international realized that the necessary organizing cadres were to be found mainly in the ranks of the Second International. And so their primary appeal was in that direction.

The first major complication in this course was the success of the Russian workers government in stabilizing its rule. In 1920 the Second Congress faced the paradox that the appeal to the ranks of the Second International had met with response from a section of the Social Democratic leadership. The evidence showed, however, that these centrist leaders aimed at bending with the universal enthusiasm among the working people for the Russian Revolution without letting go of anything essential.

Thus it became necessary to precipitate a crystallization of political tendencies among the newly won forces. In contrast to Stalin's later policies, Lenin sought to drive away those "friends" from whose treacherous instability the Soviet Union were better saved. He therefore proposed the famous twenty-one conditions for admission to the Communist International for which the Social Democrats have roundly abused him ever since. These aimed at defining the International as a fighting organization and requiring deeds as well as words in evidence of acceptance of the responsibilities of membership. The conditions had the desired effect. The "friends" drew back and the infant organization emerged with a promising body of young energetic leaders blazing with zeal.

Their political insight, however, left much to be desired. This could be acquired only through experience, an educational process that was to prove costly in the conditions of the time.

The task of building a revolutionary socialist International was, of course, intimately interrelated with world economic, social and political developments. These were the subject of sweeping analysis and general orientation at all four congresses. Most of the documents dealing with such topics preserve an astonishing freshness and validity for the current scene. Particularly instructive is the development of Leninist

policy in the light of new problems and deepening understanding flowing from the experience of winning and holding state power.

The post-war revolutionary upsurge in Europe subsided. But the cadres who had come to the Communist International, especially those in Germany, acted as if the previous situation still existed. The result was adventuristic actions and ultra-leftist policies that seriously damaged the standing of the young organization. The turn in the objective situation and the necessity for an adjustment of tactics were the principal topics at the Third Congress in 1921. General agreement was reached on following the policy of the "United Front."

This signified a change in attitude toward the leadership of the Social Democracy. Proposals were now advanced for collaboration in common actions where it was possible to reach at least minimum agreement. Critical appraisal of Social Democratic policies were not abandoned; in fact, the Communist International insisted on the democratic right of all parties in a united front to freely voice opinions about each other's basic programmatic positions. It was the hope of the Communists, naturally, to prove in action that they stood in the forefront of the working class struggle and that their program corresponded best to its fundamental, long-range interests.

The prerequisite for such a free-wheeling policy was the previous assemblage of at least the core of a new leadership politically mature enough to discharge its responsibilities in limited blocs with a leadership of the character of the Social Democracy.

The Fourth Congress, which convened in 1922, extended the discussion to highly complex questions. Italian fascism had now appeared on the scene, placing the intricate problems of this new phenomenon before those fighting for the socialist alternative. In the Far East, national-revolutionary movements

having a peasant base in pre-capitalist economies tested the famous flexibility of the Bolsheviks. In Europe the problem of governments that were anti-capitalist and yet not socialist—that were perhaps even anti-socialist—challenged for the first time both the theoretical and political capacities of Marxism. Work in various fields such as the trade unions, the youth, the Negro struggle, women's rights, came up for consideration.

This Congress, the last one before the death of Lenin, testified to the success of the Bolsheviks in placing their knowledge and talents, as was their fraternal duty, at the disposal of other sections of the world socialist movement. An international organization capable of highly disciplined and militant struggle had now to be reckoned with in world politics.

In hailing this achievement, how were the delegates to foresee the subversion and eventual destruction of the Communist International by the Stalinist bureaucracy, the new reactionary force already rising with alarming swiftness in the Soviet Union?

I hope that these brief comments are sufficient to indicate the value of the work of the first four congresses of the Communist International. Now a word about the book itself. It is not a complete record. Quite a few documents are missing. Only excerpts are offered from others. By way of compensation, important documents issued by the Executive Committee between congresses have been included.

The notes provided by Jane Degras have been kept to a minimum. They are often helpful and informative, but it must be added that sometimes the selection and interpretation of items indicate an editorial bias.

