The Labour Party Crisis

LABOUR REVIEW

EDITORS: BRIAN PEARCE, CLIFF SLAUGHTER · NEW PARK PUBLICATIONS LTD., 186 CLAPHAM HIGH STREET, LONDON S.W.4 PHONE: MAC 7029

Summer books

ONE SHILLING and SIXPENCE

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Editorials

(I) Once Again – The Summit

WHO was right about the summit talks? Here we had an important test for all those who claim to be socialists The Communist Party, Labour MPs from Left to Right and the New Left all supported the call for summit talks. The Marxists, represented by the Socialist Labour League, insisted that these talks could not resolve the serious threat of World War Three.

Our editorial in the October-November, 1959, issue of *Labour Review* 'Socialists and the Summit' should be compulsory reading for our critics. Two quotations from this editorial underline the superiority of the Marxist method as against those who serve the power politics of British and United States imperialism or the power politics of the Soviet bureaucracy.

> 'Who, then, will meet at the Summit? The representatives of US imperialism, Republican or Democrat, the representatives of British imperialism, Tory or Social Democratic, and the Stalinist leaders of the Soviet bureaucracy. In point of fact the most important "camp" in world politics will not be represented, and it will be a conference of leaders who fear the strength of the working class and will come to agreements based on the hopeful assumption, each in his own terms, that the struggle of the working class can be arrested. Thus the working class is the common enemy that must be "contained". This common front against the working class will not be the subject of precise written agreements; the Soviet bureaucracy defends nationalized property in the USSR by methods of its own, not relying on the development of the revolutionary movement; the capitalists faced with the colonial revolution and the threat of economic crisis and by industrial struggles, will be grateful for Khrushchev's guarantee of the peaceful intentions of Stalinism which holds back the working-class movement wherever the Communist Parties have influence. . . .
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> 'Marxists must take their stand firmly. Only the strengthening and growing revolutionary consciousness of the working class is a safeguard against war. Defeats for the working class are in the long run steps towards war, and such defeats are prepared by all those who spread illusions about forces other than the working class itself achieving peace. Macmillan is not a "representative" whom we push to the Summit, he is a leader of the class enemy who must be defeated. He does not represent the working class in any shape or form. If he goes to the Summit and makes agreements, they will be in the interests of his class, not of the working class. The first thing Marxists must say to the working class about such people is: they have been on the Summit too long; our job is to get them off, not to keep them there.'

Shortly before we wrote these lines, the *Daily Worker* waged a campaign against what it called the 'die-hards' who opposed Ike. Now that Mr. Khrushchev has supplied them with the latest line that Ike is in fact himself a die-hard, the *Daily Worker* merrily switches its attack to Eisenhower as if nothing had happened. This is a perfect example of Stalinist method—follow and support the Soviet leadership in whatever it does, no matter where such enthusiasm may take you.

The breakdown of the summit talks underlines once again that the real decisions in the world today cannot be made exclusively by the statesmen of either the imperialist or the Soviet blocs. There are people who speculate, with some weight to their arguments, that Khrushchev really wanted the Paris talks to succeed. That may well be so, but the opinions of the Chinese had to be taken into account. Unlike the Soviet bureaucracy, the rulers of China are still very much under the influence of the colonial revolution. They are forced to consider their relations with the imperialist powers from the standpoint of the fortunes of this revolution and not from the *status quo* between themselves and imperialism. It was precisely for this reason that Stalin himself did not want the Chinese revolution to succeed. He never gave up hoping for a deal with Chiang Kai-shek. Although steeped in Stalinist ideology, just as Tito was, the Chinese Communist Party leaders were forced by the enormous revolutionary impact which swept the continent of Asia at the end of the war to put an end once and for all to imperialism, its puppet warlords and Chiang Kai-shek.

Suddenly, on the eve of the summit talks, the Chinese leaders discovered that Lenin had after all a very different opinion on the struggle against imperialist war from the present Moscow overlords. In this respect their statements are in many ways similar to those of British Marxists.

The Communist Party in Britain carefully avoids a discussion on the significance of the Chinese statements. They are frightened lest the

next wave of 'revisionists' in the party should *begin* their theoretical struggle against the inept King Street leadership by adhering to the Chinese policies in relation to the fight against world imperialism.

Khrushchev's dilemma underlines again that it has not been possible for either he or his fellow bureaucrats in the Kremlin to restore Stalinism and its method of rule. The 20th Congress speech marked an historic departure and some of the results can be seen in the recent collapse of the summit.

The struggle for peace is inseparable from the struggle against imperialism. The Labour movement in Britain must relate its daily struggle for living conditions and for a socialist society to the fight against the war makers. This is the real lesson to be learned. Is it too much to hope that many of those who have been so dangerously misled over the summit should now re-examine the policy offered by the Marxists of the Socialist Labour League in the struggle against war?

(II) The Labour Party Crisis

THIS year's annual conference of the Labour Party promises to be one of historic importance. Since the special conference held at the end of November, 1959, the situation inside the Party has gone from bad to worse. It is clear that neither the Left, the Right nor the centre have any longer the slightest hope of healing the breach which grows wider as the days go by.

Gaitskell's speech at the special conference had as its main object an attack on any move to extend nationalization to the basic industries. He has followed this up with an addendum to the constitution which, if carried at the conference, would place the now famous Clause Four in cold storage. Whilst it is perfectly true that Gaitskell has been successful on this issue it is equally true that the Right-wing cannot hope to maintain the unity of the party on this policy. Since the trade unions are based on the working class they are more immediately affected by the uncertainties of the economic situation. Despite the boom and a relatively high level of employment, the outlook for the future remains unstable. Nationalization will be constantly posed inside the Labour movement. It is all very well for Mr. Gaitskell to write off Clause Four, but the things that it stands for are still very much burning issues inside the movement.

This year's conference will most likely go on record against the manufacture of the H-bomb. Here we have the outcome of three years of campaigning inside the Labour Party and the trade unions. The resolution rejected at Brighton in 1957 seems likely to become in all essentials the policy of the Labour Party in 1960. Domestic and foreign affairs are drawing closer together. This is the real political driving force for the present stage of the struggle inside the Labour Party.

As the crisis becomes more insoluble, so does tension mount, especially in the leadership. Right-wing trade union leaders launch violent personal attacks against the Left. Right-wing Labour politicians, such as Woodrow Wyatt, launch violent attacks against centrist trade union leaders like Frank Cousins. A whole number of lesser personalities such as Shinwell mount the rostrum to denounce one another at week-end meetings. In the midst of this confusion Morgan Phillips takes the floor and as usual in the name of party unity proceeds to outline a proposal which would almost certainly split the Labour Party if carried out. The archpriest of officialdom proposes that the policy of the Parliamentary Labour Party should not be governed by the decisions taken at the annual conference of the Labour Party. It was all very well, you see, when the block vote of the big unions, under the leadership of such stalwarts as Arthur Deakin and Will Lawther, was certain to go to the Right, but now that the voting pendulum swings the other way Mr. Phillips thinks that the past history of the Labour Party was after all a grave mistake. What is now needed is to create a situation where the rank and file, whether through the block vote or the votes of the constituency Labour Parties are powerless so far as any effective control over the Parliamentary Labour Party is concerned. It is absolutely certain that the party and a substantial portion of the trade unions will have nothing to do with this proposal.

Every informed person realises, of course, that in practice the Parliamentary Labour Party has in the past enjoyed almost complete freedom from the decisions of party conference. But just as in the case of nationalization and Clause Four, the crisis of our times permits little room for such manoeuvres in the future. In other words, social democracy has reached the gravest crisis in its history.

The question that now arises, and which the

Left must seek to answer without delay, is as follows: 'Why do Morgan Phillips, Gaitskell, Woodrow Wyatt, Sir Thomas Williamson and their ilk press so hard on the proposals in relation to Clause Four, and in their support for the foreign policy of the Tory government? Why do they want to cut the Parliamentary Labour Party loose from the authority of the party conference?' The more one reads the speeches of these gentlemen, the more we are forced to realize how determined they are. It is all very well for the democrats of the *New Statesman* to speak longingly about the flexibility of Lord Attlee, but this does not offer the slightest consolation in the present dilemma. The Right-wing are determined to force the issue inside the Labour Party and the trade unions. They do not want to be tied any longer to a party committed to nationalization of the basic industries under conditions where the Parliamentary Labour Party would have to carry out the decisions of conference if it took power. Gaitskell and company definitely want to get rid of socialism once and for all, so far as the Labour Party is concerned. They have made their minds up about that.

The crisis building up inside the Labour Party now contains, in fact, the ingredients of a major split. Even if Mr. Gaitskell is defeated on the H-bomb issue at the Labour Party conference there is no guarantee that he will automatically resign as leader when the election takes place in the Parliamentary Labour Party. He may, in fact, be re-elected and he may, even, defy the decision of the party conference. By proposing constitutional changes Morgan Phillips is hiding the real facts about what he knows to be a serious crisis.

The question is: who is to replace Gaitskell? It is clear that the illness of Aneurin Bevan has proved to be a disastrous blow for all those who wish to hold back a major Left development inside the Labour Party. There is not the slightest doubt that if he were physically fit the leadership would be his for the asking. We have, therefore, a most dangerous situation for the reformists. The Labour Party is threatened with a split from the Right. Considerable pressure from the trade union rank and file has succeeded in altering policy at the top of some major unions. Constituency parties are ready and waiting for a lead to the Left. This is where a great vacuum arises. Who will lead the Left?

There is only one force capable of ushering in a genuine socialist leadership and that is the Marxists, organized in the Socialist Labour League. The power behind this force is not the publicity value of the personalities in its leadership but the historical correctness of the ideas which it advocates. It was in order to deal a blow against these ideas that the Socialist Labour League was proscribed last year. Contrast this brutal treatment of the Left with the way in which Gaitskell condones the actions of Alfred Robens as he proceeds to take charge of the Tory plans to dismantle the nationalized mining industry. But the proscription of the Socialist Labour League did not resolve the major problem which Marxism poses for the Right-wing. As the crisis deepens, more and more people are being drawn towards fresh political consideration of the major problems of our time. In this respect the confused ideas of Mr. Crossman cannot even be considered as a minor stop-gap. Behind the demand for the extension of nationalization is a firm belief that Socialism is necessary. Behind the struggle to stop the manufacture of the H-bomb is a firm belief in working-class internationalism and a determination to fight the preparations for World War Three. Behind the powerful sympathy which the rank and file of the British Labour movement extended to the South African people lies the feeling that no matter what the colour of our skins we face and fight a common enemy.

Marxism, and a Marxist leadership, is the only force which can fill the void on the Left. This explains the vicious way in which newspapers such as the *News Chronicle* constantly attempt to smear and distort the policy of the Socialist Labour League. The *News Chronicle* speaks for that rump which was once known as the Liberal Party. These elements are painfully aware of the vacuum that is growing and the fact that they are unable to do anything about it. So they rely on smears and witch-hunting to weaken the Marxist movement.

The second annual conference of the Socialist Labour League decisively rejected the sectarian conception that this was the period to launch an independent revolutionary party of the working class. We firmly believe that the time is coming when such a party will have to be launched. But it is important to understand that we are not yet at that stage. The Socialist Labour League will continue to encourage all those who want to challenge Gaitskell and the threatened split from the Right to turn their attention to work inside the Labour Party and trade union movement for a socialist policy that will unite all those who stand for colonial freedom and independence, those who struggle to end the manufacture of the H-bomb and those who want to extend nationalization to all the basic industries in Britain. Now is the supreme testing time for British Marxists.

CND and Politics

G. Gale

THE Committee of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament were against any political banners being carried on the Aldermaston March and tried to suppress political slogans on the March. Those who agree with this attitude feel that the movement against the Bomb is a wide movement involving people of different political beliefs and any attempt to move the campaign in a specific political direction would drive people away. Therefore, the argument goes, the movement has to be confined to general demonstrations or to protests at particular sites and has to avoid other issues.

Members of the Socialist Labour League who continually press for the Campaign to take a political stand against the Tories, who sell socialist literature at CND meetings, who have appeared on the Aldermaston marches as a contingent with their own banners, who link up the struggle against the bomb with the class struggle of workers against employers, are regarded with suspicion by some supporters of CND. They are sometimes crudely accused of trying to latch on to the Campaign for their own 'sectarian' ends. More often it is recognised that the Socialist Labour League is genuinely opposed to nuclear weapons, but its insistence on politics is said to split the movement and divert it from its real job.

Against the Marxists, it is argued that the threat of nuclear annihilation is so great that it overshadows all other issues. To 'drag in' things like wage increases and nationalization is not only irrelevant but an obstruction. These things may be important, but they are secondary and quite separate. The thing to do is to concentrate solely on the Bomb, and—by arousing such tremendous feeling against it—to compel governments to give up their nuclear policies.

To this end there have been demonstrations at rocket bases and research stations all over Britain. There have been mass meetings addressed by such people as Canon Collins, A. J. P. Taylor, Bertrand Russell, J. B. Priestley and Michael Scott. There have been the three great Aldermaston marches and tremendous gatherings in Trafalgar Square. There have been marches from Liverpool to Hull, all-night vigils at rocket sites, poster parades through towns and cities (and sometimes through miles of open country) and pickets and lobbies of members of the Government. Members of the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War have clashed with police at Swaffham and Harrington, and have suffered imprisonment.

How effective has all this been? It has certainly spread an awareness of the nuclear peril and brought many people into the Campaign. In particular, thousands of young people have been brought into activity. (These are the youth that paunchy Labour Party aldermen call 'apathetic' because they don't attend ward meetings.) The mass demonstrations against the Bomb have been the most effective displays of popular feeling since the Suffragettes. This is a tremendous achievement, despite the efforts of the press in the early days to ignore the movement and later to present it as cranky. However, this kind of activity does have its limitations. A writer in a recent issue of *Peace News* pointed out that there was a tendency of people to notice the form that the protests took rather than what they were about. And demonstrations become less effective if they are repeated too often without coming any nearer to achieving their objective. An annual Aldermaston would gradually become a meaningless gesture.

The balance sheet of CND activity would appear to be that it has succeeded in drawing many people into the anti-Bomb movement. But it has not succeeded in affecting in any way the nuclear strategy of the governments. The tremendous spread of nuclear weapons and the increase in their power in the last three years emphasises the need to draw up a political balance sheet of CND's activity.

H-bombs are now fitted to the 60 missiles now ready in Britain. RAF crews are standing by 24 hours a day and, in case of emergency, the missiles are ready to go after six minutes' warning. There are continual patrols of aircraft carrying H-bombs over Britain. The recently

acquired Thor rocket is now out-dated (it is only of use if fired first), but Britain also has the Corporal and Little John artillery weapons; the Bloodhound and Sea-Cat surface-to-air missiles and the Thunderbird, Firestreak and Sea Slug missiles. Meanwhile, radio-activity in Britain's drinking water approximately doubled between the first half of 1958 and the same period in 1959.

In February this year France exploded an A-bomb in the Sahara. This was despite demonstrations at French embassies in many countries, an all-night vigil at the United Nations building in New York, an international protest team led into Africa by the Rev. Michael Scott, and mass demonstrations in African States like Ghana. At the beginning of April a second French A-bomb was exploded, while Khrushchev was actually in Franch on a goodwill tour. And this nuclear programme has just started in France. The government foresees by 1963-5 a hundred French nuclear bombers with a maximum speed of 1,320 mph.

America now has H-bomber bases surrounding the Soviet Union from Greenland to Saudi Arabia and from Okinawa to Alaska. The 'Titan' ICBM became operational in February last year—this missile weighs 110 tons, carries a nuclear warhead and has a range of about 9,000 miles. The United States Air Force is to use missiles mounted on railway trains roaming the country. The trains will carry two or more 'Minuteman' solid-fuelled ICBMs which have a range of 6,300 miles; and last December Washington announced that American long-range bombers operating from overseas bases would be kept on continuous air-borne alert from the early 1960s. The United States also has nuclear submarines each capable of carrying 16 15,000-mile range 'Polaris' missiles with H-bomb warheads. The Americans are designing new supersonic low-altitude missiles that fly too low to be detected by radar. They already have bombs that explode at a high altitude and can blind people up to 300 miles away before they have time to blink. And in February this year the Annual Report of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission reported that new tunnels for underground nuclear explosions are to be dug in the Nevada desert.

Developments are also going ahead in Germ Warfare. Last year a U.S. Congressional Committee on Science and Aeronautics strongly recommended trebling expenditure on research into chemical warfare. They are concentrating on nerve gas and gases that cause paralysis. And the Chief Officer of the U.S. Army Chemical Corps has said: "We are seeking in addition new toxic substances that will attack other vulnerable systems of the body such as the eyes and the mind."

Some people argue that if only the statesmen can be made to see clearly this alarming growth of nuclear weapons, rocket bases and germ research stations they can be convinced of the necessity to do away with them. This argument wrongly assumes that governments are in complete control over their own actions. Apart from the very real danger of an accidental outbreak of nuclear war, the development of capitalist industry contains an inner logic of its own. It has pushed technical development to an extremely high level and at the same time concentrated real power in fewer and fewer hands. Intensified international competition, at a time of rising colonial revolution, dominates economic and military policy and over-rides the fears and misgivings of individual capitalists and ministers, 'peace-loving' or otherwise.

From the very beginning, the Atom bomb was more than a military weapon. It was a product of world politics . The bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on August 5th, 1945, and Nagasaki on August 9th. But we now know that Japan had offered unconditional surrender *before* these dates. The only reservation she had was that the imperial system should be allowed to remain (in subordination to the authority of the Allied Supreme Commander). This condition was accepted by the Allies *after* the bombings, even though the excuse for dropping the bombs was that this was the only way unconditional surrender could be forced. In fact, the bombs were dropped in order to find out their effects on human beings and also to demonstrate to the Soviet Union and the colonial peoples that America possessed, and was prepared to use, the most powerful weapon mankind had ever known.

On August 8th, Molotov, then Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, announced that Russia was joining the war against Japan. In the course of his speech he stated that Japan had requested the Soviet Union in mid-June to mediate in the war in the Far East. This had been followed by a personal request from the Japanese Emperor. At the Oppenheimer loyalty trial in America in 1954, Lieutenant-General Leslie Groves, who had been in charge of the Manhattan project manufacturing the first atom-bomb, testified that within a fortnight of taking over his job in September, 1942, he became quite convinced that the power against which the A-bomb was being manufactured was not Japan but Russia (quoted in Blackett's *Atomic Weapons and East-West Relations*). Rear-Admiral Zacharias, at that time Deputy Director of U.S. Naval

Intelligence, writing in the American magazine *Look* said: "Japan would have surrendered by August 15th, 1945, without the use of extreme measures."

Admiral Zacharias broadcast on July 21st, 1945, offering Japan the chance to surrender unconditionally. Her reply was, he says, "in effect an open invitation to begin surrender negotiations on the terms we had proposed."

Anyone who doubts that nuclear weapons have been closely bound up with the whole international strategy of western capitalism ever since, should read Aneurin Bevan's famous 'naked into the Conference chamber' speech at the Brighton Labour Party Conference in 1957. Bevan was opposing a resolution moved by Vivienne Mendelson of the Norwood Labour Party, which called for unilateral renunciation of nuclear weapons, for Labour to organize a national campaign against the government on this issue, and for an appeal to the international Labour movement.[1]

Bevan pointed out that a demand for unilateral renunciation of nuclear weapons contained 'implications which are not always understood.' These implications were 'that all the international commitments, all the international arrangements, all the international facilities afforded to your friends and allies must be immediately destroyed.' And again 'it means you must immediately repudiate all the protection and all the alliances you have with anybody who uses, or possess or manufactures H-bombs. That is our dilemma.'

But what is the purpose of these international commitments, arrangements and entanglements? A map of western nuclear bases ringing the Soviet Union would give this answer, as does the report of the U.S. Defence Department, issued on February 24th of this year. The latter states that the main recipient of military aid from America in the 1950s was France—for the purpose of wars in Indo-China and Algeria. Next came the Chinese Nationalists, Italy, Turkey and South Korea. And the White House requested two thousand million dollars to continue such military aid in the forthcoming fiscal year.

But nuclear weapons are not only essential for preparations for war against the Soviet Union, and if necessary, the colonial revolution. They are also essential to American capitalism itself. In August, 1959, there was a significant reaction on Wall Street when it was announced that talks would take place between Eisenhower and Khrushchev. Arms industry, missile, aircraft, and electronics shares all fell heavily, and there were reactions in associated industries such as rubber. Disarmament would be disastrous to the American economy, where the annual military programme has reached the astronomical figure of forty thousand million dollars. The huge combines associated with nuclear weapons have no intention of permitting such a disaster.[2]

A serious attempt to put an end to the nuclear threat involves far more than trying to persuade a minister to be a little more reasonable. It involves a campaign against the whole system of western military alliances and strategy and cannot be contained within national boundaries. A campaign against the British bomb alone is not enough. It is quite possible, for instance, that Britain *could* cease to make an independent nuclear contribution to the western military alliance. This is the argument that Richard Crossman put forward in the recent debate on the Defence White Paper. His opposition to the British H-bomb was in no sense a move to the left. His argument was that an attempt to maintain an independent British nuclear deterrent was beyond the economic resources of the country, had led to a weakening of conventionally armed forces (especially in Germany), caused dissensions amongst NATO members and undermined the Western Alliance. But he recognised the need for a Western deterrent—'Let the Americans have the deterrent in reserve behind, but we should concentrate in Europe on building up conventional forces.' (Shinwell said the same thing: 'NATO is departmentally weak. I want to retain it and inject some substance into it.')

