

# WORLD OUTLOOK

## PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

*Un service de presse ouvrier*

PARIS OFFICE: Pierre Frank, 21 rue d'Aboukir, Paris 2, France

NEW YORK OFFICE: World Outlook, P. O. Box 635, Madison Sq. Station, New York, N.Y. 10010

Vol. 4, No. 11

April 15, 1966

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*a labor press service*

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of deactivating United States aircraft that are bombing Vietnamese territory." [See World Outlook April 8 for more details.]

The proposals of the Cuban delegation met with a frosty reception, according to all reports. The following account, which we have translated from the April 1 issue of Le Drapeau Rouge, the official publication of the pro-Moscow Belgian Communist party, indicates the attitude of the Khrushchevists:

"After Zhivkov [First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist party] spoke, Comrade Hart took the floor in the name of the Cuban Communist party. His speech was received rather coldly by the audience, to such a degree that it was necessary -- certainly to give Comrade Armando Hart Davalos the feeling of not being isolated -- for Brezhnev himself to give the signal several times for applause.

"Armando Hart began by expressing the gratitude of the Cuban people to the USSR for all it had done and was still doing in behalf of the Cuban Revolution. After rejecting Peking's accusations on the 'little aid' given by the USSR to North Vietnam, he voiced an evident truth: unity is necessary in all the problems of the struggle against imperialism but above all on the key point -- Vietnam. But he then generalized by proposing adventurous, irresponsible solutions: 'Let's assure the development of the revolution in every point of the world; let's bring forward the revolutionary violence of the masses,' and other expressions having only a verbal character because they do not at all take into account the internal situation in each country but tend to impose on the peoples, from outside, a revolution which they might not yet want. These are pseudorevolutionary phrases that move away from the revolution and even end up by relegating to a secondary level the number one objective of the moment: to assure victory to the Vietnamese people and to save world peace. But this extremist language nevertheless did not prevent Comrade Hart from finally appealing for action to coordinate efforts in behalf of Vietnam 'so that the country becomes a cemetery for the American planes.'"

The distance separating the bureaucratic delegates at this congress from the revolutionary outlook of an Armando Hart can be judged from the following small item included in the same report by Henri Laurent, the Moscow correspondent of Le Drapeau Rouge:

"It is to be noted that the name of General de Gaulle was applauded two times during the speech made by Waldeck Rochet." (Rochet is the head of the French Communist party.)

The truth of it is that the coldness displayed by the gathering to the Cuban proposals were more proper to renegades and traitors than to people in charge of running the country. The defense of the Soviet Union is very much involved in the aggression being carried out against the Vietnamese Revolution by American imperialism. The failure of the Soviet government to react adequately to the situation seriously weakens the world position of the Soviet Union and increases its vulnerability to possible attack. There is a

deadly parallel between the present attitude of the Brezhnev-Kosygin team and Stalin's reaction to Hitler as the Nazi representative of German imperialism began expanding across the European continent. Stalin signed a pact with the German dictator in the interests of "peace." Brezhnev-Kosygin want a "peaceful coexistence" deal with Johnson.

The truth is that the Cuban delegation conducted itself in a restrained way and only suggested the absolute minimum in the way of sending aid to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The Cuban proposal is all the more realistic in view of the present disarray in the camp of Saigon. If Hanoi's position were now strengthened to the necessary degree, the dangerous war that has been escalating in Southeast Asia could be quickly extinguished through the revolutionary action of the people. This was what the Cubans were talking about.

They should be supported to the hilt and appeals should be made to the Soviet people to put the pressure on Brezhnev-Kosygin to reconsider their short-sighted attitude.

#### WASHINGTON'S DILEMMA

"President Johnson is in a foul mood this Easter Sunday, apparent for all to see," Douglas Kiker wrote in the April 10 New York Herald Tribune. The report from Texas is that Lady Bird, Lynda and Luci were dressed in their Easter finest. "As for the head of the family, he is wearing a scowl wreathed in a fit of ill temper."

Johnson went to Texas to soak up a little sunshine but a cold front hit the state about the same time as the president, "clouding the skies and chilling the days, and almost exactly duplicating the gloom of uncertainty and apprehension that is hanging low over the LBJ Ranch."

The trouble -- as everyone knows -- is Vietnam. What to do? The April 10 New York Times boiled it down to a three-word caption under a close-up photograph of Ky and Johnson at Honolulu last February. The three words were: "KISS OF DEATH?"

From these cryptic words, it is not clear whether the Times means kiss of death for Ky or kiss of death for Johnson. In the long run it will certainly turn out that the famous Honolulu embrace did the political health of neither of them any good.

The Pentagon is now growing very impatient with the political situation in Saigon. The military strategists have a very simple, or, more accurately, simple-minded solution; namely, just move in and run the whole show. "That is what is being debated here behind the scenes," Times correspondent James Reston reported in a Washington dispatch [April 10]. The trouble with that is -- what becomes of all

the propaganda about being in Vietnam at the request of the Saigon government and just to "advise" and "support" it?

Of course, the American troops could be pulled out as even a sector of the Saigon forces are now demanding. But "Washington cannot get out without accepting defeat and abandoning every principle it fought for in the first place..."

On the other hand "it cannot use all its power without risking more opposition from the Buddhists, the North Vietnamese and Communist China," Reston declared.

Another alternative is to dump Ky and try to save the junta. That is the inspiration of the moment. But "a new coalition government might want to end the war by negotiating an arrangement with the Vietcong..." [In the April 10 "Week in Review" section of the New York Times.] Of all the alternatives, the one most dreaded by the Johnson administration is being forced to stop the war. What would happen to the stock market!

If, by some miracle, another puppet can be found by scraping the barrel, what guarantee is there that he will prove any better than Ky or will last any longer? Ky doomed himself by being a faithful puppet and doing everything his American advisers told him to do. Won't the next puppet tend to be a little more fearful about adhering to American advice? But then what good will he be as a puppet? Obviously he would be completely undependable.

Finally, if the Pentagon strategists have their way and simply take over in order to step up the bombings still more, what guarantee is there that the American troops will remain uncontaminated by all the political ferment? Will they remain content indefinitely to play the role of mercenaries in an open, undisguised war of colonial conquest?

In the United States itself, won't the American people begin to get hot under the collar over the colossal size of Johnson's blunders and the enormity of his crime in plunging the U.S. into a war of this nature?

In fact, there were indications from many parts of the country that the demonstrations in Hué, Danang and Saigon, which have been shown on American television screens day after day, were inspiring a sympathetic response that may lead to a new round of demonstrations in the USA. The feeling was that those kids in the streets deserved a big helping hand. Maybe, after all, the best kind of "foreign aid" is a massive march down Fifth Avenue or Main Street!

Small wonder that observers in Washington were "particularly impressed last week" by the "fatigue" that showed in Johnson's face. And to cap everything, it could not even be revealed what "religious services" the Johnson's planned to attend on Easter. Demonstrators from Austin and San Antonio were waiting for word in order to show up with picket signs at the church door protesting his policies in Vietnam.

KY? -- JOHNSON ISN'T TALKING

By George Novack

Since the eruption of the "civil war within a civil war" a month ago, the formerly voluble leaders of the war cabinet in Washington from Johnson to McNamara have had little to say in public on developments in Vietnam. The few curt comments by Secretary of State Rusk have made manifest the administration's discomfiture and dismay in the face of the turbulence its advisers helped to provoke but have proved unable to calm or control.

The present difficulties go back to the Honolulu conference in February where Johnson sought to buttress the Saigon military regime by giving his blessings to Premier Ky. The president's exuberant embrace of the tin-pot general, whose hero is Hitler, displeased some of his own supporters and disgusted his critics in the United States.

Still worse for Washington, this unconditional commitment weakened rather than strengthened Ky's position by further exposing him as a tool of U.S. imperialism. This gave his political opponents headed by the Buddhist monks and all the elements dissatisfied with the junta an opportunity to stir up anti-American feelings as a means of replacing the detested military rule with a constitutional government.

The five northernmost provinces where Hué and Danang are located is the hotbed of opposition to the Saigon dictatorship. This was reflected within the ten-man military directorate by the unruly attitude of its most powerful member, the northern commander General Thi, who had built a base of his own in the military district under his command.

Ky and most of his colleagues plotted to tighten their power by ousting Thi from the junta. According to an account in the April 6 New York Times, independently confirmed by CBS correspondent Charles Collingwood on his return from Saigon, when this proposal was brought to U.S. Ambassador Lodge, he "summoned his mission council, which included the heads of military and civilian organizations, to consult on the plan. One or two members were uneasy about the possible repercussions but the consensus was that the move would reinforce the government's authority.

"Ambassador Lodge reviewed with Premier Ky the details of his plan and impressed on him the need for presenting a good case for his action. The Ambassador did not attempt to dissuade him."

Ky went ahead with the dismissal but was outmaneuvered by General Thi and the faction led by the Buddhist monk Thich Tri Quang who had played a major role in bringing down three governments, beginning with Diem's regime in November 1963. Thi's supporters and Tri's organization, spear-headed by student committees, coalesced on a program calling for the elimination of the military junta and

the immediate election of an assembly that would draft a constitution and, in the interim, exercise legislative powers. They set off the anti-Ky and anti-American demonstrations which have exhibited such remarkable militancy and stamina in the past weeks.

Since Ky's first move against the northern stronghold of discontent backfired, Lodge and his superiors back home have not had much luck in subduing the forces they inadvertently set into motion. As the struggle against Ky has intensified, they have had to change tactics in their improvised efforts to cap the volcano.

Their initial reaction was to back Johnson's puppet to the hilt, urge him to stop temporizing with the opposition, and crack down on the rebellion. As late as May 4 New York Times reporter Richard Eder wrote that U.S. officials had made it clear that "Washington will give unreserved support to efforts by Premier Nguyen Cao Ky to reassert the Military Council's authority in the dissident city of Danang." While the American representatives discreetly pretended to keep hands off the internal conflict, they kept prodding Ky behind the scenes.

The premier was reluctant to act for fear that he could not get away with the repression. "Despite the urgings of American officials," said the April 6 New York Times, "Marshall Ky did not move to put the anti-government movements down with armed force as they began to spread. 'I do not want to create any martyrs,' he said."

Actually Ky was worried about his own neck. Nevertheless he was prevailed upon to make the attempt. The thin veil of U.S. neutrality was ripped aside when Ambassador Lodge put eight planes at Ky's disposal to transport his marines to crush the rebels in central Vietnam. This intervention in the civil conflict was justified on the ground that "we are committed to the support of the South Vietnam government."

This move, too, resulted in a fiasco. Faced with unyielding resistance and the prospect of a bloody encounter whose outcome was uncertain, the sawdust Caesar backed down from his threats to smash the insurgents and their leaders in Danang and Hué and apologized for calling them Communists.

His conciliatory statements and failure to go through with the use of force cut down Ky's prestige so much that his fellow generals in the junta and their U.S. subsidizers now treat him as an expendable liability. What had begun with the dismissal of Thi now promises to end with the dumping of Ky.

This development caused the Johnson administration to concentrate on insuring the survival of the military junta, with or without Ky at its head. Washington correspondent Max Frankel wrote in the April 7 New York Times that, although officials there "did not suggest any desire to push Premier Ky from the leadership," they felt he would not be able to weather the storm and he could be sacrificed in order to save the junta. That was "Washington's principal objective."

