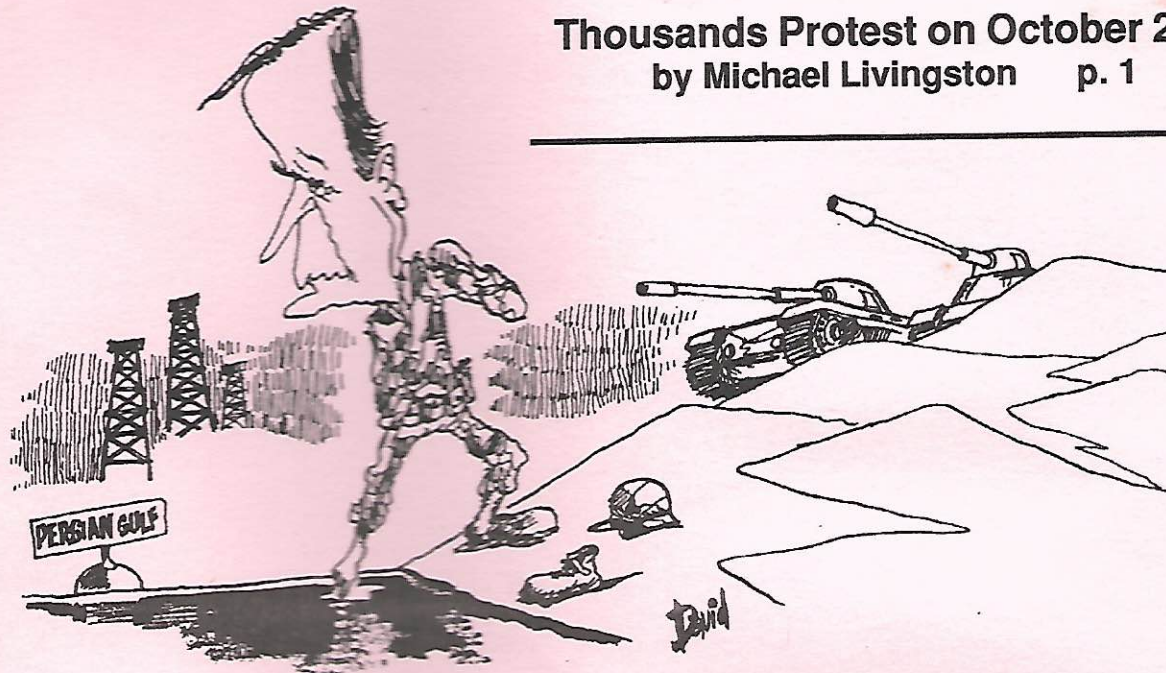


In Defense of Marxism

Thousands Protest on October 20th by Michael Livingston p. 1



**Massacre in Jerusalem
George Bush Walks a Diplomatic Tightrope** 3
by Tom Barrett

The 50,000th Immigrant 5
by Gabi Nitzan

Union Busting at the New York Daily News 6
by Tom Barrett

**Session on Malcolm X Meets in New York:
A Radical Conference with
a Revolutionary Message** 8
by Claire Cohen

The Antiracist Struggle in France Today 10
by Keith Mann

**The Socialist Workers Party
and the Fourth International** 32
by the United Secretariat of the FI

**Notebooks for the Grandchildren
43. To Vorkuta for the Second Time** 34
by Mikhail Baitalsky

Review
**A Useful Contribution to the History of the
Vietnam Antiwar Movement** 37
by Samuel Adams

Letters 39

Special Section on the USSR

The USSR: Toward a Major Crisis? 12
by Livio Maitan

**Mikhail Gorbachev Introduces
New Economic Program for the USSR** 21
by Steve Bloom

**Trotsky's *The Stalin School of Falsification* Published
in USSR** 23

Introduction to the Trade Union 'Independence' 26
by Marilyn Vogt-Downey

**From the Arsenal of Marxism
Planned Economy in the USSR:
Success or Failure?** 29
by Leon Trotsky

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.

FIT members and supporters are involved in a broad range of working class struggles and protest movements in the U.S. We are activists in unions, women's rights groups, antiracist organizations, coalitions opposed to U.S. intervention, student formations, and lesbian and gay rights campaigns. We help organize support for oppressed groups here and abroad—such as those challenging apartheid in South Africa and bureaucratic rule in China, Eastern Europe, and the USSR. We participate in the global struggle of working people and their allies through our ties with the world organization of revolutionary socialists—the Fourth International.

The FIT was created in the winter of 1984 by members expelled from the Socialist Workers Party because they opposed abandoning the Trotskyist principles and methods on which the SWP was founded and built for more than half a century. We tried to win the SWP back to a revolutionary Marxist perspective, and called for the reunification of Fourth Internationalists in the U.S. through readmission to the party of all who had been expelled in the anti-Trotskyist purge. The SWP formally severed fraternal relations with the Fourth International in June of 1990. Our central task now is to reconstitute a united U.S. sympathizing section of the Fourth International from among all those in this country who remain loyal to the FI's program and organization as well as through the recruitment of workers, students, Blacks, women, and other activists who can be won to a revolutionary internationalist outlook.

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Thousands Protest on October 20th

by Michael Livingston

Thousands took to the streets of cities across the U.S. on October 20th in coordinated protests against U.S. intervention in the Middle East. The largest demonstration, organized by the New York City Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East, took place in Manhattan, where 15,000 marched from Columbus Circle to 34th St., and then back up to Times Square. The demonstration in San Francisco attracted 5,000 people and in Los Angeles 1,200 participated in a march and rally.

In at least a dozen other U.S. cities demonstrators numbering in the hundreds marched and rallied to protest U.S. intervention. In Minneapolis, San Diego, Portland, and Seattle actions of 400 to 500 took place. Marches of 200 to 300 were held in Cleveland, St. Louis, Indianapolis, and Detroit. In cities like Pittsburgh, Kansas City, Dallas, Houston, and Tucson the actions numbered between 100 and 200 people. Demonstrations also occurred in other countries on October 20. For instance, 23,000 protested in Japan against intervention and the proposal to send Japanese forces to the region. In Paris, 12,000 marched. In Italy the traditional annual international peace march, which drew 100,000 people, expressed opposition to Italian participation in the armed imperialist presence in the gulf.

A striking feature of most of these demonstrations, especially the larger ones, was the number of young people who participated. In the New York metropolitan area a student coalition was formed in the weeks leading up to October 20. It built a contingent for the march and has continued to meet, considerably expanding the number of campuses participating. It is projecting plans for a citywide teach-in on the Middle East for December 8, to correspond with several days of activities on campuses across the country. We are receiving new reports daily about citywide student coalitions springing up in many

places, and individual campus actions taking place all over the country. We hope to have a roundup of this new upsurge in student activity for the next issue of the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*.

Rally speakers and marchers stressed similar themes at all of the October 20 events: Troops Out Now! No U.S. Intervention! Money for Human Needs! and No Blood for Oil! But it was a significant strength that those in the movement who want to express their opposition to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait or appeal for UN intervention as a way of solving the crisis also came, and brought their own signs and banners. Speakers from this point of view appeared on platforms across the country.

There is a division within the U.S. anti-intervention movement on these questions. The call for October 20 was originally issued by the New York coalition, which very early established the theme of "U.S. Out Now" as the primary basis on which it would try to establish unity. Many other local coalitions around the country have adopted a similar approach. But another wing of the movement has coalesced around the idea of condemning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and viewing the UN as a force for peace in the region. For example, the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East is projecting these points as part of its basic political statement.

Such themes tend to weaken the message of the anti-intervention movement. They can easily be taken as establishing conditions, limiting our demand for U.S. withdrawal. They also tend to exclude groups and individuals who do not agree that North Americans should be issuing condemnations of Iraq—for whatever reason—or who think that we should not appeal to the UN which is, after all, the same world body that the U.S. government is using to provide diplomatic cover for its war-making. Nevertheless, the fact that the National Campaign also includes a demand for U.S. withdrawal in its program means

Coming in Our Next Issue

- Since the publication of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency's declaration, "For the Reconstitution of a United Movement of the Fourth International in the United States" in issue No. 78 of the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, we have received a number of comments from individuals around the country. In our next issue we will be publishing a letter from a reader in Seattle, Washington, with a reply by Evelyn Sell, national coordinator of the FIT.

Also:

- November 16 meeting in New York to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Leon Trotsky's assassination
- NOW New Party Commission hearings in New York City, November 30-December 1
- December 1 national meeting of anti-intervention activists

Proposal Made for National Actions

*This letter signed by Jerry Gordon on behalf of the Cleveland Committee Against U.S. War in the Persian Gulf was sent on November 13 to the two major groups which have been organizing nationally against U.S. policy in the Middle East: the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East and the New York-based Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East. The **Bulletin in Defense of Marxism** endorses the call for a national demonstration in Washington, D.C., to stop the war preparations of the Bush administration.*

Greetings:

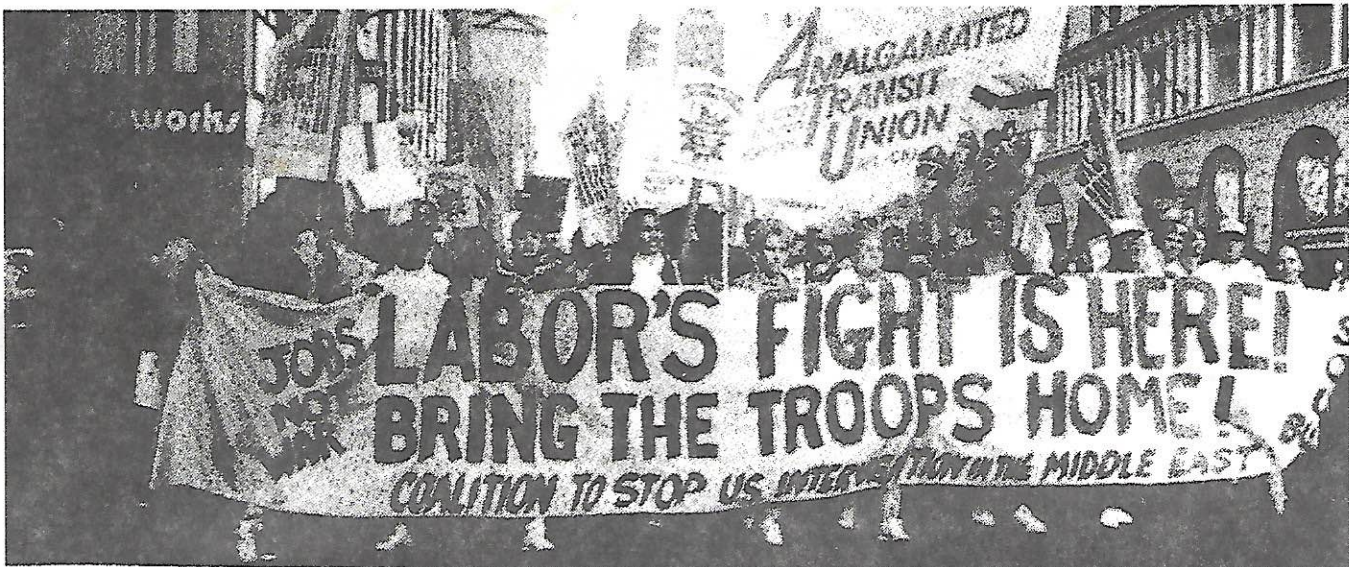
At its November 9 meeting, the Cleveland-based Committee Against U.S. War in the Persian Gulf voted unanimously to urge the New York Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East and the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East to issue a joint call for emergency national demonstrations as soon as they can be organized in Washington, D.C., and on the West Coast. This call should be cosigned by Persian Gulf antiwar coalitions around the country and other for-

ces so that the actions would be unified expressions of the entire movement.

We recognize that there are programmatic differences between the New York coalition and the National Campaign. But both groups oppose a U.S. war in the Persian Gulf and call for immediate withdrawal of U.S. military forces from the region. Let each build the actions on the basis of their own demands (which is what the two major coalitions did during the Vietnam war for the January 20, 1973, demonstrations).

In view of the gravity of the present situation and the advanced preparations by the U.S. government for a catastrophic war, we must act now. Our best hope for preventing this war is through massive, united mobilizations. We hope very much that the proposal for a March on Washington with a simultaneous demonstration on the West Coast will be agreed to and acted upon without delay.

In solidarity,
Jerry Gordon



October 20 march in New York City

that both wings of the movement can continue to unite in action, with this idea as the unifying theme. The National Campaign endorsed October 20, and the unity that this created was one of the keys to the success of that action. It will similarly be key to the success of future protests and activities.

The October 20th demonstrations, the first nationally and internationally coordinated events since the crisis began, suggest that the movement has an enormous potential for growth.

Further united national actions are absolutely essential to tap the energy that they began to mobilize, broaden visible antiwar sentiment among the American people, and contribute to a process that could even stay the hand of George Bush, preventing an outright military attack against Iraq. This must be the immediate goal of our movement—not simply preparing for a reaction to a shooting war if and when that comes. □

Massacre in Jerusalem

George Bush Walks a Diplomatic Tightrope

by Tom Barrett

On October 8, the entire world was reminded once again of Zionism's true character. On the Haram al-Sharif (the "Temple Mount," as the Zionists call it), in illegally occupied East Jerusalem, Israeli police used live ammunition on unarmed Arab civilians who were demonstrating against a provocation by the fanatic Zionist group known as the "Temple Mount Faithful." When the shooting stopped, 21 Arabs were dead and over 100 were wounded. The political fallout continues to have disastrous consequences for George Bush, as he has been forced to agree to a United Nations condemnation of the massacre in order to hold together his coalition of Arab states against Iraq.

This is not, of course, the first time that the Zionists have proved to be a net liability for imperialism rather than an asset. Back in the 1950s and 1960s, before the bourgeois-nationalist Arab regimes had become settled into a neocolonialist framework, the white-supremacist garrison state of Israel had an obvious usefulness. Today, however, things are more complicated. Washington needs to develop closer ties not only with the conservative Arab monarchies in the region, but also with the bourgeois-nationalist Arab regimes. They, in turn, have come to recognize that a friendly relationship with the United States and Western Europe can be profitable, especially now that they can no longer depend on the Soviet Union for military supplies. Washington's close ties with Israel are a real obstacle to this process. But the U.S. cannot simply cut loose from the Zionist regime both because of the pro-Israeli public opinion that has been built up at home and because in the final analysis the Israeli state is the one in the region with the strongest stake in continued imperialist domination—the only ally Washington can really count on. Thus we see George Bush walking a diplomatic tightrope at the UN in the wake of the Israeli massacre.

Zionist Provocation and Police Riot

Every year on the Jewish holiday of Succoth, the Temple Mount Faithful lay a symbolic cornerstone of the "Third Temple" on the Haram al-Sharif. (The Second Temple was destroyed by the Roman Empire in 70 A.D.) This fanatical Zionist organization calls for the demolition of the 1,200-year-old al-Aksa Mosque and Dome of the Rock—whose importance to Muslims is second only to the Kaaba in Mecca itself. Its more practical program calls for massive settlement of Jews into illegally occupied East Jerusalem. Jerusalem's Arab residents understand these activities for what they are—provocations.

The Temple Mount Faithful issued a press release on October 1, which said: "The people of Israel and each of you are called to give a Jewish, national, and Zionist answer to our enemies and above all of them to Saddam Hussein and his proxy, Arafat. On Monday, October 8, you are invited to the historic ceremony [the laying of the symbolic cornerstone]." The Arabic newspaper *Al-Fajr* picked up the release and reported the group's plans on its front page that same day. Within the Arab community plans for a counterdemonstration and defense of the Islamic shrines began to

be made. At Friday prayers at al-Aksa, Sheikh Muhammad Hussein called on his congregation of 20,000 to defend the mosque.

By 5 a.m. on October 8, 3,000 Arabs had gathered on the Haram al-Sharif. (The Haram al-Sharif is a plateau with stone walls on all sides. The Western Wall is Judaism's most important shrine.) The security force—composed of only 45 Israeli policemen—decided not to allow the Temple Mount Faithful demonstration to proceed. At the Western Wall below 30,000 Jews had gathered for Succoth prayers, which proceeded without incident. After the Jewish service was over about 10,000 lingered behind. Though it is possible that this group intended no provocation, with social tensions already at the breaking point a confrontation was nearly unavoidable, and some Arab youths on the Haram al-Sharif began throwing stones. The Jewish worshippers fled, and none was seriously injured. However, the police began firing tear gas into the crowd of Arabs, most of whom had not been involved in the rock-throwing. The Arabs charged the police, who retreated from the area, still firing tear gas and rubber bullets.

About 20 minutes after the initial confrontation, the police returned in force to the Haram al-Sharif. This time they were not firing tear gas or rubber bullets, but live ammunition. Though none of the Arabs was armed and everything was now peaceful—for 15 minutes the Western Wall Plaza had been empty—the police, numbering about 200, fired automatic weapons indiscriminately into the Arab crowd. By the time they were finished 21 people were dead, including a 70-year-old man and a 15-year-old boy; 100 were wounded.

Mark A. Bruzonsky, writing in the October 17-23 issue of *In These Times*, quotes an Arab-American witness to the incident:

I was witness to a large group of Jews dancing in front of the Wailing Wall chanting in Hebrew and English: "Let us in! We want to kill more! Death to the Arabs!" This was immediately following the massacre of some 21 innocent people! After leaving the [Dome of the Rock], I began to walk through the Old City to return home. On my way, a group of five or six Jewish settlers pointed toward me and shouted in Hebrew, "Arabs!" They then fired a burst of machine-gun fire in my direction. The bullets hit the wall behind me, mere inches away from my head.

If readers of this account are reminded of violence by police and racist civilians in South Africa, Forsyth County, Georgia, or Bensonhurst, New York, they are right.

The U.S.'s New Relationship with Israel

The Zionists have been carrying out such violence against Arabs since before the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948. In terms of lives lost, the 1990 massacre was not the worst. And, of course, genocidal attacks on civilians have been the rule rather than the exception throughout the history of imperialism. The Zionists are acting in the tradition of the British in India, the U.S. in Latin America, and the Japanese in China. Israel's history parallels South Africa's in many ways, and, like the apartheid regime in

South Africa, its usefulness in the broad context of imperialist world domination is being increasingly called into question.

In the post-World War II period, the U.S. and other imperialist powers resisted attempts by bourgeois-nationalist forces in the colonies to win independence for their countries. Independence was won in India, Kenya, Vietnam, Algeria, and many other countries only after prolonged and bloody struggle. The coming to power of Arab nationalists such as Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt and Abdul Karim Qassem in Iraq was greeted with alarm and in some cases military mobilization. Nasser's attempt to nationalize the Suez Canal in 1956 was met with military attack by the combined forces of Britain, France, and Israel. In 1958 U.S. President Eisenhower dispatched troops to Lebanon, poised to invade Iraq after Qassem forcibly deposed the Hashemite King Faisal II.

Israel has from its very beginning played the role of "attack dog" for the imperialist powers in the Middle East and indeed in other parts of the world as well. Israel has been consistent in its support to pro-imperialist regimes in Africa. Even though it has criticized apartheid in words, its practical support to South Africa is well known. However, as any animal handler can testify, an attack dog can be dangerous to its owner as well as to its intended victims. In addition, maintenance of Israel has become an expensive proposition for the United States, which faces a real crisis over its federal budget deficit.

The fundamental problem is that Israel is a settler-state and a garrison state in which—since the 1967 war—a minority of European Jewish descent rules undemocratically over a majority Arab population which does not enjoy full political rights. Israel cannot survive economically without outside aid, either from the United States government or from private contributions. Without this massive infusion of dollars, the Israeli miracle ("they made the desert bloom") would look much more like the other, poverty-stricken nations of the region. Israel's chief exports are weapons and cut diamonds (the rough diamonds being imported primarily from South Africa). With the fading of the cold war and the truth about Israel's racist and oppressive character coming out—due mainly to the *intifada*—Israel's dependence on foreign aid and the international arms trade makes it increasingly less viable as an economic and political entity, and consequently less useful to Washington as a military and political ally. What Washington needs in the region is an ally who can fill the void left by the fall of the shah of Iran. For that reason Bush absolutely must maintain the friendship of the conservative monarchies—Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the Kuwaiti House of al-Sabah, Oman—and is attempting to solidify alliances with some of the bourgeois nationalist republics, most especially the Mubarak regime in Egypt. Sole reliance on Israel for the achievement of U.S. foreign policy objectives at this time would be totally counterproductive. After all, if Bush was just interested in getting Iraq out of Kuwait, or even in carrying out a military strike against Iraq itself, Israel could pull it off within hours. Why hasn't Bush asked the Israeli air force to bomb military installations in Iraq in the same way that it bombed the Iraqi nuclear power plant? The answer is obvious—the political stability and favorable attitude of the Arab states toward doing business with the U.S. would be jeopardized. The cure would likely be worse than the disease.

The truth is that as direct colonialism has been replaced by neocolonialism, direct military domination of the region—which was Israel's primary value to imperialism—is less important. The republic which Nasser established in Egypt still exists, but Hosni Mubarak, as the representative of the Egyptian bourgeoisie, recognizes that Egypt can no longer afford the luxury of anti-U.S. rhetoric. Trade with the United States is profitable for the Egyptian

bourgeoisie as well as the American. French economic penetration of its former colonies Algeria and Tunisia is greater now than it was when France held them as possessions. Any fear that the Arab states would ally with the East against the West was put to rest long ago—even before Gorbachev's decision to pursue a thaw with Washington. Even the so-called "terrorist" Muammar Qaddafi of Libya has toned down his rhetoric considerably. (And it should be noted that Qaddafi's own views have always been anticommunist, which is why the Nixon administration looked favorably on his accession to power in 1969.)

As a result of the October 8 massacre, the United States has been forced to support a United Nations Security Council resolution condemning the Israeli attack and mandating the UN secretary general to carry out an investigation. The Zionist state has flatly refused to cooperate with the UN, refusing to meet with the investigating team and preventing them from meeting with the Arab victims or with Arab human rights organizations. As a feeble compromise, the Israeli government offered simply to give the UN its official report of the incident. Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar rejected the Israeli proposal out of hand, leading to the drafting of a new resolution condemning Israel for its refusal to cooperate with the UN. The United States is again caught in a diplomatic bind. If the U.S. were to stand by Israel and veto the resolution, it would risk the breakup of its anti-Iraq alliance. The refusal of one conservative monarch, King Hussein of Jordan, to support the U.S. war effort proves that Bush's coalition does not rest on a strong foundation. If the U.S. does support the UN resolution and U.S. support to Israel continues to deteriorate, the Israelis may act with less restraint in the future, further destabilizing the region. The Zionist government has already reneged on its assurance to the United States that it would stop settling immigrants into East Jerusalem.

The Palestinian Arab Masses

As the *intifada* has proven—and the Arab demonstration of October 8 was inseparable from the *intifada*—the Arab masses of Palestine are far more combative and resourceful than their so-called leaders. They are ready to take their future into their own hands, and they have done more real damage to the Zionist state and its image around the world in three years than the Palestine Liberation Organization has done in more than a quarter century. This is not necessarily the result of any default by the PLO, but it is clear that its strategy of guerrilla warfare carried out by dedicated *fedayeen* has not been nearly as effective as the action of the Arab masses in the streets.

If an international campaign to isolate Israel politically and economically could be extended to the United States it could strike the same kinds of blows against Zionism that the international campaign against apartheid has struck against the South African racist regime. It could force the same kinds of concessions to the Arab people that de Klerk has been forced to make to the South African Black majority.

The developing struggle against U.S. intervention in the Arab (Persian) Gulf region has the capability of thwarting imperialist goals and of exposing the truth about the role which Zionism plays in the Middle East. This is the place to begin. If the massacre of October 8 serves to further expose the truth about Zionism and leads to the kind of economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation that has forced concessions from the South African regime, then the victims of the Haram al-Sharif, like the victims of Amritsar and Sharpeville, will not have died in vain. □

November 3, 1990

The Story Which Wasn't Told: The 50,000th Immigrant

by Gabi Nitzan

This article is reprinted from The Other Front (September 19, 1990) which is published by the Alternative Information Center in Israel. It was credited to Hadashot (September 14).

To our great delight, fate had it that the 50,000th immigrant was handsome and impressive: quite tall, about 40 years old, black-haired and green-eyed, with high cheekbones and a solid, well-cared-for mustache.

He blinks in some confusion before the scene which reveals itself in the light of the sun of the holy land. The orchestra has just reached the chorus ("the land in which we were born, the land in which we shall live, whatever will be"), and the entourage below breaks out in applause. The immigrant stops in his tracks, furrows his brow in an attempt to understand, and begins to descend hesitantly.

Yitzhak Peretz (the Minister of Absorption), on his side, strides to the honorary platform together with his Russian translator, in order to accompany the immigrant on his first steps on the ground of the Land of Israel. And there they meet. Yitzhak Peretz smiles, offers his hand, and turns to the immigrant (with the help of the translator): "Blessed is he who comes to the Land of Israel."

Peretz: "I am happy to announce that you are the 50,000th immigrant of the year in the Land of Israel." Immigrant: "Who? Me?"

Peretz (while walking together to the honorary platform): "Yes, yes." (The orchestra passes to "O my land, my homeland," and Peretz brings the immigrant to the honorary platform, where there are also waiting for him the secretary general of the Ministry of Immigration, Dov Shilansky, and Haim Herzog, and everyone shakes his hand warmly.)