This sort of opposition to the British bomb simply means a rationalisation of western militarism to make it more efficient and more monolithic. It is significant that people recognised as being on the extreme right of the Labour Party, such as Denis Healey, are beginning to incline towards this view, and even Hugh Gaitskell, although he disciplined Crossman for opposing official party policy, was by no means hostile to Crossman's ideas. He said: 'The issue between these people (i.e. those who want Britain to give up independent nuclear weapons but to retain NATO) and the rest of us is not anything like as fundamental as our differences with those who want us to get out of NATO altogether. I regard the issue of whether we have nuclear weapons under our own control—providing that we remain in NATO—or whether we do not, is

[1] Vivienne Mendelson was expelled and the Norwood Labour Party disbanded as part of the witch-hunt against the Socialist Labour League in 1959.

[2] For instance, these firms hire, at fantastic salaries, former high-ranking service chiefs to push their products in the right quarters.

largely a matter of balance between economic, military and political factors. I do not take the view that this is an issue about which it would be wise permanently to dogmatise.'

Gaitskell is quite right. The fundamental question is not whether Britain shall have the bomb. Nothing at all would be gained if Britain gave up the bomb yet remained welded in a military system, the cornerstone of which was the American H-bomb. The campaign against nuclear weapons involves a struggle against the whole system of military alliances and preparations for war, of which those weapons are a part.

The vote against NATO at the CND Conference shows that more and more people recognise this political aspect of the campaign.

After all, what are these alliances for? NATO, SEATO and CENTO (formerly the Baghdad pact) include in their ranks Adenauer, De Gaulle, Franco, Chiang Kai-Shek and Synghman Rhee.[1] Such allies are clearly not bound together in defence of peace, political liberty and personal freedom. Chiang Kai-Shek and Synghman Rhee are the allies of American imperialism in Asia. De Gaulle, Adenauer and Franco are bulwarks of capitalism in Europe. In short, these alliances are the military expression of international capital. The fight against the H-bomb is really the fight against its social basis, international capital. The fundamental forces which threaten this social basis are the international working class and the colonial revolution. French imperialism is exploding nuclear bombs in North Africa. The greatest sore in the side of French imperialism is the Algerian revolution. Every success of the Algerian revolution is thus a blow against nuclear weapons.

The Socialist Labour League has always advocated turning the anti-bomb movement towards the working class. By this we do not mean trying to persuade individual workers to leave their jobs on rocket bases. That is simply an individual protest and not a class action, and it is unlikely ever to be done in such numbers as to hinder the building of the bases. We have meant turning to the working class *as a class*. In the first instance this meant campaigning within the organised labour movement for opposition to nuclear war and for the trade unions to declare 'black' all work on nuclear weapons and bases. (See *Black H-Bomb and Rocket Bases*, by Peter Fryer, published by *The Newsletter* in March, 1958.) We still think this should be done. But the situation is now even more urgent than it was then. The finger is well and truly on the nuclear weapon trigger today—and the gun is loaded.

Now, more than ever, the campaign against the bomb involves more than just the bomb. Anything which weakens capitalism, weakens the class which has produced the bomb and which lives by the bomb. Every successful strike, every move forward by the working class, weakens the employers, weakens the Tories and thereby lessens the nuclear threat. Every victory of the working class strengthens the confidence of that class and strengthens the movement against the bomb.

In the early part of this year, the government was seriously worried at the threat of a national rail strike. At the same time the engineering employers were faced with a demand for a 40-hour week and £1 increase. The opposition of miners to redundancies broke out in the Bettes-hanger strike. And now the tremendous upsurge in South Africa is causing consternation in the finance houses of the City of London. All these struggles against the employers and the government are struggles against the class that produces the bomb. They are the kind of issues which could come together to bring down the government. That is, they could bring down the government responsible for Britain's nuclear strategy. Such struggles are therefore struggles against the H-bomb, even though on the surface they might appear to have nothing to do with the H-bomb, and even though many of the workers concerned in them might be 'apathetic' towards CND, and some might even say they were in favour of Britain having nuclear weapons. It is in this way that the success of the anti-bomb campaign depends directly upon the industrial struggles of the working class.

Unless the campaign can turn in the direction of this class force it will remain limited. The danger facing CND is not that it will turn in a political direction, but that it will turn in a wrong political direction. And any method of struggle which cuts across the class nature of the conflicts in capitalist society, which obscures it, is taking the movement in the wrong direction.

The Communist Party's anti-German campaign and appeals to British 'patriotism' come under this heading. In recent weeks the *Daily Worker* has carried more appeals to British patriotism than has the *Daily Express*. A speaker at the recent Scottish Regional Conference of the Communist Party called on all 'patriotic Scotsmen' to oppose German bases in Scotland, and a recent *Daily Worker* editorial, condemning 'Panorama' for its attacks on the ETU, said that if the BBC wanted to be 'truly patriotic' it would oppose German bases in

[1] This was written, of course, before the recent upheaval in South Korea.—Editors.

Britain. At the celebration of the *Daily Worker's* 30th anniversary, John Gollan said the Communist Party would unite with anyone, irrespective of political beliefs, to 'keep the German jackboot out of Britain'. And on March 31, the *Daily Worker* published a letter from a reader who reported that his grocer had agreed to distribute copies of a party leaflet saying 'I don't like the Germans, either'. This attempt to stir up animosity towards the German people obscures the real enemy, weakens the fight against international capital, and makes nuclear war more likely.

Nor will the threat of nuclear annihilation be averted by international conferences of heads of state. Macmillan is the representative of the capitalist class in Britain, and acts in the interests of that class. Eisenhower is in the same position in America. This class is responsible for the bomb and developed the whole war threat. How can they be expected to give it up voluntarily? We know that the Africans in South Africa will never gain freedom by appealing to the better nature of Dr. Verwoerd or by 'putting pressure' on him. Nobody expects that, since everyone has seen what Dr. Verwoerd has done in Sharpeville. Why, then, expect such methods to succeed with Macmillan and Eisenhower who have far bigger interests to protect—and whose predecessors showed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki that they were prepared to commit atrocities that make the Sharpeville massacres look like a gentle reproof? To put faith in summit talks weakens the movement against the bomb, because it gives people the impression that the solution is not in their own hands but amongst the 'top' people, and because it implies that the final solution can be found within the framework of capitalism, without any far-reaching social and political changes. This really strengthens the impression that the anti-bomb campaign is a pressure group and not a political movement. But in fact the movement is campaigning against the firm, declared policy of the government. That brings it right into the field of politics. It is against the Tory government. Why doesn't the leadership of CND come out and say so? The movement can only be held back by shilly-shallying on this question.

A serious campaign to end the nuclear terror must be a campaign aimed at bringing down the government. That means replacing it with a Labour government. Here the question inevitably arises: since Labour's policy is fundamentally similar to that of the Tories, what good would it do to elect a Labour Government? The opposition amendment to the Government's motion approving the White Paper on Defence was concerned only to prove that Labour could get more for the money. George Brown, Labour's shadow Minister of Defence, stated that although the government's policy had brought 'weakness, indecision and uncertainty' still 'we do not conclude that it is unnecessary and unprofitable to pay for defence'. Sounding just like the most reactionary Tory, he went on: 'As long as the war does not break out, who is to say that we have deterred it from breaking out or that it would not have happened anyway? If there is no war, it might be said that maybe there would not have been a war even if we had not spent the money. On the other hand, as the whole purpose is deterrence we might as well take credit for the result.'

Labour's right-wing leaders are under attack from the ranks for their H-bomb policy. They are also under attack for their retreat from nationalization and for their method of trying to stifle all opposition by bans and proscriptions. Every move that strengthens the left and weakens the right is a step forward in the campaign against nuclear weapons—again even if it does not seem to be connected with the Bomb. A victory over the Right on nationalization is a victory in the fight against the bomb. Every restriction on democracy that is rejected by the rank and file is a victory in the fight against the bomb, because the right-wing, who want to move away from nationalization, and who want to ban and proscribe organizations like the Socialist Labour League, are the same people who are keeping the British labour movement tied to nuclear weapons. How can anyone say that the fight against the H-bomb is separate from the fight for democracy in the Labour movement after the experience of the recall conference of the General and Municipal Workers' Union in 1959? A strong campaign against, for instance, the proscription of the Socialist Labour League and the black circular on Communist Party members, would seriously weaken the ability of trade union leaders to use such bureaucratic manoeuvres against the anti-bomb campaign.

The industrial struggle of the working class, the colonial revolutions in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the fight against the Tory government, the struggle inside the Labour Party for a socialist policy (wouldn't the nationalization of the engineering industry, preventing the manufacture of arms from being a source of private profit, be a step towards peace?), an end to bans and proscriptions: these are closely bound up with the campaign against nuclear war. That is why they are all brought together in the programme of the Socialist Labour League. This

programme is not just a collection of as many points as possible designed to provide something for everybody. It is designed to mobilize the unified opposition ensuing from all the conflicts that break out in capitalist society. To keep these forces separate weakens each one of them. But, brought together in a political movement, they will be a force which can sweep away imperialism and end the nuclear threat.

Finally, what are we asking members of CND to do? Obviously we would like as many as possible to accept our programme and join the Socialist Labour League. But apart from that, we say that the campaign against the bomb should be brought together with other movements. The campaign against apartheid and racialism is an obvious example. But to unite demonstrations against rocket sites in South Yorkshire with the demands of the miners in that area would bring a new quality into the movement. This would be a real link with the working class. Moreover, we think that individually, members of CND should be active in other movements of protest (as many of them already are). We think they should join the Labour Party and fight for a socialist policy inside it to get rid of the right-wing and 'bomb-happy' leadership. Above all we ask members of CND to recognise that the campaign against the H-bomb is a political movement. The issue is not between political and non-political, but what kind of politics? Only the politics of the working class and Socialism can bring the end of militarism.

Tom Kemp

A New Ideologist of Capitalism:
Rostow's 'Non-Communist Manifesto'

IT is notorious that, in present-day capitalist society, there is a never-ending quest for a satisfactory ideology to take the place of the discredited dogmas of the past and meet the challenge of Marxism. A terrible intellectual void is discernible among those educated managers, administrators, technicians and publicists who have placed their talents in its keeping for a due share of the good things of life, accompanied by chronic anxiety. The void is filled, in one way or another. From their ranks come many a fluent pen and plausible doctrinaire purveying mysticism for the soul-sick and so on through to sheer cynicism for the hard-headed. But something more is needed than fashionable evangelists and story-writers. There is a demand for some solid explanation of economic and social development which does not challenge the assumptions and values of capitalism. Something comparable, in fact, to the comforting bourgeois doctrines of 'progress' which were blown sky-high in the 20th century. W. W. Rostow, who has already achieved prominence as an economic historian,[1] now comes forward to provide what purports to be at once a coherent answer to Marxism and a comforting philosophy of history for the adherents of capitalism.

Rostow proclaimed, indeed, that he was going to provide 'an alternative to the Marxist interpretation of modern history' and 'challenge Marxism'. What he said in the lecture halls echoed into the City of London and was given the unusual amplification of publication, in advance of appearance in book form, by the widely-read business organ *The Economist* with the sub-title

* W. W. Rostow, 'The Stages of Economic Growth', Cambridge University Press, 21s.

[1] Especially with the articles and lectures reprinted as 'The British Economy in the Nineteenth Century' and 'The Process of Economic Growth'. He was also responsible for writing up collective works on China and the Soviet Union in volumes which, while containing useful material, could be described as products of the Cold War.

A Non-Communist Manifesto.[2] It would thus reach an important stratum of the salaried servants of capitalism whose conviction about the necessity of what *is* would thus be reinforced. At the same time Rostow's thesis would be thrown out more widely, to be discussed among, and perhaps to influence, those students and intellectuals especially concerned with economics and the social sciences.

At first sight, then, it might seem surprising that Rostow is so seriously concerned with the refutation of a doctrine which is hardly likely to have made many inroads into the first category of readers. But it is not really so strange. It was at one time generally assumed by the orthodox that *The Communist Manifesto* had been buried along with all the other economic and historical errors of Marx and Engels. Now, however, much time and energy is devoted to the refutation of Marxism, a testimony to its power and to the failure of its enemies to deal with it intellectually. Once it was enough to pretend that Marxism did not exist; now the challenge can no longer be evaded, but has to be dealt with in deadly earnest. More: other theories, especially theories of history, have to be defined in relation to Marxism, and this is Rostow's concern. It is not that he is speaking to an audience infected with the virus and is trying to cure them: few could have read much of Marx at first hand. It is simply that Marxism provides a fixed point of reference: it has endured among the changing fads and fashions of the intellectual world and the host of other interpretations which have come and gone. Rostow, by implication, thus pays Marxism an immense tribute. He does not consider any other historical position—there is only his own, and Marx's. Let us see how he deals with Marx, what his alternative is worth—for *The Economist* describes it as 'one of the most stimulating contributions made to economic and political thought since the war'—and to what practical conclusions it leads.

It cannot be said that as a refutor of Marx Rostow adds much to the long list of his predecessors in the way of distortion and bad faith. One suspects that his study of the works of Marx and Engels has been neither so protracted nor so meticulous as his confident assertions lead one to believe. In any case, his understanding of their meaning is certainly defective. Whenever possible he identifies Marxism with the parody of it which provides the Soviet rulers with an ideology; and 'communism' he takes as the Soviet system of today. This leads to some statements which are quite fantastic in terms of classical Marxism.[3] Indeed, his own theories, as we shall see, share with Stalinism a determinism which leaves little room for the creative activities of flesh-and-blood men and women. Frequently he merely trades on his 'reputation' and simply employs the method of counter-assertion instead of demolishing the Marxist case: enouncing what he believes without argument or proof. At other times he copies Marx, i.e., he makes statements which are basically the same as those which Marx, or Marxists, would make (which may arise from ignorance), or admits 'broad similarities' between his system and Marx's. Indeed, he leaves himself plenty of escape routes: clarity of statement is not one of his virtues, he prefers a certain fuzziness of language and the insertion of an imprecise qualification. Marx, he tells us, was 'a lonely man, profoundly isolated from his fellows'—a statement which was simply not biographically true in any sense.

THE STAGES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

There is no doubt, however, that as an anti-Marxist advocate Rostow is a difficult customer. He knows when and what to distort. He also knows (although perhaps again it is ignorance) which parts of the Marxist challenge to ignore. But it is in his own positive alternative that he shows, inadvertently, his evasion of the main questions which Marxists pose in the historical field.

From the beginning of his exposition Rostow is in fact in retreat, or taking evasive action. Returning to the attempt to delineate 'stages' of economic development which had been abandoned by the empiricists, Rostow appears to believe that he has found a new criterion which supersedes the Marxist sequence of social formations as found in *The Communist Manifesto*, *Anti-Duhring* and elsewhere. But he does not face up to and provide cogent reasons

[2] The articles which are the subject of this critique are the author's abridgement of the lectures which appeared in 'The Economist' for the 15 and 22 August, 1959. Judging from the lecture reprinted in 'The Economic History Review', for August, 1959, the full version is more nuanced than the articles. The latter do bring out the essence of his thinking more sharply and will clearly exercise the greatest influence, and that justifies them. All quotations, with a few exceptions which are from the 'Economic History Review' article, are, unless otherwise stated, from these articles, but page references have not been given.

[3] Thus, 'communism is a curious form of society appropriate only to the supply side of the growth problem (?), **and likely to wither in the age of high consumption**' (my emphasis—T.K.). What will take its place? Capitalism, perhaps?

for rejecting the Marxist division. He is content to admit that 'there are some broad similarities between the Marxist sequence and the stages of growth analysis'—the description he applies to his own pattern. This pattern is devised independently of social relations, in terms of the level of growth, output per head, i.e., a purely quantitative measure.

In the course of his discussion however, it is soon evident that the 'broad similarities', where they exist, merely smuggle back into the picture the key role of the social relations governing production. His own division is as follows:

The traditional society;
the transitional society;
the 'take off';
the maturing society;
the society of high consumption.

These are the stages through which all societies are supposed to pass. The advanced countries are at present in the fifth stage, the rest of the world in the four previous stages, but most of it already out, or on its way out, of the first.

What is this 'traditional society' with low productivity and a slow rate of growth? It is evidently what Marxists know as 'feudalism'. Rostow himself describes it as a society with 'a hierarchical social structure with little scope for vertical mobility—with wealth and power concentrated in the hands of those who controlled land rents', namely the feudal nobility. This was, in fact, the key to this stage. Such a society, indeed, already marked a considerable advance in productivity over more primitive societies. It had a settled agriculture, a complex social structure and a social division of labour which permitted, besides the existence of a luxury-loving ruling hierarchy, a considerable flowering of human culture—all at the expense of the dependent cultivators from whom a surplus was extracted with the help of what Marx called 'extra-economic coercion'.

In discussing the Marxist view of human development Engels pointed out that 'A surplus of the product of labour over and above the costs of maintenance of the labour, and the formation and enlargement out of this surplus, of social production and a reserve fund, was, and is, the basis of all social, political and intellectual progress. In history, up to the present, this fund has been in the possession of a privileged class, on which also devolved, along with this possession, political supremacy and intellectual leadership'.[4] This is a useful point of reference, not only for dissecting 'the traditional society', or feudalism, but for testing Rostow's subsequent stages of growth. Not just the level of production, or even the rate of growth, but how the surplus was produced and who secured it—these were the fundamental questions, *upon which, in the last analysis, the rate of growth and the level of productivity depended.* What Rostow does is to define his stages in terms of the dependent variations—output and consumption—and not the determinants, to confuse changes in quantity with changes in quality.

When seeking the main reason for the slow growth of the traditional society Rostow has to admit that the barrier to change was the feudal ruling class itself. Only when the nobility was displaced by what Rostow, to avoid that embarrassing term 'class', chooses to call 'a new leading élite', were the barriers to change overcome.[5] The feudal nobility, in effect, scooped up the surplus and put it to non-productive purposes. Only as part of this surplus was acquired by the bourgeoisie did new relations of production, which were eventually to disintegrate the old society, take form. It was the members of this class who directed income into 'roads and railways, schools and factories, rather than country houses and servants, personal ornaments and temples'. Yes, here were the rational utilitarians who valued men 'for their individual ability to perform specialised functions' and were able to enlist science in the widening and transformation of the environment and the methods of production.

The driving force of this class was the rational pursuit of acquisition carried on in particular circumstances in which 'competition makes the immanent laws of capitalist production to be felt by each individual capitalist, as external coercive laws'.[6] Capitalist relations introduced a new

[4] Engels, F. 'Anti-Dühring', page 268. This book is, of course, one of the most valuable sources for the understanding of the materialist conception of history.

[5] Rostow speaks, for example, of the need for 'transferring surplus income from those who would waste it in prodigal living to those who will invest it and regularly plough back the profits'. Other people—unidentified—'must be prepared to lend their money on long-term', and so on. Bourgeois ideologists have always been able to criticise the prodigality of the nobility! But where did this money come from? Where did the 'surplus income' originate? The classical economists said 'abstinence'. Weber said from the abstemiousness produced by the protestant ethic. Marx pointed to the process of 'primitive accumulation'. Rostow just leaves a gap. Later, 'for growth to become self-sustained, all that is necessary is a rise in the rate of investment and the stock of capital per head'. 'All that is necessary . . .' but this does not explain the source or the process of accumulation. . . .

[6] Marx, K. 'Capital', Vol. I, page 603. 'It compels him to keep constantly extending his capital, in order to preserve it, but extend it he cannot, except by means of progressive accumulation.'

dynamic factor into the economy: the pressure to accumulate in order to invest for the purpose of increasing the scale of production and reducing unit costs. In order to retain and increase their share of the social surplus the bourgeoisie revolutionized the productive forces, thus fulfilling its 'historical mission', succinctly described by Marx as 'the ruthless development in geometrical progression, of the productivity of human labour'.[7] The continued working out of this process right down to the period where the ability of the bourgeoisie to fulfill this mission reaches limits inherent in the system itself, and which sees it swept aside in a significant area of the globe, spans the remainder of Rostow's stages.

The 'transitional society' is none other than the passage from feudalism to capitalism. The remaining stages are, at the most, only one way of dividing up the subsequent history of capitalism. When Rostow speaks of the requirement for growth being a 'rise in the rate of investment and the stock of capital per head', he has, in fact, made the whole process a mechanistic one by abstracting from the social relations in which it occurred.

