

THE COMMENTATOR

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A Marxist Analysis of Issues and Events

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THE ECONOMICS OF RACISM

A central feature of the present-day U.S. is that the inner-city areas of our urban centers have become huge, sprawling ghettos of black and third world people. These ghetto areas contain the worst and most dilapidated housing, the poorest services, generally higher crime rates than surrounding areas, and a higher percentage of unemployment and poverty. Very often, super highways pass right over from the suburbs to the downtown business section with hardly an exit in the blighted areas. At the edges of these ghettos white working class people either "run" gradually retreat, or in some cases fight against more black or third world families moving in. In many cities the downtown business sections are gradually drying up, as many corporation headquarters move out to the suburbs, and huge shopping centers dot the surrounding area. Many factories are also moving to the suburbs along with the jobs they imply.

That this same pattern has appeared across the country, with only minor variations from area to area, means that this is not something accidental or casual. It is a phenomenon rooted in the very structure of our economy.

AN OLD POISON IN A NEW BOTTLE

It is often said that ours has always been a racist society. This is true. But it covers up some important differences and changes that have taken place over the last hundred or more years.

In the old South, racism had a rather clear and obvious economic foundation. This was the slave-owning plantation system. Blacks, with but few exceptions, were slaves, who worked the cotton plantations. The majority of whites were small farmers, a minority of these owning perhaps a few slaves. A small but dominant

minority were the big plantation owners with hundreds and sometimes thousands of slaves. In the slave south, there was not the same kind of residential segregation we have in the country today. Indeed, there couldn't be because the slaves lived near their masters, on the plantation



Real estate interests reap huge profits off decayed housing.

or farm. Nor was there the physical distance between black and white, nor could there be because even a slaves free time was not his own. He belonged to his master body and soul. There was no need for segregation to maintain the distance between black and white because their relationship was set down in law and custom.

But the Civil War put an end to the old slave system. For some time a majority of black people were driven into a situation little better than slavery, namely sharecropping - a form of serfdom. But capitalism, as it grew and demanded an ever growing supply of wage-labor or wage-slaves, sucked more and more of the blacks out of the South and into the Northern cities.

Because of its need for "free labor", capital took an interest in "liberating" the blacks from slavery and even the serfdom of sharecropping.

WHY CAPITAL NEEDS RACISM

But this by no means signifies that capital was interested in

doing away with racism and the oppression of and discrimination against blacks altogether. It merely meant that the forms and content would change under this new system.

The growth of capital in the North, especially in the latter part of the 19th century, saw the growth of big capital and big combines in steel, oil, and the railroads. This meant not only a growing need for labor, it also meant that capital was more and more confronting a growing and increasingly militant working class which was organizing itself into unions and even political parties. Capital began to realize that it was in its interests to retain and revive the system of racism and discrimination against blacks. Blacks, as unorganized newcomers to the labor force, were used to break strikes, which of course helped to reinforce the racism of the white workers. The union leaders, rather than extending a hand to these newcomers, often ostracized them and drove them more firmly into the hands of the capitalists, compelling them to take work wherever they could find it. Racism and discrimination thus very early became a powerful weapon in the hands of the capitalists against the unity of the working class.

The capitalists were able to use blacks as a buffer against the worst effects of economic crises on the white working class, since a high proportion of the joblessness would fall on blacks and thereby be less likely to rouse the white workers to militancy than if they had to bear their proportionate share.

Then too, the high degree of unemployment in the black community would also be useful to the capitalist in periods of otherwise relative prosperity, since it meant that there was always someone forced to take the dirty, lowpaying jobs that the white worker would not have been desperate enough to take. In effect, there were and still are two labor markets - one black and one white.

HOUSING-THE PROFITS OF DECAY

Just as significant as the divided market for labor is the di-

CON'T ON PAGE 2

Also In This Issue:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1. 5-1 IS STILL A THREAT | P.3 |
| 2. WORKERS' HISTORY NO.2 | P.4 |
| 3. EDUCATION CUTS | P.5 |
| 4. POEMS | P.5 |
| 5. FASCIST DANGER WORLDWIDE | P.8 |

ECONOMICS CON'T

vided market in housing and real estate. If there were but one market in housing, if blacks were free to buy or rent wherever they wanted, the prices for the oldest most dilapidated housing would fall rapidly. But since blacks are compelled to buy or rent precisely within certain limited areas, in the oldest most rundown neighborhoods, the real estate interests and landlords (slumlords) are able to continue making profits off property that would have otherwise become quite valueless.

Indeed it can be seen that this double market, and the system of racism and discrimination that prop it up, have heavily contributed to the decay of the inner cities. Why? Because decayed housing and neighborhoods can thus retain their profitability long after they would if they did not have a captive market.

Then too, it has been clearly shown quite recently that banking and real estate interests conspire to bring about the decay of whole neighborhoods through a device called redlining - drawing a red line around an entire neighborhood and excluding it from all further loans for self-improve-

the ghetto store. Prices are notoriously high for merchandise which is equally notorious for poor quality. But very often poor mobility plus easy but expensive credit binds the ghetto dweller to these stores.

A disproportionate number of people in the ghetto are obliged to be on welfare, given the high rate of unemployment and the low wages of many workers. The point, however, is that it is not the ghetto resident who chiefly benefits from welfare. Perhaps half or more of the welfare check is taken by the landlord. By the time the loansharks, the finance companies, utilities, and the store take their cut, there is little or nothing left. It is first and foremost the slumlords and secondarily a host of lesser parasites, all charging artificially high prices, who are the biggest recipients of welfare money.

