

## Draft Perspectives Thesis, 1976-1977

# National-International. Objective-Subjective Crises Are Testing Revolutionaries

With this special issue, News and Letters Committees is presenting the Draft Perspectives Thesis for our coming National Convention, in full, directly in the pages of News & Letters. We ask you to join in the pre-convention discussion of these Perspectives with us, over the next two months. Write us your ideas. In an age in such total crisis as ours, revolutionaries can no longer allow a separation between workers and intellectuals, "inside" and "outside", philosophy and revolution.

### I. Facing State Capitalist World Reality

The instigation to racism directly from the White House, under the threadbare euphemism of anti-busing, compounded by the even more blatant racism of Ronald Reagan, reveals the abysmal state of degeneracy of the U.S. rulers this bi-centennial year. "Smiley" Carter, the Democratic Party challenger to the Republican occupant, has likewise nothing to offer but noxious "ethnic purity." And, as if unconscionable bloated profits, in face of continuing high unemployment which has become a permanent feature of capitalism in its Automation phase, meant prosperity for the masses, President Ford keeps talking about an economic "upturn." The only negative feature Ford seems to see is inflation, and to his Administration that means further inroads into the poor's living standards, including the cutting off of food stamps to millions on social security and welfare. Nor is it possible to take the crisis in this country out of the context of the myriad world crises, in all of which U.S. imperialism is hardly the least of the perpetrators-instigators.

Take the little country of Lebanon where the civil war surely began on indigenous grounds, between the fascist Falangist rulers holding on to their unholy military-economic-political exploitative dominance in face of the challenge of the great masses of Lebanese on the point of winning, and not merely as Moslem vs. Christian, but as exploited versus exploiters. The sharp class struggles have, after all, gone on for years, but this year they were finally reaching a successful finish. This time, it is true, the first to enter the fray was not the U.S.A., but the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Arafat. It was he, while shouting orders to his UN ren-

representative on the "Zionism is racism" Resolution,<sup>1</sup> who also ordered the winning Lebanese Left to hold in its reins, to accept the leadership not only of the PLO but also of Syria's Palestine Liberation Army (PLA). And once that happened, the imperial U.S. eye became glued to the situation in Lebanon, at one and the same time decrying "foreign intervention" . . . and welcoming Syria's.

Pandora's box is now open, not only in Lebanon but with the other nuclear global super power, Russia, while the other "Communist" power, China, is busy regularly and favorably reporting meetings of Islamic countries and their communiques about "ending Zionist occupation"<sup>2</sup>. The complications that (1) France's d'Estaing's sudden protrusion into its former colony which the U.S.'s ubiquitous Secretary of State Kissinger is christening as a "historic role"; (2) the murder of U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, Meloy; and (3) the landing of a new all-Arab Army "to keep the peace", will be introducing into that tinderbox, the Middle East, cannot but multiply the counter-revolutionary factors in that beleaguered land.

U.S. imperialism in this single year has intervened in every crisis spot in the world from Angola to Italy, from the Middle East to Latin America, and from Cyprus to Portugal. Presently, just when the greatest Black revolt in South Africa's history is occurring and apartheid South Africa is outdoing its 1960 Sharpeville massacre<sup>3</sup>, Henry Kissinger is meeting with its Prime Minister, Vorster.

In all instances it is impossible to separate the objective crisis from the subjective mouthings not only where ruling powers are concerned, where the governmental policies logically flow from economic crises, but among the opposition Left. The truth is that ever since the near-revolutions in West Europe collapsed in 1968, coming to a counter-revolutionary climax in the Nixon Administration's 1970 invasion of Cambodia and massacre at Kent State, and Jackson State College in Mississippi and Augusta, Georgia, the Left has failed to work out a new relationship of theory to practice.

1 See Political Philosophic Letter #1, "The UN Resolution on Zionism--and Ideological Obfuscation Also on the Left," Jan. 24, 1976, 50c from News & Letters.

2 The latest UN conference on housing held in Vancouver, B.C. suddenly came up with a resolution for "ending Zionist occupation" of Palestine by which it was clear they meant, not just the lands conquered in the 1967 war, but the very creation of Israel in 1948.