"The military leaders of South Vietnam," Frankel went on to say, "though pledged to yield eventually to civilian authority, are looked on here as the only cohesive national force capable of prosecuting the war. Though Premier Ky's troubles are viewed as injurious, the fall of the junta, the officials noted, could be disastrous."

However, the Americans have to reckon with the most decisive forces in the shaping of events in south Vietnam -- the insurgent masses and their leaders. The main demand of the demonstrators continues to be the overthrow of the U.S.-dominated military regime and the establishment of an elected government. The more radical among them want no more American interference in their internal affairs; they want the withdrawal of U.S. troops, and an end to the war.

A typical expression of these anti-American sentiments was contained in the message addressed to President Johnson by some 5,000 students, teachers and other citizens who marched to the U.S. consulate in Hué April 5. The message blamed "the United States' policy of interference with the domestic affairs of Vietnam as the cause of all the crisis." This charge was followed with the declaration that the educators of Vietnam had decided "not to recognize any de facto government, either military or civilian, that is influenced by the United States to implement a policy that goes against the aspirations of the Vietnamese people."

The application of this test would rule out any government Washington would find tolerable. The U.S. officials now hope to alleviate the political crisis through a deal between the junta and the Buddhist leaders followed by the antigovernment forces. This is no easy assignment owing to the conflicts between the rival factions and the temper of the rebellious masses who have shown in Danang and elsewhere that they are not disposed to compromise but insist on the abolition of military rule.

In the April 8 New York Times James Reston outlined the central political issues in dispute between the Saigon government and the Buddhist activists as follows. They concern "(1) what south Vietnamese will form a committee to make arrangements for a national assembly to draft a new constitution; (2) who will be represented at that constitutional assembly and when it will be held; (3) how the delegates will be chosen, by election or appointment, and who will do the electing and the appointing and the supervising of all these things."

Reston reported that Thich Thi Quang, head of the Buddhist Institute of Religious Affairs, had sent a message to Johnson, promising to call off the demonstrations in central Vietnam and Saigon if the president would support Buddhist-supervised elections within three months. "He also apparently suggested that the new constitution should have a single-chamber parliament and that thereafter there should be a vote on whether to invite the United States to remain in Vietnam." Reston ironically comments that "Thi Quang is not a timid man."



His bold proposals should have caused a few shudders in the White House, State Department and Pentagon. They would, if carried into effect, transfer the government power in south Vietnam from the puppet generals to elements far less compliant with American demands and commands. Under pressure from the people, these might declare their neutrality and even seek a compromise with the National Liberation Front and invite the Americans to leave.

Such a measure of democracy would not be to Washington's taste. At the moment the U.S. imperialists have no alternative but to prop up, if they can, the military directorate, whether Ky remains or not. That has its handicaps.

Here is how Reston sees the administration's dilemma. It is not likely to get a government in Saigon which has the allegiance of the people "by supporting the present government, which presumably will not want to arrange its own defeat, and it cannot very well allow the present revolution to go on without hurting the war effort."

The bumbles and fumbles of Ambassador Lodge over the past month have not enhanced the administration's confidence in its chances to find a favorable solution in the deepening crisis. This did not deter Secretary of State Rusk from a reckless prediction in a television interview April 3 that the ruling military council would still be in power by the time elections were held for the constitutional assembly.

This does not look like a good bet while Americans are being beat up and angry young demonstrators are distributing leaflets in the heart of Saigon demanding Ky's resignation and the withdrawal of American troops.

In a dispatch from Saigon in the April 8 New York Post, Keyes Beech controverts Rusk's official optimism in these words: "South Vietnam is up for political grabs and there is little the U.S. can do about its investment here except stand worriedly on the sidelines and hope for the best. Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky's 10-month-old government is so seriously weakened by continued Buddhist demonstrations that it is doubtful it can survive for long."

#### POSTSCRIPT TO THAT BOMB

With the recovery of that H-bomb, dropped over Spain last January along with three other H-bombs when a B-52 collided with a tanker plane during refueling, the world breathed easier. Safe again! Or as Admiral Guest, one of the "bulldog" type, put it in a phrase destined to echo down the halls of time: "Thank God, we finally did it!"

Elatedly swinging from hooks to drums, the New York Times crowed editorially [April 9]:

"It was also an event of political importance. It permitted the population of a whole corner of Spain to breathe more easily, got the United States off a most uncomfortable hook, and deprived the Soviet Union of a propaganda drum on which it had hoped to pound away indefinitely."

Many people will no doubt now feel inclined once more to take a complacent attitude toward the H-bomb patrols which the White House keeps in the air on a world-wide scale twenty-four hours of the day. An accident like the one in Spain is really rare. Small chance it will be repeated. For study by such easy-going souls, we offer the following paragraph, part of an article about the search for the lost H-bomb which appeared in the April 3 issue of the London Observer:

"The Pentagon has lost H-bombs before; one is still missing in the soft earth of North Carolina. But the Palomares bomb is the first to be so publicly missing."

#### REACTIONARIES BOMB BERKELEY HEADQUARTERS OF ANTIWAR COMMITTEE

The Berkeley headquarters of the Vietnam Day Committee were bombed April 9 as the militant antiwar group was preparing to announce the scheduling of a street demonstration April 12 in sympathy with the demonstrators in Saigon who have been opposing the puppet Ky government.

The explosion occurred at 12:15 a.m. when twelve persons were in the headquarters. Four of them were injured by flying glass and one of them received burns. Five nearby buildings were damaged.

The blast left a three-by-five-foot crater near the foundation, ripped apart the back of the two-story, 14-room stucco building as well as the side of the home next door, and broke all the windows in the headquarters and in the houses on either side.

This was the second explosion of the kind in the Bay area in the past five weeks. On March 6 a dynamite explosion blew the national headquarters of the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs off its foundation. This group, too, is opposed to the war in Vietnam and has participated actively in demonstrations along with other antiwar and youth groups like the Young Socialist Alliance.

The Vietnam Day Committee gained world-wide prominence last year when it sponsored the International Protest Day marches of November 20-21. The committee also played a key role in the recent International Protest Day marches of March 25-26.

Ultrareactionary groups in the United States have been enraged over their incapacity to organize any effective counter-demonstrations. Among the American people, antiwar sentiments have been on the rise, putting the reactionaries in a more and more isolated position. Through terroristic bombings they evidently hope to compensate for their political weakness.

THE TRIAL BEGINS -- THE TRIAL ENDS

By Pierre Frank

"We are not concerned about what you write and keep in your desk drawer," Smirnov, the judge who sentenced the writers Sinyavsky and Daniel, told a meeting of the Union of Soviet Writers where he was asked to explain his sentence. These words deserve to go down in history. You can think what you please but it must stay in your desk drawer. Judge Smirnov has given us the exact measure of the changes that have come about in the Soviet Union since the death of Stalin -- a more liberal regime certainly, but not a democratic one. Freedom of opinion has its place in a desk drawer. To take it out of the drawer, to try to express it, that runs the risk of years in prison.

The ruling bureaucrats have, it is true, many reasons to fear freedom of expression among the writers. We have already given a synopsis of Daniel's short story Moscow Speaking. [See World Outlook March 4.] Likewise of interest is Sinyavsky's short story, The Trial Begins, which is included in a book published in French under the title, Le Verglas (The Frost). It was written in 1956; that is, in the period immediately following the death of Stalin when there was a certain ferment, before Khrushchev succeeded in reestablishing an equilibrium by setting as the goal...a consumers society in the Western style.

The central character of The Trial Begins is prosecutor Vladimir Petrovitch Globov, a conformist to the nth degree. He tells his son: "You're preparing to chose a career in law? That's fine, that's serious...But your doubts, your problems, let me tell you, are not worth a fart...One of these screwball notions bothering you? You're still too young to understand anything about politics... Hold on, you just stuck up for the former internees. Well, believe me, I know a little more than you do on that subject. They're all scoundrels and traitors. And talking about wages! You'd like to pay a minister and a cleaning woman the same thing? Go on, here's three hundred rubles; see if you can run the government with that! You think those at the top are dumber than us? But while you're conjugating your German verbs and arguing philosophy, the ones up there have foreseen and figured out everything."

We find him in charge of a dossier against "Citizen Rabinovich, gynecologist," for having "practiced an illegal abortion." The case brings him to think:

"He had already had occasion to indict a Rabinovich, maybe even two or three, in the past. How could he remember them all? Anyway, all these Rabinoviches are petty bourgeois by nature, enemies of socialism, everybody knows it, even schoolboys. There are exceptions of course. There is Ehrenburg for example. But look at Trotsky, Radek, Zinoviev, Kamenev and the cosmopolitan critics...They all have a congenital tendency to treachery."

Glovov's second marriage is to the beautiful Marina Pavlovna.

With this marriage, they can utilize the one's office and the other's beauty to mutually further their positions in society.

Nevertheless only something minor is necessary to set the drama in motion. It begins with a marital quarrel in the course of which Marina Pavlovna informs her husband that she has had an abortion:

"The explosion of an atom bomb...The surface of the earth wiped clean; no more enemies to overcome...Almost unconscious, he reflected that he was doubly dishonored: as a husband and as a prosecutor...How could he reproach Citizen Rabinovich, when his own wife?..."

But the drama concerns his son Sergei above all, a high school boy who organizes a "Party" and works out a program for his "Party":

"Cleaning women will get the highest wages. Ministers will be reduced to a starvation pittance to prove their disinterested motives. Taxes, torture, thievery will all disappear. Freedom will be total, so glorious that no one will ever again want to imprison anyone and everyone will have what he needs. Quotations from Mayakovski will be pasted up everywhere along the streets."

The boy Seryozha and girl Katia continue their discussion on the party program.

"In Seryozha's description everything fell into place even more harmoniously than I have said. Only one point remained unclear in Katia's mind: Must we overthrow the government immediately by force or wait until the rest of the world has liquidated capitalism? Seryozha advised waiting for the world revolution but he admitted finally, although painfully, that the government would still have to be overthrown."

This affair is called to the attention of the authorities by a lawyer, a skeptic, who nonetheless is disturbed to come upon "Trotskyism of the 1920's." Katia is trampled by the crowd in the terrible stampede that occurred in Moscow after the death of Stalin. Seryozha is accused of having contacts with foreign intelligence services. Prosecutor Globov rejects the pleas of an old revolutionist, the mother of his first wife, for her grandson: "A traitor is no son of mine...." Finally he gets another promotion.

But The Trial Begins has another climax which stands out even more in the light of the sentence just given Sinyavski. The epilogue in reality occurs in a labor camp on the river Kolima when Sergei, the schoolboy, and Rabinovich, the doctor, meet...the author. How and why was Sinyavski sent to the camp?

Two policemen, Vitya and Tolya, in search of a way to ferret out the most intimate thoughts and feelings of the author have an idea.

"If we installed a dragnet or a special screen under every

house and gave strict orders to the porters to collect every piece of paper with writing on it....It seems a quite scientific method to sift through the crap."

By this means, the author says, the authorities found the rough drafts of his short story and he was called before a tribunal for "slander, pornography and disclosure of state secrets."

