

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

APRIL 1963 -- I

POSITION OF THE FRENCH SECTION
OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
ON THE CUBAN QUESTION

(Document referred to as "Draft Report on the Cuban Revolution" in Joseph Hansen's article, "Cuba -- The Acid Test," published in Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 24, No. 2, January 1963.)

30¢

Published by the

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

116 University Place New York 3, N. Y.

Introduction

THE TROTSKYIST MOVEMENT AND THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

The international Trotskyist movement is now discussing the Cuban revolution, and this discussion in itself reveals the situation of the movement. All the parties which approve the positions of the I.C., and all the tendencies which came up in the course of the discussion, agree that it is necessary to defend the Cuban revolution against imperialism and to defend the Castro government against Washington's manoeuvres. However, there are important differences of opinion as to the nature of the Cuban state and the Fidel Castro government as well as to the duties of the Cuban revolutionists, and these differences are likely to become sharper with the new developments in Cuba. The discussion must therefore be carried on with fitting gravity.

The Cuban revolution presents a certain number of original characteristics due to the economic and social situation of the country, to the nature and development of the Castro leadership and to the international context. For certain comrades, these specifically original features call for the use of new criteria to characterize the new situation. Revolutionary Marxists, i.e. Trotskyists, are aware of the fact that the analyses of past revolutions cannot be mechanically applied to all revolutionary situations. Life in society is so many-sided that since 1920 many forms have appeared which neither Marx, Engels nor Lenin predicted, not to mention analyzed. Other new forms appeared after Trotsky's death. Naturally, the point is not to seek in the works of the masters of Marxism ready-made formulas to be applied mechanically, but rather to use their methodology to analyze contemporary revolutions, and to start with, the Cuban revolution. The duty of Trotskyists is to preserve the ideological heritage of communist thinking, as it was willed to them by Trotsky, which means to enrich it as they apply it.

This duty leads to other duties which are just as urgent. No one in our movement can exclude the theoretical possibility of re-examining any of Lenin or Trotsky's statements or any positions of our organizations in the past, in the light of experience. But revolutionary morals forbid us to do so without saying that this is what we are doing. As for us, we affirm that if our study of the international situation today leads us to conclude that Lenin's claim that a revolutionary movement cannot exist without a revolutionary doctrine is outdated, or that the crisis of humanity is no longer, as Trotsky said, a crisis of revolutionary leadership, we would reach this conclusion without hesitating a moment. However, to adopt positions which are based on the idea that a revolutionary movement can be built without revolutionary doctrine and that the crisis of humanity can be solved without revolutionary

leadership, as far as the Cuban revolution is concerned, and then to claim that these positions are in keeping with the integral revolutionary heritage of Lenin and Trotsky, is an attitude which is incompatible with the duties of a revolutionist. From this point of view, the positions adopted by the S.W.P. have the same stamp of "shameful revisionism" as the positions of Pablo and his friends when the International split.

The discussion on the Cuban revolution is today being carried on under the imprint of this heavy liability. It bears the marks of the unfortunate methods of discussion which were current in the International even before Pabloism appeared as a liquidationist tendency. We can go much further back into the past than "Ou allons-nous?" (Where are we going?)(Pablo's famous article, February 1951, where all his revisionist points of view are systematically exposed) to situate the beginning of the political crisis of Trotskyism. We will no doubt have to revise the analysis (made in 1948) of the new workers' states in Eastern Europe and if we begin this discussion again, we will see that at that time points of view foreign to Trotskyism were introduced into our methods of work. As an organized current, these points of view took the form of "Pabloism", and yet they still remain in use in many parties claiming to agree with the I.C., whereas, inversely, certain parties which are members of the I.S. seem to have avoided them to a far greater extent. We are happy that the discussion on Cuba inevitably calls for a re-examination of past discussions and the working-out of a new analysis of the nature of the "iron curtain" countries, and especially of Yugoslavia and China. On these points we are "revisionists" to the extent that - and the Cuban discussion demonstrates this - some comrades today question the very principles on which the construction of our international movement was based, by basing themselves on characterizations adopted in 1948.

THE NATURE OF THE CUBAN STATE

Trotskyists in the various organizations have in their discussion on the nature of the Cuban state tried, at least theoretically, to place their analysis of the Cuban state in the tradition of Trotskyist thinking, that is to say that they took into consideration the specific features of "workers' states" defined in the past by our movement.

As far as the Pabloists are concerned, the Cuban state is a special type of workers' state, a "workers' state sui generis". Among the comrades who are grouped around the I.C., notions such as "degenerated workers' state" (like the USSR according to our traditional definition), "deformed workers' state" (like the "iron curtain"

countries, and in particular Yugoslavia and China; - the Chilian P.O.R. stresses the similarity of Cuba with Yugoslavia and China) were all defended at the same time. Some comrades who were not content with the application of these already insufficient definitions to Cuba, tried to stress the particularity of the Cuban situation by proposing terms, which to them seemed more precise, such as "workers' state in a transition stage" and "workers' state not yet developed." The majority of the S.W.P. defined the Cuban state as a "workers' state in a transition stage not yet having the forms of proletarian democracy".

These are not simply differences of form. The disagreement goes far beyond any of terms. Starting off from an over-all concept of the Cuban revolution, a definition is chosen which, fundamentally, sums up the political ideas of those who made the choice.

FIRST DIFFICULTIES

Those comrades using a previously accepted definition to characterize Cuba, a definition which applied to a state having different characteristics, are obviously having some trouble justifying their point of view. If for us the USSR is a degenerated workers' state, isn't it precisely because the "bureaucratic deviations" of the workers' state, denounced by Lenin in 1920, have become a monstrous parasitical bureaucracy which has expropriated the political rights of the workers? In this context, degeneration means the seizure of power by the bureaucracy and the destruction of the workers' and peasants' soviets as organs of power. This label cannot therefore be applied to the Cuban state, because, as is admitted by all, there never was "proletarian democracy", and so, logically, this democracy could not degenerate.

The term "deformed workers' state" was first applied by Trotskyists to the European "iron curtain" countries. This expression translated the idea of "structural assimilation" to Russian society under the leadership of the Stalinist bureaucracy, that is to say (regardless of what one might otherwise think of the theory of "structural assimilation") the fact that the state in these countries was, above all, a reflection of the interests of the Russian bureaucracy, an element foreign to the society. It is obviously impossible to put the Cuban state into that family of "workers' states" born out of the union of a control of the real but limited movement of the masses by the Russian bureaucracy and a bourgeois-type state apparatus reconstructed after the war, especially the army and the police force (e.g. Hungary, Czechoslovakia, etc...).

