

Information, Education, Discussion

BULLETIN in Defense of Marxism

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Who We Are

The *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* is published monthly (except for a combined July-August issue) by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency. We have dedicated this journal to the process of clarifying the program and theory of revolutionary Marxism—of discussing its application to the class struggle both internationally and here in the United States. This vital task must be undertaken if we want to forge a political party in this country capable of bringing an end to the domination of the U.S. imperialist ruling class and of establishing a socialist society based on human need instead of private greed.

The F.I.T. was created in the winter of 1984 by members expelled from the Socialist Workers Party because we opposed abandoning the Trotskyist principles and methods on which the SWP was founded and built for more than half a century. Since our formation we have fought to win the party back to a revolutionary Marxist perspective and for our readmission to the SWP. In addition our members are active in the U.S. class struggle.

At the 1985 World Congress of the Fourth International, the appeals of the F.I.T. and other expelled members were upheld, and the congress delegates demanded, by an overwhelming majority, that the SWP readmit those who had been purged. So far the SWP has refused to take any steps to comply with this decision.

"All members of the party must begin to *study*, completely dispassionately and with utmost honesty, first the essence of the differences and second the course of the dispute in the party. . . . It is necessary to *study* both the one and the other, unfailingly demanding the most exact, printed documents, open to verification by all sides. Whoever believes things simply on someone else's say-so is a hopeless idiot, to be dismissed with a wave of the hand."

—V.I. Lenin, "The Party Crisis," Jan. 19, 1921.

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CONTRA AID REJECTED IN HOUSE It's Time to Revitalize the Movement

by Bill Onasch

The House of Representatives' narrow rejection of Reagan's contra aid package is a recognition of the tremendous mass sentiment among the U.S. population against assisting the world's bloodiest terrorists. All House members are up for reelection this fall and a majority clearly felt the need to dissociate themselves from the most visible aspect of U.S. imperialism's efforts to overthrow the Nicaraguan revolution. (The Senate, where only a third are up for reelection, narrowly approved contra aid.)

Anti-intervention forces are entitled to a brief celebration of this setback for Reagan's war plans. But we cannot afford to pause long because U.S. intervention is not over by a long shot and the Nicaraguan revolution remains in grave danger.

Very Limited Victory

The Iran-contra scandal demonstrated that congressional bans on military assistance have meant little in the past and we can assume that the White House will find ways to continue providing material support for the contras.

The House Democratic leadership announced—even before their Senate colleagues had a chance to vote—that they would come up with their own plan for "humanitarian aid" for the contras. Of course, their definition of "humanitarian" aid is all manner of food, equipment, medical supplies, and logistical support for these bloody bandits—everything except actual guns and live ammunition. In any infantry unit, the cost of the things within the Democrats' definition of "humanitarian" aid far exceeds that of weapons. And there is no doubt that covert operations by U.S. agents, aid arranged through other governments and "private" sources, will insure the resupply of arms.

So the contras are not dead nor is contra aid—as much as the Democrats would have us believe that they have "given peace a chance."

But even if the contras do fall apart—they are, after all, riddled with factional rivalries and have proven to be militarily ineffective when matched up against the Sandinista army—they are only part of U.S. intervention against Nicaragua. The economic and political warfare being directed against the Sandinista regime is still a threat to the revolution, and the threat of direct U.S. military intervention always remains.

The cordoba has collapsed. There are critical shortages of food, clothing, fuel, and medical supplies. The black and gray markets are flourishing. Virtually every non-Sandinista current in Nicara-

gua—the church hierarchy, bourgeois political groups, social democrats, Stalinists, and ultra-leftists—are trying to exploit these problems, caused by the sabotage and embargo engineered by Washington, to agitate for the downfall of the government.

The peace plan, revised daily to suit the needs of U.S. imperialism and the Central American bourgeoisie, has already forced the Sandinistas to make political concessions, and more will certainly be demanded.

Moscow has assured Reagan that it will cut off military assistance to the Sandinistas—which they have grudgingly doled out through an eye dropper—if contra aid is scrapped. Gorbachev has put the Nicaraguan revolution on starvation rations and even the present meager level of assistance is not assured in the future.

Supporters of Nicaragua's right to self-determination have no great cause for joy, nor any excuse to relax. Nicaragua needs our help today more than ever. Unfortunately, the movement against U.S. intervention is politically disoriented and in a state of virtual collapse.

Attitudes Toward the Peace Plan

Most of the self-appointed leaders of the movement, along with most of the left, have politically embraced the Arias peace plan—a plan which usurps Nicaragua's sovereignty and threatens to roll back the gains of the revolution. Because of the critical situation in Nicaragua, the Sandinistas have agreed to some compromises of their national sovereignty. We cannot condemn these courageous fighters who are struggling to survive under the gun of U.S. imperialism. But for North Americans to applaud this process is a disgrace.

Leading the way in providing left cover for supporting the peace plan is the Socialist Workers Party. The pages of the *Militant* have been filled with glowing testimonials to the "victory" of the peace plan and how concessions made by the Sandinistas will strengthen the revolution. It has lauded the reopening of *La Prensa* and other U.S.-sponsored newspapers and radio stations. It has hailed the repeal of the Emergency Decrees and the abolition of the People's Courts, giving very "orthodox" democratic arguments explaining the benefits for the proletarian revolution of freedom of speech, association, press, assembly, and the right to strike.

The arguments for democracy strengthening the revolution are valid. They were no less valid, one, two, three, or four years ago. They have always been

recognized by the FSLN which has imposed restrictions upon democratic rights reluctantly and only because of the mortal danger faced by the revolution. If these temporary restrictions on democratic rights were being lifted because the counterrevolutionary danger has subsided this would be a cause for genuine celebration. Unfortunately this is not the case. The threat to the revolution has never been greater. If there were ever justification for limiting democratic rights—which unfortunately can be exploited by the counterrevolution for its own destructive purposes—it would be now.

The Sandinistas eased restrictions on the opposition not because they voluntarily came to the conclusion that they were no longer needed, but because of the enormous pressure of the peace plan and the implied threat of congressional approval for even greater military threats against Nicaragua.

We will not second-guess the Sandinistas about either the imposition of the restrictions initially or their decision to rescind them. Those are tough tactical choices that have to be made by those under the gun. But we can have nothing but contempt for anyone in this country who tries to pretend that these are anything other than concessions to the power of the imperialist government.

Need for an Organized and Massive Response

Aside from material aid campaigns being organized by solidarity committees, nearly all efforts by anti-intervention groups have been focused on lobbying and/or involvement in electoral campaigns of various Democratic hopefuls. This orientation contributes little or nothing to the defense of self-determination for the peoples of Central America. It has demobilized the forces that built the massive demonstrations in Washington and San Francisco last April 25.

There were a few pickets, rallies, and similar events around the country against contra aid before the February 3rd vote. On the whole these were quite modest affairs, numbering in the hundreds. Only in Los Angeles, where the *L.A. Times* reported that 8,000 marched, was a major response generated by the movement. This stands in stark contrast to what might have been possible.

The overwhelming majority of the American people oppose U.S. intervention in Central America. Unlike the cynical Democratic politicians, most U.S. citizens really believe in the right of self-determination. They don't believe our government should impose its rule on another people. They are unwilling to spend money and lose lives to advance an imperialist foreign policy. They want to leave



Central America alone and that's what the revolutionary fighters in Central America want too—for the U.S. to end its intervention.

If an active effort had been made by the movement to mobilize that sentiment in the streets demanding "U.S. Hands Off Nicaragua!" in the weeks leading up to February 3, it might have been possible to significantly widen the margin of defeat in the House, reverse the vote in the Senate, help to turn the general trend of public opinion even more in our favor, demoralize the supporters of the contras, and make any future efforts to aid the Nicaraguan counterrevolution—even through "humanitarian" measures, or private sources—much more difficult.

No mass movement of that kind will ever be built around negotiating away the sovereignty of other countries. Nor will a mass movement be built primarily around material aid to the Central American peoples—aid that can never make up for the misery caused by the billions spent by the U.S. government on destruction. But there is a potential for building a mass movement around a clear focus of stopping U.S. intervention. Whenever there has been an authoritative call for mass, legal protests against intervention, tens of thousands have responded. An ongoing movement could draw in hundreds of thousands and, eventually, the kind of massive involvement that contributed to the end of the Vietnam war.

The anti-intervention movement should seize the initiative now, using the momentum of the defeat of contra aid, by forging local and national coalitions to launch a new series of mass actions against U.S. intervention. ■

EDITORIAL

Self-determination for the Palestinian people

THE PAST YEAR marked a double anniversary in the Near East, that of the two main stages of the Zionist takeover of Palestinian territory: 1947 and 1967.¹ The Palestinians did not let it pass unmarked. Since December 9, there has been the most extensive popular uprising — both in breadth and duration — on the Palestinian lands since the creation of the state of Israel. (See also article on page 28.) What sparked it off is not important — the explosive material had been there for a long time.

SALAH JABER

FORTY YEARS have gone by since the United Nations adopted its iniquitous partition plan on November 29, 1947 [see map]. That was the signal for the Zionist armed gangs to launch their war of annexation. In 1948 they seized, in total, 80% of the lands of the former British mandated territory of Pales-

tinian. (The UN plan granted them 55%). In 1947 the Jews held only 6% of this land and represented only a third of the total population: 630,000 inhabitants out of nearly 2 million.

In December 1949, in the wake of the war for the establishment of the Israeli state, there were no more than 160,000 Pa-

lestinian Arabs on the usurped 80% of this territory, as against a million Jews. Such were the two pillars of the Zionist colonial enterprise: massive expulsion of Arabs and massive immigration of Jews in the name of "biblical rights."

In June 1967, the Zionist usurpation of Palestinian territory was completed by the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with the addition of the Syrian Golan plain and the Egyptian Sinai desert. Israel has withdrawn from only one of these territories since then — the Sinai — which it evacuated in 1982. East Jerusalem was officially annexed for "biblical" reasons right away in 1967, and the Golan, for "security" reasons, in 1981.

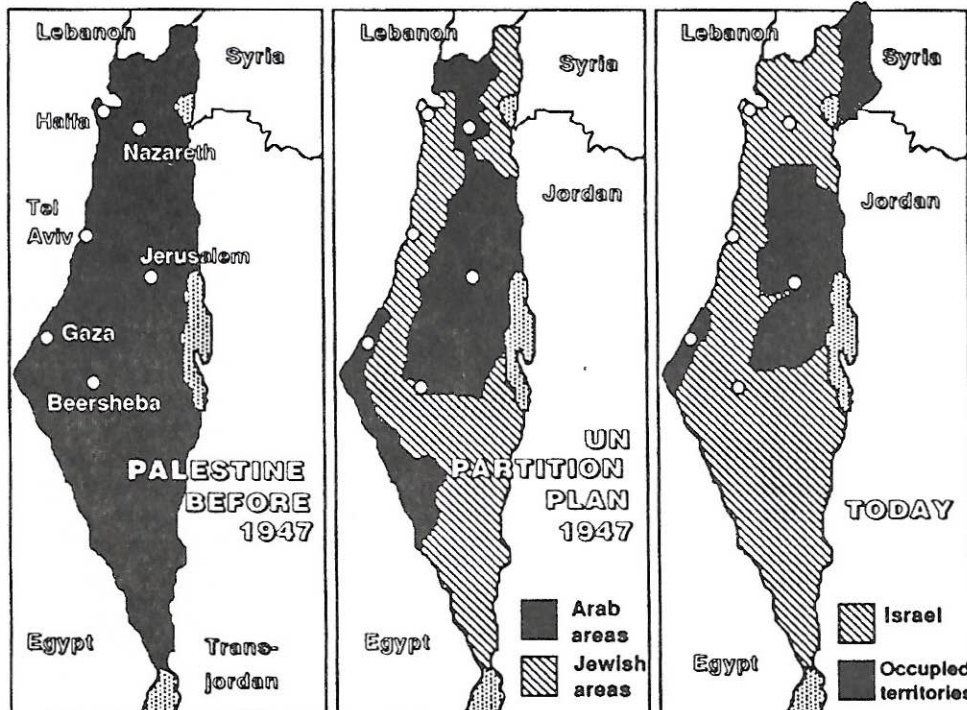
Status of the occupied territories

The rest of the West Bank, as well as the Gaza Strip, retain to this day the official status of occupied territories, and for good reason! Unlike the Golan, where the great majority of the population (more than 150,000 before June 1967) fled during the six-day war without being able to return, and where Jewish colonists now outnumber the natives, these territories are still populated by Arabs numerous enough to upset the ethnic and political makeup of Israeli society if they became Israeli citizens — a corollary of formal annexation. That would be contrary to the very essence of Zionism.

In the long term, the very nature of the Israeli state as a "Jewish state" would be threatened, given the difference between the growth rate of the Jewish population and the much higher one of the Arab popu-

lation. This, by the way, is the reason why the Zionist movement attaches so much importance to the emigration of Jews from the USSR, the only source of massive potential immigration into Israel that exists today and therefore the only available means of compensating for the relatively low birth rate of Israeli Jews. It is not labor power that Israel lacks, but cannon fodder.

In the aftermath of the June war, the Zionist state already had almost 1,400,000 Arabs under its control, including more than a million on the West Bank and in Gaza, as against 2,400,000 Jews. The Palestinian exodus this time was not as large proportionally as in 1948, when the vast



1. See the editorial in *IV* 122, June 15, 1987.

majority of Palestinian Arabs fled the usurped territories. Even though increasingly since 1967 the majority of all Palestinians lived outside the frontiers of the former British Mandat of Palestine — against only a quarter at the beginning of the 1950s, and nearly 35% after the June war — nevertheless less than a third of the residents of the West Bank and Gaza fled these territories in 1967.

The reason for this was not that the 1967 invasion was any “gentler” than the preceding one, although it did not give rise to deliberate collective massacres, such as the one perpetrated by the Zionist terrorists of Irgun at Deir Yassin in 1948.

Second Arab exodus in 1967

The exodus in 1967 was proportionally smaller for several combined reasons. In 1948, for two-thirds of those involved, the exodus was from one part of Palestinian territory to another. This was no longer possible in 1967, since the whole of Palestine was occupied. Secondly, the great majority of the 1948 refugees thought that they were leaving their homes only temporarily. By 1967, the lesson had sunk in.

The fact that the Arabs who remained under Israeli rule in 1948, while persecuted, were not massacred was also an important factor. Finally, the poverty in which the 1948 refugees were living could only encourage the people of the West Bank and Gaza to hang onto their homes and their livelihoods. Thus, the bulk of the 1967 refugees included those who had already fled in 1948, and had nothing of much worth to leave behind. This was their second experience of displacement, their second exodus.

As a result, when the Zionist state took over the remaining 20% of Palestine territory, it brought under its control nearly 40% of the Palestinians, in addition to those already under its jurisdiction. This was the main flaw in the Zionist expansionist project — a veritable time-bomb that successive governments of Israel have not succeeded in defusing, and whose explosive power grows with each day that passes. Today, according to Israeli figures, 2,125,000 Arabs are living under Zionist jurisdiction (two-thirds on the West Bank and in Gaza), against 3,590,000 Jews. The ratio is thus 37 to 63. The Israeli's own projections are that, given the present rates of growth, this ratio will be 45 to 55 in the year 2,000, that is in twelve years!

This explains the worry of the “enlightened” Zionists (an epithet more appropriate than “moderate”). It was enough to hear their leader, the Laborite Shimon Peres, exclaim nervously on December 30 that “in 12 years, there will be a million Arabs in Gaza and the demographic density will be greater there than in Hong Kong.” At the same time, he lamented that today “out of every hundred children born between the Jordan and the Mediterranean, 50 are Ar-

abs and 50 Jews, and nobody is going to stop this phenomena.”

This is Zionism's fundamental dilemma — the contradiction between its expansionist territorial ambitions and its racist project of a “Jewish” state. The latter, of course, is the overriding principle. “To preserve Israel's Jewish character,” as Peres says, is the chief concern of all Zionists. How can this be reconciled, therefore, with the demographic data presented above? This is a debate that goes back 20 years in Israel. Among the Zionists, four different answers to this question can be discerned.

First of all, there is the answer of the biggest fools, or the most outspoken, such as the fascist rabbi Meir Kahane, the leader of the Kach party, who is fighting to make Israel “*Araberrein*” — free from Arabs — just as the Nazis wanted Germany to be “*Judenrein*.” Unable to expel the Arabs by military force, he is offering visas, airline tickets and financial aid to any Arabs willing to leave. Another example is the general who a few months ago made the term “transfer” notorious in Israel by proposing massive deportation of the Palestinians from “Greater Israel.”

Then there are those who, while proclaiming their unflinching attachment to the same “Greater Israel,” and in particular to Judea and Samaria (the biblical names of the West Bank territories), realize that “transfer” today is impracticable. They know that Israel's extreme dependence on the United States makes a massive expulsion of the Palestinians from their territories quite impossible in the present circumstances.²

“I prefer to keep the Arabs under our control”

They prefer, nonetheless, to hold onto the territories in question, even at the price of maintaining indefinitely the apartheid that was shaped several years ago under Zionist auspices. It is the view of the Zionist right and part of the extreme right that was expressed recently by the outspoken leader of the Tehiya party, Geula Cohen, in the American magazine *Newsweek* of August 31, 1987: “I prefer to keep the million-plus Arabs here, where they are under our control, despite all the problems. At present, the idea of a mass population transfer seems to me impossible, although not immoral. It is the most moral idea in the world”.

However, this “realism” of the Zionist right does not reduce the dilemma described above. It cannot refer to the fact that in the country where apartheid originated 5 million whites control six times their number of Blacks. The power of Israel's Arab environment and the narrowness of the Palestinian territory are major factors making Israel's situation qualitatively different from that of South Africa. This is why, in fact, the Zionist right envisions solving the demographic problem by

“creeping” expulsion of a large mass of Palestinians, even if it does not always avow this openly.

Repression and persecution worsen

Already at the Thirtieth Congress of the Zionist Movement in December 1982, Menachem Begin replied to Peres' demographic argument by saying that the statisticians were often wrong in their predictions because they did not take account of the growing emigration of Palestinians! The worsening in recent years of repression, persecution and provocations against the Palestinians in the territories occupied in 1967 have been designed precisely to goad them into leaving “voluntarily.”

Enlightened Zionists consider that this option is as illusory as it is impossible, just as much as “transfer” pure and simple. Illusory because there is nothing to indicate that emigration of Palestinians from their territories is compensating for their birth rate. On the contrary, a number of factors have increased Palestinians' attachment to their homeland: the closing of the traditional outlets for emigration — especially the oil states of the Arab-Persian Gulf, which have suffered an abrupt fall in their buying power; the Palestinians' political determination; and the spectacle of the misfortunes of the refugees in Lebanon, the last country where they could have a certain autonomy.

The Palestinians will only leave en masse if they are forcibly driven out — there is no way that their departure could appear “voluntary.” This is why it is as impossible as “transfer.” When Peres, with his hypocritical air, says that Israel must not lose its “democratic” soul, he means that such a deterioration of its image could be fatal for the Zionist state, in view of its dependence on outside support from its American tutor or from the “diaspora.”

Peres, therefore, proposes simply to maintain control of the territories, while leaving the Jordanians the job of controlling the population! According to the Laborite plan worked out by Yigal Allon in the 1970s, Israel would maintain on the West Bank — where 55,000 Israelis have now settled — a belt of strategic colonies and military bases, especially along the Jordan valley, which is considered the untouchable “safe” border of the Zionist state. The Israeli army would withdraw from those parts of the territories that have a

2. The mere decision to banish nine Palestinian “agitators” has cost Israel strong criticism (as well as a vote against them in the UN) from its American tutor, anxious to calm down the game in the Middle East. A massive deportation of Palestinians would immediately set the whole region ablaze — a real disaster for Washington. It should be pointed out, moreover, that international condemnation of the banishments — although this practice has been well-utilized almost constantly by Israeli governments — shows to what extent rights are only imposed by struggle. The rights of the Palestinian people have never been so evident in the eyes of the whole world as since the present uprising.

dense Arab population, while maintaining the right to oversee their demilitarization. Civilian administration and law and order would be entrusted to King Hussein, in the framework of a settlement coming out of an "international conference," which Peres sees as a sort of second Camp David, only this time with Jordan.