Peretz: "What is your name?" Immigrant: "Yosef Dori."

Peretz: "Are you excited, Yosef?" Immigrant: "This is very exciting, I am very pleasantly surprised."

Peretz: "What city are you from, Yosef?" Immigrant: "From Leningrad."

Peretz: "For how long have you been dreaming of the journey here?" Immigrant: "Twenty-three years."

Peretz: "And how do you feel now?" Immigrant: "This is like a dream. Again I tread on the ground of my homeland. I have returned home."

Peretz: "This is your home, Yosef. We will try to ease your acclimatization to your home. Did you have a profession in Leningrad?" Immigrant: "Certainly. In fact, I went to Leningrad in order to study medicine at the university there. I specialized in the treatment of cancer of the foreskin."

Peretz (rolling his eyes in annoyance): "Here you'll do some retraining. Tell me, Yosef, do you have any family here in the Land of Israel?" Immigrant: "All of my family is here. I have family in Haifa and on the Golan Heights."

Peretz: "How long has it been since you have seen them?" Immigrant: "Twenty-three years."

Peretz: "And do they know you are coming?" Immigrant: "They knew that I was trying to come, but I don't think that they thought I would succeed."

Peretz: "Why?" Immigrant: "You know, for all these years it was very hard to come home."

Peretz: "True, but all that belongs to history already. As you can see, today the gates are wide open." Immigrant: "I see, and I am very surprised. I didn't think I would be able to get here. I thought I would have to die in exile."

Peretz: "God forbid! God preserve us! Thank god, god is returning all his sons to their borders!" Immigrant: "God is blessed."

Peretz: "Tell me, Yosef, do you understand a little Hebrew?" Immigrant: "A very little, that I learned in my youth, in the village."

Peretz (handing him a little flag): "Do you know what is written here?" Immigrant (wrinkling his brow before the embroidered golden letters, he reads slowly, with a heavy accent): "From immigrant... to immigrant... our strength... increases."

Peretz: "Because of you and your brothers we will be able to turn Israel into

the most glorious among the lands of the earth." Immigrant: "I don't understand."

Peretz: (with the patience of a kind grandfather): "What I mean is that you will become a part of the life of the community and society in Israel until you are blended into it." Immigrant (with a certain suspicion): "Just a minute. Will I have rights like everyone else? I can take part in elections?"

Peretz (laughs in delight): "What a question! What a question! This isn't Russia, this is a democracy!" Immigrant: "And also all my family and my whole village?"

Peretz: "What village? In Russia?" Immigrant: "No, on the Golan."

Peretz: "A village on the Golan?" Immigrant: "Yes, the village where I was born."

Peretz: "Weren't you born in Russia?" Immigrant: "No, I told you. I went to Leningrad 23 years ago to study medicine."

Peretz: "From Israel?" Immigrant: "From Palestine. Before the war I traveled to Russia. Now I have decided to try to return, even though my family wrote me that the government of Israel still does not accept the right of return. But I was optimistic, and I see that I was right. I was very moved to hear all the things you said, that the gates are now wide open, and that god is returning all his children to their borders. It is good to know that there are also Jews like you."

Peretz (pale, with dry lips): "You are not a Jew?" Immigrant: "No, I am a Christian Palestinian, Yosef Dori. I read in *Pravda* about the direct flights here through Warsaw, and I decided that this is the time to return home."

Peretz: "Get back on the plane, terrorist." Immigrant: "But you said that together we could build a wonderful state here! You said that I would have rights!"

Peretz (to the audience): "Call the police. Get him back on the plane. Stop the music. Stop the photographing. Where is my driver?"

Union Busting at the *New York Daily News*

by Tom Barrett

After seven months of stonewalling at the negotiating table, the Chicago Tribune Company, the parent corporation of the *New York Daily News*, succeeded in provoking nine of its ten unions out on strike. On October 25, management locked out members of the Newspaper and Mail Deliverers' Union of New York, forcing it to declare a strike over "unfair labor practices." All of the other *Daily News* unions went out in solidarity with the drivers, with the exception of New York Typographical Union No. 6, which gave a permanent no-strike pledge in 1973 in exchange for guaranteed lifetime jobs for its members.

There are two things about this strike which every working person should know: first, management has no interest in negotiating a settlement with its unionized employees. Its intention has been from the beginning to transform the *Daily News* into a nonunion newspaper. Second, despite all of the well-known technological changes going on in the newspaper industry, management's union-busting activity is directed at those crafts which have been the least affected by technological changes. Management is not attempting to eliminate "unnecessary" jobs but to reduce the standard of living of those workers who are essential to publishing a newspaper, especially the writers, represented by the Newspaper Guild, and the drivers, represented by the Newspaper and Mail Deliverers' Union.

It has also made clear that in its campaign to drive down pay and benefit scales it has no concern for the newspaper-reading public of New York. The experienced journalists and sportswriters—even gossip columnists—who know the city, have developed the news sources, and know how to write in such a way that New Yorkers have bought more copies of the *Daily News* than any other newspaper for as long as anyone can remember, have been replaced by people flown in from Orlando, Chicago, and other cities where the Tribune Company owns newspapers. These "replacement workers" (otherwise known as scabs) are getting lost on the subways trying to find City Hall while reporters who have been at their desks and on the streets for 30 years are locked out. The *Daily News* management has no interest in fairness to its employees nor in informing the people of New York. What it is doing constitutes an affront to all of New York's working people, not only to the *News* employees.

The Chicago Tribune Company: Preparations for Union Busting

The *Daily News* has been published by the Chicago Tribune Company since it was founded in 1919. Besides the *News* and the flagship *Chicago Tribune*, the company owns the Orlando *Sentinel*, the Fort Lauderdale *Sun-Sentinel*, and the Newport News, *Daily News/Times-Herald*. In 1985, it locked out its

employees at the *Chicago Tribune*, leading to a long and bitter strike. This year the Tribune Company was found guilty of unfair labor practices in that strike and was ordered by the courts to give back pay to those workers affected by the lockout and strike.

In preparations for this year's negotiations with the *Daily News* unions, management retained King and Ballow, a Tennessee law firm specializing in union decertification. They flew in "replacement" writers, drivers, printers, and other personnel from their Florida and Virginia newspapers, who have been living in New York area hotels since before March of this year (when the contracts expired). The irony of a newspaper crying "poverty" and then incurring these kinds of expenses is not lost on New York working people. Of course, they claimed that they did not want a strike. One is reminded of George Bush deploying a quarter of a million troops in Saudi Arabia and claiming that he doesn't want a war.

Management Provocation

Newspaper unions lack a "no contract no work" tradition; rather, their policy over the years has been that as long as management and labor representatives are negotiating, the union members continue working. In the case of the *Daily News* negotiations, the unions consistently refused to be provoked into a strike. They put up with abuse after abuse, in the newsroom, in the printing plants, on the loading docks, and in the negotiations themselves, where management was simply stalling, not interested in any kind of settlement. The union leadership recognized that a strike would be difficult to win and that no worker with children to support and mortgage payments to meet wants to be deprived of an income. In addition, if it came to a strike, the support of the reading public would be indispensable. If it were generally understood that the unions did everything they could to prevent a strike in the face of management provocations, then it would be easier to generate support for the strike outside the unions themselves, as well as undercutting any sentiment within the unions for crossing picket lines.

For months management looked for an excuse to lock the employees out. It manufactured one during the predawn hours of October 25. Gary Kalinich, a 23-year veteran driver, was placing cover sheets on newspaper bundles at the *Daily News* plant in the Fort Greene section of Brooklyn. He had recently suffered a knee injury and was certified for light work, including sitting down on the job. At about 2 a.m. a supervisor ordered him to do his work standing up. The *New York Times* quoted Kalinich as saying, "I had seen him [the supervisor] before creating incidents on the floor, making a big issue over how a guy placed the wrappers on the bundles and stuff like that." Kalinich called in the union business agent, Seymour

Goldstein, to intervene in the dispute. Goldstein said that the supervisor was wrong and supported Kalinich's right to be seated. The mailroom chief, Dominick Proce, called them in and suspended Kalinich and ordered Goldstein out of the mailroom. Goldstein refused to leave, and security guards were called to escort him and Kalinich out. About 30 drivers who had gathered to see what was going on followed them out to the street to discuss the situation. The supervisors then ordered the remaining 230 drivers out of the building. Within hours, busloads of scabs were being driven to the plant. By morning, all the unions except the Typographical chapel were walking the picket line.

Strike Strategy

The Newspaper Guild and the printing trades have been unable to keep scabs out of the newspaper. However, the drivers' union has had success preventing distribution of the *Daily News*. It has been able to convince news dealers not to sell the struck paper and has made life difficult for scabs attempting to make deliveries. Because the New York newspapers depend on newsstand sales much more than papers in other cities, a newsstand boycott of the paper is an effective strategy. Within a week the *Daily News* was resorting to giving the newspaper away for no charge, even employing homeless people to hand it out (a sad commentary on the state of urban life in New York City).

The newspaper unions have enlisted the support of the entire labor movement. This is especially important, since the *Daily News* has traditionally been the most widely read newspaper by New York workers. The unions have called on workers not only to boycott the newspaper itself but to boycott retailers who continue to advertise in the *Daily News*. Pickets have been organized outside department stores which have not agreed to pull their ads.

Will the News Close?

It is clear that the labor movement has the strength and the will to make it impossible for the *Daily News* to be published and circulated. However, is the Tribune Company really interested in continuing to publish the paper? After all, it claims that it has been losing money for a number of years, and this year its circulation fell below that of the *New York Times* for the first time. If the Tribune Company were simply to close the paper down, it would be required to give severance pay to its 2,700 employees. However, if the paper were "forced out of business" because of a strike, the workers would not be entitled to such compensation. Management spokespeople have repeatedly denied that their intent is to shut the paper down or to sell it. But few believe them.

The Dinkins Administration's Role

Mayor David Dinkins was elected with virtually unanimous support of New York's labor officials. Like most urban Democratic politicians, Dinkins made all the "friend of labor" promises that the union leadership likes to hear. He has marched in the Labor Day parades and been photographed shaking hands with union local presidents at every opportunity.

There is no doubt that without labor support Dinkins would not have won his narrow victory over Republican Rudolph Giuliani in the 1989 election.

His role in the *Daily News* strike has shown that with "friends" like Dinkins, labor truly needs no enemies. In spite of the city's serious financial problems and its inability to provide even a semblance of public safety, hundreds of police have been dispatched to protect scabs entering *Daily News* plants and delivering the paper around New York. Policemen are working overtime to ride the trucks with scab drivers. The city is cutting back on necessary social services and laying off city employees, then turning around to spend huge sums to protect strikebreakers.

Dinkins has been attempting to play "mediator" and get negotiations restarted. He has even gotten the Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York, John Cardinal O'Connor, involved in trying to get the two sides talking again. The assumption, of course, is that both sides are interested in a fair settlement. The *News*, however, is *not* interested in a fair settlement. Management is only interested in total unconditional surrender by its workers. Barring that, they are completely prepared to close the paper down.

Dinkins has not commented at all on the Tribune Company's violation of the public trust. Whatever one may think of the *Daily News's* journalistic merit, millions of New Yorkers have for over 70 years depended on it for information and entertainment. It employs 2,700 people, many of whom are second- and third-generation *Daily News* employees. Does this corporation have the right simply to put them out of work or to cut their wages in a city where the cost of living is one of the highest in the United States? If the Tribune Company thinks that it can simply take from the people of New York and not give anything back, then New York government has a responsibility to explain that such a management has no right to do business in New York City. Those who live in the city have every right to confiscate their assets and put them to positive use.

The problem, of course, is that though working people elected David Dinkins and the other city officials, they are not the working people's *representatives*. They represent the interests of employers like the *Daily News* management, even to the extent of using the police force to escort strikebreakers. Especially in this age of union busting by yuppie lawyers, picket line muscle is, by itself, insufficient to defend and improve labor's living standards. A *political* strategy is necessary, one which puts no faith in promises by "friends of labor." Labor needs a new political party, whose candidates will be chosen by and responsible to working people—not media consultants, law firms, or Political Action Committees. Union officials have for too long attempted to play the game of "responsible" politics—giving concessions at the bargaining table in the "public interest," electing "realistic" candidates like David Dinkins, and attempting to "see management's point of view" in negotiations, as if management couldn't take care of itself. The workers at the *Daily News* are paying the price for these policies. It's high time that labor exact a price from employers like the *Daily News*—if management can't run its business properly, the workers can. □

November 6, 1990

A Radical Conference with a Revolutionary Message

by Claire Cohen

The conference *Malcolm X: Radical Tradition and Legacy of Struggle* was held at the Borough of Manhattan Community College of New York from November 1 to November 4, 1990. It was convened by the Cooperative Research Network in Black Studies.

The conference was a resounding success. Both the audience and the speakers had an international character, coming from Canada, the Caribbean, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East, as well as the United States. Approximately 1,500 people attended. Of those, about 10 to 20 percent were white, Latino, Native American, or Asian, and the rest were African American or Blacks from other countries. A large percentage of the audience consisted of college and high school students, and other youth.

Rather than a demagogic commemoration of Malcolm X, this conference was a critical study and analysis of the revolutionary implication for the Black liberation movement and other struggles worldwide of Malcolm's radical message and the methodology he used to develop his theoretical viewpoint. The speakers and panelists presented, for the most part, a revolutionary, socialist, and internationalist perspective. Conscious reformism was notably absent.

Some criticisms are appropriate, however. A few of the talks were presented in an extreme academic style. Their meaning was lost on the overwhelming majority of conference participants. In addition, the conference itself was not designed to come out with any specific program for action to unite the Black movement, or even that wing of it which identifies with the political legacy of Malcolm X. There was much talk about the need to begin organizing, about how those who simply talk about the need for change but don't act to bring it about are irrelevant to the struggle of Black people today. But, at least in the plenary sessions, there was no opportunity to discuss how to begin that vital process of organization in our community. Discussion of specific activities was limited to workshops.

Although the audience was clearly of a diverse ideological background (socialists, nationalists, Black Muslims, religious activists, progressives, and "just plain folk"), they seemed to enthusiastically receive and appreciate the radical message they heard. During discussion periods many thought-provoking questions were asked and comments made, providing for a lively and informative dialogue. No one seemed turned off by the frequent references to the need for a socialist revolution in this country, and they likewise seemed inspired by the idea of international solidarity among workers and oppressed peoples. Many youth responded to the message by expressing, both in discussion and side conversations, an eagerness to "get a move on." As two young men behind me at one plenary said: "Okay, this is enough intellectual theory. When are we going to get to developing the program?"

In every workshop I attended, at least one young person asked for pointers on how to start mobilizing other youth of color—in college, high school, or in their communities—for struggle around issues of oppression, exploitation, and on how to convince them of the need for revolution. Although in some of the workshops people did network and exchange ideas on organizing, even here there was no discussion of how revolutionaries go about the process of developing strategies and organizational skills for mobilizing people in struggle.

The conference consisted of five plenary sessions and nineteen workshops. In this article I will report on all of the plenaries and say a little about a few of the workshops. In future articles I hope to use the content of the workshops as a starting point for a discussion of various issues pertinent to our struggle.

Plenary Sessions

The first plenary was called "Malcolm X Remembered: 25 Years of Research and Retrospective Reflection." This was the only session that did not develop a revolutionary critique of Malcolm. Instead, it reviewed Malcolm's life, his work, and his

methodology. The chairperson and conference convener was Abdul Alkalimat (author of books on African-American studies). Speakers included Betty Shabazz (Malcolm X's widow), Amiri Baraka ("Poet Laureate of Black Liberation"), C. Eric Lincoln (author of *Black Muslims in America*), Margaret Burroughs (founder of the DuSable Museum of African-American History), John Henry Clarke (editor of *Malcolm X: The Man and His Times*), and Alex Haley (collaborator on the *Autobiography of Malcolm X*).

In the second plenary session, "Theoretical Perspectives on Malcolm X," panelists analyzed Malcolm's works from revolutionary socialist, internationalist, revolutionary Black nationalist, Pan-Africanist, and Afrocentric cultural perspectives. It was stressed that "the task for us is not to replicate what [Malcolm] did but use how he thought as a guide for us." A serious weakness of this session was that all of the speakers except one used a male-centered definition of oppression. Abdul Alkalimat did mention "the need to establish the voice of Black women in leadership positions" in the movement. Panelists were Lou Turner (*News and Letters*, and co-author of *Frantz Fanon, Soweto, and American Black Thought*), James Conyers reading a paper by Molefi Kete Asante (Temple University professor and author of *Kemet, Afrocentricity, and Knowledge*), Clarence J. Munford (African-Canadian author of *Production Relations, Class and Black Liberation: A Marxist Perspective in African-American Studies*), and Abdul Alkalimat (author of *Introduction to Afro-American Studies: A People's College Primer*).

The third plenary, "New Research on Malcolm X," generated the most controversy in the audience because of frank presentations on the counterrevolutionary effects of sexism, and the contradictory effect of the Nation of Islam, on the Black liberation movement. Speaker Bell Hooks (author of *Ain't I a Woman* and *Yearning: Critiques of Race, Gender, and Class*) emphasized the need to make Black feminist issues an integral part of the movement, and also to address homophobia in the

African-American community. Most women and some of the men in the audience were enthusiastic about her comments, but many men were puzzled on "how an oppressed male of color could be sexist," as one questioner put it. A few men were hostile to the ideas of Black feminism and the need to address sexism in the movement. When women booed the men who made such comments Bell Hooks responded that it is important to listen respectfully to everyone's views, because the only way we're going to convince unenlightened Blacks of the validity of such issues is rational, analytic critique, rather than emotional name-calling. The other panelists, who were male, wholeheartedly supported her viewpoint. They were William Sales (author of *Southern Africa: Same Struggle, Same Fight*), and James Cone (Black liberation theologian and author of *Martin and Malcolm: American Dream or Nightmare?*).

During the plenary on "Black Liberation and Social Revolution: U.S.A. Perspectives," panelists emphasized a number of points. These included: "revolutionary Black nationalism as the foundation for internationalism" in the movement; the need "to fight from the bottom up" rather than to rely on Black politicians in the capitalist parties; the necessity of building "a culture of permanent resistance"; recognition that there is a heterogeneity of ideology in the oppressed and working classes, and that we need to build unity in struggle rather than trying to suppress this diversity; the contradictory effects of the crisis of socialism in Eastern Europe on the struggles of African Americans and other third world peoples; the need to develop a "united front" of revolutionary forces; the bankruptcy of a reformist struggle for civil rights versus the liberating struggle for socialist revolution; and the necessity for the Black working class to lead the struggle, rather than the Black bourgeoisie. Speakers were Chowke Lumumba (New African People's Organization), Linda Burnham (Frontline Political Organization), Bill Fletcher (Freedom Road Organization), and Nelson Peery (Communist Labor Party).

The last plenary, "Black Liberation and Social Revolution: World Perspectives," was the least exciting, mostly because its main theme—the need to build international solidarity in struggles of oppressed peoples and toilers—had already been repeated so many times before during the conference. Panelist Gus John (London, Black Parents Movement) made the point that Black capitalism is not any more acceptable than white capitalism (an important lesson for nonrevolutionary Black nationalists to learn). Erroll McCleod

(Trinidad-Tobago, Oilfields Workers Trade Union) stressed the points of "unity from the bottom up" and the need to develop "a people's plan for people's needs, not profit." Abdul R.M. Babu (African author of *African Socialism or a Socialist Africa*) stressed the difference between "a nationalism of resistance" versus counterrevolutionary "jingoistic nationalism," the necessity for organized rather than spontaneous struggle if we are to have a successful socialist revolution, and the central role of American Blacks in leading the struggle "since [we] are in the belly of the imperialist beast." Edwin Madunagu (Nigeria, *Guardian* Newspaper) expressed the following themes: "with the crisis in Eastern Europe, the center of gravity for the anti-imperialist-anticapitalist struggle has switched to the third world"; the history of Africa as the "history of struggle and betrayal"; and "the debt question is second slavery."

Conference Workshops

The nineteen workshops covered such diverse subjects as Black student activism, Black feminism, Black working class struggles and efforts to organize workers in the South, third world liberation struggles, the educational crisis, homelessness in the U.S., AIDS, the drug war, political prisoners, independent Black politics, relations between Blacks and Latinos, revolutionary art and culture, Islam, and the revolutionary implications of Malcolm in Harlem and Ghana.

A partial list of panelists in the workshops included Kwame M.A. Somburu (Socialist Action), St. Claire Bourne (Black independent filmmaker), Don Rojas (former press secretary to the late Grenadian prime minister Maurice Bishop and Executive editor of *Amsterdam News*), Saladin Muhammad (Black Workers for Justice), Dhrouba bin Wahid (former political prisoner and member of the Black Panther Party), Esmeralda Brown (U.S. Committee Against Intervention in Latin America and the Caribbean), Rabob Hadi (Palestine Solidarity Committee), Ray Davis (D.C. Student Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism), Fran Beale (Frontline Political Organization), Maxine Alexander (editor of *Speaking for Ourselves*), Ashanki Binta (Black Workers for Justice), General Baker (Local 600, United Auto Workers), and Ron Daniels (former executive director of the Rainbow Coalition, now announced independent candidate for president of the U.S.).

The workshops I either attended or listened to on audiotape expressed the same revolutionary themes as in the plenaries,

focusing these on specific areas of concern. In some of the workshops, including "Campus Racism and the Rebirth of Militant Student Activism," "Black Women and Black Liberation: Fighting Oppression and Building Unity," and "Black Workers' Unity and Resistance to Economic Barbarism," sign-up lists were passed around to compile names, addresses, and phone numbers so that people could keep in touch for future activities coming out of the conference. Women in the Black Women and Black Liberation workshops discussed our need to organize a conference on Black women's issues, but no formal plans were made to pursue this.

In the workshop entitled "Fighting Repression and Supporting Political Prisoners," the audience was encouraged to become actively involved in Freedom Now, the organization working to publicize the plight of political prisoners in the United States (who are disproportionately Black, Puerto Rican, and Native American). In response to the workshop "Campus Racism and the Rebirth of Militant Black Student Activism," students from around the country and from Canada reportedly held a caucus on Saturday evening to discuss further activities to help rebuild the student movement.

After a 15- to 20-year lull in radical activity in the Black liberation movement in the U.S., the success of this historic conference reinforces the impression that revolutionary activity is again stirring among African Americans. As the objective conditions in this country worsen, revolutionaries can count on increasing Black radicalization. Against the background of the collapse of the Stalinist monolith and the crisis of capitalism, revolutionary socialist ideas may find greater receptivity in the Black liberation movement than ever before. Black revolutionaries should encourage radical comrades of all races to support this and other important steps to rebuild militant struggle and resistance in the United States and throughout the world.

If you would like to get a copy of the Malcolm X Conference Program and Study Guide, contact 21st Century Books, 607 E. Muddy Waters Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60653, (312) 538-2188. For video and audiotapes of individual conference sessions, contact Melvin Simmons, 116-07 205th St., St. Albans, New York 11412 (718) 712-5625. For other information regarding the conference, contact Malcolm X Conference, Cooperative Research Network, Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers Street, #5749, New York, New York 10007. □

November 6, 1990

The political climate in France following the desecration of a Jewish cemetery in the southern town of Carpentras last May has dramatically underscored the threat of the French far-right. It also highlights the bankruptcy of the traditional left parties and the Social Democratic government, not to mention the bourgeois parties, in effectively taking up the fight against racism, anti-Semitism, and neofascism. The incident itself involved the mutilation of the corpse of a freshly buried 81-year-old member of Carpentras's thousand-year-old Jewish community. Many expected the near-universal outrage which followed to lead to the isolation and even decline of the far-right wing National Front (FN) of Jean-Marie Le Pen. But the failure of the Social Democratic Mitterrand-Rocard government, and all the mainstream political parties, to take energetic measures against the FN has meant that it has been anything but isolated.

The anti-Semitic outrage in Carpentras represents an extension of racism that has been aimed primarily at the immigrant working class population from the former French colonies of North Africa—mostly Algerians. This has plagued France for some time. While anti-immigrant sentiment has long been part of the discourse of the mainstream right, the revulsion against widespread French collaboration in the deportation of many French Jews to the Nazi death camps during World War II has long mitigated against the open expression of anti-Semitic views in France. But the mainstream political parties, and above all the workers' movement, have failed to offer solutions to the racism of the far-right. That has encouraged the anti-Semitism that has long simmered below the surface, along with the emboldening of all who hold reactionary views.

Le Pen has taken advantage of this atmosphere by publicly describing the Nazi concentration camps as a "detail" in the history of World War II, while other FN spokespeople have sought to win credence for the reactionary lie that the holocaust never occurred. Le Pen has also fulminated against "Jewish control" of the media and the threat of a "Jewish International."

As great a threat as anti-Semitism is, the real target of the FN remains the millions of North African immigrants and their children—the weakest and most vulnerable part of the French working class. Their plight was most recently highlighted by two days of violent protests in the Lyonnaise suburb of Vaulx-en-Velin. These followed the latest in a series of racist murders by cops and right-wing vigilantes in the Lyon region.