3 See "South Africa, South U.S.A." News & Letters, April, 1960, and "Our Life and Times" in this issue, p.3.

Instead, it has continued to tailend existing state powers at one or the other pole of world state-capitalism, calling itself Communism. Nowhere has this been more revealing than in Italy where the largest, most theoretical and most famous breakaway from the Communist Party—the II Manifesto organization—instead of filling any theoretic void, has now likewise sunk to electoral politics.<sup>4</sup> Theoreticians sans theory would be the correct designation of such intellectuals who are by no means confined to Italy. On the contrary. The most innovative (except for "style" in which the French still excel) of the split are those in Italy. This, however, no more removes the seal of bankruptcy on their thought which is nearly as total as on that of the "internationalist" state-power they tailend. . . . It all comes down to the new type of national capitalism—state-capitalism calling itself Communism—which does indeed have a global reach.

The sharply dual, contradictory nature of state-capitalism befuddles the "New Left" sufficiently to consider it (the state-capitalist planned economy) some sort of revolutionary alternative to private capitalism. Since, however, the two revolutions this year—Portuguese and Angolan—which created the fright of a possible shift in the global balance of power have created some very strange bedfellows indeed, we must take a second look both at that Goliath, U.S. imperialist capitalism, and Mao's "revolutionary China" to see what is new in the present world crisis that can make such opposites like the U.S. and China (not to mention South Africa) be on the same side.

## II. U.S.'s South African Connection

The totality of the world crisis is such that Goliaths likewise cannot escape it; indeed they bring it on—massive unemployment, spiralling inflation, the undercurrent of revolt which has brought about instability, an instability that will not let go and threatens capitalistic class rule itself. It is this which has brought about the curious situation that it is not only Ford-Kissinger but the Congressional Black Caucus that presents U.S. imperialism as if it were concerned with the Third World. What should have been used as the most telling tale of all about the total hypocrisy of the U.S.-Kissinger's present meeting with Vorster—is very nearly being whitewashed by them. Indeed, Kissinger got an O.K. for this meeting from the Congressional Black Caucus as if Kissinger would, in the not too distant future at that, help bring about majority Black rule in Rhodesia.

O.K. let's take a look at real relations with South Africa, economically and politically. A single glance at U.S. investments in South Africa show them to be both massive and growing. Where, a decade ago, U.S. companies had \$600 million invested in that apartheid land, it has skyrocketed to no less than \$1.46 billion in 1974 (the last year for which data is available). Fur-

ther projects are being built by Kennecott Copper and Caltex Petroleum (owned jointly by Standard Oil of California and Texaco, Inc.). Moreover, some Canadian-sounding names are mainly American owned, as witness Quebec Iron & Titanium which is two-thirds owned by Kennecott and one-third by Gulf and Western Industries, which has a 39 percent interest in a proposed \$290 million mining and smelting complex. Two other major mining companies are planning investments: Phelps Dodge and Newton Mining.

It isn't as if the State Department doesn't know about these investments, or why American capital prefers that white supremacy country with its cheap labor, and high profits. As one State Department official explained, "the large and growing role" (no less than 15 percent of total foreign investment in South Africa is American!) of U.S. investments is because "businessmen don't have to fear their operations in South Africa are going to be nationalized. . . ."<sup>6</sup>

No statistics are needed to prove the global might—economic, military, nuclear—of U.S. capitalism. What is needed is to expose why some of the Left, including Black intellectuals, are very nearly whitewashing U.S. actions at the very time when the open revolt of Africans against apartheid South Africa is being put down most brutally, and when even just the stark facts of economics reveal the real relations of the world in crisis. Thus, half of the world's 3.9 billion population lives on less than \$200 annually; 900 million subsist on less than \$75 a year; and four million are literally starving. This at a time when a mere five percent growth of U.S. GNP in 1976 (\$70 billion) equals the combined annual GNP of no less than 70 developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The designation of the Third World has, of course, by now become a misnomer. The Arab Gold Circle carries a clout all its own, and again not only in economics—the fact that the energy crisis for the industrialized world also hurts the undeveloped does not in any way divert from the oppressive capital-labor relationship in each country—but politically in West Europe as well as Japan, and the U.S.—as well as the UN where, especially when it comes to the question of Israel, it has very nearly total control. This, however, in no way helps the poor Third World, or the masses in the Gold Circle any more than the masses of Africa.