Given the reluctance of Israeli public opinion to accept his party's plan and the Zionist demagoguery of Likud about "Judea-Samaria," Peres has chosen recently to divide the problem by focusing his campaign on the fate of Gaza. It seems to him easier to get a majority on the question of Gaza for several reasons: there is not the same Zionist "biblical" attachment to it as there is to the West Bank; it is a small territory (360 square kilometers), that has a dense population (600,000 inhabitants) with a well-established reputation for rebelliousness; fewer than 2,000 Israelis have settled there; and, finally and mainly, on the other side of Gaza is the immense buffer-zone of the Sinai desert, which was restored to Egypt on condition that it be demilitarized under the supervision of the US.

"Peres proposes the creation of bantustans"

From the beginning of December, even before the spread of the ongoing Palestinian uprising mainly based in Gaza, Peres opened his campaign on this territory's fate. He took the offensive again at the end of December, as soon as the Palestinian struggle seemed to have subsided. His proposals for Gaza are identical to those concerning the West Bank, except that in the first case no role is foreseen for the Jewish settlements, whose numbers are negligible.

"Peres proposes the creation of a bantustan," ingenuously protested Yassar Arafat, leader of the PLO and of its dominant right-wing faction. As if anything else could be expected from an international conference for a negotiated "settlement" of the Palestinian question on the basis of a Jordanian-Palestinian "confederation" — that is, in the framework of the official program held by the PLO since 1983 and reconfirmed last year! As if it were not entirely clear that:

"Leaving aside the totally illusory independence of such a mini-state completely trapped in the Israeli vice, with its back to Jordan on the one side (the West Bank) and to the sea and desert on the other side (Gaza), with Israel stuck in between the two — it would be quite impossible to achieve this through a (negotiated) Israeli agreement to withdraw from the territories occupied in 1967. At best, the Zionist state would agree to a very partial withdrawal from the West Bank — where it has already "appropriated" almost half the land — and Gaza, involving draconian conditions which would render these territories little more than bantustans, and this at the price of a total political capitulation, Sadat-

style, by the Arab states."³

In fact, no partial self-determination of the Palestinians on the West Bank and in Gaza can be real without an unconditional Israeli withdrawal from these territories. But in the present relationship of forces this will never come out of an international conference. Achieving it would require a combination of irresistible pressure from the Palestinians on the occupying forces, firm Arab support for their struggle, strong international pressure on the Zionist government and a powerful movement for unconditional withdrawal inside Israel itself.

Today, the supporters of such a withdrawal, both anti-Zionists and "Zionist doves," are in a very small minority among the Israeli Jews — only two thousand demonstrators came out on December 26 in answer to a call issued by the Peace Now movement. But the realization of the other three conditions cited above could only reinforce their arguments.

For this to happen, the determination shown by the Palestinian masses in revolt has to be matched by that of a no less determined leadership rejecting the various schemes for an international conference to decide the fate of the Palestinians, whether these schemes are American, Soviet, Arab or Israeli. A leadership that would unequivocally demand a total and unconditional withdrawal of the Zionist army from the territories occupied in 1967.

For a partial self-determination of the Palestinians to be real, in particular on the West Bank, the Jordanian threat hanging over them would also have to be removed.

This does not only mean that it is necessary to sweep away the proposals that would subject the fate of the Palestinians to the tutelage of King Hussein, including the notorious "confederation" idea. (It should be said in passing that it is a desire not to burn all his bridges to Hussein that explains Arafat's great reticence to proclaim a "Palestinian government in exile," which has been much talked about lately.) It also means that the struggle of the Palestinians in Palestine has to be complemented by a struggle of Palestinians in Jordan, where they are in a large majority; a combined struggle with the Jordanian progressive forces and working masses to overthrow the Hashemite monarchy that has no less Palestinian blood on its hands than its Zionist cronies.

Conditions for emergence of radical leadership

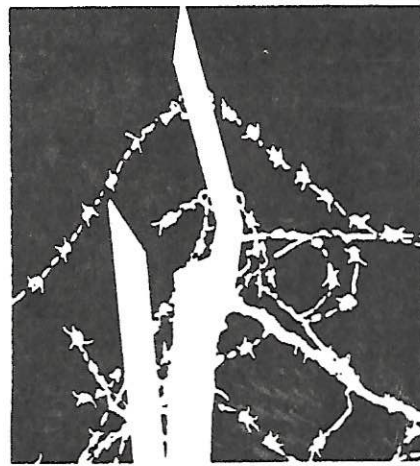
The Palestinian uprising that is underway is creating the objective conditions for the emergence of a radical leadership. This is true in precisely the same measure that, as everyone agrees, the movement is largely a spontaneous one. In fact, given the lasting blind alley into which the successive capitulations of the PLO leadership have led and the general political discrediting of the other factions of the Palestinian resistance out-

side the country, the distinctive feature of the last few years has been the development of spontaneous expressions of the Palestinian struggle. They make up the great majority of the 3,150 "violent incidents" (stone throwing against the army), almost daily occurrences between April 1986 and May 1987, that have been registered by the Israeli sociologist Meron Benvenisti.

A new generation radicalized by uprising

Even if, in the absence of any credible alternative, the majority of the Palestinian masses continue to support the leadership of the PLO, their new generation has already been radicalized by the experience of the uprising that is underway. It is to be hoped that a left leadership can emerge from this radicalization. Short of this happening, there is a great danger that the Islamic fundamentalist current will be the only one to profit from it. This current is already growing rapidly among Palestinians, in particular in Gaza. But such an eventuality would end in a new, still more tragic and disastrous impasse than the one into which the policy of the PLO leadership led.

Finally, it should be noted that, over and above any partial self-determination that may come about, real self-determination of the Palestinian people as a whole inevitably involves the destruction of the Zionist state and the abolition of any discrimination and restrictions on movements and settlement of Palestinians in the territory of their historic homeland. After all, to give only one example, 60% of the inhabitants of Gaza are refugees from 1948! This perspective is inconceivable outside of a proletarian internationalist solution, for which the conditions are still far from having been assembled on the regional and local level. This makes the task of those fighting for such a solution all the more considerable. Hopefully the Palestinian uprising will give a powerful impetus to their activity. ★



3. "The crisis of the PLO". *International Marxist Review*, Vol.2 No. 2, Spring 1987. Report approved by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

POLICE CRACKDOWN IN MALAYSIA

An Assault on Democratic Rights

by Barbara Wentworth

Between October 26th and early December, 1987, the Special Branch of the Malaysian police arrested 106 persons under the Internal Security Act. This sweeping police and political crackdown has attracted growing criticism and protest both within Malaysia and internationally.

The prime minister, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, explained the detentions as necessary to prevent racial riots. But most political observers and ordinary Malaysians interpret the crackdown as a desperate attempt of the prime minister to save his own political career by silencing all effective critics.

As of January 7, fifty-one people were still being held. Thirty-three have now been served detention orders of two years and some of these have been sent to a political prison camp in the state of Perak. Eight others have been placed under restricted residence, two are banished from their district or state of residence, and eight are still under investigation.¹

The Political Detainees

A study of the list of those arrested reveals that while politicians (including several members of Parliament and state assemblymen) are highest in number, a large proportion are leaders or active members of social and voluntary organizations involved in community work, civil rights issues, consumer and environmental activities, labor rights issues, and socio-economic research.

Among the persons arrested and detained are well-known figures from the major political parties, including a few members of the ruling coalition, Barisan Nasional (National Front). But the parliamentary opposition, including leaders of the Democratic Action Party (DAP) and the Parti Islam (PAS), has been worst hit by the arrests.

In addition, the cream of the nation's non-governmental organizations were also taken into prison. Most of these are small groups which carry out research and provide services to poor communities and workers. These groups find it incredible that their leading members were arrested in a swoop supposedly caused by heightened racial tensions. Those detained have indeed been advocates of multiracial harmony which they felt could be attained only through helping communities solve their basic problems, irrespective of their ethnic composition. Also arrested were several leaders of grass-roots people's organizations or movements, including environmental

activists and supporters of land-scheme settlers and striking agricultural workers in Sarawak.

"Those deemed hardcore offenders [and thus served two-year detention orders] are seven MPs from the opposition Democratic Action Party (DAP)—led by party chief Lim Kit Siang—at least three from the opposition Parti Islam (PAS) and ten from Christian groups, public-interest groups, and trade unions combined."²

In order to clamp down further on dissent, three of the country's more independent newspapers have been forcibly closed and the other leading papers have been warned not to carry news or analysis which is critical of the police crackdown. Freedom of assembly has been suspended with the banning of all public meetings and rallies. Even parliamentary proceedings that involve critical speeches have been blacked out.

Causes and Results of the Crackdown

Independent observers interpret the police crackdown as Mahathir's way of silencing criticisms against him and his political colleagues. During the weeks immediately preceding the arrests, the prime minister's credibility was shaken by revelations and accusations of corruption and abuse of power for financial gain by his party (UMNO) and by politicians and businessmen close to him. The crackdown is also seen as a way to silence and cripple the prime minister's critics within his own party, who had almost succeeded in voting him out of office in the last party elections in April 1987.

To justify such widespread repression, Mahathir has painted a picture of extreme racial tension between the Malays and non-Malays in particular. He also raised the specter of the violent racial conflict of May 1969 to explain the arrests and detention of his political opponents and dissidents, saying that they were "absolutely necessary" to prevent the escalation of the tension from breaking out into riots.

While there has been underlying tension among the people of different ethnic groups in Malaysia, much of this tension, especially in recent months, has been generated by government policies and by the squabbling among the racially organized political parties of the National Front coalition. Many indeed suggest that Mahathir has been deliberately allowing, even nurturing, racial tensions to draw attention away from other pressing economic and social problems like unemployment and economic stagnation.

The prime minister has promised to maintain the system of parliamentary democracy, even while

(Continued on page 26)

This article was compiled largely from reports issued by Werkgroep Maleisie/Singapore, Utrecht, Netherlands.

UPDATE ON THE MOSCOW TRIALS CAMPAIGN

The Moscow Trials Campaign Committee in the United States has been gathering steam since it was first formed over six months ago (see *Bulletin IDOM* Nos. 42 and 47) for the purpose of seeking the exoneration and rehabilitation of the victims of the Moscow trials. In view of its small forces, the committee's accomplishments have been fairly impressive.

- The committee has managed to compile a list of about 300 well-known figures in the academic, cultural, civil liberties, and humanitarian fields.

- Mailings to these 300 people have gone out containing appeals and materials explaining the motivation and aims of the campaign and seeking endorsements for a petition to be presented to General Secretary Gorbachev, via the Soviet Embassy.

- About 70 endorsements have been received by the committee so far, from people like Noam Chomsky, Norman Mailer, Pete Seeger, Paul Sweezy, Harry Magdoff, Annette Rubinstein, Conrad Lynn, Morris Schappes, Grace Paley, Rev. Philip Berrigan, Howard Zinn, Howard Brick, David McReynolds, and many others. These 70 endorsements represent a positive response of almost 25 percent.

- Of the 70 endorsers, over 20 also sent in cash contributions.

- The names of these endorsers have been forwarded to *International Viewpoint* and have been listed in the pages of *IV*, together with thousands of names collected in similar fashion from around the world.

The campaign is serving an educational purpose as well as urging active participation of prominent individuals in seeking the rehabilitation of the victims of the Moscow trials. It is carrying out the vital task of establishing the historical truth

about the reason for the great purges and the meaning of Stalinism and the Soviet bureaucracy. The campaign seeks to restore the Moscow trial victims to their rightful place in history and to the honor which they have so long been denied. The campaign will continue until these goals have been achieved.

The committee appeals to all who support this campaign to send in names of well-known figures who may want to add their names to our petition. Write to: Moscow Trials Campaign Committee, P.O. Box 318, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028. ■

FLASH:

Bukharin, Others Exonerated

As we are preparing this issue of the *Bulletin IDOM*, news arrives that Nikolai Bukharin, Aleksei Rykov, Arkady P. Rozengolts, Mikhail A. Chernov, Lev G. Levin, Khristian G. Rakovsky, Pavel B. Bulanov, Ignaty N. Kazakov, V.A. Maximov-Dikovskiy, and Pyotr P. Kryuchkov have had their 1938 convictions (in the third of the infamous Moscow trials) overturned by the Soviet Supreme Court. The inclusion of Rozengolts and Rakovsky on this list is particularly important, since they were both prominent supporters of Trotsky and the Left Opposition.

According to a government spokesman, the court decision dealt solely with legal questions, and a rehabilitation of Bukharin's status in the Communist Party is still under consideration.

In a separate development, an article in the February 11 *New York Times* reports that pictures of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Bukharin, have been placed on display for the first time at the Central Lenin Museum in Leningrad.

TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO OBSOLETE?

by Karl Kautsky

Editors' note: 1988 marks the 140th anniversary of the publication of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. We think it appropriate to observe this with a republication of an article by Karl Kautsky which appeared in the December 1904 issue of the U.S. socialist magazine *The Comrade*. To the best of our knowledge, this was the only time it was published in English until now.

Kautsky at the time was considered the foremost exponent of Marxism in the Second (Labor and Socialist) International. Among many left-wing intellectuals it later became fashionable to denigrate "the Marxism of the Second International," particularly after Kautsky's own abandonment of revolutionary socialism when the First World War erupted in 1914, and his subsequent hostility to the Bolshevik revolution. Yet "the Marxism of the Second International" was hardly the mechanistic and dogmatic caricature which many have suggested. In addition to Kautsky, it was represented by a variety of creative minds: George Plekhanov, Franz Mehring, Antonio Labriola, Rosa Luxemburg, Anton Pannekoek, David Riazanov, Alexandra Kollontai, as well as Lenin, Trotsky, and others. Kautsky, who in the early 1900s was one of the best theoretical representatives of socialism's revolutionary wing, helped to advance the Marxist education of many thousands of activists in the workers' movement—including those like Lenin and Trotsky who went on to apply and develop Marxism in a manner that Kautsky himself proved incapable of.

On page 13 of this issue we are reprinting a brief evaluation of Karl Kautsky written by Leon Trotsky on the occasion of Kautsky's death fifty years ago. The essay by Kautsky on the *Communist Manifesto* reflects, as Trotsky put it, that which was best in the Marxism of the Second International, and it is well worth reading by revolutionary activists of today.

Almost sixty years have passed since the *Communist Manifesto* was written, sixty years of a mode of production which, more than any preceding one, consists in a constant overturning of the old and a continual hurrying and hunting after the new. They have been sixty years of thorough political and social revolutionizing, not only of Europe, but of the whole globe. Naturally, these sixty years could not pass without leaving its mark on the *Communist Manifesto*.

The more correctly it had comprehended its time and corresponded to it, the more it must needs grow obsolete and become an historic document which bears witness of its own time, but can no longer be determinative for the present.

But this, mark you, is true only with regard to some points, to those namely where the practical politician speaks to his contemporaries. Nothing would be more erroneous than to stamp the whole of the *Communist Manifesto* simply as an historic document. On the contrary. The principles developed by it, the method to which it leads us, the characteristic it gives by a few strokes of the capitalist mode of production, are today more valid than ever. The whole actual development as well as the whole theoretic investigation, of the time since the drawing up of the *Manifesto*, are nothing but an unbroken line of confirmations of its fundamental conceptions. Never was the principle more universally accepted that the history of all hitherto existing (civilized) society is the history of class wars; and never has it appeared plainer that the great moving power of our times is the class war between bourgeoisie and proletariat.

But the proletarians, and also the bourgeoisie, are no longer quite the same as they were six decades ago. Sharp and accurate as is the *Manifesto's* portrayal of them, and though even today it forms the most brilliant and profound exposition of them possible within so narrow a limit, in some respects it does no longer tally.

At the same time when the *Communist Manifesto* appeared, the most striking characteristics of the proletariat were its degradations, the lowering of its wages, the lengthening of its working hours; its physical, and often its moral and intellectual damage, in short, its misery. Of the three great classes, which made up the bulk of the people, the peasants, the small tradesmen, and the wage workers, the last named then stood, in every respect, at the bottom of all. It was poor, oppressed, and helpless; and numerically as well as in economic importance it stood (except in England) inferior to the two other classes. For most of the disinterested spectators it was only an object of pity. It therefore needed all the economic and historic knowledge and all the acumen of a Marx and an Engels to detect in the class struggle of the proletariat the strongest motive power in the social development of the coming decades, at a time when the successors of the great utopians yet regarded the proletariat as a helpless mass to which relief could come only from the upper classes. At that time, the revolutionists expected everything from what was called "the people," that is, in the main, from the small traders and the peasants, whose appendix was this mass of wage workers, intellectually, socially, and often economically dependent upon them.

Entirely different is the position of the proletariat nowadays. True, it is still subjected to the distressing influences of capital, as it was sixty years ago, and capital even today still endeavors to lengthen the hours of labor, to supplant the worker with the machine, to displace the toiling man by the woman and the child, and thus degrade the proletariat. But every day mightier does also grow "the rebellion of the constantly increasing working class, schooled, united, and organized through the mechanism of the capitalist process of production." (Marx in *Capital*.) Ever stronger sets in the resistance of the proletariat as one after the other of its strata learns to overcome the degrading effects of capitalism.

Quite different is it with the peasantry and the small trading class. While for decades growing numbers of proletarians were shortening their work-time and increasing their wages, the worktime of the craftsmen and small farmers remained the same, or was extended even to the limits of physical endurance. At the same time the intensity of their labor grows, and more and more does the standard of life of the craftsman, the small trader, and the small farmer approach the minimum of existence. On the other hand, while the working class knows how to gain an ever stronger bulwark, an ever greater protection for the women and children employed in the great industries, craftsmen and farmers are more and more forced to a far-going exploitation of their own women and children, as well as those of others.

Hand in hand with this economic transformation goes an intellectual and political one.

A hundred years ago the small tradesman far surpassed in intelligence, self-reliance, and courage, all other classes of the people; today he has become the prototype of narrowness, servility, and cowardice, while the proletariat vigorously develops in those virtues. A hundred years ago, the small trader class still formed the heart of democratic opposition and bourgeois radicalism, which declared war upon the castle, throne, and altar, and peace to the cottage. Today the small bourgeoisie has become the elite of reaction, the body-guard of those in the castle, upon the throne and on altar, to whom it looks for salvation from the misery into which it has been thrown by the economic development; and a similar thing has happened to the peasantry. Now there is only one class of the population that with all its strength stakes itself for social progress, and that class is the proletariat.

But all these transformations are, fortunately for social progress, attended by a complete shifting of the proportion of power. At the time of writing the *Communist Manifesto*, the great majority of the population (in France and Germany 70-80 percent) were still living in the open country. In the cities the petty bourgeoisie was dominant. Today the urban population of all the industrially developed states of Europe is in the majority, and in the cities the proletariat preponderates. And still more than its proportion to the whole popula-

tion has grown its economic importance. A hundred years ago capitalist industry, especially on the continent of Europe, still served chiefly to satisfy the demands of luxury, and to produce silk-stuffs, rugs, porcelain, paper, etc. Sixty years ago economic life rested mainly upon handicrafts and husbandry. At present the economic significance and the wealth of a country depend in the first place upon its great capitalist industries which no longer serve luxuries but mass consumption and producing things that are indispensable. A modern state can exist without farmers and handicraftsmen, as is shown by the example of England, but it cannot exist without capitalist industries and the means of communication corresponding to them. One can no longer say, as did the *Manifesto*: "The worker becomes a pauper, he sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class."

