

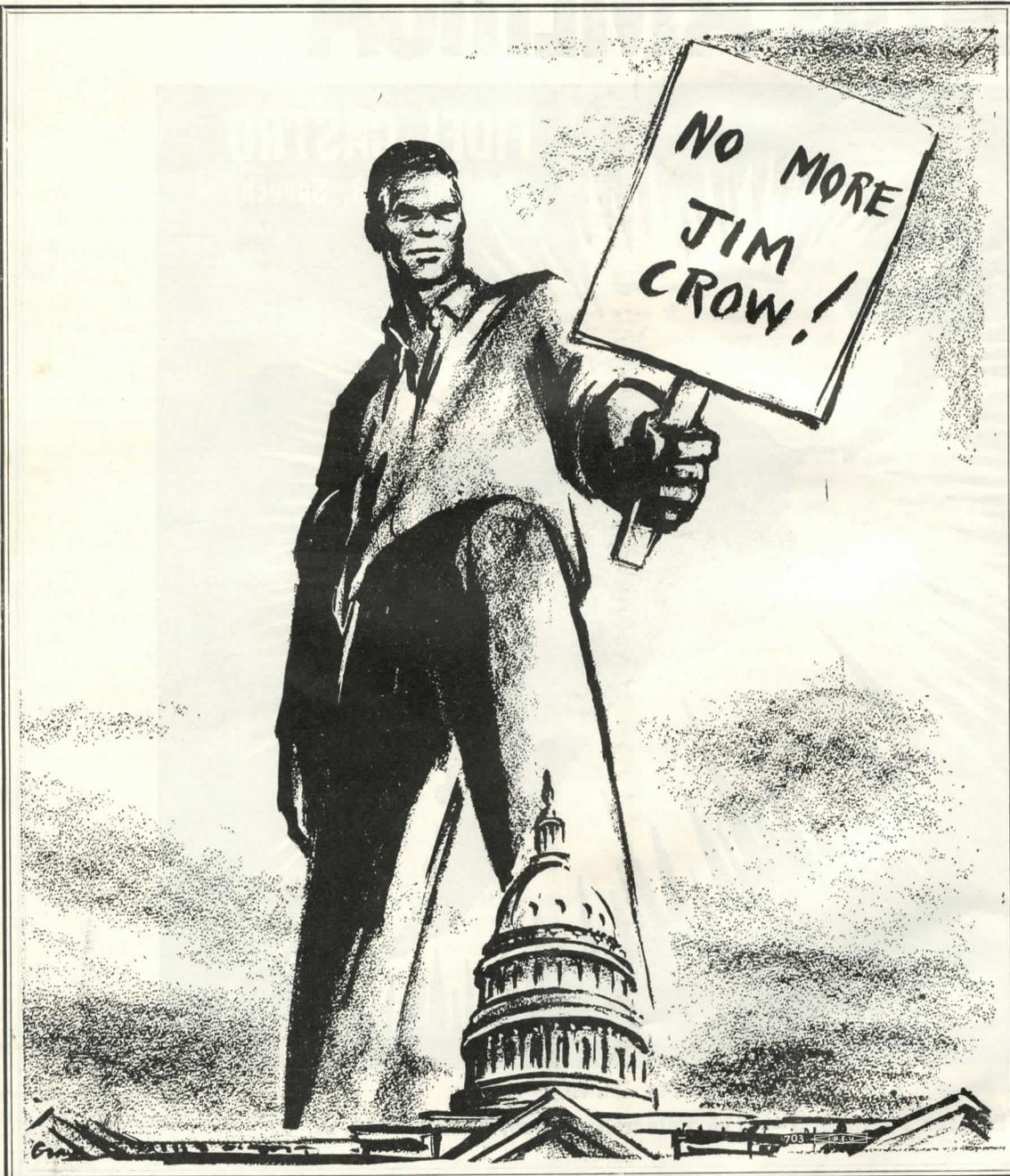
**INTERNATIONAL
SOCIALIST
REVIEW**

FREEDOM

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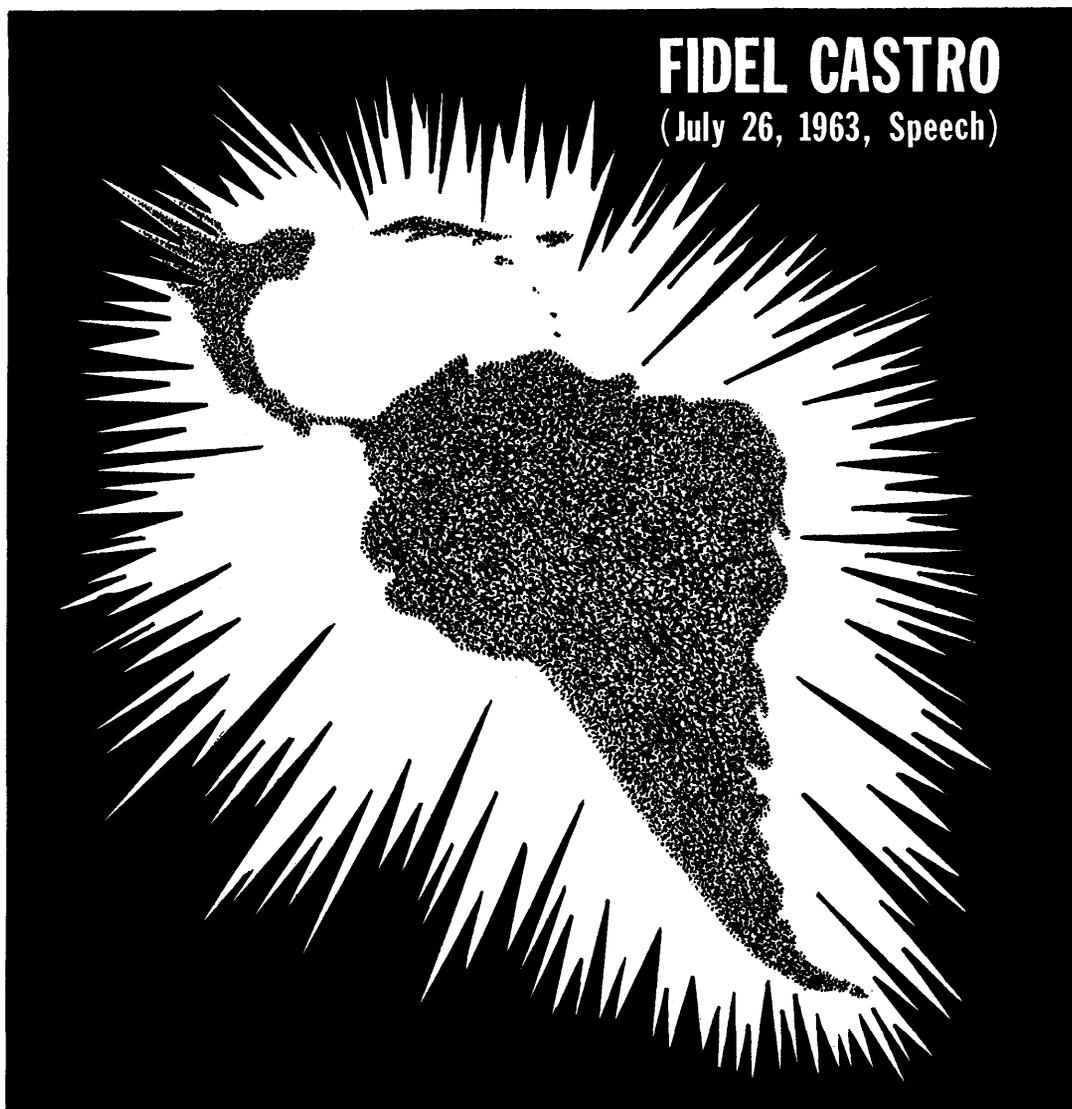
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FREEDOM NOW

"The New Stage in the Struggle for Negro Emancipation and the Tasks of the SWP," adopted by the 1963 Convention of the Socialist Workers Party.

I. "Freedom Now": A New Stage

UNDER the banner of "Freedom Now," the Negro struggle for equality has entered a new stage. This is comparable in significance to the change that occurred in the 1830's when a wing of the Abolitionist movement, previously dominated by schemes for piecemeal purchase and deportation of the slaves, raised the explosive demand for immediate and complete emancipation.

The most notable characteristic of this new stage in the Negro struggle is the clear and sharp rejection of gradualism, which is the program, method and perspective of capitalist liberalism. *Freedom Now* is an essentially radical and potentially revolutionary demand. It brings its advocates, regardless of their particular views, into growing conflict with the White House and the Southern Democrats, with the labor leaders as well as the liberals, with Negro as well as white exponents of moderation, compromise and tokenism.

The ruling class of this country cannot grant this demand. Neither can it suppress or sidetrack the movement. That is why a consistent struggle to achieve it will stimulate profound changes not only in race relations but also in class and political relations in the United States.

Freedom Now sentiment is generated from numerous sources: by urbanization, industrialization and migration as a result of which three-fourths of the Negroes live in cities

rather than rural areas and one-half outside the South; by inspiration from the colonial revolutions against white imperialist domination in Africa, Asia and Latin America; by the smallness, fewness and slowness of concessions offered to the demand for equality; by the conviction that the rulers of this country will never grant equality voluntarily or without pressure, and that their difficulties in the cold war make them more vulnerable to pressure; by disappointment in the old-style Negro leaders and the labor bureaucrats. It is spurred by the growth of racial consciousness and solidarity, which flows from common experiences of oppression and is strengthened by historical and contemporary evidence that the Negro must rely on himself first of all if he is to make any progress. This sentiment is bolstered in some circles by a questioning or repudiation of the values of capitalist (white-dominated) society.

THE results have been a spread of the Negro struggle into every corner of the country; a sizable increase in the number of active fighters, with the most important new reinforcements coming from the student youth, who are not encumbered by the skepticism, routinism or defeatism of many of their elders and are imparting a new vigor and vibrancy to the struggle; assertions of independence, coupled with height-

ened self-confidence and growing determination that the Negro will decide his own goals, work out his own tactics and lead his own struggles; more openly expressed feelings of mistrust and suspicion of whites and bitter resentment against paternalism in any form; the raising of new demands and proposals that are unacceptable to most liberals (special consideration or priority for the needs of the Negro to compensate for centuries of oppression and deprivation, adequate and effective Negro representation in all places and at all levels, bloc voting, etc.). This new phase has already witnessed a significant growth of Negro nationalist and separatist sentiment along with the appearance of new national organizations and hundreds of local groups dedicated to equality. This is all part of the ferment, discussion, experimentation, and lively search for ideas, methods, programs and leadership capable of guiding the struggle for equality to victory.

The new period which was definitively ushered in with the Battle of Birmingham in May 1963 has been marked by the following features:

1. The struggle is acquiring an ever greater mass character. It actively involves hundreds of thousands ranging from students and middle class people to the most disinherited and dispossessed of the city ghettos. They have stepped onto the arena of action as a mass force of constantly growing dimensions and dynamism.

2. Mass action in various forms has now recrossed the Mason-Dixon line. The opening punch was delivered in the fight for jobs at the school construction site in Philadelphia which spread to New York and other places. The dam burst with the turnout of a quarter million Negroes in the June Freedom March in Detroit, the biggest protest demonstration of its kind in this century. From the start the demands in the North are on a higher socio-economic level than those in the South, striking deeply into the established class structure.

3. The impact of these events has shocked the Kennedy administration, provoked a political crisis in the country and compelled federal, state and local governments to take steps not even remotely contemplated before the upsurge of the Negro revolt. The Kennedy administration does not intend to grant equality. It is anxious

to contain and, if possible, buy off the leadership by offering the minimum of concessions to keep the mass movement from moving too fast and far ahead.

4. The top Negro leaders feel even more nervous and unsteady. They are being forced to talk, and in some cases even act, more militantly because they fear the power of the revolt which they did not unloose and cannot control. They also fear that the ruling class upon whom they rely will not grant enough concessions soon enough and that the mass movement will continue to sweep around them and beyond them, dragging them along as they try to slow it down. The profound insecurity of the official leaders, their lack of control over the masses, the emergence of new forces and potential new and bolder leaders are positive signs of an ascending revolt that is becoming more and more radicalized.

5. In the South at this stage the civil rights struggle has some special traits distinguishing it from the rest of the country.

a.) Because of the glaring and intolerable violations of the most elementary democratic rights, Southern freedom-fighters are in a position to expose and dramatize the injustices of Jim Crow, constantly embarrass the federal government and deepen the indignation against segregation not only throughout the United States but throughout the world.

b.) In parts of the South where Negroes are a majority, such moves as the call for the election of a Negro sheriff in Leflore County, Mississippi have a highly explosive character because they directly challenge and endanger the white supremacist structure. Voter registration drives in rural areas where uncompromising Negro candidates might become mayors, judges, or sheriffs could upset the whole balance of power there.

c.) What happens in Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia has immediate repercussions upon the moods of the movement in the North. Any outrage and outbreak of violence, or any outstanding demonstration and achievement in the South, arouses the Negro communities in the rest of the country. Thus the intensification and extension of the struggle in the South is a sharp goad to the national civil rights movement. Conversely, the advances of the Northern struggle, such as the direct actions for jobs, tend to feed back into the South and raise the struggle there to a higher level.

II. The Present Tendencies

The *Freedom Now* forces face the task of uniting into an effective movement and equipping themselves with a program, a philosophy and a perspective. Success in these efforts will depend on correct evaluations of the competing tendencies now in the field, of the intentions of their racist enemies, and of the Negro movement's relations with other sections of the population.

The NAACP was for a long time the dominant civil rights organization. But its relative influence has declined and it is today challenged on all sides. Its leadership, middle class and liberal, relies mainly on legal and legislative action and discourages mass action, initiative and struggle. Afraid of being outflanked and bypassed by more militant organizations, they have attempted to modernize their "image," but the NAACP remains the chief protagonist and symbol of gradualism. The Negro masses may appreciate it as a legal defense arm and legislative lobby, but they do not feel welcome in it and most do not belong to it.

A PACIFIST tendency has acquired strength and its leaders prominence since the late 1950's. Its main organizations are the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, headed by Martin Luther King, and the Congress of Racial Equality. Their prestige derives in part from the fact that, unlike the NAACP, they have sanctioned and participated in certain kinds of direct action. But King's pacifism also has the opposite effect of restraining the full unleashing of mass struggle and initiative. He preaches "love" of the racist enemy and threatens to cancel civil rights struggles whenever the masses display a readiness to defend themselves against racist violence. Although King speaks the rhetoric of *Freedom Now*, it is not accidental that the liberals support him as "the right kind of Negro leader" while the Kennedy administration feels he can be used to keep the masses from getting out of control.

There is an essential difference between pacifism which preaches no resistance to assaults at all times and at all costs, and a defensive pacifism imposed by an unfavorable relation of forces. The need for organized self-defense against white supremacist gangs and police officials is as yet openly supported only by small groups of Negro militants. The

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Ghandist-pacifist leaders are ready to rely upon government military force while they repudiate in principle the adoption of self-protective measures by Negroes who are menaced with attacks by Jim Crow elements who are shielded by or may even be part of the state apparatus.

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee is a tendency distinct from King and CORE. It originated in the desire of militant students to strike out on a road different from that of the gradualists. It does not preach a binding commitment to Gandhism. For its leaders, nonviolence is rather a tactic than a dogma or principle and one that does not exclude the right of self-defense. SNCC is a vanguard-type movement whose main emphasis is on direct action as a means of organizing the Southern masses for independent struggle.

The Negro American Labor Council was formed to fulfill the indispensable function of leading and coordinating the fight against discrimination in industry and the labor movement. Because of their numbers and strategic position as a link between the labor movement and the Negro community, Negro unionists can play a crucial role in enlisting union support for the independent struggles of the Negro people and Negro support for the unions. But outside of a few cities the NALC has so far failed to recruit many Negro workers into its ranks. Partly this failure is due to the tight bureaucratic grip on the organization by the A. Philip Randolph leadership. The NALC is weakened by the fact that most of its leaders owe their union posts to appointment by the union bureaucracy and are afraid to jeopardize these by undertaking bold actions unacceptable to the Meanys and Reuthers.

THE Muslims, headed by Elijah Muhammad, are the most dynamic tendency in the Northern Negro community today. Previously a small, uninfluential religious sect, they have acquired a considerable predominantly working-class membership in the Northern cities, a more substantial following, and the respect of millions of Negroes who are stirred by their forthright denunciation of racial oppression and their determination to free themselves from white domination. Nationalist and separatist, they reject not only gradualism and tokenism, but also the right of their

oppressors to control and exploit Negroes. They boldly declare the capacity and right of the Negro people to govern themselves. Important weaknesses include their failure to understand the economic causes of racism and their lack of a program of action enabling them to participate in and influence partial, immediate and transitional struggles of the Negro masses. In the last year the Muslims have begun to overcome their isolation by greater flexibility in their approach toward other Negro organizations. An important and promising step forward was their recent declaration in favor of political action in the form of election campaigns to elect black candidates.

The most radical tendencies with a social or political orientation have been inspired by the example of the Monroe, N.C., movement headed by Robert F. Williams. Monroe has made valuable contributions to the theory and practice of self-defense. However, the movement has been weakened by the persecution, frame-up and exile of its leader.

Significant parts in promoting the struggle against liberalism and gradualism are being played by newly-formed regional and local groups in all parts of the country.

It is from among these groups and currents that the Negro leadership of an effective struggle for equality will be gathered and united. But it is necessary to add that at the present stage none of these tendencies, including the biggest, can claim the affiliation of more than a small percentage of the Negro people. The *Freedom Now* movement is forming, re-forming, learning, developing, preparing, defining and refining. However, the great mass of the Negroes, concentrated in the big ghettos of the North and South, have yet to be heard from.

III. Negro Nationalism Today

General definitions of nationalism are inadequate for understanding and explaining Negro nationalism in the United States today. While it has resemblances to the insurgent nationalism in African countries, and to the nationalism of oppressed minorities in the old Russian Czarist empire, American Negro nationalism also differs from them in certain important respects. Moreover, Negro nationalism is still in an early stage of its development and will surely undergo changes in the future. A definitive analysis will have to wait until Negro nationalism becomes a

mass movement and acquires firmer and more fixed features than it now displays. Nevertheless, it is already possible to draw a number of conclusions for guidance.

CAPITALISM segregates the Negroes, confines them in ghettos, builds walls around them and binds them together in common resentment against racial discrimination, proscription, deprivation and abuse. This is the soil in which Negro nationalism is rooted and grows. It is an outgrowth of these conditions, a reaction against them, a way of resisting and fighting them. In the past the hope that these conditions could be eliminated tended to weaken Negro nationalist sentiment and suspend its activity. However, the belief that these conditions will exist in this country forever, or for another lifetime, serves to nourish, strengthen and activate Negro nationalism.

The intensification of separatist moods among Negroes in the Northern cities expresses a rejection of American class society from top to bottom and a strong desire to break free from the evils of that society. It is their verdict that the present "American Way of Life" has nothing worthwhile to offer Negroes. In the absence of a revolutionary labor movement or powerful socialist vanguard, the radicalism of the Northern ghetto masses flows through channels of race-consciousness, repudiating U.S. society as the white man's world. The urge to tear loose and separate from the social fabric of U.S. capitalism is not far removed from the urge, under different forms, to abolish that system in revolutionary struggle.

The 1948 convention resolution of the Socialist Workers Party noted the appearance and growth of an embryo Negro "nation within the nation." It is still an embryo today, but bigger and more mature. Racial-national sentiments have been fed and stimulated by the mockery of tokenism at home and the successes of colonial revolution abroad. The Negro is keenly aware that as a second-class citizen he is both a citizen and not a citizen. He sees plausibility in the concept of internal or domestic colonialism, which correctly stresses the many similarities between the capitalist treatment of the Negro people in this country and the imperialist treatment of colonial peoples.

But the American Negro people are in a situation with some unique

aspects. They are an oppressed minority without a clearly defined geographical, language or cultural basis for differentiation from their oppressors. Negro nationalism is at this point a broad medium for "self identification," a method of differentiating a racially oppressed minority from its oppressors and of uniting it ideologically and organizationally to free itself from oppression. Negro nationalism plays a function for the Negro people here in many ways like that which class consciousness plays for the working class.

JAMES Baldwin's attempt at a definition of nationalism is a useful one to build on. This author said it means "that a certain group of people, living in a certain place, has decided to take its political destinies into its own hands." Applied to the United States, as it was meant to be, this means that large numbers of Negroes have decided, and more are in the process of deciding, that they cannot leave their future in the hands of the white oppressors but must unite with other Negroes and decide for themselves what they want in and from the United States.

This consciousness is the basic feature of Negro nationalism today. It is expressed in various ways — most commonly in the stimulation of racial pride, declarations of independence, the desire for Negro leadership and control of the civil rights struggle, mistrust of whites — and it is present to varying degrees in most Negro tendencies, both integrationist and separatist.