In fact, the process of accumulation involved the extraction of surplus value from a propertyless class of wage-earners and its realisation on the market, as it still does in capitalist society. But this takes place in a changing and complex social setting; in *Capital*, to give precision to his economic concepts and formulations Marx frequently abstracts from these surrounding conditions. But he makes it plain that he is abstracting and does not confuse reality with his theoretical model (which is more than can be said of many economists today). He was quite explicit that theoretical conclusions had to be tested by close investigation and by practice. The pure capitalist relation between wage labourers and the owners of the means of production has to be inserted in a society which, for example, would contain carry-overs from other systems, remnants of the classes which went with them (the landlords could adapt themselves very well to capitalism). The system also provokes a self-defensive response on the part of the workers which modifies the operation of the laws of the system.[8] Marx stated quite plainly, too, that the same 'economic base' may show 'infinite variations and gradations in its appearance, even though its principal conditions are everywhere the same. This is due to innumerable outside circumstances, natural environment, race peculiarities, outside historical influences and so forth, *all of which must be ascertained by careful analysis.*[9]

MARXISM AND DETERMINISM

If the economic base could show 'infinite variations' all the more so could the 'superstructure'. To present the Marxist interpretation as a simple economic determinism, as Rostow does, in which the base directly determined the nature of the superstructure or in which men are assumed to follow their own self-interest single-mindedly is simply an inexcusable distortion. Perhaps there are a few formulations which could be taken out of context to support such a view for polemical purposes. It appears that Rostow knows quite well that these did not represent Marx's view of historical materialism. It is with patronising dishonesty that he permits himself the statement 'there are a few passages in Marx—and more in Engels—which reveal a perception that human behaviour is affected by motives and objectives which need not be related to or converge with economic self-interest'.[10]

This is presumably a reference to some of the passages in later works and correspondence in which Marx and Engels developed and refined certain of their concepts and dissociated themselves from some of the over-simplifications of their disciples. But nowhere did they assume, except within the terms of abstract economic-model-making, that real human behaviour could be understood as the pursuit of individual self-interest. A fair-minded perusal of Marx's writings should be sufficient to expose any such

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[7] Marx, K. 'Capital', Vol. III, page 308. 'The effort to reduce the cost price to its minimum becomes the strongest lever for the raising of the social productivity of labour, which, however, appears under these conditions as a continual increase of the productive power of capital.' Also Vol. III, page 1027.

[8] There are plenty of references scattered throughout 'Capital'. See also the rich analyses of contemporary developments in 'The Eighteenth Brumaire', 'Class Struggles in France' and 'Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany' (more than one modern historian has burrowed into these and made use of the insights of Marx and Engels with scant or no acknowledgment). For an historical study there is Engels: 'Peasant War in Germany', recently republished in English (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow). Where, in these works, is it assumed that 'capitalist societies' made 'all their major decisions simply in terms of the free market mechanism and private advantage' or that 'political, social (or) economic power neatly followed the fact that property was privately owned' (a somewhat amgibuous statement—T.K.) as Rostow asserts?

[9] Marx, K. 'Capital', Vol. III, page 919. My emphasis—T.K.

[10] From the article in 'Economic History Review', August, 1959.

interpretation.[11] Of course Marx's prime intention was not to investigate motives. In Rostow's account we find an inconsistent assemblage of various theories and assumptions about human behaviour. He wants to dissociate himself from what he wrongly assumes is Marxism by his stress on the fact that capitalists are not only out to make money, but are also inspired by 'power, adventure, challenge and prestige'. At the same time, the main lines of his theory of development are the outcome of a quasi-automatic process, 'compound interest', which hardly appears to require human intervention. Even his sponsors of *The Economist* cannot refrain from the remark that 'he may seem to claim to have invented a diabolical law of perpetual historical motion, and embodied it in a steam-roller'.[12]

How can Rostow explain that 'economic change has social and political effects', without analysing the material conditions and social and class relations in which men live? He draws rigid lines between the 'economic' and the 'non-economic'. He swamps all references to that central theme of *The Communist Manifesto*, the class struggle, in his newly-branded 'stages of growth'. Yet, to take a simple example, the behaviour of businessmen in the 20th century has an historical, social root and could only become acceptable after a long period of bourgeois dominance. It is quite different from that of a feudal lord or a Chinese mandarin, because the material environment is different, and because of the specific class relations of capitalist society. The very motives other than the search for profits of which Rostow speaks are also the product of bourgeois dominance, and take their special form from the social environment.

'I paint the capitalist and the landlord in no *couleur de rose*', wrote Marx in the Preface to *Capital*, 'here individuals are dealt with only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories. . . . My standpoint can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations of production whose creature he socially remains.'[13] The self-expansion of capital, accumulation for accumulation's sake, is part of the system; as he personifies Capital, a particular set of production relations, the capitalist, as long as he remains such, has to accord with its demands. 'How', Rostow asks, as though he had discovered something profoundly important, 'how can one explain the ardent striving of men (he means capitalists—T.K.) long after they have made more money than they or their children could conceivably use?'[14] Yes, instinctively, when he asks what they have done he first answers in terms of making money. But his own reply to the question, given in advance, was that 'the game of expansion and money-making was rewarding in terms of the full range of human motives'. Precisely the same thing might be said of the gambler or even of the criminal. In fact, the capitalists who go on piling up money do so, on the one hand, because they have come to personify capital as a result of their place in the relations of production; as long as the system is in a phase of expansion and they are in a good line they can do no other. On the other hand, the explanations can run from the none-too-pleasing assumptions of some psychologists (money = excrement) to . . . Rostow's own. But, without the laws of capitalism these explanations have no interest because it would be impossible to go on piling up money, anyway!

Of course Marxists do not deny that businessmen are other things besides personifications of the capitalist process of accumulation and exploitation, that they seek all manner of gratifications, create favourable images of themselves and genuinely believe them. Nor do they assume that the only active moulders of history were those directly owning the means of production and operating them in the bourgeois epoch. The bourgeoisie is, and always was, a structured class, not one composed entirely of capitalists. It was bound to ally with others when it gathered strength within the womb of feudalism. It contained, besides industrialists, merchants and financiers, the officials (although not always), the professional men, the literary and scientific intelligentsia, part of the clergy as well as landowners and farmers (some of them). What gave this class its common measure was that it derived its income from the surplus value of those having nothing but their labour power to sell; and with that went, though not automatically, a consciousness of common interests as men of property, of 'standing' and 'respectability'. However, some members of this class were, at the same time, able to attain to a certain autonomy in relation to the economic system and to influence it in one

[11] Historical materialism seeks to grasp the historical process in its many-sided dialectical totality as the product of flesh and blood men. Instead of assuming some rough equality between so-called 'factors'—which are no more than abstract concepts—it sought the ultimate determining forces and did not take men at their own valuation. As Rostow says, 'The life of most human beings since the beginning of time has been mainly taken up with gaining food, shelter and clothing'; and that is precisely where Marxists begin—though not end—their analyses.

[12] An editorial in 'The Economist', 22 August, 1959.

[13] 'Capital', Vol. I.

[14] 'Economic History Review', August, 1959.

way or another.[15] Some tried to reduce its inhumanity. Others contrived to speed up its development or to guide it into one direction rather than another. Marxists do not overlook this phenomenon and those responsible for it, but they do trace the social roots of what such men do and the impact of their actions. They see them in relation to the position of the whole class and, particularly, of the class struggle; of the nature of the State; of the role of ideology.

This is not the place for a systematic exposition of historical materialism, but sufficient has perhaps been said to expose Rostow's parody of it. As for his alternative 'interpretation', despite his display of specialist virtuosity and his ambitious claims for it, he fails to provide adequate criteria for the distinguishing of his stages—smudging over significant changes and creating distinctions of no more than secondary importance.

To substantiate this judgment in detail would inevitably take up as much space as the original articles so that all that can be offered here is a selection of points. Thus if we return to his second stage, 'the transitional stage', we find that, despite himself, he has to mention the changes which the Marxist would highlight, though he buries them in a discussion of results rather than causes. He has to indicate that this is a period in which capital is being accumulated and concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie (though he does not use the term), but he does not dwell on the accompanying dispossession and proletarianisation of the direct producers.[16] As Marxists see it, this is the central feature of what is, in fact, the early process of capitalist penetration into industry and agriculture. In the course of this, labour-power itself becomes a commodity in one sector after another, though largely without any technological revolution in the instruments of production; this is the phase of capitalist-organized manufacture.[17] There is, as Rostow says, 'much variety in the sectors which have played the key role in the take-off process'. By this he means that in one place cotton, in another iron, in another timber took the lead in industrialization.[18] The decisive point, which has to be ignored to fit in with his scheme, is that those sectors which took the lead and grew rapidly did so primarily because they had become subject to a new dynamic: the laws of capitalist production.

INDUSTRIAL CAPITAL AND THE NATION-STATE

Capitalism was already well-established before what Rostow designates as the 'take off', the early period of industrialization, after which 'economic growth becomes more or less automatic', could take place. The essential force behind the upsurge of industry was quite simply the massive extension to it of capitalist relations. This acceleration of growth was associated with new and more productive techniques developed in response to the incentives provided by expanding markets and rising profits and the existence of a proletariat. While Rostow keeps this in the background he readily ranges over a wide field to illustrate what might be summed up as the point that no two 'take offs' were alike. This is neither surprising nor original.

For Marxists, differences in the timing and tempo of capitalist development on a world historical scale are interpreted not by formal comparison but dialectically. The international nature of capitalism is important to stress, especially because Rostow tends to neglect the necessary links which bound the various capitalist States to the world market.[19] Already the burgeoning of capitalism in Western Europe would not have been possible without the widening horizons of the known world brought about by the opening up of new routes to other continents. The pioneer industrialization of England was closely bound up with the strategic position of English trade and shipping in overseas markets, including the seizure of colonies. The

[15] This is clearly possible also for members of former ruling classes and for State officials attached, not to the bourgeoisie, but to the dynastic or 'bonapartist' State.

[16] Like a true inverted Stalinist he passes over the human costs of economic development with only a passing reference: it is only when real wages are rising that 'workers' come into the picture.

[17] Analysed as a preparatory period for industrialization by Marx in relation to England and Lenin for Russia, cf. 'The Development of Capitalism in Russia' (in English, F.L.P.H., Moscow).

[18] But, of course, considered on a world scale there had first to be cheap iron, a new source of power (steam) and machines made by machines. The supposed 'variety' is spurious unless seen in this perspective.

[19] Rostow makes a miracle out of countries like 'Switzerland, Israel and Hong Kong, which have performed a kind of economic rope trick, climbing into industrialization with virtually no means of support'. Since he mentions the world market in the previous sentence there was no reason to marvel at this. The economic development of England, Germany, Russia and America were also inseparably connected with the world market, though in different forms. England virtually dragged a world market into existence as a complement to her industrialization; Japan made use of it.

slave trade and the plunder of India considerably furthered the accumulation of capital, part of which flowed into the new capitalist factories and mills. Certainly the formation of English industrial capitalism was a world process which had its repercussions from Virginia to Calcutta, from China to Peru. English capitalists virtually dragged a world market into being, ground out 'primitive accumulation' from the slave trade and the toil of African slaves; they uprooted peasants from the English counties, and subjected the market to their own needs for an entire epoch. Indeed, without the subjection of an expanding world market to its requirements, economic growth in England could not have gone on at a cumulative rate. There is, in fact, nothing automatic about compound interest: it has to come from somewhere; for England at this time her world trade and colonial monopoly had not a little to do with it.

Moreover, once industry was established in one part of the world, other countries were affected by it and could, under certain conditions, take it over and assimilate it into their own economic structures. Consequently no subsequent industrializing process repeated exactly that of the pioneer country where it had taken place, so to speak, organically. Not only were features of the most advanced technology and organization grafted on to societies which were otherwise 'backward', but these countries stood in an entirely different relationship to the world market to that of England at a corresponding stage of development. Not only did the existence of this world market lead to the subjugation of some countries to those of the colonising powers, but those nations newly industrialising took advantage of the possibilities of participation in the world division of labour which it offered.[20] Capitalism in one country could not exist, and competition in the world market was an inevitable extension to the global scene of what happened between capitalists inside each country.

It may be noted here, too, that the countries which industrialized after England frequently did so as part of a more or less conscious effort with assistance from the State. In its time, the State had been closely associated with the rise of capitalism in Britain, but the actual industrialization which began in the second half of the 18th century was carried through primarily by individual entrepreneurs responding to the laws of the market. In Prussia, Russia, Japan and other countries State officials played a prominent or even decisive role in promoting industrialization. Without the model of England and the existence of the world market their efforts, like those of forerunners in the 18th century, would have been doomed to failure. In the 19th century it was different: the State could, and did, play an active role.[21] But what it did, even in Japan, was to give an artificial boost to capitalist development, not to create a new and distinct form of economy. This was done in a variety of ways, by sweeping away restrictions on enterprise, granting tariffs and subsidies, encouraging invention, raising capital, even setting up and running key industries—in short, by providing favourable conditions for the development of capitalism.

Rostow talks about the State as though it were always an independent force over and above the social and class structure. Indeed, he goes to extremes in the autonomous role which he grants to political and ideological forces in economic development. He states that 'As a matter of historical fact, xenophobic nationalism has been the most important force in the transition from traditional to modern society—vastly more important than the profit motive.'[22] 'The

[20] cf. previous note.

[21] Many factors contributed to this. To be noted are the further decay of the old feudal structures through the penetration of commodity dealings and the extension of the market—as, e.g., in the decline of serfdom—the corresponding growth of the bourgeoisie and the application of what might be called 'bourgeois' techniques to government.

[22] His examples are not happily chosen. Thus he claims that 'In Germany it was certainly a nationalism based on past humiliation and future hope—the Junkers and the men of the East, more than the men of trade and the liberals of the West—that did the job' (i.e., brought a modern society into existence). The case of Germany was interesting and complicated, but this snap judgment is certainly wide of the mark. Marx and Engels followed events in Germany closely and the latter left an unfinished work with the title 'Force and Economics in the Establishment of the New German Empire' (in French in 'Le role de la violence dans l'histoire', Editions Sociales, 1947) which shed a lot of light on the subject and, indeed, fits in with more recent writings. Far from being protagonists of German nationalism or industrialization the Junkers, as a caste, sought to conserve its privileges in mutual cooperation with the Prussian ruling house. Their revenues fell short of their rising expenditures, despite their transformation into rural capitalists in the 18th century. They were constantly on the edge of an abyss from which they were held back only with State aid (members of the caste dominated the bureaucracy), which made it a 'proletarian nobility', 'parasitic' and 'doomed to disappear', in Engels words.

The material means for German industrialization came from the coal, iron and potash deposits developed with English techniques and foreign capital to begin with and with State aid playing a part. The bourgeoisie was certainly the carrier of the national idea against the Junkers. Their defeat in 1848 and subsequent political impotence left the way clear for a different solution: a revolution 'from above' effected by means of a civil war. The leading role was taken

historical fact' is no more than the interpretation of some selected facts by Rostow; the confident assertion is not backed up by sustained argument. There is, indeed, some retreat, when he states that 'xenophobic nationalism has not, of course, been the only force at work'. It is typical of his method that he never gets down to assessing its precise role. Like the State, xenophobic nationalism seems to hang in the air, to be 'disembodied' (to use one of his own terms). Historically nationalism inheres in particular social groups for specific reasons: it does not descend from the skies to refute the materialist conception of history. Nationalism and the nation-state arose in close association with emerging capitalism; their special historical achievement was to create the political form within which the capitalist mode of production became dominant. It is true that there was not always and invariably such an association, nor would it be argued that nationalism was only the expression of the political interests of the bourgeoisie. State-building, especially in its earlier stages, was undertaken by dynastic monarchs in struggle against feudal prerogatives and decentralising elements. Where they failed to link up with a progressive bourgeoisie (e.g., Frederick the Great and Joseph II in the 18th century) the 'traditional society' of Rostow's terminology remained in being. Capitalists have not invariably been nationalist in their profession; at times they have leaned towards an ostensible cosmopolitanism, as in the Free Trade movement in England in the mid-19th century. Even in the latter case the following of the movement was attracted by material interests, especially the possibility of getting access to foreign markets.

From an abstract 'rational' standpoint the material gains from a more effective utilisation of the international division of labour through co-operation would have been greater than the actual contest for the market between States. But capitalism, the bourgeoisie, needed the national State in its struggle against feudalism. As the States-system of the modern world evolved, frontiers, boundaries, customs barriers, national tax, wage and price differences became relevant economic facts. Material interests and nationalism remained closely intertwined, and as capitalism developed its history was marked by wars for the creation of national States and wars between States.

Did these wars have economic roots? What of the Marxist-Leninist theory of imperialism? When Rostow considers these questions we can forecast his response. Wars are the result of faulty 'choice', a preference for unproductive political over productive economic objectives. There was, in his estimation, no economic basis for imperialism, which he identifies with political annexations in which the flag followed trade,—unnecessarily and irrationally—for reasons of prestige and the pursuit of power. Thus he asserts that: 'Nothing justified much ado about colonies on strict economic grounds from (say) 1873 to 1914; but the competition went on because colonies were accepted symbols of status'. Colonies were not acquired *only* because of an actual or supposed economic value: that is obvious enough from a cursory survey of history. What was characteristic of this period, however, was that powerful forces inside the main capitalist countries were seeking wider and more certain markets, assured supplies of raw materials, new investment fields, as well as strategic positions whose value, if they had any, derived from the international nature of the contest.

The theory of imperialism assumes that capitalism was embodied in nation-states, that a contradiction arose between the development of the productive forces within each State and the extent of its market and resources, and that the drive for colonies represented the search for an escape from this dilemma. That the active participants in and proponents of imperialist expansion responded to other immediate stimuli and that these economic drives were cloaked in the ideological trappings of political nationalism, racialism and the 'white man's burden' was only to be expected. Rostow's assertion assumes that economic forces as powerful as those generated by modern industry were somehow tamed and kept in tow by the flag-waving and platform

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by a Junker, it is true, but he owed his success to his ability to act in the sense of the material needs of German industry—safeguarding his class, but not with its active support, except as officers in the army. When Bismarck completed the task of providing the political and legal basis for German capitalism, in deference to the Junkers many feudal vestiges remained, but these held back, rather than promoted economic growth.

The German bourgeoisie was nationalist because its material interests demanded a unified national market. But nationalism, in Germany as elsewhere, attained a certain 'autonomy', removed from calculations of direct material interest, let alone individual self-seeking, when it gripped large masses of people. That it continued to be a powerful force, however, can be understood only against the background of the imperialist rivalries which dominated world history from the last 19th century. Germany's late arrival in the world market, like that of Japan, gave her nationalism a strident, and then (with Nazism) a pathological quality. The fact that it was also all-pervading—witness the pro-war stand of the Social Democratic Party in 1914—does not mean that it was not nurtured by objective, material forces. The links between 'base' and 'superstructure' are never direct and straightforward; but when their dialectical interplay is studied the material roots can be exposed.

rhetoric of politicians and propagandists.

CAPITALISM OF A NEW TYPE?

Marxists see the struggles of rival imperialist powers in a shrinking world as the source of the world wars of our century. Rostow finds that 'as far as they have an economic base . . . it lies in the contours of the Eurasian arena of power and particularly in the temptations and fears presented to *new* mature powers by the transitional societies in Eastern Europe and China'. With such high-sounding phrases and vulgarised geo-politics Rostow brushes the problem aside. For him, 'ambitious nationalism', 'the temptations of power' (to which Germany 'succumbed' in 1914), the existence of 'soft spots' or the 'choice' by 'mature societies' of military expansion rather than other alternatives suffice as explanations. Today, it is happily assumed that the United States, Britain and Western Europe have renounced these temptations and policies, while the Russian leaders still maintain their drive for world hegemony.

This division of the world underlies Rostow's political thinking and we may say that the 'new' interpretation of history turns out to be a more sophisticated apology for the policies of the State Department as well as an ideological justification for capitalism. While he has been arguing not with genuine Marxism, but with the rigidly deterministic derivation from it which, under Stalin, became the ideology of the Russian leadership, so his own system shares many of the shortcomings of the system which he is opposing. This is evident not only in his method—the irreversible 'steam-rolling process' going on without human intervention—but also in his view of the world. Just as for Stalin-Khrushchev the world is divided between 'peace-loving' and warlike powers, so for Rostow the same division exists, with the signs reversed. America and her allies seek peace, Russia and her's are bent on world domination. Both for Rostow and his Soviet counterparts any initiative or independence by people outside and against the power systems is just unthinkable.

His international policy for the atomic age derives from his simplified basic assumptions. We may use the summary which *The Economist* makes for him because it brings out quite starkly its true nature. The West, i.e., the capitalist States, 'must try to make the choice of attempted world domination so unattractive to the Russians as to be unattainable: it must maintain and reinforce a network of alliances which denies the Russians all the routes to a military breakthrough by military adventures with which they still toy. On the other hand, and here current summit-climbing comes in, the West must make the choice of a high-consumption society . . . as easy, as natural and as face-saving for Mr. Khrushchev as it can'.[23]

It is assumed that in some way, namely by the use of nuclear deterrents, the Russians—i.e., the Khrushchev leadership—can be made to choose 'high mass consumption' instead of military expansion. He speculates about social trends in Russia which make such a shift conceivable. In fact, however, since Rostow sees in Russia the predominance of the political over the economic, and a new technique of power—as well as a formidable example for backward countries seeking to industrialise—the main stress, as *The Economist* rightly points out, is on military alliances and weapons, which can bring about some alteration in Russian *policy*.