Which is why all the rulers feel a great deal more in common with each other than with "their own people", and why at this very moment, despite both the civil war in Lebanon and the revolt in South Africa—or just the elections in Italy—Ford-Kissinger's meddling is accepted. From the capitalists' point of view that is understandable enough. The shocker is China. As a state-capitalist society calling itself Communist, it has been building up all sorts of theories why only Russia is state-capitalist while it, China, remained the world revolutionaries' beacon light. But its support of FNLA and UNITA brought it so close to South Africa that, at least in Africa, it had to step back.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See "Paradoxes of the Italian Crisis," by Paolo Flores and Franco Moretti, *New Left Review*, #96, March-April, 1976.

<sup>5</sup> "In France, one doesn't have ideas; one has style," writes Bertrand Poirot-Delpech in his quite interesting review article, "In the Wake of Structuralism: French Philosophy's New Wave," *Manchester Guardian* (Le Monde section), 3-20-76.

<sup>6</sup> "Uncertainties in S. Africa Don't Slow U.S. Investing" by John Henry, *Detroit Free Press*, 6-20-76.

<sup>7</sup> See Political-Philosophic Letter #2, "Mao's Last Hurrah," Feb. 27, 1976, 50r. from News & Letters.

Just as the breather we gained with the mass disgust with Watergate, which at least did remove Nixon from office, didn't mean any fundamental change in capitalism-imperialism in reactionary outpouring against the anti-Vietnam war movement, or in Nixonism's racism and anti-laborism, so the present Maoist move back from the precipice of being with South Africa doesn't cause fundamental class changes in either Russian or Chinese state-capitalism, or more familiar global capitalist-imperialisms. It becomes imperative therefore to turn to basic class questions:

### III. State Capitalism—in Theory and in Practice

What is state-capitalism calling itself Communism? Isn't it the stage of capitalism Marx predicted in *Capital*, not because he was preoccupied with "prophesying" ultimates, but because, in logically tracing the "law of motion" of capitalism, he wanted to warn the proletariat that even if capitalism ever reached the stage where all capital would be concentrated "in the hands of one single capitalist or one single corporation", nothing fundamental whatever would change in the most fundamental of all relations—capital/labor which had to be totally uprooted?<sup>8</sup>

What is new ever since this theory Marx projected became reality, first, with the transformation into opposite of Russia as a workers' state into a state-capitalist society; secondly, with the Depression's collapse of private competitive capitalism and rise of fascism; and thirdly, post-World War II world?

In probing for the answers to these questions, we must keep in mind that in the present situation the one place where Mao didn't step back an inch is: (1) Russia is Enemy No. 1 not only to China, but the world over, including even Angola where a genuine national liberation struggle was reaching a successful conclusion, and this also makes the Cubans fighting with the Angolan revolutionaries "mercenaries." (2) Any possible shift in the global balance of power which might tip in favor of Russia automatically makes U.S. imperialism "the lesser evil".

It is this concept of a shift in global power, and not Rhodesia, which has brought about the ongoing Kissinger-Vorster meeting. Angola, or more specifically Russia-Cuba's role in Angola's

<sup>8</sup> See Ch. 8 on "The Logic and Scope of Capital" especially the section on its applicability to today: "The fundamental error of those who cannot understand that a single capitalist society is governed by the same laws as a society composed of individual capitalists is that they simply will not understand that what happens in the market is merely the result and the consequence of the inherent difficulties in the process of production itself. They seem to think that a single capitalist society will have a limitless market. The single capitalist—call him "Collective Leadership under Khrushchev, Inc." if you will—will have, at a certain stage, a magnificent plant, completely automatized, or a jet bomber, but he cannot stop to raise the standard of the masses of workers . . . Marx, throughout *Capital*, insists that either you have the self-activity of the workers, the plan of freely associated labor, or you have the hierarchic structure of relations in the factory and the despotic Plan of capital. There is no in-between." *Marxism and Freedom*, p. 136.

victory, and not South Africa's apartheid, is the topic of discussion and maneuverings. It may have created in Russia, too, the Grand Illusion that the scales of global power have tipped in her favor. But in fact, again like the false consciousness of all exploiters, it all results from an underestimation of mass power as Reason, especially African masses achieving national liberation. It is the most basic capital/labor relationship we must never lose sight of as we take a second look at a world in decay and its new national state-capitalisms, whether they call themselves Communist or just Socialist Planned Economies or "Democracies."