Viewed in this light, Negro nationalism, as it now exists, should not be equated with Negro separatism, the tendency that advocates creation of a separate Negro nation. The two are not the same thing. All separatists are nationalists but not all nationalists are separatists. Nationalism expresses the desire of Negroes to decide their destiny, including, among other things, their attitude toward the question of a separate nation. Nationalists want the right to decide their destiny, and to create an independent movement and other conditions that will make it possible for them to decide their destiny. But so far they have not made a choice in favor of a separate nation.

For many Negroes, nationalism is considered and may prove to be a way of uniting the mass of the Negro people and forcing the rulers of this country to grant them equality in-

side the United States. They leave open the question of separatism for a future stage, neither rejecting nor endorsing it now.

The first big task of the Negro struggle is the mobilization and unification of the Negro masses in an independent movement to fight for their equality — an indispensable condition for an eventual revolutionary alliance of the working class and the Negro people. Negro nationalism is progressive because it contributes to the creation of such an independent Negro movement. It will remain progressive so long as it fulfills that function, whether the struggle be fought along integrationist or separatist lines.

REVOLUTIONARY socialists welcome the growth of such Negro nationalism and give its participants wholehearted collaboration in the fight against our common enemies. For us, Negro nationalism and revolutionary socialism are not only compatible but complementary forces, that should be welded closer together in thought and action. The common sympathy and support for the colonial revolution and hostility to imperialist domination is an important bond between the two movements.

Revolutionary socialists must be ready to learn from militant Negro tendencies and to absorb everything progressive in their spirit and ideas; at the same time it must never be forgotten that we have things to contribute as well as learn. The nationalist tendencies still lack a comprehensive and realistic program to solve the problems of the Negro people, and many nationalists have confused conceptions. Revolutionary socialists must be simultaneously firm and patient in demonstrating that Marxism, properly understood and applied, is valid and relevant for the Negro struggle — firm because of our confidence in the correctness of the socialist program, patient because we know that the logic of the Negro struggle inevitably leads it into socialist channels.

Nationalism itself is an empty vessel which can be filled with vastly different contents. The nationalism of Chiang Kai-shek is the opposite of that of a Chinese Communist revolutionist or a Fidel Castro. Militant Negro nationalists can have wrong ideas and petty-bourgeois illusions. Negro Marxists have to imbue the nationalist sentiments and

struggles of their people with a revolutionary, scientific, anti-capitalist content and direction.

They will be greatly aided in this work by the progress of the colonial revolution. The ideas of socialism are being adopted by more and more of the colonial peoples striving for national and social liberation in Africa, Asia and Latin America. This popularity of Marxist and anti-capitalist doctrines, movements and governments among the non-white races will exert an increasing influence upon the vanguard elements of the Negro struggle here which will lend strength to the positions of the SWP.

Negro socialists must bring forward, as an inspiration and guide for American Negroes, the example of Cuba where the overthrow of capitalism through the socialist revolution has uprooted discrimination and established genuine equality and fraternity of black and white citizens ninety miles from the Southern coastal states.

IV. Separatism and a Separate Nation

The theoretical position of revolutionary socialism on Negro separatism was first worked out at the Socialist Workers Party convention in 1939. Now, when Black Muslim influence has made separatism a live political issue among many people, it needs to be restated, adapted to current conditions and made unmistakably clear.

In 1939, we foresaw the possibility that the Negro people, as part of their struggle to end centuries of oppression and exploitation, might some day decide that they want a separate nation, controlled and administered by themselves. We said that if this happened, it would settle the long theoretical dispute about whether or not Negroes are a national minority as well as a racial minority, and that we, as supporters of the right of self-determination, would support the Negro demand for a separate nation and do everything in our power to help them obtain it.

IN TAKING this position we did not become advocates of a separate nation, as the Communist Party used to be, nor do we advocate it now. What we advocate is the right of the Negro people to decide this question themselves. All we commit ourselves to do is support their fight to achieve whatever *they* decide they want, whether it be equality through integration or equality through segregation, or both.

It appeared to us in 1939 that the mass of the Negro people had not yet expressed themselves on this point, or had not expressed themselves definitely. Nine years later, in the resolution adopted at our 1948 convention, we noted that the growing "feeling of racial and national solidarity among the Negro people thus far aims solely at acquiring enough force and momentum to break down the barriers that exclude Negroes from American society, showing few signs of aiming at national separatism." It was clear that the vast majority of the Negroes were integrationist in the sense that they favored abolition of each and every discriminatory and segregationist device and institution in this country. But we did not take that to mean that the Negro masses had reached a conclusive position for or against separatism. We felt both in 1939 and 1948 that the question was still "open" — that the Negro people might make a different decision about separatism in the future.

By 1963 the situation has changed considerably, but not decisively. On the one hand, the Muslims, the strongest advocates of separatism, have made serious organizational gains and growth of their general influence has been even greater. On the other hand, more Negroes than ever before are actively engaged in assaulting the Jim Crow barriers. If such activity makes them integrationists, it is necessary to point out that a profound division of feeling agitates many Negro integrationists. They have mixed feelings of attraction and repulsion in relation to the Muslims.

In general, Negro thought and discussion about separatism and related questions is much more intense than 15 or 24 years ago. But the mass of the Negro people have not yet taken any settled stand on these questions, and we must still await their definitive decision.

Until the Negro masses decide, the SWP neither advocates nor opposes a separate nation. We defend the right of the Negro people to make such a decision. This means we defend the rights of separatists to meet, speak, write and circulate their views and be free from government or vigilante assaults and frameups. It means refuting the slander that the Muslims and other separatists are "counterparts" of the White Citizens Councils and the Ku Klux Klan. It means counteracting the widespread but mistaken notion that separation, free-

ly chosen by Negroes, is "equivalent" to segregation imposed by white supremacists.

Our attitude toward separatists, including the Muslims, is a friendly one. We recognize that the mere existence of the Muslims has had healthy effects, pushing rival Negro tendencies to the left and thereby imparting an impetus to even purely integrationist battles. We note with interest that, far from being a hardened sect, the Muslims have shown capacity during the last year to change in a direction that better serves the interests of all Negroes. However, they have still to develop a program of action for the struggles now taking place.



MALCOLM X

WHERE we differ with them, we differ in a friendly way, and we seek collaboration with them on mutually acceptable projects. We make it plain that we are not opposed to separation, if that should be the will of the Negro masses. Instead of attacking separatism as "utopian," we seek to point out the revolutionary implication of the mass struggle for it and urge its advocates to develop radical methods, tactics and programs as the only way to achieve it.

If the Negro people should decide they want to separate, we would openly come out in favor of granting them separation. At the same time we would continue to fight before, during and after any separation which might take place, to abolish all racial inequalities and the cause of such inequalities in the United

States. In that sense, we are and will remain integrationists, whatever else happens. We are convinced that the revolutionary struggle for socialism and the establishment of a socialist government will eliminate the basic causes of racial antagonism and create the conditions for equality and integration of all in a new type of living together.

V. The Capitalist Orientation

The future of the Negro struggle depends first of all on what Negroes do about it. It depends on what their allies do — or do not do — about it. And it also depends on what their enemies do about it.

The ruling rich are the foremost enemy of the Negro people. The capitalist class introduced the system of racial oppression in this country, first in the form of slavery; they continued it under other forms after slavery was abolished; and they maintain it today. The rich initiated and have continued racial oppression because it was and is a convenience in the exploitation of labor, a source of super-profit, and a method for dividing the labor force and disrupting its efforts to unite against its exploiters.

That the responsibility for racial oppression rests on the capitalist class is not at all contradicted by the fact that other sections of the population, including the working class, are infected to one degree or another with race prejudices and poisons. If this were not so, Jim Crow could never have existed. But the capitalist system injected these prejudices into the white workers and reinforced them by granting the white workers concessions and privileges at the expense of the Negroes. The chief responsibility belongs on the capitalists, not on the workers who go along with racial discrimination and who are themselves victims as well as beneficiaries of racism. It is necessary to ceaselessly combat racist prejudices and practices of the workers too. Yet we must keep in mind that it is not the workers but the capitalists who have the political and economic power in this country and who control the propaganda-information-education-police apparatuses. It is an incontrovertible fact that the capitalists have used their power to perpetuate rather than abolish racial oppression.

Gradualists, even when forced to admit these historical facts, answer that things are different now or soon will be. They claim that steady and

substantial progress has been made in recent years; that the gains already made indicate that this progress will continue indefinitely until it results in the total eradication of the color line; and that this process will be accelerated by the government because of its propaganda needs in the cold war. The evidence does not support these claims.

Progress is actually slow, small and uneven. Moreover, in some areas there is retrogression rather than progress. Average Negro family income in 1962 was 54 percent of average white family income whereas ten years before it had been 57 percent. While the incomes of both groups rose during this decade, that of the whites rose more, and so the income gap has been growing greater, not smaller. The rate of unemployment among Negroes has been around twice that among whites since the end of World War II, which is a greater disproportion than existed during the depression of the 1930's. During recessions the gap grows bigger, reaching a rate 2½ and 3 times that of whites.

Negro children still receive an average of 3½ years less schooling than white children. The proportion of dilapidated housing occupied by Negroes is more than five times as big as that occupied by whites. On an average, Negroes still die seven years sooner than whites; discrimination from the cradle to the grave costs the Negro this much of his life span. There is still not a state in the country where a Negro may not be subjected at any time to humiliation, abuse, or worse.

The real trend is exemplified by the school situation in the South since the Supreme Court decision in 1954. Its restricted application is deliberately obscured since schools are classified as "desegregated" if one or a handful of Negroes is admitted. The fact is that after nine years less than 8 percent of Southern Negro children attend the same school as whites. At this rate it will take another century before the Southern school system is open to Negroes.

WHERE small gains have actually been made, their benefits have not been equally distributed. Some Negroes have been able to obtain jobs in areas previously closed to them (professional, clerical, white collar) and to attain the income and status of the Negro middle class (which is proportionately smaller, more insecure and less well paid than

the white middle class). At the other pole, conditions of large numbers of Negroes have deteriorated badly because of unemployment and automation. Negro workers are hardest hit by the effects of automation. Overall, the gains of the more fortunate minority of Negroes are more than offset by the increasingly chronic poverty and deprivation imposed on the majority of the Negro people.

Studying the present trends in the light of the past, revolutionary socialists conclude that racial oppression can be abolished in the United States only if the present capitalist profit system is eliminated and replaced by a system based on production for use. Critics of this position reply that history has provided examples of capitalist countries relatively free of racism. Therefore, they conclude, racism is not an indispensable component of all capitalist societies and so American capitalism can be rid of this feature without necessarily abolishing capitalism itself.

Such thinking is misleading because it is based solely on generalities. The SWP conclusion is based on a *concrete* analysis of the nature and contradictions of the specific capitalist structure in the United States. This has had a history different from other capitalist countries, out of which specific economic and political relations developed, out of which specific interests, needs and institutions arose *and still flourish*. This particular capitalism, the American, may be forced to modify some of the features of its race system. But the ruling class will never willingly abolish it because it has too much of a stake in its maintenance, because it knows that attempts to uproot it in the South would inevitably give birth to a regional political revolution that would tend to become transformed into a social revolution.

American capitalism is not just tarred with racism. Its very roots are inextricably intertwined with racial oppression and it knows that pulling up the latter would endanger the former. To be sure, Jim Crow genuinely embarrasses the American ruling class in its foreign relations and diplomatic maneuvers. But it would rather go on being embarrassed than to risk the consequences of any serious effort to get rid of the cause of the embarrassment.

There is no evidence in anything happening now that the capitalists or their government intend to eradicate

racial oppression in our time. Even their spokesmen who deplore the situation do not believe it will be eliminated in this century. Their real perspective is not to abolish racism, but modify it, reform it, remove some of its secondary features, repeal the laws that make segregation mandatory — and to do this little at a pace so slow it will extend over several generations in a way acceptable to the Southern white supremacists.

At the very most, the capitalist goal is to establish throughout the country relations between the races like those that now exist in the North — where formal segregation is not sanctioned or is even prohibited by law, but where the rankest segregation and inequality exist in practice. They hope that this gradual process of reform will enable them to claim abroad that American democracy is improving race relations at home; that it will avert explosions in the South that could spread to the North; and that it will contain Negro discontent and rebelliousness at home.

THEY are also prepared to grant additional posts and concessions to a thin layer of the Negro middle class in the hope of using them to restrain the Negro people as a whole. Where they cannot buy off opponents, they will use harassment, intimidation and persecution to suppress and break up Negro groups which refuse to submit to the capitalist power structure. The best American capitalism holds out for the mass of the Negro people is not the prospect of equality in this generation or the next, but the promise that *formal* inequality may be removed some time in the remote future.

VI. The Labor Movement and the Negro Struggle

Historically, it has been shown that the more radical and democratic the leadership of organized labor is, the more it seeks to wipe out racial barriers and integrate Negro workers in the unions, to solidarize itself with the Negro people as an oppressed minority and to promote a fighting labor-Negro alliance against their common enemies.

The opposite is also true. When conservative or liberal-sounding bureaucrats dominate the labor movement, their main concern is the preservation and expansion of their own privileges and powers. They do everything they can to avoid fighting the capitalists about anything; they

subordinate and betray the interests of the union rank and file, the unorganized workers and all other oppressed groups; and they are indifferent or hostile to the Negro struggle for equality.

The role of the labor movement is one of the crucial differences between the 1930's and the 1960's, and it bears directly on the present moods and activities in the Negro community.

The youth of today find it hard to appreciate how profoundly the rise of the CIO affected race relations. It brought about the 20th century's first major progressive shakeup and reversal in these relations. Until then, discrimination and segregation had been growing worse and harsher in every area, including the old AFL unions, which had always turned their backs on the Negroes. Then, with the coming of the CIO, for the first time in many decades, the Negro worker saw a powerful hand held out to him and an invitation extended to enter the house of labor, or at least one floor. Despite previous painful and discouraging experiences with whites, the Negro workers rallied magnificently to the new industrial unions and played a key role in smashing the open shop in basic industry. No other group was more loyal or devoted.

This was not because the CIO, even in its best days, fulfilled all its obligations to Negroes. But, unlike every other major force, it welcomed the Negro. This held out the promise that the growing unfavorable trend of race relations in the country could be reversed. Although the Negroes never won complete equality in the unions, through their own efforts and with the aid of the CIO they did gain a strong foothold in the unions and industry, from which they could exert leverage for further gains. Before the stagnation of the labor movement set in during the late 1940's the Negroes had reached their present imposing numbers inside organized labor (1½ million). Equally important, the CIO, by its very existence, served as a shield behind which the Negro community as a whole was able to consolidate its forces, develop new and more independent demands, and lay the ground for the struggles of today and tomorrow.

MUCH has changed in the last quarter century. With the aid of the government and the employers, the labor bureaucrats have

housebroken most of the unions and decimated or destroyed radical influence in them. Militant oppositional groups, which were usually the Negro's closest ally inside the unions, are now absent or impotent. The labor movement has been on the defensive for years. The capitalist-minded bureaucrats are guided by class collaboration, not class struggle. In practice, this means not fighting the employers but seeking deals with them — sometimes to preserve the conditions of the older, more privileged, higher seniority workers and always at the expense of the weaker and most exploited workers, of whom the Negroes and other minorities form a large part.

The bureaucrats pledged to eliminate racism when the AFL and CIO merged in 1955. But, as with every other progressive task, they have given only lip service to this pledge. They even blame the rank and file union members, rather than themselves, for its non-fulfillment. They simply cannot understand why the Negroes are demanding more from the labor movement than they did when they first joined it in the 1930's. Some labor bureaucrats harbor racial prejudices, and all of them, like their liberal friends, are guilty of paternalism. When the Meany and Reuther instruct the Negroes to take it easy and wait, and this doesn't work, they react to the demand for equality with outright hostility or tokenism. Their only real interest in Negroes is collecting their dues and keeping them tied to the Democratic Party.

Inside the unions some Negro members have become discouraged or demoralized and abandoned the fight against the bureaucracy, as some white militants have done. Negroes outside the unions confuse the labor bureaucracy with the labor movement as such. They fail to recognize that millions of white workers have reason to hate the bureaucrats too and will seize the first chance they get to throw the bureaucrats off the backs of all the workers, white and black.

Some Negro nationalists are disposed to declare the unions "dead" and write them off. They disregard the fact that on the surface the labor movement appeared to be even deadlier in the late 1920's and early 1930's, not long before the upsurge of industrial unionism. Also evident is a tendency to counterpose independent Negro organization to a labor-Negro alliance, as though these two things were in contradiction, and

even to reject the desirability and possibility of a militant labor-Negro alliance. The mobilization and merger of the forces needed to eliminate racism are considerably complicated by these feelings and beliefs, for which the labor bureaucracy must be held primarily responsible.

However, the consequences of the default of the union leadership have not all been negative. Awareness that the labor bureaucracy cannot be counted on to defend the Negro workers or the Negro people has strengthened the desire of Negro workers for their own means of defense and advancement inside the labor movement. This is reflected in the formation of the Negro American Labor Council and in the hundreds of formal or informal Negro caucuses or clubs inside local unions. Outside the labor movement it has been a big factor in stimulating nationalist sentiment and activity, and generally strengthening the feelings of self-reliance and the trend toward independent action and struggle.

Unlike capital, labor has been and is capable of playing differing roles in relation to the Negro struggle, depending on which forces are at the head of the unions. Revolutionary socialists recognize that the labor movement in the grip of its conservative and capitalist-minded bureaucracy is increasingly remote from the rank and file and is shamefully defaulting on its responsibilities to the Negro people.

BUT the unions don't belong to the bureaucrats, who have usurped the power they hold and betray the ranks they are supposed to represent. As happened after the 1920's, we anticipate that the union movement will be transformed and radicalized again, and at a higher level than in the 1930's, by the effects on the working class of the crises and contradictions of capitalism and the failure of non-radical methods to solve the problems of automation, unemployment, speed-up, inflation, insecurity and the war danger.

The coming radicalization of the labor movement will be accompanied by and accomplished through the creation of a left wing in the unions. This cannot be some vaguely "progressive" formation interested mainly in winning union offices, but a group that will be distinguished by class struggle policies, an independent labor party orientation, and active

support for the Negro struggle inside and outside the unions. Militant Negroes will contribute to this big change both by forming their own groups in the unions and helping to build and be part of a left wing, or closely connected with it. To abstain from either of these tasks would be to insure the continued dominance of the labor bureaucracy, at the expense of the living conditions and rights of 1½ million Negro union members, 6½ million other Negro workers who want to be union members, and the Negro people as a whole.

VII. Independent Political Action

The Negro struggle is above all a political struggle — that is, its solution requires political action. The coming labor-Negro alliance will operate in many areas and through many forms, but above all it will be a political alliance. And yet it is precisely in the field of politics that up to now practically all tendencies in the Negro movement are weakest and *least independent*, both in theory and practice.

Some tendencies ignore politics, but politics do not ignore them. The effect of political abstention is to leave the monopoly of political power in the hands of capitalist parties and demagogic politicians who use that power against the Negro people. Others recognize the importance of politics and participate in politics — but only in the two major parties that are opposed to Negro equality. Among politically active Negroes are some whose main interest is in electing Negroes to office. But these are repeatedly frustrated because the Negro Democrats or Republicans whom they help elect usually turn out to be captives and apologists for the corrupt capitalist political machines rather than consistent spokesmen for the Negro people.

Most current tendencies reflect, to one degree or another, the desire of the Negro masses to determine their own destiny — to have their own organizations, their own leaders, their own strategy, tactics and programs. But few of these tendencies have expressed a similarly independent spirit in the vital field of politics by breaking with the parties of their oppressors and organizing to challenge their political monopoly. Yet such a break and such a challenge are implicit in everything that has happened up to now. It is contradictory and self-defeating to talk about *Freedom Now* while accepting the right of the white supremacists and

gradualists to jointly wield the political power of this country.

The idea of a Negro party, a civil rights party or an equal rights party, is not a new one. Representative Adam Clayton Powell has talked about it on and off during recent years. *Liberator*, the Liberation Committee for Africa magazine, wrote about the need for an “Afro-American political party” during the 1962 election campaign. More recently Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Muslims, has advocated that Negroes run and elect their own candidates to public office because “there will be no real freedom for the so-called Negro in America until he elects his own political leaders and his own candidates.” William Worthy has spoken along similar lines.

The basis for such a party already exists. Millions of Negroes are concentrated in the big cities of the country, North and South. United in a party of their own, they are so situated geographically that they could sweep the elections in dozens of congressional districts. They could send a bigger bloc of Negroes to Washington than they did in Reconstruction days and elect a sizable body of state and city legislators who would for the first time be beholden to no one but the Negro community. Both nationally and locally they could hold the legislative balance of power and be in a position to compel bigger concessions from the dominant parties. More fundamentally, with a party of their own Negroes could take a lead in undermining and changing the whole power structure.

