



# INTERNATIONAL

WORKERS OF THE WORLD — UNITE!

## *Developments in the Soviet Union*

By ERNEST GERMAIN

*Editorials on:* INTERNATIONAL PROSPECTS; XXIst CONGRESS OF THE CPSU; CHINA; BLACK AFRICA; COMMON MARKET; JAPANESE LABOR VICTORY; ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY; NEW US CONGRESS

## *SP and CP Election Defeat in France*

By PIERRE FRANK

## *More on the Yugoslav Programme: II*

By MICHEL PABLO

*Texts on:* LIEBKNECHT AND LUXEMBURG; INDONESIA ARAB REVOLUTION; GERMANY; BRITAIN; CEYLON

*Report on the Arab Revolution to the IEC XXIst Plenum*

*From the Archives of Marxism: ZINOVIEV on LIEBKNECHT*

BOOK REVIEWS

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

WINTER 1959

5

2 SHILLINGS  
35 CENTS

# Contents

Editorial: <i>Reflections on International Prospects</i> .....	1
Editorial Notes : <i>First Comments on the XXIst Congress of the CPSU</i> .....	8
<i>The Situation in China</i> .....	9
<i>Africa Awakens More and More</i> .....	11
<i>The Common Market</i> .....	13
<i>Japanese Workers Fight Reaction to a Standstill</i> .....	14
<i>Developments in the Italian Socialist Party</i> .....	15
<i>The Eighty-Sixth United States Congress</i> .....	16
<i>The USSR from the XXth to the XXIst Congress of the CPSU</i> , by Ernest Germain .....	18
<i>The Embezzled Heritage</i> , by P Richards .....	25
<i>Remarks on the New Programme of the Yugoslav Communists : II</i> , by Michel Pablo .....	27
<i>A Revolutionary Crisis Comes to a Head in Indonesia</i> , by Tjokro .....	30
<i>The Election Defeat of the French SP and CP</i> , by Pierre Frank .....	33
<i>Crisis in the Arab Revolution</i> , by MK .....	37
<i>The Situation in West Germany</i> , by W Becker .....	39
<i>The British Labour Party's "New" Programme</i> , by George Edwards .....	42
Documents : XXIst Plenum of the International Executive Committee —	
<i>The Arab Revolution</i> , Report Presented by Comrade Michel Pablo (first of two parts)	46
Resolution of the October 1958 Membership Conference of the Lanka Sama	
Samaja Party (Ceylonese Section of the Fourth International) —	
<i>Forward to an LSSP Government ! The New Political Situation and Our Task</i> (Excerpts)	54
From the Archives of Marxism :	
<i>Karl Liebknecht and the War</i> , by G Zinoviev .....	58
Book Reviews :	
<i>Trotsky's Diary in Exile — 1935</i> , by Pierre Frank .....	62
<i>Boris Pasternak's Dr Zhivago</i> , by Patrick O'Daniel .....	65
News of the World Workers' Movement and of the International :	
Argentina : <i>The General Strike</i> .....	67
Belgium : <i>The Working Class Breasts the Stream</i> .....	67
Bolivia : <i>Crisis as a Regime : The Siles Government Lurches On</i> .....	68
Congo : <i>Another African Area Races for Independence</i> .....	70
Great Britain : <i>Tory Government Opens Attack on Coal-Miners</i> .....	71
Uruguay : <i>Workers Occupy Big Tyre Plant and Operate It Themselves</i> .....	71
[The abundance of material has forced postponement till the next issue of the fourth installment of "Twenty Years of the Fourth International," by Michel Pablo.]	

## Editorial Correspondence and Subscriptions to

SAL SANTEN  
BERLAGEHOF 36  
AMSTERDAM W, HOLLAND

## Other Correspondence to

SAL SANTEN	LANKA SAMASAMAJA PARTY	SAM BORNSTEIN
Berlagehof 36, Amsterdam W	49, Drieberg Ave., Colombo, Ceylon	21, Sidney Street, London E1

## Rates

Single copies : 35 cents ;	1 year (4 issues) : \$ 1.25
2 shillings (2/5 postpaid) ;	" " " " : 8 shillings
1 Dutch florin ;	" " " " : 3.50 florins

---

---

★

---

---

# FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

ENGLISH - LANGUAGE EDITION OF THE THEORETICAL ORGAN OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

---

Number 5

Winter 1959

---

## *Editorial*

# REFLECTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL PROSPECTS

The year 1959 began by endowing the life of man with a new dimension, that of the exploration of interplanetary space, the earth's attraction having been overcome by a human device that has become a satellite of the sun.

This is a fantastic exploit of man's science and technique, of his collective social power, a sure guarantee that no barrier will remain impassable to this power, which in truth has no limits.

Yet the marvelous conquest of nature contrasts more than ever with the uneven development of human society and its organization, so far from rational and scientific. Normally the men and women of this planet ought to be saluting, in the streets and public places, the flight of this cosmic rocket toward the sun. Instead, tormented by the fear inspired in them by the social use of this extraordinary feat, by the fear of atomic rockets in a possible conflict between what it has now become customary to call the East and the West, they have generally remained, in appearance at least, as blasés and unstimulated as toward some minor news item from daily life.

As for the masters of the camp opposed to that which first launched this rocket, reaction was not slow in coming in what may be called the mad logic of the super-arms race: since "our Atlas" is outclassed, we must add new hundreds of millions of dollars to the already fantastic expenditures of "the rocket economy" in order to pick up the challenge and catch up on the lag as quickly as possible.

At the moment when there are opening up to humanity newer and more exalting horizons of activity and knowledge than anything that the most fertile imagination could have grasped a still short time ago,

it is realized that humanity has now got itself into a sort of impasse. Never has the contrast been more striking between scientific prospects concerning nature and immediate social perspectives.

★

In what does this present feeling of the impasse of post-war society consist? Mainly in a feeling of the powerlessness of the autonomous movement of the masses in face of the privileged minorities who are ruling in the West and East. This state of affairs tends to prevail especially among the worker and intellectual vanguard militants of a number of countries in the East and of the capitalist countries of Europe and North America.

In the countries of the East, this is the almost inevitable result of the disillusion that followed on the great hopes, just after Stalin's death, about the possibility of a rapid and unswerving destalinization and an opening up of socialist democracy and its new humanism. The fact that destalinization is currently blocked at the level of the Khrushchev period acts as a regressive and centrifugal factor in the ranks of a vanguard that had just begun to regroup ideologically and organizationally.

In the capitalist countries of the West we are witnessing the spread of a certain dismay in the most conscious circles of the revolutionary vanguard, who suddenly realize to what a degree the situation of the workers' movement has worsened as a result of long years of the impotent, opportunist, and class-collaborationist policy of the Socialist and Stalinist leaderships.

The fall of the French Fourth Republic is unquestionably the event of capital importance which cur-

rently weighs on the whole of the workers' movement, particularly the European, and of which all the consequences have not yet been deduced.

In both the East and West, it is now as if revolutionary prospects had been temporarily blocked and as if the determinant actions in the world were now developing only on the plane of the policies of states and their antagonisms. But, on this same plane, a question is being raised without a clear and satisfactory answer: Are we evolving toward war, or are we witnessing a period of prolonged "peaceful coexistence"?

★

It would be useless and harmful to deny that revolutionary prospects must now be reexamined in detail, on the basis of the new situation that has been created in the world, globally and by regions. But any examination that took into account essentially the phenomenology of the situation and not its deeper tendencies, would be able to reach results only of slight validity, if indeed not completely false.

The difficulty of being specific about revolutionary prospects arises in reality from the extreme complexity of the factors currently determining the situation and its dynamism. Any analysis will be able only to schematize broadly. And yet this analysis is necessary.

The present situation is unquestionably characterized by the temporary ebb of the political revolution in the countries of the East, and of the socialist revolution in the capitalist countries of the West. This contrasts with the steady progress of the colonial revolution, whose achievements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America continue to be spectacular.

On another plane, the advance taken by the rate of expansion of the economy of the USSR and the other workers' states is being confirmed and is speeding up. It is a question now of getting a better grasp of these fundamental traits of the present situation, each in itself and in their interpenetration, in order to derive therefrom some dominant perspectives and tasks.

★

### THE PROSPECTS OF THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION

The ebb of the political revolution in the East as a result of the halting of the Polish and Hungarian Octobers, the stiffening of the bureaucracy in the USSR and in China, and the marking time, as it were, of destalinization at the Khrushchevian level, must be understood as a transitional stage in a context where basic forces are active in preparing inevitably a new and more advanced phase in the struggle against the bureaucracy. The fundamental fact in this field is the following: *the speeded-up economic and cultural advance of the masses of the Soviet Union and of the other workers' states, in the international context, confirms the establishment of a correlation of forces favorable to the Revolution.*

This fact far-and-away predominates over passing defeats and stimulates the regrouping of the forces of

the political revolution. All the retreats and crimes of Khrushchev must not obscure the fact that the USSR is no longer in Stalinist times, that the terror and arbitrariness of the police have been considerably reduced, as well as the forms of mass physical extermination of opponents.

These are some of the manifestations of a new relationship being established between the bureaucracy and the masses, the pressure of the latter steadily increasing and imperceptibly erasing the picture of the Stalinist period.

The situation has naturally gone backward in Poland without having fallen to the level of that prior to October 1956, and especially in China, which is at present throwing all its weight into the adoption of a style of neo-Stalinist orthodoxy. But the contribution of China to the evolution of Stalinism is in reality more complex. Practice, quite empirical though it be, remains in China essentially revolutionary and independent of the Soviet "model." China is following its own paths, and this fact is going to become more and more one of the main ferments of contradictions within the international Stalinist bureaucracy.

And finally there is the nowise negligible fact of the Yugoslav way, which has received a very clear expression in the elaboration of the new programme of the Yugoslav Communists. The fact that a mass Communist current has separated from Stalinism on very important questions of doctrine, with brilliance and success, is in one sense a highly encouraging and significant historical event. In fact it points out the inevitable path on which the communist tendency in all the workers' states must set out as soon as it begins to meditate with its own head about the problems of socialist construction during the period of transition.

*The prospect in the workers' states, and in the first place in the USSR, is not a return to Stalin, but "destalinization" distorted through the Khrushchevian experience, which for the moment combines concessions, promises, and reforms, with the tendency to forbid ideological and political expressions that invariably bring the bureaucracy into question.*

### EBB OF THE EUROPEAN WORKERS' MOVEMENT

In reality what is now weighing heaviest on the world socialist vanguard is the ebb of the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries, in Western Europe and especially in the United States.

Marxists had too long cherished the schema of the European revolution, and partly even that of the American revolution, considered as the vanguard of the world revolution, to be able to get used to the picture now presented by the workers' movement in these countries, the de facto rear-guard of the world revolution for a number of years already.

The revolution in the developed capitalist countries was long considered the precondition for the victory of the colonial revolution and of the political revo-

lution in the USSR. What then is to be concluded from the present situation of the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries? Must the abdication of this movement from its leading role in the world revolution be furthermore accepted as definitive?

All these questions, and still others, emerge inescapably into consciousness as a result particularly of the recent evolution in Europe and the United States, which culminated in the defeat of the French Fourth Republic. The imperceptible passing over of the initiative to the bourgeoisie almost everywhere in these countries; the growing disaffection of the masses toward the traditional parties and even the trade unions; the very considerable lowering of the activity and spontaneous combativity of the masses; the strengthened anti-parliamentary tendencies — these are the very clear characteristics of this evolution. Naturally the intensity of these characteristics perceptibly differs from one country to another.

The ease and speed with which the French Republic was overthrown, without any remarkable reactions being shown either in the traditional parties or in the class, expressed in the highest degree what appears to be the general sag in class reactions at the present stage in Europe.

Certain apologists for a so-called "updated socialism" have already hastened to doubt even the objective existence of the working class, and to explain this sag by the pretext of so-called structural social and economic transformations in capitalism. These gentlemen, in order the better to excuse their own powerless reformist policy — no less responsible than that of the Mollets, Gaitskells, and Brandts, for the degradation of the European Socialist movement — raise the doubt whether there still exists a social regime, a class, and a state, of *an essence that is more capitalist than ever*.

The de Gaulle experience in France soon gave these "new" questions a smashing answer. The state — supposedly an arbiter, inter-class, administered by a bureaucracy and a technocracy allegedly independent of big capital — has just imposed an economic and general policy in conformity at all points with the well understood interests of big capital at the present moment in the French and international conjuncture, and to the obvious detriment of the class of wage-earners, the latter losing at one blow a very large part of the economic and political gains painfully achieved in the years of euphoric expansion of French capitalism.

The social nature of the regime, of the state, the reciprocal relations among classes, and the reality or unreality of capitalism, the reality or unreality of the class of wage-earners — all these questions were instantly cleared up in the garish light of the policy of the new regime in France, which represents the greatest concentration of power that French big capital has known since at least the end of the last war.

In periods of the continuous expansion of capital-

ism, there is created the illusion of a society run essentially by the play of political democracy, viz, bourgeois parliamentarianism, in which the proletariat and wage-earners in general are somehow dissolved in the different professional categories, often making demands each on a different and sometimes even opposed level. But it suffices for the conjuncture to turn to crisis (economic, or financial, or political) for the class mechanism of society to appear clearly, the state in the hands of big capital endeavoring to apply a line that aims precisely at surmounting the crisis and strengthening the position of capital thanks to "national" sacrifices hitting the whole of one class — suddenly homogenized socially — *that of the wage-earners, i.e., all those paid at about the level of an industrial worker*.

There has thus been verified one of the essential principles of revolutionary Marxism, that in reality, without an effective control over the state by the wage-earners, it is hardly possible to ensure substantial and continuous gains under the capitalist regime. The guarantee and integration of "reforms" are to be found in the conquest of the state, i.e., in the Revolution.

The sag in class reactions that we are at present observing in Europe is not due to a so-called destruction of the working class, as a result of an evolution stripping capitalism of its essence. It is due essentially to the disorientation, disillusion, and weariness of the masses who for years on end followed the traditional Socialist and Communist Parties. These parties, when they were not flatly applying the policy of capital, limited themselves in the best of cases to a practice as powerless as it was anachronistic, partial demands and reforms within the capitalist framework. Now such a policy, absurd in relation to the socialist goal these parties claim to have, is unacceptable also to capitalism, which is not working for the construction of the welfare state on earth, but for as productive and competitive a production apparatus as possible, turned toward maximum profit.

This policy has resulted in *depoliticizing* the masses from the class viewpoint, *disorganizing* them as a class, and lastly *wearying* them by its routine and inoperative character.

True, the economic conjuncture of capitalism in these last years, characterized by continuous expansion, has accentuated the sag in class reactions by affording the possibility of an improvement in living levels obtained essentially by family overwork. In reaction away from the parties and trade unions, ineffective and devoid of prospects, the ideologically atomized class has taken refuge in individual material solutions. There has thus occurred a certain effective *depoliticization* of the working class, due essentially to the behavior of the traditional leaderships, and only in the second place to the effects of the conjuncture.

The workers' defeat in France, however, is going

to show that partial gains or individual solutions cannot in the long run resist the ups-and-downs and the contradictory demands of the evolution of capitalism. In France at present the masses are undergoing at the hands of capitalism an offensive of unusual brutality. There is admittedly the danger that, caught unprepared by this offensive, and lacking on the political plane parties capable of making an adequate counter-attack, the masses may undergo even graver defeat by the *transformation of the Bonapartist regime of de Gaulle into open fascism.*

Nothing yet shows, however, that this transformation could be carried out in a completely peaceful way. In any case, the trend is toward an aggravation of the class struggle in France, with profound and original repercussions on the structure of the workers' movement in that country, and its ideological and organizational regrouping.

There will furthermore be seen in Europe generally a stepping-up of the offensive of the bourgeoisie, cheered by its victory in France and spurred on by the needs of revived international competition. Class tensions will therefore grow in all the capitalist countries, but in a correlation of forces which is at the present stage unfavorable to the proletariat.

In what way will the evolution of the economic conjuncture intervene? *We must not count on a prolonged aggravation of the current recession, transforming itself within a foreseeable future into a classical cyclic crisis of great scope.* European capitalism now possesses "dirigist" means, on its own scale comparable to those of American capitalism, to keep the economic ebb within the limits of a "recession" and not a genuine crisis with abrupt and catastrophic developments.

It is necessary to expect rather a slowing down of the rate of expansion, a certain amount of unemployment, and especially a perceptible decrease in overtime; simultaneously a direct lowering of the masses' living standards in order to avoid internal inflation and to support an increased effort toward competitive exports.

In general an economic climate that should not be judged to be unfavorable to resistance and counter-offensive by the workers provided that these are illuminated by more general political prospects.

The case of Spain should be separately emphasized, as a real possibility of the eruption of a genuine revolutionary hotbed in Europe, despite the counter-blow received through the events in France. In Spain the economic situation is again rapidly worsening, and the maintenance of the Franco dictatorship is leading this country into a genuine impasse.

In the Far East the case of Japan must also be borne in mind: the only big capitalist country that is passing through a genuine revolutionary crisis, where the working class, with astonishing dynamism, is engaged in writing some of the finest pages of contemporary proletarian struggles.

## THE PLACE AND PROSPECTS OF THE COLONIAL REVOLUTION

The most striking contrast that has imperceptibly been created between the situation of the workers' movement in the advanced capitalist countries and the colonial revolution lies in the vigor of the spontaneous reactions of the masses in the colonial and dependent countries in spite of the lack or weakness of proletarian leadership. The much more explosive social and political contradictions of these societies, and the much graver effects on these countries of the present recession and the general fluctuations of capitalism, stimulate a revolutionary activity of their masses that is without possible comparison with that of the advanced capitalist countries.

The considerations of capital importance to be kept in mind in this field are the following:

These societies are at present striving to emerge from their colonial or semi-colonial condition by engaging in a struggle for the liquidation of the consequences of imperialism, and for industrialization. New bourgeois strata in formation are now emerging from the position of compradores and are capitalizing on this process in their own favor. They are often, directly or through petty-bourgeois ideologists, at the head of the current phase of the colonial revolution. But there is no chance for them to catch up with the advanced industrial countries by the path of capitalist development, for *evolution now works out in a direction that aggravates rather than lessens the gap between the colonial and dependent countries and the advanced countries.* The economic fluctuations of capitalism, furthermore, however slight they may be for the advanced countries, are felt in underdeveloped countries as genuine crises.

As a result, the colonial revolution has a dynamism that cannot be exhausted by its reaching some given stage of capitalist stabilization, but which drives it to grow over into a socialist revolution. For this reason the colonial revolution is in fact at the present moment in the vanguard of the socialist revolution, and has in practice taken over the role formerly played by the European revolution.

The greatest chances for a whole period to see the socialist revolution progress exist in fact, objectively and subjectively (from the viewpoint of the spontaneous activity of the masses), in the colonial and dependent countries. It is necessary to start out squarely from this observation, which flows from a reevaluation of the objective and subjective conditions of the revolution at the present stage, draw all the conclusions therefrom, and take action in consequence.

In this view, the revolution in the advanced capitalist countries appears as broadly influenced by the advances of the colonial revolution, which sap the possibilities of capitalist stabilization and the economic foundations of reformism.

In this concrete process of the development of the

socialist revolution in our time, where the colonial revolution aids and in a way prepares the revolution in the advanced countries, it was necessary for the workers' parties in the metropolitan countries to work to the maximum extent for an effective tie-up between the metropolitan movement and the colonial revolution, by according the latter an unconditional and active support. But instead of that, these parties, hostile to revolutionary prospects, in reality acted as instruments for transmitting the instinctive repulsion which the progress of the colonial revolution caused among the social strata who profited from the imperialist exploitation of these underdeveloped countries.

The degree of depoliticization and the sag in class reaction of the workers' movement in the capitalist countries is shown especially in an indifference, if not a passive hostility, toward the colonial revolution. Naturally the development of the latter is seriously handicapped by the factual break with the metropolitan revolution.

There is a risk that the phase of bourgeois-democratic leadership of the colonial revolution will drag on before the clearer autonomous role of the proletariat and its parties emerges.

In any case, the prospects for the colonial revolution remain wide open in the different countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In Asia (in Indonesia, Ceylon, India, Iraq and the other countries of the Middle East); in practically all of Africa; and in Latin America — the revolution has real and relatively short-term chances.

The Iraq, Algerian, Bolivian, Colombian, Venezuelan, and Cuban revolutions, and the tireless activity of the Argentine and Chilean proletariats for years on end, are some sufficiently eloquent illustrations of the degree of strength of the mass movement in these countries.

At the same moment that a big capitalist country with the long democratic and revolutionary traditions of France was succumbing without a fight to the blackmail of a military-political camarilla at the service of big capital, the Algerian people, deprived of everything, has been standing up for more than four years already to the bulk of the military forces of French imperialism, while the army of partisans of Fidel Castro, starting out with practically nothing two years ago, has overthrown a ferocious dictatorship, under the very nose of its powerful protector, Yankee imperialism.

In the underdeveloped countries, the mobilization of a whole people, resorting to the highest forms of struggle, has to a certain extent made up for the lack of leaderships. In the developed countries the "going bourgeois," the opportunism, and the reformism of the policy of the traditional parties is otherwise determinant of the activity of the class. *Here, without a revolutionary leadership which — not just occasionally but for years on end — advocates and applies a consistent class line, often against the current of the mas-*

*ses' reformist illusions, it is scarcely possible to exploit the moments of revolutionary crises which ripen only at intervals, often a good ten years, if not more, apart.*

The revolutionary fire of the masses of the underdeveloped countries is the expression of both their intolerable living conditions and their lack of a skepticism natural to politically organized classes who have matured in a series of disappointing experiences. The masses of the underdeveloped countries first plunge fully into the fight and leave it till afterward to see where they are going. The metropolitan masses, taught by experience, get thoroughly involved only on the basis of trust in the organization and policy of their leaderships.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS

It remains to examine the international prospects that emerge from the development of the relations between the states of the East and the West.

Will these relations evolve toward war or will they stay within the framework of a "peaceful coexistence"?

Everybody seems at present to have reached the conclusion that "coexistence" is in any case not possible on the basis of the plain status quo, which is an abstraction, but that it must be looked at in its dynamics. On this point both Khrushchev and Dulles are now in agreement.

Now what are these dynamics? On the strictly economic level, the new element is the confirmation of a rate of steady expansion of the economy of the U S S R and the other workers' states that is more than double (7% against 3%) the average attributed to the development of the American economy in its boom periods.

It results from this that we have in fact entered the decisive decade which may see the gap between the Soviet economy and the US economy considerably reduced, and the U S S R reach — at least in certain important branches of agricultural and industrial production — a per capita production higher than in the United States.

Just calculate the explosive implications of such a trend.

What is more, this lead in the rate of expansion taken by the workers' states will enable them to increase their exchanges with the underdeveloped countries and compete very seriously with imperialism in this field, so important, if not crucial, for the latter.

Granted, capitalism is going to react to these prospects, which can in the long run quietly settle its fate, including on the economic plane, by developing "dirigist" and "planning" elements on an equally "supernational" scale to the maximum extent compatible with its anarchic, antagonistic, and contradictory nature. There is no doubt but that, clutched in a daily struggle to the death with the workers' states, capitalism finds therein a sort of stimulus to its own development.

The European Common Market, the trend toward

a united Europe, the concessions that the United States may be led to make to the Latin American bourgeoisies, finally granting their request for a customs union and the creation of a bank of Latin American investments ; the constantly renewed efforts of the United States to get hold of Arab nationalism and the pan-Africanism of N'Krumah for its own advantage ; increased economic aid to India — all these attempts and plans contain real possibilities of seeing a strengthening of capitalism's dynamism, and must not be minimized.

The main reaction of imperialism, however, to the threats involved for its regime in the economic strengthening of the workers' states will not be able to be shown on the economic plane but on the politico-military plane : alliances, bases, and arms.

The plans, or the economic gains, are invariably transformed into politico-military strong cards played by each adversary against the other in the game of "coexistence." Thus the projected unification of capitalist Europe is clearly aimed at tying Western Germany up inseparably with the Atlantic alliance and permitting the atomic rearming of all this part of Europe.

All those who cherish the hope that a "neutralized" and "disarmed" Western or "unified" Germany may be the price of a major bargain between the East and West guaranteeing for years a competitive "coexistence" on the economic plane, fail to recognize realities and fundamental interests.

Even if they leave aside the economic integration of East Germany in the Soviet bloc and of West Germany in the Europe of the Six, and even if they visualize the transitional formula of a "confederation" of the two German states, it would remain to be seen whether the Atlantic bourgeoisie would ever be able to accept depriving itself of one of its most dynamic elements, at the risk of seeing its military situation in Europe and the world gravely deteriorate.

The Kremlin is currently reopening the question of Berlin and Germany, on the one hand because it considers that it has attained — at least momentarily — military superiority, and on the other hand because it is forced to find a way out of the situation of instability and ferment that the existence of West Berlin involves for the Eastern zone. The Kremlin believes that it is in a position to bring about a change in the status quo in these fields that will be favorable to itself. But imperialism cannot retreat very far on these questions without causing a more general retreat and disintegration of its positions in Europe and throughout the world.

From this point of view, the test of Berlin and Germany is destined to open a graver crisis than those — which, furthermore, are not yet settled — of the Middle East and of Formosa, *imperialism's margins for retreat becoming steadily narrower.*

Hence the stiffening that was observed at Formosa and that will be seen to reappear at Berlin if the Kremlin does not work out in time an acceptable

compromise position. But in that case there is a risk of essentially perpetuating the present status quo, with all the dangers that that involves for a rebound of the crisis at a later stage.

Just the "balance of terror" by the superarms of both sides is naturally not a "guarantee of peace." Such a conception runs the risk simply of perpetuating the arms race, with technical progress constantly changing the balance.

The possible compromises in this field, such as, for example, a halt — not excluded — to atomic explosions, would not be the sign of a lasting "relaxation of tension," but simply the result of a level in stockpiling atomic arms which both sides consider satisfactory.

*In reality the situation threatens to remain explosive, marked by more frequent and grave crises, each of which literally skirts the "brink of the abyss," just as long as the competition between the two social systems has not been settled by the definitive retreat of one of them.*

Such a retreat by imperialism, furthermore, is practically inconceivable. It cannot be visualized that it be gradually and peacefully carried out, so long as imperialism, even though weakened, still solidly hangs on, both in the United States and in Western Europe.

★

#### IT IS NECESSARY TO FIGHT FOR A TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMME TO SOCIALISM

If we take as a point of departure this evaluation of international prospects, what are the main tasks to be set ?

That the sector that needs to be straightened up on the international front of struggle is that of the workers' movement in the advanced capitalist countries ; that the chances of the progress of the revolutionary Marxist tendency and of the revolution in the colonial and dependent countries remain excellent, and must be fully grasped by according a greater attention than ever to implanting the International in that currently most living sector of the revolution.

The straightening up of the European workers' movement will be in proportion to the vanguard's ability to draw radical conclusions from experience and to concretize the revolutionary and socialist solution.

What has gone bankrupt in the advanced countries, particularly those of Western Europe, as the French experience strikingly illustrates, is the vulgar reformism and opportunism of the traditional leaderships, which, in the best of cases, cling to the pure and simple defense of bourgeois democracy.

By abandoning systematic propaganda and consistent struggle for a *transitional programme* that spreads out into the revolutionary socialist solution, these leaderships inevitably throw the disoriented and weary masses into the arms of reactionary "saviors" and "reformers" à la de Gaulle. This happens as soon as the

regime of bourgeois democracy, suitable to the boom stage in the capitalist cycle, becomes inoperative in case of crisis.

In various centrist circles there is much talk of the "new road to socialism" in each country, indirectly blaming revolutionary Marxist orthodoxy as responsible for the sclerosis and ineffectiveness of the European revolutionary movement. But it is a question first of all of ardently wanting to carry on a consistent struggle for socialism, and not of limiting oneself in practice to a minimum programme of reforms within the capitalist framework.