Out of the holocaust of World War II only two powers remained standing and of these only one—the U.S.—was an economic might, strong enough to start capitalistically rebuilding what it had just destroyed, West Europe; the only Goliath possessing an A-bomb; and thus the only one with the Delusion that this was its "century"—*Pax Americana*. To make matters still more ominous for Stalin's Russia, the greatest international Communist economist, Eugene Varga, in taking measure of the post-war economy, said that no general economic crisis can be counted on for a decade because the war economy had taught private capitalism to plan. Stalin quickly put an end to that discussion, and continued testing the U.S. "will", be it in Berlin, Iran, or where it could have others do its fighting—Korea.

His heirs ran quickly from his policies for immediate global reach. But there was no doubt that something totally new had appeared. There was no doubt that—as against private competitive capitalism, where economics and politics were in different spheres, and thus Marx's classical expression that the State was the "executive committee" of the capitalist class applied—economics and politics had become tightly tied (and not only in foreign trade). When China won its revolution, it acknowledged its economy as state-capitalist, but assured the masses there was no need to worry since the Communist Party controlled "the commanding heights", and property was nationalized.

Once the Sino-Soviet orbit had been transformed into the Sino-Soviet conflict, however, a new reality was forced upon the Movement: new questions had to be answered. Clearly, a new stage of national Communism had appeared. No longer was it sufficient to say, that, "of course", "socialism in one country" had always meant a move away from world revolution.<sup>9</sup> No longer could one hide under Trotsky's understanding of nationalism as a return to private property. The nationalism of state-capitalism the world over meant also a new imperialism, not alone for division of world, but for single, national control of world economy. It is this which is new, which is most immediate and ominous today.

<sup>9</sup> See Political-Philosophic Letter #3-4, "Western Europe and Its Communist Parties; Portugal and Its Socialist Party; New Stage of State-Capitalist Crises." Since that letter was written, in May, the European Communist Parties met in East Berlin, and seemed happy with their separated national Communisms. See report, NYT July 1, 1976. As against this development, the latest revolt of the Polish workers shows the real state of unrest within each of these national Communist state powers.

No one doubts that this is precisely what U.S. capitalism is reaching for, but that the new nationalism with global reach is the nature of world capitalism today, including state-capitalism calling itself Communism, is not faced. Which is why it has been impossible for the New Left, no matter how multitudinous are its splits, to make a clean break, theoretically, "strategically", practically, that is to say, a total break from Stalinism-Maoism. What becomes imperative, in the face of Russia and China maneuvering to get U.S. on "its" side<sup>10</sup> is to start afresh, on totally new beginnings from the ground up, indeed so grounded in the mass movement from practice, with so new a relationship of theory to practice, that never again will the philosophy of liberation and actual revolutions be separated.

There is no doubt in any one's mind now that no holds are barred in the Sino-Soviet conflict, nor that what had begun as differences in internal policies extended to differences in relations to the Third World which was gaining political independence on its own, with no aid from Communism. What is in dispute is the similarity of class origins and, therefore, each pole's narrow nationalism, tied nevertheless to a global reach. The simple truth, however, is that state-capitalist perspectives prevailed when both swore by their "indestructible friendship", and all 81 Communist Parties were meeting in Moscow, signing unanimous statements against "revisionism" by which, then (1957) they meant, not Russian state-capitalist counter-revolutionary politics against the Hungarian Revolution, but the revolutionary Marxist-Humanism against Russian totalitarian domination of East Europe.

It was then, just then, that Mao shocked Nehru out of his wits by telling him there was not much to fear from the A-bomb; even if it led to a nuclear war, and half of humankind was destroyed, China could survive and "start anew."<sup>11</sup> Whatever, "the East Wind" (which then meant not just China but Russia) would prevail over "the West." This hardly convinced revolutionaries, when it was they who had started the movement against totalitarianism, and Mao advised Khrushchev to get the tanks to roll over them.