Paradoxically, the high ghetto prices do not mean low suburban prices (although they are lower than ghetto prices). The big chains all send their junk to the ghetto and charge more than they do for the better stuff out in the suburban malls. If they were not able to sluice off the second-rate surpluses to the ghettos these same goods would

kinds of petty racketeering. The same with loans and credit. Little wonder then that petty racketeering pervades the ghetto. It is is but a reflection of the big time racketeering that goes on between the ghetto and the outside financial and business interests - big and small, legal and illegal - interests that make Dracula look like a fairy god-mother kissing Cinderella.

THE BEAUTY OF THE BEAST

It can be seen from the above that the modern capitalist system of racism and discrimination against blacks differs in several respects from the old slave system. The great beauty of this entire system, from the point of view of the capitalists, is that it is self-perpetuating and self-renewing.

There is a great difference in the employment opportunities of blacks and whites, not to mention wages and salaries. But, if anything, it is in this area that there is the least distance between black and white. It is also where black and white workers are most likely to come into contact, to be friends, to unite against their employer. It is once these workers go home to their different neighborhoods that the really wide gap opens up. It is the ghettoization, the whole ghetto

BIG CITIES ARE LOSING PEOPLE...

Population change since 1970 —

PEOPLE LIVING IN BIG CITIES

DOWN 1.9%

PEOPLE LIVING IN SUBURBS

UP 8.4%

PEOPLE LIVING IN SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS

UP 5.0%

CITIES vs. SUBURBS: DIFFERENCES IN THEIR POPULATION

	Cities	Suburbs
Median family income	\$11,343	\$14,007
Proportion of blacks	22.3%	5.0%
Proportion of families headed by women	18.9%	9.5%
High-school graduates*	59.8%	68.5%
College graduates*	13.1%	16.2%

*Among persons aged 25 and over.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

ment. It has long been known, also, that cities cut back garbage collection and other services in "certain" areas, thus doing its own version of redlining. Why? Again, very simple, there's a lot of money to be made in the changing of hands in real estate, especially in changing from one market to the other.

What is not so evident is that this divided market also enables the real estate and financial interests to further exploit the white working class community also. White working class families generally are obliged to sell their property at low prices if they are near a ghetto. The real estate interests then turn around and sell the same houses at a very high price to black families, since the same house is the best in the other market. It is vital to the real estate interests that this double market in real estate exists - and also the racism and fear in the white community that keeps it working.

THE TWO-TIER PRICE RIPOFF

There are many other respects in which this double market operates. One well known example is

act as a dead weight pushing down on the prices of the goods in the suburban areas. Thus the suburbanites who think that the high prices in the ghettos don't affect them are sadly deluding themselves.

The higher prices in the ghettos then make possible and nec-

JOB MARKET IS SHRINKING IN MANY CITIES

From 1970 to 1974, even before the wave of recession layoffs, employment was declining in major cities — at a time when jobs in U.S. as a whole increased by 9.3 per cent. Among big cities losing jobs —

	People at Work		
	1970	1974	Change
Detroit	577,000	470,000	Down 18.5%
St. Louis	224,000	183,000	Down 18.3%
Baltimore	353,000	308,000	Down 12.7%
Philadelphia	776,000	682,000	Down 12.1%
Washington	342,000	307,000	Down 10.2%
Chicago	1,364,000	1,249,000	Down 8.4%
New York	3,131,000	2,932,000	Down 6.4%
San Francisco	454,000	443,000	Down 2.4%
Los Angeles	1,282,000	1,273,000	Down 0.7%

Source: U.S. Dept. of Labor

essary an extensive black market in "hot" goods, and foster all

system which rivets blacks to the bottom, which more than anything else tends to perpetuate and renew the division between black and white and spawn even more bitter racism among the white workers. The inferior schools, inferior homes, inferior access to jobs, inferior everything that goes with the ghetto, weigh down more heavily than anything else. Even blacks with relatively good jobs find it enormously difficult to escape from the ghetto.

As the needs of capital for new labor shrink, instead of grow, as in days of yore, the populace of the inner city ghetto is left to passively rot along with the buildings and neighborhoods they occupy. New industry goes not to the inner city, as it was compelled to do in the days before our modern highways, but to the suburbs, to the industrial parks straddling the super highways that carve up the countryside. The whites, in the neighborhoods surrounding the ghetto, not understanding the true causes of their decay, blame the blacks residing in them. They see in the

CON'T ON PAGE 7

S-1 IS STILL A THREAT

Contrary to the widest expectations of its proponents, a massive opposition to S-1 (Senate Bill #1) is growing. This widespread opposition has grown thanks to the many coalitions which have sprung up across the country dedicated to informing the public of the very existence of the bill and exposing its repressive nature. So great has the opposition become to this repressive monstrosity of a bill that many of its supporters are doubting its ability to pass at all in its present form. Its present form already includes some forty pages of amendments, and more are forthcoming.

So - have we heard the last of S-1? Not by a longshot! There is however much talk of disguising the wolf in sheep's clothing.

A NEW COVER-UP

While the original bill continues to be held up in the Senate Judiciary Committee, various compromise measures are being prepared. One such compromise is being proposed by Senators Mansfield and Scott (both original backers of the bill). This compromise contains two parts. The first is an original idea of the two Senators to change the number of the bill - ingenious isn't it? After all they argue, "S-1 has become a battle cry." The second part of their proposal, which they copped from Ted Kennedy, is to delete 13 specific controversial sections of the bill, while leaving the rest intact. While the 13 proposed deletions would definitely cut out some of the most repressive features of the bill, it would not eliminate: 1.) the provision on extortion which strengthens the Hobbs Act to be used against labor unions, 2.) the section which puts all but two Native American reservations under federal jurisdiction, 3.) the section on riots which makes one liable to prosecution without proof of intent, or 4.) the section on rape which limits the charge of statutory rape to molesting of children only under 12. There are many others.