The programme cannot be either abstract propaganda for final goals or down-to-earth adaptation to immediate demands. It must be a programme of *transition to socialism*, adapted to the special conditions of each country, socialism being here defined — at least as far as its initial stage is concerned — *as the regime of a satified and planified economy, under workers' management, combined with genuine proletarian political democracy.*

Such a regime is suited not only to just colonial and dependent countries; it is no less urgent for advanced capitalist countries. Its installation would mean for these countries, instead of contemplating with self-satisfaction the mediocre comfort that capitalism lavishes during the years of its expansion — only to take it away again in periods of depression — putting oneself in the orbit of a steady economic expansion managed by the society of free workers.

It is in this field that European socialism would easily be able to surpass the experiments still controlled by the Kremlin and put itself at the head of economic progress and of freedom.

The *programme of transition* must contain not only the slogans, the *concrete transitional* economic and social solutions for each country, but also the *concrete transitional political solution* for carrying out such a programme. That political solution, under present conditions, could not be anything except a *workers' government, of the overwhelmingly majority workers' party, or of the workers' parties that share influence in the class, based on trade-union organizations and committees.*

It is as a result necessary to guide the struggle in each advanced country in a way that such a perspective is imposed in the traditional parties by the political victory of *their left wings*, and that there be created in the whole class a climate favorable to such a solution.

Formulating a programme of transition for each country and illuminating by a political solution of transition in such a direction, means to trace out in each concrete case the only "new path to socialism." That is now the central task of the revolutionary Marxist tendency in the advanced countries.

One danger would be that the revolutionary Marxist tendency — independent or entered into mass organizations — may be itself influenced by the negative aspects of the situation in the advanced countries, adapt itself in part to the weaknesses of its surroundings, and fall into routine, practical defeatism, and ideological centrism. The best guarantee against such a danger will once more be the solid international organization of the revolutionary Marxists which will know how to maintain a policy and an activity determined by the global view of the prospects and tasks of the world revolution.

## Editorial Notes

### FIRST COMMENTS ON THE XXIst CONGRESS OF THE CPSU

As we go to press, the complete texts of the reports, speeches, and resolutions of the XXIst Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union have not yet been issued. But its general meaning is already clear. The "destalinization" begun by the XXth Congress will be continued in a whole series of fields, except that of free ideological and political expression, which would bring the bureaucracy directly into question.

The XXIst Congress completes Khrushchev's victory over the Stalinist wing, strictly so called, of the Communist Party and Soviet bureaucracy. Khrushchev, spokesman for that stratum of the bureaucracy that derives its privileges from the position it holds in the party apparatus, is consolidating his power by making a more direct appeal than ever to the masses. In addition to the material and social promises contained in the Seven-Year Plan in the fields of consumption, housing, and the length of the working week, special stress was laid by several speakers on the return to "socialist legality."

The speeches of Mikoyan and Shelepin, among others, as well as the formulæ of the final resolution of the congress, deserve on these grounds a particular attention. Mikoyan stated that in the U S S R there were no longer reprisals for political reasons, and that the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat lies in its organizing functions, in the mobilization of the forces of the whole nation for the building of socialism and communism, while coercion might have been indispensable only at certain stages of development, already left behind.

As for Shelepin, former Secretary of the Communist Youth, and successor to Serov, he assured the congress, and, through it, the country, that all the consequences of the activity of Beria and his acolytes belonged to the past. "Revolutionary legality" was restored, and those who had violated it had been punished. Soviet citizens could henceforth be sure that nothing that might recall that "shameless" period would ever be repeated.

The final resolution of the congress insisted on the need to develop "democracy in all its forms," called on the soviets to strive for such a goal, and affirmed that "numerous functions fulfilled by state organizations must be gradually entrusted to socialist organizations." The "withering away of the state" timidly made its appearance at the congress, all the more necessarily so in that the congress had been given the watchword of the gradual transition "from socialism to communism."

It will be necessary to take up again in detail the theoretical considerations provided on this subject in the reports of both Khrushchev and Suslov, and to compare them with the analyses on the same subject currently developed by the Yugoslavs and the Chinese. Suffice it to say for the moment that what the XXIst Congress calls the transition from socialism, allegedly already achieved in the U S S R, to the communist phase,

is in reality still only the transition from the lower or preparatory stage for socialism to the stage of socialism properly so called.

The U S S R will not begin the tasks of the socialist stage, properly so called — such as Marx and Lenin visualized it in their theoretical writings — until the moment when it surpasses the most developed capitalism in per capita production. Now this stage will be reached, according to the XXIst Congress itself, only about 15 years from now, i e, half a century after the victory of the October Revolution, and within the framework of a system of workers' states and of renewed relations with the world market, which currently contribute much to the progress of the Soviet economy.

In the matter of the construction of socialism, it is not without interest to observe the remarks made at the congress by Yudin, attacking the Yugoslav "pseudo-Marxists" who "have not understood that socialism cannot be built in a single country detached from all the others, while there already exists a world socialist system."

Thus the privilege of "socialism in a single country" actually belongs only to the U S S R, which was able to profit by it, so to speak, in order to "build its socialism" in the absence of a "world socialist system"!

The attacks made during the congress against both the Yugoslavs and the "anti-party group" are significant of the degree of solidity of the Khrushchev regime. To the extent that Khrushchev's policy consists in reforming the sclerotic bureaucratic regime from above in order to infuse it with a greater elasticity, a greater productive efficacy, and to overcome its isolation from the broad masses, he cannot permit that the Yugoslav position, bringing into question the bureaucratic regime as a whole and the existence of the bureaucracy, should be taken into consideration. The attacks on the other hand against the "anti-party group" have as their purpose to continue to expose the Stalinist wing, properly so called, which, it is evident, is not laying down its arms.

We now know that this group was already an opposition at the XXth Congress and that in June 1957 it was on the point of overturning Khrushchev thanks to its majority position in the Presidium. Furthermore, several indications now permit the affirmation that it is maintaining its resistance to all Khrushchev's reforms. But because of this very fact Khrushchev is obliged to broaden his appeal to the masses by taking responsibility for the policy of concessions not only on the plane of "legality" and "democracy," but also on the plane of consumption and other material advantages — something that will not fail to strengthen the self-confidence of the masses and swell the current of demands.

*Thus "destalinization," spurred on immediately after the XXth Congress, continues, albeit distortedly, on the*

ideological and political planes, and actually becomes an irresistible and irreversible evolutionary tendency of Soviet society. At a new and relatively not distant stage, the more direct role of the masses will inevitably appear. From this point of view, the message of the XXIst Congress, despite the various bureaucratic limitations and deformations in its analyses, remains heartening.

The "anti-party group" underwent a deprivation of the right that it had had to defend its policy at the congress, and two of its representatives were obliged to go through with the ritual "self-criticism." But the physical extermination of opponents is no longer in force in the U S S R.

On the other hand, the XXIst Congress's message to

the Communists and proletarians of the world remains very poor indeed. No serious analysis is made therein of the situation of the Communist and workers' movement in the world, and no fundamental lesson is drawn from the events in France: Empty formulæ calling for unity are not enough to rectify the catastrophic situation of the Stalinist movement in the capitalist countries, which weighs heavily also on the situation of the general workers' movement in these countries.

We shall soon come back to the overall labors of the XXIst Congress, which in its own fashion was no less important in every way than the XXth Congress, whose line it affirmed and developed.

## THE SITUATION IN CHINA

The capitalist press, which has tardily realized what was going on in 1958 in China on the plane of agricultural and industrial production, has since started to talk about the "people's communes" and the apprehensions caused by this gigantic experiment of "militarization" of the life of a whole people, of the "abolition of the family," etc. When it learned of the decisions of the last meeting of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party concerning the projected resignation of Mao from the post of President of the Republic and the resolution on the "communes," it thought it discerned therein major difficulties which had supposedly arisen in the Chinese experiment, and which had led to a discreet withdrawal of the Central Committee "ultras," led by Mao himself.

Supposedly well-informed or clear-sighted journalists, like Alsop and Lippman, did not hesitate to prophesy gigantic "blood baths" in China in case Mao should persist in carrying on his "anti-human" experiment of the "communes" against the inevitable revolt of millions of peasants.

The capitalist press and leaders are becoming more and more conscious of the colossal new factor which is little by little emerging on the world stage, and do not succeed in finding the adequate answer to the rising "yellow" peril. Being unable to face this danger in any other way, they are cherishing the hope of a possible Russo-Chinese conflict in the future, or else a dislocation through the internal contradictions and difficulties of the regime.

It is quite useless to insist on the emptiness of such hopes. The great Chinese revolution runs no risk of foundering either in a war with the U S S R, which the geophysicist seers prophesy, in search of "living space" for the country's "overpopulation," or under the weight of the regime's internal contradictions. Granted, it will experience major crises due to its "uninterrupted" evolution, to the complexity of the problems to be solved, starting from a still very low economic and cultural level, and to the limited nature of outside help; due also to its leadership's education, which was, after all, Stalinist. But the roots that it has sunk in the Chinese masses and in the world revolutionary context are deep and immovable.

The economic balance-sheet for 1958 in China confirms and surpasses the optimistic predictions issued by the Chinese leaders. Steel production has reached 11 million tons (of which 80% was produced in big plants). Machine-tools have reached 90,000 units, i.e., three times those of 1957. Coal, 270 million tons, or more than double that of 1957; electric power, 27,500 million kilowatt-hours, that is, 42% more than in 1957; grains, 375 million tons, or 190 million tons more than in 1957; cotton, 3,350,000 tons, i.e., 1,700,000 tons more than in 1957.

With this phenomenal agricultural production, the Chinese leaders argue, China "has basically solved the question of the quantity of grain per capita" (1,300 pounds).

This real upsurge in agriculture is due above all to the greater productivity of land as a result of colossal irrigation works, a more rational technique of cultivating, and a considerable effort in the use of natural fertilizers.

The results achieved by intensive deep-plowing are such that it is already planned in certain parts of the country to limit cultivated areas, by cutting off from them a third to be used for pasturage, reforestation, construction of industrial plants, or various public works (roads, gardens, lakes, etc).

On the basis of such economic results, the goals set for 1959 are nonetheless impressive: steel, up from 11 to 18 million tons; coal, from 270 to 380 million tons; grains from 375 to 525 million tons; cotton, from 3,350,000 to 5,000,000 tons.

It is possible, furthermore, that in the middle of the current year these objectives will be upped even more, as was the case last year.

There is no longer any doubt about both China's colossal productive effort and its spectacular results. Obtained, however, on the basis above all of the fierce labor of millions of men and women, they raise the question of the conditions and rhythm of this labor.

The experiment of the "people's communes" is closely linked with this aspect of the question. The Eighth Central Committee of the Chinese C P, at its VIth Plenum, on 10 December 1958 adopted a long resolution summing up the situation since the stormy launching of the campaign for the "people's communes" last

August.<sup>1</sup> Some people have tried to perceive in this document a sketchy self-criticism by the Chinese leadership, if not an indirect censure of Mao, the inspirer of the campaign. It is only a step from this to the supposition that Mao's projected resignation from the post of President of the Republic is due to the "failure," or even the "withdrawal," of the initial plan of the "communes."

This time again, however, as at the time of the campaign for the collectivization of agriculture in 1956, and as at the time of the campaign for "rectification" in 1957, everything takes place in the usual style of the Chinese C P and of Mao himself in particular: a lightning start, only to slow down the rhythm later, to proceed to setting things in order, to adjusting the aim better, to vary a little, to balance up notions and accents, to criticize, without sanctioning, the inevitable "excesses" of the activists, before starting off again with a new spring forward.

The 10 December resolution on the "communes" is suffused with this spirit of work and even seems to be written by Mao's own hand, as might be indicated by its quite poetic opening sentence: "In 1958 a new social organization appeared fresh as the morning sun above the broad horizon of East Asia."

This organization is, of course, that of the "people's communes." The resolution repeatedly emphasizes the "historic" importance and the irrevocable character of this institution that already includes 99% of the Chinese peasants, after the 740,000 farm coöperatives fused into 26,000 "people's communes." For the peasants, the resolution declares, the economic and social achievements of the "communes" "are epoch-making news."

The system of the "communes" has furthermore pointed out, the resolution adds,

the way to the gradual industrialization of the rural areas, the way to the gradual transition from collective ownership to ownership by the whole people in agriculture, the way to the gradual transition from the socialist principle of to each according to his work, to the communist principle of to each according to his need, the way to the gradual diminution and final elimination of the differences between rural and urban areas, between worker and peasant, and between mental and manual labour, and the way to the gradual and final elimination of the domestic functions of the state.

The insistence on *the gradual evolution* toward all these goals is noteworthy.

Various "misunderstandings" and "excesses" in the campaign for the communes having been pointed out, the resolution applies itself to dissipating the former and to criticizing and correcting the latter. First of all, there is no question of "hastily" extending the system of communes to the cities, especially the big cities. The structure of cities is more complex, property there is already state-owned (and not collective), bourgeois mentality is more deep-rooted. Time will be necessary in order adequately to prepare the ground in the big cities for the experiment of the communes.

What is more, the communes themselves hastily built in the countryside are neither correctly understood nor correctly organized and administered. The communes at

the present stage, where *collective* and not *state* property prevails, are a form of *pre-socialist* organization.

Fifteen to twenty years, if not more, will be necessary for all property to be transformed into state ("socialist") property and for the country to possess a truly socialist advanced economy. Then it will be necessary to pass "gradually" from socialism to communism.

"This is a gigantic and extremely complex task," says the resolution, which this time tries to warn against childish exaggerations on the matter, and admits:

There are good-hearted people from our ranks who think that ownership in the rural People's Communes is even now of the nature of ownership by the people as a whole, and that very soon or even now they can dispense with the socialist principle of distribution according to work and adopt the communist principle of distribution according to needs.

The resolution insists on *the long duration of the socialist period*, including in the term socialist both the phase preparatory of socialism and the socialist phase proper.

From this estimate of the period, the resolution endeavors to draw practical conclusions. The system of distribution throughout the whole "socialist period" can be based fundamentally only on the "socialist" principle of "to each according to his labor."

"For this reason", the resolution specifies,

in the income of commune members that portion of the wage paid according to work must occupy an important place over a long period, and will, during a certain period, take first place.

Hence the salary in cash will remain the dominant form of distribution, with a wide spread of remunerations which might reach four times the minimum wage.

"Egalitarianism" will be reached and then surpassed only to the degree that society becomes, by the abundance of production, truly "socialist" advancing toward communism.

Market production, with merchandise, money, market, values, and prices, is also characteristic of the whole "socialist" period.

Those who have already abolished these notions, thinking that they have already entered, in the "communism" of the rural communes, into a more than rudimentary egalitarianism, strike a blow against the construction of socialism and the prestige of true communist society.

The resolution then criticizes the various excesses committed by activists ill-informed about the exact character of the communes at the present stage, and lays down certain rules that must henceforth be observed. The confiscation of objects of private use for the profit of the collective property of the communes is forbidden, as well as pushing work beyond eight hours plus two hours of study, except at the harvest season. In general "eight hours of sleep plus four hours for eating and recreation" must be guaranteed to everybody every day. It is necessary to think about men, not merely about things.

The places of use in common — restaurants, crèches, old people's homes, etc, must be well arranged and kept up. Food should be more carefully prepared, more nutritious, more varied, and better presented. Particular attention must be paid to the labor of women and to the care they deserve before and after their pregnancies, etc.

<sup>1</sup> See "Uninterrupted" Revolution in China," by J. P. Martin, in our last issue, Autumn 1958.

The resolution blazes up against the "calumnies poured out by the enemies of the popular power concerning the abolition of family life in the communes, the "militarization" and the crushing uniformity in the comfort and setting of living, etc. It promises that the inhabitants of the communes will have a more comfortable and agreeable collective and private life on every point, in a varied and carefully prepared setting of new rooms, etc.

The empiricism of the Chinese leadership no longer requires emphasizing, and once more the resolution on the experiment of the "communes" is a striking demonstration of this.

Several of the remarks and criticisms that it formulates a *postiori* might have been brought forward at the time the campaign was launched, so elementary are they. The lacks and excesses of the campaign, furthermore, are only too apparent through the letter and the spirit of the resolution itself.

There is great danger, if the rhythm of labor speeds up and if the material conditions of the masses (food, housing, etc) do not improve perceptibly — while the constraint of the party and the administration are weighing on them — that the peasants may lose their confidence in the proletarian state, openly revolt, or go over to obstinate sabotage of the economy, as they did in the U S S R after forced collectivization.

It must be hoped that the empirical prudence of the Chinese leadership may once more avoid excesses and

carry out literally the rules and prescriptions of the resolution.

The grounds for a reasonable optimism about such a result are to be found in the fact that Mao, unlike Stalin, did not begin by a forced collectivization which caused the level of agricultural production to fall considerably and made the peasant poorer, but by a main effort on agriculture which considerably raised the level of production and the living level of the peasants. Thus the experiment of the "communes" is associated, in the minds of the Chinese peasant masses, with a condition which permits a better "breaking-in" period for the whole campaign for the organization and reasonable functioning of the "communes."

Any analogy, concerning living standards and the time and conditions of labor, between China and other more developed countries, must be rejected. For the Chinese peasants, setting out from a very low level, the experiment of the "communes" roughly represents what has so far been a positive gain. For the cities, the question is quite different, hence the hesitation of the Chinese leadership to extend the "communes" thereto.

But in the long run the contrast between the cities and the countryside can only undermine the experiment of the "communes" if the cities enjoy a higher material, cultural, and political level.

Once more, China will not escape major jolts, in its "uninterrupted" revolution toward socialism, without a massive material aid from the other workers' states and from the world revolution.

## AFRICA AWAKENS MORE AND MORE

The Accra Conference, held in December 1958, marks a new stage in the emancipation of the African continent. This conference follows on that of Bandung, the Afro-Asiatic Peoples' Solidarity Conference, and the Conference of Independent African Countries.

It brought together some 300 delegates from 62 organizations representing 28 African countries and territories, independent or still under colonial control.

The conference adopted a declaration and five resolutions, and decided on the creation of a permanent secretariat for the purpose of coordinating the struggle for the total liberation and the unification of Africa. The main resolution, on *colonialism and imperialism*, stated the support of the conference for all the fighters for freedom in Africa, both those who use peaceful means of non-violence and civil disobedience (the national movement in South Africa) and those who are obliged to resort to violence to obtain their national liberation. The allusion to the case of Algeria is clear.

What is more, the Algerian delegation received the warmest welcome of all the African delegations, and a member of the F L N now forms part of the permanent African secretariat.

A special resolution of the conference treated the Algerian question, affirming the right of the Algerian people to independence, condemning the so-called integration policy of France as well as the results of the faked elections, and called on the French government to begin negotiations with the Algerian government in order to bring about the country's independence and put

an end to the war. It also called on all countries to refuse all aid to, France in its war against the Algerian people, and to recognize the Algerian government. It appealed to the African countries to organize an "Algerian Solidarity Day" and to collect funds for the victims of imperialist repression.

Lastly the resolution saluted the African soldiers who are deserting from the French army and called on them to join the ranks of the Algerian Army of Liberation. The idea of an African brigade fighting in Algeria was accepted.

Another important resolution of the conference concerned the question of the artificial frontiers created by imperialism in order to divide Africa. The conference, this resolution declared,

endorses Pan-Africanism and the desire for unity among the African peoples and declares that its ultimate objective is a Commonwealth of Free African States. As its first step, the independent States of Africa should amalgamate themselves into groups on the basis of geographical continuity, economic interdependence, linguistic and cultural affinity.

The resolution is a direct encouragement to the process of unification which is currently speeding up in Africa.

A resolution on "tribalism and religious separatism" declared the conference strongly opposed to the imperialist tactic of using tribalism and religious separatism in order to perpetuate colonial policy.

A special resolution was also voted concerning the question of Cameroon's rapid accession to complete independence and against the imperialist repression of the national movement of that country.

The dominant note at the conference was unquestionably the deep desire now stirring the African masses for *the unification of a free Africa, administered by its native inhabitants, within a confederation*. This confederation would be formed from the primary federations such as those now emerging in West Africa.

A similar unificatory step, this time in the trade-union field, was taken a month later, in January of this year, at the First Congress of the U G T A N (Union Générale des Travailleurs d'Afrique Noir) at Conakry, capital of the newly independent state of Ghana. This congress decided to form a broader organization, the General Workers' Union of Black Africa, as president of which it elected Ghana's Prime Minister, Sekou Touré. One of its goals, it specified, was "to unite all African workers in a single trade-union movement," and as a step toward this, it issued a call for a *Pan-African Trade-Union Conference*. Politically in agreement with the decisions at Accra, and specifying that "the essential cause of the exploitation of the workers is imperialist domination, which must be combatted," it demanded complete independence for all the peoples of Africa.

The trend toward the liberation and unification of Africa is one of the determinant forces of our time. This force will inexorably sweep away all the residues of direct imperialist domination or of racial discrimination by minorities of European origin. The recent events at Leopoldville speak volumes for the fierce determination of the African masses to shake off the yoke of the tiny (e.g. 75,000 Belgians in the whole Congo) European minorities.

This irresistible unification movement, like its equivalent in the Arab countries, like that which is now developing in Latin America, is for the moment encouraged and led by the circles of the native bourgeoisie now in the making. Despite its weakness, this bourgeoisie is emerging from its former compradore position, under the combined influence of the following factors: the decline of the power of British and French imperialisms; the growing interest in Africa shown by both American imperialism and the Kremlin, and their antagonism; the pressure brought by the peasant masses, the proletarians, and the petty-bourgeois intellectuals of Africa; the growing consciousness of the economic possibilities of Africa; the crisis currently raging in the African colonial-structured economy.

The dominant trait of recent developments in Africa is the gradual destruction of tribal economic and social life as market production becomes generalized, with the exodus of population to the cities, intense urbanization, and the beginnings of industrialization. The urban centres, where new social layers are being formed and developed, are dethroning the chiefs and gods of tribal life. Political movements and parties are being organized, suffused by an African consciousness, and it is to these that the new generations are thronging.

African nationalism is the reflection of the urban revolution, capitalized upon in its first stage by the nuclei of the native bourgeoisie in process of formation and by their intellectual ideologists. Economic and social needs drive them to free themselves from the fetters of imperialism, which exploits the agricultural and min-

ing wealth of the African countries, to get back the best land occupied by the white settlers and by imperialist enterprises, to diversify the economy, often dependent on a single export product, to unify the African market, and to industrialize.

For several years the rise in the prices of products like tin, copper, peanut oil, coffee, cacao, rubber, tobacco, and cotton, the principal African exports, concealed the grave crisis that was ripening in African society as a result of galloping detribalization. On the contrary, the prodigious boom in the prices of these materials resulted in the extreme development of industrial crops to the detriment of food crops and produced an upheaval in traditional African agriculture.

The recession that has gone on since 1957 has particularly affected the economy of all underdeveloped countries, by bringing down the prices of their main export products by more than 15%. The industrialization of African countries — already slow except in the Congo, Rhodesia, and especially South Africa, nourished by investments of scarcely 7% of a meagre national income — was catastrophically checked.

An agriculture out of balance and not very productive, industrialization at a standstill while urbanization increased — these explain the explosive climate in which Africa is now living.

For lack of a rapid solution to these problems, the impatient masses of the dark continent, on whom there weigh neither conservative traditions nor defeats, will have a tendency to skip over the stages of bourgeois nationalism, reaching solutions of revolutionary socialism.

The native bourgeoisie is conscious of this danger. It thinks it will be able to stand up to it by driving for "primary" unifications and by speculating on competitive bidding about economic aid between imperialism, especially American imperialism, and the Kremlin.

Much remarked at the Accra Conference was the presence of a big delegation of American observers, among whom was the indispensable Mr Irving Brown. It is said that their role behind the scenes was neither negligible nor ineffective. Washington wanted in a way to get even for the Afro-Asiatic Peoples' Solidarity Conference at Cairo in December 1957, dominated by the Kremlin.

To the degree that Africa in its turn is becoming an epicentre of the cold war and the last economic and strategic reserve of imperialism, and also to the degree that Washington is despairing of winning over Arab Nasserism, it is trying to polarize the awakening of Black Africa around negro "Bourguibist," i.e. pro-Western, leaders. At a second stage, the operation can include a unified Maghreb, also "Bourguibist."

The fundamental problems of the current African revolution, however, cannot find even the most slightly satisfactory solution under a bourgeois leadership. As the old U S negro fighter Dubois said so well in the message he sent to the Accra Conference, the choice facing Africa is not that between a capitalist development and socialism. For Africa has not the time to catch up with the advanced industrial countries by the capitalist road, and has no interest in experiencing the evils of such a regime of exploitation.

The only radical solution for its urgent problems is to be found in *socialism and the Socialist United States of Africa*.

## THE COMMON MARKET

With the application of the Common Market beginning with January of this year, the economic policy of European capitalism begins an important turn. The ultimate goal of the operation is political, and aims at the political integration of the Europe of the Six, open also conditionally to Great Britain.

The Common Market completes other European institutions — the European Coal and Steel Community, the Euratom — all oriented toward the unification of capitalist Europe.

The Common Market is above all a customs union which aims at abolishing gradually — over the next 12 to 15 years — all currently existing barriers, to permit free circulation of merchandise, capital, and manpower among the Six. Toward the outer world it would maintain harmonized common tariffs, equal to the average of existing national tariffs.

For the moment, the first steps of the Common Market are modest: a 10% reduction of customs duties; the transformation of bilateral important quotas into overall quotas, and a 20% increase in their total value (the smallest quota to reach at least 3% of the national production).

This attempt at capitalist unification, however, does not fail to stir up the fundamental antagonisms and contradictions of the system. For the operation to be viable, it is necessary that each of the partners be able to face the competition of the others. This obliged France to take drastic economic and financial measures on the eve of the application of the Common Market: about 550,000 million francs (roughly \$ 1,116 million or £ 400 million) of new burdens on the wage-earners and consumers; and a devaluation of the franc by more than 15%.

The goal of these measures is to lower the production costs of French industrial production, aid investment, and to protect the French internal market, while considerably strengthening France's ability to compete abroad.

Notwithstanding these measures, the French budget deficit, because of the war in Algeria and the burdens resulting from the "Constantine Plan," remains in the neighborhood of 600,000 million francs (roughly \$ 1,217 million or £ 435 million), and the reserves in gold and dollars at less than \$ 1,000 million (even counting the recent massive aid, from American, German, and even British banks, to bolster up the franc, of some \$ 450 million).

The de Gaulle-Pinay operation has a chance of succeeding only in case the prices remain stable, the wage-earners accept the "sacrifices" without stirring, and internal consumption lessens while exports increase — just so many contradictory conditions, difficult to fulfill simultaneously.

If the operation is successful, on the other hand, it is the other partners in the Common Market who will suffer and who, to face up effectively to French competition, will be obliged to devalue in their turn.

Next there is the antagonism between the Common Market and Great Britain, which has triggered off the

war of convertibility of European currencies. In opposition to the *customs union* which the Common Market represents, discriminating against trade with non-European countries, Great Britain sets up the *free-trade zone* which enables it to have access to the European market without injuring its *Commonwealth preference system*. Thanks to this system, British industrial products have preferential access to the Commonwealth countries, while Britain in its turn imports from the Commonwealth at very low tariffs some £ 739 million (\$ 2,069 million) of agricultural products, £ 102 million (\$ 286 million) of manufactured products, and £ 754 million (\$ 2,111 million) of raw materials (figures valid for 1956).

France, which is afraid of facing simultaneously the competition of Germany and Great Britain, countries possessing industry that is better equipped and above all of lower production costs, is opposed to Great Britain's applying the common European tariff to its trade with the rest of the world, while on the other hand profiting, for both its imports and exports, by its imperial preference system.

It is true that the recent measures taken by France concerning the liberalization of its exchanges with all the countries of the O E E C and the dollar zone, as well as the partial convertibility of European currencies, including the franc, have lessened the gap between the specifically economic positions of France and Great Britain. But disagreement persists on the *political content* represented by the two orientations: *Common Market* or *free-trade zone*.

France, backed for the moment by Germany and the other partners in the Common Market, is asking that Great Britain pledge itself politically toward European unity by defining its economic policy toward Europe first of all; while Great Britain wishes still to remain free to establish its tariffs toward the Commonwealth and the rest of the world in any way it wants.