The term "deformed workers' state" was also used by the Trotskyists to characterize the Yugoslav and Chinese states, which were born out of the revolutionary action of the masses controlled and limited, however, by a Stalinist and bureaucratic leadership. This quickly led these states to bureaucratize themselves and to manifest common features with the "degenerated workers' state", i.e. the existence of new property relationships, concretized by the nationalization of the means of production, of trade and of transportation and a state apparatus which cannot be called proletarian, because it is absolutely not controlled by the proletariat and reflects the interest of a new bureaucratic caste. As far as we know, and despite the criticisms of the Cuban P.O.R., which is a member of the Pabloist I.S., against the absolutism and bureaucracy of the Castro regime, none of the comrades who say that Cuba is a "deformed workers' state" claim to assimilate Cuba to Yugoslavia and China and to denounce in Cuba, as in those two countries, the existence of a real bureaucracy of working class origin.

Conscious of these contradictions, other comrades tried to find new definitions. The formula of a "transition state" defended by the S.W.P. minority has the great advantage of leaving the door open for another definition. It reflects the thoughts of those comrades who correctly think that the situation in Cuba is transitional par excellence. But, at the same time, it is a refusal to give a definition and thereby leaves the door open for the most dangerous contradictions. The formula presented by certain comrades of the S.W.P. - "workers' state not yet developed" - has no meaning whatsoever, however one looks at it, except perhaps in the light of a return to metaphysics! The formula "workers' state sui generis" makes it possible for its promoters - and they are old hands at this! - to defend a line which they have chosen without analysis without jeopardizing their position by a precise definition. The formula of the S.W.P. majority - "workers' state in a transition stage not yet having the forms of proletarian democracy" - shows a greater desire for analysis but comes up against major contradictions. In "State and Revolution", long before our time, Lenin wrote the following: "We cannot imagine a democracy, even a proletarian democracy, without representative institutions." And, indeed, we can very well ask whether there can be "proletarian democracy" without the "forms of proletarian democracy", or in other words, whether there can be content without form. Unless, of course, the comrades of the S.W.P. majority consider "proletarian democracy" to be a secondary feature of a workers' state, and the presence or absence of proletarian democracy to simply be a difference of form?

THE QUESTION OF THE "CRITERIA" OF THE WORKERS' STATE

In reality, all the comrades who studied the nature of the Cuban state felt the difficulties of the definition "workers' state" when faced with a reality in which, among other things, all forms of proletarian democracy and power are missing. That's why, in order to demonstrate that Cuba is a workers' state, they used different criteria, which no doubt are important in defining the class nature of a state. The danger in this method of analysis is to assume that any one of these criteria is sufficient to give to the Cuban state its nature of a workers' state. Other criteria then simply come to confirm the demonstration, one criterion supporting another, but no criterion, taken alone, being decisive in the eyes of a Marxist revolutionist.

Is it possible to say, as do certain supporters of the thesis "Cuba, workers' state", that Cuba is a workers' state because the bourgeois state apparatus was destroyed? We say no. The comrades who make this affirmation are confused as to the beginning and the end of a victorious proletarian revolution. The bourgeois state, and in particular its organs of repression, the police and the permanent army, can be destroyed at the beginning of a revolution without nonetheless giving way to a workers' state. Between July 1936 and May 1937, Trotsky and the Trotskyists never dreamed of calling republican Spain a workers' state, although neither the police, nor the army, nor even the civil service apparatus remained - "the ashes of a state" were hardly present. Starting in September 1937, a bourgeois state was reconstituted, naturally slowly, against the proletarian power of the "committees", which, in the last analysis, were used as a framework within which to reconstruct the bourgeois state, whereas a revolutionary leadership might have made them the basis of the construction of a workers' state. Churchill, who assuredly is not a Marxist, but who is an expert in the class struggle, wrote the following in this context: "When, in any country, the total structure of civilization and of society is destroyed, the state can only reconstitute itself on a military basis" - which means that when the property relationships and the bourgeois state apparatus have been destroyed, there remains an alternative to the creation of a workers' state ("subversion"), namely the reconstitution of a new bourgeois state apparatus "on a military basis". What is the difference between the "rebel army" of Fidel Castro and the "popular army" of the Spanish republic, which was just as equalitarian, just as democratic, just as militant and no doubt more connected with the working class organizations and more politicized, but which, nevertheless forged the "Popular State" of Largo Caballero, i.e. the former bourgeois state

reconstituted, rejuvenated and dressed in the prestige of working class organizations and working class ideology? The destruction of the former bourgeois state apparatus is not automatically the proof, the criterion for the existence of a workers' state, although it is one of the conditions without which the workers' state cannot exist. A destroyed bourgeois state can be replaced by another bourgeois state, which integrates the remains of the preceding one, if the masses, for a certain period of time, are under the illusion that it is their state. Only a consistently revolutionary organization, fighting for a workers' state, can hinder this illusion from developing.

Other comrades say that it's true that the destruction of the old bourgeois state apparatus is not in itself a criterion for the existence of a workers' state because this is only negative, but that Cuba gives us a positive proof, and that is the existence of workers' militias, Lenin's "armed people". They will have to admit, however, that for brief periods of time a bourgeois state and workers' militias have co-existed. To please them, let us admit that the remains of the Spanish bourgeois state in 1936 could not stop the formation of militias, which, during several months, were the only armed force. They think that the significant fact is that the Fidel Castro government, quite hesitantly at the beginning, called for the constitution of militias and thereby insured the passage to the workers' state. Will they go so far as to say that the workers' and peasants' militias which were created these last few years in Bolivia under an M.N.R. government have turned that country into a workers' state? Have they forgotten that in 1923, within the heart of the German bourgeois state, the regional governments of Saxony and Thuringia, which were called "workers' and peasants' governments" by the Communist International, which criticized them for their weaknesses and opportunism, contributed, although in a limited and insufficient manner, to the creation and the arming of Proletarian Centuries? These were real workers' militias, which were convened together by very officially created workers' control committees, the real organs of proletarian democracy, the factory councils which were elected in the factories. At that time, the Communist International, despite these facts, never dreamed of calling Saxony and Thuringia "workers' states", despite the decomposition of the bourgeois state which was hard hit by inflation, and despite the fact that there existed in these regions a socialist-communist government, which the International called a "workers' government", workers' militias and elected workers' councils...

To define Cuba as a "workers' state", many comrades use the criterion of property relationships. According to them, Cuba is a workers' state because most of industry, trade and transportation was nationalized after the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and because the economy is

directed by a planning commission. Here at least they are basing themselves on a precedent - this criterion of nationalization and planning made it possible for Trotskyists in 1948 to call the Soviet satellite countries "behind the iron curtain" "workers' states", even though all forms of proletarian democracy were lacking and even though the decisive factor was the military and bureaucratic action of the USSR, instead of the revolutionary action of the masses, as was the case in Yugoslavia and China.

The action of the masses, and their revolutionary mobilization cannot be denied in Cuba, and the nationalization and planning affect an important part of the country's economy. We understand what the comrades' concern is - how can they refuse to call Cuba a "workers' state" when they gave this label to Bulgaria and Albania?