The liberal press has reported that Kennedy and other "liberal" Senators are supporting some such compromises because they feel that they must pass a criminal justice reform bill this year. They are no doubt atuned to the fact that this is an election year and most of those who will go to the polls in November are concerned about crime. So the answer we get from liberals like Kennedy is that timing is what counts - pass a bill now - and to hell with the rights of Native Americans, children between the ages of twelve and sixteen, or labor's right to strike!

BEWARE THE FINE PRINT

Other forms of congressional alternatives to S-1 have arisen

in the House of Representatives in the form of two proposed bills (HR 10850 and HR 12454). Some have cited these bills as "liberal" criminal justice reform bills but others say they still contain within them certain seeds for repression. The main thing about these bills is that due to the furor raised by S-1, any bill proposed in either House of Congress is now going to be looked at much more carefully by those of us concerned about preserving our democratic rights. Had there been no S-1, quite possibly the original Brown Commission proposal would have gone through Congress with little or no squawk. And yet, it is clear now that some of the

pass it piecemeal.

WHY FIGHT

What is the point of fighting against S-1? Are we doomed to lose our rights anyway? Not necessarily - if we learn some lessons from all this. S-1 must be seen as a part of a larger picture which includes Watergate. This picture is the relative decline in the ability of U.S. imperialism to conduct wars of aggression abroad together with a growing world economic crisis having serious effects on conditions here at home. More and more people in the world are rising up against U.S. imperialism. With worsening economic conditions within the country,



repressive features of S-1 were contained even in that bill. That is not to say that these "liberal" reforms are as bad as S-1, but it is a warning that our rights can and will be chipped away where they cannot be gotten rid of in one fell swoop. The liberals in Congress cannot be counted on even to slow down the rate at which the chipping is done except under extreme pressure from the people. Along these lines too, at this moment various pieces of legislation are being prepared which would limit freedom of the press, extend the rights of the President and the CIA, etc. The hopes of S-1's promoters are that if it cannot pass as a whole, then take the next best thing and

U.S. ruling circles have to find a way to protect their interests against the will of the majority of us. They have to protect themselves against strikes (which disrupt profits) and exposures of their repressive role abroad, as well as to prepare to wage unpopular wars to protect their interests abroad.

It is therefore no accident that S-1 and other measures to limit our rights come at this time. If we are aware of this and recognize that ruling powers among the big capitalists will not give up on trying to curtail our rights then we will remain watchful lest they try again. We must prepare to resist every attempt as it comes up. □

THE THIRD PARTY: YESTERDAY & TODAY

(SECOND OF A SERIES)

Sharp political and economic crisis are a precondition for the development of a significant third party movement in the U.S. Also important to such a development is a similarity of positions on the part of the two major parties. At all but two of the junctures of crisis historically an influential third party has arisen either on the right or the left. The earliest movement to gain widespread support was the Anti-Mason Party, built in 1832 primarily around opposition to the enormous concentration of power in any one group or institution, especially the Bank of the United States. More parties arose in the mid-1800's: the Free Soil Party on the issue of new territories, the American Party (around opposition to Southern and Eastern European immigration), the Breckenridge Democratic and the Constitutional Union parties on slavery. The Populist Party arose in the late 1800's as the sole vehicle expressing the plight of farm workers. All of these third parties of the 1800's polled at least 5.6% of the presidential vote and had the effect of prodding one of the two major parties into incorporating portions of their programs into "mainstream" politics.

The 20th century has seen major third party movements in three distinct Progressive Parties (Teddy Roosevelt's in 1912, Bob LaFollette's in 1924 and Henry Wallace's in 1948), in the Socialist Party 1900-1920 and in George Wallace's American Independent Party in 1968. On a more local level, the American Labor Party had no small impact in New York State and during the Henry Wallace campaign.

One feature distinguishes the 19th century third parties from those of the 20th century. The earlier parties generally arose over a single issue and thus when the issue at hand was adequately "reformed" by the major parties, the third party ceased to exist. Further, the early third parties did not mount any broad assault on the established system of rule. The major third party movements of the 20th century, on the other hand, more often than not mounted a broad attack on both the two major parties and the existing order of society. George Wallace's American Independent Party may be the one exception to this general trend of the 20th century in that his campaign in 1968 had a more or less single issue focus, that of busing. Suffice it to say, for the purposes of this article, that the impact of the Wallace campaign (13.5% of the vote) has had the effect of moving sectors of the Democratic Party in a rightward direction. (See the *Commentator*, #9 for a more thorough analysis of George Wallace.)

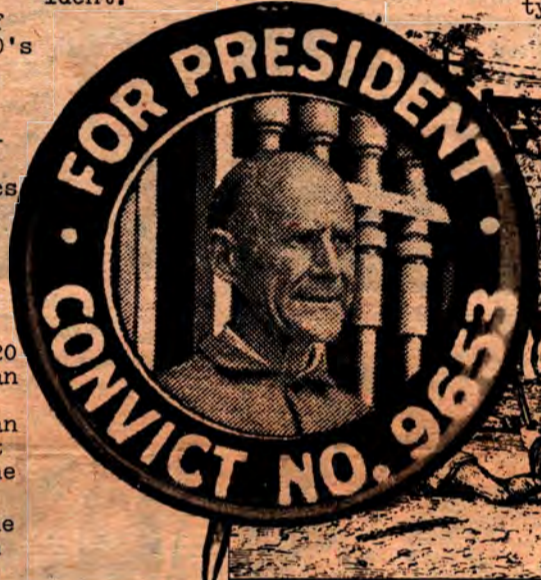
Since history is only useful insofar as it serves the people today, we will concentrate on those examples of third party movements in the 20th century that were genuinely progressive and sustained electoral struggle in the interests of the working class. From this brief overview we hope to gain some insight into how left and progressive forces might conduct electoral work today.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY 1900-1920

The turn of the century marked a time of sharp struggle between labor and capital with intense exploitation of working

people. The Republican and Democratic parties were little more than twin parties of monopoly and the newly emerging imperialism.