Great Britain basically, for equally political reasons, wants to torpedo the creation of a European politico-economic bloc that would include 162 million people, controlling more than a fifth of world trade, which would become the world's biggest exporting and importing unit.

The prestige of Great Britain as the second power in the capitalist world runs the risk in this case of suffering a mortal blow. Germany, on the contrary, encouraged by the United States, is driving for Great Britain to associate itself with "Little Europe," since considerations of anti-Soviet policy take precedence over all others — all the more so in that both Germany and the United States have the expectation, in a climate of free competition and currency convertibility, of easily dominating the Common Market.

The enterprise of the capitalist unification of Europe represents nevertheless a serious attempt by certain European and American leading circles to face the mortal struggle that is speeding up between capitalism and the workers' states. A certain concentration and a certain economic, military, and political "planning" by

world capitalism are imperative requirements in this struggle.

But the antagonistic nature of capitalism still resists the political consciousness of the most clear-sighted leading circles of the capitalist world. In case of an aggravation of the European recession, or of major economic difficulties for any individual country, each one's defensive reflexes will win out over "supernational" good intentions.

The bold economic and financial measures that characterize both the Common Market operation and partial currency convertibility, would prove to be viable only in the perspective of a harmonious expansion of the capitalist economy. In the contrary case, there would be witnessed precipitate withdrawals that would sow the greatest disorder in the barely commenced enterprise of capitalist "planning."

Meanwhile, its costs must be borne by the wage-earners of Europe and the world. The trend toward a compression of production costs and of internal consumption the better to face revived competition, gives rise to a new offensive against the living standards of the European masses already affected by unemployment and inflation.

What is more, the underdeveloped countries look forward with perfectly justified apprehension to the discriminatory competition and dictates of the Common Market toward their own economies, already in ebb.

The wage-earners of Europe must coordinate their struggles for their economic and political demands in order to break out of the capitalist framework of the "unification" of Europe by enlarging it to all Europe on the basis of the *Socialist United States of Europe*, the only progressive and realistic historical perspective.

## JAPANESE WORKERS FIGHT REACTION TO A STANDSTILL

Since August 1957 Japanese capitalism has been marking time. The rate of increase in production in 1958 is estimated at only 1%, lowest since the 0.3% rate of the depression year of 1931. If optimistic estimates hope for an increase of 5% for 1959, it is doubtful whether this will be achieved. Increases in production and productivity are particularly essential for Japanese capitalism, with a capital accumulation between 1952 and 1958 of some \$ 25,000 million, and an ever more competitive world market.

As might be expected, from these economic conditions the Japanese bourgeoisie, like those of various European countries, drew the political conclusion that the labor movement must be hamstrung. It prepared various anti-labor measures against different sectors of the workers' movement, but the most universal and far-reaching was that presented to the Diet on October 8th in the new so-called Police Duties Revision Bill. Specifically this bill was aimed at limiting labor's right to engage in demonstrations and to form picket-lines; more generally, in the uncontrolled discretionary powers it gave to the police, it was a first and important step toward the reimposition of an open police state.

The threat was undisguised, and not only provoked violent reactions among the rank-and-file workers, but could not be blinked by even the most hardened reformists: resistance was immediate and unanimous from all workers' organizations, both political and trade-union. Nation-wide strikes and other protest actions were prepared in a series of five mounting "waves." The early waves, though universal throughout all unions, were limited to work-stoppages or shop-rallies ranging usually from one to three hours. But as the "waves" succeeded one another, the stoppages grew graver. The government attempted to get tough: after the October 28th "third wave," it victimized about 1000 railwaymen and 375 postal workers, and arrested the leaders of the teachers' union.

The workers' response was to elect substitute leaderships in case of further arrests and to redouble their militancy: on November 5th, 180,000 workers went on 24-hour strikes and some 4,500,000 members of both the leftist Sohyo and the rightist Zenro unions held stoppages and rallies of three or more hours. What was particularly significant of the workers' attitude was that in many regions and trades, the local unions went far beyond the instructions received from the cautious national centres, and innumerable rank-and-file militants called for a general strike of unlimited duration. The reformist trade-union leaders found themselves between two fires: to save their bureaucratic skins they had to fight

the bill, but they were soon in danger of being unable to keep the militancy of the rank and file within reformist bounds. The potentially revolutionary nature of the crisis beginning in Japanese capitalism began to show through.

After 45 days of these mounting waves, the last 19 of them heightened in tension by a continuous crisis within the Diet, the government had to admit defeat by withdrawing the Police Duties Revision Bill. This major and unquestionable victory of the Japanese working class not only is heartening in itself but considerably changed the political climate in Japan. The leaders of Sohyo, after the victory, tried to cancel plans for the fifth "wave," scheduled for November 26th, and though the wave was therefore mostly quieter than previous ones, many workers wanted not to stop at the stage of having blocked the government's plans but to drive ahead. The National Coal Miners' Union staged a 24-hour nation-wide strike, the telecommunication workers, agricultural ministry workers, and non-nationalized railway workers held militant rallies, and the teachers boycotted classes and transformed the goal of the struggle into a drive for year-end bonuses and against the teachers' efficiency-rating system, a device for weeding out militants.

On October 16th, as part of the tactic of fighting the police powers bill, the reformists formed a "People's Congress," representing 5,000,000 workers and over 1,000,000 students, intellectuals, and other pro-labor elements. The reformists tried to keep this congress within a framework of a pressure tactic, but it soon rendered them very uneasy by tending to consider itself a rival to the bourgeois parliament, and they had nightmares that it might prove an embryo of dual power. It did not, of course, and has been officially "put on the shelf," but it is conceivable that we have not heard the last of this curious and interesting body.

Thus the Japanese bourgeoisie — trying, in the present conjuncture, like those in other capitalist powers, to take back what gains the workers had forced out of it — has been, in its first major anti-labor offensive, set back on its heels, hard, by an aroused and dynamic working class. The result for the moment is an uneasy and unstable truce. The government is concentrating its efforts on trying to isolate the more militant and politically conscious workers from the masses as a whole. On their side, the workers are planning struggles for a minimum-wage system and against the U.S.-Japanese Security Treaty.

The general tendency to political polarization and the increasing strain between the revolutionary instincts of the workers and the reformist practices of the traditional workers'

leaderships is at the moment particularly reflected in rising disputes within the Socialist Party. Its leftist theoretical leader, Professor Sakisaka, recently published an article in which he criticized the rightist leaders of the party as a purely parliamentary fraction. To their denial of the class character of the SP, he opposed the affirmation that it is and must be a class party of the workers, even if it is not a majority in the population. While rejecting the armed insurrection as a means of revolution, he proposed the general strike as necessary for the seizure of power. His declaration was supported by the chairman and general secretary of the Sohyo, Ota and Iwai, and, on the basis of it, a left fraction

in the SP is being formally organized. It is visible here that the left tendency in the SP is reflecting mass pressure from the ranks, while the right remains as ever a tool of the bourgeoisie in a quite unmixed way.

It is evident that the fight over the Police Duties Revision Bill was only the first round in a continuing battle. The magnificent way in which the courageous Japanese workers, despite timorous reformist leadership, sent the bourgeois enemy reeling back from its first offensive augurs well for its capacity to contain and by counter-attacking to roll back its tireless class antagonist.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY

The Italian Socialist Party (PSI), second-largest workers' organization in the country, on the eve of its national congress found itself seriously divided for the first time in ten years. After the violent conflicts of 1945, 1947, and 1949, which caused successive splits (the biggest of which gave birth to the Social-Democratic Party of Saragat), this party was partially "Stalinized," and its congresses voted unopposed resolutions by unanimous vote. But now this period seems to be over, and the rank-and-file units themselves were this time called on to decide among three different reports, which reflect a division at the top, openly observed at the last session of the Central Committee.

The line of the report presented by Nenni was quite clear. Nenni noted the difficulties which the workers' movement of the country has been going through for some years now, and analyzed, though in a summary kind of way, the bureaucratic degeneration in the USSR and the other workers' states. He thought that an increase in the "autonomy" of the party's policy might prove a way out of the situation or provide the conditions therefor: this policy should be concretized in an attitude of neutralism and equidistance of tendency on the international plane, and in a very clear differentiation from the Communist Party within the country. By such an attitude, according to Nenni, the PSI should succeed sooner or later in polarizing the necessary forces to impose what it calls the democratic alternative. When the opportunity offers, the goal should be achieved by new elections.

Basically, Nenni was developing the line already sketched out after the XXth Congress of the CP of the USSR. For him, the condemnation of Stalinism — of which, however, it must be recalled, he had made no criticism during a very long period — involved a condemnation of Leninism, and the only possibility of success for the Western workers' movement lay in abandoning any revolutionary conception and adopting the neo-reformist theses on "new" roads to socialism. It is true that the Italian CP had also taken a stand in favor of this line; but the essential idea of Nenni was precisely that the Italian CP, by its nature and its ties with the USSR, would never be able to transform the "democratic" paths to socialism into reality, whereas the PSI was the only workers' organization in a position to do so.

All that does not put Nenni on the same plane as that of the classical positions of the international Social-Democracy (his rank and file would not tolerate it, and he himself, furthermore, could not so easily forget his past and his training), but in fact he is from now on very close to certain left or left-centre tendencies inside the big Social-Democratic parties (for example, the tendency of Bevan, who indeed contributes quite regularly to the organ of the PSI).

It might be noted that this line developed the same ideas that had won out at the Venice Congress two years before. That was just the goal that Nenni proposed to reach. But,

according to him, a large part of the outgoing Central Committee was, underneath, hostile to this line without opposing it openly, and "sabotaged" its application; that was why Nenni himself took the initiative of a break at the top so that the party might take a position not only on the policy but on the men who would be entrusted with carrying it out.

The second tendency was represented by Basso, a quite characteristic personage, who has often worked out very good analyses but without knowing how to draw the conclusions they rendered necessary (on the contrary, he drew and is still drawing opportunist conclusions). His document — from the formal point of view — was unquestionably the most coherent one, and again contained quite correct analyses (especially about the USSR and the workers' states). But Basso also accepts the "new" roads (the possibility of passing over to socialism through democracy, etc) and the conception that the Socialist Party would be best qualified to translate this possibility into practice. Hence his position is not very different from that of the Nenni tendency. More exactly, Basso, who was in fact the first to state the formula of the democratic alternative — since then become widespread — flatly excluded collaboration with the Christian-Democracy, whereas Nenni seemed more of a "possibilist" on this matter. But Nenni also was aware that in the immediate future such a collaboration could not be seriously carried out: which reduces his divergences with Basso at this stage.

The third tendency — the left — which had the relative majority in the Central Committee — proposed for the Congress a document which, from certain points of view, was the most advanced one, but which unfortunately was also rather eclectic and very uneven in value. Far the best part of the document was that which criticized the Social-Democratic tendencies of the Nenni group, stressed the danger of a break between the two workers' parties, and came out unhesitatingly on the side of the USSR and the other workers' states. In addition, the left's report worked up a certain criticism of the past policy of the Italian workers' movement and denounced certain aspects of the line of the Italian CP, correctly emphasizing that it is on several planes a "line of defense without any prospects." And lastly the left recalled certain Marxist ideas about bourgeois democracy and workers' democracy, saying among other things that "the organization of the democratic state of the workers is not identical with that of the democratic state of the bourgeoisie."

But, side-by-side with this, it continued basically to accept the "new" roads and to conceive of the possibility of a transformation of the structures of the bourgeois apparatus from the inside. The idea of the democratic alternative — nobody is able to say just what this means, exactly — is also accepted by the left, which on this matter stated its agreement with either Nenni or Basso.

Second, concerning the question of the USSR and the workers' states, the report of the left correctly emphasized that the system of workers' states must be criticized from within and that "the process of destalinization is irreversible, for the objective causes that determine it prevail over the subjective causes that slow it down." But the criticism of the bureaucracy was rather weak, and it could be inferred therefrom that the bureaucracy has found in itself the strength for a renewal by eliminating the evils denounced by the XXth Congress. Furthermore, the allusion to revisionism was too vague, and there was not a word about the Yugoslav Communists, whom Moscow denounces as the worst revisionists.

Immediately after the session of the Central Committee that formalized the creation of the three tendencies, the forces of the party lined up behind each of them; a few weeks later the positions were already crystalized. The Basso tendency, with a few exceptions, had a very limited success, and is able to play at best only a subordinate role, by rallying to the others either at the Congress, or after the Congress in the new Central Committee. Nenni was followed by the right wing of the party, including many members who are rather close to the conceptions of the Social-Democracy, and who would not be hostile to a collaboration with the Christian-Democracy. It may be said, probably without exaggeration, that Nenni's base stands to the right of Nenni himself.

The left — which has the support of several trade-union leaders (a large fraction of whom, however, are allied with Basso) — is internally very heterogeneous. In it, at least three groups can be distinguished. The first is the one called "the apparatus": these are the people who have very few ideas and who have always been more concerned with keeping the posts they have in the party than with working for a genuine clarification. The second is that of the nostalgic Stalinists, who did not like the XXth Congress, do not want any criticisms of the bureaucracy of the USSR, and basically consider that the party will have correct positions only to the degree that it adopts the position of the Italian PC and of the leaders of the USSR (the members of this tendency are currently called "carristi," for they were in favor of the use of Soviet tanks — "carri" in Italian — against the Hungarian revolution).

And lastly there is a nucleus grouped around *Mondo Operaio*, the official periodical, under the formal direction

of Nenni but under the de facto control of opposition militants, which worked up very good analyses on the USSR and the workers' states, on the international workers' movement, and on the present currents in the Italian bourgeoisie. In particular this group carried out an excellent campaign for workers' control, which had repercussions even inside the Italian CP — whose organ several times polemicized with these socialists, till the moment when Togliatti himself spoke up at a session of the Central Committee to accept in part certain of the ideas put forward by this group. Although numerically weak, the *Mondo Operaio* group has been the only really new socialist tendency which has developed ideas valid for the workers' movement as a whole.

Though this note was written on the eve of the Naples Congress, it was already possible, on the basis of the results in the different local congresses, to count on a quite clear majority for Nenni (who had his big successes particularly in big cities such as Rome, Milan, and Genoa, where his victory was a crushing one). This outcome was determined by several factors: Nenni's personal prestige, the insufficient clarity of the left tendency, the unfavorable reactions of many militants to the too open intervention of the Italian CP, which came out against Nenni and in favor of the left; and, especially and basically, the notable weight of the petty-bourgeois wing in the party. In addition, it must not be forgotten that the situation in broad workers' sectors also weighed heavily here: by their own admission, many militants chose Nenni because they are tired of fighting under very difficult conditions and want to find a less rocky way out. This is an illusion, obviously, but at the moment a rather widespread one.

As the present issue prepares to go to press, the news comes in that at the Congress the results were much as expected, i.e., a quite clear majority for the Nenni tendency, which henceforth will rule the party. One of the immediate consequences of the Congress was been the crisis in Saragat's Social-Democratic party, whose left wing wants to go over to the PSI. This crisis furthermore provided the pretext for the Fanfani government — already in an untenable position — to resign.

We shall see in the next months in what direction and to what degree Nenni will be able to exploit his present success. We do not believe that he will be able to do much, even from his own point of view.

## THE EIGHTY-SIXTH UNITED STATES CONGRESS

On the day after the November 1958 elections, the hope of something new in the management of US foreign and domestic affairs seemed to be justified. The country had just voted very clearly "liberal," plebisciting the "progressive" candidates, both Democrats and Republicans. Important regroupings in both the victorious Democratic Party and in the Republican Party appeared to be inevitable. Certain conservatives, alarmed, even foresaw splits in both the traditional formations and the creation of a new liberal party grouping "progressive" Democrats and Republicans, based on the trade unions, i.e., almost the birth of a labor party, upsetting the traditional US political scene.

The quite conformist beginnings of the 86th US Congress, however, seem to indicate that the conservative apparatuses of both parties are still firmly in the saddle and that the "liberal" reformers will have to wait. That does not mean that the President, in the two remaining years of his term, will not have to put up with major difficulties from the new Congress, with its crushing Democratic and even "liberal" predominance — all the more so in that, backing up from the refurbished Republicanism which he

had formerly called for, Eisenhower has now cramped up into a conservative orthodoxy that Taft might have envied, to the great despair of the "liberals" of his party, even up to and including, some say, Vice-President Nixon himself.

Eisenhower has become the champion of the "balanced budget" as the no 1 national objective, and of fiscal orthodoxy, in face of the clamors of those who demand increased social and especially military expenditures and a more dynamic economy assuring a steady expansion.

Alarmed by the budgetary deficit of the current fiscal year, which will reach \$ 12,000 million, and by the perceptible deterioration of the dollar's purchasing power (half that of the pre-war dollar), the US government experts are calling for strict economy in order to bring the next budget down to \$ 77,000 million, eliminating the deficit.

The administration is seriously worried by the weakening of the dollar in foreign markets, the fall-off in US exports in face of revived foreign competition, and the dangers inherent in a domestic stock-market speculation that nowise corresponds to the still limited possibilities of the current economic recovery. This recovery remains slow, and the

limited expenditures, both state and in private investments, forecast for this year, do not seem propitious for spurring a new boom.

To this attitude of the administration, the "liberal" current answers that the best way to fight inflation is by a new and considerable increase in production and productivity, thanks to new government expenditures, independently of their immediate repercussions on the imbalance of the budget. Leon Keyserling, Truman's economic adviser, is the theoretician who heads this current.

But independently of the immediate and rather technical aspects of the current dispute between "spenders" and "savers," it is really a more fundamental debate that is again dividing leading circles in the U S.

The relative stagnation of the U S in the economic, scientific, and military fields contrasts more and more with the dynamism of Soviet society. Since the launching of the first sputnik, a growing part of the American bourgeoisie is discovering this reality with growing anguish. The economic challenge represented by the steady annual rate of expansion of the economy of the Soviet Union and the other workers' states, the figures of the U S S R's new Seven-Year Plan, China's progress in 1958, etc, are now taken quite seriously in the United States — all the more so in that not only the present recession but also a more thorough study of the functioning of the U S economy in these last years, clearly reveal the disturbing lag that has for a certain time now been established between the rate of expansion of the Soviet economy and that of the U S economy.

The new statistical series prepared by the U S Department of Commerce about the gross national product *at con-*

*stant prices*, just published, prove that the U S economy was already virtually marking time (an average annual increase of slightly over 1 %) several years before the current recession, and that 1955 was the only year since the Korean War in which production spurted — about 8 %.

During this same period the Soviet economy developed at an average annual rate of expansion in any case higher than 7 %.

Under these conditions, the 5 % annual rate of expansion that the Rockefeller Report called for in the coming years in order that the U S economy should always outclass that of the U S S R, seems already insufficient. This rate represents an essential imperative requirement for a U S economic policy of any dynamism whatever that attempts to pick up the Soviet challenge.

In this case, how can one fail to be astonished that such a concern found no echo in the President's Message on the State of the Union, any more, for that matter, than did the lead taken by the U S S R in intercontinental and cosmic rockets, or in the field of scientific research and education?

It must be expected that the almost provocative flatness of the President's line will be fought by the new Congress, which will try to make up for the lack of dynamism and leadership currently shown by the Republican administration.

It remains to be seen, however, whether even the United States can in the future ensure the colossal expenditures required by the fantastic super-arms race of the atomic age, as well as by the needs of aid to underdeveloped countries, without seriously lowering the living standards of the American people and without subjecting it in its turn to the yoke of an open dictatorship.

# THE USSR FROM THE XX<sup>TH</sup> TO THE XXI<sup>ST</sup> CONGRESS OF THE CPSU

By ERNEST GERMAIN

Three years have passed between the XXth and the XXIst Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Three years : one can scarce believe that so dramatic a succession of events as Khrushchev's secret report denouncing Stalin's crimes, the Polish and Hungarian revolutions, the shift from the "hundred flowers" to the "rectification campaign," the new Yugoslav affair, the sale of the farm machines to the kolkhozes, the first measures associating the workers with the management of the plants in the USSR — that these constant upheavals in a society that some people declared to be congealed have taken place at so astounding a rhythm.

Granted, these upheavals were not all equivalent. They marked, here an advance, there a slowing-down, of destalinization. The leadership of the Soviet bureaucracy, frightened by the extent of the political revolutions that began in Hungary and Poland, tried to reestablish a stricter political and ideological discipline. That was the essential reason for the new "Yugoslav affair." It was also the reason for a partial "rehabilitation" of Stalin himself. At the same time, the Khrushchev team carried out more vigorously than ever its policy of economic concessions to the workers and especially to the peasants, in order to wipe out the most acute material reasons for popular discontent.

The contradiction between these two elements of Khrushchev's policy were not long in showing themselves. Though it has unquestionably succeeded in postponing the deadline of an explosion in the USSR itself, it has not succeeded in channeling the energy of the toiling people and the youth toward purely productivist goals and "material enjoyment." The question of the management of the plants, the question of free access for the children of the people to knowledge at the university level, the controversies about freedom of cultural creation — these have harshly reminded the ruling strata as well as the mass of proletarians, that the most burning problems to be solved by Soviet society, if it wants to fulfill the grandiose promises that now appear tangible, are and remain *political* problems.

## THE INDUSTRIAL UPSURGE CONTINUES — BUT AT A SLIGHTLY SLOWER RHYTHM

Since 1956 the industrial upsurge has been regularly shown by the annual increase in production and investments. An event, however, of capital importance, the interruption of the Sixth Five-Year Plan, now replaced by the 1959-1965 Seven-Year Plan, has shown that the rhythm of industrial progress has slightly slowed down, and that the goals foreseen for

the Sixth Five-Year Plan would not have been reached in 1960.

It is amusing to observe the deep emotion that the publication of the goals of the Seven-Year Plan have caused in capitalist circles. These gentlemen had allowed themselves to be lulled, for several decades and thanks to "technicians" of various kidneys, by the contention that the Soviet economy's rate of growth was explained by its "underdeveloped" character. And they would compare this rate of growth with that of the American economy between the War of Secession and the First World War, or with the Japanese economy between 1890 and 1938.

Unfortunately for these apologists of capital, Soviet industry continues to advance at a rhythm at least double that of the growth of the capitalist countries in the best situations — and it maintains this rhythm of growth even after it has reached the level of development of the world's second industrial power. Struck by astonishment, the capitalists are now discovering the magic of geometric progression. It is one thing to increase production 50 to 60 % every five years when it is a question of going from 4 to 6 million tons of steel, or even from 20 to 30 million tons. It is another thing to go, within a decade, from 45 to 90 million tons, then from 90 to 200 million tons, then... It is dizzying. Such is, nevertheless, the irreversible dynamic of planned economy, even though braked by the bureaucracy.

To evaluate the prospects opened up to the USSR by the goals of the Seven-Year Plan, we may set out from the hypothesis that these goals will be reached. We may do so more surely in that these goals, like those of the last two years, are relatively more modest than the objectives of former times, and seem to have been chosen for the purpose of being able to be slightly overfulfilled.

There is no reason to consider these goals exceptional. We have already said that they imply rather a slight slowing down of the general rhythm of growth of Soviet industry. Are examples called for ?

The Sixth Five-Year Plan forecast a steel production of 68 million tons in 1960 ; an annual increase of 8 % would have led to 100 million tons in 1965. In fact, the Seven-Year Plan forecasts a production of only 86-91 million tons for 1965.

The Sixth Five-Year Plan forecast a production of 320,000 million kilowatt-hours for 1960. Now electric production has doubled or more than doubled during each five-year period. That would have given a production of about 600,000 to 650,000 million kilowatt-hours in 1965 ; the Seven-Year Plan forecasts

only 500,000 to 520,000 million kilowatt-hours for that year.

As for coal production, the increase forecast for the whole seven-year period is of only 20-23 %, which represents an annual increase of from 2.5 to 3 %, a pronounced slow-down of expansion. This slow-down is doubtless partly voluntary : it forms part of a plan of power reconversion that puts the emphasis on electricity and heavy oils to replace coal.

It might be concluded that, though Soviet industry continues its momentum, the enormous advantages promised by Khrushchev, at the time of the reform in the management of industry and the creation of sov-narkhoses, have scarcely shown themselves in real life. In fact, though industrial decentralization has permitted wiping out the most redoubtable excesses of bureaucratic supercentralization, it has brought out stronger than ever the defects of local and regional particularism, and the individual interests of the bureaucrats considered as the main motive force for carrying out the plan. In the review *Voprosi Ekonomiki* (no 7, 1958), there are enumerated a series of examples of arbitrary modification in the variety of production, carried out by the sov-narkhoses, which are quite comparable to the modifications in the same direction denounced by Malenkov at the XIXth Congress of the CPSU for the directors of factories, trusts (glavki), and industrial ministries.

One of the most disconcerting aspects of the new Seven-Year Plan is the increase forecast in labor productivity. Total manpower in industry will increase 20 %, we are told ; but industrial production will increase 80 %. This implies an increase in labor productivity of 50 %, i.e., an average of 6.5-7 % per year — quite an average ! At the same time, the working week will be reduced to 40 hours, and the 35-hour week will begin to be introduced in industries where work is heavy and exhausting. From this fact, therefore, the annual increase in labor productivity will reach 8-9 % per year. It is true that the Seven-Year Plan puts the emphasis on partial or complete automation in numerous industrial sectors ; publications of a technical nature or of scientific popularization mention production-line methods for making machine-tools or completely automated ball-bearing manufacture.

It may be supposed, however, that a manpower shortage will become acute during the seven-year period, and that once again the achievement of the 1965 objectives will require the employment of a greater number of workers than originally foreseen. In this connection, Soviet agriculture furthermore contains

enormous reserves of manpower, if it can be effectively rationalized. It is, however, unlikely that it will remain a source of abundant manpower able to be freed for industry ; and the bureaucrats seem to be falling back rather on... the young, from 15 to 18, considered as a source of "extra" manpower.

The vital question remains : to what extent Khrushchev's claim — that 1965 Soviet production will reach the production level of the United States, and surpass European and approach US production per capita — was a serious one.

Concerning the United States, the Khrushchev prediction — misunderstood by the broad public, and misreported by the press — was in reality more modest than it seemed. Khrushchev did not say that the USSR would have attained the 1965 US production level ; he said that the USSR would in 1965 reach a level close to that of 1958 US production ! The difference between the two formulæ is immediately grasped : to suppose them equal implies a forecast that American production will undergo *seven years' stagnation at a recession level*. This hypothesis is obviously unreal.

In fact, the comparison should be made, not between the *current* production of the two countries, but between their *per capita production capacity*. Now for a series of basic sectors, this production capacity in the United States has undergone a *continuous advance* even in the recession period. Thus in 1958, despite the economic recession that caused nearly 40 % of capacity of steel production to lie idle, that capacity was being simultaneously *increased* 4 %. This is because the American bourgeoisie allows itself to be guided, no longer by economic criteria, but by political criteria about military capacity, in its investments in these key-sectors. The state makes up for the insufficiencies of private capitalists ; and when the annual military budget reaches such lofty sums as 45, 50 or 55 thousands of millions of dollars, it is plain that 5 or 10 % of these sums can be used to develop production capacity of basic sectors, in order to maintain a certain advance over the productive capacity of the Soviet Union.