Thus the proletariat occupies today quite a different position from sixty years ago. But, to be sure, he looks at things in a peculiar way, who thinks he perceives that in consequence of these changes the antagonism of the proletariat toward capital has been softened. Quite the contrary. On the one hand the proletariat has today, just as every other class, at its disposal a greater part of the advantages of culture than in former centuries, or even decades. The enormous increase of productive forces which have been unchained by capitalism has not come upon the working class without leaving its mark. We may speak of an amelioration of the condition of many proletarian strata, if we compare them with the condition of the small bourgeoisie and the peasantry, but it falls short compared with the growth of the social powers of production, which capital appropriates and exploits to its own advantage. Compared with the standard of life of the capitalist class and the accumulation of capital the condition of the proletariat deteriorates; its share in the product of its toil decreases more and more and its exploitation increases. All the progress, which it nevertheless gains, has been gained only by a war against capital, and only by a continuous struggle is it able to maintain its winnings. In this way its degradation and its elevation, its defeats and also its victories, become sources of a continuous and growing exasperation against the hostile class. The *forms* of the struggle change. It assumes a higher level. Isolated acts of wild despair change to well-planned acts of great organizations, but the *antagonism* remains and becomes ever *harsher*.

But as the proletariat so the industrial bourgeoisie during the last sixty years has undergone a transformation. When the *Communist Manifesto* appeared that class had only just done away with the corn laws, the last obstacle to its domination in England, and on the continent of Europe it was confronted with the necessity of a revolution, to make the political power subservient to its aims.

It stood in hostile attitude opposed to the powers that most apparently oppressed the bulk of the population—clergy, nobility, monarchy, and high finance. It was still cherishing great politi-

cal aims, ideals that even surrounded it with something like ethical significance. It still believed that only the debris of feudalism stood in the way of a general prosperity, and after that was cleared away, there would begin an era of general happiness.

The revolution of 1848 brought the great disappointment and unveiled the class antagonism which, as we have just seen, the economic development afterwards deepened more and more, and thus the industrial bourgeoisie with its followers were driven into the camp of reaction. Nowhere in Europe could it gain exclusive sway. It tried to attain to power with the help of the small traders and the proletariat, and to preserve its domination by the help of those powers against which it had mobilized the democracy. To this should be added that industry is more and more surrendered to high finance, which has always been antidemocratic and favoring an absolute power in the state.

The *Communist Manifesto* could yet declare:

"In Germany the Communist Party fights with the bourgeoisie whenever it acts in a revolutionary way, against the absolute monarchy, the feudal squirearchy, and the petty bourgeoisie."

Today we can nowhere speak of a *revolutionary bourgeoisie*.

However, not only are bourgeoisie and proletariat in some respects differently disposed today, but the course of development also has not turned out quite as had been expected. To be sure, the basic economic development has wholly moved along the path which the *Manifesto* outlined so keenly; and what it says in this respect remains classic to this day. But the political development has proceeded in a different manner than one could foresee at that time.

Marx and Engels were well aware of the fact that the working class in its condition at that time, especially in Germany, was unable to conquer the political powers or to maintain them. But they expected a bourgeois revolution which they, in Germany sooner than elsewhere foresaw, and they expected it to take a similar course to that of the English revolution of the seventeenth, and the French revolution of the eighteenth century. They expected it to be in its beginning a movement of the revolutionary bourgeoisie against absolutism and feudalism, but they hoped that in its onward course the proletarian elements would more and more recognize and develop their antagonism to the bourgeoisie and that the revolution would strengthen the influence of the proletariat and rapidly render them stronger and riper. For during a revolution, so they reasoned, every development proceeds at the quickest pace; a revolutionary class proceeds in five years as far as otherwise in a century. Thus the proletarian revolution and the conquest of the political powers by the proletariat would follow immediately the bourgeois revolution was on, not as the product of a coup, but of years, perhaps decades, of revolutionary struggles.

The *Communist Manifesto* says in this respect:

"The Communists turn their attention chiefly to Germany, because that country is on the eve of a

bourgeois revolution that is bound to be carried out under more advanced conditions of European civilization and with a more developed proletariat than that of England in the seventeenth, and of France in the eighteenth century, and because the bourgeois revolution in Germany will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution."

This expectation did not materialize, as we all know; it did not materialize just because the revolution of 1848 happened "under more progressive conditions of European civilization" than those of 1640 and 1789.

That which drove the proletarian, the half-proletarian and half-petty bourgeois elements of the English and the French revolutions to the front and helped them into temporary political power, was the *war*, a war of life and death, which the revolution had to carry on, and in which it could only maintain its position by that disregard of its own life and the property of the owning class, which distinguishes the proletariat. In England it was the long war of the Parliament against the feudal armies of Charles 1, and in France the war, likewise lasting for years, against the allied monarchs of Europe.

But the revolution of 1848 kindled no war. Not a long-drawn civil war brought down the governments, the barricade battles of one day were sufficient to make them break down in Paris, Vienna, and Berlin. And since the revolution extended over the whole of Europe, there was no foreign power to proclaim war against it. Absolutistic Russia kept at first very quiet.

But while the feudal-absolutistic opponents of the revolution of 1848 were much weaker than in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the proletariat was much stronger. During the days of February it gained at once a dominating position in Paris. In place of a struggle of life and death against monarchy and nobility, for which it would have been necessary to call the proletariat to arms, submitting finally to its consequent influence, the bourgeoisie now at once felt constrained to begin a struggle of life and death against the proletariat itself, and for this purpose it called upon the power of the state, just subdued by it, for the help of its army, thus submitting once more to the military yoke.

The battle of June was the catastrophe of the revolution of 1848. It inaugurated a new historical epoch and marks the time when the bourgeoisie entirely ceases to be a politically revolutionary class. It brings, at least for Western Europe, the era of bourgeois revolutions to a close. I will not discuss how far this holds good for Russia, where the peasantry and the intellectuals play an entirely different role than in Western Europe. After June 1848, a bourgeois revolution which could form the prelude of a proletarian revolution is no longer possible in Western Europe. The next can only be a proletarian revolution.

And in Russia, too, the initiative for a revolution can only emanate from the industrial prole-

ariat, even if as yet it does not lead to its exclusive domination.

But all this has put the labor movement in a totally different situation.

The strengthening of the working class and its elevation to the altitude which would enable it to conquer the political powers and maintain them can no longer be expected from a bourgeois revolution, which, becoming permanent, grows beyond its own limits and develops out of itself a proletarian revolution. Outside of the revolution, and preceding it, this ripening and strengthening must take place. It must have reached a certain degree, before a revolution is at all possible. It must take place through methods of peace, not of war—if one is permitted to express oneself as distinguishing between warlike and peaceful methods of the class struggle.

Protection of the workers, trade unionism, and the organization of cooperative societies, now gradually assume a significance quite different from that of the time before June 1848.

That which sixty years ago was still enshrouded in deepest darkness is today as clear as daylight. Thanks to this fact many a shortsighted mole who is diligently digging for earthworms thinks himself far superior in range and sharpness of vision to the masters of the *Communist Manifesto*, and even looks down with pity upon their intellectual errors. But the fact is that among the Socialists and revolutionaries nobody comprehended the new situation sooner than Marx and Engels.

They were the first to recognize that the era of revolution, for the near future at least, had come to an end. It was the International which before others systematically endeavored to promote the trade organization on the continent of Europe. *Capital* by Marx first offered a theory for the protection of the workers, and it was the International which in the sixties participated energetically in the movement for universal suffrage in England.

But not only the methods by which the working class becomes riper, the pace of development, also, had to change in consequence of the new situation. The place of rapid revolutionary flight was taken by the snail-like movement of peaceful and legal evolution, too slow for a fiery soul.

Thus some things have had an outcome different from what the authors of the *Manifesto* expected at the time of its writing. But they were the first to recognize the new situation and they did so because of the principles and methods they had developed in their *Manifesto*, and the new situation was itself, although in different forms, an affirmation of these principles. When, during the following decades, the questions of protection to the worker and trade organization acquired an importance which in 1847 it was impossible to recognize, this was due only to the fact that a few months after the appearance of the *Manifesto* the class antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat already reacted upon the bourgeoisie in a manner which before February 1848 nobody suspected. It was due therefore

to the fact that the outlines of this antagonism in the *Manifesto* for its own time already proved to be truer than its authors had assumed.

Very few of those who act the part of "critics" of the *Manifesto* suspect this connection of things. From the fact that a rapid and stormy development was replaced by a "peaceful" and gradual one, and revolutionary by legal methods of class war, they conclude that an antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat either does not exist at all, or that it is in a state of constant mitigation. They preach cooperation between the liberal bourgeoisie and the proletariat and, insofar as they are Socialists, they refer to that sentence of the *Manifesto* which states:

"In Germany the Communist party fights with the bourgeoisie whenever it acts in a revolutionary way, against the absolute monarchy, the feudal squirearchy, and the petty bourgeoisie."

This sentence, it is claimed, gives approval to the policy of a combination of radicals in order to capture the government, and to the policy of a socialistic ministerialism, as practiced by some Socialist factions in France and Italy, and preached everywhere by the representatives of the "new method." Here we have a Marxian "dogma" defended with a truly dogmatic fanaticism by the champions especially of "critical" socialism.

But we have seen that so far as we may speak of a "mistake" in the *Manifesto* and deem criticism a necessity, this has to begin with the very "dogma" of the politically revolutionary bourgeoisie. The very displacement of revolution by evolution during the last fifty years grows out of the fact that a revolutionary bourgeoisie no longer exists. Besides, Marx and Engels understood by the term "fighting with the bourgeoisie" something else than the supporters of present-day socialistic ministerialism. The address of the Central Executive Board of the Communist League of March 1850 treats of the relation of the Communists to the bourgeois democracy, of which it was assumed at that time that during a new revolutionary eruption it would place itself at the helm of the state. To quote:

"At the present moment, when the democratically inclined petty bourgeoisie is everywhere oppressed, they generally preach union and conciliation to the proletariat. They offer their hand for the formation of a great party of the opposition, comprising all the different shades of democratic belief. That is, it is their aim to draw the workers into a party organization ruled by the phrase behind which the bourgeois democracy hide their special interests. In this organization the definite demands of the proletariat, for the sake of dear peace, must not be mentioned. Such a combination would only redound to the benefit of the bourgeoisie, and wholly to the disadvantage of the proletariat. The latter would lose its independent position, gained by hard work, and it would again descend to the level of an appendix of the bourgeois democracy. This kind of combination must therefore be rejected most energetically. No special combination is necessary in case of a fight

against a common enemy. As soon as such an enemy is to be fought, the interests of both parties for the time being are one, and just as heretofore, so also in the future, an alliance, calculated to serve the moment, will spring into existence. It is understood that in the approaching bloody conflicts, as in preceding ones, the workers, by their courage, firmness, and sacrifice, will have to win the victory. . . . During the struggle and after it, the workers must at every opportunity advance their own demands side by side with those of the bourgeois democrats. They must demand guarantees for themselves as soon as the bourgeoisie prepare to take the government in their hand. They must, if necessary, wrest such guarantees from them and in general see to it that the new rulers pledge themselves to all possible concessions and promises—the surest means to make them compromise themselves. On the whole, they must in every way keep back as much as possible the intoxication that comes of victory and the enthusiasm for the new state of affairs, by a calm and cool comprehension of conditions and by an open distrust in the new government. . . . In a word: from the first moment of victory the distrust must no longer be directed against the vanquished reactionary party, but against those who have so far been allies, against the party which will try to exploit the common victory solely for its own advantage."

This, then, was the form of the common struggle of bourgeoisie and proletariat against absolutism and feudalism, as Marx and Engels looked upon it. It is something quite different from what the present-day socialistic ministerials in France and Italy aim at.

Of course one may object that what took place at that time were revolutionary struggles. But a common revolutionary struggle is for the united action of bourgeoisie and proletariat the most favorable case. The danger that the political power of the proletariat may be exploited by the bourgeoisie, the danger of a loss of that political power which emanates from its political independence, and the necessity for distrust against a bourgeois democratic government are evidently much stronger where the bourgeoisie can no longer be anything but conservative, as where its aim is still the revolutionary conquest of new positions.

But wherever today a cooperation of bourgeoisie and proletariat may become necessary, it is, with the exception of Russia, not for revolutionary but for conservative purposes, for the preservation and security of the existing meager rudiments of democracy against the onslaught of reaction.

In these struggles against reaction also the proletariat has to stand its ground, here too the hardest work falls to its share, and here too it sometimes has to cooperate with the liberal bourgeoisie. But more even than in the revolutionary struggle there is danger here that it may be betrayed by its ally, and exists the necessity to face him with open distrust. And above all there exists the necessity of a fully independent organization. The proletariat, by condition of its class,

is a most thoroughly revolutionary class, and is today the only revolutionary class. For a time circumstances may force it to participate in a conservative action against reaction, but never can it be fully consumed thereby. It will always give practical proof of its revolutionary character, which will break through even where for the moment it acts conservatively. Its powers can only develop and increase by revolutionary action and revolutionary propaganda and it destroys the roots of its strength if it limits itself to the role of a conservative guardian of the ruling liberal bourgeoisie against the onslaught of clergy, landed aristocracy, and mercenaries.

Of course these are questions which concern the Socialists of Western Europe more than those who are active in the Russian empire. The latter live under political and economic conditions which still greatly resemble those of Germany on the eve of the revolution of 1848. For that reason the *Manifesto* is still far more valid for them than for the Socialists of Western Europe, not only as regards its fundamentals and methods and its presentation of the general character of the capitalist mode of production, all of which at present still form the firm foundations for every consciously proletarian movement of every country, but also in many details which for Western Europe have become obsolete.

With modern conditions of international intercourse, however, no country, and least of it a capitalist country, is moved along the path of its domestic development by its internal motive power alone. Outside influences, and above all the reaction of the class wars of foreign countries, become almost equally important for its class struggles.

The revolutionary battle of June 1848 in France proved decisive not only for the course of the French revolution, but also for that of the German revolution and the labor movement in England. In the same way, the relations between proletariat and bourgeoisie in Western Europe react upon the relations of these classes in Russia, which classes are placed in a political and economic situation at once corresponding to the time of the *Manifesto*, and embodying all the tremendous revolutions and experiences which for two generations of uninterrupted economic revolution since the *Communist Manifesto* have been created.

The political relation between bourgeoisie and proletariat, between liberalism and Socialism, is for that reason a much more complex and difficult one in Russia than in Western Europe. To rightly comprehend it, the Socialists active under Russian absolutism will have to take into consideration the most primitive conditions of their own country just as much as the most highly developed conditions of the other countries. The bourgeoisie of Russia still has a revolutionary task to fulfill, but it has already the reactionary turn of mind of the bourgeoisie of the West.

The best and most reliable guide the Russian Socialists will find in the *Manifesto*. It is no gospel, no bible, as it has been called, the words

KARL KAUTSKY

by Leon Trotsky

The death of Karl Kautsky has passed unnoticed. To the young generation this name says comparatively little. Yet there was a time when Kautsky was in the true sense of the word the teacher who instructed the international proletarian vanguard. To be sure, his influence in the Anglo-Saxon countries, especially also in France, was less considerable; but that is explained by the feeble influence of Marxism in general in these countries. On the other hand, in Germany, in Austria, in Russia, and in the other Slavic countries, Kautsky became an indisputable Marxian authority. The attempts of the present historiography of the Comintern to present things as if Lenin, almost in his youth, had seen in Kautsky an opportunist and had declared war against him are radically false. Almost up to the time of the world war Lenin considered Kautsky as the genuine continuator of the cause of Marx and Engels.

This anomaly was explained by the character of the epoch, which was an era of capitalist ascension, of democracy, of adaptation of the proletariat. The revolutionary side of Marxism had changed into an indefinite, in any case, a distant perspective. The struggle for re-

This appreciation of the life of Karl Kautsky is reprinted from the Writings of Leon Trotsky [1938-39].

forms and propaganda was on the order of the day. Kautsky occupied himself with commenting upon and justifying the policy of reform from the point of view of the revolutionary perspective. It was taken for granted that with the change of the objective conditions, Kautsky would know how to arm the party with other methods. That was not the case. The appearance of an epoch of great crises and of great shocks revealed the fundamentally reformist character of the Social Democracy and of its theoretician Kautsky. Lenin broke resolutely with Kautsky at the beginning of the war. After the October revolution he published a merciless book on the "renegade Kautsky." As for Marxism, Kautsky, from the beginning of the war, behaved incontrovertibly like a renegade. But as for himself, he was only half a renegade from his past, so to speak: when the problems of the class struggle were posed in all their acuteness, Kautsky found himself constrained to draw the final conclusions of his organic opportunism.

Kautsky undoubtedly leaves behind numerous works of value in the field of Marxian theory, which he applied successfully in the most variegated domains. His analytical thought was distinguished by an exceptional force. But it was not the universal creative intelligence of Marx, of Engels, or of Lenin: all his life Kautsky was, at bottom,

a talented commentator. His character, like his thought, lacked audacity and sweep, without which revolutionary politics is impossible. From the very first cannon-shot, he occupied an ill-defined pacifist position; then he became one of the leaders of the Independent Social Democratic Party which tried to create a Two-and-one-half International; then, with the debris of the Independent Party he returned under the wing of the Social Democracy. Kautsky understood nothing of the October revolution, showed the petty-bourgeois savant's fright before it, and devoted to it not a few works imbued with a spirit of fierce hostility. His works in the last quarter of a century are characterized by a complete theoretical and political decline.

The foundering of the German and Austrian Social Democracy was also the foundering of all the reformist conceptions of Kautsky. To be sure, he still continued to affirm to the last that he had hopes of a "better future," of a "regeneration" of democracy, etc.; this passive optimism was only the inertia of a laborious and in its way honest long life, but it contained no independent perspective. We remember Kautsky as our former teacher to whom we once owed a good deal, but who separated himself from the proletarian revolution and from whom, consequently, we had to separate ourselves. ■

of which are holy words, but an historic document that should be subjected to criticism, to a criticism, however, which does not limit itself to state how some sentences and turns no longer fit the case; to a criticism, furthermore, that endeavors to comprehend it and to comprehend also those sentences which today are obsolete, thus deriving new knowledge from them. To him who studies the *Communist Manifesto* in this manner it is a compass upon the stormy ocean of the proletarian class struggle.

A compass that has proved reliable by pointing out, for sixty years, the direction of the economic development, and which all the facts have corroborated again and again. A compass to which the Socialist parties of all countries are indebted for the fact that, despite all contrary currents, despite fogs and cliffs, they are always headed in the right direction. There is no historic document which the decades following its writing have confirmed more gloriously than the *Communist Manifesto*. ■

PERMANENT REVOLUTION: THE NICARAGUAN EXPERIENCE

by Michael Lowy

The strategy of permanent revolution implies that Marxists learn to take advantage of all the hesitations and uncertainties of the bourgeoisie in order to win over the popular and peasant masses and advance the revolutionary process in an uninterrupted manner toward socialist objectives. In other words, a combined democratic-socialist revolution, under proletarian direction, is an objective possibility in the peripheral capitalist regions, and this possibility does not depend on the prior achievement of the bourgeois democratic revolution (the classic stagist doctrine of the Stalinists). On the contrary, it depends on the partial or total success in accomplishing these tasks, and/or the capacity of the proletarian vanguard to win leadership of a block of progressive forces.