Despite these limitations, the volume is to be recommended as an indispensable supplement to the two volumes of Trotsky's *First Five Years of the Communist International*.

Dubinsky as Hero

by F. J. Wells

THE WORLD OF DAVID DUBINSKY, by Max D. Danish. The World Publishing Company, Cleveland and New York. 1957. 341 pp. \$4.75.

Birth and childhood in the Polish ghetto. Involvement in the Jewish Socialist Bund's attempt to organize the bakery workers. Arrest, exile to Siberia, escape. Next an emigrant landing in America. That's the early background of David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies' Garment

Workers' Union. It is similar in most respects to the background of thousands of young East European radicals who found themselves working in the then expanding garment industry of New York during the first decades of this century.

Dubinsky, young, aggressive and militant, found himself in the socialist movement, taking an active part in political work among the Jewish workers on the lower East Side. He became a garment cutter and gradually began

to assume a prominent place in the struggle to build a stable union for the garment workers.

In a period when unions are growing at an accelerated speed, young activists rapidly move into positions of leadership. Dubinsky was no exception to the rule. A member of Local 10 executive board in 1918, he became vice-president of the local in 1920, president in 1921 and one year later general manager of the cutter's union.

In 1932 Dubinsky, then 40 years old, became president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

By 1933 his gradual metamorphosis from a socialist fighter to a conservative labor bureaucrat was complete. His resignation from the Socialist party at this point removed him from any pressure to conduct himself as a principled socialist and marked his rejection of a

socialist solution for society. A "labor statesman," collaborating with the capitalist ruling class, can hardly retain ideological ties with radicalism.

Max Danish, the biographer, for 33 years the editor of the ILGWU organ, *Justice*, presents this book not as a history of the garment workers' union, but rather as the Horatio Alger success story of a poor immigrant who rises, in spite of adversity, to become a benign, kindly individual, dispensing justice and the distilled wisdom of experience to his fellow man.

Books of this sort have a special purpose. Showing the transition of the labor leader from radical to reformist, they convey the idea that the best working-class leader is the labor faker and that class collaboration rather than class struggle is the road to the workers' emancipation.

tired, now they are wrung by nervous fatigue.

The book analyzes the stages of adjustment of the men to their jobs until they become fused into a smooth-working group who "actually spend more time together than with our own family." The author examines their relations with each other, with their foreman and supervisors, and with management whose "gains is so much greater than ours." He presents their views on job security, upgrading, incentives and the impact of the new mill on other workers and the union. A rich case history emerges of how a unit of the working class achieves its class concepts and cohesion.

Charles R. Walker is the author of *American City*, a study of the great Minneapolis Strikes of 1934-35. Walker now confines his writing to sociological studies of the industrial scene. While socialists will find his latest book valuable for its facts, his main purpose seems to have been to indicate how management can introduce the latest technology with a minimum amount of opposition from the workers.

Workers naturally resist any step under the restrictive control of management that threatens their well-being, as is clearly shown in this study. Walker sums up his overall impression by concluding that "the machine here has outstripped man." He has really demonstrated, however, that the productive system has outstripped its social base; for almost all the contradictions he records could be rapidly resolved under workers control of production.

Has the Machine Outstripped Us?

by Robert Chester

TOWARD THE AUTOMATIC FACTORY, A Case Study of Men and Machines, by Charles R. Walker. Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn. 1957. 232 pp. \$5.

The age of automation has brought us a new literature dealing with its impact on society. *Toward the Automatic Factory*, as part of this literature, confines itself to one narrow, limited aspect, the effect of automation on the men in the productive process.

The work is a close-up study of the hot-mill crews in the "first continuous seamless pipe mill in the United States" at the Lorain, Ohio, works of the National Tube Division of the U. S. Steel Corporation, which began production in 1949. In this plant a crew of nine men turn out four times as much pipe as twenty-five men did previously. Interviews over a three-year period chronicle the changes in thinking of the men as management raised production.