It was in this period that the Socialist Party widened its influence reaching out to masses of people -- the Jewish workers in New York's needle trades, a significant socialist tendency in Chicago's union movement, in the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor, the agrarian radicals of Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas, Texas and Missouri, the miners and loggers of the Rockies and the West Coast and those middle class reformers who broke with the Democratic Party. The Socialist Party sought to develop a working class consciousness with the ultimate aim of establishing a socialist society. One of the major vehicles used was the electoral process. Perhaps the best known campaigns run by the Socialist Party were those of Eugene V. Debs for President.



The Socialist Party used elections to talk to masses of people and to educate them politically. Debs understood the danger of defining success in terms of votes cast and candidates elected. He continually opposed "vote seeking for the sake of votes" and "office seeking for the sake of office". Political education was primary and a vote cast was generally a vote for the program rather than for the candidate. In each of Debs' five candidacies the political questions facing the working class were brought out sharply, questions ranging from the collaborative character of Sam Gompers and the A.F. of L. to the imperialist nature of WWI. Speaking on this last question and against American participation in WWI landed Debs in prison.

The growth of the Socialist Party's national electoral influence was significant as may be seen by the votes cast: 100,000 (1900), 400,000 (1904), 420,000 (1908), 900,000 (1912), 900,000 (1920). While there was no increase in votes for 1920, the significance is even greater when one realizes that Debs conducted the 1920 campaign from a prison cell!

But, lest one err in overestimating Debs' individual role in this national phenomenon, by 1912, the Socialist Party had 118,000 members and 1,200 officeholders in 340 cities, 70 mayors in 24 states among them.

Through the electoral process the Socialist Party brought working peoples a well developed educative program. The impact of this approach and its content may be seen in the casting of a 6% presidential vote in 1912 and in the formation the same year of

the Progressive Party ticket by Theodore Roosevelt and other "reformers". The Progressive Party's purpose was to attract workers away from the Socialist Party through adopting some of its program but of course not the direct attack on the capitalist system. The tricksters of the Progressive Party did manage to mislead numbers of workers. This, in later combination with significant doses of corporate backed reforms and internal splits in the Socialist Party, led to the Socialist Party's demise as a strong third party force in the early 1920's. A core of Socialist Party members did go on, however, to help form the first Communist Party of the U.S.A.

THE AMERICAN LABOR PARTY

The American Labor Party emerged in New York State during the Great Depression partly to support FDR without working through Tammany Hall (the N.Y.C. Democratic political machine). The party represented a coalition of

anti-fascism and their record of fighting in the interests of the working class. Though never a member of the CPUSA, this stance ultimately led the conservatives within the ALP to split and form the Liberal Party in 1943. The split had little effect on the ALP as evidenced by the re-election of Marcantonio through 1952, three years before his death.

In 1948, the ALP focused its activity on the national level with its active support of Henry Wallace's Progressive Party candidacy for President. A national formation for only one election year, the Progressive Party, much like the ALP, put forward issues and positions that reflected the interests of both farm and industrial workers. However, due to late formation, often insurmountable ballot requirements and treacherous major party tactics, the Progressive ticket polled only 2.4% of the vote.

Temporary economic recovery and developing revisionism within the CPUSA combined with the repression of the McCarthy period were in large part responsible for the scattering of most progressive forces including the ALP.

A THIRD PARTY FOR THE 70'S

The 70's represent yet another harsh step-up in the attacks on working people. Once again the two parties of Imperialism are shifting the burden of international and national crisis onto working people, in order to maximize profits for the wealthy few. Working people must begin to build an alternative. A broad third party of the working class and its allies seems to be on the agenda.

As Marxist-Leninists we do not see this third party as any substitution for the building of a new communist party in the U.S. (a task of primary concern for all Marxist-Leninists today). We are, however, witnessing a phenomenon in the U.S. wherein Republican and many Democrats are pandering to the most reactionary sentiments among increasing numbers of the white working and middle classes. These strata of the people have been given one explanation of their worsening conditions (chiefly that the source of their problems lies among those worse off than they). In light of this, the building of a new third party would provide progressive and Marxist-Leninist forces the opportunity to counter false explanations, even to learn how to counter false ideas in a far reaching way.

In the building of such a third party, the historical experience of earlier movements becomes particularly valuable. The foregoing historical examples can help us to avoid the errors of collaboration and individual manipulation and achieve broad progressive impact with increased political consciousness and unity. □

(FOR A MORE EXTENSIVE POSITION ON ELECTORAL WORK IN THE 70'S, WRITE THE *COMMENTATOR*)

THE UNITED FRONT AGAINST WAR AND FASCISM by Georgi Dimitroff

Limited quantities of this classic are now available for \$1.00 (price includes postage). Mail to address on page 5.