In Nicaragua as in Cuba, the economy before the revolution was based principally on cash crops for export: cotton, coffee, sugar, livestock breeding. The development of capitalism in the countryside since 1960—notably the cotton boom—had signified the displacement and dispossession of small producers of corn, beans, rice, and sorghum.¹ This capitalist "progress" contributed to the food deficit, to malnutrition and the growth of poverty.² Likewise, it had two important social consequences: 1) the development of an enormous mass of rural workers into proletarianized, semiproletarianized or underproletarianized conditions, in which many only worked during the four months of the harvest; it is estimated that 78 percent of the rural labor force experienced such a proletarianization;³ 2) a vast process of rural exodus that saw the victims of "land clearings" for cotton and ranches leave for the towns. However the urban industrial development remained too limited to absorb the mass of displaced people; they were therefore condemned to a miserable life of underemployment, surviving day to day in the shantytowns. According to Orlando Nunez, one of the leading theoreticians of the Sandinista Front, "masses of proletarians who are not organically integrated into the centers of productive capital, and consequently must earn their meager pittance in the margins of the sphere of circulation" are found in these shantytowns.⁴

The combined and unequal character of capitalist development in Nicaragua had the result of

aggravating the social contradictions in the cities as well as in the countryside, leading to the formation of an explosive mass of poor—landless, unemployed (or underemployed), oppressed—of which the industrial working class was only a small minority.

To this it is obviously necessary to add the "gangster capitalism" of Somoza and his band, marked by corruption, nepotism, and violence, as well as the traditional economic, political, and military dominance of the country by U.S. imperialism.

Important sectors of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie opposed Somoza, but without the least intention of setting off a popular insurrection against the National Guard, or of struggling against American hegemony.

It is probably in comparison with its Cuban predecessor that the particular dynamics of permanent revolution in Nicaragua can best be illustrated. First, we note that the Sandinista experience reproduced a number of familiar motifs of the Cuban revolution: 1) the formation of a radical anti-imperialist movement under the banner of a legendary Jacobin revolutionary leader (Marti, Sandino); 2) a movement (the July 26 Movement and the FSLN) which led the struggle against a brutal dictatorship protected by U.S. imperialism (Batista, Somoza); 3) by a combination of rural and urban insurrections, the old state apparatus and the repressive organs were completely destroyed; 4) a new revolutionary army was organized based on the unity of guerrilla and popular militias, but the government remained a coalition with the representatives of the antidictatorial bourgeoisie (Urrutia in Cuba, Robelo in Nicaragua); 5) as the masses are mobilized and armed and the revolution takes more and more radical measures (beginning with attacks against the rural oligarchy and foreign capital), the coalition disintegrates and the bourgeois forces pass to the counterrevolutionary camp.

Like their Cuban co-thinkers, the Nicaraguan Stalinists—the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN)—participated very little in the revolution. The PSN participated in the opposition of the bourgeois coalition, UDEL (Democratic Union for Liberation), stressing that the revolution against Somoza had a uniquely democratic and nonsocialist character. They objected to the strategy of the FSLN as "ultra-left," as "sterile adventurism" marked by "Maoist and almost Trotskyist influences." Even after the launching of the 1978 insurrection, they still considered it as a "premature insurrectional act of well-intentioned young patriots who placed an ultra-left primacy on the armed struggle that did not correspond to the concrete reality of the country."⁵

This article is a selection from Michael Lowy's "On Permanent Revolution" which appeared in the April 1987 issue (No. 4) of Cahier D'Etude et recherche. It appears here in English for the first time. The English translation is by Keith Mann.

The social composition of the revolutionary movement resembled that of the Cuban process: The Sandinista base as well as its popular support was made up especially of poor peasants, workers, the urban poor of the shantytowns, of students and of intellectuals. The youth—and notably students from secondary schools—were perhaps the most crucial component of the popular revolt, so much that the word *muchacho* (young man) became quasi-synonymous with Sandinista during the years 1978-1979. When they attacked certain turbulent neighborhoods, Somoza's National Guard automatically considered the whole population between twelve and twenty-five years old to be suspect of Sandinism.⁶

It is, however, important to note several differences between the two revolutions. The FSLN, for example, was from its origin in 1961 endowed with a clearer programmatic definition, more to the left than the July 26 Movement at a comparable stage in its development (between 1954 and 1959). The two founders of the Sandinista Front, Carlos Fonseca (killed by Somoza's troops in 1976) and Tomas Borge (current minister of the interior) were Marxists who had quit the Stalinist Nicaraguan Socialist Party in protest of its reformist orientation. In 1969 Fonseca wrote in a key FSLN strategic document published in Cuba that: "Our goal is the socialist revolution, a revolution that aims to defeat Yankee imperialism and its local agents. . . . We must guard against the danger that the insurrection will be manipulated by reactionary forces within the anti-Somoza opposition. The objective of the revolution is a double one. One part of its task is to break the power of the criminal and traitorous clique that has usurped power over the years. The other part is to stop the capitalist component of the opposition, whose submission to imperialism is well known, from taking advantage of the crisis to seize power in its own name."⁷ Another distinctive trait of the Nicaraguan revolution is the relationship between the respective roles of urban insurrection and rural guerrilla warfare: The *decisive* political/military moment in the destruction of Somoza's well-oiled war machine was the massive armed uprising of workers, the urban poor, and the youth of the towns—first in the provincial centers (Masaya, Lyon, Esteli), then in the capital (Managua).

The relative maturity of the FSLN is easily understandable since the Nicaraguan revolution took advantage of the Cuban revolutionary process.

On the other hand, the transition to a collectivized economy after the overthrow of the dictatorship was effected much more slowly in Nicaragua than in Cuba, where two years after the victory of the insurrection capitalism had been completely uprooted. It would be false to draw the conclusion from the prolonged character of the transition that the Nicaraguan revolution had taken no anticapitalist measures or that it had remained a prisoner of the "bourgeois-national stage."

Paul Le Blanc, author of one of the best revolutionary Marxist studies of the process in Nicaragua, justly remarked: "From the beginning,

the Nicaraguan revolution did not limit itself to 'bourgeois-democratic' tasks. To the contrary, it dismantled capitalist political power and gradually undermined capitalist economic power. It was only in crossing the limits of bourgeois democracy, in effecting changes going in the direction of socialism, that it was possible to put into practice even the 'minimum program' of the revolution."⁸

The first element of this "transgression" is therefore political: the Sandinista revolution destroyed the repressive bourgeois apparatus and established a new revolutionary state, popular militia (worker and peasant), Sandinista unions, and local popular committees (CDS-Sandinista Defense Committees). Though the anti-Somoza bourgeoisie still participated in the government for a year or two, real power was in the hands of the Sandinista insurrectional forces from July 1979.

It is perhaps useful to compare these events to those happening at the same moment (1979) in Iran: in both countries, armed powers—well-equipped, supported by U.S. imperialism—had been defeated by vast popular insurrections in which the proletariat and urban forces played a decisive role.⁹ Soon after, however, their trajectories diverged, following two radically distinct political projects: Sandinism and Islamic fundamentalism. The Iranian religious nationalists executed a number of generals and police officers and organized a new paramilitary force (the Pasdaran), but they *did not* destroy the Shah's old Imperial army. Today, this traditional military apparatus, "rehabilitated" by the war with Iraq, is used by Khomeini and his regime (with the support of the Pasdaran) to break workers' combativity, oppress the Kurdish people, and massacre leftist organizations. In Nicaragua, to the contrary, there were not executions (the Sandinistas abolished the death penalty) but the Somozaist army, the National Guard, was entirely dismantled and replaced by the revolutionary forces and the armed people (in militias).

As for *social* measures, the first great initiative of the Sandinista revolution was the agrarian reform. Even if this initially only struck Somoza and his accomplices—estates comprising more than 20 percent of the arable land in the country!—it was soon extended, especially after 1983, when owners of "unproductive latifundias" were expropriated. Whereas before the revolution, 37 percent of the land was part of large landed property (more than 350 hectares), this percentage fell to 12 percent in 1984. In other respects, the collectivized sector made up of state farms and cooperatives reached 37 percent of the land the same year. Certainly, the majority of the land remained in private hands, but the peasants union (UNAG) and the agricultural workers' union (ATC) severely limited the power of the rural bourgeoisie.

Other economic measures led to not inconsequential incursions into capitalist property: from 1979, the new revolutionary power seized numerous enterprises belonging to Somoza and his gang—which made up the nucleus of the first Public Property Sector (APP)—the banks and insurance companies,

and the natural resources; foreign trade was gradually nationalized, and the first moves toward national economic planning begun. In 1980, violations of the laws against decapitalization and economic sabotage allowed for the confiscation of factories and land. The urban and rural workers' unions (CST—Sandinista Workers' Confederation and the ATC—Association of Rural Workers) acquired a very important role in the application of this legislation, leading to a continuous chain of expropriations of counterrevolutionary capitalists.

It was in order to draw the lessons of this contradiction between the political nature of state power and its economic structure that a document on Nicaragua, issued by the Fourth International, considered July 1979 as the first stage in the construction of a new workers' state, in which the expropriation of bourgeois and imperialist property would signify its consolidation. The contradiction between the socio-economic content of the property forms and the class content of the revolutionary state is "contained in the straightjacket of the newly installed power."¹⁰

In not less than seven years after the victory of the Sandinista insurrection, the largest part of the Nicaraguan economy remains in private hands. In previous revolutions (Russia, China, Cuba, etc.) there was always a period of several years between the conquest of revolutionary power and the transformation of the economy, but this transitional period was never as long as in the Nicaraguan case. Elsewhere, the Sandinista leadership has underlined on several occasions that, until the new order, it wanted to maintain a *mixed economic* system and that it did not intend to collectivize production in the near future. These politics flow from objective conditions: the impossibility of the revolutionaries taking the management of the factories into their own hands, the necessity of avoiding a catastrophic interruption of production, the lack of technical cadres, the weight of small and medium producers in the rural and urban economy. Certainly, this contradictory situation creates tensions, economic problems (the noninvestment of private property, capital flight, speculation, etc.), and permanent conflicts between the private sector—led by COSEP (Superior Council of Private Enterprise), an adversary of the revolution—and revolutionary forces (the government and the unions).

Let us underline however that the Nicaraguan "mixed economy" has nothing to do with the way the term is usually used (notably in European social-democratic programs). Far from describing a friendly division of labor between the public and private sectors, it is a question here of a conscious *struggle* of the Sandinista forces (including of course the CST and the ATC) to control and limit the economic power of the bourgeoisie, and submit the entire economy to a new logic, the logic of the people's interests. Sergio Ramirez, vice president of the republic since 1984, explains the Sandinista orientation in the following terms: "At the present moment, the revolution remains favorable to the mixed economy project. We don't mean this as a

justification of two economic models, in which one stands for the same old mechanisms of implacable capitalist reproduction—as if the popular revolution allows a 'free zone' for a private capitalist system, archaic and intact. It is rather that the mixed economy must begin with the harmonious and limited insertion of the private economy into the overall strategic framework of the public property sector. To the latter the political responsibility must come back to leading the national economic system towards change and towards the production and distribution of wealth."¹¹

The process of transition toward socialism therefore takes an extended form: though the mass of the bourgeoisie has not been expropriated, its control over the economy has steadily declined since 1979. John Vincour, a journalist for the *New York Times*, has offered the following somber reflections on the condition of "free enterprise" in Nicaragua: "It is estimated that nearly 60 percent of the economy remains, at least nominally, in private hands. But as the government controls all the banks, all the sources of foreign trade, and has total jurisdiction over imports, and that it fixes production quotas and designates priorities, the entrepreneurs are hardly agents of the crown which the government can control with the payment of salaries."¹² The spokesmen of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie utter regrets similar to Enrique Bolanos, a rich landed proprietor, capitalist, and president of COSEP: "The State tells me what I must do, what I must produce and controls all the routes of distribution. Is that a mixed economy? What does that mean in these circumstances."¹³

It is difficult to say for how much time the Nicaraguan private sector will accept the rules imposed by the Sandinista revolution; the bourgeoisie is more and more divided among those who are disposed to collaborate and those—represented by COSEP—who put all their hopes in the contras and in Reagan's intervention plans.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Nicaraguan processes is that the deepening of the radicalization and of permanent revolution has not resulted in the type of authoritarian bureaucratic dictatorships so frequent in postcapitalist societies in the third world. Under very difficult conditions—the U.S. aggression, the counterrevolutionary war and sabotage, the terrible economic problems—the Sandinista revolution has so far guaranteed a large measure of democratic freedoms and political pluralism. Certainly, some authoritarian errors have been committed—particularly concerning the Miskito Indians—but Nicaragua is no doubt today the most democratic, the most pluralist, and the least repressive of all the postcapitalist states. This has been very concretely manifested during the November 1984 elections, the first truly democratic elections in the history of the country. Although the most reactionary sector of the bourgeois opposition—the Coordinadora and its candidate, Arturo Cruz (today a contra leader, taking part in a coalition with well-known Somozista torturers)—decided at the last moment (follow-

ing the "advice" of the Reagan administration) to boycott the elections, the vast majority of the population did participate, voting for either the FSLN (67 percent) or for the opposition made up of diverse bourgeois parties (Conservatives, Liberals, and Christian Socialists) and several small left forces (pro-Soviets and pro-Albanians). The pro-Soviet Nicaraguan Communist Party accused the FSLN of capitulating to social democracy (by organizing the elections) while the bourgeois parties accused the Sandinistas of collusion with international communism. . . . All had the right to equal time on the radio and television and the government granted an allowance of nine million cordobas to each of them (permitting the small parties to fi-

nance their campaign). This is a far cry from the bureaucratic ritual called "elections" in countries like Poland or Czechoslovakia. The Sandinistas have won legitimacy and popular support.

The Nicaraguan revolution seeks to combine representative democracy with a national electoral slant, with direct democracy at the base, relying on popular self-organization, notably the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS) in the neighborhoods, local militias, unions, women's organizations, etc. But the connection between these two forms and the direct participation of the people in making decisions remains a problem that has not yet been resolved. ■

NOTES

1. This passage on Nicaragua is drawn from the German edition of this work, published in 1984.
2. See Jaime Biderman, "The Development of Capitalism in Nicaragua: a Political Economic History," Latin American Perspectives, winter 1983, p. 12.
3. See Carmen Diana Deere and Peter Marchetti, "The Worker-Peasant Alliance in the First Year of the Nicaraguan Agrarian Reform," Latin American Perspectives, spring 1981, pp. 42-45.
4. Orlando Nunez, "The Third Force in National Liberation Movements," Latin American Perspectives, spring 1981, p. 7.
5. Cited by Paul Le Blanc, Permanent Revolution in Nicaragua, New York: published by the F.I.T., 1984, p. 7, and Gerard de Sede, "Nicaragua sous la menace," Politique Aujourd'hui, Paris: October-November 1983, p. 131.
6. For a brilliant analysis of the role of the youth as a social category in the Nicaraguan revolution, see the essay by Orlando

Nunez cited above.

7. Carlos Fonseca Amador, "Nicaragua heure H," Tricontinentale, No. 14, October-November 1969, pp. 40-47.
8. Paul Le Blanc, op. cit., p. 20.
9. For an interesting comparison of Nicaragua and Iran, see Manuel Aguilar Mora, "Populisme et revolution permanente," Quatrieme International, July-September 1980.
10. "La revolution centro-americain, resolution adoptee par le XIIe Congres mondial de la Quatrieme Internationale" (1985), Paris: Quatrieme International, special issue 17/18, January 1985, pp. 92-111.
11. Cited by Paul Le Blanc, op. cit., p. 20.
12. John Vincour, "Nicaragua: A Correspondent's Portrait," New York Times, August 16, 1983, p. 4.
13. Marcel Niedergang, "Le Front est partout," Le Monde, November 3, 1984, p. 4.

Seattle Freedom Socialist Defendants Threatened with Jail

For over three years, nine members of the Freedom Socialist Party being sued by an ex-member—who made a donation for the construction of a new party headquarters and claims that it was fraudulently obtained—have refused to turn over party minutes because of the threat such a disclosure would mean for constitutional rights. Because of this, the judge in the case has issued a default judgment against them in the suit, and on January 13 their principled stand brought three of them to the brink of jail.

King County Superior Court Judge James Noe in Seattle ruled FSP founder Clara Fraser and case attorneys Val Carlson and Fred Hyde in contempt of court for refusing on constitutional grounds to answer questions about their finances. He chose the harshest possible action: ordering them to jail

until they agree to testify. However, on the urging of defense lawyers, Noe stayed execution of his sentence while the defendants appeal it to the Washington State Supreme Court. They have filed a motion for reconsideration of the contempt charges with Judge Noe, and if he rejects it they plan to proceed to the state Court of Appeals.

On January 21 a rally was held outside the courthouse to protest the judge's action. A petition effort is also under way. To make donations to the Freeway Hall Case Defense Fund or to obtain petitions or further information contact the committee at 5018 Ranier Avenue South, Seattle, WA, 98118, 206-722-2453. ■

This article is based on news releases issued by the defense committee and dated January 17 & 24.

DISPELLING SOME MYTHS ABOUT THE ANTI-VIETNAM WAR MOVEMENT

by Evelyn Sell



Although there are many myths about the movement against the war in Vietnam, I'm going to concentrate on only one today: the myth that the antiwar movement hated all GIs and that GIs hated all antiwar activists.

I know from my own personal experiences that the reality was far different. Along with many others in the antiwar movement, I helped win support for GIs victimized by the military for exercising their constitutional rights to protest the war. My involvement with antiwar GIs was stepped up in 1969 when I moved from Detroit to Austin, Texas. I helped organize GI participation in antiwar events as well as civilian support to GI organized events protesting the war. There were a number of antiwar GIs stationed at Ft. Hood, and since the military base was only about an hour's drive away from Austin, there was a lot of contact and cooperation between the GIs and the civilian antiwar movement.

I'm not going to rely on personal anecdotes to show the positive relationship between civilians and GIs in the antiwar movement. I'm going to give you dates and names and places and numbers to show you what was going on around the country and in Vietnam.

After President Johnson began to build up the U.S. military presence in Vietnam during 1965, there were occasional reports of GIs denouncing the war or refusing to fight. An AP dispatch, sent from Vietnam in September 1965, reported that four Black soldiers of the First Cavalry Division refused to be inoculated and to go through other procedures to prepare them for overseas duty. At about the same time, Special Forces Sgt. Donald Duncan, who had served 18 months in Vietnam, quit the army and returned to the U.S. as an outspoken critic of the war. His talks and interviews received very wide publicity.

Over the next five years, more and more GIs became involved in antiwar activities. Here are some examples from the late 1960s:

In October 1968, a rally was organized by the Chicago GI Weeks Committee, a coalition of the Chicago Vets for Peace, Student Mobilization Committee, Chicago Peace Council, and others.

A GI teach-in on the war and the rights of soldiers in the U.S. army was held on December 14, 1968, at Ft. Knox, Kentucky. The event was organized by a group of GIs on the base who invited

civilian antiwar activists to participate. Antiwar students helped build the teach-in by passing out leaflets at the Ft. Knox army base—and they received a warm welcome from almost all the GIs they met during this distribution. Some GIs took batches of leaflets to pass out and post in their barracks. When the Military Police arrived and escorted students off the base, many GIs made "V" signs to show their solidarity. After the teach-in, many GIs joined the Ft. Knox antiwar organization and made plans to build a GI antiwar conference to be held in Chicago two weeks later.

This December 27-28 GI-Civilian Antiwar Conference set up the GI Defense Organization with the following guidelines: ". . . to uphold the rights of American GIs to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and association, the right to petition for redress of grievances, and all other Constitutional rights. To this end, the organization will carry out the following activities:

"1. Arranging civilian legal counsel for GIs victimized for exercising their rights.

"2. Carrying out national publicity campaigns to rapidly get out the facts on cases involving GIs that deserve public scrutiny.

"3. Utilizing all legal and political channels to safeguard the right of defense guaranteed to citizens in uniform by the Bill of Rights, including those provided by the legislative branch of government."

The major result of this GI-Civilian Antiwar Conference, however, was a call for demonstrations during Easter weekend. Plans for the 1969 actions gained wide support in the weeks that followed the conference. The actions were endorsed by the Chicago Peace Council and the Los Angeles Peace Action Council, two of the major antiwar coalitions in the U.S. at that time.

