

VANGUARD NEWSLETTER

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STATE AND REVOLUTION IN LATIN AMERICA (Part I)

Introduction

Pablo, viewing post-war developments empirically, concluded that the "epicenter" of the world revolution had shifted to the under-developed sectors of the globe.

[This schematic conception was more completely developed by Mao Tse Tung's heir designate, Lin Piao, in the thesis that the backward countries would triumph over American capitalism in the same manner as had the Chinese countryside over the cities.]

In both cases, the role of the working class is disparaged. To the "Third World" ideologists, the working class in the backward countries as in the advanced is a privileged and "conservatized" layer, sharing in imperialist oppression. Pablo came, quite logically, to agree openly with this viewpoint, and found it possible to become a functionary--for a short time--in the Algerian government of Ben Bella, who had replaced the trade union leaders elected by the workers with his satraps, as had Castro in Cuba.

The peasantry, on the other hand, is invested by the "Marxist, Leninist and Trotskyist" revisionists with the revolutionary qualities which the Marxists have always attributed to the working class.

Officially enthroned in the 1950's by Chou En lai of China, Nehru of India and Sukarno of Indonesia, this conception is now threadbare. It manages to survive today in the US, only by expanding it to include the specially oppressed Black and Spanish-speaking masses as indwelling "colonies" in the US "mother country".

Ben Bella has since been replaced by another Bonapartist, Boumediene. In the same year, 1965, Suharto began the slaughter of more than half a million Indonesian "Communists", and stripped the recently-departed Sukarno, first, of his power, and then of his office.

[In May-June 1968, the French working class sent, not only the De Gaulle regime, but the world bourgeoisie into shock, as restrained only by its Stalinist leadership, it shook the pillars of bourgeois rule, along with revisionist theory.]

[The growing crisis of world capitalism is now visible in the struggles of the masses throughout the world, in the backward and the advanced countries. The crisis of

Stalinism also becomes increasingly acute and indissolubly linked to that of world capitalism. East Berlin in 1953, Hungary and Poland in 1956, are followed by Czechoslovakia in 1968. The opposition of intellectuals and other forces presages a volcanic eruption of the Soviet masses in a political revolution which will sweep away the Stalinist bureaucratic excrescence and recapture the Soviet proletarian democracy of Lenin and Trotsky.

The impressions of revisionism built upon aspects of reality, vanish, leaving behind only disorientation and cynicism. But Trotsky's theory of the Permanent Revolution, which they have either distorted or openly discarded during the period of capitalism's post-war economic growth and Stalinist expansion into Eastern Europe and China, is, in this new period, reasserting its validity as alone capable of illuminating the road for the revolutionists in under-developed countries.

Predicting the path of the Russian Revolution, Trotsky in 1905, stated that the working class of a backward country can come to power, can achieve a socialist revolution, before the working class of more advanced countries. As a result of uneven and combined development, capitalism in the backward countries produces, on the one hand, a proletariat without the conservative traditions of its first arrivals, and on the other, as a result of imperialist domination, a shrunken and already senile bourgeoisie.

More than compensating for its smaller numbers by its higher specific weight, the working class can take power, but only if it is able to achieve an alliance with the peasantry under its leadership. Only then will those national and democratic tasks be solved which, in the advanced countries, had fallen to the bourgeoisie in the 17th and 18th centuries.

But because the proletariat comes to power in a backward country, with economic foundations which are inadequate for the construction of a socialist society, the victory of the socialist revolution in the ad-

vanced countries is essential to its survival in the backward.

The Revolution in Latin America

But perhaps the concept of the Permanent Revolution is now "outmoded"? The fundamental contradiction between mankind's growing productive forces and the social relations which hamper them is now manifesting itself in all under-developed regions in a post-war crop of "left" military bureaucrats, some of whom are even "socialists".

In Latin America, the mass struggles of agricultural workers and poor peasants against latifundia and landlord, the militant and sharpening struggles of the workers in extractive and in growing manufacturing industries against their domestic and foreign capitalist masters, have increasingly brought forth the caudillo. Two-thirds of Latin America is now under military rule.

The military "gorillas" have heretofore suppressed the masses as the direct agent of imperialism, for the greater profit of the giant oil, mining and agricultural corporations, and for the preservation of its stunted domestic capitalist class.