THE immense implications of such an independent Negro course in politics illustrate graphically the truth of the revolutionary-socialist analysis that the independent Negro struggle tends to stimulate, spur and shake up the major forces in the country. The creation of a Negro party running its own candidates would rock the whole political structure to its foundations. It would throw the Democratic Party into a crisis. Without the majority of Negro votes which it now gets, it could never again hope to hold national power. The only place it could go would be down. Organized labor would be faced with an excruciating dilemma too. Its coalition with the Democrats is justified on the ground that the Democrats can “win.” But when it becomes plain that they cannot win, the unions

would be forced to reconsider their whole political policy. Advocates of a labor break with the old parties would get a bigger and better hearing from the ranks. Thus the creation of a Negro party would benefit not only the Negro but his present and potential allies.

The Socialist Workers Party contends that racism, like unemployment, exploitation and war, can be abolished in this country only by independent political action aimed at taking control of the government out of the hands of the capitalists and their parties. As a step in this direction, we have long advocated that the unions break from the Democratic Party and form an independent labor party that would seek to politically unite workers, farmers and Negroes and elect their representatives to office. In addition, and for the same reason, we have also endorsed and supported representatives of the Negro community whenever they have run for office independently of and in opposition to the old parties, even when they were not socialists.

Extending this policy in the light of current developments, we publicly express our readiness to support and collaborate with any Negro party or *Freedom Now Party* that runs candidates of its own in opposition to the capitalist parties and seeks to elect representatives whose primary allegiance will be to the Negro community. Our support of such a party in no way conflicts with our own independent socialist political campaigning or with our continued advocacy of a labor party. On the contrary, we believe that a Negro party, a socialist party, and a labor party would find much in common from the very beginning, would work together for common ends, and would tend in the course of common activity to establish close organizational ties or even merge into a single or federated party. Revolutionary socialists don't care whether capitalism and racism are abolished by a single party or by a combination of parties, just so long as they are abolished.

VIII. Strategy of the Negro Struggle

In previous convention resolutions, the SWP predicted that the Negro movement would precede and outpace the labor and anti-capitalist movements. This prediction was based on the fact that while the Negro community is predominantly proletarian, the Negro people are

more than just another more heavily exploited section of the working class, and the Negro movement is more than just a part of the general working-class movement.

As an oppressed minority, the history of the Negroes is different, their position in society is special, their consciousness is influenced by racial, national and international as well as class factors, and they have developed their own standards, their own methods of action and their own forms of struggle. Although they are a minority numerically, they are a compact minority, knitted together by capitalist segregation in the ghetto and by a common sense of resentment against injustice, and they often play a role disproportionate to their numbers, a vanguard role. This prediction has been strikingly confirmed by recent events, which sees the Negroes in motion and out front while the labor movement is standing still and lagging behind.

Previous SWP resolutions have also analyzed the special factors tending to radicalize the Negro movement. The Negro struggle is the struggle of an oppressed minority for democratic rights, for equality. But because the American capitalist class will not grant equality, it tends to merge with the wider struggle for the abolition of capitalism, for socialism. Under the banner of democratic rights, the Negroes learn to reject the myths about American democratic capitalism, and through their own experiences in fighting for democracy they reach deeply radical conclusions, frequently ahead of other sections of the potentially anti-capitalist forces. This analysis has also been verified and validated by recent developments which find the Negro movement becoming radicalized, rejecting gradualism and passing beyond liberalism, which is still the dominant ideology of the labor movement.

THese disparities between the Negroes' growing activity and radicalization and labor's relative inactivity and conservatism have at this stage raised a number of complicated problems. In addition, they have produced some questioning and even rejection in certain nationalist circles about a third aspect of the SWP's traditional analysis of the Negro struggle, expressed in the following perspective: while the labor and Negro movements march along their own paths, they do march to a com-

mon destination, and the freedom of the Negroes from oppression and of the workers from exploitation can be achieved only through the victory of their common struggle against capitalism.

Our differences with such nationalists do not concern the facts. We both agree that a gap has appeared between the Negro movement and the labor movement and that present relations between them are strained or cool. We disagree over the meaning of these facts, their significance for the future, what to do about them. Since the relations between these two movements are the key to the future of this country, and through it of the world, they deserve the most sober appraisal and searching study.

The fact that the tempos of development of the two movements are uneven is neither new nor really surprising. Since their origins and histories are different, they have rarely marched in step. At the present time it is not the Negro movement that is laggard or out of step but organized labor. The complications occur, not because Negro radicalization is premature or unwarranted, but because labor radicalization has been retarded and is long overdue.

Faced with the disparity of development between the two movements and the frictions generated by it, the liberals do not prod the labor leaders to hurry up, go ahead, initiate a new course. They tell the Negroes to slow down and wait. The union leaders and Negro gradualists offer the same advice. And even some radicals and ex-radicals do the same in effect when they exaggerate the dangers of Negroes "going it alone."

But the Negro movement will not wait, should not wait, and should push ahead with an expansion of its independent action. To do anything else would set back the Negro cause for many years. We say this without the slightest modification of our fundamental view that the Negroes cannot win their goal of equality in this country without an alliance with the working class.

Although Negro independence and radicalization may not produce large-scale common action with organized labor under present circumstances, it will hasten common action eventually. In previous SWP resolutions, we explained that because the Negroes are doubly exploited, their struggles have exceptional effects on the social and political life of this country. Their fight for simple democratic

rights tends to upset the status quo. Their special demands introduce unsettling elements into the consciousness of the working class as a whole, disturbing the relations between the classes and inside the classes. Their independent action serves to spur, stimulate, awaken, excite, inspire, divide, unite, and set into motion other, bigger forces.

Correctly appraised, the independent course of the Negro movement, and even its essentially nationalist aspects, does not signify a permanent and principled repudiation of a labor-Negro alliance. What militant Negroes object to is any alliance based on subordination or gradualism in which the Negroes are merely a junior partner supplying manpower but having little to say about the policies and tempo pursued by the team. What they want is an alliance that will include *Freedom Now* as one of its main demands and in which the Negroes will have an equal voice in setting policy.

There is no inconsistency, in logic or practice, between organizing or reorganizing the Negro movement along independent lines and achieving alliances with other sections of the population. Many Negroes view doing the first job as an indispensable condition for successfully doing the second. They believe — correctly, in our opinion — that they must first unite, shape and orient their own movement. Only then will they be able to bring about an alliance of equals, where they can be reasonably sure that their demands and needs cannot be neglected or betrayed by their allies. This does not mean that they cannot begin forging links with the most progressive elements in the labor movement even now. But they feel that if any temporary conflict arises between these two tasks priority should be given to the imperative need of creating an independent Negro movement.

The strategy of the Negro struggle in the coming period can be expected, if our analysis of the past and the present is correct, to follow the course of uniting, dividing and uniting.

NUMERICALLY, Negroes are today about one-ninth of the population. (One-fifth at the time of the American Revolution, one-seventh at the time of the Civil War.) For some, this is a reason or pretext for the feeling that there is nothing much Negroes can do until the white

majority changes its racial attitudes; Negroes can only follow, not lead. This is just another way of saying that the Negroes must — wait.

Revolutionary socialists emphatically reject this approach. Our analysis has demonstrated that the Negro has a vanguard role to play, that his independent struggle will set other currents into motion, and that the worst thing he can do is wait. This is one of the telling differences between a revolutionary approach and a liberal approach, however the latter may be dressed up. Being a minority is not a reason for waiting, but a reason for developing a course of action and program that takes this fact into account and finds ways of overcoming it.

Throughout American history militant Negroes have always understood that their progress depends on their own readiness and ability to struggle. The tactics of today's struggle are necessarily different in this country than in countries like South Africa or Angola or Kenya, where black people are the great majority, and where simple majority rule can mean an end to racial oppression. But here, as in Africa, the liberation of the Negro people requires that the Negroes organize themselves independently, and control their own struggle, and not permit it to be subordinated to any other consideration or interest.

This means that the Negroes must achieve the maximum unity of their own forces — organizational unity, in a strong and disciplined nationwide movement or congress of organizations, and ideological unity, based on defeating, exposing and isolating gradualism and other tendencies emanating from their white oppressors. This phase of the process is now beginning.

Having united their own forces, the independent Negro movement will then probably undertake the tasks of division and alliance. It will seek ways to split the white majority so that the Negro disadvantage of being a numerical minority can be compensated for by division and conflict on the other side.

That has happened at earlier crucial points in American history. When the whites became divided between revolutionists and Tories in the American Revolution, the Negroes allied themselves with the former, and were able to gain emancipation from slavery in many Northern states. In the first half of the 19th century the independent struggles of

the Negroes — slave insurrections, mass escapes via the Underground Railway, sabotage, etc. — helped to widen the breach between the North and South and prepare the way for the Civil War. In the Civil War itself the Negroes threw their weight on the Northern side, pressured the North into accepting an emancipation policy, and provided the military balance of power. In the 1930's, when a division among the whites occurred along classic class lines, the Negroes drove in the wedge by giving overwhelming support to the CIO, helping to batter down the open shop and effect their own entry into the labor movement.

In each of these cases, the process of social division was accompanied by or led to a process of social and political alliance in action. That is how we see the future too. United, the Negro people through their independent struggle will help to divide the white population — between those who most benefit from racism and those whose interests are really damaged by racism. In the process of this struggle, the Negroes will both seek and find alliances. The major one will be with an insurgent working class, and especially with its most anti-capitalist forces.

The general alliance between the labor movement and the Negro fighters for liberation can be prepared for and preceded by the cementing of firm working unity between the vanguard of the Negro struggle and the socialist vanguard of the working class represented by the Socialist Workers Party. This is the primary task of the SWP in the present period of the *Freedom Now* movement.

IX. The Role and Tasks of the Socialist Workers Party

The role of the Socialist Workers Party is to assemble and programmatically equip the forces that will lead the coming American revolution to abolish capitalism and racism. This function is indispensable because American capitalism is so powerful and racism is so deeply rooted in it. If the SWP did not exist it would be necessary to form another organization to carry out this function, which no other existing political party, big or small, now aspires to fulfill.

The SWP operates in an arena wider than the Negro struggle, narrowly considered. For militant Negroes concerned first and foremost with the Negro struggle, this may at first appear as a disadvantage or liability. It is neither.

The SWP agrees that the first task of Negroes is to organize themselves independently. But the Negro movement does not and cannot exist in isolation from other forces and conflicts at home and abroad. The broader perspective and concern of the SWP with the totality of social struggle is an invaluable asset. Its revolutionary activity in the labor and other mass movements provides a means of enlisting allies and neutralizing potential enemies of the Negro movement in both its present formative and its future stages, and of connecting the class struggle with the Negro struggle in such a way as to strengthen both.

THE SWP seeks to equip both revolutionary whites and Negroes with the best set of scientific tools yet devised to change society — Marxism. Drawn from and fusing the lessons of American and world experiences, Marxism is constantly enriched, refined and rendered more effective by the experience of new struggles. It illuminates the causes of racism and points to the method for eradicating them. The SWP has long sought to “Americanize” Marxism (that is, to apply it to American conditions and use American conditions to modernize and expand Marxism itself). In order to accomplish this, it must now also work to “Afro-Americanize” Marxism (that is, apply it to the specific conditions of the Negro people and use the experience of their struggle to further concretize and enrich Marxism).

The SWP believes and acts on the belief that the working class cannot achieve its aims without the Negro people achieving theirs. The American revolution for a socialist democracy cannot succeed unless it is based on an equal and mutually acceptable partnership between the working class and the Negro people. It is this belief, deeply ingrained and expressed in the SWP's program and practice, rather than any written or verbal assurances or pledges, which affords an objective basis for regarding the SWP as different from other organizations most of whose members are white.

Its unblemished record in the class struggle and the Negro struggle during hot wars and cold, its uncompromising attitude toward capitalism and all its agencies and ideas, have earned the SWP the right not to be considered as just another party, or even just another radical party. Un-

like the Communist Party, the SWP has never called on Negroes to subordinate, suspend or give up their struggle for any other interest or cause, national or international. Unlike the Socialist Party, the SWP has never urged Negroes to support any of the political parties of their oppressors, and its opposition to gradualism in the Negro struggle is matched by its opposition to that same policy in all other fields. Unlike the Socialist Labor Party, the SWP does not belittle, stand aside from and turn its back on the immediate and partial struggles of the Negroes, but views them as a necessary and hopeful link to future, more fundamental struggles and participates in them actively and wholeheartedly. White or black, those who understand the need for a revolutionary-socialist party will find the genuine article in the SWP.

The present tasks of the SWP in connection with the Negro struggle for liberation are:

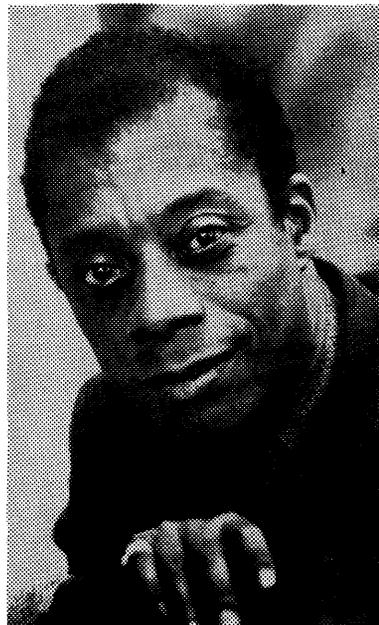
1. To better educate the entire membership; give ourselves a deeper and more sensitive understanding of the feelings, aspirations and needs of the Negro people; become more closely acquainted with their history, their current tendencies and organizations, the obstacles they face; above all, absorb, steep ourselves in the revolutionary character of their struggle, so that it becomes and remains a central feature of our work at all times. In this way we can inoculate ourselves against paternalism and other conscious or unconscious manifestations of the racial pressures that capitalist society brings to bear on everyone, even within the revolutionary party dedicated to ending capitalism.

2. To provide, through the party leadership, permanent help, guidance, coordination, encouragement and expansion of our work in the Negro struggle.

3. To devote more attention, energies and forces to the Negro struggle.

a.) While our white members cannot aspire to leadership of Negro organizations, they can play important auxiliary roles there when permitted to join and can help our Negro members when not permitted to join. Their direct participation in the struggle is doubly important in branches where we have few or no Negro members, since this is one way of contacting and recruiting Negro members. White members have the duty to fight against racism wherever they are and can greatly prom-

ote the party's work by fulfilling this duty. White members in the unions have the vital tasks of combating inequality on the job and at the hiring gate, supporting battles for Negro representation at all levels of union leadership, helping to build a left wing unequivocally committed to aiding the Negro struggle, working for labor collaboration with existing Negro movements and wherever possible persuading the unions to initiate such collaboration.



JAMES BALDWIN

b.) Just as most workers in the party are expected to work in their unions and most students to work in campus organizations, so most of our Negro members will belong to Negro organizations, which they seek to build along militant lines. They work to unite the Negro community around a *Freedom Now* program. They join and help to promote independent Negro electoral activities. If members of unions, they help to form Negro groups and a broad left wing in the unions, and whether union members or not they propose collaboration between the labor and Negro movements whenever feasible. Negro Marxists have irreplaceable functions to perform in the struggle of their people. They serve as a two-way channel of communication between the movements of the Negro masses and the conscious struggle for a Socialist America. (1) In the Negro community they popularize the ideas and proposals of revolutionary socialism. With the help of Marxist methods, they exercise their

rights, as Negroes, to help form the ideology of their race, including its attitudes toward integration and separation. (2) In the SWP they strive to equip themselves for the role of revolutionary leadership in the mass movements and remain alert to see that the party as a whole understands and pays the necessary attention to the problems of the Negro struggle.

4. To expand and strengthen the party's Negro cadre and forces in the Negro organizations and the civil rights movements, by:

a.) Recruiting revolutionary Negroes and helping to train them for leadership in the party and mass movements.

b.) Bringing more of our present Negro membership into the party leadership at all levels.

c.) Widening our contacts among individual Negro radicals and collaborating with them closely and fraternally if they decide to form radical or socialist groups of their own.

d.) Recruiting revolutionary whites, especially youth, like the Freedom Riders who are already engaged in courageous struggles for civil rights.

5. To develop, in collaboration with other Negro militants, a series of demands and proposals which will connect the needs of the struggle at its present stage with its ultimate aims. The proposals for a thirty-hour week at forty-hours pay and a *Freedom Now* party should figure prominently in such a program today.

6. To expand and improve the party press's treatment of the Negro struggle and expand the circulation of our literature among Negro militants.

The seriousness with which we apply ourselves to these tasks will be a test of our capacity as a revolutionary party.

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Documents on the Negro Struggle

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Dynamics of World Revolution Today

Text of Resolution Adopted by Reunification
Congress of the Fourth International, June 1963.

I. The General Background

THE classical schema of world revolution assumed that the victory of socialism would occur first in the most industrially developed countries, setting an example for the less developed. "The more advanced countries show the more backward ones their own future," wrote Marx. For the victory of socialism, Marxism generally held that a highly developed industrial base and powerful proletariat as well as a strong and politically conscious labor movement were indispensable objective and subjective preconditions which could appear only with the full development of capitalism.

It is true that after the revolution of 1848, Marx voiced some misgivings about one of the political assumptions underlying this schema; namely, the capacity of the bourgeoisie to carry out a classical bourgeois-democratic revolution in countries where capitalism is still immature but where a modern proletariat already exists. Later Engels further undermined this schema when he pointed out that the relative weakness of political consciousness among the British working class was due precisely to the fact that Britain was the most advanced capitalist country, holding a world monopoly on high productivity.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Trotsky in 1905 in his theory of permanent revolution, which held that the working class would find itself compelled to carry out tasks historically belonging to the bourgeoisie, and Lenin in 1914 in his theory of imperialism, which included the view that the imperialist chain would break first at its weakest link, showed that they had come to understand the main consequence of the law of uneven and combined development; namely, that the proletariat might well come to power first in a backward country as a result of the contradictions of the world capitalist system as a whole. Both Lenin and Trotsky were firmly of the opinion that the victory of the revolution in such circumstances would prove to be only the prelude to the victory of the socialist revolution in the key capitalist countries and a means of facilitating the final outcome. It was in this spirit that the Bolsheviks took power in October 1917 and founded the Third International in 1919.

The revolution followed a more devious path than even its greatest theoreticians expected. We know what a heavy price mankind as a whole and the workers and peasants of the first workers' states in particular have had to pay for this detour.

The betrayals by the reformist bureaucracy led to the defeat of the German and Central European revolutions of 1918-21, isolating the first victorious revolution to backward Russia and thereby paving the way for the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet state and the Communist International over which the Stalinist bureaucracy established tight control. The Comintern became transformed from an instrument of world revolution into an instrument of diplomatic maneuver in the hands of the Kremlin thereby blocking, first unintentionally and then with calculated purpose, the victory of the proletarian revolution in many promising situations in many countries. At the end of World War II, Social-Democratic and Stalinist class-collaborationist policies, in combination with the efforts of Western imperialism, led to the stabilization of a capitalist economy and a bourgeois state in several imperialist countries where the victory of socialism was objectively possible and even imminent.

As a result of the successive failure of the two major revolutionary waves of 1919-23 and 1943-48 — and of the minor one of 1934-37 — the main center of world revolution shifted for a time to the colonial world. The victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, following the postwar revolutionary wave in Europe, opened an uninterrupted series of colonial revolutions. All the victorious revolutions after 1917, including the establishment of workers' states through revolutionary upheavals in Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam and Cuba, thus took place in relatively backward countries while the possibility of early revolutionary victory in the imperialist countries was postponed.

THE view must be vigorously rejected that this development, unforeseen in the classics of Marxism, was more or less fatally determined by objective factors or by lack of revolutionary energy or will among the workers in the imperialist countries. No one can seriously deny that since 1917 various mass upsurges and even uprisings of the working class made the overthrow of capitalism objectively possible in many imperialist countries. (Germany and the whole of Central Europe 1918-20, Italy 1919-21, Germany 1923, Britain 1926, Austria 1933-34, Spain 1931-37, Belgium 1932-36, France 1935-37, Italy 1943-48, France 1944-48, Britain 1945-50, etc.) Nor can it reasonably be denied that in innumerable general strikes, occupations of factories, mass demonstrations that have toppled governments, and even insurrections threatening the foundations of bourgeois state power, that the proletariat of the im-

perialist countries (excepting the United States) has shown again and again its understanding of the general need to reconstruct society along socialist lines and its willingness to carry out the task. The failure of all these attempts is not due to any innate incapacity, to any political "backwardness" or to "corruption," but to the treacherous role of the official leadership which has repeatedly preferred not to utilize the objective possibility of taking power, or to deliberately destroy that possibility. The European proletariat has been hit harder by such betrayals than any other sector of the world working class as is clearly shown in the cases of Germany and Spain.