Rostow does not consider the internal effects of such policies in the Western countries, but he does give some indication of what he thinks are the uppermost tendencies in modern capitalist economies. To consider these it is necessary to refer once again to his stages. After industrialisation has got under way, the economy passes through the stage of maturity, when, he admits, 'it behaves in the most Marxist way'.[24] As growth continues, development is assured into the stage of 'high consumption', which again is arbitrarily defined in terms of output per head. The use of this designation makes it possible to conceal the actual vast inequalities in consumption levels within these societies. Consumption is seen through the suburban living of the American middle class, which sets the pace for the world. Some people, of course, lag behind because of their own fault. There is, for example, the European worker who, between the wars, 'took only slowly to the idea that gadgets, travel and other services a mature economy can afford were really for him'. Such fatuous comments do co-exist with other more prescient remarks. He does not disguise the fact, for example, that in the 1930s the American economy after its preceding surge forward, 'appeared almost to have stabilised itself at a lower level, when World War II, like a sort of *deus ex machina*, restored

[23] 'The Economist', editorial article, 22 August, 1959.

[24] This is a euphemistic way of referring to the heavy social costs of capitalist industrialization. During this phase of 'maturity' society even becomes 'a bit bored with the miracle of industrialization' (what a characterization!—T.K.) and throws up a crop of deviant personalities, including, inevitably, our friend Karl Marx. Strange that his influence should have grown, not waned.

full employment'. In fact it has only been kept on an even keel since by further shots in the arm, notably those associated with the spending of the State on armaments. Even Rostow is worried. 'Unless consumption levels press outwards', he says, 'capacity in consumers' goods industries and those supplying them will be underused and the impulse to invest will be weak'. In other words, industry must have markets in which goods can be sold at a profit, otherwise the system will come to a halt. The point at which it does so is not determined by the satisfaction of the all-round needs of the masses, even in the advanced countries—and these needs are not to be identified with 'gadgetry'.' Pre-war American consumption levels were lower than those of today, but a slump came nevertheless; it was not incapacity to consume but inability to pay which provided the barrier.

Of course, consumption under capitalism has risen: there has been a 'sharing', though in unequal proportions—determined by the social relations of productions—of increased productive capacity. What capitalism cannot do is to plan the rational use of resources for optimum consumption: it cannot regulate labour time equitably between its members or provide leisure and facilities for the full development of their capacities. It cannot control the effects of a social division of labour in which some men are objects for attaining the ends of others. It is locked in its own categories and subjects men to them whether they will or not. Rostow makes a fantastic identification between 'high consumption' U.S. style, and the 'communism' about which Marx wrote. According to one of his statements, 'the societies of the West have . . . made their way to the brink of communism without succumbing to Marx's prognosis'.[25] This is a parody of Marx which Rostow has produced by falling dupe to his own interpretation: if consumption goes on growing, won't 'communism' in the sense of abundance, become a reality? But the concern which Rostow feels about the limits to mass consumption, his satisfaction that there exist backlogs of neglect in important investment fields or about the 'extraordinary and unexpected decision of Americans to have more babies'[26] shows that the real problem is whether capitalism, as Marxists would say, can go on extracting and realising surplus value on an expanding scale. Since the 'thirties this has been possible because one *deus ex machina* after another has ensured that markets existed for expanding output. Rising consumption was incidental to this and only on a superfical view can *define* this period of capitalist development.

Rostow puts in the foreground the level of output (identified with consumption) which is perhaps the most important feature distinguishing capitalism today from that which Marx knew and analysed. Otherwise, capitalism is still capitalism and if Rostow had spent any time in examining the relations of production he would have been bound to conclude that in qualitative terms his last three 'stages' are indistinguishable. Before he can consume, the worker has to sell his labour power, to work for a boss. While he is at work he is at the boss's disposal. At the end of the week or month he draws his pay cheque —and if he wishes to draw the next one he has to be at the boss's disposal at the due time and place at the beginning of the next week or month. As his wage makes up the whole of his means of existence he has no other alternative; or rather, those alternatives are open to only a few workers, say, by trying to secure 'independence' by opening a small shop or by turning to crime.

What the worker produces is not his own—nor can he decide the tempo or conditions under which he works. Even the union can only modify these within the limits which the maintenance of the system imposes. For most workers, their labour has been largely severed from interests or a sense of fulfilment. Work has become separated from life and yet deeply involved with it. What counts is what happens when work ends: the night out, the TV show, the annual holiday, though even here 'work' accompanies the worker everywhere and he cannot shake off its shadow. But it is here, in 'leisure', that 'real life' begins: which is in large part nothing more than the necessary rest, recuperation and repose of nerves and bodily tissues without which work would be impossible. If he gets more of it than his father or grandfather this is partly because modern work is more intense, more grinding for body and nervous system. And, even so, it has had to be wrested from the purchasers of labour-power in struggle and not granted through the inexorable processes of 'high consumption society'.

Real life begins . . . but 'real life' is often far from living up to men's expectations; and perhaps for women the problem is worse. And so refuge is taken in the various media of escape purveyed as part of the commodity production of capitalism. Output per head includes, of course, the activities of advertising men, the trade in narcotics of the mind and body, the unwanted and useless gadgets bought under the pressure of the latest sales techniques. The system pours

(Continued on page 63)

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25 'Economic History Review', August, 1959.

26 One wonders whether this was a gift of Providence or was the result of the emphasis on sex in American life.

Summer Books

Murder by Planning

The Mind of an Assassin. By Isaac Don Levine. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 1960. 18s.

The Politbureau resolution exiling Leon Trotsky in 1929 spoke of this as a means of discrediting him and making it possible to portray him as a traitor. The uninterrupted analysis of the successive mistakes of the Comintern upon which Trotsky immediately embarked, and the raising of the standard of the Left Opposition, soon convinced its master that he had made a mistake. When Trotsky was eventually struck down in his study in August, 1940, that act was the culmination of a series of preparations extending over several years and embracing many countries.

It was a tribute to the GPU's choice of the man for the job, as well as to the technical excellence of its work, for that for almost a decade he was able to conceal his identity and origins. Levine draws on a number of already known sources to fit together the story of the operation, fills it out with some account of other activities of the GPU at the time and adds some original material on the assassin's family background and supposed psychological make up. However suspect his motives—and those who do not trust their own discernment in such matters, or are not prepared to check up from other quotes, may treat much of the story as invalid simply because it comes from a tainted source—there can be little doubt that the main facts in the case are as Levine states them.

The self-styled Belgian, Mornard, alias Jacson (the name on his Canadian passport originally issued to an International Brigader), who, with a skilled stroke, drove the alpine axe into Trotsky's brain, was, in reality, a Spaniard and a former officer in the Spanish Republican Army. Ramon Mercader, to give him his real name, was thus an authentic 'anti-fascist', and it is not difficult to discern in his make-up some of the traits often to be found in the Stalinised intellectual of that time, and since. He was, indeed, a dedicated man; he surrendered himself completely to the GPU; he performed with a lethal weapon and not with a typewriter and put into practice the anti-Trotskyism which, for others, was simply verbal. He was part of an international murder machine devoted to spying on and hunting down Stalin's political enemies on the left and defectors from his service. To this end it was necessary to penetrate into the Trotskyist organization and convincingly play the part of a supporter. Thus the agent Zborowski—later to be picked up and sentenced in the USA—under the pseudonym of Etienne, played a leading role in the Fourth International for many years while betraying his associates, including Trotsky's son, Sedov, to the GPU assassins and supplying regular information to the Kremlin. When he departed to temporary obscurity in the USA others took over the work, for one can be sure that an organization as experienced as the GPU would always have replacements to hand.

In order for Mercader to carry out his task he, too, had to evince an interest in Trotsky's politics and became the lover of an American girl who had access to his household. This required patience and dissimulation of an exceptional kind: the creation of an artificial personality and its maintenance for some time during an intimate relationship and with a wealth of circumstantial detail. To those who came into contact with him before the assassination Mercader appeared a colourless person; but this was clearly part of his act. He was, as Joseph Hansen, Trotsky's chief secretary, put it later, 'a person of high ability in the kind of work required in such organizations as the Soviet secret police . . . he must have been selected after the most careful consideration, observation and testing.'

What does Levine add to this? Indeed, despite the title of the book, its attempt to plumb the mind of Mercader is a failure. Levine tries to make a Freudian type analysis second-hand on the basis of tests carried out by Mexican psychologists during the assassin's prison life. These lead him to assert that, for Mercader, Trotsky was 'the symbol of his father whom he had disowned and hated.' The assassination was thus the working out of an Oedipus complex by a 'happy robot'. Levine switches from Freud to keys provided by the State Department to unlock the allegedly political symbols imprisoned in the mind of the assassin; in either case credence is stretched to breaking point.

Mercader, it seems plain enough, was the apotheosis of the Stalinist. He was not merely a thug; and a robot would be unpromising material for a psychiatrist. That he was 'happy' seems equally questionable. He was in the machine and being in could not extricate himself without risk to his own life and possibly that of members of his family. For 20 years he has had time to mellow and

reflect in the not too arduous confines of a Mexican prison—doing satisfying work, earning money and with a mistress on call. What his mind is really like as a result of this experience and in the light of what has hapened in the world outside, Levine does not know. Has he, like his once equally dedicated mother, broken with Stalinism? Will he ever spill the beans? Will he become a victim of the machine he once served? Or will he simply relapse unscathed into the obscurity from which his crime has lifted him? The answers to these questions may be fascinating, but they are not particularly important. What is needed, however, is more information about the other crimes of Stalin (against his left opponents) and their perpetrators in Europe and America, especially the operations of Etienne and his successors.

TOM KEMP.

Socialist Legality?

Government, Law and Courts in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. By Gsovski and Grzybowski (2 vols.). Atlantic Books. £8 8s.

This is a massive work. The two volumes comprising it purport to be a comprehensive survey of the legal systems in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and of their transformation since the war. The authors are experts in their native law, but in addition have been trained in Anglo-Saxon law; the two chief editors both hold leading positions in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. It is therefore not surprising to find that they are hostile to the Soviet regime.

The first volume deals with the origin of the régimes, administration of justice, organization of the courts and judicial procedure. The second volume is concerned with substantive law—for politically-minded people, the sections on 'Workers and Factory' and 'Land and Peasant' are well worth studying to observe exactly how the degeneration in the Soviet State was accompanied by changes in the law. I would hasten to add that I am here concerned with the facts as distinct from many of the conclusions drawn by the authors. As might be expected, they accept the traditional proposition of bourgeois lawyers that the courts (at any rate in the advanced capitalist states such as Britain, France, Holland, USA) are independent of all other institutions and can be relied on to exercise justice impartially. I do not propose to examine this concept now for we are here concerned with Soviet-type law and not with bourgeois legal theory. However, the point should be made, because from there the authors are able to make their most effective attack upon the Soviet legal system and regime (and for that matter upon all the States in Eastern Europe in the Soviet bloc and Yugoslavia, whose systems of law and State apparatus are modelled upon the Soviet Union). The criticism is based upon the following type of reasoning and is perfectly valid: In the Soviet Union, say the apologists for the régime, the State is identified with all other institutions, i.e., it is a workers' and peasants' state and therefore Trade Unions and Law Courts, for example, cannot represent an interest other than that of the workers and peasants! Who determines this interest? Ultimately the Politbureau of the Communist Party of the USSR. In this organ resides complete sovereignty over all other institutions; the Courts are instruments of the Government. **Soviet legal theory presupposes no conflict of interest between the people and the Government institutions.**

The Soviet Constitution looks good on paper. It looks like a socialist document. It is supposed to be the fundamental law of the land. But in fact provisions in the Constitution have been set aside by administrative decree and the newly enacted rule incorporated into the Constitution only at a later date! **Declarations of rights are excellent—but the real question (re the Soviet or any other Constitution or body of laws) is: what is the remedy if there is a breach of the law?** For example, the Constitution of the USSR guarantees inviolability of the person, and now nobody may be arrested except by order of a Court of Law or Procurator. Suppose a relation or friend of mine is arrested by the secret police or some other agency, I can lodge a complaint with the Procurator (Public Prosecutor); but it is then up to him whether he takes the matter further and if he does not, I have no remedy (the Procurator for a particular area is appointed by the Procurator-General or Attorney-General, who is elected by the Supreme Soviet). In other words, there is **an administrative discretion** in the matter. In Britain in similar circumstances I could apply for a writ of Habeas Corpus which would compel the person having custody of my relative or friend to justify the detention in open court (in the presence of the press), i.e., I would invoke a judicial process. The Procurator in the USSR, who is supposed to be the watchdog of the Law, is in fact little different from any administrative agency. According to Vyshinsky he must in all phases of his activities, be primarily 'the leader of the policy of the Communist Party and of Soviet authority, the champion of Socialism'. Once again the complete identification of the Soviet State and the people is assumed. The reader might be interested to note what Soviet Law regards as the proper relationship between lawyer and client—again in the view of Vyshinsky. The first requirement which must be met by the defence counsel is that in presenting evidence in favour of a defendant he must proceed 'not from the interests of his client but from the interests of the building up of Socialism, from the interests of our State'. In addition, Vyshinsky required of the counsel for the defence a 'high feeling of political responsibility and high political qualifications'. It may well be that matters have improved since Vyshinsky used those words in 1934; but Soviet jurists in recent times frankly recognize that the problem of the relation of defence counsel to his client and the court is 'most highly controversial in Soviet theory and most complex in practice'. And as long as Vyshinsky's definitive statements are not repudiated, one is surely entitled to retain a healthy scepticism!

The work deals with the changes in the Soviet criminal code of December, 1958. These are important for they indicate an apparent break with the arbitrariness of the past. In my opinion the three most important changes are:

(1) The principle now is 'criminal punishment may be applied only by a court sentence'. If this is consist-

ently carried out it means that the power of the secret police or other administrative authority is severely curtailed. However, the experience of the past is such that one is chary of accepting the principle at its face value. For example, penalties administratively meted-out were not called punishments but 'repressions', 'measures of social defence', or were not designated by any special term. The new principle could be sidetracked in the following way. Deportation for from 2 to 5 years under the law against 'parasitic elements' is not called punishment but 'a measure of public censure' and the behaviour of the person involved is not called an 'offence' or 'crime'; **so that deportation might still be imposed in spite of the new law because technically it is not a 'punishment' for a 'crime' committed.** The authors consider that the powers of the Ministry of the Interior and of the Committee of State Security must be precisely and legally defined so as to leave no loophole. This has not been done so far.

(2) Renunciation of the application of punishment by analogy. The law now states that nobody may be convicted for an act which is not directly specified by a penal statute.

(3) Retrospective criminal legislation is now forbidden.

Let us assume then that the new laws mean what they say. This only signifies an end to arbitrary rule and the beginning of the rule of law in the Soviet Union—over 40 years after the Revolution!

Take a look at the balance sheet in the Soviet Union. On one side, a dynamic, planned economy, expanding rapidly, using its resources intelligently and fairly soon to take first place in the world—a society which has cast off the fetters of private property relations. On the other side, the Party with absolute control of the state, the business of government remote from the masses, administration having usurped the functions of social initiative and action. The disparity between the two is enormous; the one representing the future of mankind, the other laden with the refuse of the past. For the people of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe this unbalance must surely resolve itself into the struggle for political freedom.

SAM REYNOLDS.

Ex-Soviet Citizens

The Soviet Citizen. Daily Life in a Totalitarian Society. By Alex Inkeles and Raymond A. Bauer. Oxford University Press. 50s.

This massive study (carried out in 1950-51—at the height of the cold war—as part of the Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System) is based largely on written and oral evidence supplied in Western Germany and the USA by some 3,000 former Soviet citizens who, in their majority, left the USSR between 1942 and 1944; 16 per cent. of them had been prisoners of war, 4 per cent. were deserters from the Red Army, 43 per cent. were forcibly evacuated by the Germans, and 37 per cent. had left voluntarily, together with the retreating Nazis armies. A quarter claimed to have been under arrest (presumably for political reasons) by the Soviet authorities at one time or another, and more than half reported the arrest of a member of their family. Three-quarters of the peasants interviewed and one-third of the workers came from 'dekulakized' peasant homes: 30 per cent. indicated that they had 'once' been in favour of the Soviet regime, 2 per cent. had been members of the Soviet Communist Party and about 10 per cent. of the Komsomol.

The authors do not, of course, claim that their sample is a representative cross-section of the Soviet population. But they argue at length that their method of enquiry and assessment largely eliminates any sources of bias, and that their study reflects significant class and group conflicts and attitudes in Soviet society. No doubt, the project has yielded some useful marginal information on the relative reactions of different groups to certain aspects of the Soviet regime. One is not surprised to learn, for instance, that 82 per cent. of the intellectuals and 20 per cent. of the collective farmers used to read the Soviet press 'frequently', and that 20 per cent. of all the intellectuals and 64 per cent. of peasants questioned stated that there was 'nothing reliable' in the Soviet press. They may well be a close approximation to the true state of affairs in the Soviet Union. But when 50 per cent. of the sample say that 'Bolshevik leaders should be put to death', 60 per cent. that 'Bolsheviks are worse than Nazis', and about one-third favour the dropping of an A-bomb on Moscow, one has to remember the time and circumstances of this enquiry.

The authors of this study, in fact, have some fascinating things to say when they interpret their material (as they should have done throughout) in the light of the impact of a new **milieu** on the views of former Soviet citizens. Take for instance the refugees' attitude to the social services: 'if the Bolsheviks were overthrown', 57 per cent. want to keep the Soviet system of education, 54 per cent. the health service, and 32 per cent. 'workers' benefits'. This may or may not be true for the parent population. These percentages are significant only if they are related to the refugees' reactions to their new capitalist surroundings: it then emerged that considerably more refugees settled in the USA than in Germany (where in 1950 they still lived in the relative isolation of refugee camps) are in favour of these social services (61 per cent. to 53 per cent.; 63 per cent. to 45 per cent.; 40 per cent. to 23 per cent.). '. . . Refugees of all social classes'—the authors conclude—'respond to contact with American society with a renewed desire for the welfare provisions of Soviet society' (page 238). The reader is left to assume that this 'renewed desire' also accounts for the fact that 88 per cent., 85 per cent. and 35 per cent. respectively, voted for the retention in the Soviet Union of government control over Transport, Heavy Industry and Light Industry.

A. D.

Crankshaw's Russia

Khrushchev's Russia. By Edward Crankshaw. Penguin Books, 1959. 2s. 6d.

Crankshaw's reputation as an interpreter of Russia to the British intelligentsia and other readers of 'The Observer' and the publication of this book at a Penguin price will ensure that it enjoys a wide public and some influence. Unquestionably he has a fluent pen and knows how to assume the manner of unimpeachable authority. Included in this volume are some interesting data

and numerous points which are valid or, at least, ingenious. Too often, however, the impression is that the whole construction rests on flimsy foundations: and it is into those that we must probe.

Crankshaw is intelligent; he knows Russia—but not exactly with the intimacy that he wishes to convey. What vitiates his writing is a method and approach which is based upon ill-assorted scraps of second-hand sociology; it is 'literary', speculative, eclectic—superb stuff for the better-class Sunday newspaper.

One has only to look at his characterization of the Russians, which explains at the same time why they had Stalin and now have Khrushchev. 'Most Russians', he says, '. . . have a deep hankering after a stern, remote father-figure, standing high above the hurly-burly of ordinary life. If he is terrible and cruel they will respect him . . ., etc., etc.' Here we have the 'Slav soul' in modern psychiatric terms!

With the heavy hand built into Russian society in this way it is not surprising that Stalinism was taken for granted (except by those—and Crankshaw mentions them without seeing the contradiction—who went to Siberia or to the executioner).

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For Crankshaw the main line of development in Russian political life since Stalin's death has been a clash of interest between the men of the party apparatus and the 'industrial bureaucracy', also described as 'technocrats' and the 'managerial class'. Although the latter were naturally also members of the Party, 'they were not all Communist ideologists'. The distinguishing mark of this species was that it stood for world revolution and really believed in Communism. But having made this distinction, it is clear from Crankshaw's text, if from no other source, that there weren't many of those around either (Stalin laid low all those that he could lay his hands on). As for the 'industrial bureaucrats'—who hankered after Malenkov as a more indulgent father-figure—'they were interested in production and in making the great industrial machine work—in preserving their own privileges and in turning the Soviet Union into a better place for their children and their grandchildren'. The party men, though presumably not immune from such human failings, were very jealous of the ascent of these new bosses who had not been through the party mill. Unfortunately, Crankshaw writes them off as a poor lot: they were 'careerists and moral deadbeats' but still they formed 'the governing class' as opposed to the rest of the elite, 'the new Soviet bourgeoisie'. Then came Khrushchev—he clumped in, a grass-roots man from the Ukraine (where they don't have such pronounced father-images), to clear up the chaos of the 1950s. He didn't give the low-grade, middle-aged, chair-warmers in the Party offices the chance to choose their father-image. He just imposed himself by strategic cunning in the struggle for power, earning from Crankshaw a curious kind of admiration.

Crankshaw must at some time have read a book by Djilas because he talks about 'the New Class'. It seems to be a gratuitous detour because he does so with so little discrimination that it could be taken (page 68) to include all the classes—upwards of six—which he finds in the Soviet Union. He does this without worrying about what determines 'class'. At one point it is apparently based on income. He mentions the privileged well-to-do who speak of the masses with such contempt that it even makes Crankshaw's blood run cold and whose pampered offspring form the jet-set. It is never clear who these people are; and presumably they include not only the highest party functionaries and politicians but also the leading 'industrial bureaucrats', not to speak of scientists, successful authors and so on. At other times he is trying to distinguish 'classes' by functions.