Today, the military juntas are increasingly sounding a new "anti-imperialist" note, are joining their counterparts in Asia, Africa and the Middle East in demanding a larger portion of the profits, in threatening and expropriating foreign corporations, with and without compensation, and in announcing and instituting "social reforms".

In Peru, the military Junta which had seized power in 1962 permitted Belaúnde Terry to be elected president in 1963, only to overthrow him in 1968. Under Gen. Velasco Alvarado, the junta "expropriated" the all but depleted fields and worn-out facilities of the International Petroleum Co., the subsidiary of Standard Oil of New Jersey in 1969 (with compensation). It has since nationalized sugar plantations, transformed other large agricultural properties into "cooperatives", promised to seize (with compensation) all large private landholdings for distribution to the landless peasants,

and has given legal title to the "squatters" on the large estates, who must now pay for the land.

The junta has also declared the fish meal industry a state monopoly, has taken over the Banco Popular del Peru (to save from bankruptcy), the second largest bank in the country, which controls many industries to which it has loaned money, has introduced worker "representation" on the boards of directors along with "profit-sharing" in "private" and nationalized industries and services. It has also converted two large daily newspapers into "employee cooperatives".

This, the junta informs the masses, is a "revolution", a "new path between capitalism and socialism".

But the "revolution" has not prevented it from sending its plenipotentiaries to the US, hat in hand, to plead for "understanding" laced with investment capital from the "American government and people".

The junta has also kept wages down and, as only a small proportion of the workers are organized, has even been able to decrease them. Only where resistance has manifested itself in demonstrations, which the junta has brutally suppressed, has it refrained from worsening wages and working conditions.

The Moscow-oriented Communist Party has been busy in the "Defense Committees of the Revolution", which function as the junta's propaganda machine. And it would seem, the military junta road to socialism has also been adopted by the Posadists and Pabloists, in exchange for the bankrupt peasant-guerrilla road.

In Bolivia, next to Haiti the poorest country in Latin America, Gen. Ovando Candía, the co-leader in the 1964 coup which had placed Barrientos Ortuño in power, ousted Pres. Siles Salinas, who had succeeded Barrientos in 1968 upon his "accidental" death.

Ovando pledged a "left nationalist course" and proceeded to nationalize the Gulf Oil Co. (later arranging for \$100 million in compensation), to announce his intention of establishing diplomatic ties with Cuba and the Soviet bloc, and to also

promise "structural reforms" which would provide democratic and trade union rights.

Gen. Miranda's attempted coup in October (with US blessings) brought down the Ovando government, but failed to gain the support of the majority of the Bolivian officer corps. Miranda then attempted to set up a military triumvirate, but this was prevented by Gen. Tórres. Tórres, the former Bolivian Army head, played a leading role in the capture and murder of Che Guevara in 1967, and had been ousted from the Ovando cabinet in July.

Promising an "anti-imperialist" and "people's government", a government of "the workers, the students, the peasants and the soldiers", Torres appealed for support to the Bolivian Student Confederation (CUB), and to the Bolivian Workers Federation (COB), headed by Juan Lechín, who also functions as the Executive Secretary of the Tin Miners Union. As a result of the general strike declared by the workers, the armed intervention of thousands of peasants and the militant students, i.e., the mobilization of the Bolivian masses, Tórres was able to assume the presidency. However, the arming of the workers which Lechín had requested from Torres, for the defense of the "republic" against the "fascist" generals, was politely refused.

According to "Intercontinental Press" of Oct. 26, 1970, the Pabloist Revolutionary Workers Party (POR), a champion of peasant and urban guerrilla war, has called for "dual power". But it seems, it is also part of the "united left front", the "Command of Working Class Forces and the People", together with the CP, COB, CUB, peasant "Independent Bloc", and reformist Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR).

The "Command" had originally requested representation in the Tórres government but had then withdrawn it, in order "to leave the president of the republic full freedom to choose his collaborators...so that, together with us, he can eliminate the enemies of the Bolivian people and the workers once and for all".