In a word, once opposition arose from the Left, from below, spontaneously, first against Russia, and then within Mao's China itself, and the revolutionary offensive challenged the Single State Party rule, then what consolidated in the minds of these rulers, Chinese as well as Russian (not to mention Indian who never had a social revolution), was to maintain state-capitalist rule, no matter what the cost; it is this monstrous perspective that Mao thought would be the next

stage of humanity's development. His "revolutionary" perspectives, as, in 1960, he began to engineer splits in the international "Communist" movement, ran under the euphemism that, since Russia was no longer the only "socialist" country, there was no reason for it to be an international arbiter. By 1965, when President Johnson was raining bombs on Vietnam, and not China but North Vietnam became the besieged fortress, Mao refused to have a united front with Russia to aid Vietnam. Indeed, the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" was geared to the proposition that Russia was "Enemy No. 1", and the U.S. "Enemy No. 2".

Before that narrow nationalism, comprised within the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", the Third World was confronted with the dualisms in nationalism on the African continent. The great revolutionary theoretician of the African national liberation struggles, Frantz Fanon, had warned about the innumerable "Pitfalls of National Consciousness." Too many on the Left were then busy playing up his concept of violence as if that was all he had to say on the question of national and international revolutions. It is high time we heard what he wrote back in 1961 on the distinctions within national liberation struggles: national consciousness when it is as great as that "untidy affirmation of an original idea propounded as an absolute"<sup>12</sup> and when it is not. Frantz Fanon knew whereof he spoke when, in hailing the Africans' freedom struggles and, at the same time, stressing that only when nationalism means liberation and is thus international, only then can the revolution develop fully into a new humanism:

"Let us waste no time in sterile litanies and nauseating mimicry. Leave this Europe where they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men everywhere they find them . . . Let us decide not to imitate Europe; let us combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction. Let us try to create the whole man, whom Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth . . . This new humanity cannot do otherwise than define a new humanism both for itself and for others."<sup>13</sup>

Like proletarian revolutions, national liberation movements begin, of course, on native ground. What of necessity extends them internationally is that philosophy of liberation which makes no distinction between philosophy and revolution, internally and externally. It is this which Frantz Fanon propounded not only for the African revolutions or Asian or European, but for world revolution.

#### IV. On-going Revolutions in Portugal and Angola

The Portuguese Revolution continues to be the burning question for revolutionaries in the mid-1970s. When it first burst out on April 25, 1974, very nearly inauspiciously, it may have appeared as no more than a military coup by a neo-fascist General Spínola against an overaged, decrepit, half-century-old, fascist Caetano regime, finally waking up to some needed decolonization. In fact, it at once displayed revolutionary features, and precisely because it was grounded in Africa. In fact, so strong was the proletarian

10. As if Nixon-Kissinger who established that "new historic" relationship with China were not sufficiently aware of how useful to American capitalism is the Sino-Soviet conflict, the Foreign Policy Association has recently issued a statement advising Kissinger that he must do everything possible to assure that the Sino-Soviet conflict never again becomes the Sino-Soviet orbit.

11. See the Wen-sui documents (Long Live Mao Tse-tung Thought!) published in two volumes under the title "Miscellany of Mao Tse-tung Thought, 1949-1968," by the National Technical Information Service, U.S. Department of Commerce, Springfield, Va. 22151.

12. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p.41.  
13. *Ibid.* pp.246, 311 and 313.

5692

4

revolutionary current at home that before the year was out Spínola was stopped in his tracks, and soon made to flee. So varied were the new revolutionary forces—proletarian and peasant, youth and women liberationist, and even petty-bourgeois and literary<sup>14</sup>—that what emerged in 1975 was a movement that was not only anti-fascist, but anti-capitalist, and not only Socialist and Communist, but independent of all existing state powers. What emerged, in a word, was a strong revolutionary current that was anti-Stalinist and anti-Maoist; what emerged was the perspective that the impossible was possible.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, though Portugal was the most underdeveloped country in Western Europe, it had, at one and the same time, the greatest appreciation of African reality, working with the national liberation movements in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, and the most massive and active proletarian movement. Portugal's labor movement is the most strongly organized in Europe, in the world.

Thus, the peasants likewise were revolutionary, occupying landed estates, and that strong movement was also solidizing with workers, with Tenants Commissions.