Such a development could not be carried on indefinitely without causing irreparable damage to the overall economic and monetary structure ; but it remains quite likely for the next 7 to 15 years. And so, if it is granted that during this period American production capacity will increase an average 2.5 to 3 % per year (which is slightly lower than the averages of the rearmament and war period, 1940-1958), we obtain the following table :

	1957		1965		1972-3		1972-3	
	USA	USSR	USA	USSR	USA	USSR	USA	USSR
							per capita	
Petroleum (in millions of tons) .....	354	98	425	240	500	390	2.8 t	1.8 t
Steel (in millions of tons) .....	146	51	175	90	200	130	1.15 t	0.6 t
Electricity (in millions of kwh) .....	716	210	850	520	1000	900	5700kwh	4100kwh
Cement (in millions of tons) .....	53	29	65	81	75	116	430 k	530 k

Apart from cement, the distance between American and Soviet per capita production will still remain very considerable for basic products, and it will be even greater for living levels. As for the countries of Western Europe, the comparison is more difficult, for it is hard to foresee a rhythm of regular growth of their production during the coming 10 to 12 years. Still, the hypothesis of a steel production of 28 million tons in Great Britain, of 32 million tons in West Germany, as well as of 8 million tons in Belgium, can be considered as realistic for 1965.<sup>1</sup> That would give us for the three countries a per capita production of 540, 600, and 900 kilos, respectively, compared to 410 kilos in the U S S R for the same year. It would be the same for electricity and the greater part of durable consumers' goods (automobiles, scooters, household electrical appliances, available housing, etc). It is, however, probable that the Soviet per capita production in textiles and the food industry will in 1965 surpass that of the principal countries of Western Europe. The level of industrialization and living standards in countries like Austria, Italy, and even the Netherlands might be already reached or approached in the U S S R.

### A SLOW-DOWN IN THE RISE IN LIVING LEVELS, BUT A TENDENCY TO MORE EQUAL DISTRIBUTION

In the matters of light industry and agricultural production, the goals of the Seven-Year Plan must be considered with far more reservations than those of heavy industry. It suffices to recall that the goal of 180 million tons of cereals, now set for 1965, had already been set for 1960 by the Sixth Five-Year Plan, and even for 1955 by the Fifth Plan, without being reached — far from it — during the last four years.

For sugar, Mikoyan had promised more than 7 million tons beginning in 1955 (*Pravda*, 25 October 1953), whereas the 1957 production reached only 4.5 million tons. Hence the figure of 9 to 10 million tons for 1965 leaves one skeptical. The production of cotton goods has in five years risen from 5.3 million metres to only 5.8 million metres, i.e., less than 10% ! Must one expect that the increase of 50% predicted for the next seven years will be attained? As for durable consumers' goods (motorcycles, ice-making refrigerators, sewing machines, washing machines, etc), about which Malenkov and Mikoyan made such sensational promises in 1953, exact goals for 1965 are no longer even stated ! In general, the objectives set for 1955 had not yet been attained even in 1957:

	Goals Set for 1955	1957 Production
Cotton goods	6,200,000 metres	5,600,000 metres
Leather shoes	318,000,000 pairs	315,000,000 pairs
Bicycles	3,445,000	3,300,000
Sewing machines	2,600,000	2,300,000
Ice-making refrigerators	330,000	309,000

The situation is still worse for certain agricultural products. As for butter, Mikoyan had promised a production of 560,000 tons in 1955 and 650,000 tons in 1956, without taking into account that part of the production eaten by the peasants themselves. Now production in 1955 reached only 459,000 tons, and that of 1956 530,000 tons. Even in 1958, according to Khrushchev's report to the last meeting of the Central Committee (*Pravda*, 16 December 1958), butter production reached 622,000 tons and thus remains lower than the goal set for 1955 !

As for meat, Khrushchev operates prudently with figures about "weight on the hoof," and not production figures. Now Mikoyan had promised 3 million tons of meat plus 1 million tons of pork products for 1956 ; the figure of 5.4 million tons of "meat on the hoof" given by Khrushchev for 1958 is certainly lower than these two 1956 goals.

The violent attack launched by Khrushchev against Malenkov on this occasion contains in particular the statement that Malenkov, at the XIXth Congress of the C P S U, seems to have given erroneous figures for the production of grain, by providing only those of the *standing* harvest, and not those of what was actu-

ally harvested. In fact this custom had been followed throughout the whole Stalinist period. Khrushchev himself, when he was responsible for Soviet agriculture, used the same method. It was employed by Malenkov (*Pravda*, 9 August 1953) ; Khrushchev repeated it a month later, in his 3 September 1953 speech on agriculture before the Central Committee (*Izvestia*, 15 September 1953). It is therefore a bit out of place to dust off this old club to beat Malenkov with.

It must be recognized that Khrushchev's wager on planting the "virgin lands" has not to date provided conclusive results. It ensures, on the average, one good harvest out of two, in strict correlation with the degree of drought in these regions. On the other hand, the sale of the farm machinery and the other measures tending rapidly to increase the peasants' income will have lasting consequences for Soviet agriculture provided that adventurist measures are not taken concerning prices.

The Seven-Year Plan forecasts a 40% increase in workers' incomes, to which must be added the general reduction of the working week to 40 hours. If the increase in the lowest wages, which will be quite large, is taken into account, the *average* wage will go up only 26% (*Pravda*, 26 November 1958). This constitutes a considerable slowing down of the rise in the

<sup>1</sup> In 1957, the respective production capacity of these countries was of 23, 27, and 7 million tons.

living levels of the workers, which was doubtless more than 50 % in the 1952-1959 period. The annual average rise in living levels would be brought back to between 2.5 and 3 %, which is lower than the trend in the last seven years in countries like France, Great Britain, Italy, West Germany, or Belgium.

On the other hand, the trend toward a certain leveling of remuneration, a lessening of too flagrant inequalities, already timidly announced at the XXth Congress and applied especially in the field of pensions, will now be carried out more boldly. The above-quoted article in *Pravda* pointed out in particular that the stretch between wages for manual workers will be henceforth reduced to 200 %. It openly stated that it is necessary "to reduce the differences between the highest and lowest salaries." It is true that it is simultaneously a question of increasing the income of certain bureaucrats. Nevertheless, the 60 to 70 % increase in low wages during the coming seven years stands out against the average 26 % increase in wages.

Let us nail right here the confession of the leaders of the bureaucracy that there are still millions of Soviet workers who earn between 270 and 350 rubles per month, i.e., according to generally accepted equivalences in purchasing power, from 11,000 to 14,000 French francs [\$ 27 to \$ 35, or £ 10 to £ 12/10 per month.] There is even talk of 7 to 8 million wage-earners who earn less than 350 rubles. Even if they enjoy free health services and very low rents, this is a poverty level unworthy of an industrially advanced country like the U S S R today.

All these reservations being made, the fact nevertheless remains that during these last five years the people's living standards have shown an absolutely sensational progress. To realize this, it suffices to add up the production of commonly used consumers' goods, and to compare them with the number of families in the U S S R. During the last five years there have been manufactured 20 million radio and television sets, close to 40 million wrist-watches, 18 million bicycles, 7 1/2 million sewing machines, 4 1/2 million cameras, 1 million washing machines. These figures may be multiplied roughly by two to obtain the production in the coming seven-year period. For ice-making refrigerators and washing machines, it is by 6 or 7 that we must multiply! That shows plainly that during this period the Soviet people will acquire the material basis for civilized living comparable to that of numerous countries of Central and Western Europe. To all this must be added an enormous effort in the matter of housing, which will create 7,000 million square feet of living space during the next seven years, thus raising the available per capita usable<sup>2</sup> surface in the cities to about 194 square feet, i.e., three times more than in 1928 and a figure comparable to those of Western Europe.

<sup>2</sup> "Usable" rather than "habitable" because "usable" space includes toilets, bathrooms, kitchens, corridors, balconies, etc.

### THE PRESSURE OF THE WORKERS TOWARD SHARING IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PLANTS IS GROWING

The most important change that has occurred in Soviet social reality since the XXth Congress is the appearance of tendencies with a view to limiting the omnipotence of the director within the plant, of the bureaucracy within the national economy. These tendencies are the inevitable result of destalinization and the denunciation of the "personality cult"; as early as 1953 we foresaw their appearance. It is a question here of a concession of historic importance that the Soviet bureaucracy has been obliged to make to the proletariat of its country. It is simultaneously a question of the only means it had at its disposal for delaying in the U S S R the appearance of workers' councils on the Yugoslav, Polish, or Hungarian model, workers' councils which have been and still are the subject of discussions among the vanguard of the Soviet Communists and youth.

It was in December 1957 that important measures were taken with a view to increasing the powers of the trade unions within the plants and in the Soviet economy as a whole. In July 1958 a decree of the Supreme Soviet confirmed and further extended these powers. Lastly, the XIth Plenum of the Central Council of the Trade Unions of the U S S R blazed the trail toward a new extension of trade-union prerogatives (*Trud*, 22 October 1958). In this mass of decrees and ordinances, three currents can be distinguished:

1) The increase of jurisdiction in the matter of managing social security, the institutions of social aid, etc. In practice the trade unions take in hand the management of the organisms of social security on the regional and local scales. They receive the right to control the distribution of lodgings, the provisioning of canteens, the management of communal public-service enterprises, etc. By this fact, *the trade-union bureaucracy acquires a broad autonomous material base*; it administers in fact funds that reach several tens of thousands of millions of rubles per year. Without any doubt, these measures are not greeted with much enthusiasm by the workers. Everywhere that they have been able to express their opinion freely (East Germany, 16-17 June 1953; Hungary, October-November 1956; Poland, October 1956 - Summer 1957), they declared themselves to be opposed to the exercise of state functions by the trade unions; what they want is for the trade unions to defend them in their conflicts with the bureaucracy. Nevertheless, the broadening of trade-union autonomy, even under its

Statistics about "usable" space in the West are not very specific. If the habitable surface per room is counted as 172 square feet on the average, and this figure is increased 25 % for usable space (this being the method generally used by the specialists), then the figures per capita for 1955-57 would work out as follows: 172 square feet in Italy; 194 in Western Germany and France; 237 in Holland; 280 in Great Britain and Belgium; 302 in the U S A.

bureaucratic aspect, opens the door to demands of revolutionary scope, such as for example the demand for the management of communal industry, or even all light industry, by the trade unions.

2) "Productivist" measures that imply a right to control and take reprisals concerning the directors and "cadres" of the economy. This trend is visible above all in the decision of the XIth Plenum of the Central Council of the Trade-Unions, a document entirely centred around the growth of efficiency and productivity of labor, which will not arouse many favorable echos among the workers, but which, as means to attain these ends, involves in particular the extension of trade-union control over the administration of industry, the creation of squads of "controllers" who will go to make surprise inspections in the workshops, the obligation for directors to apply the measures proposed by these squads. It all culminates in a truly surprising formula: "The construction workplaces in metallurgy and chemistry must be subjected to the control of the trade union."

3) Modifications in hierarchic structure of the plants, and the increase of the powers of the trade unions within them. These prerogatives, it is true, are exercised by various more or less "representative" or "elected" organs, but never by the mass of the workers. Nevertheless, the transformation is deep-going; it constitutes in several ways an abolition of the reactionary "reforms" of the Stalinist period and a return to the customs of the 1928-1933 period, when Soviet democracy was already abolished on the political plane, but important vestiges subsisted within the plants.

In this way, the apparatus of economic direction and the apparatus of the trade-union committee (its full-time functionaries) now jointly prepare the draft of the annual collective contract. The trade-union functionaries are generally associated at each stage of working up the plan. The trade-union committees, dominated by these bureaucrats, but within which the formal majority belongs to the rank-and-file workers — example: in a factory of 7,000 workers there are 21 members of the trade-union committee, of whom six are functionaries — receive the right of examination and control concerning the establishment of production norms and salaries, hiring and firing of workers, and decisions about the plan and the collective contract.

In addition, these committees have "the right to listen" (sic) to the reports of the directors and the chief engineers concerning the extent to which the plan is being carried out (*Pravda*, 16 July 1958), as well as the right to "give their opinion" about the designation of the leading personnel of the enterprise. Most important point: the trade-union committee now has the *power of last resort* in the matter of "small conflicts" within the plant. In each enterprise, special parity commissions (half representatives of the direction, half representatives of the workers)

examine these conflicts. If the parties do not reach agreement, the affair is sent before the factory trade-union committee (or, in certain cases, before the local trade-union committee). The decision of the trade-union organization is without appeal and its execution is obligatory for the administration.

Despite the predominance of trade-union bureaucrats within these committees, it is here a question of a reform that is greeted by the workers as an important step forward, for they have more of a grip and possibility of pressure on the trade-union functionaries than on the cadres of the economy.

It should also be noted that broader organisms, such as "the active members of the union" or "assemblies of producers" (which, however, in any case, group only a few percent of the workers in the big factories) are also associated with the discussion about working up and carrying out the plan, but this is only with purely consultative powers and without rights of decision.

Without reaching a form of workers' management as developed as is the case in Yugoslavia, or as was the case in Hungary (23 October - November 1956) or in Poland (October 1956 - Summer 1957), this growth in trade-union prerogatives in the USSR increases the rights of the toilers and especially those of that most "modest" and "worker" part of the bureaucracy, which is the most linked with the proletariat. The more workers' pressure increases in the USSR, and the more this fraction of the bureaucracy is used as a "transmission belt," then the more it will play this role *in both directions*: on the one hand receiving from the higher strata of the bureaucracy the directives to be imposed on the workers in exchange for increased rights; on the other hand transmitting to the higher strata of the bureaucracy the workers' demands that it must in part itself adopt in order to be able to act as a guarantor of "socialist labor discipline."

#### SCHOOL REFORM AND JUDICIAL REFORM

Economic and social transformations, the raising of the living level, the sale of farm machinery to the kolkhozes, the beginning of the participation of the workers in the management of the plants — have all these reforms created a "reformist" climate in the Soviet Union? And Khrushchev's attempt to carry out destalinization while depoliticizing it and thereby maintaining the command posts and the privileges of the bureaucracy — has this succeeded?

It is normal that the raising of the living level and the removal of general insecurity, of the reign of the secret police, have reduced tension in the USSR; the comparison that forces itself on us is that of 1900 Germany compared to the Germany of the "law against socialism," or France at the beginning of the XXth century compared to France under Napoleon III — all due allowances being made. It is true that in these cases the reforms were not only economic and social but also political. Khrushchev's wager consists

precisely in supposing that political demands themselves will lose their sharpness with the improvement in economic and social conditions.

No sensible person can deny that this wager is in part realistic — even though there must be added to the causes of the present “reformism” of the masses in the U S S R and in certain people’s democracies the experience of the Hungarian revolution and the continuance of international tension. It was workers who were *desperate and at the end of their patience* who went into the streets on June 16th and 17th 1953 in Berlin, and on October 23rd in Budapest — not to mention the rebels of Vorkuta and other forced-labor camps. Among the great mass of Soviet workers there no longer reign today the despair, insecurity, and poverty which threaten to make the cup overflow. They have, on the contrary, the hope of a steady and sure improvement in their lot —except in case of war.

But it is just this improvement in their standard of living that permits them to be more interested in political problems. These perhaps take on an immediately less explosive aspect than during the 1952-56 period, but it is nonetheless a real aspect. The more the living level of the Soviet people rises, the more the problems of attaining Soviet democracy as quickly as possible on all levels of social life present themselves in an imperious way. The Soviet bureaucracy cannot have any illusions on this subject. Its attitude toward educational and judicial reform shows this.

The causes of the reform in schooling have been clearly set forth by the Soviet leaders themselves. At the XXth Congress of the C P S U, it was promised to generalize middle schooling for all Soviet youth, i e, to have all Soviet youth go on to a “middle polytechnic” school until the age of 17 (ten years of schooling). But experience showed that the gradual generalization of the system — which was never applied to all of the youth — caused sharp contradictions. On the one hand, with the growth in the number of students who finished their middle schooling and obtained the baccalauréat,<sup>3</sup> the number of applicants for the universities increased; but the places available therein remained far fewer than the requests. In Khrushchev’s memorandum on the reform of schooling, published in the *Izvestia* of 21 September 1958, there was quoted the figure of over 800,000 students who had finished their middle studies without being able to enter the universities. This represents about two-thirds of the total of students who had completed their middle studies.<sup>4</sup> It can well be imagined under these circumstances how fierce are the struggles to obtain a place in the university!

What is more, these 800,000 youths — more than

<sup>3</sup> Not to be confused with the British and U S baccalaureate, the degree of Bachelor of Arts conferred on *leaving* a university, the continental baccalauréat is, technically, the equivalent of the U S high-school diploma or the British school-leaving certificate, enabling the student to *enter* a university (in scholastic level, it is in practice usually rather higher).

2 million if we take the overall figures for the last three years — are thrown into productive life without any practical preparation, since middle schooling serves especially for preparing for the university.

These objective givens of the problem are greatly complicated by subjective factors arising from the situation of social inequality that reigns in the U S S R. Khrushchev, in his memorandum quoted above, makes spirited reproaches to different strata of the Soviet population, that they “look down on” manual work, that they will do anything to hew a path to the university for their children, that “contacts,” pressures (especially on the part of bureaucrats), and even bribery, play a preponderant role in this “selection.” He explains these phenomena by “the lack of communist consciousness.” He would have done better to understand that *consciousness is a product of social existence*. If all parents want a university degree for their sons and daughters, it is because in the U S S R the income and the standing of “intellectuals” far surpasses that of manual workers. *Under these conditions, it is normal and inevitable that people consider the entry of their children in the university to be the principal means of social advancement!* And in fact any contact with Soviet society confirms this diagnosis: the universal thirst for knowledge and culture that reigns in the U S S R finds a common catalyst: the desire to engage in higher studies.

Khrushchev reveals that at present the children of the bureaucracy compose from 60 to 70 % of the students at the University of Moscow! Demagogically, he affirms that this abnormal situation must be changed. In practice, however, the school reform such as it was finally adopted by the C C of the C P S U (*Pravda*, 16 November 1958) makes entry into the university even *more difficult* rather than easier for the children of workers and peasants. Everything takes place as if the bureaucracy, observing the imbalance between supply and demand for places in the university, adapted, not supply to demand, but demand to supply, i e, it ruthlessly blocked the path to higher education to an important fraction of Soviet youth.

Indeed, in place of ten years of schooling, there is now eight years of generalized schooling (school will be obligatory to the age of 15)<sup>5</sup>; children at 15 can follow two paths: that of labor combined with night school (with possibly one or two working days per week free); and that of the polytechnic schools of general culture, which look forward among other things to practical exercises in production. That means that the selection, which for the moment is delayed till the age of 17-18, is now to be advanced to the age of 15-16. And universal experience has shown that the earlier professional selection is made among children, the more those are favored who, on ac-

<sup>4</sup> The *Pravda* of 16 November 1958 estimates new admissions to the universities at 450,000.

<sup>5</sup> Khrushchev revealed that in 1958 20 % of Soviet children do not continue schooling to the age of 14.

count of the living conditions and culture of their parents, are the best prepared for intellectual work. In this sense, it is certain that the school reform is by its nature *anti-democratic and anti-egalitarian*.

The "labor" of several million young people in the factory for six hours a day, under conditions not very conducive to productivity,<sup>6</sup> will not contribute much to the Soviet economy in the immediate future. On the other hand, for the young people condemned to this labor, finding entrance to the university will be in practice very difficult. To engage in studies preparing for the baccalauréat, *in addition to* 30 hours of physical labor per week, requires exhausting efforts. Soviet statistics show that less than 15% of the students who follow evening courses under these conditions succeed in their baccalauréat. Those who are obliged to combine labor with university studies have still less favorable conditions. They are, in practice, incapable of studying the physical and mathematical sciences, the sciences of the future; the Soviet cultural manual indicates that university teaching by evening courses or by correspondence formed in 1955 514,000 university graduates in the branches of general culture, of human, pedagogical, and biological sciences, and only... 6,100 scientific technologists.

This is true to such an extent that — after the publication of Khrushchev's "memorandum," which proposed to generalize for practically the entire youth the obligation for those between 15 and 18 to work 25 to 30 hours a week in factory or field, as well as the obligation for university students to work in factories — the principal Soviet scientists intervened in the discussion, stating, in measured but nonetheless clear terms, that such reforms ran the risk of destroying the bases of the upsurge of Soviet science. The Academician Semzhonov stated in the *Pravda* of 17 October 1958 that it was vital that the great majority of students come directly from the middle schools to the university without interrupting their studies, for this is essential for developing to the maximum extent the students' intellectual and creative capacities. He also specified that it is necessary that university students do practical work *in the creative sense of the term* (laboratory work in research and production), and not common manual labor, which is in fact a pure loss for both the economy and themselves.

The final draft adopted by the CC takes these criticisms into account to a large extent — an indeed sensational innovation for which there is no parallel in Soviet history for the past 25 years. But it corrects that initial draft of Khrushchev in a still more anti-democratic direction, by deepening the gulf between the two kinds of upper middle schools. The fact that "social organizations" (party, trade unions, etc) are associated in the selection of university stu-

dents is not a measure for reducing the pressure of the bureaucracy — indeed, quite the contrary.

The example of schooling shows clearly how the bureaucratic dictatorship runs up against both the progressive aspirations of the people and the needs of the Soviet economy and society. The judicial reform, finally carried through — five years after the announcement that it was being undertaken! — in the same way confirms the democratic demands of the Soviet people and the limits within which the bureaucracy can meet them.

The new penal code contains a series of advances, important and indeed sensational if they are compared with the "judicial" jungle of the Stalinist period. Confession is no longer considered sufficient proof; the accused is considered innocent until his crime is proved — he no longer has himself to prove his innocence; the principle of crime by analogy is suppressed — return is made to the democratic principle "which the revolutionary bourgeoisie had inscribed on its banner" (*Sovietskoié Gossudarstvo i Pravo*, no 12, 1957): nullum crimen (and therefore: nulla poena) sine lege (no crime, hence no punishment, without written law), which has previously defined as such the act under judgment; rights for the defense are highly increased; punishments are generally reduced (deportation for example is limited to five years); etc.

On the other hand, in this "classless society," 41 years after the October Revolution that began by abolishing the death penalty (reintroducing it only exceptionally under civil-war conditions), the death penalty is maintained for political crimes, "formation of gangs" (Soviet jurisprudence designates under this term any political organization other than the bureaucratized CP), and high treason. And though the new penal code does not contain the word "enemy of the people," this was used by USSR Attorney-General Rudenko in the very session of the Supreme Soviet that adopted the code.

All these reasons lead us to the conclusion that though a certain "reformist" tendency is unquestionably showing itself today in the USSR, it will end up sooner or later by political demands that will bring into question the very essence of the bureaucratic dictatorship, by a direct preparation of the political revolution.

It becomes essential, in this transitional phase, to work up a *minimum programme*, adapted to the concrete conditions of the USSR, a programme of vigorous democratization and equalization in all spheres of public life, a programme that would objectively play the same role as the Transitional Programme: to lead the Soviet workers by their own experience to the consciousness of the need for an organized political struggle against the bureaucracy, for the reestablishment and extension of soviet democracy at a level of which the founders of the USSR could only dream.

15 January 1959

<sup>6</sup> Khrushchev reveals that the majority of plant directors do not want to hire young people. It appears that for some years now considerable unemployment exists among those under 18.

# THE EMBEZZLED HERITAGE<sup>1</sup>

By P RICHARDS

On January 15th 1919, in Berlin, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were murdered. In the name of the Russian proletariat and of the Third (Communist) International, founded soon thereafter, Lenin and the representatives of the revolutionary workers' movement of the entire world, assembled in Moscow, took an oath to preserve the heritage of the murdered leaders and to remain true to their spirit. The life and struggle of Karl and Rosa, their part in the German revolution of 1918, and their martyrdom, had made them the symbols of the rising proletarian world revolution.

The Russian proletariat in particular, which was at this period on the point of consolidating its state power and putting itself at the service of the revolutionary workers' movement of the entire world, was as well acquainted with the history and the ideas of Liebknecht and Luxemburg as with the history and ideas of its own Bolshevik Party, and considered their way the right one. It was determined to remain faithful to them.

This found outward expression in the unheard-of popularity in the Soviet Union of the two murdered fighters. Hundreds of plants, factories, clubs, schools, streets, etc., received the names of Liebknecht and Luxemburg; their writings and speeches were distributed in enormous editions in all the languages of the Soviet Union; January 15th became an annual holiday in their honor.

Even stronger must have been the impression produced on anyone who visited the Soviet Union in the early '20s by the deep inner conviction with which the Russian communists, and especially the youth, spoke of Karl and Rosa, and how basically the ideas of both had become the very flesh and blood of some of them. For them, Liebknecht and Luxemburg were an organic part of the world revolutionary movement to which their own Bolshevik Party belonged, and the achievement of Karl's and Rosa's ideals was inseparable from the achievement of their own tasks. Indeed, they could not conceive the latter without "victory on the world scale" (which then concretely meant: especially in Germany).

The workers of other countries were convinced that it was in the hands of the Russian communists that the heritage of Karl and Rosa was safest. When, in the Spring of 1925, I spent rather a long time in Paris with Karl Liebknecht's eldest son (named Wilhelm after his grandfather) and we got talking about the

question of the leadership of the workers' parties in various European countries, he remarked:

"It can no longer be a question of forming the leading cadres of communism in a capitalist country. The bourgeoisie, as the case of my father and Rosa demonstrates, will know how simply to liquidate them physically. But in Moscow the general staff of the world revolution, based on the material conquests of the soviet revolution and on the high theoretical level of the Russian communists, and guaranteed against all outrages, can and will develop fruitful activity, such as is not possible elsewhere at the present time."

At that time the Communist International and its most important sections (and in the first rank thereof the Russian Communist Party) stood for the principles of Liebknecht and Luxemburg (whatever differences there might have been on a few tactical questions, talk of which was, furthermore, avoided at the period). They were the same principles which had been for decades the principles of Lenin and his closest companions: consistent proletarian internationalism; firm combative anti-militarism; the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the sense of a state power set up and administered by the workers themselves, in their own interest and under their constant control.

How much, in those years, Liebknecht and Luxemburg represented one and the same idea as Lenin in the consciousness of the Soviet communists, is visible also in the following detail: in the first years after Lenin's death (on January 21st 1924), the day of remembrance for him was combined with that for Karl and Rosa and was celebrated as the "Day of the Three Ls" (Lenin, Liebknecht, and Luxemburg).

Then came — for the Soviet Union and for world communism — the great retreat. The bureaucratic apparatus, under Stalin's leadership, not only systematically liquidated the best traditions of the Bolshevik Party, but also falsified — down to its very roots — the concept of Leninism. When could then remain of the memory of Karl and Rosa?

It was well-known — and it was just that which Lenin and the Bolshevik old guard esteemed the most in Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg — that for them the spontaneous activity of the working-class masses, their revolutionary élan, their instinct and their initiative, were the decisive element in social overturn. A small group of functionaries, armed with the means of power, with at their head a "leader" regarded as a godlike personality, could be — according to the conceptions of the Spartakist leaders (which were set forth in several works by Rosa Luxemburg, among them also her work written while still in prison in 1918, especially devoted to the October Revolution) — only a tool of the reaction. No phrases and soph-

<sup>1</sup> In further commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, see also in the Archives of Marxism section, p. 58, "Karl Liebknecht and the War," by Grigori Zinoviev.

isms could have connected, for them (and for the comrades trained in their spirit), the monopoly of such a group with the concept of a revolutionary development.

Just as little could the "Communist Soviet policy" cracked up by Stalin as proletarian internationalism have found agreement with Karl or Rosa. Just as group or clique dictatorship and the power of the proletariat were for Rosa Luxemburg contradictory and mutually exclusive conceptions, just so she (together with Liebknecht) had also a very clear idea of what national-chauvinism is. The revival of Great-Russian power chauvinism that developed under Stalin's auspices and that was pushed so far in the '30s that both the interests of the significant proletarian groups in Europe (Germany, France), and the interests of the whole world proletariat were sacrificed offhand — all that, naturally, was never to be brought into harmony with the memory of Karl and Rosa.

Still less can it be imagined that Karl Liebknecht would, directly or indirectly, have given his agreement to the petty cult of the Czarist Marshals Suvorov and Kutusov, to whom, on Stalin's instruction, homage had to be paid, not only by the peoples of the Soviet Union, but also by the Communist Parties of the entire world. The Red Army, which immediately after the Revolution and in the Civil War had passed into history as a model of a truly revolutionary army and vanguard of the world revolution, whose creation had also been hailed by Karl and Rosa, was suffused with a militaristic and Imperial-Russian spirit, and many of the rousing anti-militarist speeches of Karl Liebknecht could now be applied also to Stalin's militarism.