While this organizing was going on for the Easter actions, GIs were involved in many other antiwar activities. For example, on January 4 two GIs were arrested for distributing copies of their antiwar newspaper at Detroit's Metropolitan Airport. GI dissent was not confined to the U.S. but was heard overseas as well. In a series of articles published in the *Chicago Daily News*, Georgie Ann Geyer reported that her six months in Vietnam showed that "fully half" of the U.S. troops there were "against the war to some extent."

A significant number of GIs attended the January 18 national conference of the National Mobilization Committee which was held in Washington, D.C. as part of events to protest the war during President Nixon's inaugural celebrations. During the January 19 "Counter-Inaugural March," the GIs

This is the text of a presentation made by the author to the Post School Forum in Los Angeles on November 22, 1987.

presence was announced with large banners proclaiming "GIs for PEACE" and "ACTIVE-DUTY GIs." Many GIs who had planned to participate were not able to when East Coast military bases as far south as Georgia were placed on restriction.

On February 16, over 200 GIs led a Seattle antiwar march of 4,500 civilians. The GIs came from Ft. Lewis, McCord Air Force Base, Woodby Island Navy Station, Fairchild Air Force Base, and other military facilities. The event was organized by GI-Civilian Alliance for Peace and was endorsed by every antiwar group in the area.

The linkage between GIs and civilians grew stronger and stronger as they worked together to build the projected Easter antiwar demonstrations in Atlanta, Austin, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle.

Many active-duty GIs participated in a statewide meeting of the Texas Committee Against the War where plans were set for the April demonstration in Austin. One of the building events for this action was a March 23 GI-civilian antiwar picnic.

GIs from Southbridge Air Force Base near Detroit helped build Midwest participation in the Chicago demonstration. Midwest antiwar groups leafleted military bases and transportation centers to maximize GI participation in the Chicago action. In the southern Ohio area, building efforts for the Chicago action included a GI-Civilian Conference Against the Vietnam War—the conference was planned in conjunction with antiwar GIs from Ohio's Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ft. Benjamin Harrison in Indiana, and Ft. Knox, Kentucky.

The GI Association in the Bay Area held a March 15th rally to help build the April 6 action in San Francisco. Building activities for the Los Angeles event included a February teach-in involving GIs from the Camp Pendleton Marine Base, and a March 1 conference called by the Peace Action Council of Southern California, Vietnam Veterans Against the War in Vietnam, and the Southern California Student Mobilization Committee.

East Coast activists leafleted military bases to help build the April 6 mobilization in New York City. The Boston coalition distributed a special leaflet for GIs at Ft. Devens, in downtown Boston, and at naval bases in the area. The Philadelphia GI-Civilian Coalition organized buses to transport people to the New York action, and held a benefit rock concert to help finance the demonstration.

The Easter weekend marches were very successful.

In New York, 100,000 demonstrated despite a steady rain. About 200 active-duty GIs led the march and carried a huge banner reading "GIs Against the War in Vietnam!" Behind this contingent were veterans from Vietnam and other wars.

In San Francisco, about 50,000 marched to the main gate of the Presidio army base—where 27 GIs had staged a sit-in to protest the murder of a fellow stockade prisoner.

Over 30,000 marched in Chicago—led by a group of 30 GIs.

In Los Angeles, 50 active-duty GIs led 6,500 marchers down Wilshire Blvd. to a rally in MacArthur

Park. The GI contingent included military personnel from Pendleton, March, and Norton Air Force Bases, and from the Long Beach, Coronado, and San Deigo Naval Stations.

The Atlanta march was the largest ever held in that city. Over 50 active-duty GIs were part of the 4,000 demonstrators.

Seattle's action consisted of antiwar basic training days. On April 5, 300 attended, including 20 GIs. The military brass at Ft. Lewis put a damper on GI attendance by placing the base on alert and giving soldiers extra duty the day of the antiwar event.

Austin's demonstration took place on April 13. About 100 active duty GIs from Ft. Hood and other central Texas military installations were among the 1,200 who marched to the grounds of the State House.

In June President Nixon attempted to halt the momentum of the antiwar movement by announcing the withdrawal of 25,000 troops from Vietnam by the end of August. The army chose Seattle as the host city for the first group of returning GIs. There was a grand parade of the returning troops followed by a program of patriotic speeches. The local antiwar movement mobilized 300 who stood in pouring rain to welcome the troops home. Their signs called for bringing *all* the troops home *now*, and they shouted, "Welcome home! Bring them *all* home!" After the formal parade and rally, antiwar demonstrators gave the GIs leaflets and newspapers. Many GIs made the peace sign as they walked by the antiwar activists. One GI told them, "I had to fight their lousy war for them and now they bring me home and make me march in a parade!"

I hope you remember that real life example next time you hear or read about antiwar activists spitting on Vietnam veterans and calling them "baby-killers"—a story that has become part of American folklore.

Many joint GI-civilian antiwar activities took place during the summer of 1969. On Memorial Day, active-duty GIs and Vietnam veterans led and spoke at marches held in Madison, Minneapolis, Cleveland, and New York. GI-civilian picnics were held in a number of places. The Los Angeles area picnic included GIs from Pendleton, March, Norton, and El Torro bases. The Philadelphia picnic and teach-in was cosponsored by *The Ultimate Weapon*, a GI newspaper at Ft. Dix. A July Fourth picnic in Austin, involving about 50 GIs, was cosponsored by the University Committee to End the War in Vietnam and two Ft. Hood newspapers: *GI Organizer* and *Fatigue Press*.

In mid-August, Associated Press correspondents reported an infantry company in Vietnam refused orders to continue a mission to reach a downed helicopter. Although there had been rumors of previous battlefield rebellions, this was the first actual report to receive national publicity. It underlined the common interests of civilians demanding, "Bring All the GIs Home Now!" and the troops who did not want to fight and die in Vietnam.

The antiwar movement's 1969 fall offensive included an October 15 Vietnam Moratorium, a Novem-

ber 13-14 National Conference on GI Rights in Washington, a November 14 national student strike, and November 15 marches in Washington D.C. and San Francisco. All of these events were great successes, and helped forge stronger links between GIs and the general antiwar movement.

Millions participated in the October 15 Vietnam Moratorium—including some troops in Vietnam. A *Life* magazine reporter, assigned to interview GIs in Vietnam about their reactions to the Moratorium, wrote: "Many soldiers regard the organized antiwar campaign in the U.S. with open and outspoken sympathy." This report was confirmed by other evidence. A photograph of marines returning from Vietnam showed them raising their fingers in the peace sign as their ship sailed into a San Diego naval harbor. A *New York Times* advertisement signed by 1,365 active-duty servicemen called for a massive turnout for the November 15 antiwar actions.

A million marched in the San Francisco and Washington D.C. demonstrations on November 15—the largest action to date against the Vietnam war. In San Francisco, a Vietnam veteran leaned his crutch against a large handwritten sign, "I WAS THERE. NOW I'M BACK. BRING THE OTHERS BACK TOO BEFORE THEY USE THIS." In Washington, servicemen carried a long banner inscribed, "ACTIVE-DUTY GIs AGAINST THE WAR."

A dispatch from South Vietnam, published on November 22, reported that a group of 21 GIs—all with extensive combat experience—refused direct orders to patrol near the Cambodian border. On Thanksgiving Day, GIs in an evacuation hospital in Vietnam fasted to protest the war. They explained their action in a letter to President Nixon signed by 200 GIs.

In 1970 and 1971, GIs continued to publish antiwar newspapers, to establish GI coffee houses as organizing centers for antiwar activities, to participate in protest events, and to insist on their constitutional rights to freedom of association, speech, press, and due process of law. Probably the most well-known group was GIs United Against the War which had chapters at Ft. Bragg in North Carolina, Ft. Jackson in South Carolina, and other military bases.

The escalation of the war into Cambodia in April 1970 also escalated GI antiwar activities. There were reports of GIs in the battle zones refusing to obey orders. GIs stationed in the U.S. called for GI antiwar actions on May 16—Armed Forces Day—to protest the war in Vietnam and the invasion of Cambodia. In order to prevent these actions, the military brass closed 23 bases around the country on Armed Forces Day—a significant departure from the traditional practice of opening up bases to the public for band concerts, full dress parades, and other festivities. GIs who were not restricted to bases on that day participated in antiwar demonstrations across the country.

I have very vivid memories of the event organized by antiwar GIs from Ft. Hood. They were not allowed any activity on the base, so they organized a march and rally in Killeen, the small army town

near the base. The GIs called on the antiwar movement in Austin to support their action. When we got to Killeen it felt like we had stepped into a Hollywood movie about the old wild west. The sheriff had deputized a bunch of men who swaggered around the assembly site, kicking up dust with their boots, toying with large pistols hanging on their hips, and encouraging a local citizen who was holding a huge American flag and shouting threats at us.

I wasn't in a wheelchair then so I helped with security. Over 500 marched through the center of Killeen. Townspeople lined the streets spitting at the GIs and their supporters, cursing us, and trying to provoke fights. When we got to the rally site, we had to link arms, facing the deputies and hecklers, to form a protective human wall around the GIs and speakers. When the program was over, we had to escort participants back to the GI coffeehouse.

Although I monitored many antiwar events threatened by extreme right-wingers, that was the scariest monitoring experience I've ever had. But I was able to leave Killeen and drive back to Austin afterwards. The antiwar GIs had to face hostility every time they were in town, and they had to cope with the military brass when they were on base. It took great courage to be an active-duty GI against the war. Many were victimized in various ways, a number were courtmartialled and sentenced to hard labor for protesting the Vietnam war. The civilian antiwar movement promptly and consistently defended individual GIs and groups. There isn't time to list all the cases or even most of them. Some of the best known were the Ft. Hood Three, the Presidio 27, and the Ft. Jackson Eight. Supported by antiwar activists in the civilian population, GIs won many important victories in their fights to express their antiwar views.

The U.S. military establishment and the government were faced with a double-barreled challenge from antiwar GIs at home and in Vietnam. This was all part of what is now called "the Vietnam syndrome." That term is usually applied *only* to the civilian antiwar movement. Most people probably don't know about the GI component of the movement. I'm not trying to tell you that *all* or even most GIs were actively involved in the antiwar movement—but GIs were certainly a very significant part of the movement.

The military establishment and the government policy-makers haven't forgotten the antiwar GIs. They have to take such matters into account as they pursue their foreign policy goals today. They know that the Vietnam syndrome is alive and well.

When we held our anti-intervention march and rally in Los Angeles two weeks ago, one of the signs read, "Nicaragua is Spanish for Vietnam." As an organizer of such actions, I have a special reason for correcting the myths about the antiwar movement—I want to spread the truth about past struggles in order to build a powerful movement that can stop U.S. intervention in Central America, the Persian Gulf, and other areas of the world. I invite everyone here to be a part of today's antiwar movement. ■

ANTI-VIETNAM WAR MOVEMENT GIVES VITAL LESSONS FOR TODAY

by Nat Weinstein

In Bulletin IDOM Number 45 (October 1987) we published an article entitled, "Don't 'Accomodate' Democracy to the Labor Bureaucracy; An Answer to Nat Weinstein," by Samuel Adams. At the same time we wrote to the political committee of the organization, Socialist Action, offering them an opportunity to respond. They declined this invitation, and instead made a request that we reprint, for the information of our readers, the original article by Nat Weinstein which Adams was discussing. We are doing so below.

One of the key political tasks facing the movement against U.S. intervention in Central America is to mobilize the largest possible opposition in the streets.

The anti-intervention movement is a force which restrains—and can ultimately stop—the U.S. war against the people of Central America. It is the only force, outside of Nicaragua itself, that can make the cost of direct military intervention greater than any gains to U.S. imperialism.

Our job is made easier because recent history is still a vivid memory in the minds of millions. The bitter Vietnam War experience has taught the U.S. ruling class grudging respect for the power of determined resistance by an oppressed nation to imperialist aggression. The Sandinistas' arming of their people to defend their revolution signifies to the American capitalists that a high price will be paid in blood for an attempted crushing of Nicaragua.

U.S. rulers also painfully learned a parallel lesson from the Vietnam experience. They learned to respect the power of *independent mass action* by the American people, which forced the U.S. government to withdraw from Vietnam.

The lessons of this period need to be absorbed, as well, by working people. Unfortunately, however, many of the leaders of today's anti-intervention movement have failed to draw the correct lessons of the Vietnam antiwar movement.

For example, almost all of the antiwar, anti-nuclear, and solidarity groups decided to support Walter Mondale and other Democratic Party candidates in the 1984 elections. This was done instead of building mass demonstrations to answer the U.S. invasion of Grenada and the increased war moves against Nicaragua and El Salvador. The movement became totally demobilized during election time.

Today, many of the organizations

building the April 25 demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco state publicly that they view these actions as an opportunity to "set a broader agenda for the 1988 election campaign." For these groups, April 25 is little more than a springboard to elect a Democratic Party president in the 1988 elections.

The Guardian newspaper, for example, in an editorial dated Feb. 4 states the following:

"Regardless of how well we mobilize in the immediate period...the struggle over Reagan's policies and the possibility of the left seriously influencing public opinion will be with us for some time to come....In the longer run, helping build the Rainbow Coalition for the 1988 election is a project that offers progressives a chance to keep alive demands for a radical reform of U.S. foreign policy and criticism of the mainstream Democratic Party's continuing commitment to the Cold War."

The Guardian fails to tell its readers, however, that the Rainbow Coalition delivered its supporters to Walter Mondale in 1984—despite the fact that Mondale said he would have invaded Grenada and would quarantine Nicaragua.

Today, Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow Coalition have renewed their pledge to remain a "loyal opposition" inside the Democratic Party.

To avoid the pitfalls of the past—and to maintain an increasingly visible independent mass antiwar movement—it is therefore necessary to understand the theoretical underpinning of the correct strategy that so effectively tied the hands of the U.S. warmakers in Vietnam.

Antiwar strategy in the 1960s

The most important lesson of the Vietnam experience comes through understanding how the tactic of the workers' united front was applied to mobilize millions of Americans against the Vietnam

War. [See box on the principles of the united front.]

This tactic serves as a guide to action in the current struggle against American counterrevolutionary intervention in Central America and against the deepening assault on American workers' living standards.

In the beginning, the Vietnam antiwar movement had no mass organizational base. The principal mass organizations of the American workers, the trade unions, were absent from this movement.

The unions have been dominated for at least the last 40 years by a conservative labor bureaucracy which has been as servile toward its capitalist "partners" as any in history. The large majority of the labor officials were shameless supporters of the imperialist invasion of Vietnam.

Despite this massive obstacle, the opposition to the Vietnam War grew quickly along with the casualty statistics and the accounts of burned villages and other atrocities.

But the successful unleashing and focusing of this potential force was difficult. The early antiwar movement was made up by small socialist and pacifist groups and by a few somewhat prominent individuals. It had to be built from scratch.

"Negotiations" vs. "Out Now!"

In addition to its small size and narrow base, the antiwar movement was divided from the outset over strategy. This division was most typically expressed in the opposed slogans: "Negotiate Now!" vs. "U.S. Troops Out Now!"

The "negotiations" position was inherently and fatally flawed. It implicitly accepted the "right" of the American capitalist government to limit the right of the Vietnamese people to determine and regulate their own affairs. It had the practical effect of helping to

Tactics of a Workers' United Front: 'March Separately, Strike Together'

Working people and their families are an absolute majority of society. The capitalists are a tiny minority. If workers were united in struggle for their class interests, they could easily overcome capitalist power and come to rule society. But in every country the working class tends to be divided into a plurality of parties, unions, factions, and tendencies.

This is an expression, in the last analysis, of the historic division between advocates of reform and revolution. The reformists and labor bureaucrats, committed to a strategy based on a "partnership" with the capitalist class, are the main obstacle to united, working-class action.

Historically, the revolutionary workers' movement has consistently advanced the proposal for a united front to overcome this division when circumstances cry out for it. The united-front tactic is embodied in the principle: "March separately, but strike together."

The basis of such an agreement to carry out joint action must realistically be limited to one or at most a few compelling issues. A united front cannot encompass the range of issues contained in conflicting programs.

The proposal for joint action is a practical way to advance immediate pressing needs without solving in advance all of the programmatic questions in dispute.

The appeal to the reformist leaders to take joint action in defense of working-class interests, thus, tends to gain a favorable response from those they influence. The reformists are put under great pressure to join in a united front to defend class interests. If they refuse, they risk losing influence over their members.

This is the logic upon which the united-front tactic is based.

Examples of the united front

The need for working-class unity during a strike, for example, opens the door to united action despite deep-going differences over many important questions. In fact, the most rudimentary form of the united front is the trade union.

In the trade union, workers of all

kind—Blacks, whites, men, women, socialists, Democrats, Republicans, Christians, Moslems, or Jews—are eligible for membership. The single purpose of the trade union is to unite workers in defense of their class interests against the bosses—despite the ideological and political differences which may exist.

The only condition for membership in a trade union is acceptance of majority decisions *where the vital interests of the workers are at stake*. The only limit to the breadth of decisions the majority imposes on the minority should be at the point where this might destroy an effective united front against the employer.

Another form of the united front was demonstrated on Sept. 19, 1981—"Solidarity Day"—when the AFL-CIO, the United Auto Workers union, the Teamsters union, and the United Mine Workers of America put their differences aside and mobilized 700,000 workers in the streets of Washington, D.C., against the Reagan administration's anti-labor policies.

But the application of the united-front tactic varies with changes in mass consciousness.

In this country, the formation of a labor party based on the unions would represent a higher form of the united front. A labor party would unite workers who understand the need to take their economic struggles into the political arena. Advocates of reform and revolution would continue to coexist and vie for leadership in such a party.

In Europe and other countries where several mass labor or socialist parties exist, the call for the united front is a call for these parties to unite in action both in the streets and in the electoral arena against the capitalists and their representatives.

In Germany in the early 1930s, for example, revolutionaries called for the Communist Party and the Socialist Party to unite against Hitler. Their failure to unite paved the way for the advent of fascism in that country.

Workers' councils

The workers' council is the highest form of the united front. But this form can be reached only in a crisis of near revolutionary proportions.

In these periods of heightened class struggle, the workers' united front tends to become a kind of executive committee of the fighting organizations of the working class.

Trade unions, strike committees, factory committees and other institutions created by the workers in such periods tend to come together into a centralized and representative united front to direct the struggle of the entire class.

Such workers' councils also may evolve, in especially tumultuous periods, toward becoming an organ in the struggle for political power, i.e., a sort of "congress" or "parliament" of the fighting working class that can evolve into a workers' government.

In Russia, "soviets" (Russian for council) developed prior to the October 1917 revolution and became the organs of the new state power.

But in less turbulent times the united front is simply a form for uniting workers for limited action in the face of a clear and present danger.

Democracy in the united front

Although pressure for the united front always comes from the ranks, it must begin with an agreement on top—between the leaders of competing workers' organizations. Democracy, at least initially, may be restricted within the bounds of the framework of such an agreement.

But the united front is established for the purpose of carrying out an action involving the mobilization, by each participating group, of their thousands and hundreds of thousands of members.

Practical decisions must be made on many levels in the course of preparing for and carrying out the agreed-on joint actions. This can only be done according to the principle of majority rule. Thus, the inexorable logic of the workers' united front is profoundly democratic.

—NAT WEINSTEIN

provide—intentionally or not—a screen behind which U.S. imperialism could compel the Vietnamese to give up at least some of their rights.

The right to negotiate, of course, is certainly a right of the victims—just as hold-up victims may be compelled to "negotiate" away their money for their life. But the witnesses to the crime do not have the right to demand, directly or indirectly, that the victim "negotiate" with the robber over terms for ending the robbery. They are obligated *only* to apply whatever material and moral force they can bring to bear against the robber, and the robber alone.