"I was reproached above all with not having depicted my positive characters [prosecutor Globov, the lawyer Karlinsky, Marina, the two plainclothesmen] in the many-sided activities of their calling, but with having posed them as malevolent entities, presented to the readers in their most untypical aspects. As for the negative characters [the abortionist Rabinovich, the saboteur Seryozha, and his accomplice Katia] they obviously received their just deserts, in my slanderous work, but their reactionary basis was not sufficiently brought out."

I have far from given an exact idea of this book, which is almost one hundred pages long, in which the question of "ends" and "means" is taken up continually in different ways, and in which there are also reactionary tendencies. But what I have sought to indicate is that in rejecting "Socialist Realism" and conformist literature with its "positive types" and its "negatives types" the author gives us a strikingly true picture of the part of Soviet society that he describes: the bourgeois style of life and thought of functionaries with their minds set on their own advancement; and the rebellion of youth suffocating in lies who turn spontaneously toward ideas in which the adults recognize the spectre of "Trotskyism."

Writing of such acid nature could only make Judge Smirnov grind his teeth, since his liberalism extends only to the point that he will not prosecute what stays in desk drawers. The trial ends with a sentence of seven years.

#### VENEZUELAN CP BACKS CUBANS AGAINST "BORBA"

The dispute between the Communist party of Cuba and the League of Yugoslav Communists, which flared up again when the Cubans opposed seating a Yugoslav delegation at the Tricontinental Conference in January, has resulted in some sharp exchanges between publications of the two parties. [See World Outlook April 1.] The Communist party of Venezuela has also become involved in the conflict.

Borba, the official Yugoslav publication, declared in an editorial January 24 that according to reports from Venezuela the leaders of the Communist party of Venezuela, held in prison since 1963, had decided to break publicly with the FALN [Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional] because they considered the tactic of guerrilla struggle to be "erroneous and harmful." Borba was seeking to prove that there is growing opposition among revolutionary Marxists in

Latin America to armed struggle as the necessary road to power. The necessity of armed struggle was the central theme at the Tricontinental Conference.

In a long statement dated February 12, Héctor Marcano Coello, the representative in Cuba of the Communist party of Venezuela, seeks to refute Borba's affirmation. The statement appears in the February 20 issue of the weekly Granma, official organ of the Central Committee of the Communist party of Cuba.

Marcano sees the motivation for Borba's attack in the close relation of the Yugoslavs to the official leaders of the Venezuelan Labor Federation and in their efforts to woo the Betancourt and Leoni regimes. He scores "their cynical answers in response to our calls for solidarity with our prisoners, denying their identity as political prisoners, and equating them with murderers and thieves."

Marcano skirts the question of the position of the imprisoned leaders of the Communist party, stating that "It is certain that nine members of the Political Bureau of the Venezuelan Communist Party (Jesús Faria, Gustavo Machado, Pompeyo Márquez, Eduardo Machado, Guillermo García Ponce, Héctor Rodríguez Bauzá, Eloy Torres and Teodoro Petkof) have been in prison since 1963. Luis Emiro Arrieta died in prison in July 1965, and Alberto Lovera has 'disappeared' after having been detained, and was certainly murdered by Leoni's henchmen."

From this it is not clear what the position of the nine are on guerrilla struggle or if there are differences among them on the question. Marcano continues:

"But it is also absolutely certain that a huge majority of members of the Central Committee, elected at the Third Party Congress, is to be found in their fighting positions, contending with the diverse duties of the Venezuelan revolution. The leaders of the guerrilla detachments in the mountains are: Douglas Bravo, member of the Politburo, and commanding officer of the revolutionary front 'José Leonardo Chirinos' in Falcón; Gonzalo Cartaño (Tirso Pinto), commanding officer of the guerrilla front 'Simón Bolívar' in Lara, Portuguesa, Barinas, and Trujillo states; Alfredo Maneiro, commanding officer of the guerrilla front 'Manuel Ponte Rodríguez,' in Sucre and Monagas states; Argelia Laya, vice-president of the political military district 'Argimiro Galbadón'; Concepción Alcalá; Elías Valdez; and many others, who, in order to assure their security cannot be named.

"The underground movement has a political staff which handles emergencies, and a majority of the 80 members of our National Headquarters deals with problems of logistics, masses and solidarity. Similarly, very prominent leaders of our party, such as José Vicente Cabezas (Pablo), Liuben Petkof, Gregorio Lunar, Freddy Carquez, Baltasar Ojeda, Rosendo Paez, and dozens more whom we have not named, are to be found in positions of responsibility on the various fronts."

Besides actively participating in an extensive way in the

armed struggle, the Communist party of Venezuela is on record on the subject.

"In 1964, after Leoni's election and in spite of his manoeuvres, encouraged by the conciliation and vacillation which had even penetrated through to some revolutionary sectors," declares Marcano, referring in this oblique way to the internal dispute over the question, "the Sixth Plenary of the Central Committee of the V.C.P. [Venezuelan Communist party] ratified the necessity of armed struggle as a fundamental form of opposition, and demonstrated the necessity to oppose and seek the downfall of Raúl Leoni inasmuch as he would be another lackey of the imperialists in the tradition of the Rómulo Betancourt regime.

"In April of 1965, the Seventh Plenary of the Central Committee of our Party unanimously approved a political tactic, designed to unite the entire Venezuelan nation in the battle for the conquest of 'A GOVERNMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC PEACE AND AGAINST HUNGER,' which would avoid civil war in Venezuela and unite its people in the fight without quarter against imperialism, and for National Liberation."

Reiterating the aim of overthrowing "the puppet Leoni," Marcano continues:

"Let it be clear that the leaders of the Venezuelan Communist Party, the martyrs, the prisoners in the jails of Leoni and those who are fighting on the various fronts, have certainly not 'decided to publicly break with the FALN' as Borba treacherously states, but have proposed to provide the whole revolutionary movement with an agile and combative tactic of action and struggle which will employ all methods of combat in the overthrow of Leoni, immediate enemy of the Venezuelan people and, at the same time, representative in this nation of U.S. imperialism.

"The armed guerrilla struggle, supported by other methods of mass struggle, whether legal or illegal, armed or not, not only has possibilities of success in Venezuela but also its expansion and transformation into a mass struggle of all the people is the indispensable premise to our liberation. It is possible that it will be a hard struggle, more or less prolonged, that it will demand sacrifices and blood. Our struggle is inevitable; victory will also be inevitable.

"In a statement contained in a message in answer to a group of personalities who are propounding the pacification of the country through the abandonment of the armed struggle on the part of the revolutionaries, the Political Bureau of the Venezuelan Communist Party recently stated: 'Let them not expect us to surrender. The peace of vanquishers and vanquished, persecuted and pursuers which the Betancourt style militarists desire, will not be possible. If circumstances compel us to shed all our blood in the struggle, we shall know how to do honor to our revolutionary duty. This is not an idle boast; you are well acquainted with our determination to fight and our unlimited capacity for sacrifice. There will not be real peace in our country until our right to defend the sovereignty of Venezuela

against foreign intervention is recognized. We have made this solemn pledge to the martyrs of our Revolution, to Luis Emiro Arrieta, and to Argimiro Gabaldón, especially, and we will faithfully fulfill it."

AND SO PROCEED AD INFINITUM

[As food for thought, we offer the following translation of Robert Escarpit's column in the April 7 issue of the Paris daily Le Monde. The original title is "Séries Gigones."]

\* \* \*

When I was a child, I liked to muse over the box of a certain brand of chocolates that showed a little girl holding a box of chocolates on which you could see a still smaller girl holding a box of chocolates on which you could see...and so on to where I imagined I could see an atom of a little girl holding an atom of chocolate.

A similar bit of reverie occurred to me when the announcement came about the success of Luna 10 -- the Earth revolving around the Sun, the Moon around the Earth, Luna 10 around the Moon. Why not continue and imagine a tennis ball revolving around Luna 10, a pea revolving around the ball, and so on down to an elementary particle.

This principle of fleas on fleas is commoner than you might think. The general wants Europe autonomous in the world, France autonomous in Europe, the regime autonomous in France, the general autonomous in the regime. The series seems to stop there but who knows what the general is debating in his mind?

As for the Americans, who so ingeniously fit a rebellion inside an insurrection and resistance inside a revolt, the limit for them; I believe, will not be reached until nothing remains but a desert, liberated at last, and their conscience awakens to tell them: "Go home!"

BUSINESS AS USUAL

The missionaries sent by Johnson to implant the American Way of Life in Vietnam are doing a first-rate job. The Army's Special Forces -- the jungle-trained fighters in green berets -- have been doing a booming business selling blood-stained "Vietcong battle flags" heroically captured in hand-to-hand struggles.

Trouble was...overproduction. Saigon police arrested a seamstress who had thirty new flags of the enemy in her possession. Turned out she was delivering an order to the green berets. The "elite" trampled the freshly sown flags in the mud and sprinkled them with chicken blood. Price? A mere \$25 each.



NKRUMAH'S DOWNFALL -- ITS MEANING AND PORTENT

By Henri Valin

Friday, February 25, 1966, was a day of great rejoicing among imperialist and bourgeois circles the world over. Imperialists celebrated the downfall of the African nationalist who had led the first successful struggle of a colony in Black Africa for independence, an achievement that set off a chain reaction ending in political independence for nearly all the African states within ten years -- Kwame Nkrumah.

As a leading theoretician of Pan-Africanism, Nkrumah again and again voiced the anger of the African nationalists over the repeated crimes and conspiracies of imperialism against the peoples of Africa -- when Lumumba was murdered; when Ben Bella was overthrown; when Ian Smith got away with his Unilateral Declaration of Independence for a white settlers' regime in Southern Rhodesia against the sham "resistance" and "boycott" organized by the "Labour" imperialists in power in London.

Nkrumah's book Neo-Colonialism -- the Last Stage of Imperialism, which was published last year, met with an angry public response from G. Mennen Williams, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs in the U.S. State Department, because of its indictment of the role of American capital in consolidating the economic stranglehold of imperialism over Africa after most areas had won independence. A loan granted to Ghana was even cancelled due to the outcry in Wall Street over the book.

The rejoicing of the world bourgeoisie was due not only to dislike for Kwame Nkrumah. The London Sunday Times [March 6] carried a headline, "Ghana Swings to the West." The generally well-informed Paris daily Le Monde declared [March 4] that the "National Liberation Council" installed in power through the February 25 military putsch was preparing to restore industry in Ghana to private ownership. In fact, what began that day in Ghana was to all intents and purposes a counterrevolution.

Revolutionary socialists have many criticisms to make of Kwame Nkrumah. They are quite able to analyze the reasons why his policies led to his own downfall. But they are not so factionally blinded as to fail to recognize a counterrevolution when they see one. Their duty is to oppose it and intransigently fight against it whatever the shortcomings of the regime it seeks to topple. For revolutionists all over Africa, February 25 was a Black Friday indeed!

A Reactionary Putsch, Not a Popular Uprising

The imperialist press has printed all kinds of false stories about a "popular uprising" that is said to have topped Nkrumah's regime. Nothing is further from the truth. Nkrumah was overthrown through a reactionary military putsch carried out by the Second Brigade of the Ghana army which was staffed by members of the Ashanti

tribe, of late more and more hostile to Nkrumah.