Most North African immigrants in France do not enjoy political rights. There has been agitation to secure the right to vote on a municipal level based on the fact that immigrants pay taxes. In the wake of the Carpentras incident the Socialist Party (PS), which enjoys a parliamentary majority and the control of the presidency and government—and also heads up one of the two largest trade union confederations, the Democratic French Workers' Confederation (CFDT)—missed a prime opportunity to rally public opinion in favor of the right of immigrants to vote at the municipal level. Instead, the government held a widely publicized "round table" on racism and integration. This had the effect of fanning

the flames of the racist forces with its talk of fighting "clandestine immigration" rather than dealing in a positive way with the problems faced by immigrants.

The blatant efforts of French imperialism to shore up the corrupt African regimes now under attack by their own people—most recently the Mobongo regime in Gabon—as well as the French military presence in the Middle East following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, has made the PS's attitude towards the people of former French and other imperialist colonies crystal clear. The failure of the PS to take a firm stand in favor of immigrant rights reveals its acceptance of at least part of the premises of the racist discourse of the far-right. Instead of explaining the threat to *all* workers that racism and anti-Semitism represent, and agitating for a workers' united front against the FN, the government and the PS have taken measures against the FN that have been so weak and ill-considered that Le Pen has simply been able to turn them to his own advantage.

For example, following Carpentras a number of PS-controlled municipal governments banned Le Pen from speaking in public. Claiming to be even-handed, they also banned antifascist, anti-

racist counterdemonstrations organized to protest Le Pen's presence. Instead of politically confronting Le Pen and his racist xenophobia, they undermined the potential for antifascist unity by forbidding those who opposed the FN from demonstrating peacefully. At the same time they made a martyr of Le Pen by silencing his party while others are able to speak.

As for the French Communist Party (PCF), they have only recently come out—in a rather timid fashion—in favor of the defense of immigrant rights. As of yet, their efforts have been far short of what is necessary to redress the damage they helped cause by taking anti-immigrant stands in many of the municipalities they controlled throughout the 1980s.

The mainstream right-wing bourgeois political parties oppose the neofascism of Le

Pen—at least for the moment—but find themselves unable to effectively counter the FN's politics for two basic reasons. On the one hand, they share a good deal of the anti-immigrant, anti-Communist ideology of the FN. This, coupled with their refusal to enter into electoral alliances with FN, can prove to be a dangerous game. As Le Pen himself has pointed out, when Giscard d'Estaing starts talking like Le Pen, French voters will want the real thing, rather than a stale imitation.

Secondly, the various bourgeois political formations like the neo-Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) are more interested in jockeying for hegemony amongst themselves than presenting a united opposition to the FN. In a recent by-election in Villeurbanne—an industrial suburb of France's second largest city, Lyon—the National Front came in second with a very strong showing in the first round of voting. It was just behind the PS but well ahead of the mainstream bourgeois parties. A leader of the RPR and mayor of Grenoble, Alain Carignon, proposed a "Republican Front" of all the "democratic parties" of the left and right, which meant in

The Antiracist Struggle in France Today

by Keith Mann

A noticeable increase in racist activities in a number of countries makes the issue of racism and national oppression a distinct component of the international political scene from Eastern Europe to the imperialist centers of Western Europe and North America. In the United States racist attacks have increased over the recent period while racists have sought to reach a mass audience. David Duke, an ex-Klu Klux Klan leader, recently won over 40 percent of the vote in a congressional election in Louisiana. Future articles in the Bulletin in Defense of Marxism will discuss and analyze racism in the U.S. and throughout the world. The following article looks at the antiracist struggle in France where this issue is at the center of national politics.

this case that the right should call for a vote for the PS in the second round in order to fight the FN. The reaction from his own party was swift. Not only would the RPR refuse to call upon its supporters to vote for the PS (they called for a boycott), but Carignon was severely reprimanded for making such a wild suggestion.

The FN is still widely considered by its supporters and opponents as simply a racist party. Its electoral support is generally viewed as a protest. One recent poll concluded that 40 percent of those sympathetic to Le Pen do not believe that he really has a solution to the question of immigration. But Le Pen and his party have responded to the entry of overt racism into the accepted mainstream political discourse in France. They are attempting to elaborate a fuller political program, with the hope that this will help the FN to be seen as capable of ruling France. The recent seventh congress of the FN was held under the theme of "The March Towards Power," and FN spokespeople are fond of talking these days about how they are preparing to assume the responsibilities of governing.

Several extracts from their program give a flavor for the type of France they would like to see. They call for an "aristocratic society" which would bear many resemblances to the "society of orders" that the collaborationist Vichy government of Marshal Pétain dreamed of creating during World War II. According to this vision the struggle of social classes would be suppressed in favor of hierarchically run national sectors—like "industry" and "agriculture"—which would work towards "national unity." Factory managers, for example, would enjoy a monopoly of control in the factories, including total freedom to hire and fire workers without being constrained by collective bargaining. They would enjoy complete control over working conditions, scheduling the length of the working day in "shops, offices, stores, in the rules of overtime pay," etc. Trade unions predictably would not have much of a role. "The advantages accorded to Marxist unions must be rescinded." Strikes would be forbidden in the public service sector. As for women, "they must be aided in devoting themselves fully to their own children." This means an end to women's work outside of the home and the repeal of laws assuring the right to abortion.

While the mainstream political parties of France have proven ineffective in fighting Le Pen, promising efforts have begun to build an effective antiracist movement. On July 9 over 150,000 attended a concert near Paris sponsored by the organization SOS racism. The concert followed a demonstration against racism, apartheid, colonialism, and the third world debt. SOS racism has organized a number of successful activities over the last few years, but their close association with the PS and the influence of left Zionists within the organization has meant that they have not taken up the question of Palestinian rights. This cuts across the ability of the organization to reach its full potential as an antiracist force—given the fact that Arabs are the biggest victims of racism in France.

Some of the most interesting and successful antiracist activity has taken place on the municipal level. Recently a campaign "J'y suis, J'y vote" (I'm here, I vote here) has been launched to win the right to vote for immigrants, who often constitute sizable percentages in certain French cities and who are subject to municipal taxes. City councils have been the arena of a number of important confrontations between the FN and antiracist forces. In the forefront of such struggles have been militants of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR)—French section of the Fourth International—who have been elected to a number of city councils throughout the country. They have used their offices as platforms to defend immigrants in their constituencies, confront the FN, and explain the true causes of unemployment and misery in French society.

The FN has responded to what it considers to be provocations by the LCR and other far-left forces with a series of lawsuits

charging defamation. The use of the courts has long been a favorite tactic of the FN. In the early 1980s they won a number of such trials. Recently, however, the courts have begun to dismiss these suits. More importantly, their intended victims have used the threat of legal action against them to build broad united front, antiracist activities and alliances and to educate workers and youth about the threat the FN poses.

In Le Puy—a small city in central France—the LCR candidate for city council, a textile worker named Raymond Vacheron, fell just short of the requisite percentage of votes required to win a seat. During the course of the election Vacheron had charged that "the ideas of the National Front led to the massacre of fifty million people during the last world war. Never again!" This accurate assessment of the close proximity between Le Pen's ideas and those of German fascism enraged the FN and led to a defamation suit. A broad support committee was formed, including the regional CGT (the PCF-led union federation) and CFDT, members of the Greens, the PS, SOS racism, the PS mayor of Le Puy, and others. It rapidly collected 6,000 signatures in Vacheron's favor, followed by a demonstration of nearly 2,000.

Gerard Vaysse, a worker at the huge chemical plant Rhone-Poulenc and a leader of the LCR in Lyon, was elected to the city council. He headed a list of candidates made up of antiracist far-left and ecological forces in Venissieux, an industrial suburb of Lyon. A large number of immigrants live there. (Venissieux has elected PCF mayors continuously since 1935.) At the first public city council meeting Gerard referred to the two FN members who were also elected to the council as Nazis. As in Le Puy the FN responded by bringing a legal suit against Gerard. He also received a series

(Continued on page 40)

Special Issue of *Rouge* Published to Commemorate Trotsky

In commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky, the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), French section of the Fourth International, has published an attractive special magazine supplement to its newspaper, *Rouge*. It contains articles by well-known revolutionary Marxists from many countries as well as rare photos of Trotsky during the revolution and in exile. *The Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* plans to publish translations of one or more of these articles in the future.

The special *Rouge* can be ordered by sending \$5 to PEC, 2 Rue Richard Lenoir, 93100 Montreuil-sous-Bois, France. Specify that it is for "Trotsky Vivant," Numero Hors Serie Rouge.

Contents:

- "When History Takes Revenge," by Christian Picquet
 - "The Courageous Choice," by François Moreau
 - "A World Without Visas," by Leon Trotsky
 - "Meeting Trotsky," by Raymond Molinier
 - "Shoot the Mad Dogs," by Peter Huber
 - "The Tragedy of the Bronsteins," by Alain Brossat
 - "The Exposure of 'Real Existing Socialism,'" by Livio Maitan
 - "Against the Party-State," by Antoine Artous
 - "Without Lenin, Before October," by François Ollivier
 - "The Economic Alternative," by Ernest Mandel
 - "Talent Against Mediocrity," by Boris Kagarlitsky
 - "Being a Revolutionary in Eastern Europe," by Peter Uhl
 - "Trotsky's Last Fight," by Daniel Bensaïd
-

The USSR: Toward a Major Crisis?

by Livio Maitan

Four months after this article was written, the crisis in the Soviet Union is getting more and more acute. The economic situation has worsened significantly. According to 13 economists who collaborated to draft the radical program for a transformation of the economy in 500 days, the country is headed for hyperinflation. The economic project which was finally adopted is once more the result of an extremely difficult compromise and nobody knows to what extent it will be carried out. (For the time being, not a few enterprises and local administrations are trying to solve their problems by introducing some kind of barter economy.) As for the national question, the Soviet Federation is almost falling apart and, in the most extreme cases, armed clashes have taken place. Last but not least, although he formally succeeded in concentrating significant power in his hands, Gorbachev's position has certainly been weakened. Thus we think that the conclusions of our article are still essentially valid—Livio Maitan, November 11, 1990.

At the twenty-eighth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Gorbachev seems to have reinforced his position—insofar as the head of the conservative forces, Ligachev, chose to retire after a resounding defeat and the best leaders of the so-called radical wing left the party. Nonetheless, this is only a partial success—on the level of control over the party apparatus or what will remain of it. More bluntly it is a Pyrrhic victory, a prelude to defeats. At the conference of the Russian Communist Party, Gorbachev had affirmed that there was a “socially explosive mixture” in the country. At the CP congress he explained that there were only two years in which to make perestroika work. In fact the conflicts have multiple levels, and the centrifugal tendencies have never been stronger. A few days after the end of the congress the president did not hesitate to issue an appeal to the country: the dynamic unfolding as a result of the measures taken by the two principal republics to concretize their declarations of independence represents, according to him, a major barrier to the creation of a “market economy” for the entire federation. In the face of the miners’ mobilization, while recognizing the validity of their demands, he resorted to some strong language: “Someone wants to organize the workers against perestroika. This poses a mortal danger.”

Did Gorbachev exaggerate when he said that the Soviet Union is basically on the road to an explosion? The answer to this question is not simple. We will attempt to look at the underlying features of the situation and to grasp the possible dynamics.

Some Data on the Economic Situation

The evolution of the economic situation has contributed, in a very substantial way, to both the aggravation of the social and political crisis and to the erosion of Gorbachev’s power.

As others have emphasized,¹ figures made public at the beginning of the year did not justify an apocalyptic vision. To the contrary, in fact, a stagnant tendency was confirmed from the point of view of production—with sectors of progress. In 1989, the gross national product (GNP) increased by around 3 percent (what the Soviets call the net material product—NMT—by 2.4 percent) and industrial output by 1.7 percent, whereas production of food grains registered a noticeable increase, returning to the high levels of 1987. The availability of consumer goods increased by 7 percent despite a slowdown in the expansion of the food industry. There

was a particularly strong increase in the production of alcoholic beverages—up 21 percent—which contributed to this. The investment budget decreased by 7 percent, but this did not necessarily signify that there was an overall drop in investment; in essence, the enterprises were forced to rely more on credit and on their own resources.

The year 1990 opened under a cloud. According to preliminary estimates the GNP was projected to shrink by 5 percent in the first four months (*International Herald Tribune*, May 14). In the first half of the year the GNP would in fact decrease by 1 percent, industrial output by 0.7 percent, petroleum products by 5 percent and coal by 6 percent, housing construction by 1.5 percent, and the productivity of labor by 1.5 percent. The unemployed would already number eight million strong. But other indicators are more revealing of the tensions and bottlenecks in the Soviet economy.

Firstly, the rate of inflation reached 7.5 percent. Though this is not particularly high in and of itself, it reflects a fundamental contradiction: on the one hand, incomes have increased by 12.9 percent (that is to say, an increase which is four times greater than projected), particularly as a result of wage increases—often obtained by strikes (for example, the miners)—in the salaries of the bureaucrats, and in pensions;² on the other hand, the “scarcity of goods,” far from lessening, has grown more acute. Suffice it to say that of the thousand products monitored by the Federal Research Institute only one hundred have been regularly available. (The balance sheet is still more negative in relation to durable goods.) There is, therefore, an increase in unsatisfied demand simultaneously with a “flight from the ruble,” which manifests itself in unnecessary purchases. One of the consequences of this has been the extension of rationing.

Secondly, tensions are on the increase in relation to the countryside. The collective and state farms held back part of their deliveries to the state. (Normally these would amount to 39 percent of their crop; in 1989 the figure was only 30 percent.) They preferred to use part of their produce as livestock feed or to sell it in the parallel market—since the price paid by the state did not seem profitable.

Thirdly, the USSR is beginning to compromise its good reputation as a credit-worthy international trading partner. For example, in the month of March it was late in the payment of 500 million dollars for imported wheat. Almost simultaneously there was a delay in payments due to the North American DuPont trust, to the

German Federal Republic (\$1.6 million), to Japan (\$500 million), and to Italy (\$200 million). Beginning in June, the president of the State Planning Commission, Isouri Masliukov, declared: "We no longer have the money to buy cereal grains" (*Le Monde*, June 6). "The delays in payment have already led foreign banks to reduce their credit" (*Corriere della sera*, June 28). This new situation results from the fact that, whereas before only big exporters were licensed to negotiate (for example, on the matter of grain imports) and were supported by the central bank, now there is a proliferation of licensees (in the neighborhood of 12,000) and the central planners are no longer in a position to exercise control (*Corriere della sera*, April 19, and *L'Unita*, June 26).

The Reforms at an Impasse

To understand the present economic situation it is necessary to draw a balance sheet, even if only a rough one, of the reforms begun during the last three years.

The first reform—launched, we recall, in July 1987—dealt with the independence of the enterprises. The more-or-less official Soviet position in relation to this, and foreign specialists agree, is that the measure has never been implemented. To the extent that it was applied it provoked perverse effects, as its advocates were the first to realize. In fact, the enterprises do not actually possess the means necessary to develop any real autonomy and to make a profit from their activities; the prices and allocation of resources continued to be determined by the central administration. "The great tragedy of our economy rests in this reality: that in principle the enterprises have much more decision-making power than before, but in fact the center continues to command," declared the secretary of the party in Leningrad, Boris Guidaspov (*Corriere della sera*, July 8).³ On the other hand, their growing margin for maneuver has permitted enterprises to carry out some doubtful practices—for example, increasing profits by inflating prices, and conceding wage increases far higher than would be justified by any real increase in productivity.

On January 1 of this year the laws regulating enterprises were extended throughout the state sector, with changes designed to avoid restrictive interpretations and to legalize things that were actually taking place. Thus, enterprises were able, from that point, to issue bonds which pay dividends, create subsidiaries, consortia, etc., to separate themselves from the collective production of which they are a part. All of this goes in the direction of increasing their autonomy. But certain measures from 1987 are suspended until the end of 1990. For example, for a whole series of products it is no longer the norm for buyers and sellers to determine prices on the basis of a range fixed by the central administration, and the weight of state orders has increased, most notably in the consumer-goods sector. Limits have also been introduced regarding the export of such goods. Finally, in certain industrial sectors, wage earners no longer have the right to elect the director and the managing personnel.

Secondly, according to a decree on the decentralization of foreign trade (December 2, 1988), individual enterprises will now be allowed to negotiate directly with foreigners and to plan their own imports and exports. As we have already mentioned, around 12,000 enterprises have this right. But this does not mean they can actually exercise it. In practice, exports and imports remain under the control of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Affairs.

Thirdly, a law designed to favor the development of cooperatives was adopted in May 1988. Following this, restrictions were set at the federal level (decision of the Council of Ministers, December 1988) and also locally. (At the end of last year, the Moscow City Council presented a list of activities from which cooperatives were banned, and limited the number of workers they could employ.)⁴ Nevertheless, the number of cooperatives has continued to increase. In the first half of 1989, 9,250 were created

each month; in the second half around 10,000. On January 1 of this year, 193,400 cooperatives were in operation; 4.8 million people (3.5 percent of the active workforce) were employed by them, doing a total business of 40.5 billion rubles (that is to say, 4.5 percent of the GNP and 8.5 percent of the total available goods and services). The largest number were in private construction, agriculture, and intellectual activities (research, studies, planning, administration, etc.). In fact, they have less and less of a relationship to their original goal, which was an improvement in the level and conditions of life of the population. They have often tended to work directly for state enterprises: four out of five being formed as subsidiaries of state enterprises which in turn receive 70 percent of the total product of the cooperatives. We will not go further into a phenomenon that rightly deserves our attention—the discontent engendered by cooperatives which establish prohibitive prices for the majority of the population, even engaging in pure and simple speculation.

It is clearly too early to draw up a balance sheet of the new law on agriculture (it would have to be completed at the level of the republics), which was adopted last February 28 and officially presented as "The most important text of the economic reform." What was actually passed has a more limited scope. It does not change the fundamental structures since it only proclaims the right of peasants to own plots of land which can be left as inheritance—but not bought or sold, given as gifts, or mortgaged. The peasants will choose between remaining on the collective farms, or engaging in individual farming on such private plots which will be given to them free of charge. (They will have to pay a real estate tax after a transition period of three years.) They will not be able to hire workers for wages. It seems that the reactions to this law were quite diverse, and that the peasants, certainly the younger generation, are hesitant to launch an enterprise that seems risky to them.⁵

Before this law, in August 1989, a decision was made to pay collective farms in hard currency for their surplus grain production measured against previous years. This operation ended in failure. The payments amounted to only 0.9 percent of state purchases as far as good-quality wheat was concerned. To be exact, the state only paid in hard currency for 223,000 tons, whereas the forecast was for several million (*Le Monde*, June 6).

The fact that, in its effort to introduce reforms and to surmount its economic impasse, the Soviet leadership runs up against enormous difficulties is confirmed by the fate of one plan after another, one economic program after another—most notably the proposals of Ryzhkov and Abalkin.⁶

Ryzhkov's program—adopted in December 1989—envisaged for the following year, by way of wishful thinking, a considerable growth in the production of consumer goods (13.5 percent). In spite of all the discussion about the market, it relied on the command economy, more concretely on the commands of the state, to increase what was available. It projected, at the same time, measures for absorbing the "over-liquidity": organization of parallel channels of distribution and of "commercial outlets"; creation of a network of "commercial outlets" where prices would be two to five times higher than those previously charged; and diverse anti-inflationary measures. Four months later, it had to be acknowledged that the program was never implemented. (For example, because of the opposition of the unions, certain prices had not been raised and it was necessary to abandon the idea of reducing the state subsidy as had been proposed.)

Abalkin's plan, developed in November of last year, included three possible variants. The first, considered the most conservative, involved the gradual introduction of measures leading to a market economy. The second was more radical: it involved a sharp break with the past and a rapid move toward a market economy. The third, midway between the other two—the choice of Abalkin himself in the given situation—projected three stages. During the first of these, covering the year 1990, the legal framework for the

reform would be set up, consisting of a system of indexing wages on the basis of prices and a process of either leasing those industrial enterprises which ran a deficit (9 percent of the total) or else transforming them into cooperatives. In the course of the second phase the market would begin to establish itself, with a partial freeing up of prices. At the same time, the liquidation of unprofitable enterprises would continue, including in agriculture. In the third phase—from 1993 to 1995—the reforms would be deepened (dismantling of monopolies, generalization of trade at the wholesale level and in means of production, complete openness to foreign investment, etc.) Following the downfall of Ryzhkov's program, however, a similar fate was in store for the proposals of Abalkin.

In mid-March, after the constitutional reform, Gorbachev declared his intention to go ahead resolutely with his reforms. Abalkin's plan was relaunched in its most radical form. But resistance emerged even among the Presidential Council and the state administration. This resulted in a new proposal—of more modest scope—which Ryzhkov presented to the Supreme Soviet on May 24. It involved presentation by the government to the Congress of the People, during the month of September, of nine laws which would include antimonopoly measures, a loosening of controls on foreign investment, and a banking reform (independence of the central bank). It also projected a privatization of around 60 percent of the state enterprises—mostly in the agricultural and commercial sectors—through the issuing of stock or leases. During the first period almost all of the stock would remain in the hands of the state. In any case, the reforms would only begin to have practical effect in 1993. For the first 18 months, mostly prices would be reformed: 15 percent to be effectively freed from any control, 60 percent to remain fixed by the state, and 25 percent to be regulated by the government. The price of food products would double, municipal taxes would increase by 70 percent, the cost of transportation by 50 percent, that of electricity by 100

*'There is a continuous development
of all kinds of paralyzing
and centrifugal tendencies'*

percent.⁷ But, finally, this plan suffered the same fate as those which had gone before: it was not accepted by the Supreme Soviet, which also rejected a proposal presented separately to triple the price of bread.

It is not surprising, in this context, that there is a continuous development of all kinds of paralyzing and centrifugal tendencies. In his comments at the congress of the Soviet Communist Party, Gorbachev put it quite bluntly: "In the initial stage of forging new economic relations, of developing self-management and self-financing, tendencies are appearing which push toward territorial and economic isolationism, toward divisiveness, toward setting up exclusively local markets. Vitaly important economic links are thus called into question. The territorial division of labor, areas of specialization, and the system of cooperation forged over the course of decades are upset." *Actualities Sovietiques*, unnumbered, June 1990, p. 11). In other words—to paraphrase a public appeal issued after a meeting of directors of enterprises controlled by the Ministry of Heavy Industry—a chaotic situation reigns regarding the allocation of resources and exchanges between individual enterprises and industrial sectors (*Financial Times*, July 20). In this context, the narrow interests of one or another city, of one or another region, are often given priority. For example, in anticipation of a rise in prices people rushed to make purchases. To guarantee that they don't find themselves without

a minimum of supplies, towns and regions have erected real barriers to trade.

The USSR is, therefore, more and more torn apart by the characteristic contradictions of a bureaucratic transitional society which introduces market reforms: the old mechanisms and resources of an administratively planned economy no longer function—or work less and less well. New mechanisms and resources do not yet exist. The danger, therefore, is to suffer simultaneously from the consequences of the old system and the evils of a partially introduced (very partial) "market economy." Gorbachev and his collaborators are very much aware of this.⁸

Bonapartist Tightrope Walking

It is in this context of increasing economic difficulties, the paralysis of the structural reforms, and under the pressure of growing social movements, that Gorbachev has once more given priority to changes on the political front.

In the beginning he explained that it was necessary to make a sharp distinction between the party and institutions of the state. In fact, following consecutive elections where the candidates of the apparatus suffered stinging defeats, his ideological-political project began to acquire a concrete content—beyond anything Gorbachev had expected. However, while advocating this separation, Gorbachev insisted on a different approach in his own case. In the situation of instability and crisis, the essence of which we have described, he did not want to relinquish his role in the leadership of the party. He still considers this to be a fundamental tool for realizing his objectives. In fact, he was looking for a concentration of power in his own hands.

The governmental reform adopted last spring goes still further in this direction. Gorbachev did not hide that fact when he said, during his report to the plenum of the CP in February, that the key to the reform was "the institution of the presidency, with all the indispensable powers, to finally make the politics of perestroika work." In other words, he stressed his role as a mediator of the Bonapartist type at the summit of the Soviet system.¹⁰

Unhappily for Gorbachev, the mere fact that a whole series of constitutional powers have been placed at his disposal does not automatically mean that he will be able to use them effectively. In reality, between the adoption of the presidential reforms and the congress of the CP his position was seriously weakened and, as we have already noted concerning the plan of Ryzhkov, mechanisms of resistance were at work—including in the heart of the newly constituted state organization.

It is well known that the eruption of the national struggle in the Caucasus, in the Baltic states, and elsewhere, had already, for two or three years, created major problems for Gorbachev's ruling group. The situation was made worse following the declaration of sovereignty by the Russian Republic on June 12 and by the Ukraine a few weeks later. It is difficult to say now what all of the concrete implications of these proclamations will be. But there is no doubt that they are pregnant with multiple, explosive conflicts and that the president of the federation is in danger of having his power significantly crippled.

Secondly, the social movements—notably of the workers—far from receding, are still growing: the mobilization of the miners during the congress itself was the most striking proof of this. For Gorbachev it will be even more difficult than during the last year to annex the miners' strikes to perestroika, since they actually represent one more challenge to his authority.

Thirdly, the conservative wing, in still greater disarray as a result of municipal elections in the major cities, called on the apparatus to provide assistance on that terrain which, in principle, is most favorable for them—the structures of the party. They especially counted on the development of the Communist Party in Russia—and saw the conference of that party, where the con-

servatives of every hue had literally gone wild, as a dress rehearsal for the congress of the CPSU which was coming up soon.