Starting from the principle upon which our own nation's independence from Britain was won—the right of nations to self-determination—there can be no question as to who was robbing whom in Vietnam.

But the "negotiate" slogan dodges this question, holding both sides at least partially at fault. It is an inherent adaptation to capitalist politicians—so-called "peace candidates"—who hide their pro-war voting record in Congress behind advocacy of "a negotiated end to the war."

The reformist advocates of "peace" candidates within the anti-intervention movement, hard put to justify support to such cynical politicians, palmed it off, more than once, as a "referendum against war."

"Peace" candidates

In the first place, a vote for a capitalist politician has nothing in common with a referendum in which the issue is more or less clearly posed: for or against the war. A vote for an alleged peace candidate is almost always a grotesque parody of such a referendum.

President Lyndon B. Johnson was such a "peace" candidate in the 1964 election. Johnson, right smack in the middle of his election campaign, issued the "Tonkin Gulf" declaration, which served as the pretext for a major escalation of the war in Vietnam. Sections of the antiwar movement—incredible as this may seem today—altered their slogan from "All the way with LBJ!" to "Part of the way with LBJ!"

A second consequence of the spurious "referendum on war" concept is that it entails registering support for the "peace" candidate's other reactionary political stands—always a part of the package.

Such a vote is worthless as a means of registering opposition to the war. But the vote of confidence it gives to these thinly disguised pro-war capitalist politicians lulls

the masses, dissipating effective opposition to the war. The elected "peace" candidate becomes the best instrument for carrying out imperialist war policy.

"Peace" candidate President Johnson's electoral victory in 1964 over "war" candidate Barry Goldwater is a text-book case. Goldwater couldn't have been as effective in taking the country deeper into the Vietnam bloodbath as was Johnson, who did his dirty work under cover of his 1964 election pledge that "American youth would not be sent to die on Asian battlefields."

When chickens elect foxes to guard the chicken coop against wolves—to paraphrase the militant Black leader Malcolm X—the chickens are in deep trouble.

Even the best-intentioned person can get sucked into the logic of this policy. Truth gives way to rationalizations to justify this false policy. And when truth is abandoned, confusion and demoralization set in.

In contrast to the "negotiate" slogan, the demand for immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam ("Out Now!") was educational, clear, and to the point. It raised consciousness by focusing entirely and exclusively on the U.S. government and its criminal war against the Vietnamese people.

Impact of "Out Now!" on GIs

The power of the "Out Now!" slogan to maximize the force of the potential opposition to imperialist intervention goes even deeper.

This slogan, especially in its more popular form, "Bring Our Boys Home Now!," is intimately connected with the deepest-felt interests of the great majority of the American people who don't want their sons to be killed—especially for no good reason!

It strikes a still deeper chord. The vision of millions of Americans marching in the streets demanding that their sons be brought home put the movement squarely behind American youth in uniform and inspired and fostered an oppositional movement by GIs themselves.

It started with GIs symbolically putting flowers in the muzzles of their rifles. Later, GIs began to take part in the demonstrations in U.S. cities. Opposition soon was expressed in increasing refusals by GIs to obey orders to carry out what they saw as suicidal patrols in pursuit of goals they no longer supported.

Knowing that they had the support of millions marching in the streets, the mood

in the ranks of the imperialist army rapidly evolved toward organized open opposition to the war. The specter of future demonstrations by GIs in Vietnam itself, more than anything else, drove home the mortal danger of continued imperialist war to U.S. capitalism.

All of these forms of opposition, first made visible by hundreds of thousands of Americans marching in the streets, were linked together by the strategic slogan of "Out Now!"

The ultra-left strategy

Also-harmful to an effective opposition to the U.S. invasion of Vietnam was the strategy of misguided leftists inherent in their slogan "Victory to the Vietnamese Revolution!"

Had this slogan been adopted by the movement as a whole, it would have reduced the potential size of active opposition to the war from millions to thousands. Only those already convinced supporters of the Vietnamese Revolution—a tiny fraction of the potential antiwar movement—would have responded to such a call to action.

This would have short-circuited and blocked the course of development which passed through a stage of ever-increasing numbers of marchers to a stage that included active opposition to the war among the troops themselves.

The mistake is not an uncommon one. It derives from short-sightedness and impatience. It is the result of failing to accurately gauge the existing level of mass consciousness—a pre-requisite for advancing slogans that make sense to masses of people and are designed to lead them, in action, to higher levels of consciousness.

Single issue vs. multi-issue

Should the political basis for joint action be the single issue of opposition to the war? Or should it include a commitment to support a range of issues as a condition for participation?

A dispute seemed to arise over this question, too. But, at bottom, it flowed from the basic argument over whether the antiwar coalition should be independent of the political parties of the warmakers or whether it should take an electoral form—that is, voting for capitalist "peace" candidates.

Given the lack of any working-class political organization in the United States—even of a conservative Labor Party such as exists in England—any electoral

expression of opposition to the war would have inevitably found its way into support to the Democratic Party wing of the capitalist political establishment.

In any case, a serious proposal for a united front must of necessity be limited to a narrow range of urgent demands. For the united front to include, at the outset, all the political questions which divide the movement—something that is implicit in an electoral campaign—is a contradiction in terms.

Unity in action

Such a limited agreement for joint action does not, of course, require that the participating groups give up their position on any question. Also retained by all is the right to criticize each other—including the right to march separately, under their own banners, and to carry their own slogans.

This united-front principle allowed advocates of "Negotiate Now!" "Out Now!" and "Victory to the NLF" to march together against the U.S. war in Vietnam. Meanwhile the argument continued, events shed light on opposed positions, and minds were changed. "Out Now!" eventually came to be the dominant position in the antiwar movement. The rest is history.

Under this principle, a united front-type antiwar coalition was formed. (This was not a real workers' united front given that the main workers' organizations—the unions—were not involved.)

The mass-action antiwar coalition encouraged progressive, issue-oriented groups to participate in the marches as self-organized contingents. Labor, Black, Latino, women's, gay and lesbian, church and other groups, organized and built their own contingents and carried their own banners and slogans in the marches. All these points of view were further represented by appropriate spokespersons on the platform at the jointly sponsored rallies.

It is important to note, however, that support to these issues was not made a *condition* for participation in the united action. The only condition was opposition to the war.

Democracy in antiwar coalition

Another dispute within the movement against the Vietnam War was over the coalition's organizational structure. Some of the political currents favored a structure composed of one representative from each organization to constitute a leadership body that would be empowered to make policy.

There were basically two problems with this structural form.

First, one delegate per organization meant that the larger and more influential organizations would have the same voting weight as an "organization" with half a dozen members. (Experience showed, too, that where this method was put into effect, some political groups had an inordinate number of its supporters claiming to represent different "organizations.")

Second, in sharp contrast to the traditional united front of mass workers' organizations, all the groups together could not bring out more than a small fraction of the action's organizers and participants.

The delegated structure provided for virtually no representation for the main force of foot-soldiers, among which students were the most numerous. It was they who printed the leaflets, distributed them, made the banners and posters, and otherwise did the nitty-gritty work of building the antiwar actions.

Given this real situation—particularly the absence of the unions from the movement—the best and most democratic organizational structure was based simply on the rule of one person, one vote. This structure was designed to let the people who were crucial for carrying out a successful action make the decisions. This policy facilitated the greatest possible activism directed toward building the largest possible demonstrations.

Most important, it provided the force for keeping the antiwar coalition pointed in the right political direction.

The key role of students

Because the labor bureaucracy enjoyed virtually exclusive domination over the unions, they were able to chain the class organizations of the workers to the pro-war policy of the capitalist government. This meant that mass worker participation was not present to keep a united coalition against the Vietnam War on the healthy tracks of class interests.

The force that played this vital role was the largely working-class youth, particularly the student movement. Young people, who were ordained to be among the first victims of Washington's imperialist war and slated to be drafted to kill and be killed in Vietnam, had a vital stake in building a movement that could end the war.

Students formed ad-hoc groups everywhere, and they strained for the widest participation in the antiwar struggle. They

also listened with the greatest attentiveness to the debates over antiwar policy. Also most acutely interested in an effective policy were the parents and others whose loved ones stood in danger of losing life or limb.

This largely working-class opposition to the war grew exponentially as more and more youth were sent to Vietnam and shipped home in body bags.

As the depth of opposition to the war visibly grew, increasing numbers of rank-and-file trade unionists and an important sprinkling of union leaders were won over to demand the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam. It was their sons who were least able to finagle exemptions from the draft, or, when drafted, to be assigned safe posts far from the battlefields.

Through this medium—the students and others directly threatened by the war—the class interests of workers made themselves felt in the antiwar coalition decision-making process. In the long run, of course, there is no substitute for the direct involvement of the organized workers.

Workers as a social class gain nothing from imperialist wars. Only the capitalists gain. Their wars are always a profit bonanza for the exploiting class, while workers are compelled to make sacrifices.

Guns or butter?

Despite capitalist promises about "building the Great Society" and "fighting a war against poverty" (both slogans cynically put out by the Johnson administration), resistance to the war steadily increased among workers at home.

Economic hardship would have accelerated this resistance. For this reason, the war strategy of American capitalism had to be based initially on a policy of "guns and butter."

Through deficit financing, full payment for the costs of the war was being temporarily postponed. Wage standards were maintained and even increased for many in the stronger unions. But this could not be maintained indefinitely. Either wages or profits would have to be diverted to pay for the enormous and steadily growing costs of the war.

The capitalist economy became seriously destabilized, taking the form of a worldwide crisis of confidence in the dollar. Forced by the monetary crisis to take measures to pay for the enormous war costs, an attack on workers' living standards and their unions was signaled in 1971 by President Nixon's decree of a "wage-price freeze."

Like all such "freezes," wages, but not prices (for the most part), were restrained by government edict.

This move to make the workers begin paying for the war had profound potential consequences, ultimately threatening to bring the heavy battalions of the working class, despite the bureaucracy, into the struggle. Had the U.S. capitalist government not withdrawn from Vietnam, its crisis could have grown to near-revolutionary proportions.

But the development of mass consciousness was only slowed down. It didn't stop with the end of the war. It continues to evolve, under the impact of the deepening assault on workers' living standards and their unions.

U.S. war in Central America

The experience of the Vietnam War laid the basis for a more rapid development of an effective antiwar movement in response to the imperialist intervention against the Nicaraguan and Central American revolution.

Late in 1984, sentiment grew for a mass action to show opposition to deepening intervention in Central America by the U.S. government. The same kinds of organizations that sponsored the anti-Vietnam War movement again took initiatives leading to a national action in the spring of 1985.

But there was a big change from the Vietnam War years. The assault on workers' living standards and their unions had been under way since Nixon's 1971 wage freeze. The anti-labor offensive was accelerated almost at the same time that the revolution in Nicaragua exploded.

For the first time, with the unions under direct assault by the capitalists, top trade-union officials felt compelled to take their distance from their previous wholesale endorsement of the government's foreign policy.

In San Francisco, as elsewhere, there was an evolution of consciousness coming from both the Vietnam experience and the sharpening class struggle.

Officials from all six AFL-CIO Central Labor Councils in the San Francisco Bay Area joined in forming the Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice, which sponsored the April 20, 1985, San Francisco protest march and rally around four themes: No U.S. Intervention in Central America; End U.S. Support for South African Apartheid; Freeze and Reverse the Nuclear Arms Race; Jobs and Justice, not War.

This presented a challenge for the antiwar movement to develop new structures, slogans, and activities aimed at involving the unions and all organizations of the oppressed sectors of society.

The commitment of the labor movement to join the antiwar movement was unprecedented. The unions provided office space, donated thousands of dollars, published articles in union newspapers, and took on other important coalition responsibilities.

It was in the interest of the antiwar movement to increase this participation and to enhance the decision-making role of the unions in the coalition.

But while this commitment by the labor movement pointed toward the possibility of a true workers' united front, the coalition had not yet—and still hasn't—become that. The labor officials were willing to become active in the antiwar coalition, but they were unable or unwilling to bring more than a few of their members to the coalition's general meetings.

The lack of direct rank-and-file involvement, moreover, is a reflection of the fact that workers remain on the defensive as a result of the class-collaborationist policies of the union bureaucrats. The labor movement, which developed into a powerful force in the great battles of the 1930s and '40s, was gradually demobilized by the union misleadership—and remains so to this day.

Absent from the new anti-intervention movement were the legions of student activists and the friends and relatives of the GIs, who had played a crucial role in resolving the debates over policy in the Vietnam coalitions.

This presented a structural problem for this coalition different from that in the days of the Vietnam War. It was necessary to accommodate the needs of democratic participation in this new situation.

In the absence of massive numbers of students or fresh forces from the unions, the antiwar coalition meetings could not consistently attract large numbers of antiwar activists.

Small coalition meetings could easily be dominated by tiny sectarian political currents seeking to impose their own political platform on the coalition—with no concern for the consequences of their actions.

At one small meeting of the San Francisco coalition, for example, a proposal was narrowly approved which threatened to drive out the representatives of the labor movement.

The meeting voted to recommend including representatives from the Salvadoran FDR/FMLN and from the Nicaraguan FSLN as speakers at the San Francisco rally. With the agreement of the representative of the Salvadoran FDR/FMLN, the coalition coordinating committee wisely rejected the proposal.

There was a general recognition that nothing must be done to make it more difficult for the trade-union officials to take their first steps in aligning with the antiwar movement. These officials were vulnerable to "red-baiting" charges by the top AFL-CIO bureaucracy.

The basis of labor's participation in the antiwar movement was the right of the Central American people to self-determination—not support for the revolutionary movements in those countries. The six central labor councils threatened to withdraw from the coalition if a representative of the revolutionary movement from El Salvador was introduced at the rally in his official capacity.

Willing to accommodate the valid concerns that had been raised, the coalition leadership voted instead to invite the representative of the Salvadoran FDR/FMLN to speak—but in his role as an exile trade unionist whose name is on the death list.

This flexible tactical approach satisfied the overwhelming majority of the San Francisco coalition. By making this kind of decision, the coalition was able to retain its unprecedented labor and community support and build a broad mass action.

The Mobilization for Peace, Jobs, and Justice succeeded in bringing out 50,000 people on April 20, 1985. This extremely successful action contributed to the objective process of changing consciousness in workers' ranks that will ultimately transform the unions into instruments for class struggle.

April 25, 1987

The current planned actions for April 25, 1987, will be on a national scale. Events like the contragate scandal will no doubt contribute to make these the biggest demonstrations yet against U.S. intervention in Central America and U.S. support to apartheid in South Africa.

The endorsement of this demonstration by 24 international union presidents is historic. It reflects pressures from the rank and file against the war and austerity policies of the government and the necessity for unions to search for allies against the employers' anti-labor offensive.

The labor bureaucracy has been responsible for the decades-long series of setbacks to the powerful American labor movement. The top labor officialdom has traditionally put the interests of American capitalism above those of its members.

But the importance of current efforts to reestablish the working-class tradition of united action against a common enemy cannot be overestimated. It is part and parcel of the education of workers, who will be impelled to overcome division in their ranks in the big labor-capital confrontations looming on the horizon.

So far the U.S. capitalist class still proceeds with great caution against the

workers, just as they must proceed carefully to carry out their imperialist agenda. They grudgingly show their great respect for the explosive power of American workers by testing the ground carefully at each step of their anti-labor offensive.

But the developing world capitalist economic crisis forces the American ruling class to pursue their anti-working class agenda at home and abroad with ever-greater ferocity and intensity. In this context, an upsurge in labor combativity can be triggered at any time. A massive outpouring of people against the outrageous disregard of legality and public opposition to U.S. foreign policy revealed

by the contragate scandal will help ripen political consciousness.

Whatever the course of events, one thing is certain: Big struggles are not far down the road. The workers' united front will be an important tool for overcoming the obstacle of bureaucratic misleadership.

The upcoming antiwar mass actions in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, made possible by an intelligent application of the united-front tactic, provide another lesson for workers in the coming struggle for political power against capitalist injustice. ■

(MALAYSIA, *Continued from page 6*)

saying that the period of liberalism is over. In fact, the recent arrests and associated government moves have substantially wiped out most of the vital institutions of democracy.

The arrests themselves were carried out under Section 73 (1) of the Internal Security Act, which enables any police officer to detain anyone for a period of 60 days. The ISA, introduced in 1960, was "initially intended to combat the remaining vestiges of communist insurgency at the end of 12 years of emergency rule."³ It has since been used to detain and intimidate student demonstrators, journalists, opposition politicians, and labor leaders. Detainees held under the act are put in solitary confinement in harsh prison conditions and interrogated for several hours continuously. After the 60-day period the home minister, who in this case is also the prime minister, can decide whether to sign an order detaining the person for an initial 2-year period or to release him or her. The 2-year period can be indefinitely renewed; some individuals have been detained without trial for fifteen years. The Malaysian judiciary, which itself is now undergoing a political shake-up, refuses to intervene, feeling "its hands [are] tied in matters on which the executive has stamped the word 'security.'"⁴

Protests from Within Malaysia and Internationally

Despite the atmosphere of extreme tension and fear created by the recent crackdown, several individuals and groups within Malaysia continue to publicly protest against the detentions. These include Malaysia's first prime minister and "father

of independence," Tunku Abdul Rahman, and the Bar Council to which all the country's lawyers belong, both of which have raised serious questions about the future of parliamentary democracy in Malaysia.

Social organizations and individuals have joined together to form an ad-hoc ISA Support Group. This group provides assistance to the detainees and their families, initiates campaigns seeking release of those detained, and also disputes the government's assertion that the arrests were needed to prevent racial riots.

Significant international protests have also been mounted. These include statements and campaigns by Amnesty International, the International Commission of Jurists, the Regional Commission on Human Rights in Asia, and eight members of the European Parliament.

When speaking with members of the Werkgroep Maleisie/Singapore in the Netherlands shortly after the arrests, they emphasized to me the importance of organizing protests from the United States. Readers of the *Bulletin IDOM* are therefore strongly urged to send messages, requesting the immediate release of *all* detainees, to: Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the Minister of Home Affairs, Jalan Dato Onn, Kuala Lumpur 50480, Malaysia. (TELEX: MA33099 PERMA).

NOTES

1. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Jan. 7 1988, p. 13.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

THE BAUHAUS: ART AS POLITICS

by Jack Bresee

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage laborers.

The Communist Manifesto

Art, explain bourgeois intellectuals and critics, must be for art's sake. Art must be pure, removed from a *purpose* such as politics. They will sometimes cite the Stalinist atrocity of "socialist realism," and conclude that if art is political it somehow means "philistine," and "caricatured." The argument follows logically: if art is nonpolitical, "pure," removed from reality, capable of being appreciated only by rich art collectors, critics, and academics, then it is *real art*.

This, however, is self-serving hype by the art establishment, which makes a good deal of money by generating a mystique around itself. There is in fact another alternative, a space for art between the two extremes of a super-bourgeoisified art world elevating itself above society on the one hand, and an artless "proletcult" on the other. A prime example is the little-known artistic flowering in the Soviet Union before the heavy hand of the bureaucracy crushed it in the late 1920s. In this article we will examine another example, one that arose around the same time as the truly revolutionary phase in Russia but in a far different political and social context—the Bauhaus.

The Bauhaus was founded in Weimar, Germany, in 1919. It later was moved to Dessau and then to Berlin where, in April 1933, it was closed by the Nazis—as their first act in the cultural sphere after taking power in order to rid Germany of every trace of "decadent" and "Bolshevist" art.

The student body of the Bauhaus, however, more closely resembled the "new left" of the '60s and '70s than the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. True, some left-wing students held meetings and distributed pamphlets with application forms for membership in the Communist Party attached. Perhaps ten to fifteen percent of the students had such sympathies, but this was a smaller proportion than in the German population as a whole during that time. Mostly they created disturbances in the school cafeteria, hardly the kind of activity which posed a threat to the German government—either before or after the Nazis came to power. One Communist publication, *AIZ*, (*Workers' Illustrated Newspaper*) wrote that "a revolutionary Bauhaus was an illusion in a capitalist state."