It seems established that British and American imperialist circles, as well as the CIA and the British Secret Service, conspired with the military in bringing Nkrumah down. The former head of the Ghana Secret Service, one Khoo Daniel Amihyia, who was dismissed from his job by Nkrumah and who has lived in London since 1961, boasted publicly of his part in the conspiracy. On returning to Accra, he was demonstratively put in jail for having given the game away.

Terms do not exist sharp enough to denounce the role played by the "Labour" imperialists at the head of the British government in bringing about Nkrumah's downfall. These gentlemen are against force and violence if it is directed at Ian Smith's tyranny in Southern Rhodesia. As "humanitarians" they shudder at the very thought of an armed uprising against the inhuman fascist dictatorship crushing the majority of African inhabitants of the Union of South Africa under Verwoerd. But high diplomats, army officers and spies under their orders have calmly employed force to overthrow one of the few governments of Black Africa whose claim to be "socialist" -- in the sense of the reformist welfare Social Democracy -- was not completely unfounded.

Heading the bourgeois state machine in Britain and administering the affairs of British imperialism, the leaders of the Labour party have participated in some of the most shameful actions of world imperialism in the past eighteen months -- the Belgian paratroop attack against the nationalist government of Stanleyville; the U.S. imperialist aggression against the Vietnamese revolution; the toleration of Southern Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence behind the smoke screen of a fake "blockade."

#### Why Did the Putsch Succeed?

For some time Nkrumah himself had felt that an imperialist conspiracy directed against his regime was underway. He issued public warnings about it. Several attempts were made to assassinate him. During one of them he had to use a gun in self-defense, so lax and unfriendly had the police become around him. As one conspiracy after another was uncovered and publicly exposed, the world bourgeois press sneered at his "persecution complex." Events have shown that these warnings were only too well founded.

However, the real conspiracy that brought Nkrumah down was not the military one, of which he seemed to be expectant for some time (in July of last year he dismissed Major General Ankrah as deputy chief of staff, holding him to be a security risk, and this February he warned parliament against the increasing role of the army in African politics). The real conspiracy was the catastrophic decline in the price of cocoa during the past seven years to nearly one-fifth of what it was in the late fifties. From a peak of £352 a ton in 1957-58, the price dropped to £180 in 1963-64 and down to as low as £75 last summer, after which prices picked up again.

The decline in the price of cocoa came after a period during

which "they were encouraged by the manufacturers to expand their production, with the assurance that they could count on prices between £200 and £250 a ton at least up to 1970. This July, Ghana's main crop cocoa for shipment between August and September was being quoted at £87:10s. a ton. But the country has already ploughed many millions of pounds into improvement schemes and disease control... all the effort and investment earned a nil return." (The Economist, October 2, 1965.)

Now Ghana is mainly a cocoa exporting country. Its economy has all the shortcomings flowing from monoculture -- its fate hinges essentially on the price of cocoa. When prices started to slide, the currency reserves built up to £200 million during the forties and fifties began to melt away (they were down to a few million pounds at the time Nkrumah was overthrown). Ghana's economic development plan, based on the assumption that cocoa earnings would amount to £100 million annually in the late sixties, including 1970, was upset when earnings stagnated around £70 million.

Since Nkrumah did not want to revise the seven-year plan (among other reasons, precisely in order to overcome the dependence of the country on a single crop!), deficit financing was resorted to on a wider and wider scale, the deficit rising to £40 million for the 1963 budget. This in turn meant increased inflation, rising food prices and mounting scarcities in some goods like yams and knives. These developments, completely opposite to the expectations of the people who had voted Nkrumah into power and who had associated independence with the hope of a steadily increasing standard of living, created the general climate of political unrest in which a conspiracy like the one organized by the officers on February 25 could succeed.

It is true that the price of cocoa rose again after last summer. But it did not reach the minimum price of £200 a ton sought by the Ghanaians. It is also true that the catastrophic decline was caused not only by the manipulations of the big chocolate trusts in Britain and the U.S. but also by overproduction due to a vast expansion of output in countries other than Ghana. Nevertheless it is significant that within a few days after Nkrumah's fall, cocoa for delivery in March-May 1966 was quoted on the London exchange at £178:9s. a ton. As late as February 20 the quotation was £160. In any case the damage had been done. The collapse of the price of cocoa bankrupted the Ghanaian exchequer, reduced the standard of living for the Ghanaian people and ended in the collapse of Nkrumah.

#### "Welfare Socialism" in a Neocolonialist Framework

Ghana's economic structure was a queer mixture of "welfare socialism" of the type seen in Western Europe and typical neocolonialism. Such a combination hardly seems possible -- until the consideration is brought in that the per capita gross national product in Ghana in 1955 was three times that of Nigeria and nearly ten times higher than that of India -- the remarkable figure of £165, which appears to be equal to or above that of Turkey!

This high income was mainly due to a long-term rise in the price of cocoa and an effective cooperative system that eliminated most of the middleman's profit in the wholesale trade and export. A government Cocoa Marketing Board bought at a fixed price all the cocoa planted for the market by the Ghanaian peasants. In addition to the Cocoa Marketing Board, a strong cooperative system was developed by the United Ghana Farmers Council, and a state sector was opened in agriculture, the State Farm Corporation holding 105 farms covering 80,000 acres by the end of 1965. This area was scheduled to be expanded to 220,000 acres by the end of 1969. Mainly food crops like rice were to be grown in this sector.

However, alongside these forms of state intervention in the economy, which were obviously in the interests of the peasant masses and the working population in general, there is a predominantly private sector in agriculture. This includes not only independent small peasants owning their own piece of land but also middle peasants and farmers exploiting labor power on a large scale. Many cocoa growers use migrating sharecroppers from neighboring countries (Togo and Upper Volta), through a system called abusa under which the sharecroppers receive one-third of the crop and the proprietors two-thirds.\*

Industry, banking and international transport display a similar combination of "welfare socialism" and typical neocolonialism. The Nkrumah government made an effort -- a costly one -- to free the country from dependence on the big British shipping and airline companies. An independent state-owned Ghanaian airline company (Ghana Airways) and a Ghanaian shipping company (Black Star Line) were developed. A large number of state-owned mining, banking and industrial companies were also set up. (In cases of nationalization, handsome compensation was paid to the former owners.)

But alongside these government enterprises, quite a number of Ghanaian businessmen started up private concerns of their own, especially in consumer goods. With the assistance of French and West German private capital, Ghana built a large textile industry. Italian capital helped build an oil refinery which makes Ghana self-sufficient in this field. And the biggest industrial scheme, the £70 million Volta River Project and the £36 million Valco aluminum smelting plant, to make the country self-sufficient in power and aluminum, are completely dominated by international capital (the two big American aluminum outfits, Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Corporation and Reynolds Metal Company, as well as various international banking corporations like the International Bank for Recon-

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\*Nkrumah was readying a new agrarian reform that would have increased the sharecropper's proportion and at the same time take away half of what the landowner traditionally received, a part going to a National Collective Productivity Fund. Besides this, an Agricultural Development Fund would loan money at low interest rates to the poor peasants, freeing them from the grip of the usurers and moneylenders. Thus two main sources of profit for the rich farmers and village bourgeoisie were threatened. Nkrumah's hour had obviously struck.

struction and Development, the Export-Import Bank of the British government, etc.).

The latest report of the World Bank gives the total capital investment in Ghana since 1959 (including government loans and aid) as £80 million from Great Britain, £40 million from West Germany, £30 million from the U.S., £10 million from France, £10 million from the USSR, £10 million from Poland and £2 million from China.

There is therefore no doubt about the basic structure of Ghana's economy being neocolonial. But it is true that within this neocolonial framework, the masses enjoyed a higher standard of living than in the other African countries, not only thanks to a more developed economy, but also thanks to the many social reforms carried out by the Nkrumah regime, such as free education (the number of pupils in primary schools rose from 154,000 in 1951 to 1,480,000 in January 1966), free health service, state insurance, the extension of the piped water system, and nearly full employment.

#### From the Stone Age to "Scientific" Socialism

On this hybrid but basically capitalist economic structure, Nkrumah erected a no less hybrid political regime and state power, the basically bourgeois nature of which was to tragically assert itself against its founder in the end.

Kwame Nkrumah broke very early with the first political party of the Ghanaian bourgeoisie, the "United Gold Coast Convention," and established his own popular "Convention People's Party," which received a large majority in the British-controlled general elections. There appears to be no reason to doubt that this party had the genuine allegiance of the masses of simple peasants and urban workers and that it moved continually towards the left. It should not be overlooked that Ghana was the African country with the largest number of British-educated bourgeois entrepreneurs and middle-class intellectuals and administrators. Much of the hate for Nkrumah displayed by the imperialist press for years was really an expression of solidarity with the top layers of the Ghanaian bourgeoisie whom Nkrumah largely eliminated from the direct exercise of political power.

Did Nkrumah thus succeed in creating that strange animal, a brain child of Nikita Khrushchev and other leaders of the Soviet bureaucracy, the "national democratic state," a creature neither flesh nor fowl, neither a bourgeois nor workers state, as proclaimed in the new party program adopted at the twenty-second congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union? Unfortunately for them, events have once again confirmed that the "dogmatic" Marxist theory of the state continues to be much more serviceable in seeking to understand current developments in Africa than any of the revisionists' "new" discoveries.

It is to be understood, of course, that any progressive nationalist, and all the more so a revolutionary socialist, who set out to build a workers state in a country like Ghana would face

enormous difficulties. The country is a caldron of conflicting social forces, some of them closer to the age of stone than the jet plane. The tribal chiefs who control most of the more backward areas of Northern Ghana rose up in strong opposition to the government when it sought to introduce...compulsory primary schooling for girls. Already turned away from the people in the time of British rule, and used as tools by the imperialists to maintain their domination over the masses, these chiefs several times came into sharp conflict with Nkrumah, especially when the central government sought to end their domination in local affairs by setting up town and city councils. They were also dissatisfied at being kept out of the central government.

Besides the rather numerous British-educated bourgeoisie and intellectuals, independent Ghana inherited from the Gold Coast colony a complete system of army and state administration which remained practically intact throughout the entire period of Nkrumah's rule. In a special supplement to Africa and the World, a magazine published in London with a political line identical to that of Nkrumah's Convention People's party, the editor Douglas Rogers commented as follows on the military putsch:

"When Ghana became independent, it had to take over a colonial army trained and led by British officers...After independence, Ghana had to take over the old colonial administrative apparatus. Many of the top-rank officials had had years of loyalty to the British colonial regime. They constituted a privileged middle class, like the army officers, and they strongly resented Nkrumah's struggle to create democracy and social equality in the country. Some of them were connected with chiefly families who have retained a smoldering resentment at the introduction of modern local government, with municipal and town councils, increasingly assuming the power previously vested in the traditional chiefs.

"As the socialist, democratic revolution grew and spread, there remained an underlying potential for counter-revolution."

The analysis is fairly correct; but the conclusion is a half truth which hides the central fact. It is precisely because the revolution had not grown to a point where it became socialist, where it destroyed the economic power of the propertied class, where it overthrew the old, imperialist-installed state machine, that the "potential for counter-revolution" could be so easily used to bring down Nkrumah!