The crisis of revolutionary leadership exists, of course, in the colonial and semicolonial countries as well as in the advanced countries. Many defeated or aborted revolutions bear witness to this crisis — from the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 to the more recent defeats in Guatemala and Iraq. But in possible outcome of the struggle, a big difference is evident between inadequate leadership in a backward country and similar leadership in an imperialist country: *the enemy facing the working population is immeasurably stronger in the latter.*

Confronted with the powerful and well-experienced bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries, the working class can achieve victory only under a genuine revolutionary Marxist leadership which is able: (1) to establish unity of action inside the ranks of the proletariat; (2) to mobilize to the fullest extent the latent and often hidden revolutionary potentialities of the working class; (3) to outmaneuver a very astute and supple capitalist class leadership which has learned how to transform reforms into a powerful brake upon revolutions; (4) to win over a part and neutralize another part of the petty bourgeoisie (the mass basis of capitalism in the imperialist countries) without surrendering its own class objectives. The absence of an explosive agrarian problem is an important element in strengthening and stabilizing capitalism in most imperialist countries.

The situation is different in the backward countries. Confronted by ruling classes, rotten to the core and lacking mass support, the revolution draws into struggle the mass of the working population, including the poorest peasants and pauperized petty bourgeoisie, bringing about collapse of the traditional order and its state, and exerting such pressure on centrist working-class parties and similar formations as to bring them to power.

Under anywhere near normal capitalist conditions, it should be remembered, "There do not," as Lenin said, "exist situations without a way out from an economic point of view." The failure of a revolutionary wave in an imperialist country gives way eventually to some form of temporary relative economic stabilization and even to fresh expansion. This inevitably postpones new revolutionary uprisings for a time, the combination of political setback (or even demoralization) of the working class and a rising standard of living being unfavorable for any immediate revolutionary undertaking.

In the colonial and semicolonial countries, on the other hand, the very weakness of capitalism, the whole peculiar socio-economic structure produced by imperialism, the permanent misery of the big majority of the population in the absence of a radical agrarian revolution, the stagnation and even reduction of living

standards while industrialization nevertheless proceeds relatively rapidly, create situations in which the failure of one revolutionary wave does not lead automatically to relative or even temporary social or economic stabilization. A seemingly inexhaustible succession of mass struggles continues, such as Bolivia has experienced for ten years. The weakness of the enemy offers the revolution fuller means of recovery from temporary defeats than is the case in imperialist countries.

To sum up: the victories and defeats since 1917 express the relationship of forces between the old ruling class and the toiling masses on a world scale. The fact that the revolution won first in backward countries and not in the advanced is not proof that the workers in the advanced countries have shown insufficient revolutionary combativity. It is evidence of the fact that the opposition which they have to overcome in these countries is immeasurably stronger than in the colonial and semicolonial world. The weakness of the enemy in the backward countries has opened the possibility of coming to power even with a blunted instrument. The strength of the enemy in the imperialist countries demands a tool of much greater perfection.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that the three main forces of world revolution — the colonial revolution, the political revolution in the degenerated or deformed workers' states, and the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries — form a dialectical unity. Each force influences the others and receives in return powerful impulses or brakes on its own development. The delay of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries has in general undoubtedly prevented the colonial revolution from taking the socialist road as quickly and as consciously as would have been possible under the influence of a powerful revolutionary upsurge or victory of the proletariat in an advanced country. This same delay also retards the maturing of the political revolution in the USSR, especially inasmuch as it does not place before the Soviet workers a convincing example of an alternative way to build socialism. Finally, the upsurge of the colonial and political revolutions, hampered by the delay of the proletarian revolution in the West, nevertheless contributes in helping the proletariat in the imperialist countries to overcome this delay.

II. The Colonial Revolution

FROM the close of World War II, and most noticeably after the victory of the Chinese Revolution, continual mass movements have drawn one backward country after another into the process of permanent revolution. The general causes of this wave are to be found in the weakening of the old colonial powers during and after World War II; the attraction exercised by the advances of the Soviet Union and especially the new China; the dawning mass awareness of the wretched material and moral conditions throughout these countries; the power displayed by the movement for national independence and its identification in the eyes of the masses with the possibility of overcoming misery, low living standards, low cultural levels, and exploitation and oppression of all kinds; the worsening of the international terms of trade for the countries exporting raw materials, especially since the end of the "Korean war boom"; the contrast between the enormous economic expansion of all the industrialized countries and the near stagnation (or lowering) of the

standard of living of the masses in most of the colonial and semicolonial countries in the past decade — these are some of the main causes of the general upheaval in the colonial world.

As a development in world history, the colonial revolution signifies above all that two billion human beings — men, women and children in areas where the tradition for centuries has been to live as passive subjects, condemned to super oppression and to super exploitation, utter humiliation and destruction of their national traditions and even their national identity when they have not been made the target of mass slaughter and extermination — suddenly acquire a voice, a language and a personality of their own. Basically, the colonial revolution is the irrepressible tendency of these two billion human beings to become at least the masters and builders of their own destiny. The fact that this is socially possible only through a workers' state provides the objective basis for the tendency of the colonial revolution to move into the tracks of permanent revolution.

In the process of world revolution, the colonial revolution — first the Chinese Revolution and then the whole chain of upheavals — has prevented any temporary stabilization of the imperialist system on a world scale such as occurred after 1921. It has turned the international relationship of forces against capitalism, forced imperialism to fight — and in most cases lose — a series of defensive battles and wars which it has launched in its efforts to halt the advance of revolution in the colonial world. It has thereby given tremendous impetus to anticapitalist forces everywhere in the world. It has provided the Soviet Union and the other workers' states the necessary breathing spell needed to overcome the qualitative advance in the military field which came into the hands of imperialism as World War II reached its climax.

THE colonial revolution could not by its own forces bring about the downfall of imperialism. Paradoxically, it has not even been able to undermine the relative economic stability of the imperialist countries. Contrary to the general revolutionary Marxist assumption following 1919, the collapse of the colonial system did not lead to an immediate economic crisis or breakdown in the imperialist countries; it coincided with the biggest relative expansion of capitalist production and foreign trade they have experienced in half a century.

Among the multiple causes of this apparent paradox, one is of outstanding importance. So long as the newly independent states, emerging through the colonial revolution, are held by bourgeois or petty-bourgeois leaderships within the limits of the capitalist mode of production and the capitalist world market, the real power of imperialism is not broken in these countries. *Its rule merely shifts from a direct to an indirect form.* As foreseen long ago by revolutionary Marxists, the basic strategy of imperialism, confronted with the colonial revolution, has been to modify its form of rule while seeking to maintain its essential content. In some cases, of course, this transformation has cost imperialism real losses and it has sought to avoid the dangerous shift in the form of its rule, sometimes by desperate and bloody colonial wars.

The transition from direct to indirect imperialist rule involves a redistribution of the surplus value produced by the colonial masses in favor of the colonial bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie at the expense of the im-

perialist power. Inasmuch as it also entails acceleration of the process of industrializing the colonial countries, it even signifies modification of the international division of labor, granting an increased share of the world market to the colonial bourgeoisie in the production of certain industrial consumer goods (especially textiles) and narrowing the imperialist countries in an increasing degree to the export of investment goods.

This aspect of neocolonialism corresponds to certain inherent needs of the imperialist bourgeoisie itself, the changing industrial structure forcing it to seek new markets for means of production rather than for consumption goods. So-called "aid to the underdeveloped countries" boils down to underwriting financially the effort to secure provisions for these needs, the expected political and social consequences being but by-products of successfully meeting the main economic necessity. But the limited nature of this industrialization process under bourgeois auspices as well as the picaresque amount of imperialist "aid" leave the real needs of economic development in the colonial countries scarcely touched. Basically their socio-economic structure thus remains as it was under direct imperialist rule. They continue substantially as producers and exporters of raw materials and foodstuffs, completely dependent on the price fluctuations of the world market. They continue to carry the burden of tremendous unemployment or under employment in the countryside. Even the limited industrialization process occurs at the cost of inflation and a lowering of real wages; i.e., at the cost of increased misery for the working masses.

Since the colonial revolution up to now has in the main been held within the framework of the capitalist world market, it has not inflicted staggering economic blows to the capitalist world economy as a whole nor touched off major economic crises in imperialist countries which lost their former empires. Only one imperialist economy, because of its peculiar economic structure, seems doomed to collapse the moment it loses its colonial holdings — Portugal.

But this does not mean that the colonial revolution has not affected the mechanism of imperialist economy. Its most noticeable consequence has been to slow down the export of private capital to the backward countries and to impel national or international public (government) bodies to assume the role normally undertaken by private capital in the heyday of imperialism. Grave monetary, financial and economic contradictions flow from this. In the imperialist countries in the past ten years, the reluctance of private capital — in the face of relatively rapid expansion — to export its surpluses to backward countries caught up in the process of colonial revolution has constituted a major problem. Government investment guarantees and insurance can mitigate but not overcome the block.

As long as the great majority of the newly-independent countries remain within the framework of the capitalist world market, these difficulties constitute a "lesser evil" from the viewpoint of world capitalism which can be handled, more or less, within the system — at least for the time being. *Only if the main semicolonial countries were to break out of the capitalist world system by becoming workers' states would the colonial revolution deliver economic blows of such proportions as to rapidly create the gravest economic and social crises in the imperialist centers.*

So far as real perspectives are concerned, it is not excluded that these countries will become workers'

states before the political revolution triumphs in the Soviet Union and before the proletarian revolution scores a decisive victory in one or more of the important imperialist countries. However, it would be inadvisable for revolutionary socialists to base themselves on this unlikely variant. Such a perspective implies not only the continuation of the process of permanent revolution in the colonial world (which is sure to occur) but also *the victorious conclusion of this process in many countries within a specified time limit* (before victories elsewhere). A policy based arbitrarily upon any one of the many possible time sequences in the development of the three main sectors of the world revolution could lead to exceedingly grave political errors.

THE objective conditions for the process of permanent revolution in the colonial countries rests basically on the inability of the colonial bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships to solve within the framework of the capitalist mode of production fundamental problems created by economic and cultural upsurge. This is expressed most acutely by the incapacity of capitalism to undertake radical agrarian reform. The subjective conditions are determined by the fact that the colonial masses generally do not distinguish the conquest of national independence from the conquest of a high material and cultural standard of living. As long as living conditions do not improve, independence seems incomplete, inadequate and even unreal. This means that *in the long run* no social, economic or political stabilization is possible in these countries without the victory of the socialist revolution. *Temporarily*, political stabilization can be achieved by bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships which continue to be identified in the eyes of the masses with a real anti-imperialist struggle for national independence and which succeed in selling the masses the idea that the process of social upheaval and economic development is actually under way. The outstanding cases of relative success in this were Peron in Argentina, Nasser in Egypt and Nehru in India. Even in these instances, the political equilibrium has proved to be quite unstable, indicating what would occur with the appearance of an alternative working-class leadership able to mobilize the general anti-imperialist feelings of the masses around basic, concrete, revolutionary goals which the traditional leadership cannot realize; for example, radical land reform in India.

For all these reasons, the most probable perspective for most of the backward countries is a succession of protracted social revolutionary crises which bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships will desperately try to contain or to canalize but which, despite inevitable setbacks, will periodically leap over these limits. This protracted period of instability and social crises does not imply the *automatic* victory of proletarian forces or of revolutionary peasant forces led by a Marxist leadership; that is, the *automatic* establishment of workers' states. As in the case of equating the *beginning* of the colonial revolution (under bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership) with its *victorious conclusion* under proletarian leadership, any idea that this process will occur automatically or inevitably within a certain time limit necessarily leads to a distorted estimate of the actual relationship of forces and replaces scientific analysis by illusions and wish-

ful thinking. It presupposes that the objective process will solve by itself a task which can only be solved in struggle through the subjective effort of the vanguard; i.e., revolutionary-socialist conquest of the leadership of the mass movement. That this is possible in the very process of the revolution, and in a relatively short time, has been adequately demonstrated in the case of Cuba. That it is not inevitable, and that without it the revolution is certain to suffer serious defeats or be limited at best to inconclusive victories is demonstrated by much in the recent history of other Latin-American countries; for instance, Bolivia, Argentina and Guatemala.

A more precise perspective for each of the great ethno-geographical zones of the colonial revolution (Latin America, the Arab world, Black Africa, the Indian subcontinent and South-East Asia) can only be worked out on the basis of a concrete analysis of the specific social and political forces at work and of their more exact economic conditions. However, certain general social trends which apply to all or most of the colonial and semicolonial countries can be indicated:

(a) **The numerical and economic weakness of the national bourgeoisie.** Despite the priority granted them by history, the national bourgeoisie has proved incapable of handling the capital made available under the rubric of "aid to the underdeveloped countries" in such a way as to achieve optimum results in industrialization. This is perhaps the biggest obstacle in the way of a "bourgeois solution" of the problem of economic underdevelopment. Everywhere we find the same phenomena: of available surplus capital, a major part is diverted from industrial uses to investment in land or usury, hoarding, import of luxury consumers goods, even outright flight abroad. This incapacity of the national bourgeoisie is not the result or mere reflection of its moral corruption but a normal operation of the capitalist drive for profits under the given economic and social conditions. Fear of permanent revolution is not the least of the motives involved.

(b) **The creation of the infrastructure of heavy industry through the state, taking the form of nationalized property.** The social layer heading and embodying this process is the urban petty bourgeoisie, especially the intellectuals, the military and state functionaries. The process favors, is even indispensable, for the development of a national bourgeois state. It can clash, however, with the interests of many parts of the old

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bourgeois classes in the private sector — not only the traditional compradore bourgeoisie but even the industrial bourgeoisie. This is the explanation for the anti-capitalist demagogy and nationalizations of bourgeois enterprises undertaken in countries like Egypt, Ghana, etc. The functioning of the state in this field constitutes the objective basis for the “socialism” of Nehru and even Nasser, whatever the other differences between the two regimes. The general capitalist character of the economy remains clear cut in such countries, however, as long as (1) the state apparatus itself and the nationalized sectors remain feeding grounds for private accumulation of capital and private industrial enterprise (through corruption, theft, outright gifts, subsidies, etc.); (2) the national economy continues to be geared to the capitalist world market; (3) petty commodity production, constantly reproducing capital accumulation, prevails in the countryside.

(c) **The strategic role of the colonial proletariat.** In view of the peculiar socio-economic structure of these countries, the main strength of the proletariat does not lie among the industrial factory workers, who, with the exception of Argentina, form only a minority of the wage earners and a tiny fraction of the active working population of these countries. The colonial proletariat must be taken as the sum total of all those who live completely or essentially from the sale of their labor power; that is, industrial factory workers, public service workers, domestic workers, miners, plantation hands, agricultural workers and the rural and urban workers who find only partial or occasional employment. The emphasis should be placed on the latter four categories — the miners, plantation hands, agricultural workers and largely unemployed — typical for the colonial economy. They are numerically much stronger than generally supposed. Even in some countries of Black Africa (Rhodesia, South Africa, Angola, Congo) they constitute from one-fourth to three-fifths of the population. In the case of the Cuban Revolution, while poor peasants were the first recruits to the guerrilla forces, the base of the revolution shifted to field workers and rural unemployed, fusing finally with the proletariat of the sugar industry and the cities. Part of the explanation for the high level of consciousness which the Cuban Revolution rapidly attained lies in the composition of its mass base.

(d) **The radical role of the peasantry.** In the form of expanding guerrilla forces, the peasantry has undoubtedly played a much more radical and decisive role in the colonial revolution than was forecast in Marxist theory. It has revealed a social nature somewhat different from that of the traditional peasantry of the advanced capitalist countries. However, to prevent any misunderstanding or confusion, which in certain situations could lead to tragic errors (witness what happened in China after the introduction of the people's communes!), two basic distinctions must be made.

First, the distinction between the *revolutionary* role of the peasantry fighting for the conquest of land as private property (even though brought together through co-operatives) and the *conservative* role of the peasantry in the phase of the socialist transformation of property relations in the countryside. Experience in Eastern Europe and also in China has confirmed the lesson learned in Russia that wherever the peasantry stands in the forefront of the fight against the old landlord-usurer-compradore alliance in order to become master of the land, it can *as a class* be the ally of the

proletariat only as long as the workers' state refrains from introducing socialist property relations in the countryside. Such relations can be based only on the *poorest* sector of the peasant class and can therefore be introduced only *gradually* in a country where agriculture prevails, if grave social crises are to be avoided. It should be noted, too, that the peasantry is not universally revolutionary. The existence of a large majority of small land-owning peasants has undoubtedly served as a momentary brake on the revolutionary process in several South-East Asian countries (Malaya, Thailand, even Ceylon).

Second, the distinction between the *ingrained individualism* of the classical peasantry with a background of centuries of petty commodity production — either possessing land or aspiring to possess it; and the *pre-disposition* toward collectivism among rural populations still living under conditions of total or partial tribal (communal) property. This class, in contrast to the traditional peasantry, is not *per se* opposed to the introduction of socialist property relations in the countryside. It therefore remains an ally of the proletariat throughout the whole process of permanent revolution. In certain countries its existence can give a peasant uprising a powerful, semiproletarian character from the outset. Even in a favorable situation such as this, however, the level of consciousness of these masses should not be idealized. Miserably oppressed, having virtually literally “nothing to lose but their chains,” these masses can offer humanity the most shining examples of revolutionary heroism and self-sacrifice. But only education under a capable Marxist leadership and a workers' state can make it possible for them to achieve revolutionary-socialist consciousness, especially the essential components of discipline, self-management and modern industrial rationality.

To win leadership among the colonial masses, the revolutionary Marxist vanguard must learn how to bring the basically progressive aspirations of the toiling masses into intimate connection with the program of revolutionary socialism. The constant struggle to educate the proletariat of the imperialist countries in the need to support the colonial revolution unconditionally must be linked with practical activity in bringing material aid to the colonial revolution. Among the freedom fighters in the colonial countries, it is a primary task to raise elementary revolutionary consciousness to the level of scientific socialism and an understanding of the dialectical interaction among the three main sectors of the world revolution today. All this cannot be achieved through some automatic process. It is an absolute necessity to educate revolutionary Marxist cadres and to build tendencies and independent parties wherever possible in all colonial countries. The building of sections of the Fourth International capable of working out concrete analyses of their specific national situations and finding concrete solutions to the problems remains a central strategic task in all countries.

TO DETERMINE the place of the colonial revolution today in the general process of the world revolution, it is insufficient to take into consideration its consequences only in the politico-military field, where it has struck imperialism staggering blows, or in the economic area, where it has not yet seriously undermined the world economy of capitalism. We must also examine the effects of the colonial revolution on the relationship of class forces in the imperialist countries,

particularly on the working-class movement, and on the conflicting social and political forces in the bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers' states.

In most of the imperialist countries, the colonial revolution up to now has not significantly modified the relationship of forces to the expense of the bourgeoisie and the gain of the proletariat. However, in the case of France it was the Algerian Revolution which — by continuing in its heroic struggle against French imperialism despite the lack of help — prevented a decisive stabilization of the bonapartist dictatorship of de Gaulle. The French working class, which received a terrible blow when de Gaulle came to power in May 1958, was given a breathing spell, precious time in which to recover its morale and begin to reassemble its forces. In Portugal, the outbreak of revolution in Angola and other colonies proved decisive in undermining the stability of the Salazar dictatorship, creating the prerevolutionary climate which has placed the overthrow of Portuguese fascism on the order of the day. The fall of Salazar would help accelerate the Spanish revolution, weaken the bonapartist regime in France and intensify the new wave of militancy in the West European labor movement.

Up to now the colonial revolution has not contributed directly toward radicalizing the mass movement in most imperialist countries; at best it has but increased the general consciousness, already widespread among significant layers, that the world capitalist system is growing relatively weaker. But it has affected elements in an immediate way, crystallizing new revolts against the waiting, passive or treacherous attitude of the old leaderships toward the colonial revolution or fresh reactions against the generally low level of politics in some imperialist countries. This has occurred not only in France where these new layers have been most vocal but also in several other European countries, especially Spain, and in the United States where the opportunity to solidarize with the Cuban Revolution has opened the door to radical politics for a new generation of vanguard elements. In the same way the influence of the colonial revolution, especially the African revolution, upon vanguard elements in the Negro movement has helped prepare the emergence of a new radical left wing. In all these cases, it is the task of revolutionary Marxists to seek to win the best elements of this newly emerging vanguard to Trotskyism and to fuse them into the left wing of the mass movement.