We think that this is precisely one of the weaknesses of our 1948 analysis, and we shall come back to this point later on. However, it is incontestably true, that in the "iron curtain countries" the criterion of "nationalization" cannot be separated from the criterion "structural assimilation" with a "degenerated workers' state". Because the bonapartist state of the "iron curtain" countries is the instrument of the bureaucracy of a degenerated workers' state, the Trotskyists were able to consider these countries as deformed workers' states, the criteria "nationalization and planning" being insufficient in themselves. In thirty years time Marxists have learned that there are bourgeois nationalizations as well as working class nationalizations. Just as Trotsky did, they think that the nationalization of all bourgeois property by the bourgeois state is indeed theoretically impossible. However, recent experience has shown that this argument can cease to be valid under special circumstances - the "Social-Fascist Republic" of Mussolini expropriated the Italian bourgeoisie in 1944 without however ceasing to represent the interests, historically speaking, of the bourgeoisie. Nationalization is one of the solutions for a bourgeois state in a backward country where the bourgeoisie is being created and where this is the only thing making the historic development of the bourgeoisie possible, even if it is to the immediate detriment of the bourgeois class. It is only in that light that we can understand the first Mexican nationalizations before the war, the total post-war nationalization of the Burmese economy and the nationalizations in Guinea, which an American comrade - who is no doubt somewhat nearsighted! - considers to be the expression of a sort of spontaneous world movement towards socialism...

THE PROBLEM OF THE STATE IN CUBA IN 1959

The comrades whose thesis is "Cuba Workers' State" don't agree on the date when quantity changed into quality - September-October 1960 when the important nationalizations were carried out or July-November 1959 when the coalition with the bourgeoisie was broken? For this discussion, it is important to go back further in time to the birth of the new government and the military victory of the "bearded ones".

After the victory, the first blow against the bourgeois state was struck - the breaking-up of the army and the police force. The rebel army, which was indeed a peasant army linked to the plebian-type masses of campesinos, but whose composition and structure, i.e. nominations from above, makes it impossible to use as a proof of the transition to a workers' state, took over. Batista's police force was replaced by a new police force recruited from Castro's followers and controlled by him. Although Batista's sinister SIM was replaced by the former security services of the rebel army, the 62, the new police force was not an outgrowth of the working class. It was a special professional repressive body and no one can call it the "majority of the people repressing its oppressors". The Miro Cardona government (he's now the leader of the counter-revolutionary immigrants) composed of the bourgeois class and the land-owners had created a new bourgeois police force.

The Marines, who too were a specialized force in the apparatus of repression, remained intact, since in the last minute they had come over to the insurrection. The commanders during the Batista regime continued to command after the dictator's fall. The most tarnished high officials were purged and corruption fought by a certain number of trials, but as a whole the administrative apparatus remained intact, with the addition, at the summit of the administrative apparatus, of a certain number of university graduates who were faithful to Castro. The bourgeois legal apparatus was saved and the stalinist Soria was able to say: "The magistrates who judged under Batista continue to judge under Castro." The "Revolutionary Tribunals" were military tribunals. All the diplomats kept their jobs.

Thus, in 1959, the victory of Fidel Castro's army only dealt a blow against the structure of the bourgeois state apparatus by liquidating the army and the police force. The destruction of these tried-and-tested instruments of coercion, the Batista forces of repression, was of course an extremely important change and a revolutionary victory. However, this didn't stop the church from welcoming the new government, nor the American banks from lending it money, both things would naturally have been impossible had they felt that these measures were the introduction to the

construction of a workers' state.

THE BREAK-UP OF THE COALITION

Many comrades quite correctly stress the importance of the rupture of the coalition between Castro and the bourgeois elements which became part of the government after Batista's flight. This rupture can be explained first of all and above all by the pressure of imperialism on the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements of the coalition, pressure aimed at trying to lead them to make the government repress the mass movements. This was demonstrated first during the repression which took place during the gigantic meetings which were held when the Batista "war criminals" were tried, and then during the development of the agrarian reform when the campesinos often went beyond the bourgeois limits of the law of the 17th of May 1959. As the Cuban leaders themselves stressed, it was the fear of revolutionary contagion which led Wall Street to intervene. As "Che" Guevara wrote, it was the imperialist attacks which led the leaders of the M 26 to give up their bourgeois-liberal program and adopt radical measures by breaking with the national bourgeoisie. He said: "Except for our agrarian reform, which the Cuban people wanted and set up themselves, all our revolutionary measures were a direct reaction to the aggression of the monopolists... The pressure of the United States on Cuba made the radicalization of the revolution necessary."

The choice made during this period by the Castro group led to a shift in the center of gravity of the government, which, in its turn, led to striking direct and indirect blows against the bourgeois state apparatus. Indeed, it is in the state apparatus and in the rebel army that the imperialists found new allies, and by striking them a blow Castro struck a blow against the bourgeois state apparatus as it was re-instituted in the beginning of 1959. The rebel army and I.N.R.A., the police force, the magistrates, the administration, and the marines were all widely purged, and so were government circles.

As soon as the Castro government decided to choose the path of resistance against imperialism by refusing imperialism's conditions, it was led to take economic, social and political measures which, directly or indirectly, were an appeal to the initiative of the masses and especially of the working class. This is the era when the nationalizations and the creation of workers' and peasants' militias took place. Opposite a bourgeois state which daily became more shoddy, more impotent and more unreal, forms of working class organization came into being and they were the bases, although still embryonic and local, of power: militias, committees for the defense of the

revolution, vigilante groups, technical and consultative committees in factories, etc...Fidel Castro's hesitancy about creating militias, which were demanded at the beginning of 1960, and the undemocratic way of choosing, not electing, factory committees as well as their consultative nature prove how much the Castro group hesitated when facing the creation of the elements of workers' power. These elements of workers' power don't change anything as to the situation of Cuba today. There is a shoddy, decomposed and unreal bourgeois state controlled by the men who surround Castro and elements of workers' power side by side with it, which claim to have the same leadership but in reality always push further in their drive for more radical measures. In other words, a situation pretty similar to republican Spain in 1936-37 - a special type of dual power, where the absence of revolutionary leadership makes it possible for the government to try and conciliate the two antagonistic powers, as it does by reuniting in the Coordination and Execution Juntas the representatives of various organs - army and militia, administration and committees, police force and trade unions.

THE NATURE OF THE CASTRO GOVERNMENT

One of the main causes for error among those comrades who at any price wish to make Cuba a workers' state is the confusion between criteria which are valid for one historical period and the application of these criteria to a clearly transitional period. These comrades note that the Cuban state has concentrated against it the hatred of reactionary forces and from this fact draw conclusions as to its class character. The basis of their thinking is that such hatred cannot be deserved by a bourgeois government. It is a serious error in methods to confound the nature of the state and the nature of the government. And yet we know that under a parliamentary regime there have existed governments of the representatives of working class parties supported by the working class and fought by the international bourgeoisie. These governments, however, ruled within the framework of the bourgeois state. During the era of Lenin and Trotsky, the Communist International not only admitted the possibility of the creation of workers' and peasants' governments, within the framework of a bourgeois state which had not yet been overthrown, but even made this a temporary directive. In fact, these governments were created specifically to overthrow the bourgeois state and they prepared its overthrow quite openly. This is the name they gave to the socialist-communist governments of Saxony and Thuringia in 1923, workers' and peasants' governments in the framework of a classical bourgeois state. These governments failed in their revolutionary task, although they were governments which were not bourgeois governments, as we have tried to show.