Thus, Women's Liberation was the new revolutionary force that was both integral in all class struggles in the factories and on the farms, as well as in developing autonomous movements—MLM as well as MDM. So many new forms of organization had appeared, from new trade unions and Workers Commissions to political parties to the left of both the Socialist and Communist parties, from rank and file committees of soldiers and sailors to Workers Councils, which, though by no means so all-national as to be a threatening dual power to capitalism, nevertheless

revealed how all-embracing was the revolutionary current. Nor can we consider the Army as just one reactionary mass. The very fact that the counter-revolutionary coup on Nov. 25, 1975 could not defeat the mass movement, though it was a tremendous blow to the revolution (which must now operate under its counter-revolutionary whip) shows that it is still an ongoing revolution. The military commanders, with all the reactionary aid from U.S. imperialism, NATO and the West European Socialist Parties, especially Helmut Schmidt's West German Socialist Party, are out to "re-establish discipline" in the army. But here too, their victory is by no means total in face of the rank and file committees in the barracks. The fact that the Left could hold their own in the elections, despite all the inflow of money and arms from international capital, also testifies to the strength of the mass movement.

14 New Portuguese Letters, published here as *The Three Marias*, was one of the most significant literary events which disclosed the deep undercurrents of revolt before the April, 1974, overthrow of the Coentano regime.

15 In addition to our special supplement, "Can The Revolution in Portugal Advance?" (*News & Letters*, Jan.-Feb. 1976) see the latest issue of *APOIO*, July 1976, and the Portugal Information Bulletin that take up events in Portugal since the elections in April 1976. A superior article on the Portuguese revolution by a Spanish revolutionary exile, Wilebaldo Solano, "Notes on the Portuguese Revolution," appears in *New Politics*, Winter 1976.

No doubt the rule will become more brutal now that military commander Eanes, who engineered the Nov. 25, 1975 coup, has become President. Nothing could be more damaging to the revolutionary movement functioning under such odds than the international Left suddenly becoming no more than bystanders.

We have witnessed the birth of a whole new generation of revolutionaries—and in this case they are both old and young since the new relates to the new perspectives raised, and not to age—who are independent of both Socialist and Communist parties. This anti-Stalinist, anti-Maoist revolutionary Left — PRP, MES, LUAR — has raised questions against elitism and the "party to lead" concept, not because they do not appreciate the need of a revolutionary organization, but the party to lead has been a noose around the revolutionary movement that appreciates the need to work out new relations of theory to practice. As against the New Left in Europe in 1968 with its disregard of theory which supposedly could be picked up "en route", they are trying to work out a philosophy of liberation and struggle that would be independent of all existing state powers.

The international Left is likewise being put to the test. Under the whip of the counter-revolution, the road is rocky enough for the revolutionaries in Portugal. More than international solidarity is a must. Filling the philosophic void since the death of Lenin is an imperative. The endless repetition of the need for The Party, The Party, The Party accompanied by the specification of itself as The Leadership needed, will hardly either be decisive for the actual struggle against international capital's intrusion into the civil war in Portugal, or help in filling the philosophic void. Each, by itself, remains narrow, one-sided, self-paralyzing. No one can tell what will precipitate the torrential release of new revolutionary forces, but a new Marxist banner of total freedom that will not tolerate the separation of philosophy of liberation from actual revolution is an indispensable first step.

Thus, at a time when it is not only international capital which is helping Portuguese capital try to recoup its dominance, but also the SP and CP are out to contain the revolution, it is of the essence to realize that the need is not total abstractions, much less sloganeering, but concretely to separate from both the "Communist" and Social Democratic orbits.

Not only that. The West European CPs, with the Italian CP in the lead, are playing the game of "pluralism" as if that meant proletarian democracy and anti-Single Party State, instead of the sheerest class-collaborationist opportunism, grabbing for capitalistic state power.

Where the Socialist Party, at first, had the greatest mass support in Portugal both because of the strike-breaking activity of the CP and Soares' mouthing of phrases for socialism and proletarian democracy, all it now has to offer is "re-establishment of discipline," not to mention working for the election, as president, of the very military commander (Eanes) who headed the Nov. 25, 1975 reactionary military coup, tied to NATO. As the darling of West Germany's Helmut Schmidt, Soares has long (since 1971) when he

5 6 9 4

first organized the SP under Schmidt's tutelage) known and practiced class collaborationism, and not just as a tactic, but as "principled" parliamentary bourgeois democracy! And if that doesn't work, when did the U.S. ever stop short of supporting fascist regimes? There is no doubt whatever that the Portuguese SP and its German Social-Democratic ties represent the greatest danger to the revolution, and even the general labor movement and its gains since the overthrow of fascism.