For decades, during the reactionary dictatorial period of Stalin, his propaganda apparatus was busied in a gross deformation of the works of Rosa Luxemburg. The "genial leader" himself gave the signal therefor when, in his well-known 1930 letter to the editors of the historical periodical *Proletarskaya Revolutsia*, he insulted the great revolutionary and forged the concept of "Luxemburgism," which was described as a deviation from the Leninist line, as a "semi-Trotskyist" ideology, and as a collection of errors.

The campaign thus opened against "Luxemburgism" grew like an avalanche, and in the '30s went so far that it was prosecuted by administrative measures as a crime and a counter-revolution similar to Trotskyism. In the many prosecutions against Polish and German communism in these years, the "tendency to the ideology of Luxemburgism" with which the defendants were charged was a particularly crushing accusation. The German reaction had murdered Liebknecht, Luxemburg, and many heroic Spartakists ;

the Stalinist reaction completed its work on Soviet territory by the particularly cruel murder of Polish and German proletarians branded as "Luxemburgists."

Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg had dreamed of great international solidarity, of the fraternization of Russian and German workers. At the time of Hitler's 1941 attack on the Soviet Union, the natural revolutionary way out of the war, in the sense of Liebknecht's slogan, would have been the fraternization of the German and Russian toilers, setting itself as a goal the construction of a powerful German workers' state allied on a basis of equality with the Soviet Union. But even the idea of such a fraternization became, in the Soviet Union, treason punishable by death. (The recounting of fraternization scenes from the First World War was considered "anti-Soviet agitation!") And, after the victory over Hitler, instead of seeking to draw close to the masses, millions strong, of the German industrial proletariat, Stalin preferred to create a buffer-state on German territory, which under the administration of the stooge Ulbricht, "faithful to the line," would ensure the carrying out of all the directives of Stalin and his clique. How Karl and Rosa — with all the fiery ardor of their temperaments — would have stormed against this lamentable caricature of a "people's" state.

Today, 40 years after the assassination of Karl and Rosa, the problem of the German proletarian revolution has again become especially timely. Everything is done to deepen and render permanent the split in the German proletariat, a split which bears in itself the germ not only of an intra-German civil war, but of a terrible atomic clash bringing the entire world to catastrophe. The German workers, when they are set against each other in the interest of the world reaction and a new world war, can learn much about the way they must take to save themselves and the world, if they will consult the works of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg (and, naturally, not limiting themselves to a few phrases torn out of context, that are set before them by the propagandists of the Ulbricht-Grotewohl clique, which is trying to exploit the names of Liebknecht and Luxemburg, although they will not hear of their spirit and their true teachings).

By comparing the words of the murdered proletarian heroes with the course of history in the last 40 years, every worker will come to the conclusion that here was a great and priceless heritage that was embezzled and dissipated. And the international workers' movement must take to itself the heritage of Karl and Rosa just as it does that of the other outstanding leaders of the post-war period.

# REMARKS ON THE NEW PROGRAMME OF THE JUGOSLAV COMMUNISTS

By MICHEL PABLO

## II

### BUREAUCRATIC DEFORMATION

The bureaucratic deformation of the workers' state in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism is a basic question for understanding the evolution of both the U S S R and the other workers' states. A correct analysis of this phenomenon is an indispensable precondition for avoiding bureaucratic degeneration and for being in a position to fight adequately against it. Stalinism, the expression of this degeneration, is by its nature unable to analyze this phenomenon correctly in a scientific way. It is satisfied to speak from time to time of bureaucratic manifestations, which it pretends to combat, but it avoids going more deeply into the essential reasons which give rise to a lasting bureaucratic deformation of the transitional state, and the characteristics and trends of such a deformation.

The Yugoslavs make quite another approach to this question.

Bureaucracy and the bureaucratic deformations of the transitional state occupy a very important place in the theoretical developments of the Programme of the VIIth Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists. These phenomena are considered by the Yugoslavs to be characteristic of the transitional workers' state, especially under the present concrete historical conditions, i.e., when the revolution, having won, remains isolated in economically and culturally backward countries.

Their concrete reasoning on the question is the following : The centralizing role of the state is necessarily great, important, and positive for a whole period after the seizure of power ; but by this very fact there is a tendency for the political and economic apparatus of the state to become "the master of society instead of its servant and executive agent." The danger of bureaucracy consists in the fact that,

like any other disease, it enfeebles the whole organism of socialist society, and thereby stimulates and fortifies anti-socialist forces and tendencies. Bureaucracy, above all, inevitably cuts the ties between the leading forces and the working class, thus sharpening all internal social contradictions.

As long as it is a question only of a sporadic tendency and manifestations, the "statist bureaucracy" impedes the development of socialist democracy and the activity of social forces, deforms certain socialist social relations, depriving the working class of several

of its rights and of aspects of its role of leadership. Developed to the extreme, bureaucracy can mean "a specific type of restoration of state capitalist forms."

The Yugoslavs' application of this conception to the concrete case of the U S S R is naturally most interesting. The concentration of all political and economic power in the hands of the state has been accompanied, according to the Yugoslavs, by manifestations

of bureaucratic-statist tendencies, errors and distortions in the development of the political system of the state, and parallel with this, a more acute and convulsive phase permeated with contradictions typical of the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.

In the long run, this process in the U S S R led to the personal power of a single man, and to the personality cult.

The judgment of the Programme of the Yugoslavs on Stalin is clear and categorical :

Stalin for both objective and subjective reasons did not fight the bureaucratic-statist tendencies engendered by the great concentration of power in the machinery of State and by *the merging of the Party and State machinery* and unilateral centralism. *Moreover, he himself became their political and ideological protagonist.* [ Our emphasis. ]

Bureaucratic tendencies and bureaucracy are inevitably reflected on the ideological level by phenomena such as "conservatism, dogmatism, programmatic revision of the fundamental principles of socialism, and the personality cult." In the concrete case of the U S S R and Stalin,

a pragmatic revision of some of the fundamental scientific postulates of Marxism and Leninism was carried out first in the sphere of the Theory of State and Party, and then also in the sphere of philosophy, political economy, and the social sciences generally.

The Yugoslav Programme makes Stalin's revisionism clear in these terms :

The Marxist-Leninist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a political system of power in a State which is withering away, and as an instrument of working class struggle in the process of the abolition of the economic foundations of capitalism, and the creation of political and material conditions for the free development of new socialist relations, was gradually replaced by Stalin's theory of a State which does not wither

away, and which must strengthen itself in all fields of social life, a State whose machinery is given too great a role in the construction of socialism and the solution of the internal contradictions of the transition period, a role which sooner or later must lead to stagnation in the development of social and economic factors.

Nevertheless, the Programme adds, this fatal role of Stalin did not succeed in

doing serious or lasting damage to the development of socialism in the Soviet Union, because the socialist forces in that first country of socialism had grown and become so strong that they were able to break through the barriers of bureaucracy and the "cult of personality."

In this evaluation, there is both a retreat from the erroneous position of Djilas on the USSR, the society of "state capitalism," and an overestimate of the results of the XXth Congress and Khrushchevian "destalinization." But, just thereby, the faults in the Yugoslav analysis of the USSR and of Stalinism clearly appear.

Nowhere in the Programme is there indicated the creation in the USSR of a whole new social stratum, privileged and all-powerful, which assumes political power in that country: the Soviet bureaucracy, of which Stalin was the ideologist. In the USSR we have what the Programme considers as a possible variant of a "full development of the bureaucracy," bringing about a not yet *social* but *qualitative political* change of regime.<sup>1</sup>

The conclusion from such an evaluation of the present concrete situation in the USSR ought to be: the need for a *political revolution* in the USSR to overthrow the political regime of the bureaucracy, and not illusions — which furthermore vanish again so quickly — about an evolutionary peaceful "destalinization" from above which Khrushchev is supposedly carrying out. Despite this important omission, the analysis of the bureaucratic danger and of the concrete case of Stalinism in the USSR contained in the Yugoslav Programme constitutes a positive and very considerable contribution by a communist current other than our own movement.

## THE THEORY OF THE TRANSITIONAL STATE

The importance that the Yugoslav Programme attributes to the bureaucratic danger, and the experience it adduces from the Soviet example, leads it to develop more thoroughly the *theory of the workers' state in transition from capitalism to socialism*.

"The question of the gradual withering away of the State," the Programme affirms, "becomes the fundamental and decisive question of the socialist system of society."

<sup>1</sup> It can naturally be supposed that the Yugoslavs say less than they really think, but in this case they are themselves proceeding in their turn to concessions starting from "pragmatic" and not strictly principled considerations.

Granted, it is not a question of immediately abolishing the state or of minimizing in any way its very important role for a whole period, after the seizure of power, in order to "liquidate the economic tendencies of the capitalist system and lay the foundations for socialist construction." It is a question, however, of understanding that "the socialist state is and must be a state of a special type, a state that withers away." (Our emphasis.)

Granted, the period of the withering away of the state is a process that lasts "through the whole period of transition from capitalism to socialism." During this time,

the State, with its specific elements, exists and plays a definite, indispensable, positive role in society, different in various phases of development during the transition period.

But at the same time

the role of the State decreases perceptibly, its bodies undergo transformation, direct democracy develops steadily, and the functions of various bodies of social self-government expand. The forms under which this process evolves have already been seen to be multifarious, and they will remain so in the future.

Thus the Yugoslavs come back to the classic Marxist theory of the withering away of the state and differentiate themselves radically from Stalinist "state socialism."

Their original contribution in this field, however, is the following: Far from being satisfied with the statification of all the means of production and their administration by the state, as the unique, or highest, form of property and of social management, the Yugoslavs consider — and quite rightly — that this form is in reality the very first — and, admittedly, indispensable — stage of the society that will succeed capitalism.

This form of *indirect* social property must in reality tend "toward maximum direct social ownership, managed ever more directly by the emancipated and associated working people," parallel with the material, social, and political strengthening of socialist society.

The degree of withering away of the economic, social, and political role of the state must be shown precisely in the development of the direct management of production by the producers, and of the self-government of all social cells.

Socialism is not summarized in the statification of all the means of production and their management by the state apparatus, but in the replacement of old capitalist social relations by new socialist relations characterized by the more and more direct management of the economy and society by the producers and workers. It is only to the extent that this economic and social content of socialism materializes that the system roots itself effectively and can gradually do without the means of economic and political coercion that the state apparatus uses to maintain it.

As is known, the Yugoslavs put this conception into practice by setting up *workers' councils, communes*, and other organizations of self-government. Workers' management of the plants by workers' councils, and direct administrative management of the commune as a basic politico-territorial organization — these, according to the Yugoslavs, bring about direct socialist democracy, in which must be reflected the withering away of the state and the attainment of the deepest essence of socialism.

That is, naturally, a way that fundamentally breaks away from the Stalinist religion of "state socialism," which erected ownership and management by the state apparatus into the sacred and supreme form of socialism. That is also a way that is of great value in fighting concretely against the bureaucratic danger.

We have, however, had occasion to express our regret<sup>2</sup> that the Yugoslavs in practice limit the content of socialist democracy to *economic* democracy and do not extend it to *political* democracy as well. In theory, the Programme of the VIIth Congress contains excellent observations on the broadening of socialist democracy, synonymous with the withering away of the state and the only effective means of struggling against bureaucracy, as long as economic and cultural conditions do not yet permit of extirpating the very roots of the bureaucratic phenomenon.

But nowhere is it clearly stated that no matter what broadening of direct social democracy cannot replace the necessary parallel broadening of socialist *political* democracy, defining the latter as *the right to tendencies inside the revolutionary Marxist party and the right to existence of other political parties operating within the constitutional legality of the workers' state*.

In reality, only such *socialist political democracy* can prove to be the most effective means for struggling against the constant danger of bureaucratization and bureaucracy during the epoch of transition.

The Yugoslav Programme, apart from the chapter on the role and conceptions of the League of Yugoslav Communists, contains a number of excellent references to the mission of communists as the vanguard of the socialist movement. We must stress and

salute the fact that in this field as well the Yugoslavs are coming back to the teaching of Marx and Lenin, stating that communists are only the most conscious part of the class, but that they cannot substitute themselves for it either before, during, or after the revolution. The communist party must not lead or govern *in the name of the class*, but with the class, the class having primacy over the party.

The Programme states :

The relationships between the Communist and the working masses cannot be either the relationships between the ruling Party and those who are ruled, or the relationship between teacher and pupil ; it must increasingly assume the character of a relationship between equal partners.

Communists must reject any idea of monopoly both in the leadership of the struggle for the revolution and in the state built after the seizure of power. Primacy must always belong to the class, democratically organized and freely expressing itself. Communists must shake off the temptation — often rendered easy, it is true, by objective conditions — to confuse the class with the party, and the party with the state, and must always tend to cause the class as a whole to act as directly as possible.

In general, the Programme of the Yugoslavs shows a real return to the essence of classical Marxism, grossly deformed by Stalinism. Whether it be a question of the conception of the socialism of the transitional state, of the way of tackling the problems of socialism (planification, collectivization of agriculture, workers' management, etc), or of the necessarily liberal socialist policy in the arts and sciences, or of the deeper philosophy of socialism, centred definitively on the social individual, which concerns the creation of optimum conditions for his maximum flowering, the Yugoslavs seem to have seriously mastered the teaching of the classics of Marxism and to have themselves elaborated on these matters in a way that is often original, quite felicitous, and always spontaneous and sincere.

December 1958

<sup>2</sup> See the first part of the present article in our last (Autumn) issue.

# A REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS COMES TO A HEAD IN INDONESIA

By TJOKRO

The situation in Indonesia at the moment is characterized by the following fundamental features : 1) the expropriation, by the government and the army, of the Dutch concerns and of the plantations belonging to the Dutch and to Chinese members of Kuomintang ; 2) the inability of the national bourgeois government to organize a planned economy ; 3) the widespread chaos resulting from this inability ; 4) the increased pressure exerted by the army to seize the power and the machinery of the state ; 5) the inability and the unwillingness of the Indonesian Communist Party to overthrow the bourgeois system and set up a workers' and peasants' government.

## THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

The action against the Dutch colonialists started in December 1957. This action, which began as a counterstroke by the Djuanda Government as part of the campaign to liberate Irian, immediately spread beyond the narrow limits within which the government wished to confine it, and the masses themselves spontaneously took the initiative in expelling the owners and the directors and in taking over the factories and the plantations. Thanks to the activity of the Indonesian Communist Party which opposed any extra-parliamentary action by the proletariat, the workers' pressure was reduced to the formation of an official committee, the so-called Irian Committee, under the chairmanship of Premier Djuanda. During the first months of 1958, the activity of the masses was on a smaller scale, their attention having been concentrated on the military action in Sumatra and Celebes against the pro-imperialist government led by the former governor of the Indonesian Bank, Sjafroeddin. The pressure exerted on the government by the masses continued, however, compelling it willy-nilly to take steps against the Dutch and the Kuomintang Chinese, in order to prevent a fresh wave of spontaneous actions on the part of the proletariat.

During 1959, the government nationalized Dutch property worth one and a half million dollars. On 3 December 1958, this situation was legalized by an act of parliament. This law came into force retrospectively as of 3 December 1957, that is to say, from the day the workers started their action against the K P M (a large Dutch navigation company operating among the various islands). Nationalization was carried out without any compensation. A promise was made, however, to pay a certain amount of compensation to the Dutch owners after the Dutch troops had evacuated Irian — which so far has not taken place.

The reasons put forward by the government in defense of nationalization were founded on a basic truth : they considered it "indispensable in order to strengthen security and defense." What the government avoided saying was that it wanted above all to defend itself against the actions of the proletariat.

It is very interesting and comforting to hear the knell of Dutch colonialism being tolled in the 4 April 1958 issue of the *Volkskrant*, the organ of the Catholic party in power in Holland : "No future for the planters." "It is common knowledge that the part played by Dutch capital in Indonesia is completely ended." "It is to be expected that Java will take the road to communism." "In Indonesia, the factories, plantations, import-export companies, and harbor franchises having a value of several thousand million florins and abandoned by the Dutch, are now in the hands of so-called 'managing committees.'" (These quotations are from the newspaper.)

And this is only one of the voices in the chorus of Dutch capitalists who lament that they have been stripped.

Having nationalized the major part of the economy, the present leading group finds itself called upon to organize the economic structure on another basis. Now not only are these new bourgeois incapable of solving the vast problems confronting them, but also the state machinery is already completely corrupted.

The central problem is and remains the expropriation of *all* capitalist property, whether foreign or native, and the nationalization of all plantations, industrial undertakings, banks, and means of transport, and the establishment of a monopoly of foreign trade. It is unnecessary to say that the national bourgeoisie is unwilling to put the rope round its own neck and pull the noose tight.

What are the results of this situation ? According to the official figures there are more than twenty million unemployed in Indonesia at the present moment. These figures were published by the Indonesian Ministry for Social Affairs. Five million workers on the plantations and in industry have become unemployed since the nationalization of Dutch undertakings. The number of unemployed among the rural population was estimated at fifteen million ; and it should be noted that these twenty million comprise one quarter of the total population of Indonesia, amounting to about 80 million.

Some time ago the Ministry of Education published the information that only 13.4 million people are registered as workers and employers. Of these 13.4 million

Indonesians with wages or fixed incomes, 3 million work in private undertakings, 1.9 millions are officials, and 8.5 millions are agricultural workers. Several Indonesian cities now have populations of over a million inhabitants, of whom the greater number came from the country. Most of the hard-pressed workers and peasants live by stealing and begging, since no social assistance whatsoever is given to them by the government. The desperate situation of these impoverished masses cannot be maintained much longer.

### THE FINANCIAL SITUATION

As compared with 1957, the receipts from traditional exports — with the exception of petroleum — have decreased by 35 %. The immediate result has been that imports have fallen an equal amount. During the first five months of 1958 the total value of exports of rubber, tin, tea, tobacco, palm oil, sugar, and copra was 1,760 million rupees as compared with 2,855 million for the same period in 1957.

The budget deficit for 1958 is estimated at 9,700 million rupees, and, according to the forecasts of competent circles and of former Vice-President Hatta in particular, the deficit for 1959 will be about 12 million rupees.

In 1951 the total amount of money in circulation was 5,000 million rupees ; in 1958 it had already risen to 21,000 million ; and according to a government financial memorandum it will reach a total of 34,000 million in 1959.

On the free market the value of the American dollar is nine times higher than the official rate (11.40 rupees). In the past, receipts in foreign currency from exports always amounted to about 9,000 million rupees. In 1958 they did not even reach the figure of 6,000 million. Imports of raw materials have ceased completely because of the shortage of foreign currency. Even when the import licences are granted it is often impossible to conclude the deal because of the unfavorable rate of exchange of the rupee.

Trade with the "people's democracies," the U S S R, and China is expanding. Most of the economic and military aid received by Indonesia in 1958 came from the Communist countries. From these countries Indonesia received rice on the one hand and jet planes and warships on the other.

### THE POLITICAL SITUATION

What makes the situation in Indonesia so tragic is that the Communist Party is not ready to intervene and place itself at the head of the proletarian movement in the towns and the country in order to crush the Bonapartist government of Sukarno. Thanks to the part played by the Stalinist party, this government is still able to keep itself in power in spite of the overwhelming superiority of the workers' forces over the bourgeoisie and its army. This army, besides being completely divided, is far from being fully loyal to the government.

The Communist Party, in accordance with directives issued from Moscow, limits its activity to a show of opposition on parliamentary lines. This policy consists in maintaining the status quo between the East and the West in the Indian Ocean area. The Soviet bureaucracy is afraid of a revolutionary victory of the Indonesian proletariat. In consequence, millions of impoverished people are condemned to live by stealing and begging. In fact these are already the signs that the revolution is losing momentum and that there is a proletarian revolutionary process without any conscious revolutionary leadership. At the same time these are symptoms of a fatal disease, forerunner of the end of the capitalist system.

The Sukarno clique is ruining both the economy and the people. That is why the fate of the generals, the corrupt ministers, and the whole system is already sealed. The slogan "A free Irian," although correct, arouses that much the less national enthusiasm among the people as their stomachs grow emptier.

There is also a struggle inside the Sukarno government. Sukarno, supported by the National Council under the leadership of Roeslau Abdulgam, is striving to change the electoral law because he fears another victory of the Indonesian Communist Party. This is something he wants to prevent at all costs. That is also the reason why the 1958 elections were postponed to 1959. He fears, and with good reason, that the Communist Party will become the largest party. The changes to be made in the electoral law mean that only half of the 260 members will be elected by the people, the other half being appointed by "functional groups."

The political parties have informed the government and the National Council that they do not agree with this change. Under "functional groups" are to be understood : the army, the women's organisations, the intellectuals, the merchants, the ex-service men, the workers and the peasants, etc.

The National Council is likewise composed of these "functional groups." Through their second secretary, Loekman, the Stalinists have stated that they have no objection to the change in the electoral law provided that the representatives in parliament are elected democratically. They do not raise any objection to the "functional groups."

The whole plan for changing the electoral law is aimed at combating the influence of the workers' parties. This is a new step towards the "directed democracy" which Sukarno would like to set up with the help of the army commanded by Nasution. It should be noted that Sukarno and Nasution, who have always been agreed on a "middle-of-the-road" policy (that is, Bonapartism), have been in open conflict since the end of December 1958. At a military conference in Bandoeng, Sukarno stated that the heads of the army must confine themselves to the restoration of peace in the whole country. Sukarno thus advised Nasution to maintain order in the army and nothing else.

Colonel Soeprajogi, who is also the Minister for Economic Stabilization in the present government, immediately retorted : "We have listened most attentively to the speech of President Sukarno and we are in agreement with most of this speech. But it should never be forgotten that *the political aspirations of the army* must also be taken into account."

The conflict between the leaders of the army and Sukarno is only of secondary importance ; however, it does illustrate the repeated wish of a certain section of the Indonesian bourgeoisie to abandon the "middle-of-the-road" policy and to go over openly to an attack on the masses. What would be of capital importance would be a decision by the masses to exert pressure on their leaders so that the latter should seize the power.

The tasks of the Marxist revolutionaries in Indonesia are to assist and facilitate this process. They must explain to the masses the situation in which they find themselves and show them what road they must

take. This is the task of all Marxists inside or outside the Communist Party.

In the course of this development, a new revolutionary leadership will be formed. As the world revolution gains the upper hand in a larger and larger part of the world, the part played by Stalinism will diminish. A victory of the Indonesian proletariat will be a very serious blow to the Stalinist bureaucracy and to world imperialism. The victory of the revolution in China has opened a new chapter in the history of man. At the same time it has eliminated an entire Stalinist generation in the U S S R. Every new victory won by the proletariat, even when gained under Stalinist leaders, brings nearer the hour of the defeat of the Stalinist bureaucracy and world imperialism.

It is in this light, that we must consider our task in Indonesia ; it is in Indonesia that this task is on the verge of being fulfilled more rapidly than anywhere else.

January 1959

# THE ELECTION DEFEAT OF THE FRENCH S P AND C P

By PIERRE FRANK

The elections of November 23rd and 30th were the logical consequence of the referendum of September 28th, which itself was the inevitable result of the coup of May 13th that caused the fall of the democratic parliamentary regime and installed a new regime aspiring to establish a "strong state."

The 4,500,000 "no"-votes of the referendum appeared again, 3,800,000 in the vote for the candidates of the French Communist Party, and the rest divided among various left candidates (Mendès-France Radicals, U G S, Autonomous S P, and also a few candidates of the Guy Mollet S P).

By comparison with the preceding elections the proportion of abstentions was 4 to 5 % higher, i.e., 800,000 to 1,000,000 votes. It is very probable it is here that a big part of the 1,600,000 votes lost by the C P are to be found. It could also be granted without risk of error that there was a shift in the percentage of usual abstentions. In other words, contrary to preceding elections, it was on the left and not on the right that the mass of the abstentions was to be found.

## THE UNR AND THE OTHER BOURGEOIS PARTIES

The big winner was the U N R, a new formation set up less than two months before the elections, which was considered by the electors as the eminently "Gaullist" organization, the so-called "Left Gaullists" not having found any audience.

We must in the first place stress the debacle of the traditional bourgeois-democratic parties and of the most outstanding among them, the Radical Party. It had already emerged from the Second World War in a crippled state ; its proverbial dexterity had permitted it to find once more an appreciable place in the Fourth Republic. But the contradictions of that republic had deeply divided it. At the elections which inaugurated the Fifth Republic, all its tendencies — the left of Mendès-France, the professionals of the French South (Daladier, Baylet, Bourguès-Maunoury), the split-off right (Morice, Martineau-Déplat) — bit the dust. We are witnessing the probably definitive liquidation of that party which boasted of being the "infantry" of the Republic.

Two bourgeois parties have resisted the drive of the U N R : the Mouvement Républicain Populaire and the Independents.

The M R P was not exactly a traditional party of democracy. It had emerged at the end of the Second World War, gathering former left Christian Democrats, Christian trade-unionists, and all kinds of

politicians blessed by the high clergy. At that moment it claimed to be the "party of fidelity" to de Gaulle. It later broke with him to maintain its unity and to play a role in the Fourth Republic. It was under the presidency of one of its members, Pflimlin, that it was rapidly able to rediscover that "fidelity" on the morrow of May 13th.

The case of the Independents is different. There we are in the presence of the classic right, of the well-placed bourgeoisie, of the well-provided-for, the satiated, the "notables." Normally they are the most desirous of a "strong power" of the Gaullist type. Yet it is to be noted that in Paris, where political currents are expressed more clearly, they had trouble in standing up to the wave of the U N R — which held a grudge against them for the break-up of the Gaullist R P F in 1952 — and even lost positions.

What then is this U N R that picked up a large number of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois votes of which the latter in 1956 had been cast in favor of the Poujadists or the Mendésists), and even a certain number of votes of backward and ex-Communist workers ?

Formally, this organization claims it should be seated in the "centre" of the parliamentary hemicycle. That makes no sense. We find here a certain number of bourgeois, well installed in society, and a whole series of people who aspire to obtain a good place in the new regime. Politically, the U N R is a mixture of Bonapartists and fascists. The division is by no means traced out beforehand, it will in the first place depend on the course of events and also on the role played by certain persons. The principal leader, Soustelle, an intellectual without political ideas, is a specialist of the police and espionage networks. He is proceeding to cell-building inside the administrations and thus is playing two cards : the regime such as de Gaulle desires it, and the fascist regime in case of need.

## DE GAULLE AND THE NEW PARLIAMENT

The Assembly elected does not correspond perhaps with the desires of de Gaulle, who wanted a "balanced" parliament, permitting him to play more easily the role of "arbiter." But it would be erroneous to think that there will soon be a crisis in his relations with that parliament or that a crisis will soon be provoked in the U N R to make the parliament more tractable. Some people are making the comparison with the former R P F, with its 1951 parliamentary fraction which was not long in breaking away, to the

greater profit of the classic right. They forget that we are no longer in a regime of parliamentary democracy, but in a regime arising out of an intervention by the army. The Assembly has the role, not of choosing the government, but, in de Gaulle's own terms, of giving it support. The "new men," whether elected from France or from Algeria, are asked only to be "beni-oui-ouis" (North African equivalents of "Uncle Toms"). Besides, parliamentary sessions are reduced to the minimum. Those who lead, moreover, whether de Gaulle or Soustelle or some others, are all provided with a strong dose of cynicism toward men in general, and it is well-justified toward these "new men," who will be seen to rush for the spoils-jobs, stipends, and other advantages that their election can obtain for them.

Divergences will not be lacking in the leading spheres. But it will be less than ever in parliament that questions will be settled. Yet at a later stage, in case of an exceptional aggravation of the situation, of a crisis of the de Gaulle regime, a parliament like the one the elections produced could considerably facilitate the "legal" manoeuvres of aspiring fascists.

#### TOWARD THE END OF MOLLETISM IN THE S P

After the May crisis, Guy Mollet believed he had played everybody off against everybody: de Gaulle against the colonels and the ultras; Duchet and the Independents against Soustelle; Defferre against the minority who left his party; above all he envisioned that the working class's "unpoisoning" from the C P would work out to his own advantage. On September 28th all his desires seemed to be fulfilled and he got up on a table in the town hall of Arras to announce the results of the referendum. It did not need two months to prove that he had worked for the King of Prussia, i.e., for Soustelle. The candidates of the S P got a sound beating, whether they were Lacoste, Moch, Defferre, or Tanguy-Prigent. Mollet himself got by only with the loudly trumpeted support of the U N R.