It had also asked Torres to recognize it as a "popular parliament" of "workers, students and left political parties", but it seems, "this demand outraged all the officers so much that it could not be accepted", according to the correspondent of "Le Monde". It has since "reduced its demands to three...raising the wages of the miners to the pre-1965 level; a general amnesty and repeal of the repressive laws; and finally a purge of the armed forces."

The centrist POUM in Spain, wrongly labeled Trotskyist by the Stalinists, joined the Catalan "popular front" government in 1936, and confined itself to appealing to other opportunists to lead a proletarian

revolution, but did not itself fight for the program, provide the leadership which would have achieved it.

In a similar fashion, the POR in the "Command", has helped bring, not the workers in alliance with the peasants, but a Torres to power, while murmuring about the need for "dual power".

In Chile, not the junta road, but the road of "peaceful transition to socialism" under the leadership of the Unidad Popular (UP) and Dr. Allende Gossens, and which the Bolivian POR also sees as a "triumph of the masses", would seem to be on the agenda, according to the Communist parties and Castro.

(to be continued)

CANADIAN WORKERS FIGHT POLICE STATE - by Robert Sherwood

The imposition of the War Measures Act has broad implications for the future of the trade union, student and socialist movements.

The powers assumed by the Trudeau government are virtually all-encompassing and have been used effectively against the left throughout Quebec, resulting in approximately 450 detainments, and several dozen arrests under the War Measures Act itself. Among those arrested and charged with "sedition" was Michel Chartrand, Montreal Executive Council President of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU).

At a War Measures Act hearing, following three weeks detainment, Chartrand along with a large number of Quebec militants were formally charged for the purpose of detaining them for 90 days without bail. Clearly the Ottawa, Quebec and Montreal governments, acting in collusion, are doing their utmost to hold these persons for as long as possible, including the use of charges that bear no relationship whatsoever to the political activity of these militants. Chartrand in court affirmed his long standing political opposition to the government and made it clear that for himself and thousands of others, the War Measures Act was not going to silence their opposition to the reactionary acts of the government.

Aside from the opposition to the

Act voiced by the Quebec Federation of Labor, the CNTU and the Quebec Teachers Corporation, there has recently been opposition expressed by the United Auto Workers, the Ontario Federation of Labor, and other labor bodies. This is a good development, and a move that can help insure a powerful defense effort for the imprisoned Quebec militants.

The terrorist tactics of the FLQ have provided the rationale for a general crackdown on labor and the left by the Trudeau and Bourassa governments. Exaggerating the actual importance of the kidnappings, the government ordered a general repression directed against the most discontented elements in Quebec society, the students and workers.

This should serve as a lesson in the practical result of individual and organizational terrorism, i.e., a terrorism which substitutes for the action of the working class. Instead of serving the avowed aims of the FLQ, to free Quebec from the shackles of English colonialism, it has brought down more firmly that domination. As a result, the FLQ, along with the rest of the Quebec left, is now under serious attack, with prominent trade union, student and left leaders behind bars facing

trumped-up charges.

The Pabloist League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvriere, by insisting that the primary focus of a defense effort should be civil liberties, to the exclusion of the Quebec national question, in no way attacks the central thrust of the government's actions--to attack the Canadian working class as a whole by initially attempting to destroy the struggles and organizations of the Quebec workers and students.

The Labor Action Committee calls for the formation of a broad defense committee to defend all those affected by the War Measures Act. Such a committee would struggle for its repeal and for the release of all political prisoners, and against any "deodorized" WMA, such as the legislation now pending which the New Democratic Party under Douglas is supporting. It would fight for the unity of the working class on the basis of a struggle against English chauvinism to defend the national rights of the Quebecois.

The UAW in fighting for the rights of French-speaking workers at GM in Quebec to work in their own language, and backing up that demand with the full weight of the union in English Canada, has made an important step in the right direction.

One of the prime objectives of the Act was to ruin the Front d'Action Politique's (FRAP) chances in the Montreal civic elections. This it did very effectively, capturing every city office for Drapeau and his Montreal Civic Party.

Although FRAP lost the election, it did manage to win 15% of the votes, primarily in the working class districts. Interesting also was the fact that 15% of the ballots were spoiled and that a very small percentage of young people voted, even though, for the first time, 18 year-olds had the franchise. What could one expect in a city occupied by thousands of troops with a political police let loose with unrestricted powers to arrest all persons they pleased?