If history gives us few examples of these types of government, it is undoubtedly because the democratic petty-bourgeois organizations shy away from breaking the coalition with the bourgeoisie, and this has been proved on numerous occasions. However, Trotsky stressed the educational value of this slogan used to free the proletariat from its traditional leaders. In the "Transition Program" he wrote:

"It is however impossible to categorically deny ahead of time the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of a combination of completely exceptional circumstances, petty-bourgeois parties, including the stalinists, can go much further than they themselves desire in the path of breaking with the bourgeoisie."

This hypothesis, which although unlikely, was envisaged by Trotsky, is what took place in Cuba. The Castro movement, which was petty-bourgeois not only in its social origin, but especially in its ideology and its program was led to take the head of a powerful peasant movement and to begin the transformation of Cuba through the carrying out of bourgeois democratic tasks. The interaction of forces resulting from the revolutionary rise of the Cuban masses on the one hand, and the offensive carried out by imperialism on the other, led Castro to go beyond the limits of his own program and, in order to defend the successes of the "bourgeois" revolution, especially the agrarian reform, to begin the tasks of the proletarian revolution and consequently to break the coalition with the bourgeoisie. The extreme weakness of the national Cuban bourgeoisie, the failure of parliamentary democracy and of the traditional parties, the exceptional concentration of the workers in rural industry and the penetration between working class and peasantry in Cuba, and the linking of the offensive aspirations of the Cuban workers and the combative qualities of the men in Castro's ruling team, all this is an explanation as to how the Castro people were able to take the leap. It is still true however that the Cuban revolution is going on and that history has not yet decided whether the Fidel Castro workers' and peasants' government will open the way for the dictatorship of the proletariat or on the contrary for the restoration of the bourgeois state and of capitalism in Cuba.

POSSIBLE FORMS

It is indeed clear that the partial destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus to which is added the arming of the Cuban workers and peasants theoretically opens the possibility for the appearance in Cuba of a workers' state without overthrowing the workers' and peasants' government, but this would call for a new "evolution" of the Castro team,

the chances of which we discuss further on. It is true that the J.U.C.E.I. which were created in Oriente province and which have now spread all over the island could, at a later stage, if they were composed of representatives elected and recalled by the workers and peasants, be the framework for a soviet state. That's how the Trotskyists quite correctly saw the possibility of transforming the regional revolutionary power in Spain in 1936 - the central committee of militias in Catalonia, the popular executive committee of the eastern region (Levant), etc. - into the organs of "soviet" power. We know that for lack of a revolutionary party, because the anarchists neglected the question of the nature of the state and because the P.O.U.M. considered to be the "dictatorship of the proletariat" something which in reality was dual power, these organs served as a mold for the restoration of the old bourgeois state apparatus in the republican zone. These two possibilities exist today in Cuba for the J.U.C.E. I., and it is impossible to go along with the comrades who only see one single possibility for the development of proletarian power, especially since election and recall are only very vague promises.

We cannot go along either with the majority of the SWP when they say that "a civil war would now be necessary to reestablish in Cuba capitalist property forms". This is only true to the extent that one considers this restoration under the light of returning the land and the factories to their former owners. This could be done in other ways, if only by that of a modus vivendi between Wall Street and Havana which would re-integrate Cuba into the U.S. market without even touching nationalized property. Once the agrarian reform has been achieved, the agricultural co-operatives could, because of their need for markets, act as a transmission belt for imperialist pressure to obtain compensation or reimbursement which would make it possible to put a hand once more on the surplus-value produced by the Cuban proletariat.

It is sufficient to say that the question of property relationships, just as that of the nature of the Cuban state, cannot be solved outside the context of the international relationship of forces and the relationships between the revolution and the workers' and peasants' government with the USA and the USSR.

THE POSITION OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION IN THE WORLD

CUBA AND THE USA

Ninety miles from Florida, Cuba is a permanent defiance to imperialism. It is however necessary to understand that it is not only the blow struck against imperialist interests in Cuba itself, but also the perspectives opened and the threats inspired for the total domination of the U.S.A. This is what Che Guevara clearly said when he wrote:

"Of course we are being attacked for what we are, but even more so because we have shown the path to follow. What worries the imperialists is not so much the nickle mines or the sugar factories which they have just lost in Cuba, but rather the destiny of Venezuelan oil, Mexican cotton, Chilian copper, Argentinian livestock and Brazilian coffee all of which furnish the wealth of imperialism."

In the war which has been carried out constantly since 1960 and which culminated in the attempt to land troops in April 1961 and in the press campaigns it is a political struggle which Wall Street is fighting. Imperialism is above all aiming at the brutal victory of the counter-revolution, which would bring with it a repression which would be an example to the other Latin American peoples struggling for their emancipation.

It is clear however that all methods are not equally good. Of course, Washington did manage to limit the damages, but it is impossible to once more run the same risks as for the April 1961 fiasco, and Kennedy's refusal to call out the Air Force proves that the North American ruling circles are aware of this. A new coup de force, resulting in another victorious resistance of the Cuban workers, would shake the very bases of imperialist domination in Latin America through the new enthusiasm which such events would give to the masses. Another path is open to Kennedy, namely the reintegration of Cuba into the "American Community", as the bourgeois candidates for the post of mediator in Buenos-Aires and Brasilia say. This would be done through a compromise which would necessarily include compensation clauses for the confiscated North American property. In this way, without carrying out a costly military struggle, imperialism might reintegrate Cuba into its economic circuit. In exchange for the re-introduction of Cuban sugar on the US market, the imperialists would benefit from the surplus value of the Cuban workers and peasants in the form of compensation, interests or amortization.

CUBA AND THE USSR

Although nothing today indicates that the American ruling circles are ready to enter the path of counter-revolution through negotiation, it is nevertheless true that this possibility seems to be one of the likeliest if we consider the relationships which exist between Cuba and the USSR. Only Stalinist agents or those who are incorrigibly naive, those "hopeless imbeciles" who, according to Lenin, take people's word for it in politics, can believe and make others believe that the help given by the USSR and the satellite countries has no political "strings attached". This applies even more for those who say that this help is given to the Cuban revolution as the first stage in the Latin American revolution, which the agents of the Kremlin have been trying to hinder for the last thirty years in systematically calling for tactics of the United Front and the front with the national bourgeoisie, which so often has led to disaster for the revolutions of Latin America, and with which the Cuban revolution had to break first of all in order to conquer.