Forty deputies elected for the party that was the pivot of the Fourth Republic! It is necessary to go back to before 1900 to find so weak a Socialist parliamentary group.

Mollet, who, right after the May crisis, had manoeuvred to postpone sine die the congress of the party, in order to have time to rediscover a majority in the parliamentary group and in the party itself, this time hurried things: four days after the elections the congress was held. It was necessary to leave no time to the militants to reflect on the causes of the defeat. Mollet gave them as fodder the promise of a "constructive opposition" preparing a victory — for 1963. At that congress Mollet put forward the argument which can justify his presence once more in the government: he fears that the pendulum may swing too much to the right, which would later have as a consequence a counter-swing too much to the left.

However this may be, the November elections will be the point of departure for a rebound of the crisis in the S P, which will lead to the end of the leadership of Mollet. For these defeated deputies — and with them quite a number of cadres of this party — are also mayors, general councillors, etc. And the elections for those posts will take place soon. They can pardon Mollet for having held the stirrup for de Gaulle, but not for making them lose their electoral positions.

Let us say a few words on the autonomous S P and the U G S. Their association with the Mendesists in the Union des Forces Démocratiques has served only to emasculate their programme. In general the candidates of the autonomous S P obtained less bad results than those of the U G S. It is desirable that the autonomous S P draws as a lesson from these elections the necessity of engaging in a relentless offensive against the Mollet leadership, instead of apologizing, as it has done up to now, for having left his party.

#### THE IMMOBILISM OF THE THOREZ LEADERSHIP

The C P lost 1,600,000 votes compared with 1956. It found itself back to a percentage of votes equal to that of 1936 (see table below).

Year	Votes	Percentage
1924	875,000	9.7
1928	1,063,000	11.4
1932	796,000	9.6
1936	1,502,000	18.3
1945 <sup>1</sup>	5,024,000	26.4
June 1946	5,199,000	26.4
November 1946	5,489,000	28.5
1951	4,910,000	25.6
1956	5,532,000	25.7
1958	3,882,000	18.9

The leadership, to minimize this profound defeat of the C P, insists that the C P remains the strongest party in France, it denounces the iniquity of the electoral law and does not fail to pick up everything that was written on this subject in the international press, it insists upon the gains (of less than 2%) of the Communist candidates between the first and the second ballots.

Above all, not the slightest political self-criticism should be counted on. On the contrary, the Political Bureau declaration of December 2nd stressed that "numerous Frenchmen, justly anxious about national greatness and the future," entered the wrong house by voting U N R instead of voting P C F.

#### THEY MISSED THE BUS

The Thorez leadership will try to make the Communist militants believe that — as has been the case more than once before — it is just a bad moment to get through, but that afterwards the party will come back

<sup>1</sup> Beginning with 1945, because of votes for women, the total number of voters has more than doubled.

stronger than ever. This argument, we may be sure, will not go down easily. The leadership of the C P will beware of reproducing the table of Communist votes since 1924. For it clearly appears from it that in 1936, with the first big drive of the masses, the party had taken the road to the conquest of the working class; that in 1945 it had obtained the majority in the working class; that at that period there were committees in the plants, and armed militias; and that the leadership at that moment simply *missed the bus*. From 1952 up to the moment of the expulsion of Marty, this essential idea has manifested itself on several occasions.

#### THE IDEA OF DEMOCRATICALLY REVISING THE GAULLIST CONSTITUTION

Thorez has reaffirmed that he is more than ever a partisan of "the broadening" of democracy. He is even for "*the democratic revision of the Constitution*," the one of September 28th (see his answers to the five questions of the periodical *Regards*). If, with all the strength it had at its disposal in 1945, the P C F did not succeed in "broadening" democracy and peacefully passing over to socialism, how can it be imagined at present, with so minute a parliamentary group in a rump parliament, that a "democratic revision" of the Constitution can be obtained? And what would this revision give? A slightly re-cooked-up Fourth Republic? But nobody can be mobilized for that!

#### THE DEMOCRATIC IMPASSE ; THE WAY OUT TOWARD SOCIALISM

It will not be easy to dislodge the de Gaulle regime. For the immediate future, there is above all to be organized a stubborn defense against the assaults — from the government, the bosses, and the fascists — that are going to multiply. But this defense will not get up strength unless the masses are suffused, not with hollow formulæ on "democracy" and the "parliamentary ways," but with a willingness to fight by revolutionary means for a workers' government which will tackle the construction of socialism.

Forty years ago the Bolsheviks denounced the Mensheviks and the reformists of every kidney who were blocking the road of the socialist revolution in Europe and who were claiming that Russia was not ripe for socialism. Today we see pseudo-Bolsheviks, in fact the disciples of Stalin, the servants of the Soviet bureaucracy, claim that China is ripe for socialism, but not France, not Great Britain, not a single one of the economically developed countries of Europe!

In France, as in all countries of capitalist Europe, the workers' movement — whether led by reformists or by Stalinists — is facing a major crisis. After the First World War the socialist revolution had miscarried, above all through the betrayal of the Socialist leaderships; its defeat ended in the victory of fascism, which covered almost the whole of Europe. After the Second World War, reformist and Stalinist

leaders got together to channel the mass movements and reestablish regimes of parliamentary democracy. These live in almost chronic crisis. France got rid of hers by Gaullism, and elsewhere they have been much weakened. To stay on the level of bourgeois democracy is to set out along the road that France has already traveled, toward the open dictatorship of capital.

Gaullism is not at all stabilized, notwithstanding the 80 % of votes which it obtained. It can founder on Algeria, on economic difficulties, but in what way? There will be no real broadening of democracy *for the benefit of the masses* except as a result of a struggle that will overthrow the capitalist regime.

#### GUARANTEES, BUT TO WHOM AND FOR WHAT ?

As to the question of the gains made by the C P between the first and second ballots, their numerical unimportance has great political significance. It is incontestable that, in a general way, the Socialist electors (even those of the autonomous S P or of the U G S) voted in the second round only to a very small degree for the best-placed Communist candidates. Far more cases can be pointed out in which the votes were cast in favor of bourgeois candidates. In the Central Committee session which preceded the elections Thorez said that it was necessary to play on the "republican reflex." We shall not explain at length here the confusion which this implies (the difference between classes has been replaced by a difference between "right" and "left" outside the classes); but there is no doubt that in France the "republican reflex" (no enemies to the left!) has strong traditions. If it did not operate, it was because there is not only a basic and comprehensible anti-communism in the reformist and bourgeois-democratic leaderships, but also an aversion in the Socialist masses toward the C P.

The reason is very simple. The leadership of the C P declares that it offers to the democratic and reformist leaders, to whom it proposes a political alliance, guarantees that it will be faithful to the contract and will not utilize the force of the workers to break out of the capitalist regime and set out on the road to socialism. That is not the problem for the broad working masses who distrust the leadership of the C P. *It is not the coup of Prague against the bourgeoisie which they fear, but the coup of Budapest against the workers who do not share the "line" of the leadership.* They acquired this distrust as a result of all their experiences in France itself, of manœuvres, of the strangling of democracy, of slanderous and brutal methods within those workers' organizations controlled by the Stalinists. If there were not that distrust in the ranks, all the venomous anti-communist campaigns of the reformists would fail and the C P would not be experiencing the isolation which its militants are feeling more and more.

Thorez, just like Mollet, is sustaining his party by

saying that all will go well — tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow. But although he has at his disposal more possibilities of manœuvre toward his party, he will not long be able to keep down a crisis which has been ripening for years now. For tomorrow all will not go better. The objective situation contains powerful contradictions which can permit a reversal of the situation, but it must be realized that those are not immediate and almost automatic possibilities. The momentum of Gaullism launched by the coup of May

13th is not at all exhausted ; the figures of the referendum and the elections attest to its extent, but they do not at all mean that the bottom has already been reached. On the contrary, we are heading into extremely difficult periods. The worst of all aberrations would be to sow illusions and false hopes. Finally, even when the objective conditions have been transformed, we shall get out of this situation only if we get rid of the fatal policies that led to the defeat of 1958.

# CRISIS IN THE ARAB REVOLUTION

By M K

The worsening of relations between the two parts of the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria), the steady sharpening of oppositions between the leaders of the U A R and Iraq, a certain rapprochement between Nasser and the U S A, Egyptian negotiations with Great Britain on questions pending between the two countries, and the recent visit of Italian Premier Fanfani — these developments have raised speculations about an imminent break with the Soviet Union by Nasser. We have already indicated in previous articles that such a possibility exists in the long run, for the Nasser regime remains, despite its “anti-imperialist” struggle, a regime of the Arab bourgeoisie and cannot shed its skin. Nevertheless, the attitude of Nasser and the most recent inter-Arab crisis can be understood only if his foreign policy is considered as a result of the internal situation, and not vice versa, even if the external influences are important.

The oppositions between Egypt and Syria and between the U A R and Iraq are not essentially a question of unity or non-unity, but are of a deeper social nature : Nasser is afraid of the masses. It is not only in Iraq and Syria that he fears the mass movement ; but also in his own country the masses are opening their eyes : this regime is not only dispossessing the toilers politically, but it is incapable of overcoming economic backwardness, of solving the agrarian problem, and of raising the workers’ standard of living. So as not to irritate the masses, Nasser hurls demagogic phrases at them. In his speech at Port-Said on the occasion of the second anniversary of the evacuation of the Anglo-French invasion troops, which coincided with the beginning of the anti-communist repression, he said : we want a “socialist-democratic-coöperative society.” He did not mention the U S A in a single word, notwithstanding that he had a few days previously had a very friendly conversation with William Rountree, Eisenhower’s special emissary ; he dared not, because that could only have aroused the masses. On the other hand, he recalled that the Soviet Union had opposed the 1956 Franco-British invasion. And the opinion of the listening masses was clearly felt : both his remark on the coming “socialist” society and that concerning the Soviet Union received a long ovation ; on the contrary, his extremely violent attacks against the Communists, which formed a large part of his speech, were received in silence. The Egyptian workers have not at all been transformed into Communists ; but both the ovation at the indicated parts of the speech and the silence at others clearly show a molecular ferment.

We have already explained previously that the Syrian bourgeoisie was the moving factor in the Egyptian-Syrian unification. Alone, it was too weak to

stand up against the stormy movement of the toilers and to carry out an agrarian reform against the will of the big landowners. Therefore it called on its Egyptian class-comrades for help : thus unification came about. But this unification did not solve the problem. Not only did Nasser neglect, to the profit of Egypt, the projected Five- and Ten-Year Plans for the development of Syria ; but also the workers’ movement in Syria could not be suppressed. Even the Syrian C P, which because of its opportunist policy during and after the unification had lost much of its influence, began to recover as a result of Nasser’s anti-worker policy and suppression of democratic rights. Nasser could not simply accept the opposition of the Syrian bourgeoisie, and therefore its leader, Sabri el-Assali, was removed from the government. The danger for the Bonapartist regime, however, is not the bourgeoisie, but the movement of the people, and especially the workers’ movement. That is the reason for the wave of arrests of Communists and left elements. In Egypt itself in recent weeks not only were many Communists interned, but also all left elements were removed from the apparatuses of the state and the economy. *The opposition of the lower layers of Syrian society against Nasser is not an opposition against the union of the two states ; it is a matter of the struggle against terror, in favor of democracy, and for the raising of the workers’ living levels.*

The petty-bourgeois “El Baath” party has exhausted its role as a moving revolutionary factor. Its leaders, especially Akram Haurani, have completely associated themselves with the Nasser regime ; they have attained their careerist goals and now have places in the state apparatus. Nasser now sets them against the masses, as also against the oppositional bourgeoisie. The left leader of the Syrian “El-Baath” has simply disappeared from the scene.

The Stalinists have learned nothing. They are not mobilizing the masses for a struggle for the democratizing of the U A R and in favor of a Workers’ and Peasants’ Government, but are seeking to create a Syrian “national” united front with the bourgeoisie. They are not explaining to the masses that it was just this bourgeoisie that not long before called in Nasser’s dictatorship to protect itself against them.

The strongest direct stimulus to unrest in Syria and to a turn in opinion among broad sectors in Egypt was the victory of the revolution in Iraq six months ago. In Iraq there now exists political freedom such as none of the Arab lands has known for centuries. The workers’ movement and the workers’ parties are not only legal, but also have considerable influence on social life.

In the first period after the victory, Nasser expressed

(though with many reservations) much praise for "our brothers in Iraq." When Iraqi ex-Vice-Premier A'rif did not succeed in making Iraq fall into step with Egypt but indeed was arrested in Iraq, the Cairo dictator felt a chill run down his spine. It is not first of all a question, as many people like to consider, of his wish to dominate Iraq; it is a question of the deadly danger for his regime in the U A R through the political relationships existing in Iraq and the potential danger of a revolutionary socialist development. State unification with Iraq he can postpone for a long time. But he must announce immediately the sharpest fight against the possibility of legal existence for spokesmen of the toiling masses.

The Iraq C P, which is already the numerically strongest party in Iraq and the strongest of all the C P's in the Arab lands, recently published a short statement and a long resolution of its Central Committee. Both documents are shot through with the most deeply opportunist and nationalist spirit. The statement was not addressed to the toiling layers of the population, but began: "*Citizens! Sons of our great people!*" Two places in the statement show us the true character of the party:

Our country possesses much natural wealth. It is necessary to seek the way for its exploitation and investments of its income on the basis of the guarantee of the most necessary requirements of the popular masses, of the development of the national economy and finances, and a coöperation with the countries of our Arab brothers for mutual interest. The idea of unification with the U A R frightens the popular masses, for the unification of the national economy and the national finances does not sufficiently guarantee the possibilities of this development and unfolding; nor does it guarantee equal conditions for economic coöperation between Iraq and the U A R, in view of the difference in the phases of development of the countries. [Our translation.]

It does not occur to the Iraq C P that a union on the basis of equality does not work out to the disadvantage of either of the partners, but can be economically, socially, and politically very positive for both. What is more, the demand for such a unification on the basis of a democratic regime would unmask the Nasser regime, would aid the Egyptian and Syrian masses to overthrow the Bonapartist dictatorship, and would give a concrete content to the slogan of the Workers' and Peasants' Government. But when we find in the statement of the Iraq C P the following point among the programmatic points: "Solidarity of *all classes* [our italics] and groups of the people, of all patriotic parties and forces," then we have before us the whole particularist swindle, just as with Khaled Bakdash, leader of the Syrian C P. Not all classes are interested in Arab unity, and the C P is in favor not of the class struggle but of the "solidarity of all classes."

In the resolution of the C C, we find the following:

It [the party] struggles consistently against "left" ideas, which take the form of the minimization of the significance of the National Front, of the tendency to create sectarian fractions among the masses, and to follow the spontaneous and adventuristic actions that can arise from the masses.

For the Stalinists the spontaneous activity of the masses and the rejection of the "solidarity of all classes" is adventurism. This passage is a proof that the Stalinist bureaucrats are foreseeing serious opposition by revolutionary elements inside and outside the party.

The retreats of Nasser, the opportunism of the Stalinists, and the lack of a revolutionary Marxist leadership threaten the firmness of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal development. The helplessness of Hussein's regime in Jordan did not lead, contrary to our expectations, to his fall after the withdrawal of the British. There Nabulsi's "National Socialists" and "El-Baath" stand on Nasser's side, and the Communists preach particularism. The previous existing united front is broken. The Nasser regime is interested in having peace and quiet there, for an upsurge would again develop spontaneous forces as in Iraq.

On the same grounds there exists in Lebanon a curious situation. The government comprises only four ministers: two are leaders of the uprising that overthrew the Chamoun regime, and the other two are militant supporters of Chamoun. This dirty coöperation corresponds entirely to the spirit of Nasser.

Lastly, the regime of terror in Sudan. The Sudanese "Nuri Sa'id," Halil, had to fall, because his pro-imperialist and anti-Nasser domination was anachronistic. Nasser is satisfied that Abond has atomized the remarkable militant workers' movement of the Sudan by illegalization, murder, and concentration camps.

This overall situation explains Nasser's turn toward US imperialism, the financial agreement with Great Britain, the rapprochement with Italy and even with France. On the other hand, it is impossible for him to turn wholly away from the U S S R. First, because the economic, technical, and military development of the U A R in these last years is closely tied up with the Soviet bloc. A sudden reversal would be catastrophic for Nasser's whole system. Second, because a full turn away from the Soviet Union and a rapprochement with the United States would unmask him not only in the eyes of the masses of the Arab countries, but also in the eyes of the national and social movements of Asia and Africa.

Never so urgently as now has the history of the Arab revolution put on the agenda the creation of a revolutionary Marxist party in the Arab East. It is the most important task in the present situation.

# THE SITUATION IN WEST GERMANY

By W BECKER

Economic development in the German Federal Republic has up till now experienced no serious reverse. True, the rate of growth of overall industrial production is lessening and the diminution of imports from the raw-material-producing countries has not yet stopped. There are also signs of crisis in some sectors of consumer-goods industries. On the other hand, the capital-goods and machine industries, whose orders come largely from within Germany, have a favorable effect on the conjuncture. The explanation of this seeming contradiction lies in the fact that German industry is increasingly entering the field of armaments, and is thus enjoying a stage of rationalization which should render it "fit" for the sharpening competition in the national and world markets.

In coal-mining there is a genuine overproduction crisis as a result of the competition of fuel oils. A second neuralgic point in heavy industry is steel, which for nearly a year now has been operating at from 60 to 70 % of capacity. If there is already talk here and there about a break in international steel prices, it is still not yet discernible how much of this is deliberate pessimism. But however this may be, the Federal Republic's economy shows no visible deep-going weakness. In general this must be attributed to the fact that German capitalism is now in process of utilizing the conjunctural reserves, that were lying dormant, in armament and rationalization. There is simultaneously occurring a concentration of capital that leaves far behind the development between the two World Wars and increasingly overflows the national frontiers. This is made clear by widespread capital interpenetration among German, French, and Belgian heavy industry, the steady inflow of American capital into the Federal Republic, and increasing participation of German capital in American undertakings.

Hand in hand with this goes a slow breakdown of the "social cushion," i.e., the so-called "voluntary extras," which were not tied up with fixed-pay-rates, in the plants. Through the introduction of a shortening of hours, it is being sought — successfully — to avoid a rapid worsening of the "social climate." On the other hand, so far, the workers who are let go can still be quickly taken by other plants. Thus the overall picture still shows full employment, with a simultaneous steady worsening of the social situation of the working class. In the plants insecurity and concern are beginning to be felt. Confidence in the economic miracle's lasting forever is beginning to disappear. At the same time there is a growing feeling of being abandoned, for no class-political alternatives are being offered by either the trade unions or the Social Democracy.

Amid a general political apathy and an inner-political "sour-picklism," the Congress of the Metal-Workers Union (IGM) was held in Nuremberg at the end of September. It shed a few rays of light by making at least formally an anti-Diest demonstration against the complete liquidation of all points on the programme of a socialist or half-socialist economic conception.

And so it seems that in this IGM the realization is making its way that times are getting harder and will in the future bring bigger attacks of the bosses against the living standard of the masses. In this situation it is significant that the biggest union is abandoning its illusions about collaboration.

This result may be credited in the first place to the attitude of the plant and union functionaries of the middle and lower levels. Their speeches at the union congress showed that the IGM could count on the active participation of broad layers of functionaries, if it decided to prepare the metal workers, by a powerful combined action of explanation and partial struggles, for the fights to come.

Up till now there are no signs that the IGM leadership thinks of developing its tactics in the framework of such a strategic plan of class struggle. The underlying reason is that a correct strategy and tactic can be worked out only if one begins by seeking out unreservedly all the mistakes and weaknesses of the past. That would bring about: the destruction of the legend of joint-management through the so-called "worker-directors," and the denunciation of the doubtful role that many of them played in the supervising councils. Another object of serious criticism would be the practice, carried on for many years, of "round-table negotiation" of wage-rates with a hopeful expectation of cheap compromises as a result of referendums, and finally the failure to submit the experiences of the biggest strike movements to a real class-political analysis and to draw the appropriate lessons therefrom, i.e., in other words, to regard and lead the unions as "schools of class struggle." Political conclusions should also have been drawn from the analysis of the concentration of economic power and the interpenetration of state and economic power.

The German bourgeoisie is operating with full consciousness of its till now favorable position toward a depoliticized, partly neutralized, and above all leaderless working class. It cynically throws overboard one of the "sacred rights" of its own "revolutionary" period — the right to an activity of persuasion, and demands against its potential class enemy the death penalty in political warfare. It is becoming ever clearer that Portugal, Spain, and now France, will provide

the model on which the German bourgeoisie will organize its state power.

Its mobilization measures follow one after another. Minister of the Interior Schröder asks for the vote of a state of emergency against the danger of communism in a divided Germany, basing himself formally on the treaty about troops. In reality it would be creating a new "Gestapo" whose fields of activity would be shown in "psychological defense" and the death penalty for political offenses.

For years the big shots of the German Socialist Party (SPD) and the trade unions have affirmed that the German working class, and especially the trade unions, will defend democracy if it should be threatened. Step by step the German bourgeoisie goes forward along the road to the suppression of democracy; step by step the traditional organizations of the working class retreat.

Meanwhile the Mannesmann trust quietly liquidates joint-management in its holding companies by a simple measure of fusion technique. The trade unions limited themselves to a written protest. In the Kassel labor court decision that holds the I G M responsible for the financial losses sustained by the owners on account of the Schleswig-Holstein strike, the German bosses and the new German class justice prepared the greatest test to date of the I G M's strength and readiness for combat. Up till now it is known only that the I G M has appealed to the Federal Court at Karlsruhe. Not only is there no question of fighting measures, but Brenner, first president of the I G M, says expressly that the union is accepting the decision; at the same time Brenner also says that it is a political decision that is in question.

The reaction of the bosses to the Kassel decision says more than any deep-going commentary on the unconstitutionality of the decision. The I G M is no longer feared; it is not even respected. The bosses feel pity for it, do not want to "ruin" it, but expect from it a "correct behavior," so they say, that the amount of the demands for damages based on the decision will depend on the "social climate." In short, they want to force the I G M to "class peace" concessions.

If the metal workers want to prevent their union from experiencing a most dangerous development which can paralyze it, and with it the whole trade-union movement, for any capacity for fighting, then they must, immediately and with all their strength, demand a defensive action in the form of propagandist and agitational struggles about wage and rate policy. The situation is growing more precarious from month to month. If the German bourgeoisie can unchallenged collect the building stones for its "strong state," then at the first hard blow the big organizations will collapse like houses built of cards.

What the Social Democracy is doing is no better. The so-called "Fight Atom-Death" movement, which had all the preconditions for becoming a genuine po-

pular movement with the distinguished participation of well-known scientists, physicians, and teachers, as well as the student youth, is dying more lamentably than the ignominiously defeated St Paul's Church movement against rearming. Ideologically in a hopeless contradiction between the old "socialist reformism" and the impatient desires for adaptation of the new SPD strata of successful petty-bourgeois, burgomaster and ministerial candidates, directors of disability funds and joint-management, trade-union bosses and professional presidents of plant councils, lacking any conception of the role of the state in the late capitalist epoch, the leadership of the SPD is helplessly adrift. It is living politically from hand to mouth.

Political vegetating has become a style of political living for this Social-Democratic leadership. When what is needed is differentiation, the SPD convulsively seeks "agreement," as at the Berlin session of the Bundestag. Joint jeremiads on the lack of freedom in the zone, instead of showing up the bourgeois hypocrisy about reunification. It agreed to vote a joint declaration with the government parties, while at the same time Adenauer in the election struggle was giving it one slap in the face after another.

On the outbreak of the Berlin crisis the SPD first just babbled the usual bourgeois phrases about freedom. The platitudes about a "joint" foreign policy between "the government and the opposition" became a flood. Finally, however, Ollenhauer, the first president of the party, called for the floor and announced a sort of official stand of the party: the solution of the Berlin crisis is possible in the long run only within the framework of a broader settlement about the reunification of Germany, the control of armaments, and a zone free of atomic weapons (the Rapacki Plan). Side-by-side with this, the ruling burgomaster of Berlin, Social-Democrat Willy Brandt, was developing his own "domestic policy". And so there is an official Social-Democratic position to which scarcely any notice is paid; but there is no clear Social-Democratic policy in this important national question.

This example is quite classic for demonstrating Social-Democratic impotence. The Social-Democracy is incapable of bringing before the masses a conception correct in itself, in order to politicize them and get them into movement. The Berlin crisis, which can develop into one of the hardest fights between the East and West, will find the masses, the way things are going, either indifferent or cooperating with the bourgeoisie. It will then be seen whether Willy Brandt will undertake the role of a German Mollet, for which he seems predestined. The SPD election victory in Berlin — among other things an answer to the Russian initiative — was in the first line his doing. The masses did not vote between two political alternatives. They voted for the "strong man" Willy Brandt, whose arrogant big talk in the absence of any real alternative, was more imposing to the voters than

the arguments, weak and without a fighting presentation, offered by the "official" party.

The recommendation by the parliamentary fraction for voluntary entry of SPD members into the Federal army is the latest egg laid by these "leaders" of the German working class. This coup provides the "Fight Atom-Death" movement with a third-class funeral and practically completes the capitulation before the *faits accomplis* of the Adenauer government.

Be it said to the honor of the party members that there is spreading through the ranks a big unrest, and in part even an indignation, which went to the degree of threats — and even acts — of walking out of the SPD. Weighty discussions broke out. These gave especially the revolutionary socialists the possibility of pointing out, on the basis of this theme, the flagrant contradictions which everyone sensed. There was even afforded the opportunity here and there to raise the question of the class nature of the state and the role of the state as an instrument of the ruling class.

The inner-party differences concerning the position taken by the parliamentary fraction are of contributory importance insofar as they permit — where left elements find some echo among the membership — the softening-up of the ground for discussion of the draft of the SPD basic programme. This programme, which deserves mention only because of its lack of any solid basis, tries to bring into agreement the petty-bourgeois governmental hopes of the careerists and the social interests of the working-class base — an idea which is as illusory as the synthesis between the conflicting class interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

While the official Social-Democratic ideology and practice gradually slide to the right, the trade unions, on objective grounds, are more and more developing into a "natural left" within the working class and into a left tendency within the Social-Democracy.

The "almost fighting words" exchanged between Kiel and Nuremberg, between the Christian-Democratic Congress and the Metal Workers' Congress, which were, so to speak, carried out in a symbolic way, reflect this objective situation in their own way. There in Kiel the conscious strategists of the CDU in full awareness of their strength; here in Nuremberg the strongest industrial union of the German Trade-Union Federation as a last refuge before the total liquidation of the remains of socialist thought and determination, the class organization as the potential breeding-ground for the growth of a new class consciousness.

If it depended only on the trade-union practice of the majority of the trade-union leaders whether and how far the German working class in the Federal Republic wakes up to a new class-consciousness, the prospects, on the basis of past experiences, would be more than doubtful. The objective situation will more and more create the conditions under which the German working class can enter into broadening and sharpening defensive struggles. That would enable it to win enough time to collect experience and to build up a new leading cadre that is willing and able to dominate the coming struggles tactically and strategically. Whether and to what extent this will happen depends above all on the trade-union organizations and therefore to a large extent on the behavior and activity of the leaders at the middle and lower levels in the plants and unions. The lessening of consciousness and will to resist, signs of which are visible, especially in the Ruhr today, can develop into a serious obstacle for a fighting trade-union strategy, if the workers do not soon, through their organizations, straighten their backs and grow infused with self-confidence.

In the sense of these developments the revolutionary socialists must make the greatest efforts to strengthen their own cadres, to be at the level of coming tasks.

# THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY'S "NEW" PROGRAMME

By GEORGE EDWARDS

The Labour governments of the post-war period conducted their work under conditions of full employment and of boom conditions of a world shortage of both capital goods and consumer goods. Consequently they were enabled to carry out a radical programme of reforms and retain the support of the overwhelming majority of the organized working class and considerable layers of the rest of the population. The decline of imperialism resulting from the revolutionary upsurge of the colonial peoples in the East forced British capitalism to relinquish its direct domination of India, Burma, and Ceylon. This could be presented as a "socialist" measure transforming the British Empire into a free association of peoples. The changed position of Britain in the world made it imperative that there should be a modernization of the decaying basic industries of Britain if British capitalism was to have even a chance of competing on the world market. In the inter-war years, British capitalism, entrenched in its Empire and with semi-satellites such as Portugal, had been content to rest on its own backwardness as far as these industries were concerned. It would not have paid the capitalist monopolists to invest in new plant when they had a relatively guaranteed market with the old, and could not use even the latter to full capacity. Consequently, in contrast with dynamic American capitalism, the British basic industries had been stagnant as far as technological progress was concerned. Now the urgent task was to modernize these industries. The colossal sums required would not have been profitable for private enterprise to invest. Thus the task fell to the state. The ruling class offered only lukewarm opposition to the nationalization of steel, coal, transport, railways, electricity, and gas. But the Labour Party ranks regarded this as the beginning of the socialist revolution.

So with the reforms introduced by the Labour government on the basis of the super-profits being coined by the capitalists: National Health Scheme, improvements in the conditions of the workers, and others. This is the basis for the solid support the Labour Party retains among the masses. But even towards the end of Labour's tenure of office, the impetus of the radical programme was lost. Under pressure from the capitalists the Labour Party leaders began to retreat. The 1951 election programme definitely promised only the nationalization of the sugar monopoly and of water. In 1955 not even the nationalization of sugar was definitely promised.

This retreat of the Labour Party bureaucracy has reached a new stage with the publication of the

programme for the General Election anticipated in 1959: "The Future Labour Offers You." The background to this policy statement, which is being sold in millions of copies, is the grim state of the economy in Britain. For the last three years the economy has been virtually at a standstill. In 1958 the level of investments dropped. Production has hovered round the same figures as in the previous year. Over half a million workers are officially<sup>1</sup> unemployed and the figure is rising. Hundreds of thousands of workers are on short time.

At the same time fixed national investment has been maintained. The capacity of production of the economy has been increased every year in the last three years by £ 600 million to £ 700 million per year. Meanwhile, according to the January figures, current production is lower than it was three years ago at this season of the year.

The ruling class has advanced a deflationary policy, in the interests mainly of the financial oligarchy in the City of London. They have had as a windfall a surplus of £ 500 million in the balance of payments. And, using this, they have introduced the foreign "convertibility" of the pound to encourage foreign investors to use the facilities of the money market in the City. This will result in increased business for banking, insurance, and the Stock Exchange.

But the basis on which convertibility has been launched is very shaky. The surplus is mainly due to a fall of 8 % in import prices of raw materials and food-stuffs, while the fall in the price of industrial goods exported has been negligible in comparison.

This advantage will turn into its opposite as the primary producing countries have less and less money to spend on industrial goods.

Meanwhile the deflationary measures forced on the capitalists in the last period, and the heightened competition on a shrinking market in world trade, has resulted in the development of substantial unused production capacity. 20 % of steel capacity was not in use in 1958, amounting to a loss of 4 million tons. There were 38 million tons of coal lying at the pit-heads at the end of the year. The most promising forecasts for the present year do not anticipate an increase in the production of steel over last year, while an additional surplus of 3 million tons of coal is expected. According to *The Economist*, the "investment

<sup>1</sup> Some authorities put the figure as high as 1,500,000. Married women not paying full insurance, dockers covered by the Dock Labour Schemes, and many other categories, are not included in official figures.

boom" in engineering was "over" by the middle of 1958. In shipbuilding cancellations exceed new orders and Britain has dropped to third place in world production. In building, the total of construction work, public and private, in housing and industry, maintained the level of the previous year or exceeded it slightly.

Chemicals saw the first fall in output since 1952 and a small drop in exports. So also with other industries. It was to give a "shot in the arm" to the economy that the government introduced a relaxation on hire-purchase and banking loans, and lowered the bank rate in stages to 4 %.

As the Labour Party leaders are constantly stressing in their propaganda, between £ 2,000 million and £ 3,000 million of production have been lost in the last three years.

Despite the record of the Tories, so unconvincing has been the alternative offered by the Labour Party that it has failed to make any substantial inroads. It has seemed that the Conservatives might win the next election. The feat of the same party's winning three elections in a row has not been achieved for generations in Britain. Now the growth of unemployment has begun to swing the pendulum once again in favor of the Labour Party. A recent Gallup Poll revealed the parties as receiving approximately the same amount of support.

It is in this light that the programme of the Labour Party for the election must be examined. It is vague and cloudy throughout, but promises a complete programme of reforms on all those points which affect the masses at the present time : Homes, Full Employment, Education, the Cost of Living, Old Age Pensions, Health, etc. There is no aspect which is not covered by the document with lavish promises.

The best comment on this aspect of the document was made by the *Times Review of Industry* in its December 1958 issue. Warning its readers, who comprise the top strata of business executives, not to take this programme too seriously, it said cynically :

He [ the business executive ] knows well enough that what, on the face of it, looks like an impossible commitment, lavish extra expenditure on education, health, hospitals, youth service and similar admirable objects, has a habit of automatically trimming itself into more reasonable shape on the impact of practical finance...

The document covers up as best it can the retreat from the policy of nationalization, apart from pledging the re-nationalization of steel and road transport, by a vague promise that

If — after full and careful enquiry — other industries are found to be failing the nation, we shall not hesitate to use whatever remedies, including further public ownership, are shown to be most effective.

Hardly a threat to frighten Tate and Lyle, the sugar

monopolists, the private banks, insurance companies, or any big-business enterprises.

One of the most telling points in the programme is the indictment of the Government for the loss of £ 3,000 million of production in the last three years. And this theme recurs constantly in the propaganda of the Labour Party leaders. But they do not use it to explain the inevitability of such drops under the system of private enterprise. They put forward their propaganda in such a way as to make it appear that it is a wicked preference for unemployment and low production that motivates the actions of the Conservatives.

In reality the Conservatives were driven to these measures for lack of an alternative. They are quite prepared to launch such schemes as the easing of hire-purchase restrictions when they think these are the only means of aiding the capitalists to make profits. But they do not run a benefit society. Capitalists produce for profit, not for the sake of production.

The whole basis of the programme is laid on the assumption that by Keynesian measures an "expanding production" can be maintained.

If in the past three years industrial production had gone up as fast as it did under the Labour Government, our national income today would be £ 1,700 million higher.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer this year would be collecting £ 450 million more revenue without adding a farthing to existing tax rates.

Against this tale of waste, Labour sets its programme for expansion:

We shall end Tory restrictions on production. We shall get the machines and the factories working at full capacity. We shall put the unemployed back to work.

We shall launch a plan for capital investment [...] Labour is determined to give top priority to the re-equipment and expansion of British industry.

A most laudable aim. And entirely modest when the resources of the British economy are taken into account. But how is this to be achieved? The authors of the document have a ready answer :

"Through the budget and key controls, Labour will ensure that this vital expansion programme is not held up by lack of money and equipment, or by any timidity [ ! ? ] on the part of managers and investors.

The Labour Party leaders in other words know how to run capitalism better than the capitalists themselves. It is noteworthy that the spokesmen of capitalism are more worried about this aspect of the Labour Party's policy than they are about the promises of reforms which cannot be kept while capitalism remains in existence. The above-quoted *Times Review of Industry* refers to "the [...] disastrous cheap-money mirage [...] still hovering over some of the academic minds in the movement." And again, indignantly : "It is dishonest to imply that a Labour Government

would rapidly dispose of the problem of unsold coal stocks [...]."

The argument of this school of Keynesians runs something like this: they will increase investment in the nationalized industries and thus create work; they will get back the money in increased revenue. But in the first place 80% of industry is owned by private capitalism and only 20% by the state. The nationalized basic industries cater to the privately owned industries. A fall in production in the engineering industries means that less coal, less railway freights, less electricity, gas, and so on can be sold. The same with other industries. So certainly the *Times Review* is correct in arguing that it would be impossible for a Labour government, any more than a Tory government, to dispose of the surpluses being piled up by the nationalized industries (assuming the present economic system as a basis, of course). To increase these surpluses would be the height of lunacy under adverse economic conditions. For, as the classical Conservative argument runs, "where's the money coming from?" If from the other industries, by taxing the capitalists or the workers, what would be gained on the swings would be lost on the roundabouts. The capitalists would have less to invest, the workers less to spend (and what would become of the promised improvements in the standards of living?), so that this would cancel out. In any event, with production falling, it would be very difficult if not impossible to increase taxes.

On the other hand the resort to deficit financing over a period would be equally disastrous. That is what the *Review of Industry* was warning about. Spending money by using the printing press is the best way to create fictitious capital. Over a period the value of money would come into equilibrium with the increased number of notes (other things being equal). There would be a rapid and chronic inflation, which would undermine the purchasing power of the workers and create a series of explosive situations without solving the problems of the economy. This would resolve itself, at a slower or faster pace, into the same situation as increasing taxes. Deficit financing would be in complete contradiction with the Labour Party's pledge to maintain the value of the pound.

To imagine that all that is necessary is to give orders to the managers and owners of big industry to employ more people and produce more, is to leave the real world of reality, and to enter that of phantasy. Every capitalist will employ the maximum number of people and manufacture the maximum amount of goods if he can increase his profits thereby. But he will not employ a single extra person, or manufacture a single extra article if thereby his profits will be lessened by producing unsaleable goods.

The Gaitskellian economists have forgotten the ABCs of socialism: those of Marxism they have never known. Production under capitalism is for the market, and the market dominates the economy. The

whole of industry, including the nationalized industries, are compelled to subordinate themselves to the needs of the market. And this must be so as long as the economy is dominated by the needs and interests of big business. The use of the Budget under these circumstances can only be a palliative at best. A palliative which the capitalist governments themselves can also use. The Tory government is taking away the slack which the Labour Party might have been able to use by increasing the expenditure on public works, roads, hospitals, and housing at the present time as well as the previously mentioned hire-purchase relaxations. Clearly use of the Budget will be a very feeble shield against economic storms. What of "controls"? It is not "timidity" which holds up expansion of the economy but the limitations of the market. Presumably Gaitskell or Wilson murmuring sweet nothings in their ears will make manufacturers "bold" and "adventurous." But alas the sale of their products will still be the problem. What other controls? In an economy of scarcity and an unlimited market, controls in a capitalist economy can be relatively effective. But even the last Labour government made a "bonfire" of these irksome restrictions as soon as possible.

But in an economy of surpluses the situation is entirely different. Even controls on foreign exchange dealings would be relatively ineffective, for there are too many loopholes. In an economy of falling production what controls could be imposed to force the capitalists to increase production? On the contrary, the capitalists would be exerting the utmost pressure to force the Labour government to retrench all investment schemes in the nationalized industries for which there was no immediate need.

Even the most superficial analysis indicates the hopeless mess in which the policies of reformism will land the Labour Movement in case the Labour Party leaders come to power with this programme.

And yet the solution is so simple. According to the Programme itself,

Today, fewer than 600 giant privately owned firms dominate the production, investment, finance, and trade of the private sector of Britain's economy [...]. The Boards of Directors [of these firms] are, in fact, responsible to no one but themselves.

Labour believes the time has come when public control must be extended, so as to ensure that the decisions of these Boards, which vitally affect our economy, are in line with the nation's interests.

But "public control" is not defined and nobody knows what it means, especially the authors of the Programme, or presumably they would have enlightened the Labour Movement on how exactly they are going to carry this out. In reality this formula is intended to cover the retreat from the basic principles of the Labour Movement. Instead of grabbing the bull

by the horns (i.e., taking these enterprises over), they want to throw themselves at its feet.

Yet a seizure of these 600 enterprises, plus all the banks, insurance companies, and any other important industry not affected would transform the situation immediately. There would then be the possibility of really planning the entire economy according to the resources involved nationally and internationally. All industry could be integrated to produce the absolute limit of production, given the present level of the productive forces, and to increase rapidly the standard of living and the wealth of the economy simultaneously. This is a road the Labour Party leaders are not prepared to travel.

On foreign affairs the programme is equally barren. A few middle-class platitudes about the United Nations, as the basis of the policy of the Labour Party. "Disengagement" in Central Europe; the handing of the islands of Quemoy and Matsu over to China (and Formosa? UN administration "until the people of the island can themselves decide their own future without intimidation"); a "fresh disarmament conference"; 1% of the national income to be devoted to the benefit of the undeveloped areas of the world.

All these notions have been shown to be empty so many times in the literature of the Fourth International that they do not deserve the space needed to deal with them in this article. One point, however. On "Defence":

Labour fully accepts the duty to maintain the military defences of Britain.

So long as the world is split into two hostile camps, we must contribute our share to the defence of the West through NATO as well as fulfill our obligations to the Commonwealth and to the United Nations [...]. When we return to office, we shall at once work for a proper ba-

lance within the NATO alliance between nuclear and conventional forces [...]. But when all is said and done, the only true defence is world disarmament.

Thus a mixture of imperialist policy with gestures towards disarmament is the contribution of the Labour Party leaders to the world problems of our era.

Completely absent is the idea of internationalism and of the solidarity and community of interest of the world working class. No suggestion that the problems of Britain, even economically, are linked with the problems of the workers of Europe, Asia, and the world. No class lead on foreign affairs any more than on home affairs. An acceptance of present national boundaries as apparently established for all time. No vision of the future society, nationally or internationally.

Dealing with the situation of the British economy, *The Economist* of 17 January comments gravely, "the artificialities of the post-war decade are wholly past." The "artificialities" of the political situation are also coming to an end. The cushioning which reformism experienced in the last Labour government will not be experienced in the next. So much greater will be the awakening of the rank and file to the need for revolutionary solutions to their problems.

The workers in the Labour Movement will learn by experience the bankruptcy of the programme of reformism. The cadres of Marxism have the duty of tirelessly explaining to the rank and file of the Labour Movement the theoretical and practical inadequacies of the programme of reformism. Together with the rank and file of the movement they will fight for a Labour Party victory, to demonstrate in deeds that only the programme of the Fourth International can serve the needs of the British and international working class.

## XXIst Plenum of the International Executive Committee

# THE ARAB REVOLUTION

Report Presented by Comrade MICHEL PABLO

This is by not meant to be a really complete and exhaustive report on the Arab revolution. It is rather an introduction to the question and a preliminary discussion concerned more especially with the Arab revolution in the Middle East as well as with the Algerian revolution.

The Arab revolution is part of the colonial revolution of this post-war period and at times it becomes the dominant feature thereof. It embraces all the countries of Moslem religion, of Moslem civilization, and of the Arabic language in Africa and the Middle East, and in particular *Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Lybia, Egypt, the Sudan*, and the countries of the Arabian peninsula, *Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq*. To a certain extent *Iran* must also be included in spite of its pre-Islamic language; in all, some 60 million Arabs and "Arabized" peoples, or about one-sixth of the total Moslem population of the world.

It is a question of a *national unit, historically developed as such*, whose various elements, despite their different backgrounds on a purely racial basis,<sup>1</sup> are conscious above all of being Arabs and belonging above all to the Arab nation.

This Arab or rather "Arabized" national community is, however, widely dispersed geographically from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Persia and the Caspian Sea and is riddled with many national minorities: Kurds, Assyrians, Jews, Greeks, Turks, Armenians, Persians, Berbers, and Arabized Negroes of many different African races, etc.

From the point of view of religion likewise, there is a diversity of sects and beliefs: *Mohammedans*: Sunnites, Shiites, Alaouites, Druses, Ismailis, etc. *Christians*: Orthodox, Catholics, Protestants, Gregorians, Jacobites, Maronites, Nestorians, etc. This religious mosaic is especially striking in for example Lybia and Syria.

While the Maghreb, having lived in isolation for a long time, has managed to remain outside the Mohammedan theological quarrels, in the rest of the Moslem world sects abound (Mohammed foresaw 72!) and though they completely agree on the strict observance of the *Koran*, there are many different interpretations of the

<sup>1</sup> Even in Arabia, there is not, strictly speaking, an Arab race according to modern scientific definitions; rather there is a mixture of three main racial types: Chamite, Mediterranean, and Armenoid (according to Bertram Thomas). In *Iraq*, the basic population is "Nabatee" or "Chaldean," and "Aramaic" or "Syriac" in *Syria-Lebanon*. Ethnically, *Egypt* is Coptic. From *Lybia to Morocco* the Maghreb is Berber; the Berbers themselves are not a race but an "ethnic complex."

importance of traditions and even more of the sense of destiny of the Prophet and of his successors.

Thus on a national foundation which is indubitably *Arab* or *Arabized*, a diversity of real ethnic and cultural structures is built up, resulting, among other things, from the extraordinarily turbulent past of these countries, most of which had suffered successive occupation by the Egyptians, the Phoenicians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Mongols, and the Turks, before being subjected to that of the European imperialists in the XIXth and XXth centuries.

As capitalism made only a late and slight penetration in these countries, the centuries-old economic, as well as social, cultural, and ethnic structures, though upset and even in places overthrown, have nevertheless not been eliminated, and at the present moment are being interwoven in the reconstruction taking place in the Arab countries.

From the Marxist point of view the basic argument in favor of the existence of an *Arab nation* despite these factors is *the existence of such a common national consciousness in the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of these countries, developed through the history of these peoples, a history which is marked by a common language, a common geographical location, and a common social and cultural system.*

A brief historic survey of this question will best show how well-founded this argument is.

### HISTORIC FORMATION OF ARAB NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Arab national consciousness appeared early, as early as the XIXth century, that is, at the very time when the modern capitalist nations in Europe were being formed, following the decline of the feudal empires of the West and the Ottoman East.

It was the fall of the Ottoman Empire as well as the imperialist aims and undertakings of the great capitalist countries of the Europe of that period (England, France, Germany) which awoke Arab nationalism at the end of the last century.

In the Arab commercial and cultural centres of the period — Beirut, Aleppo, Damascus, Bagdad, Alexandria, Cairo, as well as in Constantinople and the Persian cities, sometimes in Kabul or even in Delhi — the intellectual forerunners, tainted by European liberalism of the time, hoped to see the West helping to liberate the Arabs from the yoke of Turkish despotism and oppression.

But the attitude of the West soon brought disappointment and the liberalism of these forerunners was con-

verted into a *more resolute Arab nationalism*, like that of the main promoters of the *Salafi* movement (appealing to the Ancients), a reform movement and the cradle of Moslem and Arab aspirations in the 1890s.

For a time the "Young Turks" reform movement put an end to the specifically *Arab* awakening by absorbing it into the more general framework of an "Ottoman liberalism" claiming equality for all the oppressed nations of the Turkish Empire.

But as early as 1910 "Ottomanism" and "Ottoman-Arab fraternity" came to an end, since the "Young Turk" ideologists of the then rising Turkish bourgeoisie could not and would not genuinely break down the feudal system and the national oppression which the Ottoman Empire had created. From then onwards, the Arabs strove to organize themselves independently, first on a cultural level and then politically, but always under the main inspiration of the intellectuals, especially the Syro-Lebanese: *the Literary Club* (al Muntada al-Arabi) in Constantinople (1909), a discussion centre of which several members, Al-Khali, a Lebanese Moslem, Haidar, a Baalbeck Moslem, and Sallum, a Christian from Homs, were hanged as traitors by the Turks during the First World War; the *Qahtan Society* (those of Qahtan, the legendary ancestor of the race), a secret society more or less affiliated to the Literary Club, which aspired to the creation of a dual Turkish-Arab state on the Austro-Hungarian model; *Al Faat*, the Young Arab Society founded in 1913-1914 in Paris, with branches in Beirut and Damascus; the "*Decentralization Party*," founded in Cairo by the Syrians, Lebanese and Palestinians in 1912, with committees in Syria and Iraq and appearing as the spokesmen for Arab aspirations; and the *Young Algerian Party*, also formed in 1912.

On the eve of the 1914 war, the Arab national movement became a mass movement in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Egypt. The war accelerated the evolution, since the English realized that Arab nationalist support was essential in the fight against the Turks and their German allies. In the Spring of 1915, the members of Al-Fatat and of Al-Ahd, the former springing from the feudal and intellectual élite in the Syrian countries and the latter mainly representing the Mesopotamian officers in the Turkish army, drew up the "Damascus Protocol" which provided for the independence of the Arab countries situated between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. They were soon to be decimated by the brutal repression of the Turkish Pasha Jemal.

This repression, however, was to whip up nationalist fervor and to produce decision to take action by the principal chiefs in Arabia, such as Emir Feisal, son of Hussein, afterwards the founder of the Hachemite dynasty, the Emir of Mecca, who learning at Damascus on 6 May 1916 of the latest executions of Arab patriots, gave the signal for the armed revolt against the Turks with the cry of "Death has become sweet, o Arabs!" And it was the same Feisal who, having believed the lavish promises showered on him by the English and French during the 1914-1918 war, submitted "the Arab problem and its solution" to the Peace Conference in the following terms:

As the representative of my father who, at the request of Great Britain and France, led the Arab revolt against the Turks, I have come here to ask you that the Arabic-speaking peoples of Asia, from the Alexandretta-Diarbuakr line to the In-

dian Ocean in the South, be recognized by the League of Nations as independent and sovereign peoples. [...] I base my request on the principles enunciated by President Wilson and I am confident that the powers will attach more importance to the bodies and souls of the Arabic-speaking peoples than to their own material interests. [29th January 1919.]

But as might have been expected, it was the latter that prevailed and divided up the Middle East in accordance with the *secret Sykes-Picot Agreement* (May 1916) into two spheres of influence, one English and the other French, and set up the infamous system of "mandates."

For the Arabs 1920 was the year of catastrophe — *Amal Nakba*.

For all Arab nationalists [wrote one contemporary reactionary writer<sup>2</sup>] the decisions of the League of Nations in San Remo seemed to be an abominable iniquity. The creation of the states of Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan, Palestine, and Iraq appeared to them as an absurdity contrary to all historical, cultural, and religious traditions.

Thus the Arab states of the Middle East were created "as by virtue of a jigsaw puzzle," a colonialist attempt par excellence at "Balkanization."

Under the shock of this disappointment, Arab revolutionary fever abated here and there, but elsewhere the national awakening burst out with greater force, as in Egypt and Iraq in the '20s, and later in Morocco.<sup>3</sup> The gradual evolution of Turkey under "Kemalism" and of Iran under *Raza*, the founder of the *Pahlevi* dynasty, stimulated Arab nationalism. In Egypt, the "Wafd," the Independence Party, was created, and wore itself out in a struggle against the king installed by the English in 1922, the latter wishing to maintain their de facto tutelage of the country. The same struggle was going on in Iraq, where the British persisted in maintaining an artificial administrative structure in order to hold in check the forces working for the real independence of the country.

They granted most of the political power to the Sunnites forming the feudal and commercial aristocracy, held out hopes of autonomy to the Kurds and Assyrians, and allocated some districts to Shiite chiefs. As for the nature of the parliamentary system which masked this regime, Nuri-es-Sa'id, "the Englishman," defined it most aptly in these words:

The selection of candidates at the elections is arranged to include all former prime ministers, all ministers who have held posts more than twice, members of the Bureau of the Assembly, retired high officials, heads of communities, tribal chiefs, etc. They represent nearly 60% of the Chamber; the rest depend largely on the power of the government.

This fake system bred fierce struggles, like those of the anti-imperialist revolts of 1921 and the internal convulsions which endangered the cohesion of the Iraq state.

★

In the Lebanon, in Syria, and in Palestine, the struggle against the "Mandates" between the two wars also

<sup>2</sup> R Furon: *The Near East*, Editions Payot, Paris.

<sup>3</sup> There was also a movement of demands in Algeria in the '20s, led by the Emir Khaled; and at Paris in 1923 there was created the *Étoile Nord-Africaine*.

stimulated Arab nationalism and brought the hour of formal independence nearer.

The case of Palestine, the most Arab country of the whole "Fertile Crescent," deserves special mention. The Balfour Declaration in 1918 recognized the right of the Jews to found a "National Home" in this Arab country under mandate. As the Jewish community grew in size — 190,000 in 1929 — a *political Zionism* was created against which the Arabs, starting from that date, have reacted violently. For they saw in it an ever more serious obstacle to their own political development, a danger to their own economic independence, and a policy of territorial expansion by the Jews to their own detriment.

It must be noted, however, that even at that time the Arabs would have agreed to negotiate with the Jews as citizens of the state of Palestine, to sanction their holding of land, to respect their cultural autonomy and perhaps even their local self-administration, in brief would have granted them a *national minority status*; but they intended to stop further immigration and the purchase of new lands, activities feverishly pursued by the Zionist Agency.

The anti-Jewish movement (soon to become anti-British by the very force of circumstances) of the Palestinian Arabs dates from the '30s and grew in strength, reaching its climax on the outbreak of the Second World War. Zionism, an instrument of the imperialists, thus became a powerful reagent in creating Arab nationalism. In the '30s Palestine became the main centre from which the ideas of *the unity of the Arab world* radiated again with new force. A Palestinian newspaper, *Al-Arabi*, issued this catechism in 1932 under the spiritual direction of *Shakib Aslan* and *Abd er Rahman Azzam*:

The Arabs occupy in their own right half of the Mediterranean circle. They look on the Atlantic Ocean on the one side and on the Indian Ocean on the other. Everywhere, common customs, identical culture. Arab unity is therefore a present reality and a historical reality."

With a view to strengthening cultural unity, plans were made to set up an Arab university in Jerusalem as well as an Arab Academy — the latter was established in Egypt late in 1933.

In the Autumn of 1932, the Executive Committee of the Arab Congress, which met in Jerusalem in 1931, prepared for a new congress to study the discontinuance of customs offices and the unification of the monetary system and the postal services in the Arab countries.

The period from 1930 to 1933 (during which King Feisal of Iraq died) was characterized by various other endeavors to effect Arab unification, but all were sabotaged by imperialism and its native agents. On the outbreak of the Second World War imperialist domination in the Arab countries was already tottering but was still far from being abolished. In Palestine, however, a veritable war against the British had been raging since 1936 while the French had great difficulty in maintaining their position in Syria.

The new war crowned the process towards formal political independence of the Middle East states who profited from the inter-imperialist war, from the decline

in the power of England and France, and from the dissensions between them.

The most outstanding events in this period were: the Iraq revolution against the English in May 1941; the evacuation of Lebanon and Syria by the French in November 1943; the Conference of Alexandria in September 1944, which laid the foundations for the *League of Arab States* (Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen). But the interested patronage of London and the antagonism between the royal families of Saudis and the Hachemites were also present at the birth of the Arab League.

And that is why the aspiration towards Arab unity retreated before the "respect of the independence and the sovereignty of the Arab State" simply "wishing to affirm and consolidate these ties," as the Charter of the League proclaimed.

Since 1945 the Arab states of the Near East have become formally independent and have become members of the United Nations.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, the Arab countries of North Africa still had to wait for their hour of independence. Lybia became independent in 1952, followed by the Sudan and then Morocco and Tunisia (1956). In Africa there are only Algeria and the Sahara regions attached to France, and the Spanish Sahara, which have not yet been liberated.

A new phase of the Arab revolution began after the end of the war, aimed at obtaining real independence from imperialism; it raises fundamental economic and social problems arising from the very widening of the Arab revolution.

#### THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STRUCTURES OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES

Arab society is that of the arid countries of a good half of the Mediterranean circle, the peasant population of which, whether sedentary, nomad, or intermediate, clings to the lands bordering the sea, or to those on the banks of the great rivers, in the high mountains, in the oases, or to the grazing "steppes" with which the extensive deserts of the interior are dotted; where the system of land-holding has in general been shaped by Islamic law and Turkish feudalism, with urban centres populated by a mercantile and money-lending bourgeoisie living parasitically on trading profits and rents; a society which has long remained compartmented, closed off, and turned in on itself, and — whether in the Middle East or in the Maghreb — with relationships of family and tribal hierarchy and subordination, with the imprint of slavery sometimes still fresh upon it, a society not yet overthrown by imperialist penetration as such, except in small islets and in the peripheral fringes of the countries.