Douglas Rogers seems to miss a decisive point. What is to be noted in Nkrumah's downfall as well as in the earlier downfall of Ben Bella is precisely the failure of all attempts to reconcile irreconcilable class conflicts, the failure of all attempts to "build socialism" without a workers state that has previously destroyed the bourgeois state machine, the failure to find an "African road to socialism" based somehow on national solidarity and class collaboration as opposed to the classic Marxist-Leninist road of revolutionary class struggle.

When Rogers states that Nkrumah was unable to eliminate the Sandhurst-trained officers of the Ghanaian army, because that would have meant "instant armed resistance," he forgets that by leaving them in charge of the army nothing was gained. They finally rose against Nkrumah anyway, and in the meantime the masses had become demoralized. Wouldn't it have been better to meet them in a trial of strength at the time independence was won, when the mass movement was rising and buoyant and could have swept away any resistance attempted by a few hundred neocolonialist-minded officers?

Wasn't it Nkrumah's policy to try to conciliate the backward, reactionary tribal chiefs in relation to his "welfare socialism"? Wasn't there even a blueprint announced in June 1965 to set up a national organization of chiefs and include it as part of the government party, the Convention People's party? Wasn't the same conciliatory policy followed towards the native bourgeoisie and foreign imperialism? Wasn't this the root of the evil?

Nkrumah was undoubtedly the main spokesman of revolutionary nationalists in Africa who wanted to unify the continent. He stood up strongly against most of the political schemes and plots imperialism hatched in Africa. But his attitude towards the neocolonialist stooges and reactionaries heading the majority of African states remained contradictory at best.

On the one hand he offered asylum to many revolutionary exiles from neighboring countries or South Africa who continued to struggle for the emancipation of their peoples. The Sawaba movement of the Republic of Niger, the Kamerun guerrilla fighters, the outlawed left opposition of the Ivory Coast, and various national organizations of South Africa had their headquarters in Ghana. Guerrilla training camps were opened on Ghanaian territory for several of these movements. All this speaks in favor of Nkrumah.

But on the other hand, he sought to unify Africa not by means of a revolutionary mass movement from below but by cementing together the various existing states with their -- in most cases utterly reactionary! -- governments, armies and high functionaries plundering their respective treasuries. And that, of course, was contradictory to the highest degree. That the reactionary governments of Africa ganged up against Nkrumah was more or less inevitable. That he succumbed again and again to their blackmail because he wanted to "unify Africa" with their help and assistance was a tragic mistake. At the latest "summit" meeting of the Organization of African Unity in Accra, he even agreed to their demand to expel the foreign political refugees from Ghana. Before he could keep his promise, his enemies eliminated him from power.

In addition to these historically futile attempts to win reconciliation from his irreconcilable class enemies, Nkrumah suffered from an overdose of paternalism in his attitude towards the Ghanaian people. Again it must be stressed that the task of building up a mass movement along genuinely revolutionary-socialist lines in a backward country like Ghana is extremely difficult. National and tribal peculiarities must indeed be taken into account, and ways and

means found to express socialist ideas in a manner that catches the imagination of the people.

But considerations of this nature can in no case justify the systematic use of the mystique of the leader cult which Nkrumah cultivated around his alleged role as "osagyefo" (redeemer) of the country. This was combined with ever-increasing bureaucratization of the Convention People's party, of severe repression of trade-union autonomy, of rampant corruption among the government and party functionaries, of growing privileges to the party and state bureaucracy. (The crassest case was that of Minister Edusei's wife ordering a gold (!) bed to be paid for out of the public exchequer. There is no doubt that Nkrumah knew about the corruption of most of his ministers, and that he was both unable and unwilling to eliminate this disease, perhaps because he also participated in it.) Such a policy, based upon lack of confidence in the masses, could only heighten the apathy induced by the unfavorable change in the economic climate.

### From Permanent Counterrevolution to Permanent Revolution

For more than eighteen months now, the African scene has gone from bad to worse. The overthrow of the nationalist Stanleyville government by Belgian paratroopers and Tshombe's white mercenaries; the military coup that overthrew Ben Bella; the elimination of the Communist party and all left-wingers from the civilian government in Sudan; a series of military coups d'état in the neocolonialist states controlled by French imperialism like Dahomey, Central African Republic and Upper Volta; the way Ian Smith could get away with his Unilateral Declaration of Independence; and now the overthrow of Nkrumah, all point in the same direction -- a seemingly uninterrupted wave of counterrevolutions is sweeping Africa. Only the military coup in Nigeria can be listed as a partial exception. That this wave is not yet over is indicated by the fact that after Nkrumah's downfall, Oginga Odinga, leader of the left wing in Kenya, was dismissed as vice-president of the country and expelled from the government party, the Kenya African National Union, which he had helped to found. Sekou Touré in Guinea, Modibo Keita in Mali, Nyerere in Tanzania, and even Nasser in Egypt, feel insecure. As for President Obote of Uganda, he escaped Nkrumah's fate a few weeks ago only by striking first himself and putting nearly half his cabinet in prison.

Without doubt what is involved in this wave of counterrevolution is a considered imperialist plot, in which both the CIA and the British secret service play their role, to stem the tide of the African revolution before it undermines the foremost strategic and economic positions held by imperialism in that continent -- the Rhodesian copper belt and the South African gold and diamond fields. The systematic way in which imperialism is able to organize these coups, with virtually complete passivity on the part of the Kremlin, is at the same time a severe indictment of those forces that have claimed "peaceful coexistence" is possible on the basis of the pledge of imperialism not to export counterrevolution.

It is significant that some nationalist leaders are trying in their own way to draw some lessons from Nkrumah's fate. Nyerere



made a public appeal for amplification of the African revolution and not to be frightened by the temporary victory of the counter-revolution in Ghana. In a resolution adopted by its national council meeting in Bamako on March 15-16, the National Union of Workers of Mali called on the workers to defend the fruits of their revolution at all cost, and urged them to organize workers' militias in the workshops, construction sites and other enterprises. This is certainly a step in the right direction.

Basically, the imperialist move to reestablish rule by direct stooges rather than to be satisfied with preserving economic power under the administration of popular nationalist leaders, reflects desperation in the face of historical trends. It demonstrates that the margin for conciliation between the fundamental interests of world imperialism and the nationalist masses of Africa, fighting for independence but still lacking clear socialist consciousness, has become narrower and not wider.

From the viewpoint of imperialism, it is a thousand times preferable to exploit the wealth of a semicolonial country through the instrument of a popular nationalist leader of the bourgeois (Nehru, Sukarno) or petty-bourgeois (Nkrumah, Nasser) type, than through the rule of military stooges like Suharto, Ankrah or Ky, who have no durable mass base in the country at all and who can only sooner or later provoke mass uprisings which are much more costly to keep in check (look at Vietnam!) than underwriting nationalist leaders with a mass following.

If imperialism nevertheless feels compelled to put these stooges in power everywhere, it is because it believes too much is at stake and that the chances of African nationalism developing even under petty-bourgeois leaders are too great. The call for a Pan-African army to wage war against the white settlers' Southern Rhodesia -- which would have been only a stage towards war against Verwoerd's apartheid regime -- is certainly not unrelated to the decision of imperialism to do away with Nkrumah.

These counterrevolutionary coups can succeed only if the masses are relatively apathetic -- a condition for which the nationalist leaders themselves often bear the main responsibility (as in the cases of Ben Bella and Nkrumah). But the apathy cannot last. The African revolution historically is on the rise. The social and economic factors feeding the revolutionary process are becoming stronger, not weaker. It is only a question of time until some striking success of the revolution will break the series of counterrevolutionary victories.

Such a success could in turn become the starting point of a process of permanent revolution, neutralizing eighteen months of permanent counterrevolution, provided that the lessons of these defeats are correctly assimilated. The balance sheet of these eighteen months shows the historical failure of the petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders, who, while paying lip service to socialism and while taking some genuinely anti-imperialist measures, proved unable to destroy either the state machinery or the economic props of

neocolonialist power, both in their own countries and in Africa, because they feared to mobilize the masses on a broad scale and to organize them democratically.

The African masses, who will rise again, must learn to arm themselves and to root out officers and army cadres groomed by imperialism. They must learn the need to expropriate the foreign and indigenous capitalists, to destroy the bourgeois state apparatus and to set up a new state of their own, a state of the workers and poor peasants. They must learn how to establish the historical continuity between tribal communism and modern communism. They must learn to see that Africa will be united not by a hodgepodge of feudal emperors, bourgeois presidents and neocolonialist stooges, but by the fighting masses, from below, and on a socialist basis. And they must learn that to achieve results, it is necessary to build revolutionary-socialist parties, based on the body of experience assembled in scientific socialist theory, by-passing those who want to lead them into the dead end of some odd-type "African socialism."

Under these conditions, the revolution can make a sensational comeback, even in Ghana, in fact especially there!

March 20, 1966

#### MORE SPECULATION ABOUT CHE GUEVARA

In an article in the New York Times Magazine of April 10 entitled "Whatever Became of Che?" Paul Hofmann compiles the current rumors concerning the whereabouts of Ernesto Guevara. Hofmann is unable to add anything essentially new to the speculation. He mentions the version about Castro having had his comrade-in-arms imprisoned or executed but appears to discount it. While Hofmann seeks to avoid any hard-and-fast conclusion, he seems to lean to the hypothesis that Guevara is active on some revolutionary front but perhaps has political differences with Castro.

No doubt Hofmann has available the best possible sources of information in Washington. He reports that all the intelligence networks, including the Soviet and Chinese, "appear to be professionally piqued" that Guevara could "slip into the unknown" and get away with it. All of them are doing their utmost to crack the mystery but without success so far.

Noting Guevara's great popularity among youthful revolutionists throughout Latin America he quotes "Francisco," a young graduate of Santo Domingo University who belongs to the June 14 Movement: "Che is the purest of the pure." According to Hofmann, "Young intellectuals like Francisco, study Guevara's 'Guerrilla War' and Trotsky's writings." As for himself, Hofmann did not find Guevara to be very sympathetic. He considered Guevara to be arrogant and -- naturally -- a bungling Marxist dogmatist. Such a reaction, however, speaks well for Guevara who seems to have been courteous enough not to express his own opinion of this bourgeois journalist.

ADOLFO GILLY, FIDEL CASTRO AND THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

By Joseph Hansen

One of the targets in Fidel Castro's January 15 speech attacking "Trotskyism" [see World Outlook February 11], was Adolfo Gilly, author of some informative and perceptive articles in the Monthly Review on the guerrilla movement in Guatemala and on developments in Cuba. These articles have been much admired among North- and Latin-American radicals.

In the April issue of the Monthly Review, Gilly replies to Castro, at the same time offering his own estimate of the Tricontinental Conference which ended with Castro's controversial speech. The editors of the Monthly Review, Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy, in the same number of the magazine weigh both Castro's appeal for united action against imperialism and his violation of that appeal in denouncing "Trotskyism." [See World Outlook April 8.] They also indicate certain differences with Gilly.

Actually, Gilly's reply to Castro takes the form of a sharp counterattack that raises broad new questions. His position is therefore well worth examining in determining the framework of the dispute and in coming to grips with the central issues.