No one can deny that the trade agreements with the Castro government have been a help for this government. No one can deny that this aid made it possible to limit the catastrophic results of the American blockade - it enabled Cuba to survive. But no one can seriously say that this help was disinterested. It goes without saying that this aid was inevitably accompanied by pressure aimed at insuring that the policies of the Castro government were not opposed to the foreign policy of the USSR, but rather in keeping with it. This "aid" is the same type that the USSR gave to the Spanish Republic starting in September 1936 - tanks, munitions, planes and technicians were sold to Republican Spain, enabling her to survive and especially to defend Madrid. But Stalin dictated the political conditions which were the counterpart of this aid to Spain, and this for the benefit of his foreign policy of alliance with the western democracies in London and Paris. This Russian aid, which was never sufficient to defeat Franco, ceased abruptly when Stalin decided to overthrow his alliances and sign his pact with Hitler. In the framework of the policy of "peaceful coexistence" of the Soviet bureaucracy, which is characterized by the search for a compromise with the USA through the negotiation between the big powers for a new division of the world, the policy of helping Cuba makes this aid a means of pressure against imperialism and a source of serious difficulties in imperialism's immediate geographic area. It can also be a possible exchange currency, better "negotiable" than any other area desired by imperialism, because of its proximity to the USA.

It is obvious that, when she so desires, Moscow can abruptly cease aid to Cuba and thereby "hand over" Cuba to the Americans. In the meantime, all measures which tend to harness the Cuban masses facilitate this quick stoppage. An operation of this sort is possible unmasked, with the true face of cynical bargaining, as well as under the hypocritical cover of "negotiations" for the "peaceful solution" of all "threats of war." At any rate, this is in keeping with the policy of peaceful coexistence which led K's USSR, just as that of Stalin, to take a counter-revolutionary attitude which today is characterized by the policy of popular fronts with the bourgeoisie, which everywhere in Latin America is preached, whereas the very lessons of the Cuban revolution show that this path leads the masses of workers and peasants to new defeats.

CASTRO AND THE LATIN AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Caught between two great counter-revolutionary forces, whose world perspectives lead to its being crushed between these united forces, the Cuban revolution has no other escape than to spread or die. The policies of imperialism as well as of the bureaucracy show that the leaders in New York and in Moscow are perfectly conscious of this. The Castro leadership are certainly less aware of this than anyone else, and one of their weaknesses, and not the least, is not to have understood, or to have acted as if they didn't understand, that in abandoning the appeal to make "other Sierra Maestras out of the Andes", the Cuban revolutionists are depriving themselves of their only weapons - they are giving up the support they might have gotten from revolutionary workers' and peasants' movements, to hide behind the apron-strings of weak bourgeois governments at the mercy of imperialism, as they did in Brazil with President Quadros before his fall.

We must, of course, admit that the workers' and peasants' government in Cuba is, from this point of view, in a touchy situation. It must at any cost export the revolution, but it must also export sugar, and it is difficult to negotiate trade agreements, which are necessary, while supporting revolutionary agitation in the neighboring countries.

After the revolution, the Russian workers' state had solved a similar contradiction because it knew how to carefully separate the diplomatic activity of the Russian state from the political activity of the Communist Party. The Rapallo treaty in no way hindered the freedom of the Russian Communist Party in its action towards the German Communist Party, nor did it hinder the latter's action towards its own bourgeoisie. Until the creation of the integrated revolutionary organizations, Fidel Castro and

his crew always were firmly opposed to the M. 26 existing as a political party, which even in words, would be independent from the Cuban state. There is permanent confusion between the policy of the Cuban revolutionists and Cuban diplomacy. The Cuban leaders did not create in Cuba the party which might have been decisive for the success of the revolution in Latin America. In February 1960, Castro excused himself for having gone too far when he threatened to spread the revolution to Latin America.

The result clearly appears in the work of the Latin American conference on National Sovereignty, Economic Emancipation and Peace held in 1961 with the participation of bourgeois-liberal leaders like the ex-president of Mexico, Cardenas. The final resolution, which excludes all class demands and all socialist aspirations, limits itself completely to the terrain of bourgeois demands, calling for an alliance "of all classes" against imperialism. This is the old Stalinist line of class collaboration which triumphed in the name of the defense of the Cuban revolution, with the approval of the Cubans, who were victorious precisely because they broke with this line of collaboration, because they broke with the bourgeoisie.

THE IMPACT OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION ON LATIN AMERICA

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Cuban revolution has given birth in the countries of Latin America to contradictory phenomena - entirely positive at the onset, they tend today to become more and more often negative, as our comrades in the Latin American Trotskyist organizations, and even to a certain extent those affiliated with the I.S., now realize.

On the one hand, the struggle of the Cuban workers and peasants and the victory of their militias was a stimulant for the revolutionary energy of the masses. The radical development of working class leaders like the Chilean trade unionist Clotario Blest, the demonstrations by Chilean workers and their resolution to fight "Cuban style", i.e. with arms in their hands, are a proof of this. But, on the other hand, the Uruguayan newspaper, "Frente Obrero" (Pabloist) stresses the fact that to the extent that the Cuban revolution is not an appeal for the struggle of the proletariat, it seems somewhat strange to Argentinian and Brazilian workers. Guevara's book, in which he says that the decisive revolutionary sectors are no longer the working class cities but the sierras, contributes to this sentiment, because it is read in the cities and not in the sierras.

To the extent that Cuban diplomats set up their contacts with Stalinist agents in all the countries of

Latin America, the main danger is that the prestige of the Cuban revolution will be confiscated by Stalinist parties and groups, enabling them, in the long run, to fight the revolutionary prospects in all these countries far better in the future than they did in the past.

THE CUBAN REVOLUTION AND STALINISM

Thus, however one may try to study the present Cuban situation, the same problem comes up all the time! Stalinism - its role, its influence and the position it has today in the Cuban political arena.