The influence of the colonial revolution on the awakening masses of the workers' states has been complex and many-sided. In general the colonial revolution has helped to overcome lethargy and the feeling of political impotence. The interest displayed by these masses toward the colonial revolution (primarily the Chinese Revolution but also the Algerian and Cuban revolutions since 1959) has been great and it is still increasing along with feelings of solidarity. At the same time the problems raised by the anti-revolutionary strategy of the Communist parties in both colonial and imperialist countries and by the ambivalence which the ruling bureaucracies of the workers' states display toward the colonial revolution have contributed toward political differentiation within the Communist parties of the workers' states, at first between sections of the youth and the bureaucracy, later between the Mao Tse-tung and Khrushchev factions. However, Mao Tse-tung's opportunistic and unprincipled bloc with the most conservative wing of the Soviet bureaucracy and

his resistance to destroying the cult of Stalin, as particularly evidenced in the bloc with the Albanian CP leadership, has limited the extent and practical consequences of this differentiation among most CP's of the workers' states. An additional factor is the direct effect of the colonial revolution through such forces as colonial students who find it difficult to breathe in the monolithic atmosphere of the world Communist movement, and who at times pass beyond words to deeds to express their feelings as in the student demonstrations in Moscow and Sofia. The emergence of mass revolutionary forces led by parties or tendencies which have developed outside the realm of Stalinist control (Cuba, Algeria) has introduced a most powerful disintegrating element into international Stalinism, favoring the development of a revolutionary left wing.

IF THE direct economic and political effect of the colonial revolution has not been strongly felt in the imperialist countries, the establishment of workers' states in China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba has had powerful ramifications among the Communist parties and in the formation of revolutionary leadership as a whole.

The Yugoslav and Chinese Communist Parties failed to develop their "tendency" on a wide international scale for a number of specific reasons. The Yugoslavs sought a close, opportunistic alliance with the national bourgeoisie of the colonial and semicolonial countries. This effectively barred an alliance with the fighting elements of the colonial revolution. In Western Europe they took an opportunistic attitude toward the reformist bureaucracies, with parallel crippling effects on linking up with the revolutionary proletarian movement. Progressive developments inside Yugoslavia, however, have had considerable repercussions among the workers' states. For instance, "revival" of workers' councils has resounded especially in Poland and Hungary even though this important step is limited by the fact that the councils do not wield political power.

The Chinese Communist Party has scored some successes among the Communist parties of the colonial world where Peking has special appeal because of its antagonism to some (not all) of the national bourgeoisies. In the imperialist centers and in the workers' states, the Chinese appeal has been much more limited because of the unprincipled alliance with the unreconstructed Stalinists and because of the bureaucratic regime maintained in China. On these two key issues militant workers in the metropolitan centers, and workers, youth and peasants of the workers' states, feel alienated from the Chinese. However, the criticisms levelled at Togliatti and similar figures have met with a favorable response among the ranks of many Communist parties.

The victory in Cuba marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the world revolution; for, aside from the Soviet Union, this is the first workers' state established outside the bounds of the Stalinist apparatus. Such a development, whatever the size of the country involved, was a turning point whose effects have necessarily reverberated on a tremendous scale throughout the whole world Communist movement.

In fact an international Castroist current has appeared inside the world Communist and revolutionary-socialist movement which, as was to be expected, is strongest in the colonial areas, especially Latin Amer-

ica and Africa. It is also noticeable in the other workers' states. In Algeria the influence of Castroism again testifies to the importance of the Cuban development.

Except in Spain and Portugal, Castroism has not had great impact in Europe. Its influence in other metropolitan centers such as the United States and Japan is likewise limited. One of the reasons for this is that the Cuban leadership has not yet reached an understanding of how it can best facilitate revolutionary rebirth in these areas.

The appearance of more workers' states through further development of the colonial revolution, particularly in countries like Algeria, would help strengthen and enrich the international current of Castroism, give it longer range perspectives and help bring it closer to understanding the necessity for a new revolutionary Marxist international of mass parties. Fulfillment of this historic possibility depends in part on the role which the Fourth International plays in the colonial revolution and the capacity of sections of the Fourth International to help win fresh victories.

The infusion of Trotskyist concepts in this new Castroist current will also influence the development of a conscious revolutionary leadership, particularly in the workers' states, will help prevent "Titoist" deviations and better assure the evolution of mass pressure and direct action into the cleansing force of political revolution. The development of the Portuguese and Spanish revolutions, historically possible in a short period, can also give rise to new tendencies of the Castroist type which would help the Cubans and related currents to achieve a fuller understanding of the process of world revolution in its entirety.

III. The Political Revolution

THE mounting political passivity and apathy of the Soviet masses after 1923 was determined by two basic factors: the defeat of the international revolution and the consequent isolation of the first workers' state, and the low living standard of the masses due to the backwardness of Russia. These forced the Soviet masses to become preoccupied over the daily struggle to make ends meet. The feeling that under these same conditions the Soviet state remained in mortal danger of attack from world imperialism contributed to the political passivity.

Since the decisive turn in the world relationship of forces brought about by the victory of the Chinese Revolution, all the factors that favored political apathy among the Soviet masses have been steadily undermined; the conditions favoring a rise in mass political interest and militancy have been maturing. The isolation of the first workers' state has been broken, not only in Europe but in Asia and the whole world. The rapid rise in the living standards of the masses since Stalin's death — a result of growing mass pressure on the bureaucracy under conditions of increased technological and economic progress — has enabled the people to devote part of their energies to cultural and political aims. The emergence of the Soviet Union as the second industrial power of the world, even holding the lead in several technological fields, has made its relatively low standard of living all the more incongruous and has served to stimulate increased economic demands. The threat of imperialist attack re-

mains, and the bureaucracy uses this threat quite consciously to periodically silence the voices of opposition. However, the masses cannot help but feel the new power and standing of the Soviet Union in world affairs in the epoch of missile warfare when the leaders of the bureaucracy themselves continually boast of their ability to inflict a crushing defeat on the imperialist warmongers.

The evolution of the workers' states as a whole since the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949 and especially after Stalin's death in 1953 has therefore steadily removed the causes that fostered political passivity among the masses and their vanguard. In the East European workers' state this development was hastened, although made more complex, by a strong feeling of national oppression among the masses. All these new factors contributed to such events as the June 16-17, 1953, general strike and uprising in Eastern Germany, to the Poznan events in the spring of 1956 in Poland, to the beginning of the political revolution in Poland and Hungary in October 1956, to the renewal of political militancy among some layers of the workers' vanguard and oppositional Communists during the "hundred flowers bloom" period in China in early 1957, to the increasing pressure of the Soviet masses on the bureaucracy which won the concessions of 1953 (breaking up of the GPU power, dissolution of the slave-labor camps and a radical modification of the oppressive factory labor code), then the denunciation of the Stalin cult in 1956 at the Twentieth Congress and a continuous rise since 1953 in the mass standard of living as a result of radical changes in the bureaucracy's general economic policy, and finally the important new political concessions granted at the Twenty-second Congress (new political rights written into the new party program, partial public rehabilitation of the victims of Stalin's purges, etc.).

Mass pressure in the Soviet Union began with a general revolt against the most barbaric and arbitrary forms of Stalin's bonapartist dictatorship, in which all social layers participated. The pressure then began to become differentiated in the economic field, all social layers participating, but each with its own set of demands. From this, the movement advanced toward specific political demands, first from the ranks of the bureaucracy who demanded and obtained a stabilizing of conditions for the bureaucrats as individuals. This was done by widening the participation in the exercise of political power. These reforms were welcomed by the workers. The first rumblings from the peasantry were demands for kolkhoz democracy, voiced publicly here and there in the Soviet Union. The ferment among the intellectuals and students, which is expressed around such issues as freedom in art and scientific research, foreshadows demands for political democracy. Certain sectors of the bureaucracy have indicated awareness of the objective need to loosen the Stalinist stranglehold on the productive forces, the better to meet the threatening military and technological advances of U.S. imperialism.

As yet, such key demands as workers' management in the factories and the establishment of control through democratically elected councils have not been raised. But it is only a question of time until they begin to appear. One reason for the sensitivity of the Soviet bureaucracy toward "Yugoslav revisionism" is fear of the attraction which Yugoslav experimentation with

workers' councils and self-management can hold for the advanced Soviet workers, youth, intellectuals, and even the lower layers of the bureaucracy, especially the lower ranks of the trade-union officialdom, who are in direct contact with the proletariat.

It is necessary to distinguish clearly between generalized mass pressure, the beginning of mass actions (invariably of reformist character), and the opening of the real political revolution. This distinction is not always easily made in the heat of events since it involves successive stages of one and the same process, each linked to the next and without clear boundary lines. This was clearly borne out in the case of the Polish events in 1956 and the actions leading to the first phase of the Hungarian Revolution. Nevertheless, a few generalizations can be made concerning the Soviet Union.

In the first place, the dominant trend since 1953 has been *mass pressure* rather than *mass action*. There are some outstanding exceptions: The revolt at Vorkuta and other slave-labor camps probably played a decisive role in hastening the liquidation of this whole utterly reactionary system. Some local strikes wrenched considerable concessions for the workers in housing and better distribution of consumer goods. Certain actions by students, youth groups and vanguard intellectuals may have contributed in bringing about the political concessions made to the masses at the Twenty-second Congress. But in general the pressure on the bureaucracy has remained below the level of mass actions. The pressure of a formidable mass of people, slowly awakening to political life, is of course a sufficient nightmare to the bureaucracy to wring substantial concessions.

Far from satisfying the masses and lulling them into apathy, the concessions have only whetted appetites. The discontent of the masses over their low standard of living is certainly more vocal, if not actually greater in force, than it was before Stalin's death. Such seemingly paradoxical phenomenon is well known in capitalist countries. What the concessions have gained for the bureaucracy is a *general reformist atmosphere*, especially since the Hungarian events, an atmosphere in which the masses expect that continued pressure will be rewarded by substantial new concessions. They do not yet see the need or possibility of broader mass actions, the scope of which would reach revolutionary proportions.

This atmosphere can perhaps last for some time, but it will not last forever. Two forces inherent in the current dialectical relations between mass pressure and bureaucratic reforms tend to undermine it. The first force is the inclination of the masses to convert into reality the political rights conceded to them on paper. At a certain point this can lead to open collision with powerful sectors of the bureaucracy. The second force is the tendency of mass demands to evolve into demands for workers' control and workers' management. Pressure along this line was reflected in a manifest way for the first time in the Central Committee of the Communist Party at its November 1962 plenum. In fact, the greater the concessions before the stage of open clashes is reached, and the stronger the Soviet economy becomes, the more decisive will be the character of the clashes and the more favorable the relationship of forces for the masses at the time of the political revolution.

IN ANALYZING the interaction between the three components of the world revolution — the colonial revolution, the political revolution (above all in the Soviet Union), and the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries — the *time element* is of decisive importance. Even without the restoration of proletarian democracy, the Soviet Union exercises enormous attractive power on the masses of the colonial countries — if only because the Soviet Union proves what can be done in less than a half century to bring a backward country up to the level of an advanced industrial country in economic development and improved standard of living. Should a revolutionary-socialist leadership resume power in the Soviet Union in the not too distant future, with the consequent establishment of socialist democracy internally and revolutionary solidarity abroad, the process of *fusing the colonial revolution with the workers' states* would be tremendously speeded up.

This would take a double form in practice. The new Soviet leadership would end Moscow's general current strategy which is to depend on *alliances with the colonial bourgeoisie*. Naturally the new leadership would continue the Leninist policy of giving critical support and material assistance to bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships in open conflict with imperialism. What it would put a stop to is the reactionary policy of subordinating the revolutionary vanguard to the national bourgeoisie. Removing this source of political and material strength, would hasten loss of control by the colonial capitalist class over the decisive sectors of mass opinion. The other side of the same policy would be rejection of the opportunist leadership in control of most of the Communist parties in the colonies today whose main strength lies in identification with the Soviet Union. The new Soviet leadership would assist those oppositional forces within the Communist parties that want to make a decisive turn to the left, or it would support the new revolutionary proletarian forces now springing up outside the traditional Communist parties, especially in countries where they are either very weak or utterly compromised in the eyes of the colonial masses because of their past errors or betrayals. In both ways the conquest of leadership of the colonial revolution by genuine revolutionary proletarian forces would be greatly facilitated and along with it, under favorable objective conditions, the tendency of the colonial revolution to end in the establishment of workers' states would be greatly accelerated.

An early victory of the political revolution in the Soviet Union would at the same time hasten the process of proletarian revolution inside the imperialist countries in an even more decisive manner. The re-establishment of Soviet democracy in the USSR on a higher level — signifying for the first time since the early twenties a regime of real democracy and intellectual freedom, qualitatively superior to the most democratic bourgeois states — would end at one stroke the main objection against communism held by class-conscious workers of the imperialist countries. It would lead rapidly to the disappearance of the bureaucratic Stalinist leadership in the old CP's, which would split in various directions, principally into a left-reformist wing and a genuine revolutionary-socialist wing. In countries like France and Italy, where the Communist parties, despite their opportunism, continue to control the mass movement, this would mean rapid develop-

ment of a revolutionary mass party which would put the proletarian conquest of power on the agenda at the first favorable objective occasion. In countries where the Communist parties are weak secondary forces, it would favor the emergence of a revolutionary-socialist mass movement through the fusion of the left wing in the Social Democratic parties — attracted by the reborn Soviet democracy — and the best elements among the old CP militants. In this way the crisis of revolutionary leadership could eventually be overcome and new objectively revolutionary situations would open the road for the victory of the proletariat.

However entrancing the picture of the world-wide consequences of an *early* victory of the political revolution in the Soviet Union may be, the process may prove to be longer drawn out than we desire. It would of course be an error for Marxist revolutionary forces to stake everything on this one card, meantime overlooking the very real opportunities for breakthroughs in the colonial and imperialist countries before the political revolution in the USSR succeeds. Consequently, it is advisable to take into account the effect which continuous technological and economic progress of the USSR and the other workers' states can have on the world revolutionary process in the absence of an early victory.

AS ALREADY stated, the continuous economic and cultural rise of the workers' states has an important effect in undermining the confidence of the colonial masses in any "capitalist way" of solving the problem of underdevelopment and in increasing their confidence in the socialist solution of this problem. Economic progress, especially of the Soviet Union, increases the weight of the workers' states in the world economy, enabling them to break the imperialist monopoly of buying primary products from many backward countries, and putting them in position to offer an attractive alternative to the onerous imperialist grants of equipment and development projects. The further technological and economic advance of the workers' states objectively favors the colonial revolution and the tendency, in the throes of this revolution, to break away from the capitalist world market. The example of Cuba shows this very clearly. It is evident that the sudden imperialist blockade and attempt to force Cuba to its knees when Washington refused to buy any more Cuban sugar would have been enormously more effective if the USSR and China had not been able to come forward as alternative customers.

The increasing weight of the workers' states on the world market is quite far as yet from enabling them to play a larger role than imperialism in the foreign trade of the backward countries as a whole. It is little likely that the combined economic power of the workers' states will surpass the combined economic power of the highly industrialized countries of the West for some years to come, unless of course a revolutionary victory occurs in the main imperialist sector. It must not be forgotten that the USSR and China are not economically complementary to the underdeveloped countries to such a high degree as are the West European capitalist powers. It should also be observed that as long as the political revolution does not score a decisive victory in the USSR, the Soviet bureaucracy will not be prone to utilize to the fullest extent the revolutionary possibilities that are opened up with the increasing eco-

nomic power of the workers' states, since this conflicts with the orientation of an alliance with the colonial bourgeoisie.

The view that the economic and technological advances of the workers' states can in themselves decisively modify the relationship of forces between the classes in the imperialist countries or contribute decisively to the overthrow of capitalism in these countries, must be rejected as false. The positive results upon capitalist society in the West of such advances can be felt objectively in increased competition for foreign markets for some industrial products, and subjectively in the slow disappearance of many reactionary prejudices against communism which were created or aroused by the crimes of Stalinism. The subsidence of prejudices will become more noticeable as the living standards of the Soviet masses come closer to those of Western Europe. But neither effect is sufficient to rehabilitate small and discredited Communist parties or to miraculously swing the opportunistic bureaucratic leadership of the mass Communist parties in France, Italy and Greece into a revolutionary orientation.

The main contribution to the development of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries remains therefore the effect in the labor movement of the crisis of Stalinism and the technological and economic gains of the USSR. This is evident in the growing differentiation inside the Communist parties, the possibility of real mass opposition tendencies developing within some of these parties, the increased possibility of mergers between the revolutionary Marxist vanguard and the leftward-moving mass of militants in some of these parties, and the rapid disappearance of anti-Trotskyist prejudices inside many Communist parties as a result of the decisions of the Twentieth and Twenty-second Congresses.

IV. The Proletarian Revolution in the Imperialist Countries

SINCE the postwar revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe and the postwar strike wave in the United States, great changes have taken place in the labor movement and in the objective conditions it faces in the imperialist countries. Contrary to the expectations of both Marxist and non-Marxist economists, the capitalist economy of the advanced industrialized countries, including Japan, underwent an expansion not experienced since World War I, i.e., for nearly half a century. The interaction of such economic growth and the treacherous opportunist policies of the traditional working-class leaderships in Western Europe and the trade union bureaucracy in the U.S., in the absence of an alternative revolutionary leadership, made possible the temporary relative stabilization of capitalism in Europe. The main center of the revolutionary movement thereupon shifted for the time being to the colonial countries.

This temporary development fostered both revisionist and defeatist views of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries. Each of these standpoints rules out the possibility of the proletariat realistically struggling for power in the West for a long time to come. Since it is impossible not to note that the general world trend is running against capitalism, protagonists of these concepts expect essentially *outside forces* to eventually overcome capitalism in the imperialist cen-

ters. A theory current in leading circles among many Communist parties is that the economic progress of the USSR will eventually solve the problem of winning socialism in the West. When the living standard of the Soviet people rises above the living standards of the West European and North American workers, then these workers will automatically turn toward communism. Another theory, voiced more or less consciously by ideologists like Sweezy and Sartre, is that the colonial revolution will eventually bring down imperialism and that the vanguard in the advanced capitalist countries cannot play a much bigger role than actively aiding the colonial revolutionists.

Both theories are based on a single wrong assumption; i.e., that it is impossible for the Western proletariat to fulfill its historic mission in the next decades. This pessimistic assumption is then made less bitter by assuming that there are other alternatives which should be taken as goals of action. Under careful analysis, however, the imagined alternatives do not stand up as realistic.

Even if the USSR's *per capita* production overtakes that of the United States within the next ten years, at least another decade will be needed to overtake the U.S. *per capita* standard of living, since this is a combination of current production and past accumulation of consumer goods and public welfare provisions. A catastrophic fall in the living standard of the American and West European workers due to a major economic crisis would, of course, change this perspective. But then it is obvious that the revolutionary consequences of the crisis would be much more important than the attractive power that might be exercised by Soviet economic growth.

Even if the USSR's per capita standard of living becomes the highest in the world, it does not follow that this in itself would break down capitalism in the West, for it would not automatically lead to depressions, economic decline and a lowering of the workers' standard of living. Those who defend this theory start from the wrong assumption that the proletariat in the West is basically "satisfied" with the present economic "prosperity" and lacks awareness of the deeper aspects of the alienation that permeates capitalist society.

As for the capacity of the colonial revolution by itself to cause the downfall of Western imperialism — we have already analyzed the reasons why this is an unrealistic perspective.

The truth is that both these defeatist theories concerning the revolutionary potential of the Western proletariat lead in the final analysis to the absurd conclusion that imperialism is still assured of a long period of stable existence.

The basic fallacy in all variations of these theories is their crude mechanistic economic determinism. The unspoken premise is that a working class enjoying a relatively high standard of living is unwilling or unable to fight for the overthrow of capitalism. The assumption is groundless both theoretically and empirically. On the level of theory it should be clear that the attitude of the workers is determined by many forces among which the *absolute level* of the standard of living is only one among other determinants. It makes a world of difference whether a high standard of living is the result of working-class struggles, and therefore appears as a *series of conquests that must be defended* or whether it appears to the workers to be a "gift" from

a "beneficent" set of masters. In the first case a high standard of living can give powerful impulsion to militancy rather than acting as a brake; in the second case a high standard of living can have a demoralizing effect, feeding the class-collaborationist illusions cultivated by the bourgeois spokesmen and the ideologists of the right wing of the labor movement. On the empirical level, Marx gathered considerable material showing the revolutionary effect on the British workers when they won the ten-hour day in the past century. Rosa Luxemburg called attention to the revolutionary effect of all fundamental trade-union achievements. Recent strike waves in Belgium, Spain and Italy — spearheaded by the *best-paid workers* — again proves that it is quite false to hold that the highest paid workers are automatically "corrupted" by "capitalist prosperity."

What both theory and experience do prove is that the most revolutionary consequences follow not so much from the *absolute level* of real wages and living standards as from their *relative short-term fluctuations*. Attempts to lower even slightly a hard-won high level, or the widespread fear that such an attempt is in preparation, can under certain conditions touch off great class actions that tend to pass rapidly from the defensive to the offensive stage and put on the agenda struggles of an objectively prerevolutionary significance around transitional slogans. Such struggles may even lead to revolutionary situations.