FRAP was founded at a convention following five months of organizing work. The three main trade-union

federations had decided in April to go into political activity on the municipal level. There was no tradition of independent labor political action in Quebec. FRAP represented an important break in this direction, despite opportunist weaknesses, as for example, its inability to transcend the narrow horizon of municipal reforms.

FRAP has indicated a desire to enter provincial politics. Real Leninists and Trotskyists will fight to win the rank and file of organized labor for a transitional program which can link up immediate needs and struggles with the perspective of the socialist revolution, i.e., to extend and deepen FRAP's initiative of independent class action in a revolutionary direction. The challenge is also to labor in English Canada to build a similar working class political party to link with FRAP.

Labor in English Canada must learn that the fight to end national oppression must be carried out in its own class interests, that only in this way can the unity of French and English Canadian labor be forged against the ruling class.

The Leninists in Canada will work to convince the English-speaking workers to include in their program the defense of the national rights of the Quebecois, including their right to separate, that they must fight to end every discriminatory manifestation, and especially the super-exploitation of the French Canadian. On the legislative front, they must, at this time, fight for the 32 hour week with no reduction in pay along with a program of public works to end unemployment, a \$3.00 an hour minimum wage law, and an end to anti-labor laws and injunctions. It must call for the organization of the unorganized, and for an escalator clause in all union contracts to cover wages and taxes, to prevent the employers from placing the burden of inflation on the workers.

As the economy turns downward, the workers in both English and French Canada will find that their unity

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JUAN FARIÑAS CASE

For attempting to distribute an anti-Vietnam war leaflet at the Whitehall Induction Center in NYC, in August 1968, Juan Fariñas, once-editor of the Spanish-language paper "Desafio", published by the Progressive Labor Party, and now a writer for the WL's "Bulletin", faces a \$10,000 fine and five years imprisonment on each of five counts.

Farinas is falsely charged with disrupting the Selective Service System, and refusing to report for and to submit to induction.

The Juan Fariñas Defense Committee was formed on the basis of the motion that, "The charges against Juan Fariñas are an attack on democratic rights and part and parcel of a political attack by the government against workers, youth and minority peoples. They must be fought by mobilizing the widest possible support from the labor, student and socialist movements and from black, Puerto Rican and Chicano militants."

Its original sponsors, in addition to VANGUARD NEWSLETTER, include Roland Watts of the Workers Defense League, Stanley Hill, Pres. of SSEU-371, District Council 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, Steve Zeluck, Pres. of Local 280, AFT-New Rochelle, James Haughton of the Harlem Unemployment Center, the WL, SL, International Socialists, The Guardian, National Caucus of Labor Committees, Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, and the Young Lords.

In addition, the defense committee reports sponsorship from the Black Panther Party, the Young Workers Liberation League, the American Servicemens Union, Puerto Rican and other Spanish-speaking organizations, and SDS chapters; from other trade unionists such as Al Evanoff, Vice Pres. of District 65 and John Anderson, former president of Fleetwood Local 15, UAW, Detroit; and from prominent individuals such as Dave Dellinger and Jack Newfield of "Village Voice".

Notably absent were the SWP and YSA, which refused sponsorship on the basis that Farinas' defense was not being conducted solely on civil libertarian grounds.

The committee is planning a demonstration at the Federal Court House

on Dec. 10th, the day Fariñas' case comes to trial.

We urge our readers to support the Juan Fariñas Defense Committee financially and by participating in the actions which it is organizing. Funds should be sent to 135 West 14th St., 6th floor, New York, N.Y. 10011

MIDDLE EAST INFORMATION KIT

On Oct. 10th, we requested the free "Information Kit" which the "Militant" had indicated was available through the Fifth of June Society, PO Box 7037, Beirut, Lebanon.

The Society has informed us that the kit is on its way. It requests that we publicize its service, and readiness to send its own publications and posters "free, in bulk (up to 100 copies) to anyone who will pay mailing costs".