The response of Gorbachev—formulated clearly enough already in his report to the Russian congress—can be summed up in the following points:

- The economic reforms developed since 1953, and never fully implemented, had only “patched up the Stalinist command-administrative system.” On the other hand, “in the course of only one year, 1987, the basis was laid for a much more far-reaching reform than before. . . . In three years, we have wholly resolved all of the problems which were the object of long discussions and efforts during more than thirty years.”
- In the political sphere, the country is “on the threshold of an authentic pluralism. Openness has become a powerful impulse for progress. Socialist democracy, which was only a propaganda slogan, has become a reality.”
- Any retreat on the question of perestroika would be just as inconceivable as on glasnost: “This would be a real disaster, a dead end for our society.” (“A dark age would be on the horizon for us and for the whole people,” he said at the congress of the CPSU.)
- The radical wing does not represent a credible alternative. They project only a demagogic populism without real content. Their extreme wing advocates, in fact, the return of capitalism, which is unacceptable.
- The party remains a necessary instrument, including for the realization of perestroika. It will not be able to accomplish its tasks if it transforms itself into a simple parliamentary-type party, that is to say, “a vague club devoid of any political potential.”

More concretely, Gorbachev proposed as a compromise, as a way out of the impasse, the formation of a coalition, of which he would be the guarantor and which would include—as a significant part of its membership—a substantial portion of the conservatives and the radicals. The goal would be to avoid a split which “would lead to an extreme polarization of forces in society” and constitute “a gift to all those who want to scuttle perestroika.”

There we have the attitude which Gorbachev was forced to take during the congress of the CPSU.

The Congress of the CPSU

The congress was the scene of a clash the likes of which the party had not seen since the 1920s.¹¹ Despite the moderate tone of Gorbachev’s report he took advantage of dramatic moments at the congress. In the final analysis it reflected, in its overall framework and manner, the trends and contradictions which are now tearing Soviet society apart. The representatives of different currents, undercurrents, feelings, pressure groups, often expressed their deepest feelings—without mincing words and ignoring the traditional rituals that had marked congresses for long decades.¹²

Thus we heard the most extreme conservatives explaining that perestroika is responsible for all the evils which afflict the country; while the military—ever so nostalgic about past “glories”—violently denounced the “capitulations” of the new, strange politics. We heard Ligachev warn (will it be the last time?) against all that constitutes, in his eyes, a mortal danger, and only declares himself in favor of perestroika on the condition that it remain in the framework of traditional politics—which is to say, in the first place, under the hegemony of the party. (In effect, Ligachev extolled the type of reforms that were implemented in the 1950s and ’60s.) We heard the interventions of those radicals who had closed the book on the party, and of those who—having all supported the Democratic Platform—did not intend to leave. And we heard the multiple and disparate voices of the “centrist” Gor-

bachevites. Some, like Yakovlev and Abalkin, presented a vigorous denunciation of Stalinism, of its failures and its crimes. As to Yeltsin, he unfurled his banner and set terms that would have allowed, in his view, the avoidance of a split: formalizing the different political platforms; changing the party’s name to “the Party of Democratic Socialism”; adopting a general program for the transformation of the CPSU; electing a new leadership and calling a new congress in six months; suppressing the party organization in the armed forces, the KGB, and all the institutions of the state; and finally formation of a “Union of Democratic Forces,” a kind of open electoral front “for all those with a socialist orientation” which would have a federated-type structure. Such conditions were certain to only be rejected with indignation by the conservatives, and Gorbachev could also not agree to them. In addition, Yeltsin challenged the legitimacy of the congress which,

‘Nothing indicates that the tensions around the national question will lessen in the short to medium term’

according to him, did not represent the people or even the party: “It is unable to decide the future of perestroika. At the most it decides the future of the party—more precisely, the future of the leading party apparatus.” This is, in fact, a proper appreciation of the congress for the most part.

Despite the strength which they had at the beginning—around 60 percent of the delegates¹³—the conservatives proved anew that they have no credible alternative to propose, that they are only able to wage a rearguard action and play an obstructionist role. Gorbachev moved to the offensive toward the end of the congress with a strong condemnation of the past and a restatement of his alternative. What’s more, he imposed structures and methods of functioning for the leadership apparatus that enhanced his powers and turned aside all the palace conspiracies (insofar as he was elected directly by the congress, and this cannot be overturned either by the Political Bureau or the Central Committee). In principle, therefore, he will be able to push his role of Bonaparte still further.

Nevertheless, as we have already said, this must be recognized as a Pyrrhic victory.

In reality, he has not succeeded in avoiding a split, which he himself stressed would have the most dangerous consequences. We do not know how many members will leave the party and still less how many plan to adhere to the new party which will be launched in October.¹⁴ Be that as it may, personalities like Yeltsin, Popov (the mayor of Moscow), and Sobciak (mayor of Leningrad) will be able to count on a large popular base—much more than that enjoyed by the leaders of the CPSU—and occupy decisive offices in the new institutional framework. At the same time, nothing indicates that tensions around the national question will lessen in the short or medium term. On the contrary, it is quite probable that they will become more and more serious, more widespread, with inevitable repercussions for the functioning of the country—including the governing bodies created as a result of the reform—and for the newly composed Political Bureau.¹⁵ As for the party, it is in danger of suffering a still greater isolation in society as a whole, and of finding itself reduced still more to just the apparatus—where the conservatives maintain a considerable weight. Under such conditions, how will Gorbachev be able to make use of it for the realization of perestroika, as he projected doing in his last speeches?

Will he be able to use his diplomatic success and the support which he garners from the Western European and North American powers? Leaving aside the fact that certain successes are at least

double-edged, and are not unreservedly appreciated—including outside the conservative milieu¹⁶—his international prestige will be of partial assistance to Gorbachev. But it will not be able to compensate for his growing weakness in the wake of domestic difficulties and crises.

Toward Capitalist Restoration?

Will the crisis of Soviet society end up, in the final analysis, with a restoration of capitalism? That is a question which many militants in the workers' and revolutionary movements have continued to ask (more legitimately with regard to the other countries of Eastern Europe).

In our article which appeared a year ago in *Quatrième Internationale* (No. 34) [translator's note: this article was never published in English], we gave a negative response to this question in light of our assessment of the situation and the tendencies which existed at that time. We especially underlined the structural obstacles that stood in the way of restoration, at least in the short or medium term. We will not recapitulate all of this here. Instead we will limit ourselves to a quick look at what has happened in the meantime.

First of all, let's see if those schemes pointing in the direction of privatization actually came to fruition and, in the end, to what degree.

Already in 1987 the idea was advanced of leasing enterprises to their employees. Up to the beginning of this year, 1,322 industrial enterprises (2.8 percent of all enterprises, 0.1 percent in 1988), 731 construction firms, 4,911 state and collective farms (9.8 percent of the total), 988 commercial establishments, 1,043 restaurant chains, etc., had effectively been leased. To be precise, the lease most often was not for the total enterprise, but was limited to particular workshops or departments. High rents and taxes have constituted an obstacle to this form of privatization.

Secondly, resulting from a pilot project in a Ukrainian enterprise (January 1988) a regulation was adopted concerning two types of stock issues: stocks sold to other state enterprises, to banks, to cooperatives, and to other organizations (the total not to be greater than half the real assets), and stocks sold to the workers of an enterprise (to constitute a maximum total of 30 percent of the fixed and circulating capital, with workers able to obtain a total which was equivalent to five times their monthly salary up to a limit of 10,000 rubles). This buying of stock does not represent real capitalist investment: the stock could not be transferred. There is no secondary market and those who wanted to dispose of their stocks had to return them to the original source. According to an estimate by the economist Chmeliov, in the middle of 1989 stocks worth 100 million rubles (a thirtieth of the total savings of the population) had been distributed.

Thirdly, commercial banks and cooperatives began to be created. This means real private credit institutions which are growing in number (41 as of January 1, 1989, and 225 one year later, with a capital of 2.3 billion rubles). These banks were put together at the initiative of enterprises, organizations, or the state banks—in the form of joint-stock companies without majority control, or as cooperatives.

Some commentators have focused on the development of commerce at the wholesale level, which, they say, represents an important step toward the restoration of capitalism. There has been an incontestable growth in this commerce: the figures for trade were 10 billion rubles in 1987, more than 40 billion in 1988, and around 100 billion a year later. But, as stressed by those who contributed to the issue of *le Courrier des pays de l'Est* (cited in footnote 1) among others, the State Committee for Supply of Material and Equipment still has the upper hand in exchanges between enterprises, which could not take place without a lot of administrative red tape.

Finally, we should look at the international agreements and joint ventures, which have been highly touted during recent months—for example, the agreement between the Soviet government and the French company Elf Aquitaine, greeted as "historic" by Soviet vice-premier Lev Voronine (*Le Monde*, May 25), or the accords with Fiat which would have given birth, according to Italian interests, "to the most important joint venture realized up to now between the Soviets and a Western industrial enterprise" (*Corriere della sera*, May 9). However, the end result is somewhat more modest. We do not yet have at our disposal the figures for 1990. At the end of 1989, around 1,300 businesses had been registered, of which only a minority were really involved in industrial enterprises. Of these 1,300, only 184 companies were actually operating, and only half of these were making a profit (*Financial Times*, February 1). Taken together, the joint ventures constituted 0.02 percent of Soviet production.¹⁷

In addition, experience allows us to verify the existence of many problems, most notably the fact that foreign investors "only contributed a minority of funds (foreign companies have contributed only 20 percent of the investment in all the mixed enterprises) whereas they sometimes enjoyed speculative profits and a series of concessions" (*Moscow News*, No. 15, 1990).

This forces us to conclude that in the course of the last year no qualitative change has taken place in the old system.

Although our article is devoted to the situation and the problems of the Soviet Union, let us nevertheless make some reference to the evolution of the other Eastern European countries.

In terms of joint ventures, Hungary—along with Poland—put itself in the vanguard. We recall that since January 1989 foreign investment is authorized up to 100 percent. There were 1,800 mixed companies up to that point, with a spectacular growth in the course of the last year. One of the more important enterprises, Tungsram, managed for more than a year by an international banking consortium, has passed to the control of General Electric. At the beginning of the year, the Japanese company Suzuki announced a large investment for 1992 in the construction of light machinery, and an accord was signed between General Motors and the truck manufacturer Raba. The mixed company will belong 67 percent to General Motors, which will provide \$100 million out of a total \$150 million capital (*Le Monde*, January 16, *Financial Times*, January 15). During the same period, a group of North American investors bought half of a Hungarian bank (*International Herald Tribune*, January 26). In the month of July, an agreement was announced between the Hungarian government and Ford. In terms of the press, powerful international groups, such as the German Axel-Springer, have made real incursions. According to the *Financial Times* of June 15, out of forty daily national and local papers, five national and ten local are already under foreign control.

Finally, on July 21, after a lively debate, the Hungarian government decided that land would gradually be returned to those who owned it in 1947. Nevertheless, an important limitation was set: only those old property owners who have continuously cultivated their land would be able to benefit from this decision.

The problems of Poland are taken up in another article in this issue of *Quatrième Internationale*. We will limit ourselves here to noting that the agency for foreign investment had authorized, in 1989, the creation of 867 mixed companies (there were 13 in 1987 and 40 in 1988) with a capital of 79.4 million dollars (12.6 the preceding year). At the end of March, the total registered mixed companies were 1,231: 25 percent in agriculture and food processing, 20 percent in services, 17 percent in light industry, 9 percent in chemicals and pharmaceuticals, 8 percent in tourism and hotels, 7 percent in construction. In the same period, an accord was signed with Scandinavian shipyards. In the month of April, a law was voted on the privatization of enterprises and a list of a dozen important local enterprises to privatize was drawn up. The

privatization project was spread out over two years. There was only a very limited distribution of stocks to workers (*Financial Times*, June 14).

In principle, Czechoslovakia has also proclaimed itself in favor of a market economy and some of its most fervent advocates, like Klaus, seem to have the upper hand in determining government economic choices. In the few months that followed the downfall of the former regime projects were already announced, for example between Renault and Skoda.¹⁸ In June, a preliminary accord was sketched out between the government and General Motors (*Financial Times*, June 26). The old shoe magnate, Bata, declared that for his part he was ready to come back into the country in order to renew his activities.

Thus we have some interesting developments. However, serious difficulties arise almost everywhere as soon as concrete action begins to be taken to actually implement projects or agreements. The best known case is the famous Gdansk shipyard. The operation of Barbara Piasecki Johnson misfired due to her extreme demands and, despite the privatization law, no other buyer has come forward so far. The case of the Hungarian enterprise, Ikarus, is similar. The Hungarian government put it on the list for privatization, but—at least up until April—it had not changed its status.

*'The largest share of capital
can only come from the state
or from foreign investment'*

More generally, it is estimated that in Hungary 90 to 95 percent of the enterprises are still controlled by the state or by elected enterprise councils. As for Poland, a recent *New York Times* article (June 26) underlined the difficulty involved in realizing substantial privatizations, notably of the large enterprises, and suggested slowing the pace of transition to a market economy. It drew a more general conclusion: "No country will be able to leap from communism to capitalism." For once we find ourselves in agreement with this authoritative voice of the American bourgeoisie.

What Perspectives?

The question is posed whether a qualitative change, which has not taken place up to now, is a future possibility in the short to medium term. It goes without saying that the answer is not the same for the Soviet Union or, for example, Hungary. In effect, it is entirely possible that in the space of a few years the multinationals or, more generally, capitalist enterprises will play a decisive role in the Hungarian economy. This would appear to be excluded in the Soviet Union. But, we repeat, major structural barriers continue everywhere.

First of all, we should remember, the bureaucracy as a social layer is not interested in restoring capitalism, nor is it able to do so. It is only from the moment that the crisis of decomposition of the old system has already been set in motion by forces beyond their control, and appears irreversible, that the bureaucrats, or some limited sectors, are led to seek individual solutions by participating, in one way or another, in the privatization campaign. The example of Poland, not to mention the GDR, speaks volumes on this subject. But even a generalization of this process, unlikely as that may be, would not resolve the problem. The bureaucrats, whose privileges exist on the level of consumption, do not have the necessary resources at their disposal to restart the economy on a capitalist basis. Not even the private entrepreneurs who exist, for example in the service sector, have such resources at their disposal. The idea of a solution based on the popular distribution of stocks

will not be taken seriously by anyone except people who are only interested in making ideological propaganda.

In reality, the largest share of capital can only come from the state or from foreign investment.

Beyond all the verbiage about the supposed triumph of the private sector over the state, the most serious bourgeois analysts also explain that the state and its major enterprises still play the principal role. With regard to the USSR, a correspondent of the North American press wrote, for example, "The state enterprises will dominate the economy for the foreseeable future" (*International Herald Tribune*, May 31). For his part, Pal Reti, correspondent for the *World Economic Weekly* published in Budapest, made a remark along similar lines: "In Eastern Europe, the state strains constantly to withdraw from all of the economic sectors. The irony is that we do need the assistance of the state." Besides, with whom are the joint ventures being built? Almost always the answer is with state enterprises, and it will remain so in the future. We add that the Bank for East European Reconstruction and Development (BERD), formed recently, decided to dedicate 40 percent of its resources to the state sector, all the while stating in its founding documents that its objective was to create "a market economy."

The desire of international capital to intervene on a grand scale is indisputable. Nevertheless, in the recent period, the international bourgeois press has seemed to increasingly pose the problems and underline the difficulty of realizing the desired objectives. For example, in a June 13 article titled, "The Art of the Impossible," the *Financial Times* asked rhetorically, "Won't the political miracles of 1989 and 1990 be transformed, in the final analysis, into an economic dead end?"¹⁹

The Marshall Plan, which contributed to the reconstruction and the economic recovery of capitalist Europe after the second world war, has often been cited as an example to follow. The more optimistic commentators—like the American senator Bill Bradley—have even calculated that the reconstruction of Eastern Europe would be possible if the equivalent of one percent of the U.S. military budget was used as a catalyst (*International Herald Tribune*, March 30). We should remind ourselves that between 1947 and 1955 the Marshall Plan sent \$17 billion each year to the participating European countries whereas, for the current year, the Bush administration has projected \$300 million in its budget for Eastern Europe. (The budget of the United States has tripled in comparison to the period of the Marshall Plan.)²⁰ What's more, the Marshall Plan had a very concrete social partner, the European bourgeoisie. Such a partner simply does not exist in the Soviet Union or in Eastern Europe and, in all these cases, it is going to be a matter of taking a deep breath and driving ahead.

We mentioned the formation of the BERD, in which the eight Eastern European countries are participating along with the twelve countries of the European Economic Community, the six members of the Economic Free Trade Association, and a series of other countries such as the United States, Japan, Canada, and Australia. The BERD will have a capital of 14 billion dollars. As Soviet commentators have remarked, since "the minimal necessary outside subsidy for Eastern Europe is estimated between 25 and 30 billion dollars, the new bank will only be able to supply a small part of the deficit. The projected volume of credits allocated to these countries for the coming years covers only one-tenth of their needs" (*Moscow News*, No. 19, 1990). *The Financial Times* of April 11 gave the BERD a lukewarm reception, underlining that the capital at its disposal was "tiny" and affirming that "it is improbable that the creation of the bank will be more than a modest contribution to the solution of the problems of Eastern Europe."²¹

The overall outlook has not changed following the recent meeting in Houston of the representatives of the seven most industrialized countries. Discord arose mostly because of the attitude of the United States, which insisted on imposing tough conditions for any assistance to the Soviet Union (including a substantial reduc-

tion in military expenditures and the elimination of aid to Cuba), while Bonn and Paris favored more rapid steps.²² In the end it was decided to set up a commission to study the economic problems of the USSR and to make recommendations on what to do. We will add that at the end of his visit to Moscow after Houston, Jacques Delors [translator's note: Jacques Delors is a leading economic expert of the EEC] declared forthrightly that before projecting the quantity, the nature, and the method of aid from the EEC he wanted to know what liberalization measures the Soviet government would announce in September. This confirmed the insightful commentary made by the *New York Times* about Houston: "The West has lost an opportunity to provide collective aid at a moment when Gorbachev has an enormous need for a political shove."

In fact, at the same time that they are proving cautious, governments and investors are demanding more and more guarantees. For example, Senator Lautenberg, one of the most important individuals for the development of policy regarding foreign trade in the United States, declared that investment is dependent on a "resolute economic reform" (and guarantees by the government in Washington). According to him, the reforms must allow, among other things, "access to principal financial services; the possibility of hiring and freely firing workers; and a workable system for reallocating the means of production, of storage, and of distribution" (*Moscow News*, No. 19). Others are demanding that the Soviets eliminate or reduce as much as possible the administrative red tape necessary, and ease access to credits and raw materials. In an article titled "A Difficult Road to Travel," the *New York Times* on May 5 presented a list "of the necessary ingredients for a plausible reform," mentioning notably the suppression of price controls, a monetary reform, fiscal reform, the creation of an efficient banking system, and laws guaranteeing the right to buy and sell land. The *Financial Times* of July 11 advanced similar demands, clarifying that "the existence of a government which brings about a political liberalization and a radical economic reform is a necessary precondition for Western aid."

Thus we have a vicious circle: Gorbachev, to get out of the impasse and launch his reforms, makes an appeal for Western assistance, but the capitalist countries demand that he realize the reforms before he can obtain that assistance.

Some Points for Political and Theoretical Discussion

Others have stated with some justice that during the last decades, if not to say for more than a century, there have been debates and discussions on the problem of the transition from capitalism to socialism. But no one has ever posed the problem of a possible turn backward, toward capitalism.

One cannot fault Trotsky for a one-sided approach on this question. As is well known, he always envisaged, from a theoretical point of view, the possibility of a restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. He likewise explained that the characterization of the Soviet regime, as a transitional or intermediate one, was altogether insufficient to the extent that "it might suggest the false idea that the only possible transition leads to socialism" (*The Revolution Betrayed*).

Nevertheless, it is true that a series of problems which now arise have never been dealt with in even a somewhat systematic way. We will not pretend to accomplish this here. We limit ourselves to posing some points for discussion.

In this article we have taken up the problem of a restoration of capitalism especially from the point of view of economic relations and developments. We should not forget that, for Marxists, the essential criterion for the definition of a qualitative leap from one social system to another is, in the final analysis, on the political terrain: what class is it that holds the power? We must therefore

pose this question: In the countries of Eastern Europe who is it that controls, in its essentials, the state apparatus and what is the nature of the forces which direct the government at the present time?

In Poland, the problem has been clearly posed since one year ago. We underlined how then, in the framework of an inevitably precarious compromise, the bureaucracy had not fundamentally lost its control—how President Jaruzelski still wielded considerable power, and how the key ministries remained in the hands of the Polish United Workers Party. Today something has changed: those forces which opposed the old regime are not only able to impose their wishes on Parliament, but they administer the local

'For Marxists, the essential criterion for the definition of a qualitative leap is on the political terrain'

governments; the key ministries have passed into other hands; the PUWP, despite some ups and downs, has suffered a veritable disintegration; and Jaruzelski is in no position to assert his formal authority. No one will pretend that it is the former bureaucrats who exercise power.

Things are still clearer in the cases of Hungary and Czechoslovakia (not to speak of the GDR, which represents by all evidence an exception and where we are on the eve of the restoration of capitalism through the structural assimilation of East into West German society). There exist coalition governments composed of parties, fronts, movements which do not claim to represent the workers' interests or socialism, which advocate a market economy of what could be called a classic form, and therefore a radical privatization and integration into the capitalist economic world, and insist on the value of "Western democracy." In fact, on the governmental level a continuity exists only in Bulgaria, under the control of a reformist wing of the bureaucracy, and in a different form in Romania.²³ What's more, in these two countries the situation also remains completely unstable.

At the level of the state apparatus, the elements of continuity are much more substantial than on the governmental plane or in the national and local legislatures. But these apparatuses have also undergone their own transformation—an upset and disarray that have practical consequences which it would be an error to underestimate. Those who are a part of these structures are more and more demoralized: any return to the past seems to them impossible and their principal preoccupation is to assure themselves a place in the framework of the new regimes. The army is no longer sheltered from the phenomena of dissension and demoralization. It is hard to see how, at least at this stage, it can be used as it was in Poland in December 1981. (The problem is not posed in precisely the same way in the Soviet Union.)

However, to the extent fundamental socio-economic structures have not changed, all these instruments contribute to the survival and management of the bureaucratic system whether they are renewed or not. Within them, coming for example from the forces which struggled against the old regime, new bureaucratic layers or elements can arise, assuring themselves a position more or less privileged and therefore with an interest in maintaining the status quo.

The former Polish leader Rakovski, a few months ago, reminded those who look to the restoration of capitalism what happened after the defeat of Napoleon. There was a restoration in a political sense. But the old regimes were not reestablished in their essence. The analogy which Rakovski suggests is not without foundation. For the moment it has relevance. That will be still more true if the radical socio-economic transformations prove impossible for a

whole period—whatever aspirations and plans the imperialists and the governmental forces in these states may have.

But such a theoretical hypothesis inevitably comes up against major practical difficulties. In the present framework it is highly unlikely that the economic situation will improve. On the contrary, to the extent that, as we have seen, the old mechanisms are less and less functional—if not completely absent—and the real mechanisms of a capitalist society are unable to operate, the tensions, contradictions, centrifugal and disintegrating tendencies become more accentuated. Besides, these apparatuses will never be able to recover the usefulness—from the point of view of a defense of the system—which they had in the past. This usefulness resided in the fact that they were part of a whole, which has been profoundly displaced, if not to say destroyed. We must not forget that in this totality the hegemony of the party played a principal role; but it can no longer play this role, that is rejected even from a theoretical point of view.

To the extent that the crisis is prolonged and aggravated the restorationist forces will multiply their efforts to impose their solution. And their task is made easier by the phenomenon of demoralization (for example in Poland, where this has already had an effect). The old state apparatus represents less and less of an obstacle. Do not forget what Trotsky wrote about the restorationist forces finding numerous servants within the bureaucracy. This idea is so much more plausible in Eastern Europe—with the exception of Yugoslavia—where the new state apparatuses, not created by a revolution, were marked by a greater continuity with the old structures which preceded them. Finally, the creation of workers' states came about through an extremely unusual process which we ourselves had difficulty in grasping. There is no reason to exclude the possibility that an eventual restoration could be likewise realized through an exceptional process, difficult to foresee at present.

An 'Explosive Mixture'?

We return, in conclusion, to the Soviet Union. Despite everything, the bureaucracy still disposes, in all fields, of more substantial resources than its Eastern European counterparts have, or had, in their hands. The apparatus remains powerful and the army can still be considered a last resort with which to save the regime (we recall that rumors of a military coup were circulated during the congress and an appeal denouncing this danger was published). On the ideological terrain, if it is true that a series of economists and intellectuals of the radical wing have declared themselves more and more explicitly for the restoration of capitalism²⁴ and that the populist ideology of Yeltsin himself is full of ambiguity and dangerous implications, the Gorbachevite reformers, on the other hand, do not extol the marketization in the same terms or from the same viewpoint as the leaders and governments of Poland, Hungary, or Czechoslovakia. Their texts, their articles, their speeches, including at the last congress, confirm this. Thus the platform proposed by the outgoing central committee spoke of a "planned market economy" and Gorbachev, at the Russian Communist Party conference, explicitly rejected the idea that resorting to the market mechanisms signifies a restoration of capitalism.²⁵

Be that as it may, the crisis deepens each day: we do not have to reiterate what we have already written on its concrete manifestations. The danger of a progressive decomposition of the bureaucratic system, without any alternative being able to emerge, is very real.