We know that the Popular Socialist Party, the Cuban Stalinist party, never had a decisive influence among the masses before the 1959 revolution. A docile agent of the Kremlin bureaucrats, it had followed the politics of the USSR in all its twists and turns, and had hardly any prestige. It had supported Batista when he first came to power, and even sent ministers into his government in the name of "anti-fascism". For a long time it opposed the resistance movement of the Castro group, whom it called "adventuristic" and whom it reproached for refusing to make an alliance against Batista with certain anti-imperialist sections of the bourgeoisie. This party rallied itself to the revolution at the very last minute, as did all the political groups in the country. It thereby benefited from the new membership of many career seekers, who had rallied to the revolution in extremis, and joined this party because they couldn't join a party in power. Many observers of the government stressed the fact that this party was numerically weak, had abstained from participating in the revolution, and had played a mediocre role during the first days of the new regime. They drew the conclusion from these facts that it had a small chance of winning important positions in the command posts of the country in a short time. They forgot an important historical precedent - the Spanish Communist Party did not even have the influence of the P.S.P. at the beginning of the Civil War. However, a few months later, it played the role we all know at the head of the counter-revolutionary coalition in the republican camp. In the interval, it had benefited politically from the material aid given by the USSR. In the besieged fortress which is Cuba today, this same Stalinist party has benefited from the governmental propaganda on the friendship and the disinterested aid of the Russian ally, the delivery of arms, and the diplomatic support. Whereas in 1959, its attempt to take over the leadership of the trade union federation, the C.T.C., failed due to the personal intervention of Castro who imposed his companion in arms, David Salvador, in 1960 the situation changed profoundly. David Salvador was arrested, and well-known communists occupied the key posts

in the C.T.C. after Castro's personal intervention to impose their presence in the leadership of the federation. The Stalinists seem to even have made much progress in the conquest of posts in the co-operatives, state apparatus, militias, and the administration, especially the diplomatic corps. Carleton Beals, a friend of the Castro group, tells how they spread their control to the official press agency and imposed the policy of "peaceful coexistence". For lack of further information, it is impossible to draw conclusions from the elimination of numerous leaders and their replacement by people which the counter-revolutionary propaganda of the imperialists uniformly label as "communists" in order to maintain the atmosphere of anti-red hysteria among the American public, necessary for the carrying-out of operations of the April 1961 type.

However, no comrade who is a member of a party which adheres to Trotskyism can refuse to examine the political meaning of the anti-Trotskyist repression of May 1961. We know the facts - on the 26th of May, an employee of the national printing office ordered the seizure, in Havana, of "Voz Proletaria", the newspaper of the Cuban Revolutionary Workers Party, which is affiliated to the I.S., as well as the destruction of the types which had already been set up for Trotsky's "Permanent Revolution". That same night, the Ministry of Labor ordered the seizure of the print-shop itself, after accusing it of having "published counter-revolutionary propaganda". This information, which appeared in the August 7th and August 14th, 1961 issues of "The Militant" (SWP organ), leave no doubt as to the fact that the decision to stop the publishing of a work of Trotsky and to stop publishing a newspaper which claimed to be Trotskyist came from government circles. A letter from the Latin American Bureau of the Pabloist organization, published in the Argentinian newspaper "Voz Proletaria" of July 1961, specifies that this group had gotten no news about its Cuban comrades, despite protests addressed to the government, to leading personalities and to the unions, all of which remained unanswered. It concludes: "In the light of this silence, we must expect the worst."

The last issue of the Cuban "Voz Proletaria" before the seizure was devoted to the "socialist May Day". It launched the slogans "Revolutionary Constituent Assembly", "All power to the workers and peasants councils (soviets)", and "proletarian and trade-union democracy against bureaucratic sectarianism". In reading the article about the revolutionary constituent assembly, we see that the newspaper was echoing the "criticism and the discontent against the bureaucratic excesses and errors in the government, the trade unions, the planning commission, the administration of the economy and in the absolutist control of the press and of the other means of communication." The remedies proposed - the election of workers and peasants coun-

cils and of a revolutionary constituent assembly by the delegates of the workers, peasants, soldiers, militia-men, students, etc. - are presented by the newspaper as the "consolidation of the workers state", "the revolutionary answer" to imperialism's accusations.

The repression against "Voz Proletaria" obviously is a direct blow against the theses of those comrades who were waiting for "the forms of proletarian democracy" still absent in the "Cuban Workers State" to develop spontaneously and who waited for the "socialist constitution" promised by Castro in order to see what new forms of proletarian democracy the Cuban revolution would spontaneously offer the world. The Castro government answered by repressing the working class tendency which called for the election of councils based on the model of the soviets of the October Revolution!

The Latin American Bureau of the Pabloist organization calls upon the Cuban Trotskyists to support this stage and to help the "Cuban Workers State" to bypass it. The majority of the SWP exhorts its militants and sympathizers "not to lose their sense of proportion" and not to forget that the Castro leadership "by its honesty, its radicalism, its use of revolutionary methods, its political resources and its capacity to learn can be situated in the great historical upsurge of the revolution and not in its Stalinist dribblings...and...represents the resurrection of the world revolution and not its decline."

The fact remains that for the time being it is a work of Trotsky which has been destroyed. This book, "The Permanent Revolution", precisely contributes its experience and its analysis to proletarian revolutions in backward countries and consequently shows the Cuban experiment in a particular light. The banning of Trotsky's book and the simultaneous suppression of the newspaper "Voz Proletaria" shows not only the will of the governmental apparatus to escape from all control by the masses, but also the counter-revolutionary will of the Stalinist bureaucracy and its ferocious hatred of Trotskyism as the representative of revolutionary ideology. Through the intermediary of the Fidel Castro government's Ministry of Labor, the same hand that struck out against the old Russian bolsheviks, the Spanish revolutionists, the Hungarian workers and students and which assassinated Leon Trotsky himself is striking out against the revolutionary current: against the defenders of workers' democracy - the hand of the Kremlin bureaucracy!...

Now it just so happens that in the "Integrated Revolutionary Organizations" as well as in the single party whose creation has just been officially announced there is a fusion between the movement of the 26th of July, the old "embryo" of the party which Castro didn't want to

create, and the Stalinist apparatus, the only organized political force. No one can doubt that the Stalinists carefully assured themselves of the control of the levers of power since the persecution of the Trotskyists was the preface to this fusion.

Indeed, one of the constants of the counter-revolutionary Stalinist line is to construct these "single parties" which are destined to become Stalinist-type parties. This line which started in Spain triumphed in the "iron-curtain" countries and was used to eliminate all forms of potential political organization and fundamentally all types of vanguard movements. Forty years of Stalinism have proved that the "single party" is the weapon of the counter-revolutionary agents of the Kremlin in the ranks of the workers, the basic tool used against proletarian democracy. In the Transition Program, Trotsky, justifying the slogan of the Fourth International "freedom for Soviet parties", stressed the fact that "the Russian workers and peasants alone would decide through free elections which parties were to be called soviet." Almost twenty years later, the Hungarian workers councils echoed this in asking for "freedom for socialist parties" - ever since the Russian revolution this demand has become one of the basic acquisitions of the revolutionary Marxist theory and is inseparable from the demand for real proletarian democracy.

The creation of the "single party of the socialist revolution in Cuba" can only be analysed in relationship to the politics of Stalinism both on the world level as well as in Cuba. In both cases these politics appear to be a war machine against the organization of the revolutionary vanguard. At the very moment when the printing of Trotsky's book was forbidden, the Cuban leaders announced the fusion of the vague M 26 with the solid Stalinist apparatus. Undoubtedly one needs much imagination or political light-headedness to greet the success of this operation which is in conformity with the constant counter-revolutionary line of the Stalinist bureaucracy as "the creation of a new revolutionary party."