First of all, at the risk of considerable oversimplification, let me state what appear to me to be the principal positions as they have been developed up to this point:

(1) In his January 15 speech, Castro charged that "Trotskyites" of the "Fourth International" have been the "main spokesmen in the imperialist campaign of intrigue and slander against Cuba in regard to the case of comrade Guevara," going so far as to state that Guevara is dead -- murdered by Castro; that "Trotskyite" agents have infiltrated the MR-13 [Movimiento Revolucionario 13 de Noviembre] guerrilla forces in Guatemala, thereby leading them into isolation from the masses; and that, in general, "if Trotskyism represented at a certain stage an erroneous position, but a position within the field of political ideas, Trotskyism became in later years a vulgar instrument of imperialism and reaction."

(2) The United Secretariat of the Fourth International in an "Open Letter" to Fidel Castro [see World Outlook February 18] replied that in every single "fact" cited by Castro to bolster his charges, the publications and personalities involved have nothing to do with the Fourth International. Included among these is Juan Posadas, quoted at some length by Castro, who heads a small group that split from the Fourth International in 1962 but which makes the fraudulent claim that it constitutes the Fourth International.

The United Secretariat cited the consistent support given to the Cuban Revolution by the world Trotskyist movement from the beginning and pointed to the responsible way in which it handled the announcement of Guevara's departure from the public scene in Cuba.

The "Open Letter" stressed the Stalinist origin of the slanders repeated by Castro, and asked him to make a rectification; or, if he preferred, five leaders of the Fourth International were prepared to argue the charges with him before a people's court in Cuba. Castro has not yet responded to the challenge.

(3) On the other hand, Adolfo Gilly holds that Castro has become a virtual agent of the conservative-minded Kremlin bureaucracy; that as a result of this he eliminated Guevara from the leadership of the Cuban Revolution, openly espoused the line of peaceful coexistence, cut his links with the Latin-American revolution, and attacked the Guatemalan guerrilla movement, the socialist vanguard of Latin America, in a slanderous way.

The Tricontinental Conference, in Gilly's opinion, was a "failure." It "began with a disloyal and distorted attack on the Chinese, using rice as a pretext, and ended with the approval of a text with no political value, full of generalized declarations, and constituting a fraud on the responsible revolutionary movement."

(4) The editors of the Monthly Review hold that the situation is much more complex and contradictory than Gilly pictures it. In their opinion the Tricontinental Conference was a "great historic achievement" insofar as it "laid to rest once and for all the illusion of peaceful coexistence between imperialism and its victims."

They consider Fidel Castro to still be a sincere revolutionist although they think his attack on MR-13 was "ugly and perhaps ominous." They take issue with Castro's assertion that Trotskyism is an agency of imperialism, pointing out that this was the "accusation which provided the rationalization for the Soviet purge trials of the 1930's." The "malice" in this attack originated from some of Castro's advisers, they believe. In their opinion Castro acted in ignorance and they suggest that he take time out to study the history of the movement. Isaac Deutscher's biography of Trotsky, they indicate, would be a good work to begin with.

They agree with Gilly that the fate of Che Guevara -- along with economic conditions in Cuba -- will play an "important part" in determining the outcome of the present situation.

#### The Mystery Around Guevara

Both Gilly and the editors of the Monthly Review stress the importance of the Guevara affair. The statement by Huberman and Sweezy on this question carries all the greater weight because of its restraint. It is worth quoting in full:

"In his final speech to the Conference, Castro said that 'some day mankind will learn all the facts. That will be the day when the villains will see that comrade Guevara was not murdered; each of his steps will be fully known.' Let us hope so, and let us hope that the day comes soon. For Fidel should be under no illusions that only imperialists and their agents are interested in Che's fate. More than anyone else, even more than Fidel himself, Che has come to

symbolize all that is best, all that is pure, all that is beloved in the Cuban Revolution, a great historic event which belongs not only to seven million Cubans but to all the people of the Americas and indeed to all mankind. If, as some charge, anything untoward has happened or should happen to Che, those responsible (and that would necessarily include all who knew and kept silent) will be forever disgraced. A Cuban regime guilty of such a crime would lose its moral authority and either would be replaced or would degenerate into a police state. In the latter case, of course, the worst bureaucratic elements would rise to the top and do whatever was demanded of them by their more powerful counterparts abroad.

"On the other hand, if the official Cuban story about Che turns out to be correct, if he reappears as a revolutionary fighter and theorist elsewhere, and if he retains his close ties to Fidel and his other former comrades in the Sierra Maestra, then the bonds linking the Cuban and world revolutions will be strengthened and the chances of a favorable evolution inside Cuba will be immeasurably improved. Is Fidel Castro aware of the real issues at stake in the Guevara affair? And does he realize that every day's delay in clearing up the mystery brings anxiety and doubt to honest revolutionaries everywhere and joy to their enemies?"

Gilly repeats an argument first raised to my knowledge in an article I wrote in The Militant of January 31, 1966; i.e., the disproportion in Castro's attack on "Trotskyism." If the alleged agents of imperialism were utilizing Guevara's absence from the public scene in Cuba in order to damage the Revolution and to disrupt unity in the struggle against imperialism, why didn't Castro answer in the easiest and most devastating way possible -- by reading a letter or message from Guevara greeting the Tricontinental Conference if he could not personally be present at this very important gathering?

Gilly goes much further than this suggestion, however. He asserts that "it is completely clear that one of the conditions of this alliance with the Soviet leadership and of this Conference was the disappearance of Guevara from the Cuban leadership."

As to the form of Guevara's disappearance, Gilly quotes with apparent approval the opinions of Juan Posadas, whom he characterizes as "a leader of the Fourth International." Posadas is "convinced" that "they" have "assassinated him, or that he is incapacitated or confined..."

Perhaps Posadas has special sources of information. The rather broad selection of choices he leaves the reader, however, would indicate that he is engaging in mere speculation like many others. He excludes only that Castro might be telling the truth about Guevara.

Why does Gilly cite Posadas as an authority? We do not know. But he weakened his own authority in the field of Latin-American radical politics by not taking the opposite course and helping to puncture the fraud that the Posadas group constitutes the Fourth

International.\*

As Gilly sees it, Castro has gone over to the Brezhnev-Kosygin team and their line of "peaceful coexistence." This required sacrificing Guevara, who, in contrast to Castro, if we are to believe Gilly, held to the line of world revolution, the same line as the "Guatemalan guerrillas program" and "the position of the Chinese." It would seem that Gilly is even tempted to imply that Guevara might have been moving toward the camp of Posadas. He includes a footnote quoting a conversation between Guevara and the followers of Posadas in Cuba on April 15 1965, in which Guevara allegedly told them "that very soon all the works of the revolutionary, Leon Trotsky, would be published in Cuba." Guevara is also alleged to have said, "The Communists call me a Trotskyist and you Trotskyists call me an adventurer." Likewise: "Very soon we will sweep out all these conservative bureaucrats."

It seems dubious that Guevara would discuss such matters in this way with the Cuban followers of Posadas. Guevara took the trouble to gain a rather accurate picture of the world Trotskyist movement as a whole, not hesitating to check with first-hand sources. He was well aware of the claims made by Posadas and discounted them.

Lest there be any doubt as to Guevara's own stand, up to the time of his last contact with real Trotskyists (in North Africa) he had not espoused Trotskyism although he displayed a fraternal attitude to its representatives as he did to other sincere and dedicated revolutionists.

Gilly assumes -- assumes is the right word -- that differences of a most fundamental kind arose between Castro and Guevara. As to hard evidence of these differences, Gilly offers very little. No articles, no speeches, no declarations. This, of course, is easily explainable as due to the absence of established procedures in the Communist party of Cuba for the expression of conflicting views.

The explanation, however, does not remove the difficulty. If differences arose between Castro and Guevara, what were they exactly? We are left with little but deductions and unfortunately -- Gilly, I am afraid, is guilty of this, too -- the deductions tend

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\*As an ultraleft faction in the world Trotskyist movement, the Posadas group at first sought to win a majority through an internal discussion. When it became clear that the project had little hope of quick success, Posadas simply called together representatives of his own faction and proclaimed the meeting to be a "world congress of the Fourth International." The faction set up duplicates of the top bodies of the Fourth International and even issued publications counterfeiting the official journals down to the style of typography. The venture could not have played into the hands of the Stalinists better if they had conceived it themselves; and they have put it to good use, particularly in Cuba.

to fit preconceptions.\*

If we check the fields where differences might have arisen, these are not nearly as great or profound as the fields of agreement between the two leaders. For instance, Guevara stressed the factor of morale, of revolutionary fervor, in the matter of economic incentives. His opponents pressed the virtues of material gain. A considerable public debate was conducted on the subject. Castro tended to side with Guevara's opponents but certainly did not reject Guevara's views.

A sharper difference that was not made public may have arisen around some of Guevara's speeches in North Africa, particularly about certain "socialist countries" taking economic advantage of others through the mechanism of the world market, and about the duty of giving full and free material aid to the peoples struggling for liberation. If these remarks were interpreted by the Soviet bureaucrats as referring to Moscow, complaints may well have been sent to Havana to which Castro responded. This is a legitimate deduction inasmuch as Guevara did not again appear in public upon returning to Cuba. But there is no solid evidence to indicate that more than tactical differences might have arisen between Castro and Guevara.

As to the area of agreement between Castro and Guevara, it is only necessary to check their public utterances. They see eye to eye on a whole range of issues, not the least of them being insistence on the primacy of armed struggle in seeking to conquer power for the revolutionary forces. It was not without reason that Castro from the very beginning of his movement displayed the greatest personal confidence in Guevara by consistently asking him to take the most difficult and trying assignments. Guevara displayed equal consistency in accepting them. Until there is hard evidence to the contrary, Castro's assurances must be given due weight and not simply be brushed aside as unworthy of credence merely because it would fit in better with this or that preconception.

And what if it turns out that Guevara's disappearance is due to some kind of monstrous, as yet unexplained betrayal on the part of Castro? The editors of the Monthly Review have stated the consequences: "A Cuban regime guilty of such a crime would lose its moral authority and either would be replaced or would degenerate into a police state. In the latter case, of course, the worst bureau-

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\*A good example of this common-enough method of thought can be found in the opening page of Gilly's article. He asserts that Castro -- despite being the leader of a socialist revolution and possessing revolutionary sentiments -- "must" launch "an attack against and attempt to destroy the most politically influential guerrilla movement in Latin America: the leadership of the Guatemalan MR-13." Why? We are told by Gilly: "...in order to defend Soviet policy." Not a shred of evidence is offered for a single one of these assumptions, including the predominant influence of MR-13, although Gilly's subsequent deductions depend completely on them.

cratic elements would rise to the top and do whatever was demanded of them by their more powerful counterparts abroad." If this dire alternative envisioned by Huberman and Sweezy were to be realized, the Trotskyists would call such a structure a degenerated or deformed workers state; and, regardless of the political character of the regime, would still defend it with all their energy and determination against imperialist attack.