We arrive then at a crucial point. Benefiting from the openings created by glasnost and the political changes of the Gorbachev era, powerful social forces have been liberated. Most important, the Soviet working class—the second largest in the world—is once again an active force after decades of crushing defeats and

paralysis. This is a major event which has not yet been appreciated for all its national and international significance. We do not have to repeat the importance of the miners' strike of the past year and of their recent mobilizations. These were not only concerned with economics: their political, democratic, and antibureaucratic demands have a growing importance. Independent forms of organization have begun to appear. In addition to the miners, others in the working class have become protagonists in larger and larger waves of struggles. Whereas in the course of the first eleven months of 1989 7.5 million workdays were lost, the figure is more than 10 million counting only the first half of this year. The reawakening of the working class is, and will be, a decisive factor in the crisis of the bureaucratic system. It remains to be seen to what extent this movement will be able to develop a credible socialist alternative.

Militants, groups, movements, and organizations which are struggling both against the bureaucracy and against any perspective of capitalist restoration have developed and are beginning to establish bonds with each other across the USSR.²⁶ These are encouraging signs. But, as those who are part of the process will themselves acknowledge, they are still dealing with very limited forces, rather heterogeneous, with very little experience, who, in addition, have not acquired all the political and theoretical clarity which they need to accomplish the enormous tasks that lie ahead.

'The Soviet working class is once again an active force after decades of crushing defeats and paralysis'

A Polish historian, a member of Solidarnosc, wrote some months ago: "We find ourselves today in an active earthquake zone, where the great rocky mass has been loosened in every direction. We must, therefore, be especially careful to make sure that the rocks do not bury us all."²⁷ That is an appropriate metaphor: truly an earthquake is taking place in Poland, still more so in the Soviet Union. But, contrary to what the Polish historian says, it is certainly not the time to be prudent. It is time for the Soviet working class to be audacious and farsighted, more concretely, to make a gigantic effort to organize themselves, to find a leadership, and to play their rightful vanguard role. The destiny of the Soviet Union for an entire period depends on this. □

July 20, 1990

Notes

1. See *le Courier des pays de l'Est*, published by *Documentation française*, April 1990, which we have utilized extensively in this article.

2. Pensions were increased from 50 or 55 to 70 rubles per month. Those getting a raise in salaries were, among others, doctors, teachers, and functionaries. The development of salaries has been stimulated at times by the competition of cooperatives.

3. In his report to the Russian Communist Party conference, Gorbachev denounced the fact that "the fundamental laws dealing with property, land, leases, etc, remain practically a dead letter" (*Actualites Sovietiques*, unnumbered, June 1990).

4. According to members of cooperatives, application of this decision required the suspension of 40 to 50 percent of the cooperatives. But this situation changed after Gavril Popov, a fervent partisan of cooperatives, was elected mayor of Moscow.

5. According to a poll published by *Izvestia*, only 10 to 14 percent of peasants would choose a private farm.

6. Concerning Ryzhkov's plan, and more generally on Soviet economic problems and the debates which are currently taking place, see the article by David Seppo "The Thorny Problem of the Market," in *Inprecor* No 311, June 11-28, 1990.

7. As has been said, the determination of prices constitutes a crucial problem. In his report of May 24, Ryzhkov indicated that "the prices of food products are particularly out of line. They are two or three times lower than their real value. . . . In the course of the past 35 years the national income has increased by 6.5 times whereas the subsidies by the state to maintain prices have been 30 times higher." And he added: "Real prices do not reflect the costs of production, nor a balance between supply and demand, nor the level of world prices. In short, they do not correspond to any economic category." At the same time as the new plan of Ryzhkov was conceived, more radical plans were put forward by N. Petrakov and S. Chataline. But these were not accepted.

8. A case which reveals the multiple bottlenecks produced by the Soviet economy is cigars, the production and distribution of which has had very serious difficulties. The following events were reported: A factory in Dnepropetrovsk did not deliver what it was supposed to. That provoked demonstrations in the city. Out of 24 plants for the manufacture of cigars, only 6 are operating, while 18 had to be closed for a lack of supplies (according to *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, July 18). One Armenian factory was unable to deliver supplies because of the railway blockade imposed by Azerbaijan. Other materials were not delivered by a factory in Latvia. Finally, the tobacco growers of Moldavia decided to reduce production in order to grow other crops which they considered more profitable.

9. The platform of the Central Committee for the congress of the Communist Party of the USSR explained: "We have reached a point where the old system of administration and management is, in large part, no longer functioning, whereas the new mechanisms have not yet taken full shape" (*USSR*, bulletin of the Soviet Information Bureau, February 14). Gorbachev was still clearer: "At the present time there is a kind of dangerous interlude, where the new mechanisms of perestroika are not yet set in motion while the old ones are already coming apart or have turned out to be useless" (report to the conference of the Russian Communist Party). Similar appreciations were formulated by the managers of 50 big Soviet enterprises in an appeal to the government, demanding the reestablishment of central allocation of raw materials in order to avoid paralysis (*Financial Times*, July 20).

10. See, with regard to the presidential reform, the article by David Seppo, "Gorbachev, What Lies Behind the New Presidential Powers," *International Viewpoint*, No 182, April 9, 1990, and our article "The Shifting Theoretical Outlook of Mikhail Gorbachev," in *Critique Communiste*, March 1990 [translator's note: not published in English].

11. At the time we are writing we do not have access to all the necessary documentation on the congress.

12. As has been said, besides the platform of the Central Committee, two other platforms were presented for discussion at the congress: the Democratic Platform and the Marxist Platform. In his report to the Russian CP conference, Gorbachev affirmed that these two platforms "had a very great impact." In fact, the Democratic Platform which, according to a deputy, Lysenko, will be supported by 30 percent of the party, would only have 150 delegates at the congress out of a total of around 5,000. We do not know to what extent the Marxist Platform was represented. According to *Moscow News* that platform was put together in November 1989 by the membership of the Marxist Research Club at Moscow University, and by the Marxist fraction of Moscow's Communist Party Club. A federation of Marxist clubs of the Soviet CP was founded in February of this year by a conference with delegates representing close to 14,000 militants. The daily of the Italian Communist Party incorrectly included the partisans of the Marxist Platform with the conservative bloc, whereas it actually consists of those who reject both Stalinism and capitalism.

13. This is an estimate made by Giuseppe Boffa, a member of the Italian Communist Party and author of works on the Soviet Union, who attended the entire congress (*L'Unita*, July 19). According to the information presented at the congress, 40 percent of the delegates were party staff, whereas the workers' delegates constituted only 11.6 percent and the peasants 5.4 percent. Women were 9.3 percent. On January 1 of this year, the USSR CP officially had

19,228,217 members, of whom 27.6 percent were workers, 7.6 percent came from state farms, 17.3 percent were retired or without occupations, and 40.5 percent were "employees."

14. It seems that only 24 out of the 105 people who signed the platform quit the party at the end of the congress.

15. The new Political Bureau is composed, in addition to Gorbachev and his deputy Ivashko elected by the congress, of the 15 first secretaries of the parties of the republics, and 7 other members (one of whom is a woman).

16. The congress voted in its overwhelming majority a text which affirmed that "the military menace against the USSR continues" (*L'Unita*, July 10).

17. We recall the decision taken to create three experimental free enterprise zones, respectively in the regions of Vyborg near Leningrad (new technologies and tourism), Novgorod (tourism and electronic products), and Nakhodka in the Soviet Far East (production of raw materials and sea food). According to I. Ivanov, vice-president of the State Commission for Foreign Economic Relations, these zones should not be set up as enclaves, in the Chinese manner, but integrated into national economic life.

18. In the case of Renault it is a matter of renewing an agreement already reached in 1967. In addition, there were discussions with Renault about the construction of a plant to produce delivery vans (*Le Monde*, February 2).

19. The London daily justified this pessimism with the example of Poland: "If the transition to a market system proves so difficult in Poland, won't it be impossible in the other countries where the unifying force of Solidamosc and the readiness of the Polish government to implement reforms do not exist?"

20. According to Brezhnevski, it will be necessary to project an allocation of \$25 or \$30 billion over a number of years.

21. German banks, including the Deutsche Bank and the Dresdner Bank, have granted a credit of 5 billion marks (\$3.4 billion) to the USSR, with guarantees from the German government. In fact, this amount will allow only the amelioration of the balance of payments deficit (5 billion dollars in 1989).

22. According to a summary of the minutes of the Houston meeting, the Italian minister, Carli, insisted that a failure of the reforms in the Soviet Union would have "catastrophic consequences for the countries of Eastern Europe and repercussions in the Western countries as well." Mitterrand, disturbed by the attitude of Bush, said, "So, it is better to plan a meeting with Gorbachev for the year 2005!" It is important to note that, concerning Cuba, Bush put on increased pressure since he knows full well that the Soviets would like to rid themselves of an obligation that they have come to consider a burden. The trip by Soviet Latin America "experts" to Miami to meet with Cuban exiles has been confirmed, among others, by Jorge Mas Canosa, president of the Cuban-American Foundation. This individual claims to have a fund of \$21 billion at his disposal to relaunch the Cuban economy in the event of Castro's downfall, and guaranteed Moscow a presence in Cuba in the new situation (*El Pais*, July 25).

23. On the Romanian situation, see our article "The Day After the Elections," in *Inprecor*, No. 310, June 1-14 [translator's note—not published in English].

24. On the views of Popov, Chmeliiov, and others, see in particular the article by Jean Marie Chauvier, "Neo-Liberal Fascination in the USSR," in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, October 1989.

25. According to the press, Gorbachev declared, while on a tour of the Ural region: "Open tomorrow all the gates. Introduce everywhere the conditions of the market. Introduce free enterprise and give the green light to all forms of property, of private property. Sell the land, sell all. I am unable to support such ideas, decisive and revolutionary as they appear. These are irresponsible ideas, irresponsible. . ." (*International Herald Tribune*, May 15).

26. Concerning one important initiative, the congress of independent Soviet workers' organizations, see the article by Poul Funder Larsen in *Inprecor*, No. 312, June 29-July 12.

27. See Andrzej Packowski, in *Po Prostu*, March 1990.

Mikhail Gorbachev Introduces New Economic Program for the USSR

by Steve Bloom

In the middle of October Mikhail Gorbachev finally unveiled his long-awaited plan for the economic rehabilitation of the USSR. It projects some substantial changes from the old, bureaucratic command economy which still dominates that country despite past efforts at reform. Included are a phase-out of price controls by the state; the selling of state-owned factories, farms, and other property to private individuals or collectives; freedom for private economic entrepreneurs; the right of peasants to return to private farming; broader freedom for foreign investors; changing the ruble into a convertible currency; and transforming most banks into regular commercial enterprises.

The bourgeois press is loudly proclaiming the triumph of capitalism in the USSR. But, interestingly, Gorbachev himself rejects this characterization of his program. To that extent his ideological approach differs from the one taken by reformist elements in Eastern Europe. In a speech presented to the Supreme Soviet on September 17, Gorbachev remarked, "We pin the solution of the socialist revolution's fundamental concern, the elimination of man's alienation from the means of production, on the formation of multiple kinds of ownership. Thereby socialism will be brought in line with the private interests of the people." It is not without importance that Gorbachev continues to develop his economic perspectives for the USSR with reference to a "socialist" vision—even if that vision comes to us distorted considerably by Stalinist theoretical conceptions. His economic program asserts: "Transition to the market does not contradict the socialist choice of our people."

In fact, some provisions of the new plan are quite inconsistent with the development of a real capitalist system in the USSR. For example, it projects that all wages will be indexed to inflation, with a guaranteed income for every family. Oil, gas, gold, diamonds, and similar resources are to remain under state control.

For all of the fanfare that surrounded its introduction, there is very little that is really new in Gorbachev's program. It represents an eclectic cobbling together of ideas from here and there, many of which have been tried before and have failed—in the USSR or in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev is trying to come up with something, anything, hoping against hope that it will help to preserve what can be preserved of the power and privileges enjoyed by the Stalinist rulers of the USSR. His economic plan reflects the floundering of a bureaucratic caste with no real economic alternative of its own to present. (In that sense it testifies strongly to the correctness of a traditional Trotskyist analysis of the ruling group in the Soviet Union—that is, it is not a new ruling class of any kind but a parasitic social layer.)

From his bureaucratic point of view, the restoration of capitalism is the last thing that Gorbachev desires. Such a restoration would certainly mean an end to the present privileges of party and government officials, just as certainly as a political revolution by the workers would end them. Neither capitalists nor workers have any need for inefficient bureaucrats leeching off the productive process.

The problem is that Gorbachev has very little control over the social dynamics that will inevitably develop if his program is put into practice. Big pressures can easily build up, going far beyond what he himself plans. Full implementation of his new economics would mean the dramatic growth of the social class of owners in the USSR, with a genuine stake in private property rights. Such a development could soon begin to pose a *real* counterrevolutionary threat.

Something similar happened in the USSR in the late 1920s, when the New Economic Policy (NEP), implemented in order to restart the country's economy after the devastation of the civil war, got out of hand. NEP meant, essentially, the stimulation of production by encouraging better-off peasants to "enrich themselves." It worked. But the rich peasants soon wanted to rid themselves of government controls altogether in order to get richer still. They organized a strike in 1928, refusing to sell grain to the government at the established price.

This was not what Stalin had been planning on when he based his economic perspectives, in the mid-1920s, on the extension of NEP. But the social forces unleashed by his economic approach went far beyond anything he had envisioned. As a response he turned to a military requisition of grain and the infamous policy of forced collectivization, combined with a program of superindustrialization. That was the beginning of the bureaucratic command economy in the USSR.

During the 1960s the limits of this system began to be reached and the Soviet government started introducing a series of reforms, trying to find a balance between bureaucratic-command control and market-regulation which would allow the Soviet economy to continue developing. That search was and remains utopian. It is only with the democratic input and control of the Soviet masses themselves that a real, effective balance between planning and market—one that will serve the needs of the workers' state and not unbalance it further—can ever be found. A process leading to this cannot be pursued by any wing of the Stalinist apparatus because it would mean an abdication of their right to rule—a right which is predicated on the political and social expropriation of the Soviet people. While the glasnost policies of Gorbachev have provided positive openings for challenging this system, it has not overthrown it and was never intended to.

Thus, without any real democratic decision making by the workers themselves on economic questions, the USSR has lurched from crisis to crisis, with one empirical adjustment

after another being tried to shore things up. Each swing of the pendulum, each attempt to deal with the crisis, has tended to become more extreme as the crises themselves become more extreme. Yet each adjustment simply ends up trading one set of problems for another. The shortages, the stagnation, grow steadily worse. The ideological crisis deepens. The bureaucracy has fewer and fewer real options. Gorbachev's economic plan is both a product and a continuation of this process.

It is in this sense, and not in any sense of a conscious policy, that we can correctly say that Gorbachev and the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR as a whole are preparing the ground for a capitalist restoration. (This has been true for more than six decades, though we are clearly at a new stage today.) If Gorbachev succeeds in his marketization scheme he will find himself confronted, sooner or later, with the same kind of social force that the rich peasants constituted in 1928. In part, it is true, this will emerge from those layers of the present bureaucracy who are in the best position to transform themselves into owners—most notably state administrators of enterprises. But that is only a minority of the bureaucracy as a whole.

And we should keep in mind that there is a real "if" involved here. The article by Livio Maitan, on page 12, discusses the structural obstacles that have caused all the schemes of decentralization, privatization, and marketization in the USSR to fail up to now. None of these barriers have been overcome by Gorbachev, and it is difficult to see how he will accomplish what his program projects. It is all well and good to theorize about the benefits of finding private investors to buy up the inefficient industrial base of the USSR. But where is one to find capitalists willing to invest in inefficient industries? Even in Eastern Europe, where the ideological commitment to privatization has been far stronger, those who are staking the future on the introduction of a market economy—even the "reintroduction of capitalism"—have found that they face substantial objective obstacles.

Some may think that a politician like Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Republic and a militant opponent of Gorbachev, is in a better position to put over his own marketization program because of the significant popular following he enjoys. Yeltsin denounces Gorbachev for being too conservative in projecting changes. He has endorsed the "500 days plan" which calls for faster introduction of a market economy.

Under the surface, however, there is little substantive difference between Yeltsin and Gorbachev, and Yeltsin represents the same kind of bureaucratic policy. He has simply chosen to defend his own power and privileges with a little populist rhetoric—by denouncing power and privilege. (It is a phenomenon which we are certainly familiar with in the context of capitalist democracy: one group of corrupt office seekers tries to oust another by issuing a loud denunciation of corruption in office.) In trying to develop a balance between the old state-run economy and the market, Yeltsin favors an even greater reliance on market elements. But he, like Gorbachev, faces the same kinds of objective obstacles which will limit his ability to put such a program into practice.

If we consider this problem further, in fact, it points to the extreme tenuousness of Yeltsin's present popularity. His support among working people exists not because they are convinced ideologically about the "500 days plan," but because he

has promised them a more rapid improvement in their quality of life and because he played an oppositional role in the early days of glasnost. It is unlikely that Yeltsin will be able to translate this into a tolerance for attacks on working people's standard of living, but such attacks are absolutely inevitable if the "500 days plan" is to be implemented. He will deliver something quite different from what he has promised. In a volatile situation such as exists in the USSR today, Yeltsin's popularity can melt away in no time. It was not so long ago, we should remember, that Gorbachev himself was extremely popular with the Soviet masses.

Today, the overwhelming majority in the USSR supports the introduction of the market—from intellectuals and professional economists, to CP politicians, to average working people (though every indication is that workers express a bit more skepticism than the others). This is because the complete collapse of the present system is obvious to all, and "the market" is the only alternative that anyone has presented. But another alternative does indeed exist, and a little more experience with the consequences of Gorbachev's and Yeltsin's policies is likely to break down the consensus of Soviet public opinion.

After all, the experience with the new "market" economies in places like Poland and Hungary are not particularly positive. The October 23 *New York Times* carried photos of homeless people sleeping in a Budapest railway station. During a talk presented in New York City on October 26, Milka Tyszkiewicz, a Polish revolutionary activist, said that now, in her country, some of those voices which had cried the loudest for a return to capitalism are singing a different tune. The results of the new experiment have not turned out so well. There is no reason to expect anything better in the USSR.

No way out of the USSR's economic stagnation will be discovered through a marketization that remains in the context of bureaucratic society. A real return to capitalism might constitute a viable "solution," in the sense of finding an exit from the absolute dead end of economic stagnation into which the bureaucracy has plunged Soviet society. But such a "solution" would first have to come up with real capitalists who could take over governmental power, and would then have to carry through a brutal suppression of the masses in order to drive their expectations down to a level where capitalists could make a sufficient profit from their labor. Such a "cure" would clearly be worse than the present disease from the point of view of working people in the USSR. In any event, such a thing is still very far from happening in any of the Eastern countries.

The only positive solution to the crisis from the point of view of working people is for a new leadership to emerge out of a growing independent mass movement—a movement that would demand the complete overthrow of all bureaucratic institutions, support the people's demands for better conditions of life and work, and raise the call for self-determination of all oppressed nationalities in the USSR. Some voices in the Soviet Union have already started to project such a program, even if only in a partial way. Though they are presently weak and not well organized, positive objective conditions exist for their further development and growth. Working class activists around the world have an obligation to do all we can to aid them in their struggle. □

Trotsky's Classic Work, *Stalin School of Falsification*, Published in USSR

by Marilyn Vogt-Downey

A remarkable advance in the quest to retrieve historic truth in the USSR, from beneath the mountains of Stalinist lies, was taken with the publication of *The Stalin School of Falsification*, by Leon Trotsky, in the summer of 1990. The official publisher, "Science," in Moscow—in collaboration with a Scientific Council called "The History of the Great October Socialist Revolution" and the prestigious USSR Academy of Sciences—issued this important work in a run of 200,000 copies. The book is a facsimile edition, reprinting the text as published in 1932 by exiled revolutionists in Berlin. It includes Trotsky's September 1931 preface.

The Stalin School of Falsification exposes the method that Stalin and his accomplices in the party leadership contrived in order to slander Trotsky and eliminate all memory of his contributions to the revolutionary and postrevolutionary period. Their goal was to discredit Trotsky so that people would not listen to his ideas. In doing so Stalin and his various allies were in fact campaigning against revolutionary Marxism.

To expose the campaign of lies, Trotsky relied on historic documents that have until now been suppressed in the USSR. Little lies and distortions begun in the early 1920s against Trotsky became the monstrous lies of the 1930s, the rewriting of history, the banning and suppression of true accounts, and the terrible Moscow show trials of the 1930s where prominent Bolshevik leaders were made to confess to bizarre crimes invented by Stalin.

The victims of this campaign of falsification included all of the leading Bolshevik figures from Lenin's time. It culminated in Trotsky's assassination in Mexico in 1940. Because they fear Trotsky's ideas so much, the ruling bureaucracy has not seen fit to officially exonerate him of the slanders and criminal charges Stalin and the ruling caste raised against him and against his son, Leon Sedov, during the Moscow trials.

But the publication of these and other critical documents by and about Trotsky shows that the democratic openings Stalin's heirs

have been forced to allow cannot be limited to topics which are safe for the bureaucracy.

A process of intellectual reawakening is taking place throughout the USSR, including amongst members of the intelligentsia who have access to the newly available historic archives and records. These scholars are now able to study and learn for themselves what really happened. As a result, Trotsky is winning respect and gaining defenders. That social dynamic helps explain the publication of works such as this. In addition, growing interest in Trotsky means that it is profitable to publish his works: the book sells for 10 rubles, a very high price by Soviet standards. However, an inscription on the reprint's title page indicates that part of the proceeds from the publication of the book will be contributed to a fund to help victims of the Chernobyl disaster.

It is of interest that a "collective" of researchers of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, attached to the Central Committee of the CPSU and of the Central Party Archives, had the task of checking every quotation of Trotsky's against official records and preparing the notes. They found not a single instance in which quotations used by Trotsky could be faulted. The collective was headed by a woman, V.P. Vilkova, and three of the collective's five members were women.

The impact that this project and this work of Trotsky's appears to have had on at least some of the members of the commission is reflected in the "Afterword" which Vilkova authored along with A.P. Nenarokov of the Science editorial board. This essay is a straightforward, honest assessment of Stalin's campaign against Trotsky and what it has meant historically to the Soviet people.

As Trotsky wrote in his introduction to the 1932 edition, "this book is not at all a volume for the archives; it is rather a weapon in the political struggle for the theory of Marx, for the policies of Lenin—against the epigones," whose heirs are in power today.

Afterword to *The Stalin School of Falsification*

by V.P. Vilkova and A.P. Nenarokov

This full reprint edition of the book *The Stalin School of Falsification: Corrections and Additions to the Literature of the Epigones* will familiarize Soviet readers with the work of L.D. Trotsky in the form in which it was published by the author himself. This work is widely known throughout the world. By its nature, it most closely resembles traditional academic collections of documentary material and, therefore, it is fully logical that it should be issued by "Science" Publishing House. By the way, many facts, documents, and assessments from this book of L.D. Trotsky are now widely used by many Soviet scholars and

publicists. However, as a rule, this is done without reference to the source and without mentioning the name of the author.

This reprint was made from the first edition of the book in Russian in 1932 by the Berlin publisher "Granit." The author's preface was dated September 13, 1931. Not long before this, L.D. Trotsky had issued the two-volume autobiography *My Life* and he had been continuing intensive work on his multi-volume *History of the Russian Revolution*. However, the stormy events unfolding in Soviet Russia at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s compelled him to drop that and devote his energies to the

publication of documents connected with the history of October, the civil war, and the first decade of Soviet power.

By this time, as L.D. Trotsky put it, the "restructuring, rewriting, and outright falsification" of the revolutionary past that had begun in 1924 was fundamentally over. This process had begun around so-called literary discussion on *The Lessons of October*. In the course of it, the Politburo and the Secretariat upon a proposal of the general secretary of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik), J.V. Stalin, adopted a decision to collect from citizens and institutions, for the Central Committee archives, all materials having anything to do with the history of the party. They also resolved to strictly limit access to those archives, particularly to documents from the period of the revolution and the civil war.

While it appeared at first to be an innocent move to concentrate in one place everything that could be source material for future work on the history of Bolshevism and October, the plan to involve only a narrow circle of people in processing and studying this material in fact opened up unlimited possibilities for the falsification of history. As a result of this operation, works began to appear in which the real meaning of the historic events and their chronology were distorted. The identities of those actively involved were changed, and many were described politically in a biased way. The masses were persistently fed the false idea of "the two leaders" of October. [Translator's note: the reference is to Lenin and Stalin.]

All this facilitated the spread of a vulgar, antiscientific perception of the development of the revolutionary movement in Russia. In essence it portrayed the Bolshevik party as some all-knowing and all-powerful leadership which supposedly had the correct solutions for all of life's problems from the very beginning and which had the unquestioning obedience of the masses. Primitivism and oversimplification of this kind had nothing at all to do with Lenin's assessments of the place and role of the party, the leaders, and the masses in the historic process.