It is no accident, however, that the great struggles in post-Stalin Russia were fought out in the Communist Party, and primarily inside its Presidium and Central Committee. It was a struggle within the same order of society, not a struggle between different 'classes'. No doubt there were real differences: but they concerned not only a struggle for personal dominance, but also the choice of means to conserve the social power and privileges of the whole order; and the inconveniences and demotions which ensued were largely subordinate to this. Thus the struggle over the industrial 'decentralization', to which Crankshaw attaches such importance as signalising Khrushchev's victory over the 'industrial bureaucrats', was not a struggle between classes. Before one could accept that Khrushchev 'took control of industry away from the new managerial class' it would be necessary to prove that such a **class** existed and that it did have control. Then who, or which class, had control when it had lost it? At times the answer seems to be simply—Khrushchev; and the title of this book is not accidental, for Crankshaw Khrushchev personally provides the key to the Russian enigma, which merely indicates that he has overlooked the real problems altogether.

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Even on Crankshaw's own showing, Khrushchev scattered the 'industrial bureaucracy', then wooed it away from Malenkov to make it one of the main supports for his system, especially in the Communist Party itself. Now who is 'the governing class'? Is it still the middle-aged relics of Stalin's regime in the party offices? Or has 'the new Soviet bourgeoisie' (itself divided by Crankshaw into a sort of upper-upper, middle-upper, etc., grading according to the best traditions of American sociology) taken over? Perhaps Khrushchev has selected his own governing class? Or perhaps the whole analysis, which looked so smart, is only a shallow thing after all.

Whether he is dealing with these economic and political changes, or trying to fit the literary Thaw into the picture, the general impression is that Crankshaw has not thought out in any consistent way the nature of the Soviet social structure or the forces which have propelled the changes of recent years. These seem either to be impersonal and 'inevitable' (perhaps Russians are becoming more discriminating about whom they identify themselves with) or to be the result of pressure from the younger generations. Without wishing to deny the importance of the clash of generations—which the peculiarities of recent history have sharpened to an abnormal degree—this clearly evades considera-

tion of the main source of pressure.

Crankshaw permits himself some paragraphs on the Russian (N.B.—not Ukrainian) peasantry—'slovenly and inefficient', 'a vast dark mass distorting the whole economy', 'ridden with superstition, inveterate drinkers of potheen' which suggest that he must have had some unfortunate personal experience in the Russian countryside. But there is scarcely anyhing in this book, which purports to analyse social forces in Russia, about the working class. Yet this class, in whose name the Revolution of 1917 was made, has grown tremendously in size and social importance in the last three decades of planned industrialization. Without this class nothing which has happened in recent years, nor the changes of the future, can be understood. That is why, underestimating its importance, Crankshaw's characters evolve in a social vacuum and his whole analysis is incomplete and one-sided.

TOM KEMP.

Russian Writings

Early Soviet Writers. By V. Zavalishin. Prager, 63s.

Comedy in the Soviet Theatre. By P. Yershov. Thames and Hudson. 35s.

Safe Conduct and other Works. By B. Pasternak. Elek. 15s.

The fuss about **Dr. Zhivago** will perhaps have justified itself if it leads to revived interest in the literature of Soviet Russia in the 1920s taken as a whole, to serious study of what effect the October Revolution had upon Russia's writers, and how it was that darkness and dullness fell across the scene towards the end of that decade.

Mr. Zavalishin gives a series of brief literary biographies, with outlines of the principal works and numerous quotations, all grouped under the various 'schools' which flourished in this lively period—symbolists, acmeists, realists, futurists, imagists and the rest. Here is Demyan Byedny, the popular doggerelist, Trotsky's generous appreciation of whom will be remembered by readers of **Literature and Revolution.**

'As soon as he became convinced that Trotsky's career was over, Demyan Byedny became Stalin's police dog; in obedience to his master's orders be would fling himself, growling, on the appointed victim. In addition to his printed poems attacking Stalin's enemies and glorifying Stalin's policies, he circulated pornographic poems—also with political overtones and of unimpeachable ideology—in manuscript form.'

But here, too, are a number of able writers, victims of Stalin, whose books, some of which have been translated into English, it is good to have brought to the notice of the new generation fascinated by Soviet Russia and seeking to understand it—Babel, Pilnyak, Tarasov-Rodionov, Tretyakov and others.

Mr. Yershov supplements Mr. Zavalishin with his study of the rise and decline of comedy in the Soviet theatre. Particularly interesting is the account given of such works as Mayakovsky's **The Bath-house,** written in 1929, not long before the poet's suicide, in which a character could declaim :

'Who rode in streetcars before? Declasse intellectuals, priests and the gentry. For how much did they ride? They rode for five kopeks. What did they ride in? In a yellow streetcar. Who will ride in streetcars now? We, the workers of the world, are going to ride in them now. How will we ride? We are going to ride with all the Soviet conveniences (i.e., in great discomfort) in a red streetcar. For how much? For only ten kopeks.'

'The book which helped him to win the Nobel Prize', is the somewhat dubious inscription on the dust jacket of Pasternak's **Safe Conduct,** originally published here in 1945. It is an autobiographical essay. Included also in the volume are some short stories and poems. **B. P.**

Labour History

Essays in Labour History, in Memory of G. D. H. Cole. Edited by Asa Briggs and John Saville. Macmillan. 42s.

Students of the history of the British working-class movement are already in debt to John Saville as editor for his **Democracy and the Labour Movement: Essays in Honour of Dona Torr** (1954). which contained such valuable contributions as Eric Hobsbawm's study of 'The Labour Aristocracy in 19th-Century Britain' and Daphne Simon's of the fight against the Master and Servant Acts. Now, in association with Professor Asa Briggs, Saville has brought together another collection of specialized studies to enrich our knowledge and understanding of the struggles which have shaped the present.

Of particular interest are Royden Harrison's essay on Professor Beesly, whose name is known to all students of Marxism for his association with Karl Marx in the First International—'a very capable and courageous man', as Marx called him, whose life has fully repaid the research that Harrison has devoted to it. The need for a detailed biography of a very different associate of Marx's, the Tory agent Maltman Barry, is re-emphasized by the brief mention of his activities in 'The English Branches of the First International', by Henry Collins. Edward Thompson, in 'Homage to Tom Maguire', examines the circumstances in which an independent Labour Party was born in England—its connection with 'partial failure' in the trade-union field, why Bradford rather than Leeds was the scene of the actual birth, and the truth about the rule of Methodism of which so much has been said. William Collison, large-scale organizer of strikebreakers ('Free Labour'), bulks big in John Saville's own study of the background to the Taff Vale decision, which throws new light on the employers' counter-offensive in the 1890s against the New Unionism. (Why no acknowledgment, though, to the pioneer examination of this phase by Allen Hutt—'A Forgotten Campaign by "The Times" Against Trade Unionism' in the **Modern Quarterly** for January, 1939?)

In the other contributions, Asa Briggs traces the emergence of the concept of 'class' in the early 19th century; Sidney Pollard follows the change in the character of the co-operative movement ('from community-building to shop-keeping'); Eric Hobsbawn shows how traditional wage-levels and wage differentials were

broken down with the development of so-called 'scientific management'; Peter Brock rescues from obscurity the socialists among the Polish émigrés of 1831 and after, and explains the prominence of Poles among Marx's co-workers and in the Paris Commune; and Stephen Coltham tells of the origin and early struggles of the 'Bee-Hive', the workers' newspaper founded by George Potter as a result of the nine hours' movement in the London building trades, which became immensely influential and was adopted as its organ in England by the First International.

The research studies in this book are preceded by a series of memoirs of Cole written by persons who knew him at different stages of his career. Hugh Gaitskell brings out Cole's nostalgia for pre-industrial Britain and his prejudice against political institutions and methods. (Gaitskell himself, a product in part of Cole's teaching, exemplifies plainly enough some of the weaknesses in the great scholar's appreciation of the realities of the 20th-century class struggle in England!) G. D. N. Worswick describes revealingly how Cole was encouraged to organize his project of a post-war reconstruction survey between 1940 and 1943, only to see the project then strangled by withdrawal of Treasury support. Once the crisis of confidence in the ruling class caused by the 1940 **débâcle** had been lived down (not without aid from the Coles of the labour movement), and once it was plain that the Red Army had put an end to Germany's military aspirations, the powers that were in England began showing their true face again in such cynical gestures as this.

Conspicuous by its absence is any study of Cole's life and work in what some regard as the most important phase of his life—the years just before, during and immediately after the First World War. Cole was then most intimately involved in the trade union movement and played a leading part in the propaganda for Guild Socialism, that strange offspring of a marriage of Fabian and Syndicalist ideas which helped to queer the pitch for revolutionary Marxism here at a decisive moment in our history.

B. P.

Ironmoulders' Record

The Foundry Workers — A Trade Union History. By H. J. Fyrth and H. Collins. Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers. 18s.

The authors of this history take the reader back through 150 years of struggle by the foundry workers. Every major struggle is chronicled. Step by step the reader can follow the changing economic conditions and how these forced changes on the moulders' organizations, although often belatedly.

The book tells a tale of bitter strife between 'masters and men'. Recorded are the strikes for recognition, strikes against anti-union legislation, strikes where strikers are put in jail for two months for 'breaking their contract with their master', strikes for a living wage, a shorter working day.

Beginning in 1809 with the formation of the Friendly Iron Moulders' Society we are enlightened by the fact that the first, unpaid, organisers of this union were known as tramps. These were unemployed union members, forced to tramp from town to town looking for work. They were given a union letter and any union member in another town had to put them up overnight and share a meal with them. These tramps spread the word of the union, and often started branches going in various towns.

The life of our early moulders was a living hell. Filthy, dust-laden atmospheres, backbreaking work, fearful accidents—these were everyday routine. As late as 1876 the Scottish moulders reported that one-third to one-half of them died from lung diseases and 'that the temporary loss of an eye was considered a normal hazard'.

Workers carried on working when ill because the alternative 'was the abyss. . . .' The early unions formed by the workers were friendly societies, partly to avoid the law, but also to help each other out in sickness and death. Very few ever lived long enough to claim their superannuation benefit in the early years.

In the bitter strikes that took place, where moulders attempted to raise themselves from a semi-human existence, blacklegs were treated to something more than an 'angry silence'. In 1891 '. . . a crowd of 3,000 pelted a tramload of "blacklegs" with stones and bolts . . . and the crowd attacked the house of a foreman, breaking the windows. . . .'

The authors record the many battles to raise wages and with facts and figures show how each economic depression knocked huge holes into the union, often wiping out all previous wage gains, and how the slow job of building up again, often with no money left in the funds, was undertaken, time after time.

They also point out that the moulders, in their maintenance of a narrow craft union, hampered themselves. By excluding not only labourers but also core builders, dressers, etc., not to mention founders in metals other than iron, they created sooner or later a multiplicity of unions, some of which still exist today in spite of many later amalgamations, including that of 1946 which created the present Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers.

As the book nears more recent history, whilst the authors maintain their high standard of conscientious recording of main events, wage negotiations, etc., the impression is given that as distinct from their correct criticism of the narrow outlook of the earlier craft leaders, a certain embellishing of the more recent leaderships takes place.

For example: in dealing with the 1939-45 war, the authors take the union's support for the war as natural and defend its acceptance of the Essential Works Order, lifting of overtime restrictions and other long-fought-for union agreements, as necessary because of the 'national emergency'. They also tell us that the Joint Production Committees in the war were mainly good things as they . . . '. . . helped thousands of trade unionists . . to feel confident of their power . . .' whereas these were really class-collaboration outfits that blunted the antagonism between the classes and sowed illusions about 'common interests', etc.

Dealing with the post-war period the authors record the bitter disappointment the union encountered

over the actions of the Labour Government on practically every issue. A Garrett report of 1947 which dealt with health and safety in the foundries, and which showed how dust could be virtually completely eliminated, was not made law because the Government employed drastic 'capital economy' measures, whilst of course spending millions on rearmament. They left it to employers to carry it out 'voluntarily'.

The union clashed with the Labour Government on all basic issues—nationalization of engineering, foreign policy, the Cripps' wage freeze, as well as the above. In 1948 the annual meeting passed a motion by 46 to 6 calling 'for the nationalization of iron and steel by emergency decree with the industry under the control of democratically elected committees of workers and technicians. .' One resolution on wages said: '. . Our Labour Government seems to be more concerned in appeasing the Federation of British Industries than assisting the workers who are the only people who can pull the country out of the present crisis. . . .'

Jim Gardner, the previous General Secretary, who wrote in 1945: 'No Government has ever presented a programme so pregnant with social change as is contained in the King's speech to the new Parliament . . .' was to write six years later in a bitter reply to a Right-wing article: '. . . changes there have been, but not in employer-worker relations except in so far as full employment gives advantages to the unions which they are persuaded not to use. . . .'

In spite of the Labour Government's complete disregard for the health of foundry workers, the authors record big campaigns by the union, led by Gardner, setting up health and safety committees that have appreciably reduced both accidents and the incidence of lung disease since 1947. Modern foundries such as Fords have clean working conditions.

But modern foundries are also more and more automating foundry processes and the skill of the moulder, core builder, etc., is a dying one. The union, according to the authors, sees the future necessitating amalgamation with all engineering unions, for soon the dividing line between founding and engineering, can well become non-existent.

This is a book of great educational value for all trade unionists and students of political and economic history. It really is (in the words of the authors) 'also to some extent a history of the British Labour Movement'.

H. FINCH.

Road to Hiroshima

The Great Decision. By Michael Amrine. Heinemann. 18s.

No one will deny that the events leading up to the dropping of the atom bombs on Japan are of very great significance; but a writer does not emphasize their significance by being more sensational than is necessary. He should be able to describe great events faithfully and convincingly without resorting to forced journalistic dramatism, but it seems Mr. Amrine cannot do this. At times his book resembles a television commentary, at times a snappy popular magazine article, but never a careful and conscientious history. Whether he has deliberately chosen to write in this style as an alternative to a prosaic and scholarly tone, it is impossible to say; but the overall result is lumpy and unsatisfying.

Otherwise, this is an important study and an informative one. Particular attention is paid to the question of whether a warning demonstration should have been given to Japan before the bomb was used in earnest. According to Mr. Amrine, the Interim Committee, formed by the Secretary of War to discuss America's nuclear policy, had already decided by June 1, 1945, in favour of a surprise attack with the atom bomb. This was before the first test had been made, and before the technical possibilities of a demonstrative explosion were known to the Committee. A number of reasons were given for not attempting a military demonstration of the bomb, but none of them seem adequate in the light of such a momentous decision. For instance, it was claimed there was no way of ensuring that the bomb would go off, and that even if it did, the Japanese leaders might not be induced to surrender. Byrnes objected that if the Japanese were told when and where to expect an explosion, they might bring all the prisoners of war to the area. Finally the subject was closed when the Scientific Advisory Panel reported to the Committee that it could not propose any effective demonstration of the weapon.

But many nuclear scientists thought otherwise, and it was from them rather than any of the war leaders that the main arguments against a policy of surprise attack came. The Franck Report, delivered by a group of prominent scientists to the Secretary of War, urgently stressed the danger of precipitating an atomic armaments race by an unannounced nuclear attack on Japan. It advocated using the bomb against Japan only after a warning demonstration, and then only with the sanction of the United Nations and American public opinion. The military and political leaders, however, had their own ideas on the subject, and were not inclined to be interested in the Franck Report.

Nevertheless, the general impression is that the American leaders could have arranged a demonstration had they really wanted to; the scientific advisers' report that no effective demonstration could be proposed was made before the first test in New Mexico, and in that time a great number of the technical problems involved had been overcome. What effect it might have had on the Cold War that was to follow is difficult to imagine. At that time the American government was already looking on Russia as a potential enemy, and that may be one of the reasons why it preferred to keep the bomb a secret until its terrifying lethal power had been fully demonstrated.

Perhaps understandably, the book makes little mention of the part played by Britain in the Hiroshima and Nagasaki episodes. The arrangement seems to have been that Churchill would give his consent, and leave the rest to the Americans. For his part, Churchill would have been only too glad to give his consent; he was positively overjoyed at the news of a successful test, and generally treated the whole subject with far less concern than either Truman or Stimson. But he disappeared from the scene after the election, and on Attlee's part in the

decision there is scarcely a word. We are only left to infer that by that time the atom bomb policy was so far advanced that his voice made very little difference.

STEPHEN WILLIAMS

Social Origins

The Mothers. By Robert Briffault. Abridged by Gordon Rattray Taylor. Allen and Unwin. 36s.

Mr. Taylor has reduced to 450 pages Briffault's original three-volume work of 2,000 very large pages. The main lines of Briffault's case remain but its main merit in any case was the mountain of illustrations of the social and sexual life of primitive societies which Briffault gathered together, and so the book suffers much from abridgement. It suffers even more from Taylor's introduction, which has the merits of neither accuracy, convincing argument nor factual evidence. On page 10 we find a series of statements which the rest of the volume suggest are not just proof-readers' slips. Thus we are told that Sir A. Maine published his Primitive Law in 1851; perhaps Taylor has unearthed a forgotten work by an obscure and neglected author, but we do know that Sir **Henry** Maine published his **ANCIENT Law** in 1861. McLennan is said to have 'made the most important restatement of the matriarchal view in 1886; in fact his work of 1886 was preceded by a similar book published in 1865 and again in 1876, and anyway McLennan's theory was totally at odds with that of Morgan, Briffault's inspirer. As for Westermarck's **History of Human Marriage** being published in the early 19th century, the actual date was 1891.

All this is unfortunate, for Briffault's work is interesting to students of social development. George Thomson echoed the sentiments of some Marxists when he wrote of **The Mothers** as 'the most important theoretical contribution to social anthropology since the beginning of the century'. (In this field, incidentally, comparisons are odious.) However in the view of this reviewer, Briffault's book has little to do with Marxism beyond the exposition of human behaviour as distinctively cultural, i.e., learned rather than instinctive. His argument is that in the original phases of human life matriarchy, mother-right, the organization of society around the mothers, was the universal rule. Only in this way could the values of social co-operation predominate over the individualistic drives of hunger and sex. The hypothesis is interesting, but how can it be put to the test? Briffault takes innumerable examples of descent and inheritance in the female line, but these turn out to be very far from mankind's primeval condition. The Nayars of Malabar, for instance, live in matrilineal households (**taravad**); but this is probably because they are a military caste within a feudal system, and the male members spend their time away from their wives. It is certain that the inhabitants of this area left savagery behind thousands of years ago. Then there are awkward people like the Australian aborigines and many other hunters and gatherers, who are rarely matrilineal and certainly not matriarchal: women among them often have a lower status than in more developed, agricultural societies.

Unfortunately this method of uncritically piling up pieces of evidence torn from their historical and environmental context runs through most of Briffault's book. The separate bits are held together by an inconsistent mixture of psychological and biological speculation on the one hand, and a vague theory of universal social evolution on the other. However fascinating the details, and they certainly are fascinating, the picture is not convincing. Taylor's introductory remarks, intended to help straighten us out, are even less so; we are asked to tack on to Briffault's thesis the theory first put forward (by—guess who? Gordon Rattray Taylor) in 1949, in which 'sociey is postulated as oscillating irregularly between phases in which the mother-figure is dominant and others in which the father is dominant, with the possibility of a balance between the two'. For scientific precision, what more could a man want? Briffault, in my opinion, deserves criticism; but he does not deserve Mr. Taylor as an editor.

C. SLAUGHTER.

Marriage a la Mode

Queen Mary. By James Pope-Hennessy. Allen & Unwin. 42s.

It seems that even Royalty have their problems. Princess May of Teck was excellently educated, as her parents always intended her to marry the heir to the British throne. Unfortunately, the same care was not taken with the heir. Her first fiancé —'dear Eddy'—was languid, fickle and useless almost to the point of mental deficiency. Within months of proposing to May, he tried to marry two other princesses and fell in love with a third woman. Queen Victoria is said to have blamed in-breeding for this sort of carry-on. However, May never married 'dear Eddy', who died a month before the wedding was due.

Catastrophe! All England, it appears, and certainly her own family, decided she must be passed on to the younger brother. Her father embarrassed everybody by audible mutterings to this effect before dear Eddy's body was cold.

Married life was not easy for Princess May. Her husband—King George V—was timid and bad-tempered. Her 'cottage' (a mansion to lesser folk) was 'terribly small' and the corridors were always blocked with footmen. Moreover it was set in grounds owned by her in-laws, and she was liable to find her furniture re-arranged by her mother-in-law. Vexation!

But, despite all obstacles, Princess May, or—as she became—Queen Mary, always had a sense of duty.

Thus, when the German Princess Maria became pregnant by the footman who put out the candles in her bedroom, she did not turn the girl away. This footman, incidentally, managed to wring money out of the princess's family, and so became one of the few men to gain financially by such behaviour.

Serious facts of history intrude into this book only as they affect Royal lives. But it is interesting to note that Queen Mary might have died in the Russian Revolution if she had accepted her first proposal of marriage. And the eventual Tsarina could have avoided her fate if she had accepted her first proposal—from 'dear Eddy'.