We have, of course, sent them our back issues on the Arab-Israeli question, with our position that the unity of the Arab and Jewish masses for the socialist revolution could only be achieved by directing the struggle against their own rulers, and that, in this context, we call upon the Jewish masses to demand the return of the Arab refugees, and upon the Arab masses for a policy of revolutionary fraternization. We await the Society's response to our "Information Kit".

CANADIAN...(continued from p. 109)

under revolutionary leadership is indispensable in the fight to maintain their living standards, let alone improve them, and that the only real solution is a socialist transformation, the utilization of the factories and land for the benefit of all, instead of profits for a handful of domestic and foreign capitalists.

TROTSKYISM TODAY (Part III) - by Harry Turner

The Birth of Spartacist and the Workers League

Organizations can appear to be very revolutionary when judged by their words, by their, perhaps, frequent bows to Marxist "orthodoxy", to the politically naive.

It is only over time and under test, throughout an entire range of struggles, that the essential political characteristics of organizations and their leaderships become clearly delineated.

Our post mortem on the recent series by the Workers League's (WL) Tim Wohlforth, "What Is Spartacist", has as its purpose the drawing up of a balance sheet on two left "alternatives" to the Socialist Workers Party, the Spartacist and WL--as well as other formations in passing--to support our contention that their leaders, both Robertson and Wohlforth, have acted as obstacles to the construction of a revolutionary Marxist, i.e., a Leninist and Trotskyist working class vanguard party.

In our second installment in October, we stated that the 1962 split in the Socialist Workers Party's (SWP) left tendency had been caused by the refusal of "Robertson and his friends...to subordinate their oversized egos to the needs of the international movement". We also observed that Wohlforth's "ambivalent attitude toward the SWP leadership" was to be "expressed in an anti-Robertson organizational maneuver which served only to discredit Wohlforth".

As was its custom, the SWP had set a two month discussion period in preparation for the crucial convention held during July 1963, which would mark its final rupture with "orthodox" Trotskyism by its political re-unification with the Pabloist International Secretariat, thereafter known as the United Secretariat.

The intense struggle over program and leadership was reflected in the sheer volume of internal discussion bulletins which were published. Every tendency and assorted independent individuals contributed documents, not only on the impending re-

unification with the Pabloists, but also on the specific political issues to which re-unification was connected, e.g., the "Russian" question, which now also included China and Eastern Europe, Cuba, the "American" question, which the majority was able to consider apart from the "Negro" question in metaphysical fashion.

The "Reorganized Minority Tendency" (RMT) under Wohlforth's leadership was, of course, legitimately concerned to present its and the International Committee's (IC) political views. It was also required to make clear the basis for its separation from the other "anti-Pabloist" tendency, the "Revolutionary Tendency" (RT), under the leadership of Robertson. While the separate existence of the two groups had produced divergent positions on a number of important questions, neither had become sufficiently differentiated in the eyes of the rank and file of the party. Moreover, the majority utilized the split to attack both groups for unprincipled factionalism.

But Wohlforth's illusions in the nature of the "Center", his reluctance to make a "premature characterization" of the Dobbs-Kerry leadership as a "finished centrist tendency" led him into taking a serious political mis-step, in attempting to carry through this responsibility.

Just prior to the closing date for submission of documents, Wohlforth produced his explanation for the left minority split, entitled "Party and Class". Repeating all the rationalizations for continuing to view the SWP as still "revolutionary", he reaffirmed the loyalty of his tendency to it, its concern to avoid factional confrontations in the interest of a thorough political discussion of outstanding

issues, and then proceeded to indict the Robertson tendency for having "written off the party as a whole", for having "displayed no serious interest in the work of our party", for seeking "to retreat into a comfortable 'study circle'...", and for rapidly evolving "at that time ... in the direction of a split from the party". As evidence for the validity of this statement, he appended tow of his internal tendency documents and the letter of a supporter, Albert Philips. But these appendices not only referred to the specific internal tendency documents which had been written by Robertson-Ireland and Harper, but interpreted their contents in a manner which could not fail to provide the SWP majority, should it desire it, with the grounds for organizational proceedings against them, e.g.,

would
"A tendency which rejects party discipline (even if only partially) and party building, which seeks to sneak people into the party, which functions in part as an independent entity, which carries on an organizational faction war within the party, which, in violation of party statutes includes non-party members, which is so deeply alienated and isolated from the party ranks that it has in fact already split in content if not yet in form--such a tendency is going down a road which must lead to a split from the party."
(Toward the Working Class)

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This writer, having considered the positions of both tendencies for some months, had by then decided to join forces with Robertson after achieving political agreement with him on Cuba as a deformed workers' state, and on organizational approaches toward Progressive Labor, which had broken from the Communist Party to its left. An important factor in this writer's decision was his conclusion that Robertson's open hostility toward the leadership was more forthright and logical than the ambiguous-seeming position of Wohlforth.