In the schema advanced by J.V. Stalin and his circle, there was no place for politics, which was understood by Lenin as a science and an art. There was no place for democratic socialism as a living creation of the masses themselves. Reducing living events to the realization of *a priori* designs of the party predetermined the necessity to falsify historic events and distort revolutionary Marxist theory. It led to the iconization of V.I. Lenin and to the canonization of Leninism to suit Stalin's conceptions, dogmatic thinking, and outright lies. Carefully concealed from the party and from the people—and that means inaccessible even to the historians—were the authentic documents of the revolution, which could have provided evidence about Lenin's closest circle and about the real concerns, actions, and views of L.D. Trotsky, L.B. Kamenev, G.E. Zinoviev, N.I. Bukharin, J.V. Stalin, and other participants in October.

The immediate occasion for the preparation and publication of *The Stalin School of Falsification* was the noisy political campaign at the end of 1929 in connection with J.V. Stalin's fiftieth birthday. The basic objective of this campaign was not simply the glorification of the general secretary and the inflation of the cult of his personality, but the definitive assertion in the public consciousness that L.D. Trotsky and his supporters were the enemy and that any opposition and any differing views were to be politically condemned.

The celebration of "the Great Stalin" was marked by a series of articles providing an interpretation of the history of the party and country that was in keeping with such an event. Particularly outstanding among these articles was "A Political Biography of Stalin," the opening editorial of the celebration issue of *Pravda*, and an article by K.E. Voroshilov, "Stalin and the Red Army," which fully erased the role of L.D. Trotsky as one of the organizers and leaders of the Red Army. Trotsky's immediate response to this celebratory campaign was his article "Toward a Political Biog-

raphy of Stalin," and also an article by his son L.L. Sedov (N. Markin), "Stalin and the Red Army, or How History Is Written." Both articles were based on authentic historical documents, many of which were published for the first time.

The materials included in *The Stalin School of Falsification* concern mainly the years 1917-1927. Of the party documents of 1917, L.D. Trotsky published two: the Minutes of the All-Russian (March) Conference of party workers and the Minutes of the Petrograd Committee of the Bolsheviks of November 1 (14). Moreover, the latter document has not been made available as a source for independent study by Soviet historiographers to this day.

The publication of the first document exposed the character and depth of the divergence between Lenin and Stalin in determining what attitude to take toward the Provisional Government in March 1917, and in perspectives for the development of the revolution in Russia. In the second, the position of L.D. Trotsky during an extremely sharp inner-party political struggle over the question of "a homogeneous socialist government" is distinctly evident. Lenin approved and supported Trotsky's position.

The documents of the 1917 period published by L.D. Trotsky have particular historic value because among the materials of the All-Russian (March) Conference of party workers is the minutes of the April 4 session; these minutes have not been taken up in the works of Soviet investigators despite the fact that the original exists in the archives. This document allows us to say definitively that this conference of party workers—despite the fixed opinion of these investigators—ended not on April 2 but on April 4. This fact has extreme and substantial significance because it was precisely on the night April 3-4, that Lenin, having just returned from exile, presented his famous "April Theses."

The five documents from 1927 will also provoke great interest among readers. While preparing them for publication, L.D. Trotsky added a small preface or afterword to several of them and removed excessive detail and repetition. These documents bear the stamp of the bitter political struggle being waged against L.D. Trotsky and his supporters. This culminated in the autumn of 1927 with his expulsion from the Central Committee and then from the AUCP(B).

For the country, 1927 marked the tenth anniversary of the October revolution. For L.D. Trotsky, who had played no small role in the victory of that revolution and the defense of its conquests, 1927 became the tragic finale of his political career. His personal experiences linked with this were reflected in many of his 1927 works. The bitterness of defeat breaks through to the surface in the sharpness of the expressions, in the severity of the personal descriptions, and in his desperate attempt to assert, explain, and defend at least some part of his trampled honor and dignity. Throughout it all, L.D. Trotsky constantly refers to documents of Lenin from 1921-23 which verify that he and Lenin shared common views on many key questions.

However, as a result of the four-year destructive struggle of J.V. Stalin and his allies against the Trotskyists, a rigid stereotype of L.D. Trotsky as the most dangerous enemy of Leninism had been formed in the public consciousness. Hence the atmosphere of animosity, hostility, and basic disrespect toward L.D. Trotsky that prevailed at sessions of the Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission. In such an atmosphere, normal discussion was not possible.

In order to understand the origins of Stalinism and the processes that ultimately delivered the country into the impasse of "barracks socialism," the documents and materials published in this book are of great value and serve as an important source of history. "Don't mourn historic events; instead try to understand the reasons they took place and their results, which are far from over." These words of F. Engels, written more than 100 years ago, provide the methodological key to understanding the logic and the dialectic of

the historic process, the mutual interdependence and progress of events. For many decades Soviet historic science was deprived of life. Stalinism and its repressive apparatus and monolithic thinking transformed historic science into an obedient servant of the political moment, thus guaranteeing a reliable ideological foundation for the system it created.

These are difficult times for the historian, when old ideological dogmas, stereotypes, and patterns are being shattered. The reader wants and must know the truth without omissions and distortions, about the past which is both tragic and heroic. Only the truth, the whole truth, can give the Soviet people moral support and regenerate confidence that the lives of several generations, as well as of each and every one of us, were not lived in vain, and that the social choice made by working people in October 1917 was the correct one and was historically justified.

Among the main problems demanding rethinking and a new conceptual approach are: the history of the Great October socialist revolution and the civil war, the experience and lessons of the New Economic Policy, and the origins and causes for the rise of Stalin's repressive system. There needs to be a revival and development on a new and higher historic level of a scientific understanding of Lenin's vision of socialism.

Also of great interest to the reader will be the history of the inner-party struggle of the 1920s and the lives, views, and political destinies of those who represented the minority in the party. The revival of the earlier dishonored names of N.I. Bukharin, A.I. Rykov, and M.P. Tomsky, associated with the final stages of this struggle, compel one to want to undertake a more diligent study of the struggle in its initial stages. This is linked above all with the name of L.D. Trotsky.

The restoration of the authentic history of the inner-party struggle demands a careful analysis of all available documents and an objective and unbiased examination of the views and proposals of all the participants in the dispute. However, in the recent past "the position of the defeated minority, as presented in most historic works, has been based on the Stalinist version of history. There has been not even one attempt to analyze any platform of the opposition. But it could not have been otherwise. The overwhelming majority of the investigators had not only failed to read, but had never even seen the documents being criticized." (V. Naumov, Yu. Ryabov, Yu. Filippov, *On the Historic Course of the CPSU in Light of the New Thinking—Pages from the History of the CPSU: Facts, Problems, Lessons*, Moscow, 1989, p. 53) Therefore, one must recognize the wisdom of the ancients when they said: "Let us now hear the other side."

The other side must include not only those inside the country who were ostracized as opponents of the general line of the party, but also foreign researchers who in a wholesale fashion were characterized as falsifiers of Soviet history. Today it must be stated that the investigative thinking of many American, English, French, and other foreign scholars studying the history of the political opposition in the USSR is based on significantly broader resources than ours has been and, whatever position it may be upholding, it deserves to be taken with utmost seriousness.

Under present conditions, in light of the merger processes of historiography and research methodology being undertaken on the level of international scientific development, joint efforts of Soviet and foreign scholars in the elaboration of some of the most important problems of the history of Soviet society would also be desirable. Differences in methodological approaches must not be an insurmountable obstacle to establishing a creative community of scholars of different countries and peoples.

The Stalin School of Falsification: Corrections and Additions to the Literature of the Epigones was published in journal form in *Problems of History* (1989, No. 7-9, 12; and 1990, No. 1) and in

part in *Communist* (1989, No. 10). In the second instance, the text was checked against the originals in the archives.

This reprint edition of a book by L.D. Trotsky allows the reader to become familiar with its full contents. The materials and documents reproduced in it have been carefully checked against the originals preserved in the Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism attached to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (from here on referred to as CPA IML) or with their first published versions. All of this is specified in the notes which are intended for bibliographical and annotative purposes. They indicate where and when the documents were published for the first and last time, note variations in the texts of documents cited in the book when compared with the originals, and provide the references to Soviet and foreign sources and contemporary publications data.

The richness of the book's documentation and the abundance of party materials and statements of Lenin that are quoted in it demanded not only careful verification but both direct and secondary proof of the facts and events referred to. In this connection, it should be noted how scrupulously careful L.D. Trotsky was toward all documentary materials, and above all those relating to Lenin, which he uses without any sort of "strain" in their natural and logical context. Several of the documents of V.I. Lenin quoted by him have never before been published in the Soviet press. They will now be included with the corresponding scientific commentaries in future collections of Lenin's works.

The process of checking the documents of Lenin published by Trotsky against the originals located in the V.I. Lenin collection in the CPA IML confirmed their authenticity. Variations in texts that showed up during the process of checking several Lenin documents have been attributed to the fact that L.D. Trotsky was referring to originals or copies which were in his possession, or to the first collection of V.I. Lenin's works (a certain editor got his hands on these texts before they appeared in the subsequent Complete Collected Works).

The documentary materials published in *Izvestia of the TsK KPSS [the Central Committee of the CPSU News]* 1989-90 concerning the period September 1922-March 1923 (reminiscences of N.K. Krupskaya about the last months of V.I. Lenin's life, two notes of M.I. Ulyanova, selected materials about Lenin's article "How We Should Reorganize Rabkrin [the workers' and peasants' inspectorate], etc.) provide additional details of the canvas of events of those years. This, in turn, allows one to see that L.D. Trotsky was insufficiently critical of himself in his assessment of some of his own actions and to understand the one-sidedness and bias of his interpretations of a number of important questions. Some documents of Lenin's from this book have not been found in the archives. They will be included in the Lenin collection on the basis of their publication by L.D. Trotsky (each of these instances has been indicated in the notes with separate commentaries). In these instances the commentators considered it necessary to cite in the notes the texts of documents that elaborate or shed more light on the facts and events referred to in the book.

The reader must bear in mind that there were misprints and typographical errors in the text of the Berlin edition. The reprinted edition of the text, of course, retains these flaws.

The Scientific Council "History of the Great October Socialist Revolution" of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the editorial board of the book extend their heartfelt gratitude to the group of scientific workers of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of the Central Party Archives for the enormous work they did in verifying the documents against the primary sources and in composing the notes and the index. □

Introduction to the Trade Union 'Independence'

by Marilyn Vogt-Downey

The Bulletin in Defense of Marxism has included ongoing coverage of political developments in the USSR. This has included materials about the efforts by workers in the USSR to organize independently from the bureaucratic apparatus—a precondition for the political revolution to overthrow the Stalinist rulers. In our May 1990 issue we featured an interview with four activists in the independent trade union "Justice," based in Leningrad.

As part of this ongoing coverage we are printing here some information concerning another independent trade union organization, called "Independence."

Independence was organized in June 1989 in Leningrad. It has grown from its initial group of roughly 30 members. Today it has between 200 and 300—not only in Leningrad, but in several key industrial centers. (See *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* No. 78) One of the founders of the group is Leonid Nikolaevich Pavlov—an economist, former economic planner and former political prisoner. While he considers himself a Marxist, as do other members of the group, the organization is anarcho-syndicalist in its orientation. They define workers as those who exert physical labor to produce use value. Only such toilers, not employees who exert mental labor, may join Independence.

Independence has become known on a scale far greater than its numbers would indicate. *Evening Leningrad*, an official daily, featured on its front page a report about an action Independence held in support of the July 11, 1990, miners' strike. Included was a statement by Leonid Nikolaevich in defense of the action.

On July 7, 1990, *The Leningrad Worker*, "newspaper of the Leningrad Provincial Committee of the CPSU," featured a full-

page interview with representatives of both Justice and Independence. It took up their history, goals, composition, structure, strategies, etc. The interview was entitled "Partners or Rivals? The Similarities and Differences of Two Independent Trade Unions." (The representative of Justice was its chairman, the same V.I. Gomelsky interviewed by the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*.) The intervention by Independence activists in regional conferences of miners striving to organize independently has also been noted in various reports from the scene.

As its masthead slogan "For workers' democracy instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat!" implies, Independence opposes workers involving themselves in politics *per se*, and rather advises workers to take economic power through control of their enterprises. Independence asserts that such "workers' self-management" is the key to winning political as well as economic democracy for workers.

This, of course, is not the view that the revolutionary Marxist movement has taken on this question. Advising workers to abstain from organized political activity leaves that field open to opponents of the workers' movement and is a sure formula for defeat of workers' organizations. But whatever criticisms one might make of Independence, its unqualified identification with the rights of the workers is inspiring, and sets the union apart from many of the voices being heard in the USSR today. Its members take bold initiatives in defense of workers' rights and their activities deserve our attention.

The materials below include a letter from Leonid Nikolaevich Pavlov and leaflets Independence has issued on various topics.

Hello Marilyn!

You seem to have forgotten about us. We've received the latest April issue of the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* and nothing more. How are things going with the publication of our materials?

Now the trade union Independence is gaining broader authority. We are corresponding with people in more than 60 cities and towns of our country and some foreign workers' organizations. Most of the people with whom we correspond are workers. Our trade union structures have been formed in the Vorgashor mine, Vorkuta region, the Josko depot, and the "Leningrad Metrostroi" (Metro building). We're gaining strength in Ruybyshev and Saratov.

Within the Leningrad ICAW-Independence a Leningrad Information Agency has been formed: LenInAg-Independence; the second issue of the newspaper, *For Independence*, is under way; two professional self-governing and managing workers' groups are functioning. These are nonadministrative trade union structures within Independence, bargaining with customers independently. They manage their work themselves and spend the money they get for their work. The Independence members in Len- Metrostroi organized a strike on the 11th of July, 1990, in support of the striking miners.

In the Josno railway depot the Independence leader V.A. Kasatkin was fired. He went on a hunger strike near the Leningrad soviet headquarters. Our trade union backed him and defended his trade union rights. Now he has won his job back but still continues his strike, aiming at abolishing the passport regime.

Our trade union participated in the international conference on human rights which took place in Leningrad. The Polish Solidarnosc organized it. From the point of view of Independence the conference had a petty bourgeois character and didn't tackle the trade union and class rights and freedoms of workers. This was the main drawback of the conference.

From these enclosed materials you'll get to know about the basic trends in our activities. If it's possible, please publish whatever you find necessary.

We've got a possibility to translate and publish foreign literature on the international workers' and women's movements. If you could send us books on these themes we will try to publish them in great numbers. But the author's and editor's permission is necessary. Could you help us find a way to get these books from you?

With comradely regards,
for Independence—A Step Toward Freedom!
Leonid Pavlov

Democratic Workers' Movement The Trade Association of Workers 'Independence' For workers' democracy instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat!¹

Hunger Strike and Struggle

V.A. Kasatkin, a member of the Leningrad Initiative Committee of the Association of Workers (ICAW)-Independence, and a member of the trade union movement of the Tosno Depot, has announced a hunger strike to begin April 20, 1990. He has decided upon this course as a protest against the tyranny of the apparatchik director,² Deputy V.P. Solovyov. Persecution and victimization of those doing independent trade union work is flourishing at the Tosno Depot with railroad regulations being used as a cover.

V.P. Solovyov, an impudent and pretentious man always bawling people out, who became a deputy, abuses his official position and impedes the legal activity of the Independence trade union. His ugly activities are protected by the immunity he enjoys as a deputy. Types like Solovyov have multiplied like flies since the recent elections. Such are the "popularly elected" officials of the Soviet empire!

Workers of the trade union Independence, along with more than one million other Leningrad workers, boycotted the elections. Therefore, we do not recognize V.P. Solovyov as a deputy and reserve for ourselves the right to apply trade union and other sanctions. The entire responsibility for the consequences lies with V.P. Solovyov.

The main demand is that the Tosno Depot sign the collective agreement for 1990 advanced by Initiative Committee of the Workers' Association (ICAW)-Independence. We uphold V.A. Kasatkin's just demands and will collectively defend them.

We propose that the workers of the Tosno Depot hold a meeting during working hours—to which we would be invited—to condemn V.P. Solovyov and express support for V.A. Kasatkin's demands.

We call upon our comrade to give up his hunger strike in favor of a joint struggle against the administration's tyranny. You will have no impact on the Solovyovs with a hunger strike. They want to reduce to the level of slaves those workers who are fighting for their trade union and class rights and freedoms. A hunger strike only plays into the administration's hands. A worker on hunger strike weakens our joint efforts because he falls away from the collective struggle.

Workers of Tosno Depot! The tyranny that has fallen upon the member of the trade union Independence, V.A. Kasatkin, can catch up with any of us. In order that this does not happen to you tomorrow, unite, discuss, and defend your comrade today. In unity there is strength! Tyranny under the protection of deputy status will not be tolerated!

If you have any questions, call 113-72-44.

**For Independence—A Step Toward Freedom!
Leningrad ICAW-Independence¹**

April 13, 1990

On the Arrival of Lech Walesa to Leningrad

The workers of the trade union Independence greet the leader of the workers' wing of Polish Solidarity. The working class of Poland was one of the first to prove the possibility of a struggle in conditions of imperial-bureaucratic socialism. Do not underestimate the historic experience of the Polish workers in the struggle for trade union and class rights and freedoms.

However, Solidarity, having attained power, has proven incapable of satisfying the workers' demands and they continue to strike.

In this changed situation the trade union Independence is on the side of the striking workers of Poland. We know Lech Walesa as an active fighter for the independence of the trade union movement and for the liberation of labor from all forms of exploitation and oppression.

Such trade union activity is like ours, and is understandable.

In our country the imperial bureaucratic ministries, heads of departments, directors of enterprises, and even executive committees, intentionally disrupt any liberal-democratic transformations. Economic difficulties artificially worsen the shortage of very necessary goods. The apparatchiks endeavor to provoke a rebellion of the workers against difficulties that the apparatchiks themselves have created, directing them toward the suppression of the democratic openings. Ambitious politicians want to use the arrival of Lech Walesa to incite workers toward a political strike. If they succeed, then a blow will be delivered against the workers' democracy that is still only weakly developed. It is impermissible to allow Lech Walesa's authority to be used against the workers. The politicians from the politicized groups seek support from the workers in order to come to power on the shoulders of the workers. But they do not reflect the interests of the workers no matter how eloquent their words may sound. Given the unstable situation our country is experiencing, a political strike by the workers will have a backlash and will play into the hands of the imperial apparatchiks—who still control all the means of production, resources, and finances. A political strike will be the beginning of the end of trade union independence. A dictatorship over the workers in the name of the workers will be the result. Who needs that?

We welcome Lech Walesa into our city and invite him to attend a meeting of the Leningrad Initiative Committee of the Association of Workers (ICAW)-Independence at his convenience.³

The Political Strike: Strikes Against the Imperial Bureaucrats [Sotsiocracy]

The importance of a political strike in the country needs to be reexamined: the equilibrium between the imperial and liberal apparatchiks has been upset. The ruling party is not turning over power to the soviets. Its imperial-bureaucratic fate is concentrated in the Russian Communist Party. The noisy discussion about power is bringing nothing to the workers.

The director-bureaucrat is uprooting the independence of the minister-bureaucrat. But neither are thinking about how to improve the position of the workers. The bureaucrats of all ranks are worried about their class interests and personal advantage.

The imperial-bureaucrats still have all the resources and money at their disposal. In the enterprises, the same social and administrative tyranny prevails. Fatal accidents have not ceased. The leaders of Independence are dismissed under various pretexts. The prosecutor and the judges protect the imperial order. Laws that have been adopted are not enforced. The soviets are powerless.

The ideologies of the ruling party are behind the sham organizations like the Unions of Workers and the Confederation of Labor.

Some leaders of last year's strikes have moved away from the workers. The imperial bureaucracy is neutralizing the independence of the democratic workers' movement.

The bureaucracy's equilibrium has been upset. The miners are answering with the political strike. In the coal regions of the country at midnight, July 11, 1990, a 24-hour strike is to commence with simultaneous demonstrations. The main demands: Resignation of the government! Immediate reelection of national deputies! Nationalize the property of the ruling party!

The trade union Independence supports the demands of the strikers and will take part in the strike. But it will not achieve results if it does not receive the support of the oil workers, metal workers, railroad workers, machine builders, and workers of other industries. We need a mass political strike in the large cities!

The trade union Independence calls upon all progressive forces of the working class to support the miners with strikes of solidarity on July 11, 1990.

Workers, make your economic demands political demands!

June 29, 1990

An Appeal to Leningrad Workers from the Striking Workers at Metrostroi Who Are Members of Independence

Workers at Metrostroi and members of the trade union Independence have organized and participated in a one-day political warning strike in support of the demands of the miners.

We, Metrostroi workers, like the miners, face a severe situation. At our work site there is social and administrative tyranny. The state trade unions and committees of the ruling party do not reflect our interests. They are only worried about their own personal interests. They, along with the administration, oppress the workers with physical labor, while they live peacefully and comfortably. This forced us to resort to a strike.

We demand that the party committees be removed from the LenMetrostroi premises.

We demand that the government trade unions not interfere in our business.

We will show no confidence in any member of the official trade union committee even if that person, by some error, ends up a member of the strike committee.

We demand a wage increase for the workers (for workers at LenMetrostroi a 100 percent increase).

We demand temporary passports be abolished and that individual apartments be granted, first of all, to families of workers.

We demand the conditions where we perform physical labor be made humane.

Anyone who agrees with these demands should join us!

The workers at Metrostroi know that in other enterprises of Leningrad the situation is no better than ours. We are sure that our strike will set an example for the workers of Petrograd⁴ in fighting for their trade union and class rights and freedoms.

In the enterprises, the embittered officials are trying to cut off workers from contact with Independence. They will not succeed. Independence is the workers themselves collectively fighting for the liberation of labor and a better life.

July 12, 1990

Crisis of the Rights Defense Movement

The Leningrad ICAW-Independence has established a Leningrad Information Agency (LenInAg-Independence).

Through the channels of this trade union structure, reports come from Moscow. On April 17, 1990, 632 people appealed to the president of our country with letter No. 544363 for the restoration of rights that have been violated. Included were some who, in the recent past, have been dismissed from their jobs under various pretexts—but essentially for criticism and exposure of abuses by officials—and others who were illegally placed in psychiatric hospitals. The letter has gone unanswered. The president is not in a mood to deal with these citizens.

The USSR prosecutor, whose job is to issue official replies, most often does not respond. People wait years for decisions on their cases. The endless waiting, the futile hopes of the oppressed, and the insolence of the imperial-bureaucratic system cause these people to suffer from psychological stress.

The ruling class of apparatchiks have an interest in trampling on the legal rights of the individual. Violation of the rights of the individual has been elevated to the level of state policy. People get absorbed in their complaints and are distracted from genuine methods of struggle. Each individual who files a complaint for personal reasons is without rights before the mighty machine of the apparatus. This mass petitioning of impotent individuals, as well as the powerlessness of those organizations and groups that are supposed to be defending our rights, shows that there is a crisis of the movement for civil rights in our country. A humiliating wait in the reception rooms of deaf officials makes no sense. Our power comes from bringing pressure on them through protest demonstrations in the streets.

The struggle, rather than being an individual matter, becomes a collective one. The collective will makes it possible to move from paper petitions to street and strike actions in order to exert pressure. It is not judicial cases that unite people, but a common interest in winning our rights. Individual methods of struggle have become obsolete. The time has come for mass activity in defense of all citizens whose rights and freedoms have been denied. These citizens themselves, united in an independent trade union of the downtrodden, can achieve this.

From individual petitions to collective demands!

From judicial defense to social protest!

July 13, 1990

Notes

1. This heading and closing appear on all the leaflets. We have not repeated them on the others printed below.

2. "Independence" uses the word *sotsiali* to refer to what we usually call "apparatchiks" or "bureaucrats." I have found no truly faithful English equivalent—MV-D.

3. This leaflet is undated.

4. There is a tendency among some residents of Leningrad to refer to people who live in that city as "*Peterskiysye*," or "people of St. Petersburg." St. Petersburg was renamed Petrograd in 1914 under the tsar. Petrograd was renamed Leningrad after Lenin's death in 1924 by the Stalin clique who iconized Lenin's name so as to deeper bury his ideas.

Planned Economy in the USSR: Success or Failure?

by Leon Trotsky

This article was written in September 1933. It is available in Writings of Leon Trotsky (Supplement 1929-33), Pathfinder Press, New York. The editor speculated at the time of printing (1979) that it "seems to have been written for a nonradical periodical, probably in the U.S." No previous publication of it is known. It is clear from the text that Trotsky's intention was to promote trade between the USSR and the USA, which the Stalinist regime desperately sought in order to relieve the Soviet economy. But, as demonstrated, the entire question was complex. It remains so today, and Trotsky's insights retain their validity. Trade between the two countries began to flow more freely after the Roosevelt administration recognized the Soviet Union and established diplomatic relations in November 1933.

I. Achievements and Difficulties of the Soviet Economy

Has the economic work of the Soviet government brought success? Or has it, on the contrary, ended in failure? Behind this question another is hidden: Are the economic methods used by the Soviet state valid in general? The reader would normally expect a monosyllabic answer: yes or no. We refuse to provide such an answer. The building of a new society is not a matter of solving an isolated statistical or technical problem. What is involved is the planful adaptation of all the branches of the economy to one another, and of all of them together to human needs. What needs to be reconciled are not statistical but dynamic quantities. For this kind of task, no single booklet, no single human brain—not even a "brain trust"—can serve for readymade formulas.¹ Creative fantasy alone, even if armed with the best technical estimates of the specialists, is inadequate to this task. What is involved is the life of society as a whole, its most deep-rooted functions and elementary needs. To achieve harmony in the state—even on the basis of collective ownership and planned management encompassing all facets of the economy—is only possible as a result of an indefinitely prolonged period of efforts, experiments, errors, crises, reforms, and reorganizations.