CELIA GALE.

out goods which it convinces people that they want, while leaving many needs poorly catered for. Some are able to consume on a fabulous scale while large sections of the populations placed by Rostow in the 'high consumption' range have only the bare minimum of house space and food, not to speak of the other amenities of life.

THE BASIC CONTRADICTION OF CAPITALISM

Marxists hold that the capitalist system gives birth to its own grave-diggers, the modern working class. Rostow occasionally mentions workers, but he never pauses to consider what they are, what they do, what place they hold in society—he tries to merge them into the general category of consumers (which covers all members of society regardless of class). Here is one of the essential falsities of his picture of modern capitalism. He evades the Marxist challenge by simply ignoring class differences. Yet even in periods of high prosperity with rising consumption levels, even when led politically and in the trade unions by men who accept the fundamentals of the system the working class remains in practice unreconciled to it. The sums which are spent on human relations, industrial psychology and 'welfare' by business are a monument to its failure, its failure to exorcise the class struggle, the central theme of *The Communist Manifesto*. Of one thing we can be sure, as long as capitalism survives the industrial relations experts will never work themselves out of a job. But Rostow says nothing about this. To consider man as a producer would mean examining the social relations of production and employing Marxist criteria which would run counter to those which he adopts. Only by retaining the viewpoint of a consumer can he give his interpretation a semblance of consistency.

Ambitious as his programme is, Rostow fails to provide adequate means for distinguishing his 'stages' of economic growth. For all this erudition and pseudo-science he only combines the old bourgeois history, emphasising ideas, desires, sentiments, great men and status symbols as the determining forces, with concessions to economic determinism, and then profusely illustrates his points with all manner of doubtful examples. His major purposes are laid bare in his more directly political statements to which this display of knowledge and academic virtuosity is designed to lend support. He mingles self-complacency with inexplicable doubts and fears; he conforms, in fact he is ultra-conformist on the main issues, but he gives expression to a few private doubts and misgivings. His major fear is the Soviet Union and what the Soviet Union symbolises for him and for U.S. capitalism. He tries to cut the U.S.S.R. down to size, as it were, by emphasising all those features in its development which resemble those of the United States, whereas it is the differences which are essential, whether considering the history of Russia before the Revolution or Soviet society today.

For example, Rostow gives no reason except 'reactive nationalism', or the drive for world hegemony, for supposing that Russia is aggressive, any more than he supplies any evidence for the peaceful orientation of the U.S.A. He fails to see, or evades discussing, the fact that all the fears he expresses about the American economy do not apply to the U.S.S.R. With a nationalised and planned economy there is no reason why long-run deceleration of growth curves should give rise to any problem, because resources can be deployed rationally to conform with social needs. Likewise, before this stage is reached, it is possible to make use of automation more fully and without the problems of technological unemployment which arise under capitalism. It is true that because of the particular distortions which have crept into Soviet society the full potentialities of planning have not been realised, but that is quite a different matter.

There is something else which worries Rostow very seriously because it concerns a world challenge to capitalism. As we have seen, he rejects —or misunderstands—the Marxist theory of imperialism. He assumes that 'colonialism is virtually dead', which is true, at the most, only in relation to open political control of colonies. Rostow is very worried lest these former colonies and other backward countries should follow the Soviet model, hence, like many other publicists, he argues that 'the West' should increase aid to them, in order to inoculate them against the 'disease'. What he omits to point out is that these areas are by no means free of economic imperialism. Nor is there any lack of capital supplied through the big extra-territorial companies, when there is scope for the profitable opening up of natural resources to meet the demand of the world market. What is lacking is capital for all-round development, and it is this which Rostow wants to see supplied.

Now, capitalist States do already supply capital to such countries in Asia and Africa because of their sensitivity to the challenge of the U.S.S.R., but also for another reason which Rostow does not mention. Foreign aid, in India for example, has been necessary to enable the national bourgeoisie to maintain itself in power; without it the

Congress government would have fallen long ago. As it is, the national bourgeoisies in semi-colonial or former colonial countries have had to lean on foreign capitalists externally—or to manoeuvre between them and the Soviet Union—and on the forces of the old social order internally. The main obstacle blocking faster industrialization is to be found in the social relations of production; the nature of the national bourgeoisie and of its partnership with landed interests inhibits faster development because such essential preliminaries as agrarian reform cannot be carried through. Of course, massive aid from outside can prolong the existence of these regimes, though it cannot dispel the contradictions of the social structure; and it is in the interests of world capitalism that they should be kept in being. But the initiation on the requisite scale of an autonomous process of internal accumulation is beyond the power of the bourgeoisie in these countries. Hence the dilemma which Rostow feels so acutely.[27]

[27] 'Communism . . . is a kind of disease that can befall a transitional society if it fails to organize effectively those elements that are prepared to modernize.' Strangely enough, at this point he starts using the term 'capitalism', since it is the only way in which he can distinguish the economy of 'the West' from that of the U.S.S.R. Thus 'Communism's hope now lies not in crises brought on by a struggle to unload exports, but in the capitalist world's excessive absorption with domestic markets'. Which is an incorrect appraisal anyhow.

In fact, his theoretical weaknesses and political intentions are here revealed once again. In particular one of his crucial blind spots is preventing him from seeing the prospect clearly. His scheme leaves no room for the intervention of the people as a political force, much less for the clash of classes. Consequently he overlooks the fact that the challenge in Africa and Asia cannot be reduced to the intervention or example of the Soviet Union. Of course this is a factor but, as far as the struggle of social forces in these countries is concerned, the Soviet leadership are only inverted Rostowians. Both overlook the advance of the colonial revolution towards a phase where it challenges the dominance of the bourgeoisie; they fail to consider that this, especially when linked with the resurgence of the working class in the advanced countries, will accelerate the demise of capitalism and topple the bureaucratic leadership in the Russian-Chinese bloc of non-capitalist States.

In the meantime, Rostow helps to adapt the ideology of capitalism to changing times, but still a distance behind the times. His sensitivity to Marxism, although he distorts it and fails to consider part of its case at all, is a significant testimony to its strength. If his attack stimulates Marxists to probe more fully into the kind of problem which he raises, test, and if necessary, re-formulate their own interpretations, so much the better. Rostow's work is among the best of its kind from the anti-Marxist camp.

Restoring Trotsky's Place in History

J.B.S.

The Prophet Unarmed: Trotsky: 1921-1929, by Isaac Deutscher. Oxford University Press, London, 1959. 420 pages. 38s.

ONLY now, 20 years after his death at the hands of a Stalinist assassin, are Leon Trotsky's real stature and his contributions to the theory of social development beginning to achieve wider recognition. Hitherto, buried under the sheer volume of falsification emanating from the Kremlin, Trotsky's ideas were the subject of serious study only among small groups of his followers, for the most part outside the Soviet bloc. Since the death of Stalin, the heightened interest in the nature and development of Soviet society has made it imperative for scholars to take a new look at this historical figure. Pioneers in this research are Professor E. H. Carr of Cambridge,[1] and, of course, Isaac Deutscher, whose many years of study of the subject equip them to point the way.

Carr is preoccupied with the broader canvas

[1] 'The Interregnum' and 'Socialism in One Country' (two vols.). Vols. 4, 5 and 6 of his History of the Soviet Union, published by Macmillan.

of the history of the Soviet Union and gives us a view of the real Trotsky only incidentally, as part of the whole picture, each part of which he reconstructs with meticulous devotion to fact, even if his reading of the facts often lays itself open to question. Deutscher confines his work more closely to the Trotsky-Stalin conflict and, while no less conscientious in the pursuit of the actual details, his work is more interpretative. His is the report of the involved observer who has a keen, first-hand, working knowledge of the action *and* the actors.

In *The Prophet Unarmed* Deutscher gives us a living, throbbing, accurate account of the peak period in the Stalin-Trotsky conflict that evokes the time and the personalities as no other work has done up to the present. This alone would give the book permanent merit for the student and the active socialist. But Deutscher does much more. As in the first volume of his biography, he strives to fill in the portrait of Trotsky the man and the thinker, as well as the embattled politician. He quotes copiously from writings long out of print, from rare newspaper articles and from the Trotsky archives at Harvard University, to show us how persistently all-embracing were Trotsky's intellectual interests and how penetrating his judgments. Among many other things, there is a remarkable forecast, in 1925, of the coming atomic age, on the one hand; on the other a practical size-up of the relations between the British Establishment and the Labour leaders in 1926 that could, with all its sharp wit, be taken as quite up-to-date in 1960. In addition, Deutscher's analysis of the period, serious and documented as it is on the interrelationship between the working class, the party and party cadre, stimulates and provokes critical thought on a subject that will bear increasingly more intensive study in the future.

Khrushchev's famous 20th Congress speech rudely ripped aside the veil of lies that covered the early Stalinist period. Deutscher's work—and in some measure, Carr's—reveal the whole intricate structure as never before. In so doing, they make laughable the approach of so many superficial students who saw in the Trotsky-Stalin conflict a pure and simple 'struggle for power' in the accepted banal political sense.

What Deutscher shows with striking narrative lucidity is that this conflict was above all a clash between the revolutionary ideas that promoted the Bolshevik revolution and the conservatism of the social forces growing out of its isolation in a backward country in a period of international reaction. The careful student will deduce as much from Carr's more general account. Whatever their criticism of Trotsky as a person may be—and no doubt human frailties had their role to play here as anywhere—there is one fact that stands out above others in this historical reconstruction. Trotsky was not out for power for its own sake. He was not obsessed with any desire to rule the roost. He was imbued with a single ambition: to pursue a scientific approach to the problems confronting society, and more particularly to expound the development of the Soviet state in the light of the world-wide transformation begun in the Russian revolution October, 1917, in order the better to complete that transformation.

Both Carr and Deutscher comment on the favourable 'tactical' opportunities that Trotsky missed; at the 13th Congress of the Bolshevik Party, when he not only had Lenin's support but his actual warning against a compromise with Stalin: at the 14th Congress, when the Stalin-Zinoviev-Kamenev *troika* fell apart. Above all, both authors dwell on the fact that the initial advantage in the struggle was with Trotsky, as head of the Red Army, who then had the allegiance of its cadres and its men. In any serious historical study there is, of course, room for a critical appraisal of historic personalities, their character, individual traits, judgments and opportunities. Deutscher finds fault with Trotsky's sense of timing, Carr with his haughty character on the one hand, and with his 'constitutional' (psychosomatic?) decline in health at decisive moments. But if these were organic shortcomings they should perhaps have revealed themselves in the previous broader struggle with his adversaries in the revolution and the civil war as much as in the internal struggle with Stalin.

In fact, the organization by Trotsky of the insurrection that established Soviet power was an exemplary piece of timing. And, whatever his deficiencies in personality, they did not hinder Trotsky in the great effort of creating the Red Army, especially with the, at first, hostile former officers of the Tsar; nor did his generally robust health fail him in any of the crises of the civil war. No matter what his human failings were, and they may and probably will be scrutinized with greater accuracy by future historians, those mentioned offer very little in explanation of the course of the Stalin-Trotsky conflict. If we want to grasp the full import of the Trotsky-Stalin conflict we have to revert to the nature of the man as a scientist engaged in laying bare the mainsprings of social action and acting upon his discoveries. And we have to bear in mind, therefore, the great objective currents in the social ebb and flow that shaped the struggle. Deutscher comes close enough to doing this in his brilliant biography, but the rounded conclusion,

the complete account, still escapes him in my opinion.

The Prophet Unarmed makes it abundantly clear that Trotsky, aware that the period was one of reaction and exhaustion, following that of upsurge and revolution, *rejected* the short-cut of what might be called a physical victory over Stalin. He had no desire to assume command in an ebb-tide that could open the sluices of counter-revolution. He preferred to stick to the task of propagating the revolutionary idea, always hopeful of a change in the trend, and to make his contribution to the exposure of the new bureaucratic dangers facing it; to put forward a concrete plan for the consolidation of Soviet power, and to link it with a firm perspective of international action. He persevered in this pursuit within the framework of the *party*, in which the levers of control were increasingly and obviously passing more and more completely into Stalin's hands. Why Trotsky *adopted* this long-term course is not altogether clear from Deutscher's account, let alone Carr's. In all fairness to Deutscher it must be said, however, that both in his preface and at the end of this second volume of his biography, he does make plain the importance of Trotsky's course for the future.

The main stumbling block for Deutscher, and even more so for Carr, to an understanding of the complete nature of Trotsky's role in the struggle with Stalin, lies in their self-imposed restriction to view the Russian revolution as a national phenomenon, despite their awareness of its international roots and aims. Summing up the great dispute over 'socialism in one country', Carr finds that this theory 'stumbled upon' by Stalin, 'was a synthesis between socialist and national loyalties. It was the point at which Russian destiny and Marxism joined hands.' Although the phrase 'Russian destiny' is no doubt alien to Deutscher's Marxist vocabulary, the thought behind it, developed in a much more sharply critical fashion, does in fact strongly pervade Deutscher's general conclusions. He suggests that against the background of Tsarist barbarism, Russia required a tyrant like Stalin to push through ruthlessly the 'primitive socialist accumulation' implied in the Trotskyist programme, a progressive task in spite of the bloody abominations that accompanied it. (Carr in his own way, is not grudging either in recognizing that Stalin eventually had to 'spear-head' policies 'that Trotsky himself had been most concerned to advocate.')

What both fail to appreciate adequately is that the progressive side of the accomplishments of the Stalin era was a by-product of the Russian revolution in its Leninist (that is, internationalist) phase and of the defence of its concepts by Trotsky and the Opposition in the ensuing period. Conversely, that since Stalinism proved to be a tremendous brake on the progress of the revolution internationally it could not consequently act otherwise in Russia itself. To seize this truth, it is necessary to return to the basic propositions on which Trotsky, along with Lenin and all other Bolsheviks at the time, based their programme of revolution in 1917. To recapitulate, these were :

> Socialism is the logical need for mankind if a relapse into barbarism is to be avoided and the continued conquest of nature assured.
>
> The establishment of socialism can only be guaranteed on an international scale, with its triumph in at least several of the more advanced capitalist countries.
>
> The Russian revolution was only the opening battle of an international action, taking place at the 'weakest link in the chain' of capitalism.
>
> Capitalism would continue to have its ups and downs—its booms and crises—until overcome by an international working-class conquest of power.
>
> The task of the Communists was to consolidate the Russian revolution and to utilize it as a base for the international operation.

It is in this light that the whole Trotsky-Stalin struggle must be seen and judged, if a truly objective and rounded view of its protagonists, its outcome and its lessons is to be gained.

We can readily see that Trotsky was concerned with maintaining a long-term strategy, called for by the Marxist analysis, and shared at first by all the Bolsheviks. His 'tactical' performance, and that of his adversaries, have to be weighed within this frame of reference.

Was he correct in these assumptions, which the others abandoned?

The danger of a relapse into barbarism, foreshadowed by World War I, was gruesomely emphasised by the rise of Fascism and by the Second World War which ended with the display of the power of nuclear weapons to wreak havoc of universal proportions on the attainments of mankind. Can the need for a socialist reorganization of society—for 'one world'—be regarded in any sense as premature? Reason should tell us that it is long overdue. Capitalism is at present undergoing a boom which gives rise to the illusion of the 'affluent society', of a 'people's capitalism', etc. But looking over the last 40 years in their totality, the organic crisis of capitalism—most acutely underlined by the long,

world-wide depression of 1929 from which only its transformation into a war economy could rescue it—has taken on not less but more explosive form than ever before. In turn, the economic crisis is being brought to a boil by the awakening of Asia, Africa and Latin America to anti-imperialist consciousness.

Trotsky put forward his programme of planned industrialization for the Soviet Union combined with an active international policy in the context of a universal perspective such as this, which we have seen materialize. The bureaucracy, which found its head in Stalin, fought and in the end defeated Trotsky, his programme and policy. But at every crisis in its own development it had to borrow from Trotsky and continues to do so up to the present. The bureaucracy discovered, empirically, from its own experience, that even its own existence as a privileged caste was wedded to the maintenance of the new property forms established by the revolution; and that the preservation of the nationalized economy required rapid industrialization and planning; that in the conflict with the capitalist environment the Soviet Union had to expand or shrink; that expansion meant the spread of the same property forms; that a growing economy and an increasingly strong working class inevitably threatened bureaucratic control. All these were implied in Trotsky's theoretical analysis. Stalin and his successors could only stumble empirically upon these truths, but never grasp them in their totality. This was because their concern was to preserve themselves as a new privileged social formation, not to destroy privilege and build society anew at the international level.

Trotsky, the man of action *par excellence* of the Russian revolution, opted for the power of the idea rather than for the idea of power. This is what puzzles so many commentators, particularly those whose understanding of Marxism is severely limited. Deutscher's understanding is more profound. Yet he, too, seems to be puzzled by one aspect in particular of Trotsky's choice. He sees something akin to the fates of Greek tragedy overtaking the prophet he first conceived in terms of Hebraic folklore. There is Trotsky foreseeing decades ahead the degeneration of the centralism of the Bolshevik Party into the dictatorship of a single tyrant—yet he himself apparently contributes to this process and in the end becomes its victim!

To me this seems to be a case of Deutscher's literary imagery getting the better of his political analysis. Here, indeed, was an opportunity for the biographer to present a timely critical and realistic analysis of his subject, his real strength as well as his real weaknesses.[2]

What caused Trotsky, if we stick to realities and get away from poetic allusion, to 'forget' his early 'prophecy' on the fate of the Leninist party? He certainly was not a man who easily formed and shed ideas, concepts, analyses of social phenomena. The truth is that Trotsky had discovered in the course of time that his original view of Lenin's organizational system was wrong. For all his perspicacity, Trotsky had not grasped the importance of the role of the combat organization in the proletarian revolution before 1917. Only through his own experience with Bolshevism in the course of 1917 and thereafter did he finally come to realize how indispensable this factor was to victory in the revolutionary struggle. This is what accounts for his unflinching defence of the party against the ultra-left oppositions in the years up to Lenin's death. It also explains his continued reluctance to break party discipline after the struggle with Stalin had begun. And, to anticipate the third volume of the biography, it gives a clue to Trotsky's whole course subsequent to his becoming convinced that the Stalinized party had degenerated beyond reform.

The conception of the revolutionary socialist party as a *combat* organization, developed and perfected by Lenin, was something Trotsky in his younger years had never mastered, despite his otherwise rich intellect. But the revolution itself convinced him that the necessity of the combat party far outweighed the dangers of its possible degeneration. The flowering and decline of political organizations, he had reason to deduce from the experience of the war-years with social democracy, was conditioned by a multiplicity of objective historical influences, and was hardly inherent in their organizational form as such. But, *without* such a centralized, democratic party as Lenin had built, a successful revolution against capitalism was impossible. That was the lesson he learned in 1917-21 and never forgot. It was learnt positively in Russia. Negatively, the lesson was brought home to him by the fate of the revolution in Germany—where the ideas of Rosa Luxemburg were no less powerful in their general revolutionary aspect than Lenin's or Trotsky's, but where their concept of the party was missing. And this was true of Western Europe generally, at that time in a state of social collapse and ripe for revolution.

Both Deutscher and Carr fail to grasp this attitude of Trotsky to the combat party. At

[2] Indeed, the chapter 'At the Door of History' in 'The Prophet Armed' led me to believe that Deutscher might do this.

an early stage of historical research and scholarship this is hardly astonishing in the case of the academician. It is perhaps less so in the case of the Marxist biographer. It is, of course, possible that Deutscher will tackle this problem in his concluding volume. Meanwhile, his account of the 1921-1929 period suffers in consequence. For it is difficult to give a comprehensive explanation of Trotsky's 'errors' in the factional struggle against Stalin without bearing in mind on the one hand his belated conversion to this Leninist concept, and on the other, his relative lack of experience—as against the Old Guard—in the mechanics of the party's functioning. Trotsky's years 'in the wilderness', outside the ranks of Bolshevism (and Menshevism) made themselves felt here. He was to express regret over this years later, when he was preoccupied with the practical problem of building the proletarian party anew. (See his *In Defence of Marxism.*)

One critic,[3] reviewing Deutscher's second volume, has taken issue with Deutscher's 'traditional Trotskyist explanation' of the failure of the Communist International. According to this critic, the attempt to extend the centralized combat party to international proportions was foredoomed to failure even regardless of the ebb-tide which was to transform it into a Stalinized adjunct of the Kremlin bureaucracy. All kinds of national peculiarities, he tells us, make anything more than a loose international federation of revolutionary parties 'utopian'. It is odd that this kind of wisdom—really a rationalization of the frustrations consequent on the limited possibilities of the moment—should be dispensed just as Sir Anthony Eden tells in his memoirs that the statesmen of *capitalism* are groping for some co-ordinated international form of organization in combating the revolution of our time. In truth, the *international* combat party, as Trotsky and Lenin foresaw, is a necessary logical step from the character of the task the Marxists set themselves. If it has not yet become a reality, this is a result of the combined and reciprocal effects of the period of reaction following the Russian revolution and the Stalinist bureaucracy itself. But this only means that its realization has been postponed. Such a postponement of socially necessary organizational developments is not unknown in the history of feudalism and of capitalism. Local languages, cultures, geographic barriers did not in the end prevent the formation of kingdoms or of national states. Is there really any reason why they should not be transcended on a larger historical scale by a proletarian revolutionary organization? A genuinely Leninist international combat organization will, of course, take full account of national peculiarities and provide for the widest latitude in tactics as well as appropriate forms of organization.