Two generations of revolutionists in the West have been educated in the belief that revolutionary situations in industrialized countries coincide with big crises or complete breakdowns of the capitalist economy and state such as occur in war or military defeat (Germany and Central Europe after World War I, Greece, France and Italy after World War II). But again theory and

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history prove that this is but one road to possible revolutionary crisis in a highly developed industrial country. The big strike wave of 1936-37, and along with it the Spanish Revolution, came neither at the end of a war nor at the peak of a major economic breakdown. They came in the period of relative economic recovery between the two big crises of 1929 and 1938. A whole series of contributing factors — the most important being the threat of fascism and the desire of the workers to make up for the suffering borne during the big economic crisis — gave this strike wave a pre-revolutionary character in the U.S. and Belgium and a revolutionary character in France. In the imperialist countries in the next five to ten years such revolutionary crises and opportunities are much more likely to occur than crises of the breakdown type of 1918-19 or 1944-48.

No Marxist, of course, will deny that a long period of economic "prosperity" brings changes in the proletariat's mode of life and thought. Habits formed during long periods of misery — indifference toward personal property in consumer goods, the tendency to express immediate solidarity in sharing money, the acceptance of daily sacrifices as normal, the indifference and hostility toward many institutions and the whole superstructure of capitalism — gradually disappear. New habits and ways of thinking appear which, to superficial observers, seem "petty bourgeois." It is a mistake, however, to approach these changes from an abstract "moral" point of view — the idealization of misery, degradation and the reduction of needs to purely physiological levels is wrong in theory and very dangerous in practice! New ways of thinking and acting are important *only as they serve to retard or advance the class struggle under given conditions*. The automobile of the American workers — taken not so long ago by many people as the symbol of the "petty-bourgeois mentality of the American proletariat" — became the instrument of a completely new and radical strike technique at the end of World War II. The scooter and motorbike of the European worker appeared during the Belgian general strike in the form of flying strike squads, an embryo of the future revolutionary defense guards of the Belgian proletariat.

If some of the obviously fine qualities of the undernourished proletariat of yesterday seem to have disappeared among Western workers, other good new qualities have appeared, precisely as a result of the higher standard of living and culture gained by the proletariat in the West. The gap between the knowledge of the skilled worker and the bourgeois technician has virtually disappeared or been greatly reduced. Technologically the Western worker is much more capable of socialist self-management today than was his father or grandfather, and he feels more strongly the need to play a conscious leading role in the process of production.

It is also easier for today's worker to reach an understanding of the over-all economic interaction among all the factors, the intertwining of all economic problems and the needs and practical purposes of socialist planning. The increase in leisure time in many countries also means the increased possibility to participate on a mass scale in political administration, something that never existed in the past. It is not for Marxists to deny the basic Marxist truth that capitalism is the great educator of the workers for socialism, at least on the economic field.

THE mechanism through which prerevolutionary or even revolutionary situations can arise in the framework of the relatively stabilized capitalist economies of the Western imperialist countries can be briefly stated as follows:

After a first period of rapid economic expansion fed essentially by the war preparations, by the need for reconstruction (both absolute and relative; i.e., rebuilding destroyed cities and plants, modernizing outmoded equipment) in Europe and Japan, and by the big wave of technological revolution spurred by both reconstruction and preparations for a new world war, the economies of the imperialist countries have now entered a period in which the forces of expansion are slowly spending themselves and in which competition among the newly equipped imperialist countries is sharpening in a world market that is relatively smaller as a result of the victories in the colonial revolution and the economic expansion of the workers' states. This increased competition, heightened still further by the constitution of the Common Market in Western Europe, will strengthen the inevitable tendency for the average rate of profit to decline. (In the final analysis this tendency is a consequence of the new technological revolutions; i.e., of the higher organic composition of capital.)

In reaction to these tendencies, the capitalist class will seek periodically to ameliorate its positions in the competitive struggle by slowing down the date of increase of real wages, by freezing wages, or even by trying to reduce real wages, especially in the imperialist countries where the workers enjoy the highest relative wages. The response of the proletariat to these attacks can lead to great struggles that will tend to move toward pre-revolutionary and even revolutionary situations, provided that the working class, or at least its broad vanguard, has sufficient self-confidence to advance the socialist alternative to the capitalist way of running the economy and the country. This in turn hinges essentially on the activity and influence of a broad left wing in the labor movement that educates the vanguard in the necessity of struggling for this socialist alternative and that builds up self-confidence and an apparatus capable of revolutionary struggle through a series of successful partial struggles.

This is, of course, only a generalized pattern in which various particular variants should be included: the possibility of the working class reacting violently against an attempt to limit or suppress its fundamental political and trade-union rights (against an attempt to impose a "strong" state or against an emergent fascist danger); the possibility of a swift reaction to a sudden financial or political crisis; the possibility of mass opposition against an attempt to launch a new colonial war, or against general preparations for war, etc. The essential point for revolutionary Marxists is to link up the program of revolutionary socialism with the masses through a series of transitional demands corresponding to the specific conditions of each country and through intimate ties with the mass movement. The objective is to stimulate and broaden mass struggles to the utmost and to move as much as possible toward playing a leading role in such struggles, beginning with the most elementary demands and seeking to develop them in the direction of transitional slogans on the level of government power and the creation of bodies of dual power. (Labor to Power; For a Workers Government; A Work-

ers and Peasants Government; A Workers Government Based on the Trade Unions; and other variants.)

In the United States the wave of working-class militancy which can lead to a decisive turn in the domestic situation will in all likelihood follow a comparable pattern. It will come about as the capitalist class undermines its alliance with the trade-union bureaucracy by starting to pass on to the American working class the cost of measures required to counteract the chronic deficit of the balance of payments, mounting inflation and depreciation of the dollar accompanied by suppression of escalator clauses in collective contracts, attempts to freeze or lower real wages in order to improve the competitive position in foreign markets, increased indirect taxation of low and medium incomes, etc. The long-range tendency toward rising permanent unemployment and the relative whittling down of trade union strength will add to the ferment. The first major moves of the capitalist class against the working class could touch off a tremendous defensive reaction, forcing some union leaders to break their alliance with the Democratic party and finally opening up the road for the appearance of a mass labor party.

The most probable variant in the next few years is, therefore, the following: the colonial revolution will continue, involving new countries and deepening its social character as more workers' states appear. It will not lead directly to the overthrow of capitalism in the imperialist centers but it will play a powerful role in building a new world revolutionary leadership as is already clear from the emergence of Castroist currents. The pressure of the masses in the workers' states will continue, with a tendency toward increasing mass action and the possible beginning of political revolution in several workers' states. Both these developments will favorably influence the resurgence of mass militancy among the proletariat in the imperialist countries, reinforcing a tendency stemming directly from the socio-economic mechanism of advanced capitalism and the slowing down of its rate of expansion.

The possibility of a working-class victory in an imperialist country — not just Portugal or Spain but the other West European countries and Japan, Australia and Canada — thus exists in the next decade. A victory in any of these countries would in turn hasten the victory of the political revolution in the key country, the USSR, if it had not already occurred, and these would react in turn to speed the victory of the American revolution. The victory of the socialist revolution in any of the advanced countries would play a decisive role in developing the economies of the backward countries at the most rapid possible rate.

SINCE the close of the World War II, the imperialist powers have been engaged in feverish preparations for a third conflict. In fact imperialism has engaged in virtually constant wars, on a larger or smaller scale, in its effort to stem the advance of world revolution: the wars in China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaya, Kenya, Korea, Suez, Algeria, Laos, Angola, plus such interventions as Eisenhower's moves in Guatemala and Lebanon and Kennedy's invasion of Cuba at Playa Girón. The master plan of launching nuclear war on the USSR and China reached dangerous levels on several occasions during the past fifteen years: during the opening stages of the cold war, again during the American invasion of North Korea, at the battle of Dien Bien-phu,

during the Suez crisis, the 1960 Berlin crisis, and finally and most ominously during the fall 1962 crisis over Cuba.

Several conjunctural factors explain why imperialism has not yet launched a full-scale atomic world war. Economic expansion was still possible with the help of periodic waves of rearmament; no major economic crisis loomed as an immediate threat; the hope still exists of diverting the colonial revolution through a *de facto* alliance with an apparently "neutralist" colonial bourgeoisie. (An example is the so-called "neutral" solution of the Laos question, in which the Soviet bureaucracy assists American imperialism to impose a halt on the Laos revolution.)

Other considerations gave the American imperialists pause, forcing them to postpone their timetable. At the end of World War II, the American armed forces proved unreliable for any further wars. In the face of great protest strikes and "Get Us Home" demonstrations, they had to be brought back to the United States and a totally new force constructed. In addition, possible domestic political opposition to another war had to be contained and reduced. The years of McCarthyism cut deeply into democratic rights and civil liberties in the U.S. but it is still doubtful that the public is really conditioned to accept another world war. The experience in Korea was very revealing in this respect. It rapidly became the most unpopular war in American history, and the adventure had to be brought to a halt. The colonial revolution has played a similar role by helping to bring the Negro movement in the United States increasingly into the political arena as a potentially strong independent force which could easily link up with any moves toward a labor party among the trade unions and political opposition to another world war. The possibility of American troops becoming "contaminated" by revolutionary ideas through contact with the forces against which they must be pitted also enters into the calculations which have caused American imperialism to hesitate at going over the brink into another world war.

In addition, nuclear war brings a new element to bear in war as an extension of politics — the very real possibility of suicide. A war that promises self-destruction loses its main purpose — which is victory and enjoyment of the spoils of conquest. The American imperialists have brandished the H-bomb for many years but still find themselves not quite capable of emulating Hitler in setting the torch to the funeral pyre they have put together. Thus, much as certain warmongers urge the rulers holding decisive power to take the final plunge, they have felt a still stronger compulsion to postpone the final reckoning.

Conscious of the danger that the capitalist system now faces of going down altogether, its statesmen have sought to strengthen it internally since the end of World War II. Behind the major policies of world capitalism is the view that survival of the system can be assured, or its demise postponed, only through a worldwide strategy of defense against the forces of the world proletarian revolution. The main capitalist countries and the satellites tied to them through interlocking military alliances (NATO, SEATO, etc.) have been acting as a world capitalist police force.

But while American imperialism must necessarily mobilize world capitalism as a whole for the assault on the workers' states, particularly Western Europe and Japan, the capitalist system is far from mono-

lithic. The old imperialist powers like Britain and France, reduced to the status of mere satellites to the American colossus, may well find it highly profitable to prepare for war and to accept the American hand-outs needed to shore up their structures. Experience has taught them, however, that war itself is not necessarily as profitable as its preparation. And this elementary truth holds especially in the case of nuclear war which can end in the destruction of all the higher forms of life on this planet, including capitalists. They thus exhibit a strong tendency to drag their feet as doomsday draws nearer. A sudden move by a de Gaulle exposes unexpectedly deep fissures in the capitalist alliances and new doubts are thrust upon the rulers of the West.

Insofar as changes in the relationship of forces due to the colonial revolution, the class struggle in the capitalist countries, the economic situation of capitalism or the economic progress of the workers' states do not threaten to put an immediate end to capitalism, a new compromise is always possible between the heads of the two main opposing camps. As long as they do not face an immediate major threat, both U.S. imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy will remain facing each other, striving to gain better positions or to avoid falling into worse ones, to strengthen their economic and military power, to acquire new allies or to avoid losing old ones, always seeking a compromise when the opponent appears ready to plunge into war. It is a dangerous game. How secure is the "security space" that each side tries to keep in reserve? It can be punctured at any time by an "error" or by a "misunderstanding" or by an act of mad folly.

In the face of nearly unanimous scientific opinion that a full-scale nuclear world war would signify the complete destruction of human civilization, if not the very physical existence of all mankind, it is obvious that the central strategic goal of the world labor movement cannot be a speculative victory in an atomic world war. To build communism, mankind must exist. A certain minimum material infrastructure is also necessary. Any assumption that "communist consciousness" is sufficient to build communism in a world of radioactive ruins, drops below the level of the primitive pre-Marxist utopians. *The goal must be to prevent an atomic world war.*

For a time, the development of Soviet nuclear weapons was a necessary step toward prevention of a nuclear world war. Without the Soviet A-bomb, a world war would have certainly broken out as a consequence of the local wars in either Korea or Vietnam. But at a certain point, the only means of preventing a nuclear world war is *the disarmament of imperialism by the workers of the imperialist countries.* This is feasible since atomic weapons cannot be used in a civil conflict without the capitalist class committing mass suicide — an outcome of remote possibility despite the appearance of such insane slogans as "Better dead than red."

A world nuclear war is not inevitable. The realistic alternative is to disarm imperialism by overthrowing it in its main bastions. The interacting process of colonial revolution, political revolution in the workers' states and proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries has this as one of its end results. The development of this process operates in a dual way on the outlook of the imperialists. As the revolutionary forces grow stronger, the imperialists become less and less confident in their own ultimate perspective and

more hesitant about staking everything on nuclear war. On the other hand the very same development increases their tendency to close their eyes to the future. When they feel that no other alternative is open but passive capitulation before the revolution, they are capable of plunging into a fatal adventure. But at a certain point, the momentum of the class struggle will place the workers in the imperialist countries in position to intervene in time and prevent imperialism from unleashing nuclear war.

In the final analysis only the victory of the proletariat in the most highly developed imperialist countries, above all the victory of the American proletariat, can free mankind definitively from the nightmare of nuclear annihilation. This is the revolutionary-socialist solution which the Fourth International opposes to the utopian illusions of "peaceful coexistence" and "victory" in a nuclear world war. The classical alternative, socialism or barbarism, today boils down to a socialist America or the nuclear destruction of the human race.

In this way revolutionary Marxism today brings to all sectors of the world proletariat a single integrated concept of world revolution, full support to wars of liberation waged by colonial peoples being an important contribution to the coming disarmament of imperialism by the proletariat of the imperialist countries. For the same reason, transition slogans of a unilateral pacifist nature in imperialist countries, far from being "reactionary" or "utopian," as old-time pacifism was, can play an extremely progressive role provided that they are linked with other transitional slogans culminating in the working-class struggle for power.

V. The Fourth International

THE year 1963 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth International and nearly four decades since the label of "Trotskyism" began to be attached to revolutionary socialism. In ideas, our movement has been very productive, more than justifying its existence by this alone. In its programmatic declarations and in its participation in the class struggle on a world-wide scale it has proved itself to be the legitimate heir and continuator of the great tradition of revolutionary Marxism. Events have proved it right on so many points that even its antagonists have had to borrow from its arsenal, though in a partial, one-sided or distorted way.

The struggle led by Leon Trotsky and the Left Opposition for rapid planned industrialization of the USSR as the only means to prevent the kulak from undermining the socialist mode of production in industry and the monopoly of foreign trade was vindicated as early as 1927-28. Hardly anyone in the world labor movement today doubts the correctness of the Trotskyist struggle against Stalin's notorious theory and practice of "social fascism" in the early thirties which paved the way for Hitler. The Trotskyist critique of the theory and practice of "popular frontism" has been shown to be correct in the most painful way, again and again, by the unnecessary defeats suffered by the working class when objective conditions were most favorable for victory as in France and Spain in 1935-37; in France, Italy and Greece in 1943-48; etc.

The Trotskyist exposures and denunciations of the crimes of Stalin in the thirties have now finally had their belated echo in official Soviet doctrine, beginning with Khrushchev's admissions at the Twentieth Con-

gress of the CPSU. The validity of the Trotskyist explanation of the character of the bureaucracy as a *social force* has become accepted by all serious students of the Soviet Union. It is even reflected in the theoretical basis and justification offered by the Yugoslav government in its experimentation with workers' councils and self-management. The correctness of the Trotskyist struggle for the revival in the Soviet Union of the Leninist norms of proletarian democracy received striking confirmation in the more or less spontaneous appearance of workers' councils at the very beginning of the political revolution in Poland and Hungary in October 1956.

The timeliness of even some of the oldest Trotskyist positions is graphically shown by the following case: In 1923 Trotsky held that if a certain degree of bureaucratization of a workers' state in an underdeveloped country is objectively inevitable, then it is the task of a revolutionary party to *limit* this to the utmost by developing all the objective and subjective conditions favoring working-class political activity and participation in the management of the state and economy. Above all the extent and gravity of the danger should not be denied, nor should the party succumb to the pressure of the bureaucracy, still less itself become an instrument for helping the bureaucracy to usurp power. In 1962 Fidel Castro voiced burning denunciations of the incipient bureaucracy in the Cuban workers' state and followed this by condemning the bureaucracy as being based on *materially privileged* elements in the state and the economy, divorced from the mass of workers. The attack Fidel Castro launched against the Anibal Escalantes of Cuba sounded like a repetition of Leninist and Trotskyist speeches heard in the Soviet Union almost forty years ago!

In the same way the theory of the permanent revolution, kept alive by the Fourth International as a precious heritage received from Trotsky, has been confirmed to the hilt both negatively and positively. (Negatively, by any number of defeats of the revolution and by the inability of the bourgeois leaderships in countries like India, Tunisia, Morocco, etc., to carry out a radical land reform; positively, by the fact that wherever some of the historical tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution, above all land reform, have been carried out it has been through establishment of a workers' state as in Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam and Cuba.)

The Trotskyist estimate of the fundamental change in the world relationship of forces which occurred with the victory of the Chinese Revolution is today accepted by the whole international communist and revolutionary movement. The Trotskyist analysis of the class nature of the Soviet Union enabled us to foresee as early as 1946-47 that even in the countries occupied and bled white by the Soviet bureaucracy in Eastern Europe, a great upsurge of productive forces would follow the then noticeable breakdown if the structure of these countries were to be adapted to that of the Soviet Union.

The Trotskyist analysis of the world situation enabled us to foresee before Stalin's death the upsurge of the Soviet proletariat and the deepening crisis of Stalinism which would eventually head toward political revolution and the restoration of Leninist-type proletarian democracy. The Fourth International was the only tendency inside the international labor movement which, at the height of West European "prosperity" and on

de Gaulle's coming to power, kept faith in the revolutionary potential of the European proletariat, thereby accurately foreseeing the new working-class struggles which in 1960 began flaring up in Belgium, Spain, Italy and elsewhere.

IF WE turn from the field of *ideas* to that of *organization*, the world Trotskyist movement appears to be far less successful. With the exception of Ceylon, the Fourth International has not yet achieved durable mass influence in any country. Its sections are still *nuclei of future mass revolutionary parties* rather than revolutionary parties in the full sense of the word; i.e., organizations able *under their own banner* to mobilize sizeable sectors of the working class.

This gap between the power and correctness of the program of Trotskyism and its weakness as an organized movement has been noted repeatedly, especially by new layers coming from large Communist parties and colonial revolutionary organizations. They incline to agree with the programmatic concepts of Trotskyism but remain skeptical about the organizational achievements and possibilities of the Trotskyist movement. The contradiction is a real one and deserves the most thoughtful consideration.

First of all, the problem must be brought into historical perspective. *The Trotskyist movement has no interests separate and apart from the long-range ones of the world proletariat.* It is not interested in constructing an "organization" simply for its own sake or as a mere pressure group. The organization it seeks to build is a definite means to a definite end — the victory of the proletariat on a world scale. This requires the highest possible consciousness, and therefore complete honesty and integrity, no matter how bitter the immediate consequences. These qualities often contradict rapid construction of an organization. The Fourth International has no choice but to follow this difficult course, for it is demanded by the interests of the world socialist revolution. Insofar as it represents the theoretical and political consciousness of that mighty process, its own ultimate fate cannot be separated from it.

To assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Fourth International in a more reasonable way, it is well to compare it with its predecessors. The First International, established under the direct leadership of Marx and Engels, never achieved great organizational strength, no matter how stupendous its theoretical accomplishments were in the history of mankind. The Second International added to the theory of Marxism and built huge organizations. But these all ended in the debacle of 1914. To achieve victory in Russia, the left wing found it necessary to split from the parent organization. The Third International moved ahead rapidly under the beneficent guidance of the Bolsheviks only to succumb to Stalinism and end finally in shameful dissolution as a wartime gift from the Kremlin to Roosevelt, the political chief of Allied imperialism. Obviously it is not easy to construct a revolutionary-socialist International and bring it to successful accomplishment of its aims.

Bearing in mind the program for which the world Trotskyist movement is struggling, it is quite superficial to accuse it of organizational stagnation. It is many times stronger today than at its inception in the days of the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union or at the time of the assassination of its founder. Less than

ten sections were present at the founding conference of the Fourth International in 1938; less than twenty at its Second World Congress in 1948. Today Trotskyist organizations exist in forty countries and most of these organizations are stronger than they were ten or twenty years ago — if they existed at all at that time.