Also contributing to the image of the Bauhaus as somehow connected to the Bolsheviks was the appointment of Hannes Meyer, a Swiss-born Stalinist, as its director in 1928. Meyer's ultraleft statements and overt affection for Stalin's "reforms" made him and the Bauhaus a constant target. Meyer was a sincere and capable artist, who helped design and build an experimental housing project in the Torten district of Dessau (1926–28) using standardized components such as precast concrete walls—a revolutionary approach in 1926.

Meyer was forced out of the school in 1930. He wrote, "I am going to the USSR in order to work where a truly proletarian culture is being forged, where socialism is coming into being, where that society already exists for which we here under capitalism have been fighting." However, after six years' experience with Stalin's rule, he returned to Switzerland.

Walter Gropius—Founder of the Bauhaus

Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus, was born in 1883. He qualified as an architect after only five semesters of study, and his early career was brilliant. He designed factories and office buildings of glass and steel, decades before this became a standard architectural norm.

His architectural efforts were interrupted by World War I in which he served as a cavalry officer and was badly wounded. The war had an enormous impact on him, and he arrived in Weimar at its conclusion with a strong political commitment. Like "every thinking person" he had come to understand "the necessity for an intellectual change of front." "Capitalism and power politics have made our species creatively dull and a broad mass of bourgeois philistines are suffocating living art. The intellectual bourgeois . . . has demonstrated his inability to support a German culture." Later he condemned "the dangerous warship of might and the machine which led us over the spiritual to the economic abyss."

Gropius hoped for a "nonpolitical" school of art, but this would prove impossible. By working to create an art bound up with the life of the common citizen, accessible to the ordinary person, he was to make an artistic statement with the most profound political consequences.

The aims of Gropius and the Bauhaus's founders were embraced in three general goals:

- Rescue all the arts from isolation and reentwine their functions.
- Elevate the status of the crafts to a position similar to that held by the arts.

● Create constant contact between leading artists, craftspeople, and the general public, so that the alienation of the arts could be replaced by a bond between the creators and the community they served.

There were secondary goals too: The abolition of division between teacher and student (there was no faculty *per se*), the desire to equalize incomes, to combat sexism by incorporating female artists and craftspeople, to promote democracy through giving an equal vote to all students in deciding the affairs of the school, etc.

Some of these objectives were obviously utopian (such as attempting to equalize living situations for all within bourgeois society) but they were sincere and honest, even revolutionary goals. The philosophical approach embodied in the Bauhaus's artistic aspirations were extremely subversive. *The idea was for the average person to live in a civilized environment which would serve to enrich rather than debase their lives.* Up to that time the European mind had conceived of art purely as the domain of the rich, the landed, the aristocrats. No more. Art was now to become a concern for everyone.

The Bauhaus had a major impact on the artistic world of its time. Perhaps even more striking was its effect on the day-to-day environment in which we live. Many, if not most, items in our homes—both utilitarian and decorative, from furniture to wall coverings—owe their design to the approach of the Bauhaus. Tubular steel chairs, materials which do not hide nor disguise themselves, and "form that follows function" are all ideas originating in the Bauhaus.

Architecture's "International Style" (so designated because of its parallel development in so many different countries) also had its beginnings there, and was actually given a boost by the closing of the Bauhaus. Rather than stamping out the ideas of the school, the Nazis helped to spread them worldwide with the subsequent emigration of artists who had trained and worked there—first to Britain and the U.S.A., and later to many other parts of the world. The tower of glass and steel rising above the street is a commonplace now in cities from Hong Kong to New York, in Europe and Africa. Artists from the Bauhaus like Kandinsky, Klee, Abers produced an effect on the art world like a thunderclap.

Art and Socialism

The advocacy of genuine artistic freedom and a belief in the artistic equality of all was the real crime for which the Bauhaus was closed. The Nazis had no ideological commitment to "art for art's sake," unlike the liberal bourgeoisie, but they could not tolerate free artistic expression (even to the extent this is allowed in bourgeois democracy) any more than they could tolerate free expression in other fields of human endeavor. They wanted an art which would serve *them* politically—a "fascist realism" identical in virtually all respects to the "socialist realism" of Stalin, save the face

and political perspectives of the dictator. Their concept of artistic function differed from the liberal bourgeois approach only in the *form* through which it imposed its artistic dictatorship.

Lenin explained the limitations of "democratic" art in the following way: "We must say to you bourgeois individualist that your talk about absolute freedom is sheer hypocrisy. There can be no real and effective 'freedom' in a society based on the power of money, in a society in which the masses of working people live in poverty and the handful of rich live like parasites. Are you free in relation to your bourgeois publisher, Mr. Writer, in relation to your bourgeois public? . . . One cannot live in a society and be free from society. The freedom of the bourgeois writer, artist, or actress is simply masked (or hypocritically masked) dependence on the money-bag, on corruption, on prostitution."

Trotsky noted that arguments over pure art and art with an obvious point of view "do not become us. Materialist dialectics are above this; from the point of view of an objective historical process, art is always a social servant and historically utilitarian. . . . And it does this quite independently of whether it appears in a given case under the flag of a 'pure' or of a frankly tendentious art."

The Nazis and the liberal bourgeois have different goals, but both use art to advance them. Hitler wanted an art that would help secure his political well-being. Bourgeois democracy requires an art that will advance its financial well-being and reinforce the social position of the ruling classes—who are the only ones who can afford to subsidize or own those objects or projects which are defined as "true art." As Marx explained: "Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that an object is only *ours* when we have it—when it exists for us as capital, or when it is directly possessed, eaten, drunk, worn, inhabited, etc."

A revolutionary socialist perspective is qualitatively different. The Bauhaus, with its effort to provide aesthetic substance and quality for the common people, gave us a hint of what will be possible in the future.

The Bauhaus itself was severely limited by, and ultimately fell victim to, the bourgeois reality in which it existed. But examining its perspectives can help us to imagine what will be possible when society ultimately breaks the bonds of private property in art as well as in the means of production. No longer will the creative process depend on the ability of artists to gain a material reward for their work. In fact, it isn't utopian to imagine a society in which the very division between "artist" and "non-artist" ceases to exist. When there is a sufficient abundance of material resources and of time, aesthetic and artistic objectives can become an inherent part of *every* aspect of human existence and of every phase of the productive process, pursued by all individuals to the extent of their desires and abilities. This, in the final analysis, was the vision of the Bauhaus. ■

NOTEBOOKS FOR THE GRANDCHILDREN

by Mikhail Baitalsky

17. My First Arrest

I have been arrested three times in my life: twice in May, once in April. This surprising coincidence taught me to be suspicious of the spring thaw.

The first time, an operative with an order interrupted my sleep on May 5, 1929. He roused me at dawn, in the apartment of a good friend in the Donbass. He clearly overdid it. The subsequent times, they did not point a pistol at me and the whole scene occurred with less fanfare.

"Take your gun away," I said. "It's up against my nose."

Before ending up in the Donbass, I spent some time in Moscow. But I was not there as an anti-Soviet courier; no one had sent me on a mission. I went on my own. Anyway, there was nothing to do. Grisha was ashamed to try and stop me. "I think I'll go see Borya Gorbatov, Maryusa, and Nina—" I'll not give her last name; let's call her Nina Lasova. She was an old Komsomol member, loved and respected by all of us Artemovsk kids. She was studying at an institution of higher learning in Moscow, specializing in chemistry.

Boris welcomed me with unusual warmth and I stayed with him for a time. He was writing a new work about Artemovsk and Artemovshchina. It turned out to be good, truthful, if perhaps less shrill than references to Artemovshchina in party and trade union resolutions.¹ However, the resolutions are printed in the periodical press and in two or three years can be forgotten, while penetrating novels do not die so soon. But neither Boris, when he was writing his novel, nor I, when I almost nightly listened with satisfaction to the new pages he had written, took that into account. Boris loved to read his works in progress to friends and I turned out to be the first person to hear many chapters of the novel.

Rafael had already been sent into exile but Maryusa had not yet been arrested. She was living in a boarding house with some mutual friends of ours.

In Moscow, the snow was thawing, the sun played on the windows of the Christ the Savior Church, which had not yet been demolished, and was reflected in the puddles at our feet. We sat on a bench not far from the church. Maryusa knew well that she would be arrested, if not today, then tomorrow. The need for conspiracy oppressed her. Who were we hiding from? Were we really the enemies of the power we ourselves had created?

Maryusa was able to be happy about life, and the day, by surprising coincidence, was like her mood—a bright, clear spring day.

In 1977, a manuscript totaling hundreds of pages arrived in this country from the Soviet Union—the memoirs of Mikhail Baitalsky, who was in his middle 70s at the time and living in Moscow. His work consists of a series of nine "notebooks" which describe his life as a Ukrainian Jewish revolutionary militant. He narrates how, as a teenager inspired by the October revolution, he joined the Communist Youth, tells about his participation in the Red Army during the Civil War years that followed 1917, his disenchantment with the developing bureaucracy under Stalin, and his subsequent experiences in Stalin's prison camps.

To the very end of his life Baitalsky remained devoted to the ideals of the October revolution. He says that he is writing "for the grandchildren" so that they can know the truth of the revolution's early years.

The first installment and an introduction by the translator, Marilyn Vogt-Downey, appeared in Bulletin IDOM No. 36, December 1986.

And on the next two days we again sat on that same bench. We spoke of serious things and of trivialities, and so carefree, so open was Maryusa's laughter that passersby without doubt thought: "Here is a happy young woman!" Or young couple. I was also cheerful; we didn't take the arrests and exiles very seriously. It had not yet gone beyond that, and we in our nobly revolutionary naivete could simply not imagine that for disagreeing with Stalin you could be killed.

Maryusa tried to spend less time at the comrades' boarding house; if they were going to arrest her, let it not be there. She did not want to put innocent people in an awkward position. At that time, I should say, my brother was arrested in Moscow right on the street. They came up and said in a low voice: "Follow me!"

"It would be interesting if I tried to continue on my way," Maryusa laughed. "What would they do? Drag me by the arm?"

One spring day, Maryusa did not come home. She went on her way. The boarding house where she was living was under surveillance.

The fact that in 1929 surveillance agents followed us is somehow understandable: They had already rightly or wrongly declared to the whole world that we were enemies of Soviet power. But in 1927, two years before this? The black coats stood under the windows of several comrades even then.

Stalin had long ago begun a preventive war against his opponents, in good time having made close surveillance one of the methods of ideological struggle.

After living in Moscow for a while longer, I returned to Kharkov and went immediately to the Donbass, this time with an assignment and a package of anti-Soviet—as they were called for a quarter of a century—leaflets, among which, of course, was the "leaflet" written by Lenin for the party congress.

"And don't you have a weapon under your pillow?" the operative asked, evidently seriously believing he had been sent to arrest a bandit who was preparing a counterrevolutionary overturn.

I refused to give testimony to the Artemovsk GPU investigator. He was glad. He had not succeeded in mastering the newly devised methods of inner-party ideological discussion. The best thing to do, he had decided, was to send the arrested people to Kharkov and let the Kharkov police investigate the matter as they pleased.

In Kharkov I fell into the hands of a fellow villager from Ananiv, with whom I had been in the Nedoluzhenko detachment. I refused to give testimony to him also, explaining that the punitive organs of the state had no business in inner-party disagreements. The GPU's involvement in the struggle against the opposition was illegal and I would not give him testimony. But I and my fellow villager—who was also called Misha—conversed in a comradely and completely frank manner. I was not afraid he would use my words to concoct a case against me. That was not done then.

"Trotsky is betraying you," he said, "you and simpletons like you. Do you think he is serious about developing ideas on the impossibility of building socialism in one country?"

"And Stalin is not betraying you?" I answered, "you and others like you? What ideas does Stalin care about? Have you found in Lenin's writings even one quotation that would confirm your theory, if not directly then even indirectly, have you?"

"We have everything that is necessary to build socialism," he said. And he made his commentaries like my rabbi at the *cheder* [religious school] made his commentaries about the Talmud—whirling a long finger in the air.

"Tell me the truth, Misha. Have you read the testament? Is it possible that you don't see what kind of a figure Stalin is?"

"I read it, I read it. Everything that's there, we know." (Misha didn't specify who he meant by "we.") "Stalin is true to Lenin. He swore he would be, don't you remember? And at the congress, he promised to keep himself in check, did you know that, Comrade Trotskyist?"

We talked for a long time, but there is no remembering everything. My namesake wanted desperately to change my mind. He had little success. It is strange to try to combine in the same hands methods of persuasion and compulsion.

Only the father who never laid a hand on his child can convince that child of something. But if you have beaten your son even once, how could you be sure that in the future he will be affected by

his father's arguments and not the thought of his father's beatings? Where is the line between convincing and compelling if the former has been reinforced by the threat to apply the latter? Does an adult in such a case react any differently than a child?

Therefore I suggest that as long as the fear exists that having views different from those generally accepted can mean if not criminal punishment then at least social ostracism, any apparent unity of views is not an ideological but a nonideological unity.

But what kind of views are we talking about? In a dynamic and developing society, there can only be a general commitment toward a basic goal, but there will be divergent opinions as to how to get there. One such basic goal is, unquestionably, the idea of Soviet power. But my namesake and I did not argue about this! He proceeded from the correct assumption that I was no less devoted to Soviet power than he was. It was merely that he was convinced that I was defending it incorrectly.

My namesake kept no record of our conversation; he called a guard and had me assigned to a cell. Refusal to give testimony was not then considered an additional crime.

The warden had hardly opened the door of the cell when I fell into the embrace of several who had been arrested like me. We could talk or write about anything we wanted, we were given ink and paper, of which later there was not a trace.

The Ukrainian GPU's political prison, as it appeared to me then, was not big. On walking around, I saw the windows of all the cells, and there were not so many. At that time we were not particularly frightened by being followed or by the threat of arrest, or by arrest itself. Apparently, there is a certain tradition of revolutionary fearlessness and contempt for arrest.

The following incident happened to one of my comrades. He arranged a small evening party on the occasion of some family event. It was not a Trotskyist assemblage, to use the usual newspaper terminology (we have meetings, "they" have assemblages, just as we have intelligence officers while "they" have spies). Some non-Trotskyists came as well. But an "overcoat" appeared by the gate. Slightly drunk, one of the lads took a sandwich and a glass of wine and set off to treat the intelligence officer. "Poor devil, we're warm in here and what a wind he's standing in! Let him warm up!"

We had scoffed at Stalin's methods in the same thoughtless way as we scoffed at his ideas. While talking about Thermidor, however, we never imagined the guillotine in action.² We imagined that nothing worse than a term of exile would come of the matter: Oppositionists began to be exiled in 1927, but not to faraway places—to Russian cities like Kaluga, Astrakhan, Kazan. Trotsky was sent to Alma-Ata, and this was considered harsh.

In Moscow, in Butyrka, comrades told me that by 1929 people were imprisoned in a punishment cell located in Pugachev Tower. (There is such a tower in Butyrka in which Yemelyan Pugachev was held.)³

It turned out that it was in the Pugachev Tower that Maryusa was held, most likely soon after she and I spent so many good hours by the Christ the Savior Church. She could not have been an obedient inmate. And she certainly spent more time in the punishment cell than in the regular cell. Trotskyists imprisoned during those years in Butyrka often arranged different types of disruptions: they banged on the cell doors, shouted slogans, exchanged remarks from the windows. (I found such exchanges from the windows with those who were being led out for a walk from another cell occurring even as late as the spring of 1936. They put an end to this by hanging shades on the windows.)

In 1929, they still sang the "Internationale" throughout the prison. They would stand by the windows and sing. They usually sang in response to some severe measure or the beating of one of the comrades. In Pugachev Tower, Maryusa was the chorus director. I was told this by a comrade who was in a nearby cell.

But in the Kharkov political prison during those very months, we were given much more liberal treatment. It could be that the patterns established by the central organs had not yet made their way to the periphery.

Two or three weeks passed and I was suddenly summoned into the corridor. There waiting for me was Mama. Yeva, having learned of my arrest from one of my friends, sent a telegram to her and she came, just as she had another time come to Ananov, to look for my body on the field of battle—but this time it was an ideological battle. She wanted to save me from prison and she asked me to repudiate my mistakes. But what do you know about them, Mama? She knows—Yeva has explained everything to her.

Soon the newspapers published the statement of Smilga and Preobrazhensky, prominent participants in the Opposition.⁴ They acknowledged their mistakes and repudiated them, placing party unity above all else. Vitya Gorelov decided to endorse their statement, along with many other comrades. He went to see my namesake-investigator and took me out on bail, so that we could conduct our conversations at home and not in a prison environment. At that time, this was allowed. They trusted us not to be cheats. I signed a simple paper pledging to return to prison in three days and they, in a gentlemanly manner, opened the door of the cell. By then, Mama had already left.

For three days, Vitya and I talked, almost without sleeping, at his home.

Views do not change at a moment's notice; they are the product of deliberations. Intellectual integrity demands that one not betray opinions which one has developed after studying the facts. But by the same token, intellectual integrity dictates that when new facts emerge, you are obligated not to turn your back on them, even if they clearly threaten to demolish your former, long-established opinion.

The firm belief that only collective intelligence based on the party's political experience can

guide the party's activities—this belief flows from the very essence of the type of party in which a fuhrer has no place. Only majority opinion rules. And this collective opinion, which I did not know yesterday, before the voting, and learned only today, in many instances constitutes the new fact which I have no right to turn my back on. Precisely the majority opinion can outweigh all the facts known to me up until that time, which had supported my views to the present day. However, it is hardly possible to reorganize one's way of thinking in one sitting. And is it required that this be done? Isn't submission to party discipline enough, and submission in actions, without immediate submission in one's opinions? If the opinion of the majority, based on its political experience, is in fact closer to objective truth than yours was, then it follows logically that you yourself know this and foresee that further practice will justify the line of the majority and you yourself sooner or later will go wholeheartedly along the common road. For the good of the party, I suppress my internal, psychologically natural resistance, mentally foreseeing that it will later disappear on its own under the influence of the logic of events.

Party unity does not mean opinions are constantly identical, which is impossible among thinking people in a voluntary, creative association. It means a conscious and honest submission to the decisions of the majority—but without self-abasement. Mandatory confession transforms a party matter into a religious ceremony, into the Muslims' self-flagellation.

The oppositionists who confessed were later reproached thousands of times for not having sincerely repented. Within the terminology itself there is a deliberate mixing of concepts: repentance or confession? Internal repentance for one's mistakes is sincere or it is not repentance at all. External repentance when people beat their breasts and humbly implore can be sincere only to a religious fanatic who confesses due to the premise that man is by nature sinful—even when trying to be holy, he can sin unintentionally. But such thinking is alien to a communist; and forcing communists to confess publicly is forcing them to be hypocrites.

We imagined this finished the matter. We signed a statement endorse, if you will, the letter of Smilga and Preobrazhensky, and that's enough. But this turned out to be enough only to keep you out of prison for seven years.

I won't go into the legality of my first arrest. But once they let me go it meant they thereby promised not to imprison me as long as I kept my word. And I never went back on my word. All the artful reports of later years were patently false, and not one of them contained any proof that I had even by one iota gone back on my word.

Letting me go, my namesake gave me a friendly handshake. He undoubtedly felt relieved, like the Artemovsk investigator who, not knowing how to interrogate a Trotskyist, had sent me to Kharkov.

It took many years to select and train investigators until they selected the type that ques-

tioned the woman in the office opposite Cell No. 9 of Butyrka prison [see *Bulletin IDOM*, December 1987].

I would not call my feelings at that time unique. A piece of the past was cut out of me. The wound could not heal quickly. It has not healed to this day, as I now see. I went to see Vitya, and there was nothing even to talk about. Grisha went to the Donbass. There was nothing but depression and emptiness.