To his dying day Trotsky's main contention was that the international conditions for socialist revolution were over-ripe. The real crisis of humanity, he concluded, was a crisis in working-class leadership. By this he meant that the element for victory that was lacking was the proletarian combat organization, whose prototype he saw in Bolshevism. Was he wrong? Or was this idea of Trotsky's as correct as those others which Deutscher and Carr have confirmed?

There are many new thinkers who regard this problem as dated. Capitalism has developed a new era of progress and prosperity, it is no longer the capitalism that Marx analyzed, they say. The working class in the West has come to terms with this new capitalism in the welfare state. Besides, add others, the threat of nuclear annihilation in the stalemated cold war blurs the lines of class division. Consequently revolutionary socialism has become obsolete, and the idea of the proletarian combat party belongs to the museum. Is this so very modern and fashionable view borne out by the true state of the world today? We need a deeper and wider analysis than that provided by the apostles of the affluent society, of the take-off economy, of the waist-high culture.

Their affluent society is a house of cards propped up by the stimulant of war production and the never-never chase for comforts of a population fed up with war-time and post-war austerity. The limit of both these phenomena is clearly visible, if only in the fluctuations of the stock-exchanges. All the gadgetry blown up by the advertising racket will not help maintain the equilibrium for very long, based as it is on artificial and not real human need. The post-war recessions were storm signals warning of the hurricane to come which will bring this house of cards crashing down as the rate of profit resumes its historic downward trend.

The welfare state is in reality nothing more than the external expression of the stalemate that exists between the capitalist class and the working class within national boundaries. It is itself conditioned by that international stalemate between the major social classes that finds its expression in the cold war. But the conditions for this stalemate are occasionally interrupted; nationally, despite the labour bureaucracies, by such outbreaks as the recent steel strike in the United States, and the threatened railway strike in Britain; internationally, regardless of the Soviet bureaucracy's longing for 'peaceful co-

[3] B. Cochrane, 'American Socialist', October, 1959.

existence', by the upsurge in China, Indo-China, the Arab world, Algeria, Cuba and Negro Africa.

Can anyone really doubt that such colossal events, reverberating throughout the world from year to year, could shake off capitalist rule altogether if combat parties of the working class existed in five or six countries—let alone a powerful international party in place of the degenerated Communist Parties and the flabby social democracies?

A sober view of present-day reality only confirms Trotsky's contention anew.

Anxious to preserve his scholarly objectivity, Deutscher appeared in his first volume, as in his biography of Stalin, to lay undue stress on the 'progressive' features of Stalinism and to disparage Trotskyism as a 'cult'. It is hardly to be wondered at if Trotskyists counter-attacked sharply, although perhaps with too much heat and polemical exaggeration. In this second volume of the Trotsky biography there seems to me to be a much greater balance of real objectivity. The Khrushchev revelations and the Polish and Hungarian risings of 1956 undoubtedly, and possibly the author's further researches into the Trotsky archives at Harvard, made their contributions to a new assessment. Still, Deutscher finds it necessary to write in his preface: 'Yet I do not imagine that the future of Communism lies in Trotskyism'. Very well, he is entitled to his opinion. However, he continues:

> 'I am inclined to think that the historic development is transcending both Stalinism and Trotskyism and is tending toward something broader than either of them. But each one of them will be "transcended" in a different manner. What the Soviet Union and communism take over from Stalinism is mainly its practical achievements; in other respects, as regards methods of government and political action, ideas and "moral climate", the legacy of the Stalin era is worse than empty; the sooner it is disposed of the better. But precisely in these respects Trotsky has still much to offer; and the political development can hardly transcend him otherwise than by absorbing all that is vital in his thought and applying it to realities which are far more advanced, varied and complex than those he knew.'

One can hardly quarrel with this view. That is indeed what Trotskyism is about; it expresses the essence of its purpose. Meanwhile, Deutscher is to be congratulated on making a major contribution in this second volume to the political education of the new generation of socialists. His is a vital, living text-book for the period of the Trotsky-Stalin conflict. It is to be hoped that in his final volume he will continue to deepen our knowledge of this great fighter and teacher of mankind in the struggle for human emancipation.

Alienation and the Working Class

Social Science and Social Theory

Frank Girling

(This article was written as the appendix to a book Children of the Golden City *which has not yet appeared. This book is a study of the life of working-class children in Edinburgh. Allusions to the book appear from time to time in this article.)*

FOR what I believe to be good reasons, I address myself principally to the ordinary intelligent reader and not to social scientists. Some might argue that social theory, like biological and physical theory, can be evaluated only by specialists. This betrays a misunderstanding of the nature of social science, which is unfortunately widespread, and which professional social scientists have been very ready to exploit.

Although men and women use discoveries made by the biologists and physicists every day, to do so they do not need to think in the terms of these sciences. In so far as social facts are concerned, however, they *do* need to think scientifically, although few in fact do so. From an early age every person acts socially—there is no other way in which he can act. And although a general theoretical understanding of these actions may be difficult to acquire, this is not a matter for social science specialists alone. Moreover, there are obstacles in the way of obtaining an understanding of social theory which do not exist in other fields—or at any rate not to the same degree.

All sciences are affected to some extent by the social system within which they develop. But those which are closest to the practical tasks involved in controlling natural phenomena are least affected by the social system. On the other hand the sciences which are most closely concerned with the means by which the ruling group in a society maintains its power over the majority, are most deeply affected. At the present time the social sciences in general represent the sectional views of the ruling class in our society—or of a part of it—and they make little real contribution to the sum of human knowledge. Because high standards of objectivity and scientific integrity are recognised as existing among natural scientists, the present-day practitioners of social science use the concepts of those sciences in order to give an air of respectability to their own collections of pseudo-scientific formulae, although these are in fact designed for the use of social manipulators and social technicians. Thus Bidney writes in the concluding sentences of his work, *Theoretical Anthropology*:

> Natural science offers a model of a progressive, self-reforming discipline which combines rational authority with freedom of initiative and change. Similarly, a normative and scientific theory of culture and society would recognize the polarity of freedom and authority and would make provision for the establishment of new forms of social and individual freedom and authority in accordance with the ever-changing requirements of men in society.[1]

It would, apparently, be the task of the social scientist to determine what the requirements of men in society were, and to decide what forms of freedom he should be allowed to enjoy. This attitude, as I shall argue, is characteristic of the bureaucratic caste in modern society to which social scientists usually belong.

Much contemporary sociological writing has been concerned with what the sociologists have called variously: 'the identification of an individual with his social role', 'the socialisation process', 'the other-directed society', 'the trend towards cultural uniformity', 'the organization man', 'the change over from "Gemeinschaft" to "Gesellschaft" institutions', etc. Some sociologists have traced this as a stage towards the creation of a form of totalitarianism, a process which is irreversible and irresistible and in some sense necessary. This is not the result, as they believe, of any particular fault in modern society which could be corrected, but the inevitable consequence of ineluctable social realities. Social processes are regarded by them as possessing an objective logic of their own which makes it impossible for the conscious decisions of individuals,

[1] G. Bidney, 'Theoretical Anthropology', 1958, 302.

classes, nations or states to play any part in influencing the course of events. They believe that social facts must be approached with an attitude of 'scientific objectivity', and that this means avoiding the use of such terms—and the concepts to which they refer—as 'capitalist', 'exploitation', 'class struggle', 'oppression' and others, as implying 'emotional involvement', connoting 'value judgments' and so on. There are no real problems or conflicts in society, these sociologists contend, only misunderstanding about the correct use of words. The interests of all members of society are in fact identical, for, to quote Bidney again, 'the democratic state is becoming increasingly a moral person concerned with the actual welfare of all classes of citizens, rather than with the special interests of one class.'[2] Sociologists are evidently eager to act as tutors to this young 'moral person'.

I shall argue that the so-called 'scientific objectivity' of the sociologist, although believed in sincerely, nevertheless implies an attitude towards society which is subjectively fatalistic, and which is objectively a form of co-operation in oppression.

According to these sociologists there are no longer either capitalists or proletarians in society, no oppressors or oppressed. Every one enjoys equal access to bountiful supplies of goods. At the same time individuals are tending to become automata, unable to think or feel for themselves, whose ideas and emotions are provided for them effortlessly through the mass culture media. Power is exercised not by individuals but through impersonal social forces, they suggest.

Although these descriptions have some superficial resemblances to the reality, they are wholly inaccurate as analyses of what is happening to society in Britain and America. It is worthwhile, however, to consider briefly whence these views are derived. Because the sociologist is cut off from the real world by his concept of 'objectivity', when he believes he is studying social facts what he is actually doing is to examine a mirror reflection of himself. His views have a certain value as auto-sociology, an account of the sociology of a group as seen by the group's members. But they reveal nothing about society as a whole; this is in fact a subjective account of the new bureaucratic caste which has replaced the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie, the source from which formerly independent intellectuals came.

This new caste has come into existence to carry out certain essential functions in the bureaucratic capitalist state. Its members are concerned with specialist tasks in the sciences, industrial production, education, the entertainment industry and the staffing of the state machine itself. Its members experience the miseries of alienation to a much greater degree than any other group in modern society. They have high prestige and material comforts, but of all wage earners they are the most isolated and dependent individually on their employers. Moreover they are aware of and accept that dependence To a greater extent than any other category of workers they identify themselves with their jobs. In terms of mental effort and time expended intellectuals sell themselves more completely than any other workers. For them the distinction between work and leisure often has no meaning, and freedom and authority come to mean the same also. They believe that this situation is general, but in fact it applies only to themselves.

The idea of a totalitarian system being introduced peacefully and almost imperceptibly, without any act of individual volition, is not based then on an objective study of social phenomena. It is a mere reflection of the more or less conscious choice made by the bureaucratized intelligentsia. They have accepted their own 'alienation' in return for prestige and a rôle in manipulating the masses. Fortunately the masses have not been dehumanised to the same extent as the intellectual caste. The conditions of life for the majority of the population make it impossible for them to be detached and 'objective'; whether they choose or no, they are compelled to struggle in order to survive. The defection of the intellectuals to the bureaucracy makes it more difficult for the workers to organize their struggles coherently; in ways which I shall discuss later the intellectuals contribute to those difficulties. Modern sociology is one of the obstacles to the humanisation of modern society Only a critical and realistic analysis of social phenomena can help to emancipate humanity and establish a true science of social phenomena, and the bureaucratized intellectuals are not interested in this. Certain of them, it is true, make mild criticisms of contemporary society; but this is a means of having their cake and eating it, of enjoying comfort and prestige while despising those who provide it for them.

While attacking the ideas of these sociologists I do not want to imply that their work is wholly without value, or that their descriptions of social phenomena are completely inaccurate. One of the most salient characteristics of the people who appear in the pages of my book is that their thinking and feeling is chaotic; this corresponds to some extent with the findings of the sociologists. To stop at that point is not sufficient, however. A social scientist will also explain how

[2] Ibid, 292.

this situation comes about and indicate how it may be overcome. My dissatisfaction with the sociologists and with the bureaucratized intellectual minority generally, is basically because of their isolation from social life, which makes it impossible for them to think or feel about society. They are thus unable to produce either art or social science. The working class, which forms the majority, feels and thinks about society, but it needs both art and science in order to organize and direct its thinking and feeling. There must be in any society those who know in order to be able to do. There must be those, too, who feel in order that they may know what to do. It is the task of artists and social scientists to organize this feeling and thinking.

I believe that the most useful approach to the understanding of this situation is provided by the theory of 'alienation' as stated by Marx and later developed by Lukacs. This forms a part of the theory of historical materialism to which I shall return shortly.

THE BASIC PROPOSITIONS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

In order to approach the analysis of society certain general propositions are needed. They are :

(1) That human society is made up of individuals, classes, nations and other groupings, each of which form separate and distinct social entities. The task of the social scientist is to observe, describe and explain the behaviour of these social entities, thus contributing to the sum of human knowledge and helping to bring social phenomena under rational control.

(2) In observing and describing the social scientist cannot behave in a completely arbitrary fashion. That is to say that he cannot isolate only those aspects of the phenomena which happen for some quite fortuitous reason to attract his attention. He must examine the essential components of this behaviour as it is organised in social systems.

(3) One such entity is the social system known as 'capitalist society'.

These propositions may be derived from the theories of historical materialism. And in view of the distortions and misunderstandings of these theories which are current today, I believe that it is necessary to recapitulate briefly those aspects which are most relevant to the present study.

As was implied above, the 'social system' is the most inclusive social entity. In isolation there can be no understanding of economics, politics, art, religion, education, etc. They all contribute to the system as a whole, and for this purpose no one factor is of more significance than any other. In analysing a social system it is the relationship between the basis and the superstructure that one is concerned with; these are the elements which make up a total social structure.

In all previous social systems men have been under the necessity of spending a major part of their time and effort in producing sufficient of essential foodstuffs, etc., for survival. This was due to undeveloped techniques, or to class conflicts, or to both. In these circumstances the nature of the economic basis, although it does not determine, imposes certain limits on the development of men's thinking, feeling and behaviour generally. Changes in the economic basis have effects on all other aspects of the social system and finally may lead to changes occurring in the structure of the system itself. This does not mean, however, that the ideas of individuals and groups (i.e. social theories) are unimportant in bringing about social changes. To the extent that theory is an accurate statement of reality and is thoroughly grasped by men it is an active element and able to guide men's actions. But it is important to note also that theory itself cannot remain unaltered and must change in accordance with both potential and actual structural changes. Each new theory is true until it is falsified in its turn by another theory which takes account more completely of recent changes. Out-dated social theories, like all scientific theories, do not disappear at once; there comes a stage when change is overdue but for some reason does not occur, the new and more appropriate theories are prevented from spreading and gaining acceptance. These out-dated social theories provide a rallying point for men whose interests are threatened by impending changes in the social structure. At this stage men's ideas, or consciousness, instead of being an active element in society, become a mere reflection of the interests of a ruling class which is redundant but not yet replaced. This is the stage reached by contemporary sociological theory.

Most of this is contained or implied in the theories of historical materialism first stated by Marx and Engels about one hundred years ago. If we are to understand modern society, therefore, we must take into account changes which have occurred in the basis and the superstructure since they wrote. Many of the developments which have occurred in industrial production recently appear to have been foreseen by

Marx himself: the increase in the scale of industrial enterprises, the standardization of work processes, the use of automatic processes, etc. But there are other developments about which he was mistaken.

(1) He did not foresee that there would be a continuing rise in the standard of life of the working class in Europe and America. This has been due in part to pressure exercised by the Trade Unions, and in part also to increased exploitation by the metropolitan countries of the colonial peoples. For the latter there has been no such rise, but rather a decline.

(2) He did not foresee that there would be increasing state intervention in the economies of the capitalist countries and that there would be deliberate attempts to avert possible crises through policies of public ownership and state investments. Heavy expenditure on the production of expensive and productively useless nuclear weapons has helped to prevent a crisis of over-production from occurring. This in its turn has prevented the use of new techniques for the benefit of the population and has led to the setting up of the modern bureaucratic capitalist state, paralleled by the bureaucratic proletarian state.

(3) Finally there is the awkward but inescapable fact that the first outbreak of the socialist revolution occurred not in the highly industrialized countries of Europe, as Marx foresaw, but in the most economically backward of them. The revolution developed too, in circumstances which have led to the distortion of socialist theory. And the prestige which the ruling party in Russia enjoys as the leader of the first proletarian state, in conjunction with the factors already mentioned, has so far prevented an international working-class party from emerging.

(4) Finally, this situation has led to the virtual disappearance of social science. From time to time empirical studies are made, but social theory as such has become a part of the ideology of the ruling groups in both capitalist society and the proletarian states.

None of these features represents a qualitative change in the nature of capitalist society. None is permanent: the success of the Colonial Revolutions will make exploitation by the West more difficult, the demand for peace in face of the destructive power of nuclear weapons will make a crisis of over-production more difficult to avoid, the pressure of the Russian working class on their rulers will become increasingly difficult to contain. Nevertheless, present-day capitalist society presents a number of features which distinguish it from earlier stages in its development; we must assess what the effect of these has been.

THE EXTENSION OF THE MARKET ECONOMY

Pre-capitalist societies—tribal, slave, feudal and others—were characterized by the fact that the greater part of both production and consumption took place within the same small group. In these groups—clans, villages, manors, etc.—relationships between producers and consumers were direct and personal. Similarly distribution took place according to a clear and generally accepted system. In these social systems production was both human and social: it was primarily concerned with the creation of goods for the use of the particular group. Thus in different environments in all parts of the world small communities grew up in relative isolation from one another. There evolved unique languages, art styles, religions and cultures generally, which contribute to the rich diversity of human life. In these smaller societies each individual had a particular status.

Today, however, the economic life of every part of the world has become completely international and wholly impersonal. The development of a world-wide market has led to the virtual disappearance of the small, self-contained social systems, they have been merged into nations which form a part of a universal society. For the purchasers of raw materials and of labour power, who hold power in this society, other men exist only as potential buyers and sellers, all other social characteristics are irrelevant. This has not been without its positive aspects: modern theories of human rights, of the rule of law and universal justice, are founded in part on the impersonality of abstract economic man. All of these aspects of society have been intensified in the years since Marx wrote.

In a social system based on a market economy, production is unplanned; it is the market itself, or rather the mechanisms of price and profit, which determine what commodities shall be produced and in what quantities. There are no institutions to control the production and distribution of commodities; although attempts have been made on an increasing scale to do so, economic planning is in fact impossible. If we are to understand the social consequences of commod-

ity production we must pay some attention to question of value and in particular we must distinguish between the two forms of value: *use-value* and *exchange-value*.

In non-market economies men devoted most of their energy to the production of *use-values*: these were the goods needed to feed, clothe, house, adorn, etc., the members of their own groups. All labour was concrete, that is, each man's work was qualitatively distinct from that of every other man: the work of a smith was qualitatively different from that of a carpenter, that of a lord from a serf, and that of one man from another. Ideas of abstract labour and of the social cost of commodities were foreign to the social systems of these societies.

In a market economy, however, men are concerned with producing not *use-values*, but *exchange-values*. It is true that commodities still possess use-values, otherwise they could not be sold. But only the ultimate consumer is interested in *use-value*; before commodities reach their users they must come on to the market where they are compared quantitatively with other commodities purely on the basis of their *exchange-value*. And in the same way as these forms of value must be distinguished, a distinction must be made, too, between *abstract work*, which is involved in the production of exchange values, and *concrete work*, which is involved in the production of *use-values* The latter is qualitatively different for each individual and every occupation, the former is qualitatively the same for all workers and differs only in the quantity of time, energy and strength expended. These distinctions are of fundamental importance for the understanding of the thoughts and feelings of workers in modern society.

The theory of liberal capitalist society is that the well-being of all its members is guaranteed through every individual acting as a buyer and seller of commodities. By everyone attempting to buy cheap and sell at a competitive price, all consumers will obtain commodities at the lowest possible price. This theory implies the existence of a society in which all individuals pursue their selfish interests, and also have the satisfaction of believing that their indifference to the fortunes of others is justified by an abstract economic law. This remains the actual practice of individuals in modern bureaucratic capitalist society, although sentiments of 'welfare' and 'social service' have tended to replace the open expressions of such ideas as the pursuit of individual profits. It is still believed, however, that enlightened self-interest forms the basis of all public relations between individuals.

In the small self-contained social systems which have been destroyed by the advance of the world-wide market economy there was a high degree of social solidarity. In spite of the poverty and injustices which characterized many of them there was, nevertheless, a real and conscious relationship between the producers and the use values they created. In modern society use-values are created, but the *conscious* aim of all production is the creation of *exchange-values*. Nothing is produced solely because it is needed, it must above all be marketable The concepts of the market economy have penetrated into all spheres of public life; only in certain private spheres—friendship, love, family—do use-values still prevail. Here there is still some degree of altruism and human solidarity.

The predominance of exchange-values in the consciousness of men in the public spheres of social life leads to the connections between men and objects of their natural environment being broken. Use-values are concerned with qualitative differences between objects, both natural and manufactured, while exchange-value abstracts from all sensuous qualities and is concerned only with quantitative differences. Colour, texture, form, design and other such qualities are irrelevant from this point of view. In the same way qualitative differences between human individuals are also discounted The kind of sensibility which in its social form is called art becomes confined more and more to those individuals who are not fully involved in public economic life: upper-class poets, middle-class women and working-class children. Socially organized thought, that is, science, becomes the privilege of highly-trained specialists, and these too are on the margins of public economic life. For the majority neither art nor science is possible. As economic ideas take exclusive control of social life and as the market economy extends its boundaries to include all spheres of life there is a tendency for the human content to be emptied from such forms of human activities as religion, law, philosophy and literature. Man becomes a passive spectator in a drama where only non-human things appear to be active. In his place of employment the individual worker is not qualitatively distinct from others: he is not like the mediaeval craftsman whose skill made him an irreplaceable means of producing articles. He has become a producer of exchange-values in the form of commodities, he is a mere number, an anonymous unit in a rational economic calculation which can easily be replaced by its exact equivalent. He is no more than a repository of exchange-value in the form of labour power.