If, in fact, the Popular Socialist Party was able, in the present situation, to appear, in the eyes of Cuban militants, as the only force capable of promoting the centralization which is incontestably necessary for the defense of the revolution, and although its leaders could, because of this fact, occupy key posts in the unified organization, revolutionary militants should not go in for illusions of this scope, even if they are shared by masses of people. As in Spain, the "efficiency" of the

Stalinist apparatus and its capacities for "centralization" will above all be directed against the organization of the working class and its vanguard. The "single party" led by the Stalinist apparatus will be the rallying point of counter-revolutionary forces, the channel for bourgeois reaction, and in the class struggle in Cuba this apparatus will transmit the double counter-revolutionary pressure of imperialism and of the bureaucracy. We can, together with certain comrades of the SWP, admit the possibility of struggle inside the single party between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces. But, if one leads the revolutionary forces to believe that the Stalinists, in furthering the construction of the single party, and the Castroists, in accepting this party, had any other aim than to prepare for their wiping-out through regimentation and the control of the masses, this can only contribute to disarm these revolutionary forces in advance.

TROTSKYISM OR CENTRISM

We are anxiously asking, after the anti-Trotskyist repression and the creation of the "single party", whether Morris Stein would once again declare the same thing, which according to the Internal Bulletin no. 7 1961 of the SWP (article by Martha Curti) he declared, namely, "Through the force of events - the least of which is not the Chinese revolution - the Soviet Union is today forced to place itself on the side of the revolution, to defend its interests, instead of playing a counter-revolutionary role, whatever you may think about that."

In the last analysis, it is not the least advantage of the discussion on the Cuban revolution to have clearly brought into the foreground the existence, in organizations claiming to be Trotskyist, of centrifugal currents of thought which reflect an opportunist and jump-on-the-bandwagon ideology in contradiction with the very teachings of revolutionary Marxism. This current is not yet organized or coherent but is typically centrist, oscillating from one position to another according to the problems involved, without any serious analysis of the problems of the world revolution. This tendency manifested itself particularly in relationship to Cuba in certain theoretical positions of the SWP majority and in its daily politics. It was especially characterized by an almost total absence of criticism of the Castro government, which it seems was motivated by an orientation aimed at converting the leaders of the M. 26 movement.

THE CASTROITES OF THE SWP

Just as the Pablo group had its extremists - the

Mestre group - the revisionists of the SWP have theirs. They don't seem to be organized in a tendency yet, but they can be characterized by a blind and unconditional attachment to "Fidelism". The proof for this can be found in the article by Comrade B.D. which appeared in Discussion Bulletin no. 10 1961 of the SWP - "The Construction of a Revolutionary Party in Cuba".

Comrade B.D. asks the question whether or not the M 26, or a section of this movement, can become a Marxist revolutionary socialist party. He answers this question in his own way - namely, the demands of the revolution in Cuba have created a leadership - "in the course of the struggle, classes create the organs which play a very important and independent role." And "the appearance of leaders during a revolution is necessary to mobilize the vanguard which in its turn will reassemble the working class as well as the urban proletariat in Cuba." In Cuba the vanguard is the rural population, the "campesinos". The first program of the M 26 was a bourgeois-liberal one, but it was abandoned for another program which "led the entire country in the direction of revolutionary Marxism." "Given the program, the formation of leading cadres is the key to the construction of a revolutionary party. The Movement of the 26th of July is united on a revolutionary socialist program in its essence. Its doors are open for the assimilation and the development of others... The task of the Movement of the 26th of July is to crystalize itself into a unified organization which would serve as a regular link between the masses of workers and their government." Comrade B.D. salutes the attitude of the SWP which knew how to play its role as a Marxist party - "the final solution", he says, "is the complete liquidation of class society as a whole."

THE FIDELIST IDEOLOGY

It is, no doubt, not useless to recall here what the main theoretician of the Fidelist crew, Che Guevara, wrote on the ideology of the Cuban revolution. Guevara recalls that "the main actors of the revolution had no coherent theoretical criteria", and he develops the now famous theory of "natural Marxism" - "If you ask us," he wrote, "whether we are Marxists or not, our position is the same as that of a physicist or a biologist when asked whether he is a 'Newtonian' or a 'Pasteurian'." For him, "Marx's merit is that all of a sudden he produced a vital change in the history of social thought...he expressed a revolutionary concept - the world must not only be interpreted, it must be changed... With Marx the revolutionary as a starting point, a political group with concrete ideas was organized. Basing itself on the giants, Marx and Engels, this group, developing itself in successive

stages with people like Lenin, Stalin, and Mao Tse-tung and the new Soviet and Chinese leaders, set up the main body of a doctrine, and, let us say, examples to be followed." ... "We, who are practical revolutionists, starting from our own struggle, simply carry out the laws predicted by the scientist Marx. When we advanced on the path of rebellion, fighting against the old structures of power, and finding support for the destruction of these structures in the people and being lucky enough to have the people as the basis of our struggle, we were simply carrying out the predictions of Marx the scientist. That is to say, and it is good to stress this once more - the laws of Marxism are present in the events of the Cuban revolution, whether or not its leaders teach or know these laws from a theoretical point of view."

It should be superfluous, in a discussion among Marxists, to stress the fact that the concept of "Natural Marxism" of Guevara, who is supposed to be the most "Marxist" of the Fidelists, is in reality in complete contradiction with the Marxist method, because it affirms that ideology is useless for action since, in acting empirically, one acts in conformity with objective laws as they were defined in Marx's teachings. Thus, as was stressed by a comrade of the SWP minority, everybody is a "Natural Marxist", including Hitler, whose stages of development Trotsky had predicted, using a Marxist analysis.

Let us simply keep in mind that the Fidelists have followed the path which has led them to the point where they are today, by using bourgeois-democratic demands for national independence and agrarian reform, which they took very seriously, as a starting point. However, they have not yet, at least apparently, asked themselves two of the "questions" which the most simple study of Marx's ideas, however rudimentary, inevitably brings up: that of the working class leading the transformation of society and that of the "new structures", in other words, the problem of the state, and on the international, not national, level. Even if optimists like B.D. are not concerned about this at all, the comrades in the leadership of the SWP have their ideas about how they can help Castro and his friends to come to revolutionary Marxist positions.

CASTRO'S CONVERSION

The clearest text on this subject is no doubt Daniel Roberts' article, which appeared in the Internal Bulletin no. 15 1961 of the SWP. He said: "Never, since the left-turn of the Titoists in 1949-50 has the Trotskyist movement had a similar opportunity to grow." According to him, "The Castro group began as a radical petty-bourgeois tendency within the wider bourgeois-nationalist movement. The history of anti-imperialist struggles in colonial

countries has, however, shown us several examples of the evolution of such groups into proletarian revolutionary tendencies." The political evolution of the Castro group allows him to affirm that this group has already become a proletarian tendency and that it is continuing to develop towards the left, which, in his eyes, "justifies the attempts of the Trotskyists to work with the Fidelistas and in collaboration with the Cubans to construct the revolutionary-socialist party in Latin America and in the rest of the world. Thus the line defended by the SWP press, by the "theses" adopted at the SWP convention and in the course of discussion by the comrades of the majority, shows that they are aiming, exactly the same way as their extremists, but with more complicated arguments, at the conversion of Castro to revolutionary proletarian socialism and at the construction of a revolutionary party through the Fidelists. This explains the absence of any reference to the construction of a revolutionary party in the first theses, as well as the accusation against the minority of having a "narrow" concept of the party.