A SMALL VICTORY FOR THE PEOPLE

April 14 marked a new development in N.Y.C.'s current fiscal crisis. New York finance capital, which has assumed direct control of the city's destiny in the form of the Municipal Assistance Corporation (Big Mac) now faces a setback in its program of ripping off workers' and taxpayers' services to pay for their crisis. The main target for city cutbacks in recent months has been the educational system -- a frill to the bourgeoisie when an over-supply of educated workers has already glutted the market. Now New York State legislators, under heavy pressure from below, have succeeded in concluding passage of the Stavisky-Goodman Bill, which is an obstacle to continued cuts in education. The State Assembly passed this bill in direct contradiction to the grand design for "fiscal responsibility" laid down by Big Mac, Governor Carey, Mayor Beame and their masters. For final passage the Governor's veto was overridden - the first time this has happened in 103 years!

This historic override was only accomplished by the people, especially parents and teachers, applying undue pressure on the members of the Assembly and Senate. Tens of thousands of

letters were written to the legislators. Demonstrations were held in Albany and in NYC. There was also an extensive lobbying effort; legislators were constantly visited both in Albany and in their local offices. This pressure was necessary because of the unreliability of the liberal legislators. All of the 5 State Senators from NYC who voted against the override are Democrats and 3 had been endorsed by the Liberal Party.

BILL RESTORES SOME CUTS

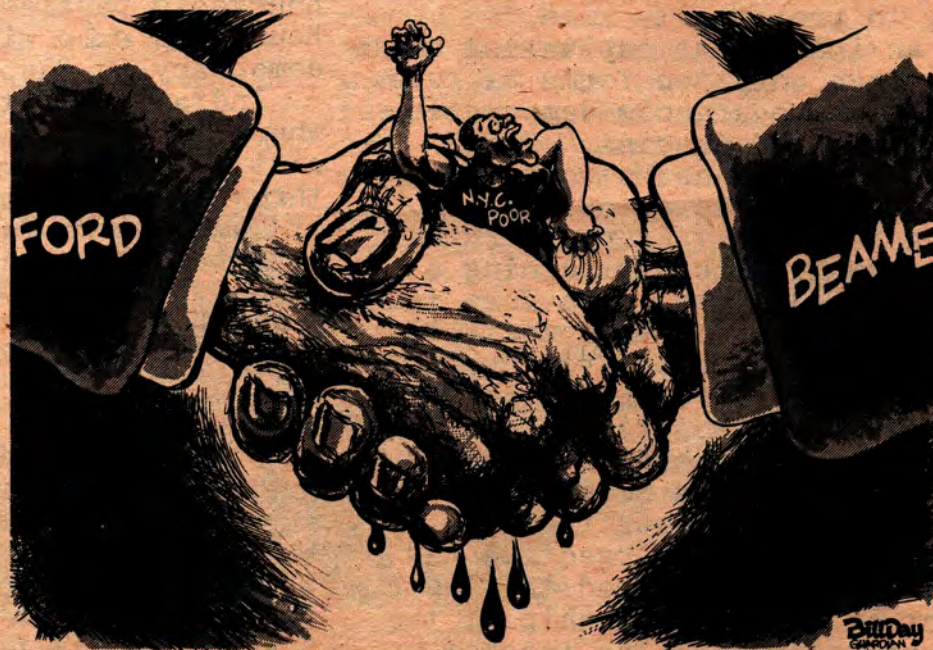
The purpose of the Stavisky-Goodman Bill is to restore some of the most drastic educational cuts. During the summer and fall of 1975 the schools were victims of the cuts in far greater proportion than any other governmental agency in N.Y.C. While other agencies experienced cuts of about 11%, education had personnel cuts in excess of 22%. Over 20,000 classroom teachers, counselors, attendance teachers, para-professionals, security guards, and secretaries lost their jobs. Instruction time was shortened by 1 1/2 hours a week. Schools were closed and many educational programs were eliminated.

The Stavisky-Goodman Bill does not protect the schools against all cuts, but does mandate that the schools continue to receive the same proportion of the city's budget that they have over the past three years. Therefore, if this law is implemented, the schools will not suffer cuts

disproportionally to other agencies. The schools will receive 21% of the total city budget. In the next budget, education would receive an additional \$150 million.

JUST THE BEGINNING

The fight, however, is not over. Both Governor Carey and Mayor Beame are refusing to implement the Stavisky-Goodman Education Bill and are challenging the law in the courts. Carey is claiming it is illegal because it violates NYC's home rule. Beame is attempting to pit one city union against another so they will fight among themselves rather than unite, as was done to some extent in San Francisco, and fight those in power to save city jobs and essential city services for the people. We must see this law as a small but important victory - we must fight to maintain it and build on it. □



NECESIDAD

Nuestros pueblos, pueblos heridos
Masas de un mundo destruido,
donde la mayoría son esclaves
y una minoría son los amos.

Necesidad es la libertad,
libertad de disfrutar lo nuestro
de trazar nuestro propio destino.

Pueblo Latino te encuentro
como prisionero en cadenas
marchando hacia la prisión de
fantasías,
donde tu serás sirviente del Mago.

Ha llegado la hora de demandar
nuestro destino;
Ha llegado el momento
de despertar de nuestra pesadilla.

El Yanqui nos explota
junto a los gusanos nacionales;
El Yanqui nos controla
junto con las fuerzas divisoras.

Ya es hora Latino America
de liberarnos,
de esas fuerzas que nos ciegan
y nos confunden con un mundo de
ilusiones.

Conoce tu situación
no la aceptes como eternidad
derrota tus enemigos
eventualmente la batalla se
ganará.

Hay que tomar lo que es nuestro,
hay que construir para el futuro,
hay que derrotar el imperialismo
mundial,
estableciendo un mundo colectivo
social.

by Nelson Vila

WHO'S NEXT?