In many different ways the abstract and quantitative aspects of social reality have become pre-

dominant over the concrete and qualitative. The fundamental characteristic of the dominant ideology of modern society is that it obscures the real relationships between social groups—those, for example, of domination and subordination between the capitalist class and the working class—and makes them appear as the natural attributes of things (an individual and his wage). This is the process which Marx knew as 'fetishism' and which Lukacs designated as 'reification' or 'thingness'.

Unlike modern sociologists, however, Marx was not satisfied with giving a name to a phenomenon and describing it. He went on to show how fetishism had come about and how it would be overcome. In the *Theses on Feuerbach*, for example, he posed the problem of the relationship between human perception and human activity:

> 'The chief fault of all hitherto existing materialism . . . is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived of only in the form of the **object** or of **contemplation,** but not as **human sensuous activity, practice,** not subjectively. . . .'

To this view Marx opposed his own ideas of social reality:

> 'Social life is essentially practical. All mysteries which mislead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of that practice.',

The fetishism of capitalist society would be overcome, he maintained, through

> 'Revolutionary, practical critical activity . . . the coincidence of the changing of circumstances, and of human activity can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionising practice.'

He thought that increasing poverty and oppression for the working class was inevitable, and that this would lead to the overthrow of the capitalist social system and to the disappearance of fetishism. Members of the bourgeoisie and of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia would join the workers in their struggles. Among the workers they would find a capacity to understand the meaning of the social theories they had created, and a willingness to apply them in practice. The working class would find in these theories a means of generalising their previous experience and of deepening their understanding of their own situation. 'Philosophy', as Marx wrote, 'would find its material weapons in the proletariat and the proletariat would find its spiritual weapons in philosophy. . . .'

The situation of the working class in 1960 is very different from that which Marx foresaw a hundred years ago. An understanding of the present circumstances must take into account the new factors to which reference was made earlier. The success of the capitalist social system in surviving so long threatens to be disastrous for humanity. So far it has avoided a disastrous crisis of over-production by plunging into successive military crises any one of which might lead to the destruction of civilization. The present leaders of the working class have shown themselves incapable of thinking and acting for humanity as a whole. Nevertheless the working class is still the only force in modern society which is capable of overthrowing the present social system. The very structure of capitalist society imposes limits on the degree to which the ideology of fetishism can be extended. The working class can never be dehumanised completely: this is the contradiction within the heart of the present social system. For the survival of the system the extension of fetishism is a necessity, for the survival of the working class as human beings their resistance to fetishism is equally necessary.

This represents the ultimate resistance of use-values to being replaced completely by exchange-values.

As a class the capitalists who control production are concerned only with the solution of quantitative problems, the search for more profitable forms of investment of their capital. Nevertheless the system, and the capitalists themselves, cannot survive unless they continue to create qualitatively different use values. They need the following:

(1) Constant Capital, i.e. investment in means of production and raw materials to replace those which have been consumed in the course of the production of commodities together with new means of production and raw materials for the fresh accumulation of commodities.

(2) Consumer goods for their own private consumption and for that of their present employees and the new workers who must be recruited in order to expand production.

In order to create both of these they must have:

(3) A working class which is ready to enter the commodity market in order to sell its labour power, after having used all the money it had previously received in the form of wages.

Thus labour power is the critical commodity in capitalist society. The contradiction between the use value and the exchange value of this

commodity poses the basic problem of this social system. From the point of view of the capitalist class this is a commodity like other commodities which they seek to buy as cheaply as possible in order to keep production costs down. This is a commodity, however, which is inseparable from human individuals. And in certain circumstances which capitalist society cannot avoid, this commodity becomes partially conscious of its humanity and rebels against the system. The rebellion may not always be a conscious one and it may be limited in its extent, but rebellion is a necessary condition of the existence of the working class.

In considering the situation of the working class in 1960—in the very different circumstances from 1860—we must examine two basic categories of working-class life. First, the level of consciousness of its own existence which it is theoretically *possible* for the working class to have in the objective conditions which exist in the world. And, secondly, the *actual* consciousness which the working class has in particular countries and at specific periods. (These two categories correspond to the distinction which Marx made between a class 'in itself' and a class 'for itself'.) Neither can be discovered without a great deal of patient research, much of which still remains to be done. The first requires detailed study of the works of generations of social theorists. The second demands the carrying out of empirical investigations into very many aspects of social life, comparing differences and evaluating similarities.

In spite of the almost complete absence of such studies I shall make a bold attempt to analyse the condition of the working class in Britain in these terms.

FETISHISM AND THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS IN 1960

It remains true that the working class and those members of other classes who see the world from a working-class point of view are the only sections of society which are able to resist the ideology of fetishism. Nevertheless the post-war years have seen the extension of fetishist thinking and feeling into many sections of working-class life and even more into that of other classes. In consequence the *actual* level of consciousness of the working class in Britain is far from reaching its *possible* level. This may be attributed in part to the improved means which the ruling class has now at its disposal for inculcating its own ideology and preventing the development of the consciousness of the working class. It is due also to the failure of the leaders of the working class to exploit successfully the means at its disposal, and to the fact that they, too, have been influenced by fetishism.

The setting up of the bureaucratic 'welfare state' has been an important factor in the process of inculcating fetishism. It has done so in a number of ways. The setting up of boards to control the nationalized industries and the creation of large industrial monopolies, all employing large numbers of technical, administrative and clerical staff, have had important effects. The training of bureaucrats to staff the machinery of the state has become the main task of the country's educational institutions. A new bureaucratic caste has been brought into existence by this means—or rather a series of ranked castes of different statuses. In return for loyalty and abstention from political activity members of this caste are promised life-long security and the means by which they can train their children to occupy a still higher place in the hierarchy. Recruitment is still partly by birth, particularly in the upper levels, but expansion has provided openings for suitable individuals of working-class origins to be admitted after a lengthy indoctrination. The mechanics of the process of recruitment of working-class children to the bureaucracy have been studied intensively by so-called 'educational psychologists'. The 'social status mobility' of a few selected individuals has been cited as a proof of the 'equality of opportunity' which exists for all in the present social system. A widely-used textbook of sociology claims that the Marxist analysis of society has been disproved by the fact that this kind of mobility is possible: a scramble for improved social status has resulted in the development of 'competitive class feeling rather than increased class consciousness'.[1] In that the emphasis on competitive striving for social advancement is characteristic of the ideology of fetishism and that a certain number of working-class families have accepted this as the main purpose for which they should struggle, this is true. But this by no means changes the nature of the social system and the endemic rebellion of the working class within that system.

In addition to providing a means for extending fetishism into the working-class household, the processes of selection for membership of the bureaucracy provide opportunities for the employment at the practical level of vocational guidance experts, intelligence testers, Youth Employment Officers and personnel managers, and of educational psychologists and child guidance clinicians at the academic level. All of these issue statements explaining, justifying and theorising about

[1] R. M. MacIver and C. H. Page, **Society**, London, 1950, page 364.

the practices they adopt and devising new techniques of selection. Their activities have the effect of reinforcing the ideology of fetishism even among the children who are not selected and their parents. Many are convinced that the reason for their children's failure is to be found in their quantitative deficiency in intelligence. Here is another example of the subordination of the concrete and qualitative to the abstract and quantitative. And of course those who are so selected are convinced that this is due to their possessing to a superior degree the same quantitatively defined attribute.

The employees of the entertainments industry form a special section of the bureaucratic caste. Mechanical advances in the fields of television, radio and films have provided employment for script writers, producers, actors, song writers, singers and performers on musical instruments. The development of the popular press as an entertainment medium provides openings for journalists, commercial artists and advertising copy writers. These are drawn from all sections of society, some of them may originally have been talented and sensitive individuals. Some began by trying to devote themselves to creative work. But since there is no place for use values as such in the present social system they found that to do so condemned them to poverty and isolation. They find it difficult to reject the rewards which the entertainments industry offers to those who are willing to produce for the commodity market. And in any case, what is the point of resisting? They find themselves not only poor but without an audience: and solitude is not conducive to artistic creation. Without a public the urge to communicate weakens, and so much energy is expended in resisting the influence of the commercials that little remains for creation; and so the majority succumb.

There is, of course, no direct censorship; as workers they are free to make whatever they like —provided that there is a market for it. Experiment is impossible, however; they must conform to tastes which are known to exist already. They are copyists and imitators of past successes; they follow changes in fashion. They can express their emotions only in their private lives, they are separated from their products and so experience the same kind of alienation to which other workers in a capitalist social system are subject.

There is in fact no place in modern society where genuine artists can establish themselves. The days are gone of the rich merchant princes who supported young artists like feudal retainers. This is not a safe investment and cannot be set off against income tax demands. Far better buy the works of established masters whose price is sure to rise. The state itself has become the patron of the arts and the bureaucrats who are responsible for disbursing its funds cannot risk their careers by supporting original work, even if their taste were sufficiently formed to be able to recognise its worth.

Nor are the Universities in any better situation. They, too, have come under increasing state control. They preserve some of the artistic relics of the past like so many pieces of jellied eel. The requirements of success in an academic career, however, are the same as in the bureaucracy generally (although it is still true that individuals who are willing to sacrifice ambition and material gain may preserve some degree of intellectual integrity). But the functions of the Universities and other educational institutions have changed in order to correspond with the new structure of capitalist society. Their task is to indoctrinate the alienated bureaucrats who are needed to staff the state machine, not to encourage original thought. This is why sociology and other so-called 'social-science disciplines' are assuming greater importance in their curricula. This is the best way to cultivate the alienated attitude of 'scientific objectivity' towards human and social phenomena.

Studies of the social origins of present-day University staffs as compared with fifty years ago might reveal that the number drawn from the middle and upper-middle class was less than formerly, and that there were more of working-class origin. The qualitative differences would be more difficult to assess, but the influence of fetishism would, I believe, be revealed in a number of ways. There would be a greater tendency to conform to the demands of the state and increased isolation from the problems which affect the population as a whole. These tendencies would, I believe, be found equally in Oxbridge and Redbrick; 'Lucky Jims' have established themselves in the arts faculties while the natural scientists restrict their original thinking to their own disciplines. The question of social origin, which can be assessed quantitatively, is in any case not fundamental: the whole climate of thought of a particular epoch is involved.

Studies of all the different sections of the ruling class and its supporters are needed in order to fill in this picture: only a few are available and much more research is needed in this area of society.

THE PROLETARIAT IN THE WELFARE STATE

Mere description and fact collecting is not enough, however; sociologists have demonstrated

this clearly by their numerous studies of the working class in post-war Britain. Concentrating mainly on such safe areas as family relationships these studies have revealed nothing which was not already known. Relatively full employment has enabled the working class to purchase the means by which their consciousness of existing as a class 'in' and 'for' itself is made more difficult. The products of the entertainments industry penetrating into their homes and into every corner of their private lives, serve to separate them from their personal experience and heighten their sense of isolation as individuals. They are subjected to the stimuli of well-established emotional symbols in press, television and music, so that their senses are continually being excited while the means of their achieving emotional satisfaction are all too rarely present. Like dreams these products distort human experience in order to provide substitute satisfaction: they leaves the consumers vaguely dissatisfied with themselves and with life, and they turn people away from real life and real satisfaction. From the point of view of the producers of these commodities this is a desirable state of affairs. These substitute satisfactions become necessities; always on the point of boredom the consumers experience feelings of emptiness and anguish. They turn once more to the distractions which the entertainments industry has to sell. From the point of view of the ruling class, too, this situation has its advantages. They can use ordinary National Servicemen to fight wars and carry out repressive measures—including concentration camps and tortures—against rebellious populations in their colonial territories and they can rely on the working class in Britain to acquiesce passively. They can make use of terrifying weapons of mass destruction in order to maintain their own power and privileges without arousing the revulsion of those whom they rule.

For the working class, and for society, since they form numerically almost the whole of society —this situation is calamitous. The ideology of fetishism has penetrated into all human relationships save one. They feel themselves to be separate individuals, crushed and impotent, controlled by vast and intangible forces. Each individual feels himself to be separated from others by a glassy barrier through which he can see everything and feel nothing. And so they blunder through the world seeking only the satisfaction of their own senses and never finding it. Husbands and wives, parents and children, neighbours and friends, attempt continually but unsuccessfully to establish warm, human contact with one another.

They lack any form of art to intensify and deepen their experience of the world and themselves. This might help them break through their isolation, enable them to become aware of their humanity, and so end their degradation. But there is no art in a society where exchange values are dominant.

Fortunately there is one relationship which has not been and will not be affected by fetishism, and in which reality appears naked, stripped of all fortuitous elements. Through this relationship the way to a direct knowledge of reality remains open, for here use-values continue to resist their transformation into exchange-values. Although a full-scale crisis affecting all branches of production simultaneously has been averted so far, nevertheless there occur continuously, minor crises affecting one firm, one industry, or even one country. Each individual worker enters the market with the only commodity he possesses: his labour power. Co-operation with other workers is not a matter of ideology but a means of defending their own material interests; in this way they resist attempts to beat down the price for which their labour power is bought. Combination occurs spontaneously; social solidarity has the same importance for the working class as individual egotism for the capitalist. In carrying on their business, workers and industrialists alike defend something which belongs to them, and with which they identify themselves completely. The difference is that the industrialists identify themselves with the commodity their machines produce and the profit they derive therefrom; while with the workers it is their very existence as human beings that is involved. The relationship between working-class consciousness and the process of fetishism is different, therefore, from that of all other social classes. The workers have an attitude of antagonism towards their employers to whom they sell their labour power and of solidarity towards their fellow workmates. But in the same way as the market is world-wide in its extent so the working class, too, is an international phenomenon. It is not sufficient that the consciousness of working-class solidarity should be established in the same workshop or in the same firm, it must extend beyond national and cultural boundaries.

The efforts of the ruling class are directed towards preventing the working class developing *in fact* the level of international consciousness which is *theoretically* possible Here detailed study is necessary of the functioning of Trade Unions, political parties and national movements. Although these claim formally to represent the interests of the working class, their role in fact is to confine within the framework of the existing social system the spontaneous revulsion of

the working class *against* the structure of the system and *for* a really human life. They do so by transforming qualitative and concrete demands concerning all humanity into quantitative and abstract concessions to different sections of the working class, setting one occupation or one nationality against another. In this connection the activities of the leaders of the British Labour Party and the Trade Unions during the last two decades must be studied with particular care. Of great importance, too, are the activities of the parties and individuals which accept the leadership of whatever tendency is temporarily in the ascendant in the Russian Communist Party. As much as any other single factor the long, sterile struggle which has gone on between 'left' and 'right' in Britain, with neither side adopting a working-class position, has been responsible for depressing the general level of actual working-class consciousness.

THE POPULATION OF THE EDINBURGH HOUSING SCHEME

I have listed some of the problems which appear to me to be fundamental and to require detailed investigation by social scientists, historians and others. My own study in Edinburgh makes little or no contribution to the elucidation of these questions, although it was partly through doing it that the above ideas were developed. My descriptions of the lives of the men, women and children among whom I lived and worked are superficial—this is because they are the result of a less complete understanding than I now possess—but within limits, I believe that they are accurate. They may help to illustrate in concrete detail some of the abstract points made in this article.

The same phenomena could, I am certain, be recorded in all of the large towns of Scotland, and, with unimportant differences, in England too. One distinctive Scottish feature is probably the number and character of the children's songs, rhymes and sayings. It might well be possible to make similar recordings in other parts of Britain, but I think it would be difficult to find another area where there were so many of them in the children's repertoire. They provide additional, although indirect support for the theory of alienation which has been developed above, and their significance may be explained briefly.

In the first place it should be noted that this is a peculiarly urban and working-class phenomenon. Unlike folk song, which is collected most easily in remote rural areas where it has survived anachronistically from pre-capitalist society, these songs and rhymes are to be found in city streets. Moreover this is not a survival, it is something which has been created within the last hundred years or so. It is, of course, true that traces of still earlier traditions may be found in them, but this is characteristically a product of the early and middle stages of the industrial revolution. It is now disappearing—although not as quickly as some suppose. Children in the streets of congested working-class districts in Scottish towns still pass on to their juniors a ragbag of remnants and tatters which they have made over to serve their own needs. Each age-set takes something from current adult 'hits' and ties it into the already existing material. In this way the literary content of their art is steadily diluted with the products of the entertainment industry, until by now it is almost all banal and limited in its scope. Nevertheless these activities—of which the songs and rhymes are a part—are an indication of the existence of small communities, isolated from the main social processes of modern society, into which exchange-values and the consequent alienation of individuals have not yet penetrated. These children have erected round themselves a living wall of songs, games and other activities; this is the 'Golden City' from which this book's title is derived. In these street communities the children have a sense of euphoria, exuberance and reckless health. Each individual has personal and direct communication with the other members of their small republics; they are mentally porous to one another and express their separate personalities in an entity which is made up of about a dozen other children. They pursue without self-consciousness the highest of all human activities: the creation of their own art.

But the 'Golden City' is really no more than an improvised shanty town. A fortuitous combination of circumstances has enabled it to be built and maintained; it cannot stand up to any severe strain. The children do not enter the labour market until they reach the age of 15; but this change in their lives is foreshadowed for three years before it happens. Working-class children, and especially the girls, mature quickly. They have adult aspirations while they are still at school and childish games will not satisfy them. The years of adolescence are marked by addiction to the gratuitous and vicarious violence of films, television, comic strip and 'pop' singer. The ardour of their desire for life and experience is readily turned into profit for the tycoons of the entertainment industry. This is the period of the 'adolescent revolt', as these young human individuals attempt to resist the process which converts them into abstract units of labour

power. This revolt is in fact directed against the social system although the adolescent is not aware of it as such. And the place of jazz—the music of unorganized protest—in this revolt, requires detailed investigation. American sociological studies of the so-called 'youth culture' have done no more than indicate the existence of the problem, they have done nothing to elucidate it.

The outcome of the 'adolescent revolt' is never in doubt; each age-set goes through the same experiences and ends by accepting the defeat which marriage and the rearing of children imply for the individual worker in present-day society. The form that this process takes is significant, however, in indicating the probable outlines of the adult revolution when it comes. These adolescents know nothing of religion, or political philosophies: the expansion of exchange values into all the pores of society, including Church and Party, has deprived these of any human content they once had. Oppression is being stripped of its disguises, force is revealed as the means by which the social system is maintained. It is inherently unlikely that any new forms of mystification can be created by the present ruling class. They may succeed in deceiving themselves but no one else.

In many ways what happens in Edinburgh is a-typical of the processes which are occurring in Britain as a whole; an archaic social structure has maintained in authority a purse-proud, caste-conscious alliance of lawyers, shop-keepers, small businessmen and landless gentry. The working class is made up of a relatively high proportion of office staffs and craft-conscious tradesmen who provide the leadership of the local Trade Unions and the Labour Party and aspire only to a share in the privileges and status of local government office. The remainder of the workers are unskilled, unorganized, unrepresented and anarchically turbulent. There is also in the local population a sort of native 'lazzaroni', recruited from rural nomads, hawkers and others on the margins of public economic life. The absence of large-scale industry and the exploitation of Scottish characteristics for the delectation of tourists seem likely to preserve the forms at any rate of this social structure for some years to come.

It is probable, however, that what happens in Edinburgh will be determined by developments elsewhere. As I write, strikes are occurring or are pending in a number of important industries in Britain and in the U.S.A. The colonial and former colonial countries are in ferment; wars and riots are occurring, concentration camps and military dictatorships are being set up in the under-developed countries. These are signs, not merely of revolts, but of *the* revolution. The oppressed peoples of all countries are openly defying their oppressors. The international working class brought into existence by the world-wide commodity market has begun to move. The struggle on which it is launched must end either in the victory of humanity over the forces which degrade it, or in disaster for human society.

So far the separate units of which the international working class is made up have gone into action separately: workers in different industries and in different national groupings struggling in an unco-ordinated fashion against their common enemy. There is no international party to co-ordinate the efforts of the working class as there is for the ruling class. So far the action of the masses has been spontaneous; there is no consciousness of their existence as a separate and distinct force. Nevertheless the character and the extent of the movements which are occurring prove that fundamental changes in the structure of society are preparing. It is not yet possible to forecast the manner in which these changes will take place. One may assume that the already existing organisations of the working class will attempt, with the same assiduity they have shown already, to restrain the mass movements and to contain them within the present structure of society. If they succeed temporarily this will encourage the ruling class to increase its pressure. All the apparatus of the bureaucratic state will be brought into action to atomise the working class and to reduce every worker to the position of an isolated individual struggling alone against his employers and the state.

The conflict between exchange-value and use-value will continue; the solidarity of the working class will continue, too, as the affirmation of all that is human against all that degrades and dehumanises mankind. All human feeling and human knowledge will be diverted into this struggle: to end man's alienation from himself and from the products of his labour and to make him fully self-conscious and aware of the world in which he lives so that he is at last free.

> 'Freedom in this field cannot consist of anything else but the fact that socialised mankind, the associated producers, regulate their interchange with Nature rationally, bring it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by some blind power, and accomplish their task with the least expenditure of energy and under such conditions as are proper and worthy for human beings.'
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> Karl Marx, **Capital**, Volume III.

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