It is clear that the minority has a completely different concept of the construction of the party, and on this point at least (although we have important disagreements with it on other points) we can say that we agree with the minority. As Wohlforth wrote, "The Trotskyist party must be constructed in Cuba outside the Castro apparatus, while supporting Castro every time he makes a move forward. Its main area of work must be the mass movements of its class - workers militias, trade unions, etc.... as well as the peasant organizations and the co-operatives. The party should repeat the following to the workers and peasants: 'Don't lean on the governmental apparatus which you don't control. You can only count on yourselves. Insist that you be given a voice in the government through representatives of your own choosing.'" This constructive orientation is indeed, what's more, the only one capable of winning over the revolutionary elements, liable to develop towards the left in the Fidelist organization. The entire experience of the working class movement shows that centrists can only be led to take consistently revolutionary positions if they have been submitted to the attack of revolutionary criticism and if they have studied at the school of a militant, and therefore conscious, vanguard. The conversion of Fidel Castro himself would not represent anything if not connected with the construction of a real revolutionary organization, the active force for proletarian democracy. In going over to the position of winning over big-shots, however brilliant and capable they may be, the majority of the SWP is seeking - and it is not the first to do so - to cut short the long and hard path which leads to the masses and to attach itself to a "supreme savior". It is no co-incidence that, to justify itself, the SWP refers to the orientation for the conversion by Tito of the leaders of the Yugoslav bureaucracy, which was the

transformation by the Pabloist I.S. in 1950 of its perfectly correct line of defense of the Yugoslav revolution.

The history of the Spanish revolution, so instructive and yet so unknown to those who should be familiar with it, is a tragic example of the dramatic consequences of this type of mistake. Having broken with the international Trotskyist organization to find a short-cut for the reconstruction of the party, the great revolutionist, Andres Nin, who was at the head of a centrist party, committed, ahead of time, the same errors which today are made by Pabloists and those in favor of the thesis "Cuba, Workers' State". In a dual-power situation, he stated on September 6, 1936 that in Catalonia the dictatorship of the proletariat existed and that there was no going back. On the basis of this analysis, he entered into a bourgeois government, which had been baptized "Council", one month later, and at his party's order collaborated in liquidating the committees which were precisely the embryo of a workers' state. Excluded from the government, the leaders of the P.O.U.M. desperately attached themselves to the apron strings of the anarchist leaders. That is why Andrade wrote the following (on April 15, 1937): "The future of the Spanish revolution depends entirely on the attitude which the C.N.T. and the F.A.I. (I.A.F.) will adopt and on the capacity which the leaders will demonstrate to orient the masses which they have under their influence." Basing their efforts on the need to "help the C.N.T.-F.A.I. leaders to overcome their prejudices", the leaders of the P.O.U.M. could not decide to break the link which tied them to the reformists and the republican bourgeoisie through the channels of the anarchists. After having launched the ambiguous slogan "Constituent Assembly of Delegates from Workers' Committees and Organizations" they were physically eliminated by the Stalinist-bourgeois bloc.

By proclaiming, after Pablo had done so, that the Cuban state is a "workers' state sui generis", the Cuban Trotskyists of the P.O.R. have followed the same path as the P.O.U.M. in 1936, and it is no coincidence that they too launched the slogan "Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of the councils" just before they were submitted to the repression. Their false analysis of the state condemned them to being unable to show the masses the path for the construction of a workers' state, to become the appendages of the petty-bourgeois revolutionary leadership, to count on the conversion of the leaders rather than on their being bypassed and, in the last analysis, to not be able to explain why the repression struck them, to the masses.

ABANDONING ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES

There is a multitude of examples of the ideological confusion and liquidationist tendencies today being demonstrated among the leaders of the majority of the SWP. We have already mentioned some of them. Let us bring up a few others which are just as serious. Joe Hansen, in his introduction to his "Theses", states that "socialist consciousness is now beginning to appear in Cuba."

Is this statement in keeping with the affirmation that Cuba is a workers' state which is neither deformed nor degenerated but which simply lacks the forms of proletarian democracy? Isn't it an elementary Marxist notion that, before becoming the ruling class, the working class must have taken on consciousness of itself and assumed its "socialist consciousness"? If Joe Hansen thinks the contrary and if he believes that socialist consciousness can exist without being expressed in forms of organization, if he thinks that the working class can take power before having taken on consciousness of itself, then he is in the same camp with all those who for decades have fought Lenin's ideas and the concept itself of the revolutionary party. If he thinks, as we can gather from his "Theses", that, at least in Cuba, the "colonial revolution" automatically weakens Stalinism, and that it is this revolution and not the working class movements of the advanced countries which is the vanguard of the world revolution, and if he believes this, as we can gather from the total lack of basic criticism on a class basis of the bourgeois resolutions of the Latin American conference of March 1961, then he must come to grips with Trotsky, who was aptly cited, to his great detriment of course, by a comrade of the majority who recalled that in 1940 Trotsky wrote: "History is not an automatic process. If this were so, what need would there be for leaders, for parties, for programs, for theoretical struggles?"

It is without a doubt on these grounds that the most serious weakness of the comrades of the SWP majority is situated. In making a vague thing out of "socialist consciousness", which seems to always be floating around and more or less present, in seeming to believe that there are automatic relationships between the class struggle on the world level and the appearance of the vanguard, in renouncing for purposes of characterizing the nature of the state the use of the decisive criterion - that is, socialist consciousness whose highest form is concretized by the creation of forms of proletarian democracy, the workers councils and the communes - they have simply revealed that, due to the pressure of the extremely difficult conditions for working class struggles in their country, they tend to give up the hard path of the construction of the party among the masses, by the masses,

and through the masses. The construction of this party, which is the form of socialist consciousness of the vanguard, has been abandoned and now they think only in terms of the apparatus, and thereby, believing to find a short cut, only find paths which lead to liquidation. In this respect, if they are not wary, the similarity of ideas with those of Pabloism - that is, the adaptation to traditional party machines and the introduction of a metaphysics of vague consciousness and of the automatic nature of evolution - will lead them straight on to the path taken, before them, by Pablo - that of abandoning the perspectives for the construction of the world party of the revolution. Let us hope that the international discussion will enable them to become conscious of this in time! At any rate, the Trotskyist movement must find the roots of these liquidationist tendencies in the gaps and in the errors of its past activity on the organizational level as well as on the ideological level.

December, 1961