Several movement bookstores have recently discontinued handling the Guardian newspaper. The bookstores have apparently done so because of the Guardian's disagreement with China on some questions. It is understandable that these bookstores exclude anti-China material. Such material is readily available for all who want it at the regular Bourgeois bookstores. But can one - or a group - or a paper be considered anti-China because of disagreement with the Chinese on Angola, or the exact nature of the Soviet Union for example? We don't think so. The Chinese don't seem to think so either. A majority in our group happens to agree with China on these questions, but we do not regard those who disagree with China - either in our group or out - as enemies. In our opinion the bookstores concerned are in fact acting in a way counter to Mao's teachings.

This does not mean the Guardian is a virgin princess in this whole matter. The question is not one of suppression in general, for we are sure the Guardian can understand the exclusion of openly revisionist, trotskyite, or anti-China material from these pro-China bookstores. And then too, we know for a fact that the Guardian "Letter to the Editors" column has been more than a little selective in regard to letters critical of their Angola position. But the action of the bookstores is far the greater evil. It affects the entire movement very adversely - substituting unnecessary antagonism for comradely debate. The pro-China bookstores have been and should remain centers for dissemination of a range of pro-China views. Why narrow down the scope of the discussion now, when there's so much disagreement and confusion? Then too, after the Guardian is suppressed - WHO'S NEXT? □

NECESSITY

Our wounded people
masses from a shattered world
where slaves are the majority
and masters the minority.

The need is for freedom
freedom to enjoy what is ours
freedom to shape our future.

Latin people -- I have found you
as prisoners in chains
marching towards the prison of
fantasies
where you will serve the
Magician.

The time has come
to demand our future

the time has come
to awaken from our nightmare.

The yanqui exploits us
along with the national worms
the yanque controls us
along with the forces of division.

Latin America: the time has come
for our liberation
from those forces that blind us
and lead us into a world of
ilusiones.

Recognize your situation
Do not accept it as eternal
defeat your enemies
eventually we will win the battle.

Let us take what belong to us
Let us build for the future
Let us defeat world imperialism
by establishing a collective
social world.

BETRAYAL

The working class of the world
has been betrayed
by the very country
that the working class made

The rulers of this country
have abandoned the Marxist line
Now Nietzsche is growing
like a spreading vine

It's the Soviets who are following
this train of thought
Adolf Hitler also practiced
what Nietzsche taught

So people of the world -
open your eyes
The Soviets' socialist banner
is merely a disguise

To hide from the people
their villainous goal
to grab up the world
and exercise control

Dan T.

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Organization: _____

FASCISM CON'T

norms and that imperialist policy is an extension of internal capitalist pressures and crises, of factors alien to a socialist economy and culture. Recent studies, such as that of Martin Nicolaus*, confirm in depth that the Soviet economy since Stalin has been transformed into a capitalist one--though its form of State monopoly capital differs from those of the West. Albanian observers have analysed in detail how and why this process occurred. They have stated, in The PLA in Battle with Modern Revisionism, that "revisionism is a new form in which imperialism is attempting to prolong its life."

An industrial capitalist state can have only two forms of rule. It can be bourgeois-democratic or it can be fascist. The Soviet Union has but one party which tolerates no opposition. In a capitalist country, ruled by a small minority forming a privileged elite, this form is called fascism. In a socialist country, this one-party apparatus is used by the working class, an overwhelming majority, to maintain its power and to suppress the bourgeois, a small minority. Having siezed power from the top, the new Soviet bourgeoisie has gradually transformed the instrument of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat into the fascist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie--all in about 20 years.

SOVIET SOCIAL IMPERIALISM AND FASCISM

As in the Phillippines, a severe crisis in India precipitated the imposition of open fascist dictatorship by Indira Gandhi in June, 1975. Exposed and discredited by a "watergate" like scandal and condemned by the courts, she succeeded where Nixon failed.** She refused to abide by customary judicial and constitutional procedures and vacate her seat in Parliament, or her position as prime minister. Instead, she declared a national emergency (a power granted by the constitution, but never before used), and stifled all opposition by force.

Just as Marcos nad relied on powerful external help, so did Indira Gandhi. This help came not from the traditional seats

*Martin Nicolaus, Restoration of Capitalism in the USSR, Chicago, Liberator Press.

** Recent revelations by ex-CIA operative Victor Marchetti confirm that some machinery for a military coup in the U.S. had been set up under Nixon, but was never activated. Only history will reveal the purpose of the "world-wide military alert" during the days immediately following Nixon's "Saturday night massacre" in October, 1973.

of Western imperialism, but from a different quarter--the revisionist Soviet Union. The Russians justified their support of the coup by saying that Indira's government was progressive and beleaguered by hostile reactionaries who were trying to subvert it and make it fascist. They would have us believe that Mrs. Ghandi is really an anti-fascist. But where have the blows fallen--not on the reactionaries but on progressives! Three out of four major parties which call themselves Marxists were banned. Only The Soviet-dominated Communist Party of India was allowed to continue its activities which now consist of rubber-stamping Congress-Party policy. All other bourgeois parties were banned. Bourgeois rule without bourgeois democracy is fascism.

India is not the only country where the USSR has supported fascist rulers. When the U.S. overthrew the legitimate government of Cambodia in March, 1970, the Soviet Union not only failed to support the liberation and united front forces, but was actually among the first nations to recognize and support the brutal Lon Nol regime.

What of the Soviet's "progressive" role in assisting smaller and Third World nations? What kind of aid does the Soviet Union give--is it free and without strings? In recent years, Soviet aid has primarily been in the form of loans which must be repaid on time and with interest. India, Vietnam and Cuba are all deeply in debt. Egypt, in breaking their long term "treaty of friendship and cooperation" with

the Soviet Union, denounced the large debt they had acquired. Contrast this policy with that of Socialist China whose loans are given interest free, to be repaid in any form, and at any time--if ever. By her example China has done much to expose this sham Soviet "aid".