Two significant developments must be stressed. In the first place the Trotskyist movement in recent years has grown in a notable way, more or less following the general rise of revolutionary developments on a world scale. This fact in itself proves that the Trotskyist movement corresponds to the *objective needs of the world proletariat* and is not a mere passing phenomenon peculiar to particular countries for a brief phase. Especially worth noting is its success as against other oppositional trends in the communist movement which began initially with much greater strength. Among these we may list the Bordiguists in Italy, the Brandlerites in Germany, the Lovestonites in the United States, the Catalan Federation in Spain, the Communist League in Japan, and a number of others. All these “national communist” oppositional tendencies completely failed to develop into world-wide organizations and most of them have all but disappeared or are weaker than the Trotskyist forces even in their home base. It should be observed that one competitive oppositional trend, the Yugoslav Titoists, have held state power for nearly twenty years, and yet have proved incapable of offering a serious challenge on the international field.

Secondly, Trotskyism has again and again proved its attractiveness to revolutionary-minded youth whether originating in the Social Democratic or Communist parties and in countries as different as the United States and Belgium, France and Japan, Indonesia and Italy, Greece and Britain. This is striking proof that the Trotskyist movement corresponds to a burning need on an international scale felt by thousands of vanguard elements moving away from the opportunist policies of the traditional working-class leadership and seeking ways and means of building a new alternative revolutionary leadership capable of guiding mass struggles to success.

The contradiction between the correctness of the program of Trotskyism and the organizational weakness of the movement struggling for its realization is not new. In the late twenties and in the thirties it commonly took the form of the skeptical question, “If Trotsky was so right, how did he happen to lose power to Stalin and why is he unable to regain it?”

What was lost sight of in this personal symbolization of the problem was the ebb and flow of opposing social forces which Trotsky and Stalin represented. Trotsky’s incapacity to hold power after 1924 was di-

rectly related to his capacity to win power in a situation like that of 1917. In remaining faithful to the long-range interests of the proletariat, Trotsky had to share its temporary eclipse in the Soviet Union under the rise of the reactionary social forces which Stalin came to represent and to express. With the downfall of the Stalin cult, Trotsky’s star has again begun to rise in the Soviet Union — in other words, the proletariat there is once more beginning to move into the political arena.

IN THE final analysis, the fate of the Trotskyist movement is linked to the dialectical interrelationship between the three sectors of the world revolution. This is the necessary basis for any real understanding of the organizational vicissitudes of the Trotskyist movement, including solutions for its most difficult organizational problems.

Being proved theoretically correct in the twenties and thirties did not lead automatically to the strengthening of the Trotskyist movement. Trotsky’s theory explained why the British general strike of 1926 was lost, why the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 was lost, why Hitler was able to come to power virtually unopposed, why the Spanish Revolution was defeated and why the great upsurge in the French labor movement in the middle thirties came to naught. But these defeats were defeats for the proletariat and therefore defeats for the Trotskyist movement and it suffered the most heavily of all. Its cadres were decimated, whether through discouragement, capitulation, imprisonment, or outright murder. All world reaction centered its most terrible blows against the Trotskyist movement — from Stalin through Roosevelt to Hitler. In all history no radical political movement has suffered such persecution or received so little help from sources outside its own ranks as the Trotskyist movement. That the pioneers could hang on at all is monumental testimony to the tenacity of the human will.

With the turn of the class struggle on an international scale at the end of World War II, it might have been expected that the Trotskyist movement would be the first to profit from the new upsurge. Its interrelationship with the concrete process of world revolution proved to be more complicated than that. The Trotskyist movement could benefit only in the final analysis and in the long range.

To understand this, it is necessary to go back to the most important single event in World War II — the victory of the Soviet Union. This victory started a chain reaction, the end of which is not yet in sight. The oppressed peoples of the world turned again as they had at previous times to the first workers’ state for inspiration and guidance. But government power in the Soviet Union was held by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Consequently this bureaucracy — and not Trotskyism — was temporarily strengthened.

This paradox was explained at the time by the Trotskyist movement. We also forecast that the very forces strengthening the bureaucracy would soon begin to undermine it, and the end consequence would be the doom of Stalinism. It took until 1956, however, for this process to register even partially in the official declarations of the Soviet government, and it is only today that the world monolith has been shattered irrevocably, opening the way for new political currents that tend to gravitate toward Trotskyism. The tendency can

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clearly be seen in the pattern of the rise of the workers' states since the end of the war — from Eastern Europe to Yugoslavia and China and finally to Cuba, the leadership has demonstrated increasing independence from the Soviet bureaucracy.

The tendency can be seen in another way. The break-up of the Stalinist monolith has been accompanied by an increasing necessity for discussion among the Communist parties, and an increasing need to deal with real issues in a reasoned way instead of in Stalin's way of substituting false issues and replacing reason by epithets, slander and frame-ups. It is instructive for instance to see that one of the major points under world-wide debate today is the necessity of extending the proletarian revolution as the only realistic way to end the threat of imperialist war. Clearly the disputants are nearing what up to now has been considered exclusively the realm of Trotskyist discourse. The victory of the Soviet Union in the war, the victory of the Yugoslav and Chinese Revolutions and most recently the Cuban Revolution, as well as the destruction of the Stalin cult, cannot help but strengthen Trotskyism. As I. F. Stone, the acute American radical journalist observed after a trip to Cuba, the revolutionists there are "unconscious" Trotskyists. With the coming of full consciousness among these and related currents, Trotskyism will become a powerful current.

This in turn will influence the development of the three sectors of the world revolution. The appearance of mass Trotskyist parties will bring to bear a new powerful force in the political arena. Even before these parties gain majority status in various countries, their mere presence and the partial successes they will begin to register can profoundly influence world events by hastening the natural rhythm of the revolutionary process in the three main sectors.

THE cadres of the Fourth International carried out their revolutionary duty in keeping alive the program of Trotskyism and adding to it as world events dictated. But this does not signify that the organizations adhering to the program of Trotskyism were immune to the effects of long years of isolation and persecution. Two main problems have proved of perennial concern. At times a tendency has appeared here or there that sought a short cut to the establishment of a mass organization. Such experiments have in every instance proved disastrous, ending in the disappearance from the revolutionary-socialist movement of many of those who became caught up in these adventures. A greater problem has been the occasional rise of sectarian tendencies. In contrast to the opportunists, who seek escape from the pressure of the hostile environment by moving away from principles, sectarians retreat into the books and convert the texts into dogmas. A revolutionist isolated by circumstances over which he has no control can fall into sectarianism quite unconsciously. It is therefore a more insidious danger for a small organization than opportunism, which is generally easier to recognize.

The building of an alternative leadership of the working class; i.e., of new revolutionary mass parties, remains the central task of our epoch. The problem is not that of repeating over and over again this elementary truth, but of explaining concretely how it is to be done. In fact, the building of revolutionary mass parties combines three concrete processes: the process of defending and constantly enriching the Marxist

revolutionary program; of building, educating and hardening a revolutionary Marxist cadre; and of winning mass influence for this cadre. These three processes are dialectically intertwined. Divorced from the mass movement, a revolutionary cadre becomes a sect. Divorced from the program of revolutionary Marxism, cadres immersed in the mass movement eventually succumb to opportunism. And divorced from practical testing by cadres struggling as part and parcel of the masses, the revolutionary program itself becomes ossified and degenerates into a sterile incantation of dogmatic formulas.

The world Trotskyist movement has given much consideration to the problem of setting out with small forces to win the working class and organize it into a party capable of challenging the rule of the capitalist class. The over-all principle on which it has proceeded on the organizational level is the Leninist dictum that a revolutionist must not permit himself to be separated from his class under any circumstances. It is thus the norm for Trotskyists to belong to the union of their trade or industry and to play an active role in union affairs no matter how reactionary the union bureaucracy may be. They likewise belong to the big organizations of the masses whether they be nationalistic, cultural or political in character. Insofar as possible, they advance the ideas and program of Trotskyism among the members of these organizations and seek to recruit from them.

In countries where the masses have an old tradition of class consciousness and powerful political organizations, as in Western Europe and Australia, an especially difficult problem is posed for the revolutionary nuclei. Because of this tradition and the power of their numbers, these organizations command deep loyalty from the workers. As a result of past defeats and the long period of bureaucratic control over the labor movement, the masses, when they display readiness to take the road of revolutionary action, do not begin with a fully developed Marxist consciousness but with an outlook which is closer to left centrism.

In addition to this, the bureaucratic leaderships do not facilitate bringing revolutionary Marxist educational material to the ranks. They operate as ruthless permanent factions, completely hostile to the ideas of Trotskyism and prepared to engage in witch hunting and the use of the most undemocratic measures against those who advance fresh or challenging views.

Such are the general conditions that must be faced by the revolutionary nuclei. They have no choice but to practice "entryism"; that is, to participate as an integrated component in the internal life of the mass movement. The special function of the nuclei in such situations is to advance transitional slogans that serve to bridge the gap between the inadequate consciousness of the masses and the objective need to enter into action on the road to revolution. The revolutionary nuclei actively participate in building left-wing tendencies capable of leading broader and broader sections of the masses into action. Through the experiences built up in these actions, they assist in transforming the best forces of these centrist or left-centrist tendencies into genuine revolutionary Marxists.

The purpose of "entryism" is not to construct a "pressure group," as some critics have charged, but to build a mass revolutionary Marxist party in the real conditions that must be faced in a number of countries. The tactic is mined with dangers and dif-

difficulties and cannot be successfully carried out unless these are constantly borne in mind. But for a certain stage of work, no practical alternative remains open. Owing to national peculiarities, the tactic has many variants. It must be applied with great flexibility and without dogmatism of any kind. The norm for those engaging in it is to maintain a sector of open public work, including their own Trotskyist publication.

No matter what the specific situation may be in which a Trotskyist organization finds itself, so long as it remains essentially a small propaganda group, it cannot play a leading mass role. Nevertheless it can work effectively in helping the masses to learn by experience through active and persistent effort at bridging the gap between their level of understanding and the objective situation. Stated in the most general way, this is also the course that must be followed to become a mass party. It is summed up in "The Transitional Program," written by Trotsky in 1938. This program must be kept constantly up to date through study of shifts in mass consciousness and through constant effort to connect up with them.

An acute problem in relation to the construction of revolutionary-socialist parties in many countries is lack of time to organize and to gain adequate experience before the revolution breaks out. In previous decades this would signify certain defeat for the revolution. Because of a series of new factors, however, this is no longer *necessarily* the case. The example of the Soviet Union, the existence of workers' states from whom material aid can be obtained, and the relative weakening of world capitalism, have made it possible for revolutions in some instances to achieve partial successes, to reach certain plateaus (where they may rest in unstable equilibrium as in the case of Bolivia), and even to go as far as the establishment of a workers' state. Revolutionary Marxists in such countries face extremely difficult questions, from an inadequate level of socialist consciousness among the masses to a dearth of seasoned or experienced cadres to carry out a myriad of pressing tasks. No choice is open to them in such situations but to participate completely and wholeheartedly in the revolution and to build the party in the very process of the revolution itself.

THE building of new mass revolutionary parties remains the central strategic task. To co-ordinate this work, the existing nuclei of these parties must be brought together in an international organization.

The final test of truth, as Marxists well know, is human action. Without the test of action, all theory becomes bare and sterile. The correct analysis of the world situation today is more complex than ever before. One fact alone graphically illustrates this: the peoples of more than one hundred countries are for the first time in history constantly involved in world events, sometimes in a highly explosive way. Only analysis of the world situation constantly re-examined and tested in the light of practical action can enable all the sectors of a world-wide movement to feel the pulse of history in the making. Only an International based on democratic centralism, permitting different tendencies to confront each other democratically while uniting them in action, can allow experiences from all corners of the world to become properly weighed and translated into revolutionary tasks on a world scale. It is not possible on the national field any longer to

arrive at a correct analysis or action without a general understanding of world developments. Never have countries and national sectors of the working class been so interdependent as today. The view that revolutionary movements can be built on a "national" scale or in "regional" isolation has never been so behind the times as in the age of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles and travel in outer space.

What is involved is the construction of something qualitatively different from the mere sum of the national organizations. By pooling national experience and opinion in accordance with the rules of democratic centralism it is possible to build an international leadership much superior to anything within the capacity of a single section. The basic concept is not that of assembling a staff of intellectuals, however valuable and necessary this is, but of combining on an international scale leaderships that are deeply rooted in their own national soil and connected in a living way with the masses of their own country. An international leadership of that kind is capable of performing the difficult dual task of keeping theory up to date and of working out viable policies of revolutionary action on the great world issues of the day.

The necessity to build a strong, democratically centralized International is underscored all the more by the present dialectical relationship between the three main sectors of the world revolution. In the advanced countries, the International can perform crucial services in behalf of revolutions in colonial countries, opening up ways and means of appealing to the feeling of solidarity that exists even among the most politically backward workers. The International can help the fighters of the colonial revolution remain true internationalists, retaining their confidence in the world proletariat and learning to distinguish the working masses in the imperialist countries from the governments and the treacherous leaders of the traditional mass organizations. Among the advanced workers, intellectuals and youth of the workers' states, the International can play a special role in helping them to dig through the debris of forty years of falsification, distortion and slander as they seek to find their way to revolutionary Marxism.

The victory of the Cuban Revolution has led some tendencies in the international labor movement to put a question mark on the necessity of building revolutionary Marxist parties, and especially on the necessity of building a democratically centralized revolutionary Marxist International. Such a conclusion is all the more unfounded in view of the fact that Fidel Castro, as a result of his own experience in a living revolution, today stresses the decisive importance of building Marxist-Leninist parties in all countries.

In truth, the need to build revolutionary mass parties and a revolutionary-socialist International flows from the objective tasks facing the proletariat in seeking power, in winning it and in exercising it after the victory. The inadequacy and treachery of the old leaderships of the working class have made the need all the more imperative. The threat of nuclear annihilation has converted it into a matter of life and death for all mankind. There is no way to win world socialism except through revolutionary mass parties fraternally associated in an international organization. Difficult as the task may seem, it will be accomplished — and in time.

Reunification of the Fourth International

By Farrell Dobbs and Joseph Hansen

THE healing of a ten-year-old division in the ranks of the majority of the Fourth International — the World Party of the Socialist Revolution — which took place at a Reunification Congress held in Italy in June, marks a most encouraging step forward for the movement founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938.

The two groupings of the Fourth International that participated in the reunification were headed by the International Secretariat and the International Committee, the views of the latter being supported in the United States by the Socialist Workers Party. With the fusion, the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International," representing a joint leadership, was elected to replace the former bodies and to head the reunified movement.

For some years the majority of both sides had felt that the political and organizational differences which appeared in 1953 and which precipitated a split the following year had been largely superseded by events. While substantial differences remained, they were considered to be of secondary importance in face of the necessity and feasibility of combining forces on a world scale on the basis of a principled program. At the Reunification Congress, leaders of both sides stated that they had not changed their views about the past dispute, but all of them agreed on the advisability of deferring attempts at historic assessments and of putting the unsettled differences aside for consideration at a later date after common work and new joint experiences can be expected to have overcome whatever factional feelings remain from the past.

A Principled Unification

A document submitted for the consideration of the world Trotskyist movement by the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, advocating early reunification on the basis of sixteen points, was adopted unanimously at the Reunification Congress as a statement of the fundamental principles on which both sides stand. By this action the document became a charter of the reunification.

The three main areas of agreement are outlined as follows:

First of all, in highly condensed form, the document restates the views

put forward by Trotsky in the "Transitional Program" of 1938, explaining the agonizing world crisis of our times as reflecting at bottom a "prolonged crisis in revolutionary leadership" in face of the need to go forward from capitalism to socialism. The delay of the world socialist revolution is ascribed to the incapacities and betrayals of the traditional working-class leadership; i.e., the trade union, Social Democratic and Stalinist bureaucracies. Strong emphasis is placed on the need for constructing revolutionary-socialist parties, and certain tactical problems in this process, involving membership in existing mass proletarian parties ("entryism"), are noted. A special point reaffirms the principles of democratic centralism.

Trotsky's characterization of the Soviet Union as a workers' state that must be defended and of the Stalinist bureaucracy as a parasitic caste that must be opposed and overthrown is likewise reaffirmed.

Secondly, the analogous analyses made by the Fourth International of the new workers' states which have appeared since Trotsky's death are included. Prominent in this section is the characterization of Cuba as a workers' state.

Thirdly, in the current world political scene, de-Stalinization is recognized as a two-sided development of prime importance, involving welcome concessions to the masses but intended by the bureaucracy to bolster and prolong its own arbitrary rule against the pressures for proletarian democracy. The differences that finally shattered the Stalinist monolith, now most dramatically displayed in the Chinese-Soviet dispute, are held to have been fostered by deep-going revolutionary processes, evident above all in the colonial world.

The prominent role of the peasantry and of guerrilla warfare in the colonial revolution since the end of World War II is noted as an experience that "must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries."

This section ends with strong stress on potential developments in the imperialist countries where, it is held, the final decisive battles will occur, determining whether civilization will be reduced to radioactive ruins or go forward to the enduring peace made possible by a socialist reorganization of society.

IN ADDITION to the political positions indicated above, the document makes organizational recommendations to be considered at a subsequent congress "which, without breaching the centralist side of democratic centralism, would remove any doubts that might still remain as to the guarantee of democratic rights contained in the statutes."

The Reunification Congress adopted three other important documents. Two of them deal with current developments in the Soviet bloc countries and with the Chinese-Soviet dispute. The third one, "The Dynamics of World Revolution Today," is a study of the dialectical interrelationship of long-range trends in three sectors, the colonial world, the Soviet bloc and the imperialist countries. We are publishing it in this issue of the *International Socialist Review*.

The reunification of the Fourth International was a conscious response to the widening opportunities for building revolutionary-socialist parties. In 1953 the world Trotskyist movement was under heavy pressure from two major unfavorable developments. One was that although the establishment of workers' states in Eastern Europe and the victory of the Chinese Revolution were highly progressive events, an immediate consequence was the temporary strengthening of Stalinism. The other was the quiescence of the class struggle in the United States and the rise of McCarthyism. Today the situation is quite different. The strengthening of the Soviet Union through the proliferation of planned economies and the relative weakening of imperialism finally broke up Stalinist monolithism and gave fresh actuality to the program of Trotskyism in the land of its birth. The colonial revolution has shaken all Asia, Africa and Latin America, bringing the heartening developments in Algeria and placing a workers' state within ninety miles of Florida. In the United States itself, the great citadel of world reaction, social stagnation has been broken with the rise of the Negro struggle in new and dynamic forms.

To the majority of Trotskyists throughout the world it became increasingly self-evident that the continued division of the Fourth International was anachronistic and that vigorous efforts must be made to heal the split so that united forces could be brought to bear in the promising situa-

tions devolving in all directions. The victory of the Cuban Revolution and the fact that both sides, through parallel analyses, reached virtually identical conclusions concerning its meaning powerfully reinforced the trend toward reunification.

The Opposition to Reunification

While the overwhelming majority of the Trotskyist movement, representing twenty-six countries, have now been united, two minority groupings refused to participate. The holdouts are a faction headed by J. Posadas, located principally in Latin America, which split from the International Secretariat last year, and a minority of the International Committee forces headed by Gerry Healy, a faction based mainly in Britain and France. To justify their opposition to reunification, both groupings have developed political differences with the majority of the world Trotskyist movement and appear rather deliberately to be seeking fresh disputes.

The Posadas tendency held a conference last year in secret from the rest of the Trotskyist movement. The delegates then announced that they had held an "Extraordinary Conference of the IVth International" and had adopted a "historical Resolution to be the international Provisional leadership until the Extraordinary World Conference, which this Conference summons." Since then the faction has called itself the "IVth International."

It has published typographical facsimiles of genuine publications of the Fourth International. (Despite the paucity of members, the grouping is impressively energetic about getting out publications.) At first glance, so far as the names and mastheads are concerned, these are indistinguishable from the originals; and the counterfeits, which are heavily loaded with articles and speeches that either are signed by Posadas or done in perfect imitation of his verbose and turgid style, have led to some confusion, especially in Latin America.

The main political position distinguishing the Posadas grouping is that it advocates the "right" of the Soviet Union to "initiate" nuclear war. The first issue of a newspaper distributed by the faction in England puts it this way: "One of the slogans under which the *Extraordinary Conference* took place was: *THE BOLSHEVIK MILITANT OF THIS EPOCH IS HE WHO IS PREPARED TO FACE THE LAST SETTLEMENT OF ACCOUNTS BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE WORKERS' STATES — WHICH WILL BE SETTLED WITHIN THE NUCLEAR WAR — HE WHO IS PREPARED ALSO TO FACE ITS CONSEQUENCES.*" (Emphasis in original.)

In a resolution passed by a "First Congress of the Revolutionary Workers Party (Trotskyists)" held recently in

England, the invitation to join Posadas in preparing for doomsday is explained: The "permeating of the once-staid British society by violence in every sphere, will find its final expression in a desperate rallying of forces for the final throw." This will be a "final military showdown against the workers' states and colonial revolution." The projected "cataclysmic reckoning" is described as being at the very heart of all politics today. "The Third World War is the coming reality, and any failure to point this out with absolute honesty to the workers, preparing them for the dreadful destruction and, at the same time, the decisive opportunity for



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seizing power which this war before or during it, affords, is treachery to bolshevism and a monstrous betrayal of the class."