Robertson had only managed to

learn about the Wohlforth document as it was being produced. In a last minute effort to prevent its publication, he called upon this writer to appeal to Wohlforth to withdraw it. Wohlforth, however, refused on the grounds that it was no longer possible, that the document was already known to the leadership. He also refused to entertain the possibility that his document would result in disciplinary action against the Robertson tendency, and insisted that the SWP leadership had never expelled anyone for thoughts, only for specific actions.

Robertson has accused Wohlforth of having "finked" on the RT in an effort at having its leadership expelled. The latter was, of course, concerned to destroy the former politically, hoped to discredit his tendency in the eyes of the SWP membership, and to establish his own as a "loyal" opposition. While personal malice was, perhaps, involved, it is possible to understand Wohlforth's action as based on the mistaken belief that the still "revolutionary" SWP would not resort to organizational measures solely on the strength of his documents.

The "Party and Class" document also made clear that the RMT would have sought "political collaboration between the tendencies", would not have sought to discredit Robertson and his followers, if his tendency had supported its resolution on the "American" question for a turn to the working class, instead of amending the majority document "to continue 'propaganda work'".

As we have shown, Wohlforth and the IC had retained illusions that the SWP was still the "main instrument for the realization of socialism" in the US. This underestimation of the ravages of the Pabloist infection also expressed itself in the document, "The Decline of American Imperialism and the Tasks of the SWP", which the RMT had presented two months prior to its "Party and Class" document. Its simplistic theme was that, like Antaeus and mother Earth, the SWP could be revitalized, would regain its revo-

lutionary elan, by restoring its contact with the working class.

But Wohlforth had miscalculated. The RMT did not enjoy a rush of new membership support from the explosion of his "bombshell". Robertson had been able to submit the refutation of the RT, "Discipline and Truth", in time for its publication as an internal discussion document, in which Wohlforth's statements were branded as "lies" concocted to promote the expulsion of the RT. Appropriate quotations from correspondence and from the Robertson-Ireland and Harper documents were used to "refute" Wohlforth's interpretations, and to put a better color on some of the more awkward phrases to which he had referred.

The last business of the Convention, the election of the National Committee by the delegates, saw Wohlforth deprived of his seat because of his "disloyal" association with Healy's SLL.

Prior to the Convention, the Political Committee of the SWP had moved against the RT leadership by demanding the Robertson-Ireland and Harper documents in question. After the Convention, it convened a Control Commission to investigate the RT leadership, suspended and then, in January 1964, expelled Robertson, Ireland, Harper, Mage and White from the SWP. Shortly thereafter, the first issue of "Spartacist" was published. Its appearance precipitated charges against and the expulsion of the remaining members of the RT, including this writer, from all local organizations of the SWP in which the majority exercised control.

The high-handed procedures of the SWP majority against the RT--suspensions and expulsions for "bad" thoughts, for the expression of opinion within a tendency, without proof of overt violations of party discipline, and, in the cases of Geoffrey White and Shane Mage, without even the evidence of "disloyal" thoughts--had brought the RT a ground swell of sympathy from many members. Protests began to pour in from individuals and even entire local organizations of the SWP.

Other tendencies, including the RMT also joined the chorus of opposition. Many of the protesters were without sympathy for the political positions of the RT. Some even had essential political agreement with the majority, and had simply become disturbed over the abrogation of the rights of the RT. Some, at odds with the majority on one or another question, feared the precedent which was being established. But others, seeing the heavy bureaucratic hand of the leadership in action, also began to give sympathetic ear to the political views of the RT. Wohlforth and the RMT were, however, isolated, distrusted and scorned by all sides. Sympathizers with the majority did not accept Wohlforth's "charges" against Robertson as a manifestation of "loyalty", and still considered him to be a creature of Gerry Healy.