What exactly is the price which the Soviet Union exacts from Third World countries for these loans? Poor and underdeveloped countries can repay their debts in many ways.

In the case of India, the Soviet Union has continuously encouraged an aggressive foreign policy. This includes the annexations of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, and the bold attack on China as far back as 1962. The most blatant example was India's invasion of East Pakistan and the formation of Bangladesh in the fall of 1971, just months after India and the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact.

Cuba offers another example. While many conditions in Cuban life improved after the 1959 revolution, the one-crop economy has remained. Cuba is no longer hopelessly in debt to the U.S.; it is now hopelessly in debt to the Soviet Union. Just as the South Koreans paid interest to the U.S. with their blood in Vietnam, so the Cubans paid interest to the Soviet Union with their blood in Angola. And although the civil war is over and South Africa removed its troops from Angola on March 27th, the Cubans remain. It is tragic to see the revolutionary spirit and good will of the Cuban people so channeled to the needs of social

CON'T ON PAGE 7

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imperialism. Recently, too, DRV leader Le Duan announced complete agreement with the Soviet foreign policy, and the DRV officially announced support of the Ghandi regime. We have only the best wishes for the Vietnamese people and acknowledge their historic struggle. We hope that their independence continues and that they don't exchange one imperialism for another.

Farfetched? Not possible with the "Socialist" Russians? Remember that Hitler was a "National Socialist". Despite the demagogic phrases, Hitler's fascist imperialism crushed the independence of Czechoslovakia in 1938. Thirty years later, history was repeated by the Social Imperialist Breshnev. Unlike Hitler, the Russians didn't even bother to coerce an endorsement from a single Czech citizen to "legitimize" the take-over.

U.S. & SECOND WORLD

The growth of fascism has not been limited to the Soviet Union and Third World countries. Trends toward fascism can also be found within the U.S., Japan, and several of the Western European nations.

England is facing a staggering rate of inflation, and some members of the ruling bourgeois class feel that only a strongman dictator will be able to bring the situation under control. In West Germany a dense network of fascist organizations are operating. Some are connected to the secret services organized by the former Nazi, General Gellan. The Italian Social Movement, a neofascist party, is growing. It is represented in parliament, and therefore receives state subsidies. The Italian Social Movement has links with the state apparatus, the secret services, the army and the courts. It has also been training fascist terrorist bands such as the New Order, the Rose of Perfumes, the Revolutionary Action Movement and the squads of Mussolini Action which have been responsible for a chain of anti-popular actions including murders.* The Italian Communist Party is also growing, and may even be a major factor in the next government. However, it is a revisionist party whose main tactics are peaceful parliamentary work. In the name of parliamentary democracy they too supported the measure of giving the neofascist party state subsidies!

Setbacks in the U.S. imperialist policy have brought worsening economic conditions home to roost. With the specter of turmoil as workers resist bearing the brunt of the crisis-- we have only to look as far as the pending S-1 bill to see how the U.S. bourgeoisie plans to meet resistance.

*Albania Today, #3, May-June 1975, "Revival of Fascism a Real Danger", pp. 61-62. (Excerpted from ZERI-I POPULLIT)

DANGER OF WAR

Under circumstances of growing Soviet influence and aggression the world faces a new fascist menace. The Soviet Union is using the word "socialism" in the Third World the way the U.S. uses the term "democracy" and is attempting to expand wherever the U.S. is forced to retreat. The U.S. is a declining imperialist power. It has suffered defeats in South East Asia and the role of the CIA in subverting governments has been exposed to the entire world. The U.S., however, is not going to sit idly by and let the Soviet Union pick up all the pieces of the U.S.-European empire.

We recognize that there is a growing trend of anti-imperialist struggle in the Third World. At the same time, however, the anti-revisionist forces within these struggles, while growing, still remain relatively isolated and few. If the trend of Soviet expansionism is not resisted world-wide (along with U.S. imperialism) by the revolutionary movements, by the national liberation struggles, and all democratic-minded peoples, the contention between the two superpowers may only be resolved by World War III. In the meantime--fascist expansion will crush and reverse the struggles of other peoples, in the same, or even more brutal fashion than was done in India. □

ECONOMICS CON'T

ghetto everything they fear and want to escape from. Indeed, so would the blacks like to escape, but their very attempt leads them to head on clashes with the encircling white working class communities. The whites, either in fleeing, or fighting the blacks, lend themselves to the easy manipulations of the real estate interests and their paid demagogues. The public schools decline and decay, all too often with nary a whimper, as the white families pay through the nose to get their kids into private or parochial schools. Finally, they end up selling their houses or abandoning their apartments at great loss, taking on much more expensive ones farther out.

But these days, even the ghettos are not big enough to soak up huge amounts of unemployment, nor absorb the entire attack produced by the growing economic crisis. Inevitably, much of it is spilling out into the white working class communities. In one respect, this has led to a heightening of the contradiction between black and white. Many working class whites can no longer afford to "run", can no longer afford to send their kids to private schools. Whites are now compelled to compete for jobs they used to be content to leave to blacks, or resent the competition of even a token number of blacks for the few good jobs.

And yet, in another way, it makes for the possibility of white working people realizing their common interests with black

working people. Ghetto-like conditions are coming to their neighborhoods without a black person stepping foot there, as unemployment, inflation, and cutbacks chew up whatever modest comforts the people of these communities have attained. They see their own kids hanging out on corners more and more, some getting hooked on drugs, some getting into scrapes with the law while the law enforcers are becoming more arbitrary and abusive even in white working class neighborhoods.