How should the living forces of labor within the nation be distributed among the branches of the economy? What unit of measurement should be used for human needs? What share of the national income should be assigned to consumption and what to expanding production? How should the consumption fund be divided up between town and country, or between the various categories of industrial labor and administration? These basic questions give only a bare hint of the enormous difficulties involved in the system of planning, which in its ideal culmination ought to constitute a vast conveyor involving all the productive functions of society in the infinite complexity of inner relations among them.

In reviewing the tasks of planning one cannot leave aside a question which in the final analysis has decisive importance: the world distribution of labor. To the extent that planning is a job done by government agencies, it is of necessity limited, at

least at the present stage, by state boundaries. But the productive forces of humankind long since outgrew the national framework. Within the bounds of a single state it is impossible to plan exports and imports. Raising the economic level of the USSR will not weaken but, on the contrary, will strengthen its ties with the world market. Here the planning system runs up against a choice between two alternatives: autarchy, or an extension of the scope of planning to other states, to the entire planet. The idea of autarchy in all its varieties, including that of a closed-in socialism in a single country, constitutes a reactionary utopia. Humanity will not deny itself the worldwide distribution of labor. There is nothing left, then, but to extend planning beyond the limits of national borders by reconciling and coordinating national plans. A problem of exceptional difficulty and duration!

It would be totally wrong to take our words as an expression of skepticism regarding the principle of planning. No, we see it as the only creative principle in our epoch. But we emphatically reject any dilettantish or light-minded attitude toward the question of organizing socialist economy. This task cannot be carried out in a short time, specified at will: here what is needed is the labor of generations. If there is an element of skepticism in this evaluation, it is directed not against the possibilities and capabilities of humankind, but against the excessive pretensions of bureaucracy.

What we have said thus far should delineate to some degree what our attitude is toward the results of the first five-year plan and the prospects for the second. It is hard to say who violates reality more—those who proclaim the unqualifiedly successful fulfillment of the plan, or those who screech about its total failure. The truth is, there can be no question of the first five-year plan—still an extremely primitive hypothesis for planning the economy for a five-year period, an equation with an enormous number of unknowns—having been "fulfilled" in the literal sense. The real percentage of fulfillment will never be known as a consequence of the total alteration of the plan during the course of its fulfillment and because of the absence of a stable monetary unit as a measure of the value of the results achieved. Partly under the impact of malevolent criticism by our enemies, and partly through the influence of domestic

political needs, the Soviet authorities have made it a matter of prestige to claim that the plan was fulfilled virtually 100 percent. But why, our innumerable enemies retort with glee—and unfortunately, not without justification—why do the living standards of the masses lag so far below the norms specified by the plan? What is the reason for the severe difficulties in food and other areas?

If one approaches the first five-year plan from the point of view of its technical-industrial achievements—new factories, power plants, etc.—the material results, even aside from statistical indices, can really stagger the imagination. In effect humanity has seen for the first time what enormous possibilities are lodged in modern technology, even for an extremely backward country, if the labor force is utilized in a planned and centralized way. However, if one approaches the matter from the point of view of the everyday needs of the population, it is not hard to reach pessimistic conclusions. This contrast testifies to the profound disproportions within the economy, partly inherited from the past, and partly the result of an incorrect distribution of forces and resources. One cannot forget for a moment that the planned direction of the economy is a two-edged sword: it can overcome disproportions or it can cause them to mount up. Having concentrated all the levers of economic management in its hands, the state may at one extreme achieve mind-spinning results, while, at the other extreme, leaving the most essential needs unsatisfied. This is no argument against the principle of planning. But it is an argument in favor of a critical attitude towards planning.

The degree of success attained by the first five-year plan can be decided in part by the extent to which it laid the groundwork for the next plan. On that score an especially large number of illusions have been sown. The second five-year plan was originally geared to an absolutely fantastic annual rate of increase in national income (30 to 40 percent)! The author of these lines, beginning in 1929, warned publicly in the press that the forced pace of the first five-year plan was sure to build up disproportions that would have to be paid for by sharply reduced growth in the second five-year plan. In 1932 we suggested that the start of the second five-year plan be postponed and that 1933 be devoted to general overall repair of the Soviet economy, that is, making up for omissions, smoothing out disproportions, surmounting contradictions. The proposal was not formally acknowledged by Moscow. But in fact the second five-year plan was not put into effect—it hardly exists today, even on paper! The pace of economic growth has been reduced in the extreme. Serious reforms in the economy and in the methods of planning themselves are needed to make possible a further stable growth at high rates. Only a very superficial or deliberately biased critic could find in these ebbs and flows of the economic process, or in the erroneous calculations of the Soviet bureaucracy, proof of the “bankruptcy” of planned economy. The formation of a new social system cannot be judged as though it were a performance record in sports.

II. The USSR and the USA

The most realistic assessment of the results of the five-year plan, and of the Soviet economy in general, would in our opinion be as follows: the very fact that the first experience of

state planning in a backward and isolated country did not end in disaster but, rather, opened up new possibilities, unquestionably represents a historic victory. The significance in principle of this victory will be less subject to dispute, the less we exaggerate the extent of the concrete economic achievements.

Above all it is necessary to remember that the Soviet Union, heir to poverty and barbarism, was forced to struggle by the techniques of planning to achieve the material level that the advanced capitalist countries surpassed as long ago as the period when free competition still prevailed. And even today the Soviets lag far behind the advanced countries, especially the United States, in terms of average national income per capita. There is no need to explain the extent to which economic and cultural backwardness hinders and retards the application of the principle of planning.

The greatest difficulties have proved to be, of course, in the agricultural sphere. Here too the greatest mistakes were made. The widely dispersed and primitive nature of peasant production left vast scope for administrative experiments and caprice. This phase is far from over even now. The percentage of collectivized peasant farms exceeds the original target figure (20 percent) by at least a factor of three. But no one feels obliged to mention any rise in the extremely low productivity of agricultural labor, in spite of the far-reaching mechanization.

Also remaining unresolved is the question of the distribution of income, which has decisive importance for production in general and for agriculture in particular: it is precisely the distribution of finished products that can provide the stimulus for increasing the productivity of labor. Collectivization as a whole has not yet passed the stage of initial experimentation. One can only regret that far too vast a scale was chosen for this experimenting from the outset.

Consequently, one may say as a general rule that the successes of planning are most apparent in those fields where the decisive role is played by the centralized initiative of the state, supported by the most advanced sections of the working class. The five-year plan has produced the poorest economic results in those fields where the participation of great masses of people is required, especially of peasant masses, and where a systematic raising of the cultural and technical levels is a prerequisite. The contradiction between town and country is the most burdensome part of the heritage from czarism, in whose economy nomadic barbarism stood side by side with the most modern technology. The growth of Soviet industry created the first preconditions for reorganization of agriculture and for improving relations between town and country in the future. But these very successes in industry have been gained at the expense of a strain on relations between town and country in the present. Here it will be necessary to pay not only for the historical past but also for the recent crimes of the Soviet bureaucracy, which too hastily replaced cultural and economic factors with purely administrative ones.

This is the issue over which, during the last few years, deep differences have appeared between the so-called Opposition, to which the author belongs, and the present ruling faction.

It is our firm conviction that the new social system cannot be built by following the ready-made blueprints of the bureaucracy. The plan is only a working hypothesis. The fulfillment of the plan inevitably means its radical alteration

by the masses whose vital interests are reflected in the plan. The uncontrolled bureaucracy inevitably creates disproportions and contradictions and allows them to build up. Only the organized working population, actively participating in the elaboration and implementation of the plan, can give the necessary signals in time if there are shortcomings, and can see to it that they are corrected. The planning mechanism, without a really active and flexible Soviet democracy, in town and country, bears within itself the greatest dangers of administrative adventurism. The severe difficulties with food and other things should be seen as the direct result of the bureaucratization of the Soviet regime that has taken place over the past few years. But that is a big subject in which economics is intimately bound up with politics, and falls outside the immediate range of the present article.

To expect economic harmony to be established in the coming months and years within the territory of former czarist Russia would be the most naive utopianism. To assert that "socialism has been achieved" in the USSR is to make a mockery of the facts, and of ideas. The main work still lies ahead. Contradictions and crises are still inevitable. In order not to lose heart and fall into despondency, one must analyze the successes and failures of planned production in the long-term historical perspective, gauging oneself not by years but by multiple decades.

Liberal capitalism, during its rise and at its height, solved the problem of economic proportion through the free play of supply and demand and of periodic conjunctural cycles. Modern monopoly capitalism, with all its mighty technical resources, stands helpless before the problem of proportions, which confronts it in the form of the problem of "sales." The nationalization of the means of production and exchange created the precondition in the USSR for a planned solution to the problem of proportions. The automatic play of supply and demand is replaced by calculation, statistical foresight, and administrative direction. Material and psychological difficulties did not thereby disappear but were translated into the language of planned management. If capitalism took shape and grew over the course of centuries, the new planned economy requires at least several decades to work out and test its basic methods and to train the necessary managerial and executive cadres. This is a totally solvable problem—the only thing is not to proclaim that it has already been solved.

Least of all can the problem be considered solved when one realizes that, in spite of the nationalization of the means of production and the monopoly on foreign trade, the Soviet Union is not separated from the rest of the world by any impenetrable barrier. The course of economic construction in the USSR depends to a great extent on what happens in the next few decades to the economy of Europe and that of the whole world, which at present is thrashing about, in the convulsions

of a terrible crisis. Here we come directly to the question of the possible economic relations between the Soviet Union and the United States.

With all the fundamental differences between their social systems, the American and Soviet economies have two features in common: vast scale and high concentration of the means of production, at least in industry. With daring and perspicacity on both sides, economic cooperation on these foundations could assume proportions unprecedented in history.

The new economic methods being applied in the United States today are based on the concept of government planning with private ownership being maintained in the means of production. This is not the place to go into an evaluation of these methods. Experience will provide the test. One thing is clear, however, that even with the most favorable results in practice, domestic planning runs up against the problem of foreign trade. Can it be brought under the control of reason? The [international economic] conference in London [June 1933] has given an eloquent answer on that score. For the United States to abandon exports would be to abandon economic advancement altogether. Meanwhile, on the map of world trade there is a sector that is already amenable to planning. That is trade with the USSR. It is possible to take pencil in hand and sketch an outline of the relations between the two giant states, a hypothetical plan of exchange that would develop in an upward spiral.

Despite all its deficiencies and contradictions, the Soviet economy allows one to see ahead much better than, say, the thoroughly sick economy of Germany does. With the establishment of normal diplomatic relations, the American government, which by the nature of things has now come to stand much closer to economic questions than any transoceanic republic's government ever did, would have ample opportunity to get fully and systematically acquainted with all the processes of the Soviet economy, and consequently, to ascertain the "element of risk" involved in Soviet-American economic relations. If upon our planet, shaken with disorders, in an atmosphere of new threats of war and of bloody convulsions, there still remains an economic experiment worth carrying through all the way, it is the experiment of Soviet-American cooperation. □

Note

1. This refers to President Franklin Roosevelt's economic advisers and New Deal administrators in his first term (1933-1936) who were called his "brain trust" at the time, their task being to resolve the crisis of the Great Depression which had paralyzed the capitalist system.

The Socialist Workers Party and the Fourth International

The following statement was adopted by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International on October 5, 1990:

The U.S. Socialist Workers Party, one of the founding organizations of the Fourth International, has broken its fraternal links with the Fourth International—together with a number of small organizations in political solidarity with the SWP. This represents an incontestable setback for our movement. But it represents the logical conclusion of a long period during which the SWP progressively abandoned key planks of the revolutionary Marxist program.

It was at the 1979 World Congress—when the SWP withdrew its support for the resolution on socialist democracy that it had contributed to drafting—that its leading group's intention of questioning fundamental ideas of revolutionary Marxism first became apparent. At that time it was obviously impossible to grasp the full scope of this step. But at the beginning of the 1980s, SWP leaders started to revise our conception more and more openly; not only on socialist democracy but on permanent revolution, antibureaucratic political revolution, the transitional methods, and the norms of democratic functioning of a revolutionary organization.

It goes without saying that our political and theoretical positions can be rediscussed, or indeed put into question. But when the leadership or members of an organization consider that new ideas have to be introduced, the normal procedure is to express these ideas clearly and to explicitly submit them to discussion in their own organization and in the International as a whole. Although Barnes and other SWP leaders had reached the conclusion that the program of the SWP and of the Fourth International had to be radically changed, they did not act in this way. They started by denying (in particular at the August 1981 SWP convention) that they wanted to question the theory of permanent revolution and chose to express their new positions through personal articles or speeches (such as, for example, two articles of Doug Jenness in 1982 and Jack Barnes's speech in December of the same year on "Their Trotsky and Ours") without these questions being discussed in the statutory bodies, whose regular functioning was in fact obstructed (for example the convention planned for August 1983 was postponed, thus preventing the members from expressing an opinion on the theses expressed in the above-mentioned Barnes speech). Thus they gradually imposed a "new course" and a new programmatic basis to their party in a bureaucratic fashion, taking absolutely arbitrary organizational measures against members of the leadership and the party who expressed their disagreement. The 1985 World Congress condemned these procedures and asked the SWP leadership to readmit all the party members who had been expelled or suspended. But the SWP leaders did not do anything of the sort.

Nor did they make any effort to stimulate a real discussion within the International on the changes that they proposed. Particularly after the 1985 Congress, the SWP representatives participated less and less in the work of the leadership bodies of the International and they finally stopped participating at all without any serious explanation. They did not participate, as they could have done, in the political and programmatic discussions that were taking place within the International, including on the problems they had raised. In fact, they limited themselves to developing undeclared factional activity with the aim of winning over some small sections, minorities of other sections, or even individuals.

What is more, they formally communicated their decision to leave the Fourth International, along with their supporters, at a time when the discussion for our next World Congress is already open and thus they could have the opportunity of participating in it actively to put over their ideas and perspectives. They have ignored this and simply announced the fact of their leaving, without even bothering to make the slightest balance sheet of their experience within the framework of the Fourth International.

The key difference which arose with the SWP was the position which they progressively adopted on the building of an international revolutionary movement. Starting with the victory of the Nicaraguan and Grenadian revolutions in 1979, they adopted the illusory perspective of a political and organizational convergence with those they considered to be part of the international Castroite current—the FSLN, the New Jewel Movement, and above all the Cuban Communist Party itself.

It goes without saying that serious revolutionaries always respond to any possibility to build a mass revolutionary international by linking up with other revolutionary currents, including those who do not call themselves Trotskyist or have the Trotskyist tradition as a key reference point. But on one condition—that there is a real programmatic and practical convergence on the key questions of revolutionary strategy in the different sectors of the world revolution.

This was not the approach of the SWP in seeking to link up with the "new leaderships." Instead, they began to see elements of the revolutionary Marxist program—and in the end the international organization of revolutionary Marxists, the Fourth International—as an "obstacle" to their goal. First and foremost, they began to see the theory of permanent revolution as a major difficulty in their projected convergence with these forces, and in particular the Cuban Communist Party.

The overwhelming majority of the Trotskyist movement internationally understood the Nicaraguan revolution as a confirmation of the basic propositions of permanent revolution. The SWP on the contrary drew the conclusion that an intermediary democratic stage on the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat was inevitable in every revolution—even in the advanced capitalist countries. The road was thus opened to a full-fledged rejection of the theory of permanent revolution, and a more-or-less complete acceptance of a “stages” theory of revolution in the third world.

The programmatic concessions to the Cuban CP became progressively more marked, leading to a rejection of our multi-party and pluralist conceptions of socialist democracy, and even to an acceptance of the authoritarian and paternalist internal regime of the Cuban CP as one which should be adopted in revolutionary Marxist organizations. Ironically, these adaptations to the line of the Cuban CP eventually led the Barnes leadership and its international cothinkers to criticize the Sandinista leadership for some of its best qualities—in particular, a regime qualitatively more democratic than existed in the degenerated and deformed workers’ states. Thus the SWP fell victim to a phenomenon seen several times in the history of our movement—an impatience with the long and arduous task of building the international regroupment of revolutionary Marxists, the Fourth International, as the instrument we have today for building the mass revolutionary International of tomorrow. Such impatience, and the seeking of illusory and utopian shortcuts, invariably leads to the jettisoning of crucial parts of the revolutionary Marxist program.

Serious differences also arose between the SWP and the International leadership in relation to the Khomeini regime in Iran. The International did not hesitate to support the new Iranian regime against imperialist attacks, but at the same time denounced its capitalist and reactionary nature, emphasizing the need to create independent political and trade union organizations of the working class and peasantry. The *Militant*, the SWP newspaper, on the other hand, characterized the Khomeini regime as “anti-imperialist,” presented the reactionary organizations which were established and controlled by the clergy as real and legitimate expressions of the mass movement and did not wage any campaign in defense of the workers, peasants, students, women, Kurds, and other oppressed nationalities, not to mention the revolutionary activists who were victims of increasingly severe repression.

Other important differences between the SWP and the International leadership emerged subsequently, for example in relation to South Africa. In a report made in August 1985, Jack Barnes explained that what was on the agenda for this country was simply a “democratic revolution.” According to him, for as long as “modern classes” have not developed in this country, all talk about the struggle for “socialist revolution” or “dictatorship of the proletariat” should be rejected as a leftist absurdity. This took shape in acritical support for the ANC.

But the evolution of the leading group of the SWP was expressed above all in its attitude to the Cuban leadership. The

Cuban revolution—the first victorious revolution after the victory of Stalinism under the leadership of non-Stalinist forces—was a major historical event. Its leading group, and above all Fidel Castro, gave undeniable proof of a revolutionary and internationalist spirit and their desire to strive against bureaucratic degeneration. There is not the least difference on all this between the International majority and the SWP leaders. But the problems arose once they confused solidarity with the revolution and an apologetic attitude in relation to its leadership. In fact, they quite rapidly obliterated all political and programmatic differentiation with the Cuban leadership, which led them in particular to say nothing about Fidel’s past idealization of the bureaucratic leaderships in the USSR and the other Eastern European countries and to accept as correct the Cuban’s authoritarian single-party system. The Cuban road was exalted unreservedly by them as the true road to socialism, the rectification process hailed as a form of antibureaucratic political revolution, and Cuba presented as a country where genuine socialist democracy prevail.

This is what explains the lack of coherence in its thought and attitudes which have and continue to oscillate continuously, more or less explicitly. For example, one such distortion led it to state that our conception of defense of the workers’ states should imply the defense of at least one part of the existing state apparatus. But once the bureaucratic regimes began to shake and fall following the powerful mass movements of 1989, the SWP’s publications supported these movements, to a large extent used Trotskyist analysis of the bureaucracy, and differentiated themselves from the attitude of the Cuban leadership. But they did not draw the conclusions: there was no explicit criticism of Fidel Castro, and Cuba remained for the SWP, despite all the evidence, a “model of socialist democracy.”

Let us repeat once more: we do not see the International as it exists today as an end in itself but as an instrument—the only one which we have today—to prepare for building a mass revolutionary International. All the experience of the past is rich in lessons on this question. A number of times, currents, groups, and individuals have emerged within or outside our ranks which have chosen, against us, their own path in the search for a bigger home. They have all reached the exactly opposite result; either they have more or less rapidly disappeared, or they have rubbed along within national or supposedly international groupings of absolutely ridiculous proportions.

The decision of the SWP leaders will have literally destructive consequences for the SWP and all those who followed it.

It is not too late to change course and avoid such a result. We call on all the comrades to reverse the decision which has been announced to us. We consider that the question of relations with the Fourth International is so important that a convention of the party should be called within a short time span, and in any case before our World Congress of next February. A democratic discussion should be organized with the participation of representatives of the International leadership. □

Notebooks for the Grandchildren

by Mikhail Baitalsky

"A variety of people viewed this spectacle, applauded, and cried out: 'Long live subordination to the iron rod!' However, history looked at the matter in another way and secretly promised herself: in 100 years or so, I will without fail get all this in the newspapers."—Saltykov-Shchedrin, Dried Volba.

43. To Vorkuta for the Second Time

We were held in Butyrka prison until an order was received as to where we were to be taken. Finally, they call for us and our things and cram us in a blue Raven and take us away. We get out and see on the tracks a long line of Stolypin cars.¹

A Stolypin car (which we inherited from tsarist times) was constructed as follows: inside are cages, as in a zoo, but much lower. Inside them, there are two levels of bunks, with a third bunk on the floor level. And they are all full of people. Alongside the cages and through the narrow corridor walks the animal tamer who accompanies the convoy escorts. There are bars on the outside of the windows. But the only windows are in the corridor; the prisoners have only blank walls.

We were herded from the brand-new, elegant blue bus to the old dark-green Stolypin cars. This business took place on a cold, windy February day at one of the freight stations near Moscow. Our Raven stopped a long way from the railroad cars; the intersecting tracks prevented us from going any further; and they made us run along the tracks the rest of the way, shouting at us: "Faster! Faster!" The convoy escorts had their machine guns ready, looks of fear on their faces, as if they were the ones being shouted at. They were out of breath from shouting. We were out of breath from running with our bundles in our arms. Only the passersby were not breathing at all.

Many people crossed the route to the station near Moscow. The officials shouted to them: "Keep moving! Keep moving!" They were not allowed to stop and they were afraid even to look our way. Not one of them raised downcast eyes in my direction. I kept looking at faces as I ran by holding onto the absurd hope that by some unspeakable miracle I'd suddenly see someone I recognized, or perhaps catch someone's eye. However, they slipped by us clutching their purses, briefcases, and bags close to their chests. Did they really believe we were guilty? There was no way for them to tell that we were political prisoners. After all, there are none in our country!

Criminals are not to be pitied. After all, they don't feel sorry for you when they take your last three-ruble note from your bag. They kill anyone who looks at them the wrong way!

That's what a passerby will say until his own son gets caught robbing a woman in a store. And then he'll blame his son's friends who were unable or unwilling to care about other people's lives. A doctoral candidate in the historical sciences in 1957 having quite possibly written that only isolated individuals suffered from violations of revolutionary legality, decided after the 22nd Party Congress to use the words "the crimes of Stalin." But later, he forgot the words again, even though the historic facts which he had known for at least ten years could not have changed. Candidates aspiring to master this type of meteorological philosophy are able to tell which way the wind is blowing. But none has yet explained the origin of the wind, including that wind which whispers advice to boys to slip their hands into someone else's bag.

Not waiting for a sympathetic look from a passerby, I scrambled up the steps of the car. They pushed us in and locked the door. In the passageway on the other side of the bars appeared the chief of the convoy, a young sergeant with an exceptional bearing:

"Attention, imprisoned enemies of the people! I want to make an announcement. They will bring water twice a day, one bucket per compartment. We will take you to the toilet once a day. Is that understood?"

The sergeant said "toilet," observing polite behavior.

The enemies of the people began to grumble. But the sergeant was not afraid of those who were under him.

"I want to announce: you are talking a lot. Those who make noise, I will not let out at all. Do you understand?"

Our car ended up with an especially successful convoy commander. But maybe he adopted his behavior in order to have strict control and not to be cruel. Whatever his beginnings, so will be his smell. His chest glittered; it had badges hanging all over it. It couldn't have been metals earned during the war because he was too young. He adored his badges and was always straightening them.

Judging by the way he spoke, he was from Vologda. In the camps we often heard the saying: "A Vologda escort doesn't fool around." Sergeants of that type often repeated this with pride and satisfaction. Why that should be a source of pride I cannot say.

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 convoy was made up of soldiers. I was used to them and could understand them. However, their young commander derived satisfaction the same way that a vicious child does: from the possibility of verifying his strength on those who are weaker than he is. He was conscious of his supremacy over full-grown, bearded men, who he could easily guess were not ordinary but well-educated people and who were now beneath him. To see that there is someone beneath you is exalting to a nonentity.

Two, three, four days passed. We sat doubled over, pressing our hands against our stomachs. We tried not to drink so as to lessen the pain. But it is harder not to drink than it is not to eat. They gave us dry rations for the journey: bread and salted herring. With each day on the road, we doubled up still more, as if a new cobblestone were being packed into our bowels. The train stayed in the stations for a long time.

"Attention, imprisoned enemies of the people!" the sergeant announced. We will be in the station for an indefinite period. You will go to the toilet when we are ready to set out. Blabber mouths!"

Throughout the whole eight days, he made not one exception for anyone. He was just, mercilessly just, as he had been persistently taught to be. We asked to see a doctor. He answered:

"There is no doctor. You prisoners talk too much!"

He believed we were fascists. That is what we were often called by the escorts, the wardens, and the common criminals. I don't blame the sergeant. He was simply putting into practice that which the bearers of higher ideological truths had given shape to theoretically.

We did not know where we were going. We had not managed to read the names of the stations. Finally, after eight days, they unloaded us. Vorkuta! Yes, it's a small world.

Vorkuta had grown a lot during the years since I had last seen it. It was developing still further at an unprecedented tempo. And it was unprecedented in a number of other ways.

In 1959, the Pechorsk coal basin was 25 years old. (It consists of the Vorkuta and Inta mines.) To mark the occasion, a book of no less than 600 pages was published. It was sent to a number of officials and presented as a gift to veterans.

"Now," the book says, "it is very difficult to reconstruct in detail the history of the construction and the first years of exploitation of the mine; but even the little that has been preserved in documents and in the memories of old inhabitants allows us to picture the truly heroic labor of the builders."