The study is interesting although this is not a fully automated factory where all processes are self-controlled through

feedback, but a transition stage, a semi-automatic mill where the flow of pipe is controlled by nine men stationed at strategic points. They are necessary to maintain the quality of pipe, thus must be constantly on the alert for hitches or breakdowns. The significant change is that they no longer work directly on the product. Whereas in the old mill they came home physically

The Paradox of Colombia

by John Liang

DANCE OF THE MILLIONS. Military Rule and the Social Revolution in Colombia, 1930-1956, by Vernon L. Fluharty. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh. 1957. 336 pp., illustrated. \$6.

The great paradox of Latin America is that while it yields up enormous riches, its peoples remain desperately poor. The more bountiful the riches, in fact, the more intense is the poverty. An unending stream of wealth pours forth from the good earth and its subterranean treasure vaults. Here most of the world's coffee is grown. Exquisite woods are hewn from the forests. Oil in abundance is pumped from great underground pools. Base and precious metals, as well as gems, are mined. And this bare catalogue only begins to tell the story.

All this wealth is held in the grip of tiny groups of native property owners and foreign exploiters. Native governments, usually dictatorships financed and armed by the U. S., stand guard

against the masses. Here is the basic explanation for the recent anti-Nixon riots which turned an intended "good-will tour" by the U. S. vice-president into a violent manifestation of ill will toward the representative of dollar imperialism.

Colombia, about which Fluharty wrote his book, is a typical Latin-American country. Home of fourteen million people, it is a fabulously rich land of half a million square miles, with a remarkably varied topography, in which snow-capped mountain peaks rear high above steaming equatorial jungle. Fluharty tells us all about the land and its resources, its racially mixed people, their class relations. His book is also a lively, often dramatic, narrative of the country's economic and political history dating back to 1910.

Fluharty was a career officer in the U. S. Foreign Service who held a post in Colombia for a number of years. At the time of his sudden death on January 7, 1957, when his book had already

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been completed, he was an assistant professor of political science at the University of Pittsburgh. In view of this background, it is rather remarkable that he was able to write about American imperialism without enclosing the word "imperialism" in quotation marks, for it is the contention of the apologists of U. S. imperialism that the beast simply does not exist except in the imagination of Communist agitators.

The central point of Fluharty's book is the military coup of June 13, 1953 that elevated General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla to the Colombian presidency. In the author's view, this was not just a typical Latin-American revolution in which one palace clique is replaced by another, but a veritable social revolution. The distinguishing factor was the entry of the masses onto the political arena. Rojas' assumption of office marked the termination of a bloody five-year civil war that began with the Bogota riots of April, 1948, in which whole sections of the capital went up in flame. Ten years have since elapsed, a full decade. Yet class and social relations remain, essentially, what they were then.

What we have here, very obviously, is an incompleting revolution. After five years of turmoil, society settles back into the old pattern. The possessing class feels reassured. The masses feel cheated. Here is Fluharty's picture of post-1953 Colombia — the Colombia that supposedly had undergone a social revolution:

"Colombia is predominantly agricultural; the whole society is still permeated with feudalistic thinking, with reverence for the Great Families, with the validity of the peasant-patron relationship. Half the national income is in the form of some type of dividend earnings from investment, which means a few relatively idle rich existing on the labor of the masses. Three per cent of the people control 90 per cent of the wealth, and the remainder is scattered through a 97 per cent composed of mestizos, mixed bloods, and Indians, whose lot is poor housing, no education, illness, and poverty, with the hope of living under such conditions to an average 39-40 years."

The incompleting revolution, in Fluharty's view, poses a dilemma. Liberalism, which arose under the conditions of revolution, is now dead — killed by its own hand. For the Liberal party, which emerged from the 1948-53 upheaval, unflinchingly surrendered to conservatism (i.e., native-imperialist interests). That, of course, is the destiny of liberalism, though Fluharty didn't realize it. But with liberalism "tragically" bankrupt (the adjective is the author's), how is Colombia's problem to be solved?

This, according to Fluharty, is the dilemma — "whether to turn back, to conserve the entrenched values of the

past, or to move firmly toward a modern, balanced society in which the interests of all classes were equitably reconciled in a mood of mutual understanding. This is still the major dilemma of Colombia."