For Trotskyist theory, this politically very unwelcome outcome would offer no difficulty. We have said from the beginning that the Cuban Revolution must expand or it will go down in one way or another; revolutionary Cuba cannot remain isolated indefinitely. However, it still remains good advice not to cross bridges before you come to them.\*

One of the decisive factors in a qualitative change in Cuba would be deep demoralization among the masses, particularly the workers. As Trotsky explained repeatedly, this was one of the most important elements in the rise of Stalin. To believe someone like Posadas, the masses are surging forward in Cuba -- Castro is holding them in check. While not too clear on the subject, Gilly appears to lean in that direction. He claims, for instance, that Castro distorted Gilly's charge that Cuba failed to give "active support" to the Dominican Revolution, by making this out to mean "the sending of soldiers and arms," whereas Gilly meant "mobilization of the masses." The purpose of the distortion, says Gilly, was "to contain the discontent of the Cuban masses who do not understand why Cuba did not act."

The Cuban people have provided history with the world's outstanding example to date of unremitting mobilization. It would be blind not to see the role Castro has played in this. Yet there are probably signs of weariness to be detected as year after year passes of unbroken imperialist blockade, continual threat of invasion and international defeats like the one in Brazil. Accurate information on the mood of the Cuban people is needed to judge the state of health of the Revolution there. Unfortunately, this is not easily obtained, one of the reasons being that Cuba is in the situation of a heavily besieged fortress.

Perhaps this is the place to mention another hypothesis advanced to explain Castro's attack on Trotskyism. Cliff Slaughter of the Socialist Labour League argues, in an article entitled with singular appropriateness, "How not to answer Fidel Castro," that "Without a shadow of doubt, Castro's attack was part of a world-wide

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\*The Socialist Labour League, a British ultraleft group, interprets Castro's attack on Trotskyism as crushing proof that Castro stands at the head of a capitalist state. The Posadas group, which for all its ultraleftism is able to see that Cuba is at least a "deformed workers state," scores a telling point in criticizing the "brainless" SLL theoreticians for maintaining such a sectarian position. (See the March issue of Red Flag, the monthly newspaper devoted to publishing the declarations of Juan Posadas in English.)



reaction by Stalinism to the growing influence of Trotskyism..." (See the March 26 Newsletter.) Posadas anticipated the slower-witted British sectarian, declaring January 17: "Fidel Castro would not come out with such groundless statements if there did not exist within Cuba and within Guatemala a great development of Trotskyism." Gilly likewise sees a groundswell of opposition to Castro in Cuba which he identifies as "guevarista and pro-Chinese," identified in turn with the line of extending the world revolution; i.e., Trotskyism.

Unfortunately, these statements correspond closer to wishes than to reality. The editors of the Monthly Review are more accurate in stating that "Trotskyism is certainly not a large or important political force in Latin America as a whole." My own impression is that Trotskyism has more prestige, standing and influence than the editors of the Monthly Review realize, particularly in certain areas. This is especially true among the new generation of youth, who are not burdened with old prejudices and who are turning to the books with open minds, anxious only to learn something that can genuinely help them in the revolutionary struggles they are engaged in. But Trotskyism, it is true, has not suddenly begun advancing in a big way organizationally and it remains a rather small minority current in Latin America as a whole. Castro's attack is thus not a reaction to a sudden phenomenal growth of Trotskyism as the ultraleft sectarians hopefully assume.

What the sectarians leave out of account, either due to ignorance or to blindness, is that attacks such as Castro levelled against Trotskyism are not new in Cuba. The Stalinists, or those under Stalinist influence, have been campaigning consistently in this way against Trotskyism since the beginning of the Revolution. In the July 30 and August 13, 1962, issues of The Militant, for instance, I had occasion to answer a series of articles in Hoy that attacked Trotskyism utilizing precisely the same frame-up and amalgam methods to be seen in the attack voiced by Castro. Even the same "leading Trotskyist" was utilized; namely, Juan Posadas. And he was not named. I had to name him and identify the source of the quotations ascribed to "Trotskyism."\*

Were these Stalinist-engineered attacks occasioned by the "growing influence of Trotskyism"? No. They were directed against the growing influence of Fidel Castro and his appeals to the rest of Latin America to follow the example of Cuba. From the Stalinist point of view, of course, Castroism does constitute a species of the genus "Trotskyism."

What is new in the current attack is that it is voiced by Fidel Castro himself. This can be explained by a weakening of Castro's position in relation to Moscow. Which is not necessarily synonymous with the strengthening of Trotskyist influence.

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\*The answer to Hoy was reprinted as a pamphlet, Trotskyism and the Cuban Revolution. Pioneer Publishers, New York. 15 cents.

## The Sino-Soviet Dispute

Gilly pictures Fidel Castro as having become a completely servile agent of the Kossygin-Brezhnev "peaceful coexistence" team, so servile, in fact, as to willingly carry out orders to liquidate his co-leader Guevara. Likewise in accordance with his new role, Castro utilized the Tricontinental Conference, as Gilly sees it, to launch an utterly "disloyal and distorted attack on the Chinese, using rice as a pretext..."\*

And where does Gilly stand in the Sino-Soviet dispute? His article is filled with references to the Chinese. Not one of the references contains a word of criticism. Quite the contrary. "The same line," he tells us, "unites the Guatemalan guerrillas' program, the position of the Chinese, and that of Che's supporters in Cuba. It is the line of extension of the world revolution against the line of peaceful coexistence..."

On this point it would seem that there is some substance to the boast made by Posadas (in the March issue of Red Flag) that Gilly is a "journalist influenced and orientated by the International"; that is, the group headed by Posadas.\*\* For those who are

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\*The editors of the Monthly Review appear to agree with Gilly's view that Castro used rice as a pretext. They state that they do not wish to imply any criticism of the Chinese decision to cut shipments of rice to Cuba, the reasons given for this by the Chinese being "valid and justified." They add: "At the Tricontinental Conference Fidel talked a lot about the duty of all revolutionaries to help Vietnam and carry on the struggle against imperialism. Does he now presume to tell the Chinese, who are doing most of the helping and a large part of the struggling, that all that comes after the duty to supply Cuba with the amount of rice it asks for?" The irony is misplaced. From the viewpoint of defending revolutionary China against the escalating imperialist aggression in Southeast Asia, it would seem well worth while to make sure that no slashes occur in the rice ration of the fighters in the front lines ninety miles from Miami.

\*\*There is sometimes a curious coincidence between the views of Posadas and Gilly. For instance on the virtues of nuclear war, we learn in a declaration made by Posadas December 4, 1965, and published in the December issue of Red Flag: "The nuclear war is at the same time the revolution." He predicts the annihilation of New York, London and Moscow:

"When the masses of the world will see, will learn that 'New York is destroyed' all the faith in the capitalist system and in the bourgeoisie and in the strength of capitalism will vanish." The disappearance of Moscow will have an opposite effect. "On the other hand as we have said the bombardment of Moscow will be the rising of the world proletariat and will provoke the revenge of the world and European proletariat."

This is only the most recent formulation of a line advanced by

not connoisseurs of the remarkable declarations of Posadas, it should be explained that among other oddities he believes that Mao has taken over a good deal of the Posadas line. In answering Castro, Posadas notes with satisfaction: "And the Chinese do not attack us; they have not said a word." Gilly could be charged with having been orientated to reciprocate.

Do the Chinese bear no responsibility for the strengthening of Stalinist tendencies in Cuba? Among the so-called "pro-Chinese," two currents can be found. One consists of young revolutionists attracted by the guerrilla background of the Maoists, their firm declarations against imperialism, and even their ultraleftism. Castro and Guevara are outstanding examples. The other current is Stalinist to the bone. Examples can be found in many places besides Albania. Mao's rehabilitation of Stalin has encouraged and fortified this current. Posadas is simply dead wrong in his assumption that the strengthening of the "pro-Chinese" elements in Cuba equates automatically to the strengthening of Trotskyism. Depending on other factors, it can just as well have the opposite effect of strengthening the elements bitterly opposed to the "de-Stalinization" process initiated at the famous twentieth congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union.

More importantly, Mao's policies are far from being Leninist. Often they are completely opportunistic, bearing the seeds of tragic defeats. An outstanding instance is the catastrophe in Indonesia.

The Indonesian Communist party under Aidit's leadership espoused and followed the line of peaceful coexistence with Sukarno, the political leader of the Indonesian bourgeoisie. Class collaboration, practiced under the notorious theory of revolution "by stages," paved the way for the biggest debacle since the collapse of the German Communist party under Stalin's genius-like guidance.

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Posadas since he split from the Fourth International. Earlier formulations are even more lurid, the suggestion being made that it would be wise of the Kremlin to launch a preventive nuclear war.

Now turn to Adolfo Gilly's introduction to the recently published Studies in a Dying Colonialism by Frantz Fanon: "And it is easy to imagine that if one day the transistor radio of a Bolivian miner, or a Colombian peasant, or an Algerian fellah tells them that Moscow and Peking have been destroyed by atomic bombs, they will rise up furiously and instantaneously to destroy in turn all that which represents their enemies. And if in the same moment they are also told that, on the other side, New York has disappeared from the map, their strength will be multiplied because they will see that their enemies no longer have any support, and they will feel that an immense weight has been lifted from their shoulders."

Gilly adds that "Perhaps this thesis is not very inspiring for a resident of New York." We can agree with him on that.

Peking, itself practicing "peaceful coexistence" with Sukarno, covered up Aidit's opportunism if not directly fostering and encouraging it. Neither before, during, nor since the great mass slaughter of Communists in Indonesia, have the virtuosos in the thought of Mao provided the world revolutionary movement with a Marxist analysis of the disaster which the policy of peaceful coexistence led to in Indonesia.\*

Coming still closer to home, we note Gilly's silence about Peking's open rejection of a united-front policy in defending Vietnam against imperialist aggression. Mao publicly rejects a united front with revisionists and opportunists -- as if Lenin's united front policy were designed for anything else except opening up the possibility for common action with revisionists and opportunists against a common enemy and thus proving in practice the superiority of Bolshevik policies and methods of struggle.

Mao's rejection of a united front policy has done immense harm to the international defense of Vietnam, making it much easier, for instance, for Brezhnev-Kosygin to reduce the flow of material aid to Hanoi to proportions far below what the situation calls for. One of the consequences was to block establishment of a common governmental front of all the workers states that would have widened the opportunity for the Cuban government to play an independent role in relation to both Moscow and Peking.

The end result, given Cuba's geographical position and China's incapacity to substitute for the Soviet Union as a source of material aid, was to compel Havana to move closer to Moscow in the Sino-Soviet dispute than it may have wished to. It is absurd and ridiculous to equate Mao's error on this level with his position on the legal ins and outs of the protocol for exchanging rice and sugar. Behind the absurdity is the assumption that China with its 650 million people and Cuba with only 7 million (just off the coast of Florida) stand in equal relation to the threat of American imperialism.

In view of these facts is there not some justice to Castro's bitter accusations about Peking seeking to use economic blackmail in search of political concessions from Havana?

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\*Last November 15 General Secretary Saturnino Paredes gave a report at the fifth national conference of the pro-Peking Peruvian Communist party, the line of which did not differ in essentials from the line followed by Aidit although it did stress the need for a long armed struggle. Paredes called for the formation of a "patriotic liberation front" that would include the "national bourgeoisie." The "strategic objective of the revolution is anti-imperialist and anti-feudal," said Paredes, and its objective is to "establish a new people's regime." Paredes warned that the prospective bourgeois ally "may" betray the revolution. Not a word about socialist revolution! (See the report in the March 9 bulletin issued by the Hsinhua News Agency.)