### V. Movements from Practice and from Theory—1968-1977

Ever since the 1968 near-revolutions in West Europe aborted, the new Left has been so preoccupied with blaming the proletariat for their defeats that it has yet to face its own role, especially its avoidance of theory, rooted in the movement from practice. This is neither a mere generalization, nor something so concrete and minor a matter as not to demand a great deal of very hard labor on the part of intellectuals. New forces of liberation that emerged can by no means be regarded only as Force, and not as Reason. For example, the emergence of the Women's Liberation Movement and its demand to have the question of "what happens after" answered now, has certainly introduced more than a so-called "tactic" of revolution. It has demanded an entirely new vision.

Or take the question that both labor and youth raised—decentralized form of functioning, like councils instead of trade unions, committee form of organization instead of centralized, monolithic party. It certainly opposes the type of intellectualistic return to the concept of substitutionism of intellectuals for the proletariat as The Leadership. Surely the new that emerged that the Portuguese call *apartidarismo*<sup>16</sup> becomes an imperative in the state-capitalist world in which we live with its strong pull on the administrative mentality that characterizes scientific intellectuals, Left included. Instead of this imperative, as we reach the mid-1970s and do have ongoing revolutions in Portugal and Angola, the old Left organizations keep bringing up the old concept of the Party to Lead as "the answer."

No one can be unaware of the unrest even where there are no outright revolutionary situations. In supposedly quiescent U.S.A. there are wildcats in the factories, women's marches, Native American unrest and youth rebellions, especially in high schools. In returning to home grounds, where lives the most monstrous and most racist of all imperialisms, and fighting intellectual laziness against working out a new relationship of theory to practice, we can build also on the new that has emerged out of the ongoing revolutions

<sup>16</sup> Alexandre Oliveira, editor of the Portuguese newspaper *Republica* during its six months under workers' control, at his New York talk on May 6, (see *News & Letters, June 1976*): "When we got out of fascism, what we call *apartidarismo* is a bit of a development of the resistance to fascism . . . I am not against the idea of a party. But I don't have a religion of the word party, or the Leninist party or anything like that."

Isabel do Carmo, head of the PRP/BR, expressed the need for a new relationship of theory to practice in its Draft Program: "It's also the organization capable of making a synthesis between theory and revolutionary practice."

Clearly the elitist Left has learned nothing from these ongoing revolutions because they remain imprisoned in the old fixed particulars like nationalized property equals socialism, upon which is grafted the supercilious attitude to philosophy as if it were an abstraction instead of what it was to Lenin, the actual theoretical preparation for proletarian revolution. In truth, it becomes a burning question in the mid-1970s because no national crisis arises anywhere that isn't at once forced into a global face-off, which global face-off not only demands inseparability between revolutionary nationalism and internationalism that is absolutely independent of all existing state powers, whether they call themselves Communism or "democracies."

Just as the international and national, philosophic and actual manifestations of revolution cannot be separated, neither can the objective and subjective. This does not mean an intellectualistic "totalization," or a Maoist total identification of objective and subjective. It is no accident that the bourgeois philosophic identity of objective and subjective which Mao first propounded back in 1937 in *On Practice* as "the dialectic materialist theory of the unity of knowing and doing" as he was preparing a new united front with Chiang Kai-shek, and repeated in another form both in 1955 and in 1958 on the agricultural front, was made into nothing short of the "Momentous Struggle on the Question of the Identity Between Thinking and Being" in the 1970s.

The reason this time was the vitiation of the class nature of West European capitalism which Mao suddenly began calling the "Second World." This time, the Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School under the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee told us "Chairman Mao's theory that 'matter can be transformed into consciousness and consciousness into matter' was a body blow to Liu Shao-chi."<sup>17</sup>

Far from there being an absolute identity of matter and consciousness, objective and subjective, totality, in Marx's sense, is that of Subject as masses in motion becoming mediation as action. It was this new historic vision which, far from seeing any "peaceful co-existence" of objective and subjective in any other circumstances than that of a new classless society, was projecting a fight to the death—"absolute negativity"—of the existing society and its "false consciousness."