It is the latter possibility that all progressive and class conscious forces must strive to bring about - for that is the only hope for working people. In the other direction lies common ruin at the hands of captains of industry, high finance, and their paid politicians. □

WHO WE ARE

The Commentator is put out by a Marxist-Leninist collective in the New York area.

In the Commentator we try to analyze current events in the country and the world from a Marxist point of view. We attach especial importance to tackling political and social issues on people's minds, as well as economic issues.

In particular, we feel that under Nixon the danger of fascism became very real in this country. We also feel that the danger has not lessened. Fascism will not come to this country in the same form it did in Germany or Italy. It decks itself out in the red, white and blue, goes under the slogan of "law and order" and uses Black people as its chief scapegoat.

We attach especial importance to exposing and educating people to this danger, in order to help build a united struggle against it. However, we believe that of all the forces that can be united to oppose the fascist danger, it is the working class which must lead.

While we believe that the main struggle of the American people right now is against encroaching fascism, the fundamental problems of our society, such as inflation, unemployment, war, racism and poverty can only be solved by the establishment of a socialist government, one which gives the ownership and control of the means of production to the majority of the people, protecting their interests rather than those of a small group of exploiters.

To achieve the above goals, we believe the working class needs a genuine Communist party, based on Marxism-Leninism and the teachings of Mao tse-Tung.

We want to make contact with progressive minded people, working people especially (but not only), who find the ideas in our paper interesting and useful. Also we want to make contact with other revolutionary groups and individuals. We want to make the Commentator as useful and interesting as possible and would appreciate your criticisms and comments.

FASCIST DANGER INCREASES WORLD WIDE

(This question is still under discussion in our group. The ideas in this article while the majority view do not reflect a unanimous opinion.)

In January of this year, the government of India announced that national elections scheduled for this year would not be held. Unprecedented in the 29 year history of independent India, this move was accompanied by notice that the "state of emergency" would last for at least another year and that the democratic rights of the people would remain suspended.

Fascism came to India as abruptly as it had come to Chile nearly two years before. Though both were part of the Third World, they each had deep traditions of constitutional (bourgeois-democratic) government; each had elected governing bodies and permitted its people certain minimum rights--of speech, assembly, press, etc. Though both governments could be repressive, their people and workers could legally organize into unions and parties and had used the weapon of the strike. Today these options of the people have been removed. These governments have been "streamlined"; pesky opposition politicians have been removed and jailed. The claim to legitimacy of the ruling capitalist class now stems directly from military force rather than from the voter.

Georgi Dimitrov, in 1935, defined fascism as "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital" (of the bourgeoisie). While fascist governments may vary in forms, structure, types and degree of repression, all of them share this common class character. Today only Spain remains as an example of "first generation" fascism with its goose-stepping, salutes and other trappings, even in the absence of Franco, (which negates the liberals' limited definition of fascism as "one-man rule"). Since the fall of fascist Germany and Italy 31 years ago, however, this form of bourgeois rule and oppression has begun to take root throughout the world under new and even bizarre circumstances.

U.S. IMPERIALISM & FASCISM

One manifestation of fascism to emerge was its role as a partner of imperialism. Simultaneous with the emergence of the U.S. as the heir-apparent of Europe's colonies, was the

resistance of national liberation movements. Previous U.S. experience in Latin America was often applied to Africa and Asia, and nominal independence was permitted. A client, comprador class of native capitalists was permitted to rule the "neo colony"; (sometimes by virtue only

diplomatic recognition of People's China.

FASCISM & USSR

There is only one type of regime that is a greater friend of fascism than a big imperialist power; it is a big imper-



of naked, U.S.-supplied force). Thus the imperialist power exploited internal class contradictions in Third World countries to maintain their rule.

While the U.S. has been known to foster fascist governments in its neocolonies, this procedure was used only as a last resort. The preferred form of government was bourgeois democracy. In the Phillipines, a traditional colony of the U.S., nominal independence brought with it U.S.-style democratic structures, even while neo-colonialism remained. It became the much touted "showcase of democracy" in south east Asia--a U.S. model of benevolent paternalism. Much of Latin America, especially Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Mexico were regarded in similar manner. Despite this legacy, however, fascism was abruptly imposed in the Phillipines in 1973 during the intensified crisis of U.S. defeats in Vietnam and diplomatic setbacks elsewhere. It was implemented when President Marcos faced the prospect of inevitable electoral defeat. U.S. warships in Manila harbor and U.S. military bases (which constant presence had fomented the crisis) had remained an ominous reserve of military force and a deterrent to the resistance of the people.

It should be noted that after thirty-one years of U.S. imperialist policies, capped by the U.S. defeats in Vietnam and Cambodia, an erosion of the U.S. position has resulted in a weakening of its hegemony. Limited yet anti-imperialist measures have been adopted by once docile clients as the oil producing Arabs, and Latin American enclaves such as Peru. Even the Phillipines have recently begun adopting a more independent foreign policy, as seen by their

ialist power that is itself also fascist. Instead of using fascism as a "necessary evil" only in those locations where brute force cannot be avoided to maintain hegemony, the fascist imperialist finds fascism the preferred form of rule. One should recall that Nazi Germany spread fascism across Europe with the enthusiasm of a religious zealot.

It is a well known fact that the Soviet Union maintains military bases in many nations. Outside of the Six Warsaw Pact countries can be seen a network of bases including India, Syria, Somalia, Tanzania, Cuba and Saklrolin (territory still contested by Japan.) Russia is seeking further bases in Vietnam, Turkey, Cyprus, and Angola. What is a "Socialist" country doing so deeply involved in Imperialism? Any Marxist will point out that acquisition of bases on foreign soil is a violation of Socialist

CON'T ON PAGE 6