In this whole complex situation no greater error could be made than to lose sight of the correct stand taken by the Cubans in favor of an effective united front against the American imperialist aggression in Vietnam. Castro took an open public stand on this immediately after Johnson ordered the bombing of north Vietnam in February 1965. Castro called for vigorous defensive action and, as a token of what was meant, the Cuban government sent a shipment of sugar to Hanoi. Moreover the Cubans have repeatedly said they are willing to send volunteers to fight in Vietnam.

The Cubans made this one of the main themes at the Tricontinental Conference. Castro repeated it in a speech March 13, calling for sufficient "conventional" arms for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to stop the American bombings. The Cuban delegation at the twenty-third congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union proposed that material aid be sent to the battlefield in such quantities as to convert north Vietnam into a cemetery for American planes.

How strange that Gilly, who has given considerable evidence of genuine perceptiveness, should see none of this! Preconceived notions indeed have power to blind one to real facts.

Finally let us note another remarkable oversight in Gilly's article. He does not make even passing reference to the Cuban-Yugoslav dispute. Yet this is so sharp that the Cubans exercised their influence to exclude the Yugoslav delegation from the Tricontinental Conference while voting to seat the Chinese!

The differences between Belgrade and Havana should be of concern to Gilly if he is really interested in substantiating his notion that Castro has committed himself to advancing the line of peaceful coexistence. This is precisely the key issue in dispute between the two sides. The Titoists condemn the Cubans for maintaining the position that the road to power lies through armed struggle; the Cubans score the Titoists for their opportunism and their friendly relations with bourgeois forces in Latin America, particularly the Betancourt and Leoni regimes in Venezuela.

Leaving aside the problem of bringing Belgrade into a united front against American imperialism (which is not easily solved in view of Tito's softness toward Washington and the failure of Moscow and Peking to set up an actual united front), the dispute between the Cubans and the Yugoslavs is of particular interest to revolutionary Marxists in gauging the limits of Castro's political concessions to the Kremlin. Since the dispute is a public one, it can easily be followed. Up to now the ultralefts have not commented on it, preferring to ignore it out of concern for maintaining their preconceived pattern.

### The Tricontinental Conference

The Tricontinental Conference should be judged against this background. Gilly labels it "a conference without glory and without program." In this judgment he comes close to the extreme sectarian

view that the "main purpose" of the conference "was to provide a safety-valve for middle-class charlatans like Cheddi Jagan and upper-class demagogues like Allende to blow off steam against imperialism, neocolonialism and what-have-you." (Socialist Labour League theoretician Michael Banda in the February 5 Newsletter.) Posadas offers an intriguing variant: It was a "defeat" for Castro.

In a declaration dated January 21 (I do not have it in the original Spanish and must rely on the French version published in the February 25 issue of Lutte Communiste), Posadas maintains that the positions taken by the Tricontinental Conference were revolutionary "only in form" but not in substance since it did not issue calls mobilizing the masses against imperialism and did not come out with a revolutionary program. Nevertheless Fidel Castro was "routed." ("C'est une déroute pour Fidel Castro.") The Tricontinental meeting at Havana, we are told, "demonstrated the enormous force of the revolution and the tendency, the objective necessity of unifying the Colonial Revolution." These forces were so strong that Fidel Castro "was compelled to make his first speech the very opposite of what he had been thinking of giving." Posadas, we must believe, has very good sources of information!

"Independently of the objectives it had, independently of the revolutionary resolutions, in form not more, independently of the interests and the objectives of the organizations present, it was the influence of the colonial revolution and that of the Workers State in its highest form -- the Chinese Workers State -- that triumphed," Posadas assures us. The triumph consisted of nine delegations opposed to peaceful coexistence who succeeded in influencing the other delegations. "It was a defeat for all the conciliatory perspectives sought by Fidel Castro."

Well and good. If there is any sense at all to this word salad, we are forced to conclude that Gilly is more sectarian than Posadas in his judgment of the Tricontinental Conference.

The editors of the Monthly Review perform a service for their readers, in my opinion, in taking a balanced view of the conference and its meaning, a view much closer to the contradictory reality. The conference did represent a positive achievement. It did strike a heavy blow against the illusions of "peaceful coexistence." And this was the line of the Cubans, both as hosts of the gathering and as participants in its deliberations.

Nevertheless the editors of the Monthly Review are fully justified in taking a reserved view as to how well the militant tone that characterized the proceedings is reflected in practice. They hold that the test will come in Cairo in 1968 when the second Tricontinental Conference is held. The object and goal for Cairo, in their opinion, must be "to take a giant step forward, to go beyond Havana, to proclaim socialism as the necessary and indispensable condition of real national liberation."

This would undoubtedly be a highly desirable step forward. I think, however, that we will be able to determine much sooner

than that whether or not the Castro leadership has given up its policy of seeking to extend the Cuban Revolution and sold out to the line of peaceful coexistence as practiced by the Kremlin. The continuation of the first Tricontinental Conference and the test of its real line will be observed in the development of the class struggle in the immediate future, above all in Latin America.

In agreeing that the first Tricontinental Conference did score positive achievements, I do not wish to imply that it did not suffer from serious limitations. The screening of the delegations was one of them.\*

Gilly's completely negative reaction to the conference in its programmatic aspects is likewise not without an element of truth. If the conference was intended to found an International, it was certainly a prime example of "centrism." But then the sponsors of the conference, the Cubans in particular, made no claim to such an ambitious undertaking. It was a conference with limited aims. These included giving a boost to united action in behalf of the Vietnamese freedom fighters and to the concept that the road to power in countries where democracy has been suffocated lies through armed struggle.

Quite evidently the program of revolutionary Marxism encompasses much more than this. But it is evident that at this point the discussion can progress satisfactorily only if we turn to the broad problem of building mass revolutionary-socialist parties.

When Gilly, for instance, refers to the Guatemalan guerrilla fighters as being "situated in the center of the political battle for the program of the world revolution," he exaggerates. The struggle being conducted by MR-13 is very important, but is there more to be learned from it either by way of program or example than from the struggle led by the Peruvian Trotskyist leader Hugo Blanco? Internationally, does the situation in Guatemala transcend in significance the situation in Indonesia? And what about Vietnam, which at the moment constitutes the key to the entire world situation?

It is very good that MR-13 opposes the line of peaceful coexistence with the Guatemalan representatives of Yankee imperialism and adheres to the program of socialist revolution. This program, however, can be discussed in relation to many situations besides the one in Guatemala where considerable factional heat has been generated. Thus without losing sight of the specific situation there or the interests of the Guatemalan freedom fighters, it might prove profitable to take a more general view.

For example, the editors of the Monthly Review refrain from

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\*Posadas bears down heavily on this in his January 21 declaration. "Who elected the delegates to this Congress? Who designated them?" he asks cuttingly. The questions, pertinent as they are, do not lack in irony coming from the organizer of a rump congress that founded a counterfeit "Fourth International."

getting involved in the specific dispute as to whether or not there are "Trotskyites" in the MR-13 and whether or not it has a "Trotskyist program." Instead they pose the issue on a broader basis: "After visiting South America in 1963 we stated our opinion in these pages that there is no such thing as feudalism in Latin America and that it therefore makes no sense to talk about a bourgeois revolution." And again: "But if Fidel Castro and the Latin American Communist Parties duck the question of socialism, and still more if they attack as Trotskyites all those who openly struggle for a specifically socialist revolution, then the prospects for Latin American Trotskyism will be vastly improved. For the necessity, and indeed the inevitability, of socialist revolution, not in some vague future but as the next historical stage in Latin America is rooted in the underdeveloped, imperialist-enforced reality of that region."

Here we reach the root of the question. The specific contribution to revolutionary theory that has become labelled as "Trotskyism," is not merely unyielding recognition of the necessity for socialist revolution on a world scale -- the ultraleft sectarians do this in all sincerity and they should be given credit for it.

What Trotskyism offers is a transitional political approach, the methodical search for points of contact with masses of workers and peasants who may have a backward outlook, who may be under the influence of conservative or demagogic leaders or opportunist parties. The approach consists of finding slogans, aims, or suggested measures that are acceptable to the masses at their given level of political development but which nevertheless correspond to objective necessities and which, once undertaken, tend to carry them toward socialist revolution and full political consciousness.

This transitional approach is applicable and required in the imperialist countries but has special meaning in the underdeveloped areas of the world where feudal conditions do exist, where the bourgeoisie have failed to carry out the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution, or where the struggle against imperialist domination leads to nationalist moods.

In tribute to Marx, who formulated the germinal idea, Trotsky named this theory, which permeates his writings and which guided all his political activities from 1905 on, the theory of "permanent revolution." The theory of permanent revolution is not at all something exotic. It was applied for the first time in the Russian Revolution of 1917 where it provided the guidelines for taking the struggle against feudalistic Czarism into the socialistic phase that culminated in the establishment of the first workers state in history.

It provides an incomparable key to understanding the inner logic of the revolutionary events of our time. It is very much involved in the problem under discussion -- the question of extending the Cuban Revolution. The Cubans, in fact, really owe it to themselves to become acquainted with the theory. They will be surprised to discover how well Trotsky foresaw the logic of the revolution they carried out by feeling their way through the more costly method



of trial and error.

To return to the limitations of the Tricontinental Conference. If a question mark must be placed on its decisions being carried out in practice, the primary reason is the absence of mass revolutionary-socialist parties in Latin America. They have yet to be organized. The Cuban Revolution gave a great impulse in this direction, particularly by helping to end the authority of the fossilized Communist and Social-Democratic formations. But the heavy and sometimes categorical emphasis on the efficacy of guerrilla warfare to the exclusion of other means, promoted by both Havana's and Peking's teachings, has tended to stand in the road of organizing parties built in the Leninist pattern. Perhaps this phase is coming to an end.

The contingents that will form the cadres of these parties are now separated in various formations, from independent revolutionaries to authentic Trotskyists, including the guerrilla movements and the youth sectors of some of the Communist parties that were represented at the Tricontinental Conference. If one of the effects of the conference is to bring them together in revolutionary actions the party-building process will be hastened in Latin America. We hope that this proves to be the case.

In that event Castro's attack on Trotskyism will turn out to have been an episodic step backward and not the beginning of a major betrayal spelling doom for the bright hopes awakened by the Cuban Revolution and its leaders.

#### SWEDISH STUDENTS CALL FOR VIETNAMESE SOLIDARITY FUND

The Swedish Social Democratic student movement has submitted the following resolution to the International Union of Socialist Youth, which is meeting in Vienna June 2-5:

"The National Liberation Front (NLF) in Vietnam is fighting for the right to peace, self-determination and social justice for the Vietnamese people.

"The United States of America considers this to be a threat to its economic and military positions in Southeast Asia. In the name of democracy, the USA daily bombs and destroys villages, rice fields, roads, bridges, factories and human beings in south and north Vietnam.

"It is the obvious duty of the socialist youth of the world to give all the support it can to the NLF in this struggle.

"The Swedish Social Democratic Students Union therefore moves that the IUSY start a solidarity fund for the NLF and that a collection be taken up among the participants of the eighth IUSY congress and that the money thus received be sent to the NLF in the name of the IUSY."