A statement of truth. That heroic labor was done by us—by Grisha Baglyuk and my other friends, who have been slandered and stigmatized. "Before 1940," the book goes on, "when the first horses were led down into the pits, the hauling of coal and rock from the face of the mine to the surface was done by hand." I remember, I remember very clearly. From the face to the surface may not sound very far, but try hauling something that far by yourself. I didn't make much of a coal miner. But I was a pretty good horse.

All aspects of Vorkuta were described in the commemoration book. Naturally, one thing that didn't get the least mention in the 600 pages was—who? Who were they, these anonymous people who built the first shafts, chopped out the coal, laid the railroad from Kotlas to Vorkuta and built Vorkuta itself? Where did they get the strength? How did they end up there? Where did they go?

The book calls these anonymous ones builders, miners, but most of all "souls." That is what the landlords called the serfs: "my souls."

These "souls" were concerned, the book emphasizes. We were well aware of what concerned Stalin, Yezhov, Beria, and Kornyev. And now the concern continues—this time they are concerned about all the Soviet souls in our country; the souls were always their first concern. They are concerned that the souls should not get upset by finding out who built Vorkuta, Norilsk, the Chirchik

Hydroelectric Station, Volgodon, and dozens and hundreds of great projects described in commemoration books, novels, and stories. The word "prisoner" has been stricken from the entire history of our country. They did not ship a single zeka [an expression for "prisoner"] to the Pechorsk coal basin during the entire 25 years! Not one zeka's bones are to be found along the tracks from Kotlas to Vorkuta! In fact, the Soviet people do not even know what the word "zeka" means—what is it, anyway?

It comes from the official term for the state organization called GULAG—Glavnoye Upravleniye Lageryei [Central Directorate of the Camps], a powerful far-reaching organization to supply the labor force for the construction of socialism. The labor force was not sold as at the slave markets in America, but "rented out" to economic organizations in places like Vorkuta, say to the Vorkuta Coal Production Unit.

The commemoration collections and novels like *Far from Moscow*—which under the pretext of depicting a single workers' collective describes an ordinary camp where Young Communist cadre were in charge of prisoners—such literature does not offend my pride but it hurts my civic feelings. Why are these things well known abroad but concealed from me? If they can know about it, why can't I?

The commemoration book named above reported the increase in the coal output at Vorkuta. It was 309 tons in 1941 and it increased elevenfold during the four war years! But neither in this book nor in others does it say a word about how many times over the number of special trains with the labor force increased during that four-year period, carrying convoy after convoy to the north. Data about the camp population are never published anywhere. There has been more than one occasion when the camp population could have been commemorated.

Let's try to figure it out ourselves. I had a friend who, many years after he was freed, worked as an economist at the Vorkuta Ore Administration. Vorkuta conducted correspondence about "transfer of the labor force" with many camp economic organizations—approximately 200 of them. Among them were enormous camps, holding a half-million or more prisoners (for example, the Baikal-Amur rail line, Volgodon, Karaganda). In Vorkuta at that time, during the years of the war and after it, there were about 50-60,000 prisoners. Considering the scale on which the GULAG population grew, it would not have been able to deal with a large number of individuals; it already had a large population. Therefore, they were naturally united into territorial directorates.

On the basis of these considerations, as well as other indicators that make their way into the correspondence, my friend adopted the figure of 60,000 zekas—that is, at Vorkuta—on the average.

That makes 12 million prisoners in the camps. This figure he considers a low estimate. On the basis of various other sources (not official ones, of course, since such data is taboo), one also comes up with a figure of no less than 12 million, and by some counts, between 15 and 18 million at any given time.

During the war when every person was needed as a soldier or as a defense worker, 15 million people in the camps required no less than a one-million-strong army of healthy, militarily trained persons as escorts, wardens, trainers, etc., without even raising the issue of how low the productivity of camp labor is in general. The figures showing the coal output per mine does not reflect the whole picture of the camps. For every one who had a drill, there were seven with spades. The two and a half million tons of coal mined in 1944 needs to be divided among all who were held in Vorkuta for the sake of the coal, which means that each person produced about 40 tons each year.

This is difficult not to understand but it can be ignored, which is what is being done in the books and articles on Vorkuta. For example, the widely distributed publication called "Questions and Answers," No. 225 of August 1969, printed an article on Mine Day: "Heat from the Permafrost." In it that very Kotlas-Vorkuta

rail line, all along which are buried the bones of prisoners, is called "the route of valor." The article notes with enthusiasm that "the development of the world coal industry has known no comparable tempo of growth like that which has been achieved in the Soviet Polar region. "Never before in history," the article exclaims, "has there been such a coal basin which every year doubles its output." Really! And has there ever before in history been such a coal basin to which special train after special train hauled a prisoner labor force accompanied by convoys of troops?

Completion of construction of "the route of valor" from Kotlas to Vorkuta, in fact, allowed the flow of special trains of zekas to Vorkuta to be increased many times over, after which special trains filled with coal for liberated Leningrad passed back along it.

The article said near the end: "The creation of the Pechorsk coal basin during the war years is proof of the might and vitality of a socialist social structure." In other words, the corrective labor camps of Vorkuta and Inta, which included the Pechora and Inta hard labor camps—these have been invoked to prove that we have socialism. Well, well! A camp with prisoners and guards, with punishment cells and punishment rations, with a Vologda-type escort official, with guard towers and dogs—that this is proof of the positive features (might and vitality) of socialism—such is the ultimate cynicism. In truth, we are receiving surprisingly clear answers to very difficult questions.

The authors of "Questions and Answers" did not slip up. Everywhere—in newspapers and books—the projects created by camp labor are called socialist. The Vorkuta commemoration book goes still further: "What was done by the Soviet people over a 25-year period in the Komi ASSR could be called with bold confidence a revolution." There you have it. No more and no less.

If the camp construction projects from Vorkuta to Karaganda are officially considered projects of socialism, a whole series of questions arise as to what, in fact, socialism is, and what characterizes it.

The commemoration book's silence is not simply silence but a lie on a grand scale. By the same token, the demand not to write camp stories and reminiscences is not a demand to maintain a sense of proportion between light and dark, but a demand to lie and deceive the people regarding the GULAG and its limitless archipelago. And we, the labor force in the special trains, were hauled to one of the islands of the archipelago, unloaded from the cars and led, surrounded by Stalin's concern and German shepherds, along the snow-covered streets of the city.

Yes, it is a big city! How it has changed, our Vorkuta! How many mines there are all around! And builders and miners! And souls! And bosses!

Vorkuta has changed a great deal over those ten years since I last saw it. However, the changes have been enumerated in the commemoration articles. The only thing that was unchanged, and about which the articles are silent, has also shown progress: There are many more guard towers, and the peajackets worn by the "souls" have sprouted numbers. Some of them have three numbers so that whichever way one turned, the code showed.

For several days they did not take us to work but gave us lectures on safety techniques, explaining how mine gas spreads and how to detect it with the help of the miner's lamp. Much of it was familiar to me, except for the innovations in the system of the camps themselves.

We learned that we were located at Rechlag. At Vorkuta, two camp systems now coexisted: Vorkutlag, with its ordinary camp regime; and Rechlag, with a strengthened regime, i.e., a stricter one. In other places, they gave such strict regime camps other pseudonyms: Morlag, Ozerlag, Minlag. Those sentenced to hard labor were sent to Rechlag, and the regime had them in mind. But those who were not sentenced to hard labor—why have they also been sent to Rechlag?

"Oh, there is a difference!" one of the convicts explained to me. "You are called zekas and we are called KTRs [those performing hard labor]. You have two numbers on your jacket and pants and we have three."

Almost all of us who were brought here from that unit near Moscow ended up in Rechlag even though we were ordinary, unassuming zekas. The covers of our records—as we noticed at the sharashka [a showplace of forced intellectual labor], when they were seating us in the blue Raven—had a wide red line running diagonally across them. The color red had apparently acquired a new significance in the hands of Stalin's apparatus.

At Vorkutlag, under the ordinary regime, there were basically socially close prisoners: thieves, embezzlers, murderers. There were few like us. At Rechlag, on the other hand, almost everyone was there under Article 58 [for political prisoners]. If they added to the crimes of a thief or a murderer a violation of any kind under Article 58, then this took precedence over everything else. The prisoner would no longer be considered a common criminal but would be subject to reeducation at Rechlag. Thus, despite the fact that we have no political prisoners, they do exist. They have to be mixed up into an amalgam with pickpockets and burglars so as to emphasize that all criminals are common criminals. Moreover, reeducation in mixed contingents is more successful. The pickpockets have a salutary influence on the engineers and writers. Therefore, for escaping, for example, they punish you under Article 58; he committed sabotage because as a fugitive he was escaping not from the prison bars but from work.

Imagine the following situation, which is fully realistic: you sit in camp on a false charge, but all your appeals remain unanswered. And you decide to run away—perhaps so that you can go to the reception room of the Supreme Court to make a personal appeal. You get caught and you get a new term added on, this time for escaping. Now you have no reason to be offended: you got punished for something that you actually did. That is why one innocently condemned must not even dream of trying to escape: by escaping, he will make himself actually guilty of something. Joan of Arc said to the judges at the Inquisition: "A prisoner has the right to escape." She herself tried to. They burned her at the stake. A contemporary court could, it seems, acquit her (if the prosecutor was not able to prove that she had not *in fact* betrayed The Homeland). But what about attempting to escape? She really did try. They would acquit her of the charge of colluding with the devil, but convict her for trying to escape.

[Next Month: "To Vorkuta for the Second Time" (Cont.)]

Note

1. Stolypin, Pyotr A. (1862-1911) in 1906 became minister of the interior and president of the Council of Ministers in the tsarist government. He zealously repressed the revolution of 1905, introducing tribunals and punishments. Thousands were executed and exiled. He was assassinated by one of his own secret agents carrying out the orders of the terrorist organization he had infiltrated.

A Useful Contribution to the History of the Vietnam Antiwar Movement

U.S. Labor and the Vietnam War, by Philip S. Foner. New York, International Publishers, 1989. 180 pp., \$7.95.

Reviewed by Samuel Adams

To the discomfort of the U.S. ruling class, talk about the Vietnam war and the Vietnam antiwar movement simply will not die. In fact, during the last few years—through books, conferences, university courses, movies, TV productions—the war and the opposition that developed to it are being talked about more than at any time since the killing ended 15 years ago.

Among the most notable of recent developments: the film "Born on the Fourth of July," based on Ron Kovic's autobiography, viewed by millions and acclaimed for Academy Award consideration; the convening of the first national "Vietnam Antiwar Movement Conference" in Toledo, Ohio, on May 4-5, 1990, for the purpose of making an in-depth historical examination of the movement's many facets; and the publication of the book "The Month of May: Killings and Coverups at Kent State," marking the 20th anniversary of the massacre of students peacefully protesting the war.

The one void in this continuing interest in the Vietnam period has been a description of labor's role in the peace movement. This void has largely been filled now by Philip S. Foner's book, "U.S. Labor and the Vietnam War." Foner, an historian of renown and the author of the multivolume "History of the Labor Movement in the United States," does a creditable job bringing to life the growth and development of Vietnam antiwar sentiment among workers and the labor movement as the war dragged on.

Foner points out that leaders of the U.S. labor movement were not always the enthusiastic supporters of Washington's foreign policy they have been in recent decades. In the 1898 Spanish-American War, which marked the emergence of U.S. imperialism on a world scale, U.S. labor with few exceptions joined the ranks of antiwar forces. But this soon changed. Top labor leaders came to accept the idea that progress by unions at home is dependent on capitalism and expansion of U.S. corporations abroad. The superprofits secured from exploitation of masses in many parts of the world were shared with some sectors of workers here at home to gain their support.

Vietnam: The Meany Leadership vs. Growing Opposition from Below

Turning to Vietnam, Foner recounts the struggle from 1965 to the end of the war between the Meany leadership of the AFL-CIO and those in labor who opposed its support of the war. In a May 3, 1965, speech to the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, Meany articulated his rationale for supporting the war:

It is up to all of us, on affairs outside the boundaries of this nation, to have one policy. We can disagree in here, but we cannot disagree outside the boundaries of the nation, and have an effective foreign policy.

So I urge you in your own communities to follow the AFL-CIO position, to back up the commander-in-chief. There is no other way for freedom to survive.

Meany was not just an intractable supporter of the Vietnam war. He used his power in the AFL-CIO to keep unions in line. Major unions never did speak out, even when opposition to the war reached overwhelming proportions. Those union leaders who weren't otherwise bought off were afraid Meany would retaliate in interunion problems and disputes. Besides, they had political commitments to the Democratic Party which was, after all, a war party. Also, Johnson's Great Society program embraced many of labor's demands so some unionists felt they owed Johnson support for the war.

In terms of official policy, Meany prevailed with his position from the beginning to the end of the war, almost always unanimously. (In 1970, however, after Nixon's invasion of Cambodia, three members of the Executive Council opposed Meany's resolution to support the action and one member abstained.) But by the end of the war, a three-fourths majority of workers had repudiated Meany's policies.

Foner demonstrates the mushrooming of antiwar sentiment in the labor movement by taking us through the various labor formations: the 1961 Trade Union Division of SANE, attended by 173 union officers and staff; the 1967 National Labor Leadership Assembly for Peace, attended by 523 labor leaders; the 1970 National Labor Committee to End the War in Indochina, composed of labor leaders representing 13 international unions with millions of members; and the 1972 Labor for Peace, which brought together 1,200 delegates and observers from unions representing four million workers in 32 states. Each formation was more broadly representative than the previous one.

Foner says that it was primarily the economic effects of the Vietnam war that led to the growth of labor's resistance to it. He cites statistics showing the rise of inflation from 1.7 percent in 1965 to 6.1 percent in 1969. This, together with exorbitant taxes, drove down workers' living standards and led to a mounting wave of strikes, including one by 200,000 postal workers. At the same time, unemployment was on the rise. In 1970 there were 4.6 million people out of work, which was 6 percent at the time and the highest in 7-1/2 years. Moreover, lack of funds for social programs jeopardized Johnson's "Great Society" programs. Foner quotes from a number of union resolutions opposing the war based on the economic hardships it was imposing on U.S. workers.

Foner also makes clear that millions of workers were horrified by some of the moral aspects of the war, such as the

massacre at Songhy. The atrocities shown on TV of U.S. soldiers cold-bloodedly killing hundreds of South Vietnamese men, women, and children caused a further erosion of prowar sentiment in the labor movement.

Strangely enough, Foner says not one word about the fact that it was workers—and young people from working class families—who were doing the fighting and the dying, with a disproportionate number of casualties among Blacks. Yet this also was a key factor in explaining the increased disenchantment toward the war by the labor movement.

The Labor-Student Alliance

One of the best aspects of Foner's book is the manner in which it describes how relations between workers and students grew closer in building opposition to the war. While writing always from a labor perspective, Foner is genuinely appreciative of the central role the students played and the change of attitude by many of them toward workers, just as many unionists changed their attitudes toward students, in forging the labor-student alliance.

A key factor in this was the support by student antiwar activists for the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers' strike against Standard Oil in 1969, the United Electrical/International Union of Electrical Workers' strike against General Electric in 1969-70, and the United Auto Workers' strike against General Motors in 1970. Union leaders in each case expressed their heartfelt thanks to the students and the whole experience helped solidify labor's ties with them.

Labor and the Antiwar Movement

Another major strength of the Foner book—and the source of a serious weakness as well—is the way he interweaves growth of antiwar expression in the labor movement with labor's participation in the organized antiwar movement.

As noted above, in the early days of the Vietnam war, trade unionists who opposed it affiliated directly with SANE (National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy). Following the March 26, 1966, antiwar demonstration of 50,000 in New York City, 17 union leaders—described by James Wechsler in the May 4 *New York Post* as “belong[ing] to the second and third echelons of the labor movement; few are headline figures”—issued a call for the formation of a “Trade Union Division of SANE.” A chapter was formed in New York. By June 1966 preliminary meetings to establish similar groups had been held in Chicago and San Francisco, and discussions were already under way among union leaders for the same purpose in St. Louis, Detroit, Cleveland, Boston, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and the Southwest.

The project had great potential but eventually it floundered and disappeared because of ideological differences. While early statements of the group called for ending the Vietnam war through negotiations, some trade unionists took a stand for unconditional U.S. withdrawal.

When union officials in San Francisco applied for a charter to form a new chapter of SANE's trade union division, they were initially turned down. The national directors of SANE pointed out that they, unlike SANE, favored immediate withdrawal from the war rather than an immediate end to the bombing and negotiations. This was accompanied by a red-baiting attack against Ann Draper, whom SANE officials

called “an old socialist,” and the “communist-tainted ILWU,” including Harry Bridges, who led the San Francisco group. The charter was later granted but the question had been posed as to whether the trade unionists owed their allegiance primarily to SANE or whether they would organize independently without being subject to SANE's control. They ended up breaking with SANE and forming the Labor Assembly for Peace.

Foner also discusses support by labor antiwar forces for the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (New Mobe), which cosponsored the October 15, 1969, Moratorium demonstrations and organized the huge demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco on November 15, 1969. Those demonstrations had significant labor backing. When Nixon's attorney general threatened to investigate the New Mobe, leaders from the Steelworkers, Teamsters, UAW, and other unions denounced the move. The UAW's legislative director said, “The Justice Department is pulling out the script of the fifties à la Joe McCarthy.” The government pulled back.

Yet, as Foner points out, the New Mobe, despite its previous successes, lost its sense of direction. He writes, “New Mobe and the Moratorium could not agree on what steps to take next. Should they organize another massive demonstration? Focus on the congressional elections? Commit acts of civil disobedience?” He could have added, “Focus on the Vietnam war or undertake responsibility for a host of other issues? Follow a democratic decision-making process or allow a handful of leaders to decide the antiwar movement's course?” It was the wrong answer that Mobe leaders gave to all of these questions that led to the group's disintegration and demise.

Finally, Foner recounts how Nobel Laureate Dr. George Wald of Harvard—a veteran of the antiwar movement—initiated a series of meetings in 1970 designed to form a coalition of workers, students, and academics to oppose the war. Wald's call drew a wide response. Leading trade unionists who participated included Leonard Woodcock, president of the UAW; Jerry Wurf, president of the American Federation of State, County, Municipal Employees; Joseph Potofsky, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers; Harold Gibbons, vice president of the Teamsters; Abe Feinglass, vice president of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen; and Cleveland Robinson, secretary-treasurer of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union.

Regarding labor's ties with the National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC), which proved to be the broadest antiwar coalition formed during the Vietnam war and which had substantial union representation, Foner's book is silent. On the surface, this seems bewildering, since NPAC sponsored the huge April 24, 1971, demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco. These were by far the largest actions which occurred during the war with a turnout of a million people, including tens of thousands of workers.

Throughout his book Foner writes about the major antiwar marches and demonstrations: who sponsored them, what the turnout was, the degree of labor participation, etc. Why, then, not one page on NPAC and April 24, 1971? Foner avoids the coalition and the demonstration altogether by stopping his chronological account of events at February 1971 and then skipping to 1972. Since Foner is a careful researcher, we cannot ascribe the omission either to happenstance or sloppiness.

What must be kept in mind is that the Socialist Workers Party, a Trotskyist group, was a central organizer of this 1971 demonstration. Phil Foner, on the other hand, comes out of the Stalinist tradition. He quotes Gus Hall, chairman of the Communist Party, U.S.A., in his book but he cannot bring himself to even mention a momentous antiwar action that Trotskyists played a key role in initiating. It is unfortunate that Foner's book—otherwise an important contribution to the history of the struggle to end the Vietnam war—is marred by his factional bias.

Support for Democratic Party Politics

We can also fault Foner for the weak ending to his book. The concluding chapter, called "1972 Election and the End to the War," recounts how antiwar trade union leaders threw their energies into supporting George McGovern. Foner is critical of the Meany bureaucracy for blocking an endorsement of McGovern by the AFL-CIO.

If the Vietnam war teaches us anything, it is that workers, students, and other progressive sectors of the population—if they organize a social movement independent of the major political parties of sufficient massiveness—can, at certain historical junctures, impose their will upon the capitalist ruling class. After all, the Vietnam war ended under the administrations of Nixon and Ford, both hawks who were forced to yield to mass pressure at home in combination with the gallant struggle for liberation by the Vietnamese people.

Undoubtedly there is a direct connection between Foner's failure to understand this and his shunning of the Trotskyist movement, which at that time made as a central plank of its program the building of an independent mass antiwar movement.

Despite the weaknesses noted, the Foner book belongs in the library of those interested in learning more about labor's participation in the fight to end the Vietnam war. □

Letters

Likes Baitalsky Memoirs

I find that my collection of Baitalsky's "Notebooks for the Grandchildren" is incomplete. I need installments 2 through 8 and I'm enclosing \$25.00 to cover the cost. I spoke to Frank Lovell this morning and told him of my interest in having the notebooks published in one volume. If there is anything I can do to assist the process please let me know. I'm sure Marilyn Vogt-Downey understands the importance of her work, but I would like to tell her myself how important her translations are for me. I'm writing a novel based partly on that period in Soviet history, and the Baitalsky memoirs are key research material.

Leonard Goodman
Seattle, Washington

Jake Cooper

I just read your October 1990 issue of *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, kindly lent to me by a friend. I'm not sure how it came to be that I have not subscribed to your excellent journal, but I'd like to remedy that with this issue. I'd also like to order back issues 67, 68, and 76.

I was one of the invited speakers at the recent 50th anniversary commemoration

of the assassination of Trotsky and the inauguration of the restored "Museo Leon Trotsky" in Mexico. I was intrigued that in your otherwise excellent obit of Jake Cooper no mention was made of his presence at the event, which was surely cardinal in his life.

I met Jake for the first time there, though I knew him the instant I saw and heard him—not just because he was an American, but because he sounded so much like his brother Dave who lives in Los Angeles. Jake was somewhat apprehensive in Mexico, but mostly giddy with excitement. It was clearly a culmination for him, a completing of the circle that encompassed his life. He even gave the same speech at the event that he did in 1940 at the Trotsky Memorial meeting. (The response was tremendous.) Jake's presence was felt everywhere at the week of meetings at that Museum/Institute: his booming voice filled the hall, and he seemed consumed with delight at each meeting of someone he had known 50 years before. I remember his seeing Octavio Fernandez and Manuel Alvarado after all those years. I was also surprised at how young and vigorous Jake looked. He was upstaged a little by Octavio, who at 82

still looked about 60 and had the energy of a 50-year-old. But Jake seemed indefatigable there as well. He was very excited politically too, to find the Soviet presence at the events, to learn of the Trotsky scholarship going on in the Soviet Union.

So it was with great shock that I found out on September 4 on a return trip to Mexico that Jake had had a serious stroke. It was Seva [Esteban Volkov] who broke the news to me, and he was very upset. We both thought that perhaps it was the excitement of the week-long conference coupled with the altitude that may have brought about his stroke . . . but I also thought of it as Jake closing the most important chapter of his life with his return to Trotsky's house after 50 years; that those 50 years were filled with his commitment to the ideas and activities of the Trotskyist movement and that commitment was symbolized by those two trips to Mexico separated by 50 years—the closing of the circle.

Suzi Weissman
Studio City, California

of unsigned death threats. A broad support committee was formed, including members of the PCF and PS union officials, the mayor of Venissieux, and other antifascist forces. Earlier this year a court dismissed the charges and ordered the FN to pay court and attorney fees. Most importantly, the support committee decided to stay together and reconstitute itself as an antifascist committee.

Committees like this are central to the LCR's new campaign, which involves launching an appeal to prominent antifascist personalities who by signing it will publicize and build support for an ongoing united antifascist movement. This will help put the working class in a position to spearhead the counteroffensive against Le Pen and defend immigrants from racist attacks. The LCR hopes to fill the void created by the "official" left's abdication of the fight for equal rights, and break down the consensus between the PS and the right—dramatized by the withdrawal of PS support for municipal voting rights (discussed above).

The initial stages of this campaign indicate that the LCR's strategy may very well prove effective. In early July, Le Pen was

scheduled to hold a meeting in Vienne, a medium-sized city just south of Lyon. A recently formed "Collective Against Fascism, Anti-Semitism, and Racism" held a demonstration of 500 to protest Le Pen's presence. The regional federation of the PS, which held a much milder demonstration later the same day, circulated a memo calling on its members not to sign the appeal or participate in the demonstration—further proof of the PS's refusal to take energetic measures against the far-right. Some rank-and-file PS members have participated in these committees nonetheless.

In all of its initiatives the LCR explains the root cause of racism in a way that the PS and the PCF will not. As a recent leaflet of the LCR put it: racism, sexism, and unemployment are the result of "a system that allows a handful of industrialists and bankers to turn fabulous profits from stock market speculation while the vast majority of workers are asked to tighten their belts." □

Funds Needed for Important Publishing Project

The Fourth Internationalist Tendency is presently preparing a three-volume series of books which will be called *In Defense of American Trotskyism*. It will contain the record of an entire decade of struggle for the program of revolutionary Marxism in the United States—beginning with the opposition inside the SWP in the early 1980s and taking us through the recent withdrawal of the U.S. SWP from the Fourth International. *In Defense of American Trotskyism* will collect for the first time in a single place a wide range of reports, resolutions, polemics, appeals, and other material now published in a variety of formats, some no longer in print, and some never before published.

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