In this illuminating passage is revealed the incorrigible bourgeois democrat. Fluharty spent many years observing and recording facts and finally embodied them in a book — just in order to advocate a reconciliation of class interests that he himself has shown to be irreconcilable. For how do you reconcile extreme poverty with extreme

Rise of the Africans

NATIONALISM IN COLONIAL AFRICA, by Thomas Hodgkin. New York University Press, New York. 1957. 190 pp. \$3.75.

The efforts of the African people to rid themselves of European rule have achieved so much success and attained such momentum in the past two decades that they can no longer be stemmed. This is the thesis of the author of this brief but scholarly analysis of the complex nationalist movements in colonial Africa south of the Sahara, excluding the Union of South Africa.

These various movements, developing along diverse paths and at differing tempos, were given a long push forward by World War II. They have now reached the stage where they signal the beginning of the end of European ascendancy in Africa. The "colonial problem," says Thomas Hodgkin, has ceased to be one of international rivalry over possession of colonies or of concern over administrative methods. Instead it has become a question of "what adjustments, compromises and surrenders" the European colonial powers — and their settlers — must make "in the face of the claims of African nationalism."

The reasons for the transformation of the political situation in Africa, the author sees as: (1) democratic anti-Fascist (and therefore by implication anti-imperialist) propaganda of the United Nations; (2) weakening of European imperial authority in Asia; (3) the experience of African servicemen during the war; (4) the stimulus to nationalism that resulted from economic hardships, restrictions and rising prices; and (5) improvement in the means of transportation.

The greater part of the book deals with an examination of the various agencies through which the developing nationalism finds expression, ranging from the rapidly proliferating church groups to the more advanced and articulate political parties.

wealth? Fluharty's idea seems to be that the lords of Colombia and their U. S. partners and patrons should give up some of their wealth so that the masses may shed some of their poverty.

It just never occurred to Fluharty that in Colombia and the rest of Latin America the solution of his "dilemma" lies not in futile preachments aimed at class reconciliation, but in the abolition of classes. That means revolution, the overthrow of the native ruling class and its imperialist partners, and the utilization of their properties for the benefit of all the people.

by Lois Saunders

The new "young men's towns," such as Dakar, Lagos and Leopoldville, have provided the setting and created the conditions that have brought about a great upheaval in the lives of the new generation. The towns have grown at a spectacular rate. Dakar in 1910 had 24,914 inhabitants; in 1955 it numbered approximately 300,000. Lagos in the same period jumped from 74,000 to 270,000; and Leopoldville in the 20 years from 1935 to 1955 grew from a small town of 26,622 to a teeming city of 340,000.

The move to the town has wrenched the young African loose from tribal customs and traditions and deposited him, unprepared, in a strange, new environment in these "great amorphous, squalid, urban agglomerations . . . vast areas of slum houses, huts and shacks, hurriedly thrown together out of planks, corrugated iron, petrol tins, sacking, anything."

Cut off from the communal life of the tribe, he is now "on his own," in the African section of the city, sharply set apart from the European section. He finds acute overcrowding, high rents, disease and unemployment, and a social life "unlike any life that has existed in Africa hitherto, deriving its special qualities, first, from the emphasis upon money and consumption; second, from the search for liberty; and third, from the influence of the European world and its values."

In these towns, says the author, the "correlation between being black and being poor, being white and being rich, is sufficiently close to stimulate . . . a spirit of African radicalism, which tends to identify the claim of the poor against the rich with the claims of the black against the white."

Here, too, the young Africans "come to think of their problems as social rather than part of the natural order," and in their search for a place to live, a job and friends, they are directed towards new skills, new associations and

new goals. The groups which attract them and which replace the link of kinship are of three types: religious, trade union and political.

The author discusses each of these types of organizations, stressing their relation to the growth of nationalist and Pan-African movements and to the emergence of a new African ideology to replace the white man's myth of African barbarism and backwardness with the "counter-myth of African civilization and achievement."