The newly aroused members, on the other hand, gave credence to Robertson's villifications, that Wohlforth had acted as a "fink", had deliberately "framed-up" the RT for his own Machiavelian purposes.

In addition, in focusing attention on the organizational side of politics, in attempting to destroy the RT with sensational appendices, Wohlforth inevitably detracted from what he had declared to be the central question of "party and class".

Although Wohlforth had deluded himself and others that the SWP might still return to a revolutionary perspective through "deepening the roots of our party in the class", the program which the RMT had issued on the "American" question, although, perhaps, somewhat over-ambitious for a small party, was a fundamentally correct orientation for a serious revolutionary movement. It mistook the tempo of economic development and looked for a "crisis of growing stagnation" at a time when capitalism was achieving a new "prosperity". It is now dated in its emphasis on the Southern civil rights movement. However, it did direct itself to the growing domestic and international contradictions of capitalism, which have, since 1967-68, shaken world capitalism.

At the time, and to many SWP members, including this writer, the majority criticism with which Robertson concurred, that the RMT was proposing a "Don Quijote perspective" which invited the SWP to "charge simultaneously into all sides of the mass movement", seemed valid. Robertson's more "modest" proposals for directing the SWP's "general propaganda offensive" along "class lines", were closer to the majority document, "Preparing for the Next Wave of Radicalization in the United States". But both the RT and the SWP majority viewed the economic "reality" in empirical fashion. The former continued to respond to it in the propagandist style which it had learned in the period of the SWP's deterioration. The latter abandoned even these feeble approaches to the working class for the new opportunities which it saw in tail-ending Black nationalism and Cuban Bonapartism.
[Viewed today, the 1963 RMT proposals that the SWP make work in the trade unions, among the workers who were beginning to move into struggle, not only against their employers, but also against their trade union bureaucrats, and to win Black and Spanish-speaking workers on this basis, seems eminently reasonable]

[While the RMT document also made concessions to the "progressive aspects of the growing nationalist sentiment among the Negro people", it did emphasize the need for working class leadership of these minorities, "the most oppressed section of the population...", "the most exploited sections of the working class..."]

The opposition of two themes--between the activity of a revolutionary Marxist organization directed toward the working class, which Wohlforth had emphasized in his document on the "American" question, and the "propagandist" orientation of Robertson, directed toward "selected" arenas for "exemplary" purposes--had been buried in a cloud of organizational maneuvering, but the struggle between the two concepts of organization would be posed again

and again, between the Workers League, formerly ACFI, and the SL, as well as within the latter organization. [Ironically, the WL was to abandon its earlier appreciation of the Black and other specially oppressed minorities as the key to the building of a working class base, for a passive adaptation to the chauvinist outlook of white workers, which it would cover with the abstract and sterile slogan, "Fight Racism".] [With equal irony, the SL was to adopt the understanding that this writer had proposed in a "Memorandum on the Negro Struggle", that it focus its activities on the construction of rank and file caucuses in the trade unions, on a program to unite the racially divided working class in the struggle against special oppression in its own immediate and fundamental interests--but only as a ploy with which to attract student radicals. It was to abandon it in short order, and in the process, eliminate those who sought to implement it]

A few months after the expulsion of the RT members, Wohlforth's RMT, minus those of its supporters who saw the Soviet Union as "state capitalist", was suspended from SWP membership for attempting to force a discussion of the Ceylonese situation. The bulk of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP), which had maintained close ties over an eighteen year period with leaders now in the United Secretariat, had joined the "popular front" government coalition headed by the bourgeois Sri Lanka Freedom Party of Mrs. Bandaranaike.

Upon its suspension, the RMT immediately declared itself to be the "American Committee for the Fourth International" (ACFI), and began to publish the "Bulletin of International Socialism".

As in the case of the early American Communist movement, the "Trotskyist" "alternative" to the revisionist betrayal of revolutionary Marxism had issued forth as two separate organizations. However, history, as Marx has observed, recurs, "the first time as tragedy, the second as farce".

(to be continued)

No!
No!
No!