The fight for a new type of human existence involved "absolutes" only as Method, Absolute Method; that is to say, it was self-movement as Method. In a word, far from "mediation" meaning a mediator, be he a trade union negotiator, or a bourgeois philosopher—or The Party—mediation as masses in motion meant actualization of freedom.

<sup>17</sup> See *Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front, 1949-64*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1971, p.43. It seems that the first time Mao propounded that concept, Liu Shao-chi shouted: "It is idealism if one holds that all man-made things are preceded by ideas." This appears to the authors of this pamphlet as the perfect "proof", in 1973, of the "bourgeois reactionary line which was 'Left' in form but Right in essence."

Presently in the U.S., where object racism oozes out of the White House both at home and abroad; where the economic crisis has made a permanent feature of unemployment under automated production (compounded by the total disregard for the lives of all those over 50); where the Black dimension and Women's Liberationists, the Native Americans and the youth in revolt are never considered as Reason, what is as urgent as

activities in the mass movements is the working out of a totally new relationship of theory to practice as preparation for actual revolution. In today's world philosophy and revolution are the manifestations of the totality of the world crisis—the myriad crises—on the one hand, and the mass revolts on the other. The passion for a new type of human existence demands that every aspect of our work, be it in the class struggles at home or the expressions of solidarity with the international movements from Latin America to Portugal, from Africa to West Europe, and of course, the dissident voices in Russia and East Europe, reflect the totality of Marxist-Humanism. Though there will be a full Organization Report, I do wish to mention a few concrete organizational tasks here.

### Some Organizational Conclusions

The concretization of philosophy gives an altogether new meaning to politicalization. That is to say, whether it's an activity in the class struggle, or Women's Liberation, or racial equality, or international solidarity, philosophic analysis is not something "appended" to a "main thesis", but is itself a form of activity even as the movement from practice is itself a form of theory. The Political-Philosophic Letters that were initiated this year were started with this in mind and have, in fact, created new relations internationally.

The same type of concretization of Philosophy and Revolution was the impulse for the creation of a philosophic nucleus, that is to say, the living realization of what we mean by philosophy, not philosopher. It is in the context also that we are projecting the following six points:

1) First and foremost, is the concentration around the Black question, both within the factories and the communities since there is no doubt whatever that, whether Ford-Reagan or Carter wins, the open war against Blacks in both employment and education will continue unabated and must be stopped in its tracks.

That will of necessity also bring us into a direct battle of ideas with Black intellectuals on the question of Marx's Humanism as well as the form of national liberation which is itself a form of internationalism and which relates directly to the Angolan revolution. Projected for 1977 is a new pamphlet, **Black Voices**.

2) Second, the establishment of a new local in Chicago, is inseparable from the first, not only on the labor and race fields, but signifies a new stage of Women's Liberation that relates to our new pamphlet, **Working Women For Freedom**. Moreover, the whole idea of a new local brings in a question that we have really never faced since we have no paid functionaries. Nevertheless, we must create financial responsibility for organizing work, and we will propose that the Special Fund this year project such a perspective.

3) Third, 1977, as the 100th anniversary of the 1877 general strike in St. Louis, will see the publication of a new pamphlet that, again, will manifest a unity of labor, women, and philosophy—the first Hegelian philosophers in this country criss-crossing with the first Workingmen's International Association.

4) Fourth, this year will also see the production of our first bi-lingual pamphlet, which will be not only a celebration of the Spanish edition of **Marxism and Freedom**, but also will open new opportunities for activity in this country with Latinos. In this case, the new preface to that edition expresses in all of Latin America the solidarity of the other U.S. in its struggles for freedom from U.S. imperialism.

5) Fifth, new classes in **Philosophy and Revolution** will be scheduled nationally. The new form of these classes will start with Ch. 9, provided that it is studied along with Ch. 1, as well as the Political-Philosophic Letters, that is to say, analyses of current events.

6) Finally, and this in itself shows that the enumeration of points does not signify the degree of importance, as this point on the expansion of **News & Letters** is every bit as important as the first—three special 12-page issues a year will be a regular characteristic of **News & Letters**. Naturally, this means financial responsibility for both continuance and expansion of **News & Letters**. Toward that end, the REB is suggesting a minimum of \$12,000 as an Organizing and Sustaining Fund for **News & Letters**.

THE RESIDENT EDITORIAL BOARD