Maybe I needed a change of scene. And besides, it was time to look for work. At the *Kharkov Proletariat* I learned that our editor Tsybin had been reassigned to Astrakhan, and Savva also went with him. I wrote a letter to Astrakhan and soon received a telegram with an invitation. Although relations with Yeva had been somewhat reestablished, she did not hold me back, and promised to come along with the children a little later. But we decided to go away first, taking advantage of Yeva's vacation time, to Chernovo. My brother and two sisters had become adults; only the youngest, Polya, was still considered a child. She was fifteen, I had not seen her in a long time, and I loved her very much. Mama invited us to come and visit.

Like a tomboy, Polya jumped up to my chest when I appeared at the door of my parents' home. She answered me with love.

My older sister, Raya, had married a childhood friend of mine, from whom I had been almost inseparable until I was seventeen. Persevering and ambitious, Iosa used to boss me around when we were

kids. Now he was a party member, a supporter of the general line, and an opponent of the opposition. It seemed as though he was looking at me in an ironic way.

Mama asked: "What has happened between you?"

"Nothing special, Mama. A black cat with long whiskers has run between us." The party variant of the usual story.

Nothing could add warmth to the parting scene between these childhood friends. We shook hands but did not embrace. And we never met again. He perished in 1937. The broom began to work and it swept him away too. . . .

But Polya, Polya! Another bloody broom swept her away. That was also the last time I saw her. We kissed in parting. She was the only one in my family who was not embarrassed by kissing. Mama had taught her daughters not to show their real feelings in a physical way.

To die in bed, such luck did not come easily to our kind even two hundred or five hundred years ago. Polya perished at the hands of Hitler's police in the Donbass, where she had gone after getting married. Her husband went to the front and she remained in Kramatorsk. Not many Jews lived there. They were not killed separately from the others in mobile gas chambers. They were not buried by the thousands in Baby Yars. . . . In the city of Kramatorsk stands one common monument to the victims of fascism. The Pioneers bring flowers to it. ■

[Next month: *The Year of Successes in Astrakhan*]

NOTES

1. Artemovshchina was a generic term for corruption and dissipation of local officials, nepotism, and favoritism in their appointments, and suppression of workers' democracy as the bureaucratization of the apparatus consolidated itself in the mid-twenties. Because a prominent scandal in Artemovsk in the Donbass in Ukraine received national exposure, such corruption for a time took the town's name. Baitalsky wrote firsthand accounts of this (see *Bulletin IDOM*, October 1987).

2. Thermidor 1794 was the month in the new French calendar when the revolutionary Jacobins were overthrown by a reactionary wing of the revolution that did not go so far, however, as to restore the feudal regime. Trotsky and his fellow-Oppositionists used the term as a historical analogy to designate the seizure of power by the conservative Stalinist bureaucracy within the framework of nationalized property relations (see "The Workers' State, Thermidor and Bonapartism," in *Writings of Leon Trotsky [1934-35]*).

3. Yemelyan Pugachev (d. 1775) was an illiterate Cossack who led a peasant rebellion in 1773-75 and claimed to be the rightful tsar. His followers—Cossacks, peasants, serfs, and others who had been increasingly exploited over the course of centuries—formed a formidable revolutionary movement that threatened Catherine II's war on Turkey. He was eventually betrayed, brought to Moscow, and beheaded. His rebellion resulted in Catherine's administrative reforms, which reinforced the institution of serfdom and the privileges of the landowners.

4. Despite the arrests and banishments, the ranks of the Opposition remained firm and even grew somewhat during 1928. Stalin worked to reverse this trend with a "left turn," beginning in 1928, which was rationalized by numerous former Left Oppositionists as Stalin's acceptance of the Left Oppositionist program. On July 10, 1929, Karl Radek, Yevgeny Preobrazhensky, and Ivan Smilga signed a capitulatory statement that was endorsed by 400 other oppositionists in the pages of *Pravda*.

A WORLD MOVEMENT OF DEPTH AND SUBSTANCE

International Marxist Review, Vol. 2, No. 4, Winter 1987. Press-Edition-Communications, Paris, 135 pages, \$5.00.

Reviewed by Steve Bloom

The latest issue of *International Marxist Review*, English-language theoretical magazine of the Fourth International, consists mostly of reports and resolutions discussed at the 1987 meeting of the FI's International Executive Committee. It reveals something important about the FI today. This is not an organization satisfied with repeating old ideas, but a living world movement trying to come to grips with what is happening around us, apply a Marxist method of analysis, and generate ideas with some depth and substance. It is also an organization with room for debate, discussion, and disagreement. These are all primary prerequisites for building a world party which can help advance the cause of independent working class politics, and ultimately resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership on a global scale.

Creative Marxist Analysis

Best demonstrating the creative and thoughtful capacity of the FI today is the article, "Feminism to the Tune of the Cumbia, Corrida, Tango, Cueca, Samba . . .," by Heather Dashner, a leader of the Mexican Revolutionary Workers Party. It will be of special interest to feminists in the advanced industrial countries because of its discussion of some of the unique characteristics and concerns of the women's movement in the less-developed countries—in this case Latin America—and its differences from the movement in the imperialist centers. The ability of the Fourth International's leadership to prepare a document of this kind demonstrates the genuine involvement of its sections in the class struggle in this part of the world. Dashner's analysis comes out of real experience, and applies the Marxist method in a way which creates a fresh analysis, and helps to generalize useful lessons.

Another article which clearly reveals the creative and analytical power of Marxism is "The Significance of Gorbachev," by Ernest Mandel. As one of the most well-rounded Marxist thinkers of our time, Mandel is able to capture the true dialectic of the contradiction in the Soviet Union today between the ruling elite and the working masses, between the socialized property forms and bureaucratic management. He shows how the very mechanisms which the Gorbachev wing of the bureaucracy is trying to manipulate—to break out of the crisis of stagnation which their leadership has imposed on the economy—can only set the stage for different, even greater, problems. The only real solution will come with the overthrow of the bureaucratic yoke.

Further, Mandel places developments in the USSR today in their proper historical and international contexts. He does not ignore what is happening among different social layers and groupings in society—intellectuals, oppressed nationalities, youth, women—and ties these in with the working class *per se*. In doing all of this he scrupulously avoids falling back on easy political formulas and jargon. This article is a must for anyone seriously interested in understanding what is happening today in the Soviet Union.

Philippines Debate

Of particular interest to U.S. readers will be the debate and discussion in the IEC on the Philippines. Two of the Fourth Internationalist groupings in the U.S.—the Fourth Internationalist Tendency and Socialist Action—submitted resolutions on this question for the consideration of the international leadership. Both of them were rejected. A third analysis, an oral report by Roman, was not put to the vote. All three positions are presented in the *IMR*.

The Philippine debate illustrates one of the chief questions which is up for discussion in the FI today: to what extent is our analysis of events in the international class struggle influenced by the historical experience, program, and principles of the revolutionary Marxist movement, and to what extent is it dependent on the necessarily unique characteristics of any particular country—the traditions of the class struggle, relationship of different social forces, economic factors, cultural realities, etc. The three positions presented in the magazine take quite distinct approaches to this basic problem, which leads them to somewhat different conclusions about the various factors at work during the Philippine revolution which began in February 1986.

This discussion also reveals an important point of difference between national traditions and experience within the Fourth International itself. It is not an accident that the U.S. comrades asked the IEC to vote on their resolutions, while the reporter from a European background did not do so. In the introduction to the magazine the *IMR*'s editors explain: "The report by Roman on the Philippines was not put to a vote, the author instead presenting it as the beginning of a discussion." This is factually accurate. However it fails to discuss the actual background of the debate which took place at the IEC, a background which is essential for the uninformed reader to gain a real understanding.

It would be true only in a formal sense to say that the debate on the Philippines at the IEC was the beginning of a discussion in the International; i.e., the *formal* debate in a *leading FI body* began

at that point. However, the impetus to the debate came, and an *informal* exchange among Fourth Internationalists began, approximately a year earlier, after the Communist Party of the Philippines issued a self-criticism on the question of the elections in which Corazon Aquino ran against Ferdinand Marcos. (That election was the prelude to the February 1986 revolution.)

A majority of the CPP decided that it had been wrong to boycott the elections, that a correct policy would have been to join with others who took an approach of "critical participation" in the Aquino campaign. An article in issue number 102 of *International Viewpoint*, a fortnightly English-language news magazine, also published by the FI, included a statement which seemed to endorse this self-criticism by the CPP.

The leaderships of both the Fourth Internationalist Tendency and Socialist Action in the U.S. noticed this, and articles with a sharply different line appeared in the publications of these groups. They considered the approach taken in *IV* to be seriously flawed from the point of view of revolutionary Marxist principles. Thus it was the middle of 1986—almost a year before the 1987 IEC—that a debate *began* in the FI, through the pages of our public press as well as through political correspondence among FI leaders.

The decision of SA and F.I.T. to ask for a vote on their resolutions by the IEC reflects, at least in part, a tradition in the U.S. regarding the role of the press in the work of the revolutionary party. In this country, the Trotskyist tradition has always insisted that the press be controlled by and reflect the views of the organization as a whole. It is inconceivable that the

opinions of an individual should be published if they go against the program or principles of the party, unless *at least* an accompanying article responding to those views should also appear. In fact, it was the violation of this basic concept by the Barnes faction in the SWP—through the publication of articles critical of Trotsky and his theory of permanent revolution without even allowing a response from those who continued to support the Socialist Workers Party's traditional views—which was a prime stimulus to the crisis which shattered the U.S. SWP and culminated in the mass expulsion of loyal oppositionists in 1984.

At least to some degree, the European and Latin American traditions with regard to the revolutionary press have not been the same as that in the U.S. It is not surprising, then, that some difference of opinion arose between fraternal delegates from the U.S. groups and others concerning the proper role of the IEC in this case. Should the international leadership have the final word with regard to the line on the Philippine elections which appeared in *IV*—either by deciding that the analysis was erroneous and correcting it, or deciding it was correct and taking responsibility for endorsing it? The IEC abstained on this, and refused to adopt any position on the matter.

The underlying problem of revolutionary principle and strategy, of course, remains. How do we determine our attitude toward bourgeois-democratic tendencies in less-developed countries when they confront totalitarian regimes on the electoral front? This will have to be addressed in our broader discussions of orientation and perspectives for the FI, which remain firmly on the agenda of our world movement. ■

AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF RUSSIA

The Roots of Otherness: Russia's Turn of the Century, by Teodor Shanin. Volume 1: *Russia as a "Developing Society"* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 286 pages, \$9.95 (paper). Volume 2: *Russia, 1905-07: Revolution as a Moment of Truth* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 379 pages, \$9.95 (paper).

Reviewed by Pierre Rousset

The Roots of Otherness: Russia's Turn of the Century represents, it seems to me, a very important contribution to the study of Russia. It allows us to renew and broaden our understanding of the features and lessons of a revolution which has played a pivotal role in the history of 20th century Marxism. Very rich, it tackles quite well the questions of method related to contemporary debates on social formations and historical materialism.

Its author, Teodor Shanin, systematically draws on Russian sources—documents of the time and later research. He also draws profitably on what has been learned from today's third world countries. Professor of sociology at the University of Man-

chester, he is in fact a specialist in the study of peasant societies and "developing countries" (with, among others, Hamza Alavi). This enables him to take an original look at Russia—a look which is quite penetrating and illuminating.

Shanin organizes his argumentation around three decisive moments: the study of the Russian social formation at the turn of the century; then that of the revolution of 1905-07; the analysis, finally, of the consequences of this major experience—this "moment of truth"—on the evolution of the principal political currents of the country.

In the first volume Teodor Shanin devotes himself to analyzing tsarist Russia, going back into its past, studying the rural world and the form of capitalist development, returning to the conceptual debate on the nature of this society and on its peasant economy. Shanin uniquely presents a systematic picture of the Russian social formation at the turn of the century, more developed than that offered by Perry Anderson in his work *Lineages of the Absolutist State*.

The central thesis of the author shouldn't surprise the readers of our review: the Russian

state was "other"—that is to say, it was in its very structure different from the countries of Western Europe. But he develops this point of view in a very interesting manner by integrating the analysis of the state and of ideologies, by applying himself to illuminating the originality of each social class (and not only that of the social formation considered as a whole).

In studying the "morphology of backwardness" in Russia, Shanin tackles the question of alternative lines of transformation of the country. This debate, at first a confrontation between "Slavophiles" and "Westernizers," continued under diverse forms: opposition between the "American" and "Prussian" road of capitalist development in agriculture; the possibilities of a modernization "from above," stimulated by the state administration; the possibility of a process of permanent revolution, that is to say, the growing-over of an antiautocratic revolution to a socialist revolution.

Shanin renews the terms of this debate which never ceased to divide the Russian opposition. He defines Russia at the beginning of the 20th century as a country on the "periphery" of capitalism, whose backwardness has a different nature than that of 19th century Germany. In light of the discussions on the third world since World War II, Shanin utilizes the notion of "dependent development" in order to approach the specificity of the Russian social structure (tying its "disarticulated" character to the manner in which it is drawn into the capitalist world economy) and the dynamics of its transformation.

With the help of the conceptual model of "developing societies" (using a contemporary vocabulary), Shanin introduces a step which breaks with the majority of analyses of academic Soviet studies in the West. For those who have studied the third world, the argument is fairly convincing insofar as the enlightening analogies are numerous. We already knew the importance of the Russian revolution for comprehending the dynamic of liberation struggles in the dominated countries (the notion of uneven and combined development, the theory of permanent revolution). But the work of Shanin shows that, despite the numerous specific traits of Russia, there is much more in common between the experience of Russia and that of the third world.

This appears clearly in the study of the years 1905-1907, the second key moment of the exposition. Teodor Shanin challenges a "received idea"—common even in our ranks—according to which the city (therefore the proletariat) simply led behind it the countryside (and the nation). An immense anti-autocratic upheaval, this revolution rather expresses a "composition of forces," thinks Shanin. The considerable role of the urban proletariat is well known—it seems to me that Shanin brings little that is new concerning the analysis of the Russian working class and the organic weakness of the native bourgeoisie. But he shows the precociousness, the breadth, and the inner dynamic of the peasant upsurge on the one hand, the radical nature of the struggles in the oppressed ethnic and national regions on the other. He also shows how, beyond the

diversity of classes among the popular layers, a "people" affirmed itself in the face of the wealthy, so great was the gap between those who possess ("haves") and the others ("have nots"). He even takes note of absences in this revolution, like that of a distinct women's movement which only appeared in an ephemeral and fragmentary fashion.

This reading of the 1905-07 revolution isn't without implications. It permits a better comprehension of at what point the massive eruption of the people on the scene of history provoked the great fear of the elite, accentuated the faint-heartedness of the bourgeoisie, and placed the intelligentsia in a difficult dilemma. It invites further work—specific studies of each social movement, perceived in its own right and not only as a side-product of the proletarian-urban mobilization.

The work of Shanin contains very interesting data on the variety of combinations which is established between the national movement and class identities among the diverse ethnic groups. Above all, he presents an especially rich analysis of the peasant movement—the "blind spot" of many interpretations of the Russian revolution—in analyzing the forms and objectives of struggles, looking at them to understand their hopes and their dreams, their vision of the world.

It is only by drawing the different elements together that one is able to reconstitute the strategic combinations of the Russian revolution and that one can fully comprehend the impact of 1905-07 on the subsequent evolution of the political movements and social struggles. The latter half of Volume II of *Roots of Otherness* is devoted to this question—and it is the third decisive moment in Shanin's argumentation. The experience of 1905-07 forced each political current to reevaluate more or less consciously their orientations, too often influenced by the models of the eighteenth (1789) and nineteenth (1848) centuries. Some, going through this trial, learned from the historic event, even if incompletely and unevenly. Others, on the contrary, retrogressed, even forgetting the more advanced conclusions which they had drawn from experience before the revolution.

Among those who retrogressed like that, Shanin analyzes the evolution of the nobility (who became increasingly less enlightened), the Constitutional Democrats—Cadets—(who became increasingly more conservative), and the Mensheviks. This last group, divided, had especially abandoned the common conception of the Russian Social Democrats of the beginning of the century according to which, in order to be victorious, the democratic revolution, though bourgeois, would have to be conducted under proletarian hegemony. He also presents the decline of the movement and the thought of the Socialist Revolutionaries (a populist current inheriting the great revolutionary tradition of the 19th century) whose best leaders died prematurely.

Shanin analyzes finally the evolution (and the limits of the evolution) of those who learned from the revolution: Stolypin, Zhordaniya, Trotsky, Lenin.

Prime Minister Stolypin, who was eventually assassinated, attempted to save the Empire through a modernizing policy favoring a "revolution from above." The Georgian Menshevik Noy Zhordaniya represented a powerfully original experience: it was in Georgia, in fact, that the first Marxist-led peasant uprising took place, that a proletarian party won power based on the rural masses, which formed a multiclass national front guided by communists. (Shanin also analyzes the contradictions and the ultimate failure, in the 1920s, of this very particular combative Menshevism.)

Shanin emphasizes the creative power of Trotsky who, very early, explicitly broke with models derived from past centuries (1789-1793, 1848), focusing his attention on the question of the state in the revolution and elaborating the theory of permanent revolution. It is this which explains, after he overcame his "blind spot" regarding the function of the party and of factional struggles, that Trotsky was to be found in October 1917 as one of the principal representatives of the Bolshevik Party. However, for Shanin, Trotsky remained too "Western" and "orthodox" in his Marxism, notably in his social analysis—classical—of the peasantry, assigning to it too passive a role: it "followed" the urban classes, and consequently the proletariat if it imposed itself in the struggle for power. The proletarian dictatorship could and should "lean on" the peasantry.

The personality of Lenin dominates the field of the Russian revolution. He is the one, for Shanin, who is the most creative: he understands better than the others the originality of Russia, he is often the best at reevaluating the tasks of the revolutionaries, temporarily finding himself in a minority in his own Bolshevik current—for example, regarding the soviets in 1905, the agrarian program in 1906, participation in elections in 1907, the strategy for the conquest of power in 1917. Unfortunately, notes Shanin, the concern for theoretical orthodoxy often concealed Lenin's creativity.

Far from turning Lenin into an icon, Teodor Shanin proposes an analysis of Lenin's evolution, presenting the advances, characteristics, and limits of each period. The revolution of 1905-07 had been for Lenin a major lesson on the peasant struggle, nationalism, the dynamic of a mass movement—and on the necessity of continually learning from experience.

Shanin perhaps underestimates the political (if not theoretical) originality that revealed itself before 1905 in the "deferential Lenin" (misled by Master Plekhanov)—originality demonstrated, for example, in his pamphlet *To the Rural Poor* which addressed itself as well to the middle peasants. He doesn't give, in my opinion, sufficient attention to Lenin's evolution on the question of the state (the shift of late 1916-early 1917 on the occasion of his polemic with Bukharin). But, on the whole, the periodization which he proposes offers an analytical framework which is very productive and fundamentally correct, it seems to me.

Shanin's work contains numerous and stimulating methodological digressions. It ends with a "postscript" in which the author comes back to the social sciences. He systematically criticizes the reductionist conceptions and unilinear evolutionism which have dominated the social democratic and Stalinist traditions. Rejecting at one and the same time all mechanistic interpretations of historical determinism (anchored in a nondialectical vision of causality) and the appeal to the "irrational" in order to explain the revolution, Shanin analyzes the interdependence of subjective and objective factors in history. He shows how alternativity (the existence of several possibilities) expresses itself in times of social crisis (what one might call "historical crossroads"). He shows how the conscious strategic choices of the political actors contribute effectively to determining those "possibles" which can become reality—how in times of revolution and counterrevolution history is the result of socio-political struggles and not simply the product of "objective necessities." ■

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