IT MUST be granted that fear of a nuclear world war has a strong basis in current reality. The majority of the Fourth International agree on that and, in fact, the Trotskyist movement has been sounding the alarm since Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The differences with Posadas occur on two points. First, the Fourth International takes a much graver view of the possible consequences of a nuclear war than Posadas does. In the opinion of all other Trotskyists it could well mean the finish of civilization if not all the higher forms of life on our globe. Posadas, in contrast, believes that a "communist society" could rapidly be constructed on the wreckage. Secondly, Posadas believes that nothing can be done to prevent nuclear war; it should indeed be welcomed as the necessary means to clear

away capitalism. The Fourth International, in opposition to this view, is confident that the working class will prove able to avert the disaster in time through socialist revolution.

Posadas does not engage in much discussion on these questions. His method is the simple one of denouncing the "opportunism," "capitulation," and "betrayal" of the "former Trotskyists — Pablo, Germain, Frank, Cannon, Healy."

Here is a fair sample of the Posadas view of the majority of the Trotskyist movement: "Lacking confidence in the immense revolutionary elan of the workers awaiting revolutionary leadership, this clique is in tow to the so-called 'left' in the labour and peace movements. They deny the possibility and even the need of open revolutionary sections. They flinch from preparing the workers for war and the seizure of power."

When Posadas passed his "historical Resolution," declaring himself "to be" the leadership of the Fourth International, he could count on forces in a number of Latin-American countries. At the time, he headed the "Latin-American Bureau," a regional subdivision of the movement, and he had utilized this body in factional preparations for his coup. As it became clear that his revelations about the political death of the parent body scarcely corresponded to the reality, he ran into trouble. The important Bolivian section, for instance, repudiated him and his "Latin-American Bureau" virtually unanimously. Elsewhere splits in his ranks have occurred. On the other hand some vigorous personal crusading in Europe has won him a few new converts. Likewise, the Cuban Trotskyists remain faithful to the "Latin-American Bureau," and their newspaper *Voz Proletaria*, which appears regularly in Havana, thus unfortunately presents a rather bizarre image of "Trotskyism" as it criticizes Castro for his stubborn centrist failure to accept the hard gospel of Saint Posadas about a coming nuclear Apocalypse and how to win redemption by speeding it up.

The Healyite Grouping

The other tendency which has opposed reunification is led by Gerry Healy, the secretary of the Socialist Labour League. Healy, to his credit, does not share the views of Posadas about an inevitable nuclear doomsday that should be speeded up. He does hold with Posadas, however, that the leaders of the majority of the world Trotskyist movement have gone over to "opportunism" and "betrayed Trotskyism."*

Healy is of the opinion that the reunification itself is a "betrayal." The reasons he advances for this view are that reunification must be preceded by

* In the interests of strict accuracy a shading must be noted in this common view. Healy differs with Posadas on one point, holding that the name of Healy should not be included in the list of betrayers.

a full accounting of the differences of 1953-54, an assessment of responsibility, and corresponding acknowledgments of guilt. Any reunification without these prerequisites, Healy contends, is unprincipled, can only prove ephemeral, and he will have nothing to do with.

It was argued against this that the world Trotskyist movement is not monolithic. Groupings with much deeper differences than opposing views over who was right in a past dispute can coexist and collaborate in the same revolutionary-socialist organization under the rules of democratic centralism. In the Socialist Workers Party, for instance, even a state-capitalist grouping has lived for years without undue friction. Why should not common political positions on the key issues of the day prove to be powerful enough to cement the two sides of the Fourth International despite differences over the past?

The reasonableness of this reply gave Healy trouble. His response was to probe more strenuously for current political differences that would preclude reunification. This search, however, led him to develop some rather far-reaching political differences of his own that finally brought him into grave opposition with the majority of the International Committee as well as the International Secretariat.

These differences became sharpest over estimates and policies in relation to the colonial revolution, above all the Cuban Revolution.

The majority of the world Trotskyist movement long ago came to the conclusion that Cuba is a workers' state and that under Castro's leadership it has entered the road toward socialism; the Cuban Revolution, in fact, being the opening of the socialist revolution in the Western Hemisphere. Even Posadas shares this view. The British and French sectors of the International Committee are virtually alone in holding otherwise. In an article last year, "Trotskyism Betrayed," the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League maintained the outlandish position that the "state foundations" in Cuba remain "capitalist." The regime, we are told, "is a variety of capitalist state power." Castro, it is argued, "did not create a qualitatively new and different type of state from the Batista regime."

Healy is quite serious in thus comparing the revolutionary Cuban government to the Batista regime. He goes even further, listing Castro himself as just another "Chiang Kai-shek."

THESSE weird conclusions are derived from a simple-minded sectarian pattern of thought: It is impossible to carry a revolution forward to the successful establishment of a workers' state without the preceding construction in every instance of a revolutionary-socialist party. Such a party did not exist in Cuba before the revolution. There-

fore, no workers' state was established. Therefore, what exists in Cuba must be capitalist.

It proved quite useless to call Healy's attention to the changes in Cuba's economic, social and political structure successfully carried out under Castro's leadership. To insist on the facts, Healy maintained, is to reveal that you are not a dialectical materialist but an "empiricist."

Similar fantasies now determine Healy's policies in many fields. In the Negro struggle in the United States, he concentrates his attacks on the "clerics," the Muslims and the Socialist Workers Party, which he holds to be "opportunist" because it raises partial, transitional slogans. In Algeria, instead of joining in centering fire on the dangerous neocolonialist tendency, he singles out Ben Bella and the Trotskyists as the enemy. In Britain itself the "fake lefts" are his main target. Everybody to the right of Healy is denounced as a "betrayal." In brief, instead of advancing to meet the leftward moving stream in Britain, Healy is taking the opposite direction — towards deeper isolation.

Speaking at the July convention of the Socialist Workers Party on the ultra-left, sectarian, isolationist, anti-international course now being followed by the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League, James P. Cannon, National Chairman of the SWP and the most experienced leader in the world Trotskyist movement, came to the conclusion, "The SLL is doomed."

Despite the direction in which Healy was moving, every effort was made to bring the minority of the International Committee into the reunification. They were invited to participate in a preliminary conference of the majority of the International Committee. They were invited to send observers to the Seventh World Congress of the forces of the International Secretariat, and to send observers to the Reunification Congress of the Fourth International. Healy brushed the invitations aside.

He went still further. Instead of seeking friendly relations with the united Fourth International, he publicly attacked both the Reunification Congress and the Socialist Workers Party, using, of course, the epithets of "betrayal" to which his vocabulary has become more and more reduced. This was the opening of a campaign to further enlarge the already formidable differences which he has developed. To give his attacks more authority, he utilized the name "International Committee," although the majority of this grouping participated in the Reunification Congress and now constitute part of the united movement. In this, Healy echoed the not-so-novel organizational methods of Posadas.

Doctrinaire Conservatism

The course now being followed by Healy and Posadas and their followers is much to be regretted. Under the

democratic centralism which governs the Fourth International, they could have maintained their political views within the organization and sought to win a majority. The fact that they rejected this course is the strongest possible proof either that they are opposed to democratic centralism or that they consider their political differences with the rest of the world Trotskyist movement to be so profound that collaborating in a common organization is excluded in principle.

The two factions combined, however, constitute only a small minority. While they can prove to be a problem in certain areas, they can scarcely affect the progress of the Trotskyist movement as a whole.

It would have been utopian to hope that the Fourth International could be reunited one hundred percent and at a single stroke. Immense events have occurred since the end of the war and the Trotskyist movement, which is a living movement, suffered its own crises in attempting to meet them on the theoretical and practical level. The Cuban Revolution, coming at the close of a long process (and, we hope, the beginning of a new one), had the effect of precipitating many things.

In the Trotskyist movement, it increased the pressure for reunification and thereby also had the opposite effect of bringing out defects in theoretical understanding and political capacity. The end result was a clarifying process that forced the movement as a whole to review all that it has accomplished, particularly on the theoretical level, since the end of the war. In the intensive internal discussion, the analyses of the character of the state and regime in China, Yugoslavia, and even the East European countries came up. Some switches occurred in these areas, too, as comrades discovered that they hadn't really grasped the previous theoretical work or at least all of its implications. Misunderstandings were cleared up in some cases; masks came off in others. All the various shadings of opinion are now fairly well recorded either publicly or in discussion bulletins available to the membership of the Trotskyist movement. This alone represents a considerable achievement and a big step forward.

DESPITE the wildness evident in their positions, both the Posadas and Healy factions are doctrinaire. The revolutionary Marxist movement correctly stresses the importance of building a revolutionary-socialist party. Healy converts the principle into an absolute, excluding thereby any variation which reality may present us with. The case of Posadas is not much different. Marxists have long stressed that war has often proved to be a mother of revolutions. Posadas converts this into the dogma that revolution can have no other mother (forgetting Cuba!) and carries

it to the absurd conclusion that the most destructive of wars will necessarily have the most progressive consequences.

Thus the leaders of both factions see broad guiding principles as absolute prescriptions. Instead of trying to apply doctrine in an intelligent way as a guide in the infinitely rich reality which the historical process compels the movement to face, they insist on reality conforming to doctrine on pain of non-recognition.

That these conservative tendencies did not succeed in holding back the majority from a dialectical appreciation of the great new achievements of the colonial revolution, and that they could not halt the process of reunification despite their bitter opposition to it, augurs well for the future of the Fourth International.

The Revolutionary Opportunities

The reunification takes place against a background of unparalleled revolutionary opportunities. Thus, even though the healing of the split does not involve mass parties anywhere in the world, the substantial number of cadres it does bring together can move ahead rather rapidly. In a surprising number of countries they have already established promising beginnings. Where they have known how, in the tradition of Leninism, to adhere firmly to the basic principles of revolutionary socialism and yet adopt flexible tactics — and this is the case with the majority of the world Trotskyist movement — their prestige among vanguard workers and intellectuals is very high. In addition, they enjoy friendly relations with many of the new revolutionary and even socialist-minded currents that have been proliferating as one of the consequences of the rise of the colonial revolution, particularly after the victories in Cuba and Algeria. An upsurge in the class struggle could face these new currents, in association with Trotskyism, with the immediate opportunity to organize mass revolutionary-socialist parties and in some places put them in position to move toward a contest for power.

One of the most favorable sectors for such a turn of events is Latin America. Few days go by that do not bring news of coups or attempted coups, counter coups or attempted counter coups, as Fidel Castro noted in his July 26 speech. The spectacular shuffling of regimes in the recent period in places like Ecuador and Argentina, the downfall of the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic and the repeated efforts to similarly bring down Duvalier in neighboring Haiti are but the most visible symptoms of general social unrest reaching from the Rio Grande to Tierra del Fuego. This rise in revolutionary potential on a continental scale is now common knowledge. What is not so

commonly known is the reflection of this process in the radical movement.

The Cuban Revolution sent cleavages, sometimes with shattering impact, through all the political formations of the left. The Moscow-Peking dispute compounded the effect. The immediate results were a decline in the prestige, authority and attractive power of the traditional leftist parties, Communist as well as Social Democratic. Within these organizations, leftward moving tendencies developed and totally fresh parallel ones appeared here and there outside the old formations.

The subsidence of the old parties and incipient development of new formations has not proceeded in a simple way. On the contrary, sharp ups and downs show that it is a complex process. But three significant new facts should be noted: First, in places like Brazil and Peru, a tendency has appeared or grown stronger among the peasants to organize along trade-union lines. Secondly, in many areas guerrilla forces have gone into action, seeking quite consciously to follow the example of the Cuban and Chinese fighters. Thirdly, the student youth have repeatedly displayed a strong bent toward action based on independent estimates of what is required nationally. Sometimes the actions have developed on an impressive scale. To discount the priority of opinion in Moscow (or Peking) is a symptom of greatest significance, for it is one of the prime requisites to build national leaderships capable of independent analysis and action.

The weakening of the old Communist and Social Democratic parties in Latin America may seem to be a paradoxical effect of the Cuban Revolution. It may even appear that the Kennedy administration is succeeding in isolating the Cuban Revolution. The truth is that we are witnessing the displacement of bureaucratic roadblocks to revolution. It is part of the preparatory process for the rise of genuinely revolutionary parties. The other part of the preparatory process is the ideological ferment, the testing of ideas, the attempts — sometimes inept — to take the revolutionary initiative, the discussions and the assessment of experiences, and the regroupment and bringing together of revolutionists of widely different origin.

It is obvious that the unification of the major forces of world Trotskyism can help play a catalytic role in the formation of new leaderships in Latin America capable of following judiciously the example which Cuba set in opening the socialist revolution in the Western Hemisphere.

The prospects are hardly less bright in Africa where a whole series of new countries have emerged, through sometimes desperate struggles against imperialism, to take their place in the arena of world politics. Here the greatest hopes and expectations attach to Algeria. Although the newly independent

country faces an exceedingly difficult situation inherited from more than a century of colonial slavery and seven and a half years of one of the bloodiest wars in history, its people have resolutely decided to move toward socialism. Already agriculture, Algeria's main industry, has been nationalized in effect and its operation placed under Workers' Council and Workers' Management Committees. The example has not been lost on the rest of Africa and the Middle East, and Algiers is coming to be regarded as the Havana of the African continent and the Arab world.

The struggle against neocolonialism and against imperialism is far from won in Algeria. A polarization of forces has occurred, with the left wing rallying around Ben Bella against the neocolonialists. The Trotskyists in Algeria are very active in this struggle. Trotskyism, in general, has great prestige among broad circles of the Algerian vanguard because of its record in aiding the underground fighters in the most difficult days of their struggle.

IN THE Far East, the fires touched off by the Chinese Revolution continue to blaze. The Vietnam freedom fighters have put up such a heroic and effective struggle that more and more voices in Washington suggest withdrawing from the dirty war in which Kennedy involved America. The rise of pessimism in Washington is paralleled by increased optimism in the colonial world over the possibilities of a revolutionary outcome in Vietnam. A defeat for imperialism in Vietnam could have immense consequences in Indonesia and Malaya where the political stream continues to flow toward the left.

Trotskyism was at one time a strong force in Vietnam, but the leading Trotskyists were killed by the Japanese imperialists during the occupation or by the Stalinists and the movement has not yet recovered from the ferocious repression. In Asia, at the moment, the Trotskyists are strongest in Ceylon, where they head the labor movement and hold seats in parliament. The Trotskyist movement also has a base in India.

In both lands, where the movement goes back to the struggle for freedom from British imperialism, the Trotskyists strongly urged reunification on a world scale. Their representatives at the Reunification Congress expressed great satisfaction at the success that was recorded there and declared that it would have immediate benefits as well as greatly facilitate building the movement in other areas of the Far East with which they are in touch.

In the Soviet Bloc

The opportunities for the relatively swift development of revolutionary-socialist forces in the colonial world are quite apparent. This is not so in the

Soviet Union, the East European countries and China. In these lands, the main task of revolutionary socialism is to establish or to re-establish the proletarian democracy for which Lenin and Trotsky stood. But no organized tendency fighting for this aim is known to exist on any considerable scale. How long can the totalitarian forms of political rule continue to operate without generating an organized movement for the restoration or introduction of Leninist democracy? The fact is that conditions are quite ripe for its appearance, especially in the Soviet Union. *De-Stalinization* constitutes a series of concessions paid out to the masses in a calculated way by the bureaucracy in order to slow down, if not head off, this very tendency. The end effect of de-Stalinization, however, will be to accelerate the drive of the masses for political democracy.

Trotskyism is endemic in the Soviet Union. It can flare suddenly and spread with great speed. This is one of the main reasons why the bureaucracy is so concerned about restricting freedom of thought in the arts and sciences. Implied in the freedom to discuss and engage in abstract art or psychoanalysis or research in genetics is the freedom to discuss and engage in revolutionary-socialist politics.

The thirst for political freedom is quite intense. Any number of signs show it, not the least of them being the immense popularity of Fidel Castro and all the Cuban revolutionists with the Soviet masses.

The difficulty which the bureaucrats experience in keeping Trotskyism buried is ironically evident in their own revival of the subject even if only in the form of accusations. Both Mao and Khrushchev hurl the charge of "Trotskyism" at each other. While the charge may not stick in either case, it certainly increases the pressure to discuss Trotskyism and to find out what it really stands for.

The first consequences of the collapse of the bureaucratic monolith, so far as direct, immediate gains for the Trotskyist movement were concerned, came among Communist parties outside the Soviet bloc. The revelations at the Twentieth Congress broke down the prohibitions against dangerous thoughts enforced in the Communist parties under Stalin. In the ensuing discussions, some rank and filers and even intellectuals came over to Trotskyism. It became possible in certain parties to discuss Trotskyist views and even to talk with genuine, live Trotskyists with at least the beginnings of objectivity. This process, which is far from concluded — in fact, it has hardly begun in sectors as important as the French Communist Party — put heavy pressure on the world Trotskyist movement to compose its internal differences. The reunification is therefore viewed by both sides as a great gain in the essential

work of aiding members of the Communist parties to overcome the evil heritage of Stalinism.

The schism between Moscow and Peking, which is more and more compelling the protagonists to broach the most fundamental questions of revolutionary-socialist perspectives and strategy, inevitably involves Trotskyism to an increasing degree and opens up truly enormous opportunities for its ascendance. These opportunities alone made it the evident duty of Trotskyists to put aside differences of secondary order in order to effectively advance the main principles of the program on which they stand.

In the Capitalist Citadels

In the main centers of world capitalism, the past decades have been particularly difficult for the Trotskyist movement. The combination of prosperity, reactionary political trends and relatively quiescent class struggle, characteristic above all of the United States, but extending to one degree or another throughout world capitalism, compelled the radical movement as a whole to mark time for an unexpectedly prolonged period. That the Trotskyists were able to hold their own and even register a few gains is a tribute to their stamina and to the power of the ideas that inspire them.

The first signs of a shift in the objective situation have now begun to appear. In Europe the new trend was announced by such events as the general strike in Belgium in 1960, the shift to the left in Britain which has placed the Labour Party in position to win the next election, and a series of important strikes in Italy, France and Germany. The underground movement in Spain has been inching ahead as a direct reflection of the growing self-confidence of the Spanish workers, particularly the miners.

The beginning of the change in the United States proved to be spectacular, since it fell to the Negro people to take the lead in breaking the trance that has gripped the country since the rise of the witch-hunt and McCarthyism in 1947. The independent self-action of the Negro people could take no other form but dramatic and often very militant demonstrations if it were to have genuine effect in battering down the violent prejudices that bar the way to equality. It is possible for this movement to now move rapidly into politics where its most effective field of action lies, and this in turn can open up an entire new and brilliant chapter for revolutionary socialism in America.

FOR the Trotskyist movement in the United States, represented by the Socialist Workers Party, the problem of reunification had no directly national aspect. But the Socialist Workers Party

is keenly alive to its international meaning and the benefits to be derived indirectly in its own work from a united world movement. The Canadian Trotskyist movement, represented by the Socialist Educational League, is similarly situated. In both the American and Canadian organizations, the Reunification Congress was hailed as a big step forward.

One of the prime considerations in the minds of those who pressed most strongly for reunification of the Fourth International was the youth. On all continents it is they who are now moving into the center of the revolutionary stage. The series of student demonstrations that swept the globe from Korea to Turkey in the past several years is proof of this. The new generation has displayed its capacities up to this point with the greatest impressiveness in the Cuban Revolution. In Latin America, those most actively concerned about learning from the Cuban experience and applying the lessons are the young people. In the United States it was youth who took the initiative in the staging of demonstrations that touched off the new surge forward in the Negro struggle, and it is they who have provided the main active forces in the picket lines, sit-ins and Freedom Rides that have made headlines internationally.

The tendency of this new generation to begin its revolutionary experience with *deeds* is of the utmost significance. It testifies to the enormous internal pressures in the capitalist system, to the widespread diffusion of the idea of seeking a revolutionary way out, and to the power of the living examples of revolutionary success from the Russia of 1917 to the Cuba of 1959.

The Cuban Revolution was marked by the predominance of action over conscious revolutionary theory; but in its course, as was inevitable, consciousness began asserting its rights and the Cubans themselves turned increasingly to the revolutionary classics in search of the meaning of what they had accomplished. This road leads in the final analysis to Trotskyism, which contains the quintessence of revolutionary-socialist theory. In moving in this direction, the Cubans have blazed a trail for millions of youth around the globe.

A generation of youth armed on a sufficiently wide scale with Trotskyist theory would signify the finish of the capitalist system. With an understanding of why they have rebelled against the social system into which they were born and how they must go about changing that system, the new generation will prove invincible.

May the reunification of the Fourth International help the youth to seize the unique opportunity which is theirs — the successful discharge of the greatest task in the history of humanity, the establishment of world socialism!

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