The analysis presented gives a singularly clear picture of complicated, little known and seldom understood developments. But, because of the book's brevity, its tendency towards generalization and the author's remoteness

from the unfolding struggle, the reader finds it difficult to pass judgment on its emphasis and conclusions. It should be pointed out, however, that the author is fully aware of the book's limitations. He makes this clear in his introduction where he states: "My chief concern is to present, in a small compass, the results of other men's work, to indicate the boundary between what is known and what is unknown, to suggest connections and comparisons and to raise questions which further investigation might help to answer."

This aim the author certainly has accomplished, and in so doing he has shed much light upon the efforts of the African people to become the masters of their own destiny.

Fuera Nixon . . .

(Continued from page 82)

well to study the basic lesson of the Russian Revolution of October 1917. After the Russian workers and soldiers deposed the Czar in February 1917, a coalition government was set up. What guarantee did it offer of lasting democracy? What single fundamental problem of the Russian people had been solved? Dictator Kornilov lurked behind the liberal quasi-socialist Kerensky. To solve the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in backward Russia — to end landlordism and foreign economic domination, to make possible the diversification and industrialization of the economy — the working class of Russia had to take power in October 1917.

The unification of all opposition forces and the organization of mass struggles — that is correct. But for what purpose, for what program? For a liberal-reform regime that is going to be overthrown tomorrow by the U.S. State Department and local reactionary groups? Lenin's program — proletarian democracy, a workers regime based on the nationalization of foreign and native capital and the abolition of landlordism — is more realistic.

This is not to suggest that the working class of Cuba or its political parties should not form alliances with Castro or others for specific, limited objectives. Material support against the dictator — Yes. Political confidence in his petty-bourgeois or bourgeois opponents — No. Castro's

program, the reforms he advocates and the class forces he represents, are incapable of solving the basic problems facing Cuba.

Castro subordinates or ignores the Cuban working class in the struggle against Batista. But the PSP of Cuba, with the approval of the American die-hard Stalinist leaders, tries to subordinate the Cuban working class politically to him. The truth is that there can be no democracy and no economic and social progress for Cuba except under a workers regime and under workers democracy.

Someone objects: "But how can a workers regime in any Latin-American country hope to hold out any longer than a bourgeois reform regime against the pressure of American imperialism?" The objection has a certain validity. Latin America is splintered into twenty small and relatively helpless segments. It is State Department policy to maintain this fragmentation as one of the securities for imperialist domination of Latin America.

None of these small countries could stand alone indefinitely against imperialism. That is true. What is needed then is a realistic basis for unifying Latin America. No liberal reform regime can provide this. Unification can come only on the basis of planned economy, the spreading of workers democracy from one country to the next until the Socialist United States of Latin America becomes a reality.

Consider the problem of industrial-

ization in backward areas. Before World War I, Czarist Russia was the most backward country in Europe, based economically largely on the export of wheat. How did the one-crop economy of Czarist Russia become transformed into the second industrial power in the world today? Through the right kind of "private investment"? Through capitalist-worker coalition governments, higher wages, lower prices, better deals from foreign companies?

Was it not a workers revolution and the complete nationalization of industry and even the land that made possible the astounding economic achievements of the Soviet Union? And Russia was a big country, with tremendous geographic and natural advantages, rich in resources and peoples.

The Latin-Americans are impressed by Soviet industrialization. They would like to emulate it. But to emulate the industrialization they must first emulate the Russian Revolution. That is the real secret of the Russian success.

"Democracy comes by evolution," Nixon counseled the Latin-Americans. The history of his own country speaks differently. Democracy, independence and unification came to the thirteen colonies through a revolutionary struggle against the English crown. Freedom for the slaves came through a second revolution in the 1860's. The independence of Latin America, its unification, and democracy will come in similar struggles against the Tories and pro-Slavery regimes of today.

On France

To fill in the background of de Gaulle's rise to power, we suggest Leon Trotsky's *Whither France?* This study of the fascist danger and how the workers rallied to meet it in 1934-36 is still timely. The 160-page book has long been out of print, but we have a few copies available at \$2.50.

We also suggest Karl Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Send \$1.50 for this 128-page book.

Pioneer Publishers
116 University Pl., New York 3.

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