This is, roughly, the customary picture that we had of the Arab countries and which substantially corresponds to present reality. But in this general sketch, the concrete individual structures are necessarily blurred, and so are the essential lines of the evolution in progress. Hence the need for a more profound analysis.

<sup>4</sup> Except Aden, the Pirate Coast, Bahrein, and Kuwait in Arabia, which are territories controlled or protected by Great Britain.

## 1) THE PROBLEM OF THE LAND

In general, and in spite of undoubted progress made in industrialization which has made great strides, especially during the last war, the Arab countries are still characterized by the overwhelming preponderance of an agricultural economy dominated by relationships which are substantially feudal in the Middle East, and capitalist in the colonialist-owned big estates of the Maghreb countries.

The parasitic and usurious bourgeoisie of the towns has a direct interest in maintaining the present conditions in the country since it is these conditions which enable it often to own lands — which it sub-lets at a profit — and to manage, as it were, the finances of the fellahin who are constantly short of money and overwhelmed with debts. There are only nuclei in formation — but growing steadily despite everything — of an industrial bourgeoisie properly so called, whose interest it is to curb the power of the feudalists and the usurious bourgeois, to carry out certain reforms, and to raise the standard of living of the peasants, thus creating the home market which is indispensable for its own development.

It is these nuclei of the industrial bourgeoisie, as well as the intellectual or even military circles — linked ideologically to the industrial bourgeoisie — who, in countries such as Egypt, Tunis, Morocco, Syria, and Iraq, have really led the Arab revolution in the post-war period. (This is apart from the special case of the Algerian revolution which we shall study later.)

Let us make clearer, by means of some essential data, the present economic and social structure in the rural districts of the Arab countries:

From 5 to 45% of the land area is suitable for cultivation and an even smaller percentage has been cultivated, between 2 and 33%, but in general less than 10%. The primary problem of water and irrigation weighs heavily on the exploitation of the land. In the six following countries — Lebanon, Syria, (Turkey), Transjordan, Iraq, and Iran — less than 1/8 of the cultivated lands is irrigated. In Iraq, 2,620 square miles are irrigated out of 19,100 square miles that could be, and in Syria, 1,250,000 acres out of 8,750,000 acres.

The limited area of cultivated land, aggravated by irrigation difficulties, occupied by an agricultural population forming the overwhelming majority of an ever increasing total population, lowers the average available land per capita to a level comparable with that of India, namely 1.48 acres.

This extremely low proportion of cultivated land, as well as the very low yields of crops, are due to unmoderated social relations rather than to insurmountable natural obstacles.

Islam forbids *tenant farming at fixed rents*; it has stipulated share-cropping and has allowed the most drastic rates. Furthermore, the inheritance laws laid down by the Koran have favored the splitting up of estates to an extreme degree, each male child inheriting two parts and each female child one part.

In addition, the principle of state control under the Ottoman Empire bore heavily on the land for a long time. It first allowed the creation of *fiefs* burdened with a rent and this favored absenteeism of the vested "lords," bad cultivation, stagnation, and consequently extremely diversified systems of tenure.

The rights of the Moslem cultivator of the land (share-

cropper or owner) are in general — whether in the Maghreb or in the Middle East — confirmed by custom, tradition, and the arbitrariness of the heads of the family or of the tribes, who fix the rents and periodically redistribute the lands inside the land collective of the family or tribe (*mouchaa* system).

This keeps the cultivator in a state of uncertainty regarding his rights and the future of his plot. This uncertainty is in its turn reflected in poor routine cultivation of the soil.

By a certain simplification, it is possible to distinguish, in the Middle East, side-by-side with "mulk" lands, corresponding to the individual peasant holdings in European countries, the *fief* and the *tenure* which predominate. Originally property of the state, or rather of the sovereign, the "*miri*" lands have passed to the feudal lords, for services rendered, in the form of "mulk," or else in the form of more or less long-term leases, and, in either case, sub-let by the feudal lords to the peasants. The "*matruki*" are lands reserved for public use and the "*waqf*" represent property in mortmain, religious or charitable donations.

The "*miri*" are characteristic of Iraq, the "*matruki*" of Iran; and for a long period the "*waqf*" represented one-tenth of the cultivated lands in Egypt.

In the Maghreb, the large agricultural estates, established on the best land, are generally in the hands of capitalist settlers and of a few native big landowners. They are cultivated according to modern methods, thanks to the use of an abundant and cheap native labor force, the landless peasants. As for the lands left for the native population, they are divided into "mulk" lands, the indivisible family lands — characteristic of the mountainous regions (each household of the agnatic family having the right to the yield in proportion to the area) — cultivated by the members of the family or by share-croppers on a 1/5 basis (*khammes*) in the case of land belonging to semi-nomads of the Sahara oases, of collective lands of peasant communities or of pastoral tribes; and of public or private "*habous*" lands equivalent to the Egyptian "*waqf*." The latter category is still particularly important today in Tunisia.

In a general way, there is social predominance everywhere of landlords as well as of the "notables" of the tribe or of the community and of their merchant and usurious bourgeois allies in the towns; in their hands are concentrated the economic power, the financial power, and the civil authority; on the other hand, small landowners, especially all precarious landholders who, for that very reason, do not see the necessity and the possibilities of long term cultivation.

The leasehold rent is often demanded in cash by the owners who live in the town. In order to subsist, the peasant must almost regularly resort to credit — an advance in cash or in kind — the formula varying but giving interest of 100% or more to the "merchants" or to the lending capitalist proprietors, acting as managers of their peasant "clients," paying their taxes, taking over their extraordinary family expenses, etc.

It is only the peasants in the mountainous regions like those in Algeria or Morocco — where the system is one of indivisible family and communal property and where a great spirit of mutual help prevails — who escape from this rule relating to the condition of the Arab peasant. But on the other hand, the population in these regions is constantly increasing on a poor and limited

land-area, already minutely split up, fully settled, and overpopulated. This is what has given rise to emigration on an hitherto unknown scale.

In *Egypt*, before the 1952 agricultural reform, the land under cultivation broke down into some 5,600,000 feddan<sup>5</sup> of privately owned land, 592,000 feddan of waqf lands and 2,500,000 feddan of state land or land for common public use. Small holdings of less than 5 feddan per family accounted for 37% of the total; but this was in the hands of 94% of the owners. Medium-sized holdings of between 5 and 10 feddan represented 31.6% of the privately owned property, in the hands of 5.3% of the owners. The large estates of more than 50 feddan and representing more than 31% of the private property (without counting the waqf lands) was owned by less than 0.5% of the owners.

It is estimated, however, that it is impossible to subsist on less than two feddan. Now before 1952 there were more than two and a half million owners with less than 2 feddan, and the tendency, in view of the growth of the population, was towards a reduction even of this area. And the average share of the crop paid to the landlord was 80% of the total income!

In *Lebanon* the very tiny estate of between 1.2 and 12 acres predominates, but a few years ago, 2% of the owners still owned 40% of the land.

In *Syria*, before the recent land reform, the large estates of more than 250 acres, contrasting perhaps even more than in Egypt with the small one of under 25 acres, accounted for more than 15% of the cultivatable area. In the north of the country, the big landowners hold from 80 to 90% of the land; and 60 to 75% in the Damascus region<sup>6</sup>.

In *Iraq* "property is the most subinfeudated, the system is vague, and the most outstanding feature is the development of the large estate. Under the Turkish regime, outside the urban areas, all the land was *miri*,"<sup>7</sup> and this was seized in various ways by the feudalists and the "notables."

Before the recent agrarian reform, about one thousand landlords owned some 20 million acres out of a total of 30 million acres of arable land. Certain "notables" owned estates of 100,000 acres worked by veritable serfs who often received only 30% of the harvest<sup>8</sup>.

In *Jordan* the small holding of less than 25 acres predominates. From 30 to 40% of the villagers are probably landless. The system of the large estate, concentrated in the hands of a few hundred landlords, is still increasing.

In *Iran*, 85% of the land workers do not own the land on which they work: it belongs either to the state or to a limited number of big landowners.

<sup>5</sup> One feddan is equal to 478 square yards.

<sup>6</sup> This property was cultivated by share-cropping. "The lots entrusted to the tenants are between 17.5 and 150 acres for dry farming, depending on the quality of the soil and the dryness of the climate, and the proportion which they keep for themselves varies in the same way from one half to four fifths. The contracts concluded for one year or for the duration of the crop rotation offer no guarantee to the tenant. He is bound to the owner only by his debts." (*The Mediterranean and the Middle East*, by P. Birot and Jean Bresch. Presses Universitaires de France, Paris.)

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> A law in 1933 gave the owner the right to keep the share-cropper on the land until he had paid his debt.

In the Maghreb the situation is as follows:

In *Tunisia*, out of about 22 million acres of "productive" land, about 9,300,000 acres of which are actually cultivated, the colonists recently still owned 1,900,000 acres of the best land. The rest is divided among a few large native feudal owners of habous lands and a multitude of small native owners.

In *Algeria*, out of nearly 30,000,000 acres of arable land, 10 million of which are cultivated, 25,000 European colonists own or have the concession of a little more than 7 million acres of the best lands. In 1950 the lands owned by the European colonists represented 38% of the cultivated land. It is estimated on the other hand that the rural land owned by the Moslems consists of about 600,000 holdings of which 70% are not viable (less than 25 acres).

There is therefore an agricultural population of almost 700,000 peasant families without land (three to four million people).

In *Morocco*, 12,200,000 out of the 37 to 50 million acres of arable land (and 10 million acres of forest) were actually under cultivation in 1953 (about 10 million under cereals). Six thousand European colonists owned about 2,500,000 acres of arable land (with 900 farms of more than 750 acres), of which 1,500,000 acres are actually worked. The yields, however, are often three times as great as those of Moroccan farmers.

The few thousand Moroccan big feudalists own one quarter of the cultivated land in Morocco, i.e., 4,500,000 acres. About 1,300,000 Moroccans cultivate nearly 10,000,000 acres of land. In 1954 it was estimated that there were 500,000 peasant families without land.<sup>9</sup> A quarter of the land cultivated by the Moroccans is in the form of collective lands.

★

Everywhere, whether in the Middle East or in the Maghreb, there is an immense rural proletariat side-by-side with a mass of impoverished peasants and nomads,<sup>10</sup> a surplus population without any possibility of obtaining really productive employment.

<sup>9</sup> In 45 years the miserable conditions have driven one million rural people to the towns where they form the semi-proletariat of the "bidonvilles" (shanty-towns).

<sup>10</sup> The latter, mostly shepherds, although declining surely and inevitably, still form an appreciable component in the total Arab population, perhaps something like 10%: 300,000 in Syria, the majority of the six million inhabitants of Saudi Arabia, two million in Iran, more than half the population of the Sahara (where there are about 1.7 million inhabitants).

The conversion of the nomads to a sedentary life, now taking place both in the Middle East and in the Maghreb, is a result of the creation of the various independent states, breaking up the desert and cutting off the pasture areas, as well as of the introduction of the trade and automotive transport of the capitalist era, which make a wandering life in the desert both difficult and obsolete.

"Sedentarization is accompanied more than ever by profound economic and social changes. The tribal chiefs are being transformed into large landowners by various means: dictatorial distribution of the arable lands, sale of water, and credits," while others become simple peasants, or even, having lost all their flocks, go to swell the number of khammes at the oases, or transform themselves into proletarians flocking to the towns or to the oil-fields as in Arabia and now in the Sahara.

The living conditions of this population are among the most miserable in the world: an annual income per capita — and sometimes per whole family, as in Egypt — of less than 50 dollars; total illiteracy; numerous diseases due to under-nourishment or the conditions of work and the climate (tuberculosis, malaria, trachoma — which does not spare the eyes of even an Ibn Saud — bilharzia, ancylostomiasis, etc), all of which undermine their already weakened organisms.

And while the tendency of evolution is towards concentration and modernization of the large estates, the surplus peasant population, which is not economically employed and consequently not economically viable for the cultivation of the land, increases because of the progress that is nevertheless made in hygiene, the sedentarization of the nomads, and the increased productivity of the soil, which does not expand in proportion.

*Thus there is clearly sketched out the primary importance, side-by-side with the national struggle for real independence from imperialism, of the agrarian problem in these countries.* This problem, furthermore, can be satisfactorily solved only by a complete agrarian reform in the framework of an overall revolutionary policy that will give the peasant sufficient land and will increase its productivity. To recover new land by various hydraulic projects, to eliminate disease and illiteracy, to increase the productivity of the soil, and, by making great strides in agriculture, to back up the indispensable parallel effort of industrialization of the Arab countries, demands more than an agrarian reform, it *requires an overall state policy.*

The agrarian reform in the Arab countries should aim at giving the land to those who actually work it, that is to say, to the small landowners, the share-croppers and agricultural workers, removing all the uncertainties which now weigh so heavily on the small plot, expropriating without compensation the lands of the large native and colonist owners as well as the *waqf* and *habous* lands, and enlarging the existing lands by hydraulic and other projects wherever possible and necessary.

As regards the forms to be taken by such an agrarian reform, they must take into account both the *community customs* which still characterize the Arab family and tribal society (although on the decline because of the penetration of capitalism) and the requirements of an irrigated cultivation, no less on a community basis.

This means that it is possible to foresee on a broad scale for these countries an agricultural reform which will right from the outset bring into being communal or tribal collectives (which will be amalgamated later into larger collectives) and convert the best of the large agricultural holdings of the native feudalists and the colonists into state undertakings, managed by collectives of the agricultural workers or share-croppers now working on them.

In fact, the standard of living of the Arab share-cropper or agricultural worker is at present so low (perhaps horrifying would be the better word) that any appreciable economic improvement, including for example in the form of wages, can inspire these masses to greater productivity on a collective farm of which they would be the managers.

Naturally, the concrete case is different for each country and sometimes even for this or that region.

## 2) BOURGEOISIE, PROLETARIAT, AND INDUSTRIALIZATION

Quite recently the Arab bourgeoisie was still composed essentially of the merchants and rentiers to whom the greatest part of the profits from agricultural production accrued in one form or another. These strata consumed, redistributed, or exported the produce of the earth, hoarding their gains in the form of gold, or investing them in real estate or in large estates sublet to share-croppers or cultivated by agricultural workers, along the lines of a capitalist undertaking.<sup>11</sup>

These strata likewise engaged in the usurious exploitation of the peasants, bound to them "by a complex system of debts, of commercial relations, or as clients." Merchants playing an important part in trade (textiles, cereals) or in transport, were a characteristic feature also in the basic composition of the Arab bourgeoisie in the towns in the Maghreb.

This structure of the Arab bourgeoisie, essentially parasitical, still predominates at the present moment.

But the economic transformations that occurred in the Arab countries as a result of imperialist penetration, the opening up of the oil fields, and the slow but steady process of industrialization, have given rise, side by side with these strata, to nuclei of an industrial bourgeoisie properly so called and consequently to a modern proletariat.

In the *Middle East*, in addition to the trade bases and undertakings such as the Suez Canal, it is the oil fields which have been the greatest influence in the economic and social transformation of the countries of this region. Today there are 600 oil wells in the Middle East supplying one quarter of the total production of the Western world, while the reserves in this area are estimated at 2/3 of the total of the "Atlantic" reserves.<sup>12</sup> The total output of the Middle East is worth more than one thousand million dollars per annum. The income obtained from petroleum forms the major part, if not the whole, of the budget of the oil-producing Arab states. Only a very tiny part of this income, however, is now used for the benefit of the national economy.

Nevertheless, the technical needs for exploiting the petroleum and the profits arising from this exploitation have completely overthrown the traditional life on the whole of the "Persian" fringe of a country like Arabia for example, where slavery still prevailed quite recently: denomadization and proletarianization, road construction, urbanization.

Furthermore, a modern industry has been developed to varying degrees in the different countries of the Middle East, especially since the First World War and

<sup>11</sup> "In Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and even in the Lebanon, except in the high mountains, a goodly section of the large estates is in the hands of the bourgeois families who bought the "mulik" lands, and acquired the usufruct of "miri" estates (made valuable in Iraq by harnessing the waters) on the basis of shares in the agricultural communities of mouchua structure. They place them under managers, parcel them out among the tenants [...] unless they expand the irrigation works, buy equipment, and introduce industrial crops for the purpose of speculation." (*The Mediterranean and the Middle East*, by P. Birot and Jean Dresch.)

<sup>12</sup> Estimated at 16,100 million tons. Saudi Arabia alone has greater petroleum reserves than the United States (thanks in particular to undersea strata).

still more since the Second : extractive industries (other than that of petroleum which is entirely in the hands of the imperialists) or processing industries.

By far the main industry is the textile industry, especially in Egypt (which, in addition to cotton, processes linen, rayon, and natural silk in very large factories as well as in a multitude of artisanal workshops). Then come the Lebanon and Syria. In Iraq, the textile industry is only in its initial stages, and only cotton and rayon are processed.

Then come the foodstuff, the metal, the chemical, and the building industries, all of recent development and concentrated chiefly in Egypt with a few undertakings in the Lebanon and Syria. As a general rule, these industries, including the textile industry, do not as yet, in spite of their constant progress, even cover internal demand, and consequently it is very exceptional if there is surplus for export.

Their development is important, however, because of its *social consequences*, strengthening the formation of a real industrial bourgeoisie and of a modern proletariat.

The contingents of the latter are still weak numerically, but, often concentrated and holding key economic positions in these countries, they are steadily growing : a vanguard of some 200,000 oil workers in Iran, in the Persian Gulf protectorates, in Saudi Arabia, in Iraq, in Syria, and in the Sahara ; workers in the textile and building industries in Cairo, Damascus, and Baghdad ; workers in transport, dockers in the various ports from Alexandria to Lattaquieh.

Egypt alone — by far the most industrialized of the Arab countries — has 1,300,000 workers at the moment, but most of them (90 %) are unskilled workers scattered among several thousands of small workshops ; only 65 factories employ more than 500 workers.

In the *Maghreb*, the economy is dominated by colonial agriculture whose aim is exportation. Nevertheless, processing industries have been established in the towns, first with the object of satisfying the needs of the internal market, especially of the Europeans : flour mills, alimentary paste factories here and there, modern oil-processing plants, and a few canneries. But before 1945 at least, they supplied practically nothing for export. Most of the other produce of the soil and the sub-soil were also scarcely ever processed, either.<sup>13</sup>

Before the war not one of the countries in North Africa had

a metal industry apart from foundries and repair workshops. Not textile industries, either, although cotton fabrics were one of the most important import articles. There were just a few workshops processing wool, especially in Morocco. The chemical industry was limited on the whole to the production of sulphuric acid and superphosphates used almost exclusively by the European settlers. The building industry was unable to satisfy the needs in these countries under construction. Algeria, for example, imported two thirds of its cement, one half of its lime, and even a substantial proportion of its tiles and bricks.<sup>14</sup>

This situation has changed very much since the last

war. Industrialization then appeared to be essential for the war effort itself. From 1943 on, in the three countries in North Africa cut off from the mother country, there was soon a shortage of the most essential manufactured goods. It was therefore necessary to improvise a whole series of new industries : foodstuffs, metallurgical, household goods, chemical and glass industries, building industries, etc.

A number of these industries, being unable to face the competition of the better equipped industries in the mother country, failed as soon as the war ended. But the impetus given to industrialization was able to be maintained nevertheless, thanks to fresh investments of capital fleeing from France or of international capital, due likewise to the strategic importance of the Maghreb countries, which favored large-scale undertakings and heavy expenditure. Industry benefited greatly from these investments (public or private).

In addition to some local capital invested in the foodstuff and textile undertakings,

large concerns in metropolitan France established branches, such as Pont à Mousson, Air Liquide, Solvay, Pechiney, Saint-Gobain, Lafargue, Niederwiller, Boussac, Amieux, etc, and some Anglo-American undertakings (Nord-Africaine de Plomb in Zellidja, Gulf Oil and Shell in Tunisia).<sup>15</sup>

Thus various factories sprang up : metallurgical, textile, chemical, etc. Some of these factories (foodstuff industries) are at the place of production, but most of them have been erected near the ports and have given rise to vast industrial quarters (the famous "bidonvilles" being among them).

Neither in the Middle East nor in the Maghreb has the industrialization process now taking place brought about as yet any *qualitative* transformation of the traditional economic structure of these under-developed countries dominated by agriculture and trade.

*Technically*, the large-scale development of industry is handicapped by the absence of a heavy industry which could efficiently and cheaply equip the light industries and consequently reduce the exorbitant cost price of the goods made by the home industries which, in order to survive, have to be protected by no less exorbitant tariffs.

*Economically*, the feudal structure in the rural regions and the usurious role of the merchant bourgeoisie of the cities are impeding the creation of a vast internal market capable of spurring the development of industry.

*Financially*, the development of industry is impeded by the lack of sufficient resources for primary accumulation of capital, native capital preferring the rapid and substantial profits to be obtained from mercantile and *money-lending* operations and foreign capital being willing to invest only cautiously, likewise with the hope of quick profits, while the state, in the hands of the native feudo-capitalists or of imperialism, in its turn favors this speculative activity and itself absorbs, by the phenomenon, well known in these countries, of an officialdom as plethora as it incompetent and parasitical, a high proportion of the resources which would otherwise be available for the development of the national economy.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Officialdom in the under-developed countries (as well as petty trading, for that matter) is a means of escaping

<sup>13</sup> *The Mediterranean and the Middle East*, already quoted.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

Furthermore, because of their very nature as underdeveloped countries, an immense productive force, represented by the working potential of their population, remains for the most part without any possible productive employment: two thirds of the 18 million fellahin in Egypt, 7 persons out of 9 of the Algerian native population, etc.

Thus the social and economic conditions of the feudo-capitalist regime in these countries, still economically dominated — with very rare exceptions — by imperialism, constitute a major obstacle to the industrialization of these countries and renders absolutely unattainable any prospect of catching up with the industrial countries in the foreseeable future.

And yet natural conditions are nowise unfavorable to a rapid industrialization of the Arab countries.

Even though the problem of hydraulic power or power based on coal is generally difficult for any of these countries to solve, on the other hand most of them can benefit, apart from the *solar power* of tomorrow, from the extraordinary abundance of petroleum, resources which, combined in an *inter-Arab pool*, would be fully sufficient for all the needs of their industrialization.

Mineral resources, although poorly prospected and ill known, seem to be abundant:

In the *Middle East*: *Bituminous limestone* in the Yarmouk valley in Syria, vast deposits of *salts* in the whole Syrian desert, in the Dead Sea,<sup>17</sup> on the shores of the Red Sea, etc; *iron ores* to the east of Assuan in Egypt, and in the Lebanon; *coal*, *copper*, and *lead* in the Yemen; *gold* at Mahad Dahab in Saudi Arabia; *phosphates* in Egypt and in the Lybian desert, etc.

In *North Africa*: *Phosphates* in Tunisia and especially Morocco which produce nearly one third of the world output; *iron deposits*, especially in Algeria, such as those of Bône (centre of Ouenza), the working of which is now contemplated with an estimated production of 400,000 to 500,000 tons of iron per annum; *lead* and *zinc* deposits in Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco; *manganese*, *cobalt*, and *other rare minerals* in Morocco; very large *mineral resources of many kinds* in the Sahara; petroleum, gas, the Colomb-Bechar coal basin, *iron deposits* in Gara Djebilet and Fort Gouraud, *copper* at Akjoujt, *various mineral deposits* in Hoggar, etc.

To these mineral resources of the Middle East and North Africa must be added the raw materials from vegetable and animal sources: cotton, cane and beet sugar, various oils, wool, etc.

With regard to the *financial conditions* for the industrialization of the Arab countries, they are fully satisfied by the existence of the petroleum resources combined with a vast and currently idle surplus labor power of the population of these countries. Theoretically, the

from the poverty to which the majority of the population of these countries is condemned. In Egypt in 1951 there were 550,000 officials, 200,000 of whom had no specific task.

<sup>17</sup> Forty thousand million tons of mineral salts; inexhaustible reserves of potash.

colossal profits from the production of petroleum<sup>18</sup> should be sufficient to finance the industrialization of a united Federated Arab Republic. But the greater part of these profits returns to the foreign imperialist companies and to the ruling oligarchies (governments, kings, sheikhs).<sup>19</sup>

The fabulous incomes of the Sheikh of Kuwait and of the royal treasury of Saudi Arabia are well known: more than \$ 500 million and \$ 300 million respectively per annum! The Sheikh of Kuwait uses about one third for his family (70 people) and another third is invested in "international shares of the first order by an investment committee" set up by the Sheikh in London, the famous *Kuwait Investment Board*! Only one third is used for the so-called "general good."

As regards the petroleum income of Saudi Arabia, \$ 50 million are used in maintaining the 300 members of the royal family and the 24 "1001 Nights" palaces (against only \$ 13 million for agriculture between 1952 and 1954, \$ 10 million for social works, and \$ 80 million for the army in 1955).

In Iraq, on the other hand, 70% of the revenue from petroleum was used by a "Development Board" to improve the national economy, especially agriculture, thanks mainly to works controlling the floods of the Tigris and the Euphrates for irrigation purposes.

The imperialist grip on petroleum also impedes home consumption, partly because of the difficulties it sets up to the refining of any quantity of crude petroleum on the spot, but mainly because of the imposition of a price much higher than the production price in the Middle East since it is calculated on the basis of the price of American oil.

*In conclusion, expropriation without compensation to the imperialists and feudalists is a primary condition if the very vast Arab petroleum resources are to make an effective contribution to the rapid development of the national economy of these countries.*

There is another very important resource in these countries which by itself could at least partly solve the difficult problem of *primary accumulation* of the capital required for a rapid and large-scale commencement of industrialization; this resource is the productive mobilization of the labor power of millions of men and women now partially or totally unemployed. This force, engaged in irrigation works, reforestation, and various civil construction, as well as in local industry, within the framework of a state-controlled and planned economy, could very quickly make considerable productive forces available, beginning by substantially increasing agricultural production. The effective mobilization of this resource is likewise a question of the social system.

<sup>18</sup> It was 150 million tons or more than 20% of world production (not counting the U S S R) in 1954. Furthermore it is estimated that Middle East petroleum will have to cover at least half of world consumption, which is to be doubled in the next ten years — which will raise production in the Middle East to 800 million tons.

<sup>19</sup> At the present moment, each ton of oil produced in the Middle East brings to the governments concerned an average share of the profits equivalent to \$ 5.50.

*Resolution of the October 1958 Membership  
Conference of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party  
(Ceylonese Section of the Fourth International)*

## FORWARD TO AN LSSP GOVERNMENT!

### The New Political Situation and our Task

(Excerpts)

#### 1. THE COMMUNAL EXPLOSION AND THE EMERGENCY

The very widespread communal explosion of the last week of May 1958, the consequent "Emergency," and the results of both have transformed the political situation. The M E P government has received a terrific blow to its popularity and its mass position. Popular enthusiasm for it has disappeared; active support for it has sharply declined; its mass base has visibly narrowed. Internally, it has come under new strains which further weaken it from within and leave it limping along from situation to situation and from crisis to crisis without any clear or defined perspective for the future. The emergency framework of laws and administration has been an important means of propping up this government today. The task therefore arises before the Party not only to step up the struggle against the M E P government immediately and sharply but also to place before the masses as an urgent task to be accomplished at the earliest possible moment the task of replacing the M E P government with a government that can be the efficient and responsive instrument for fulfilling their fundamental immediate needs.

The communal explosion of the last week of May 1958 spread very much wider than the communal explosion of June 1956. The May 1958 explosion also bore to some extent a different character from its predecessor.

A numerically larger section of the population and a wider geographical area were drawn into the disturbances this time. Also more elements from higher up the social scale than the urban and rural poor came in. In particular, many younger bikkhus played a prominent part. So did many youth elements. A noticeable sprinkling of "trousered" elements also participated.

Again, the murder, the manhandling and the injuring, the arson, the looting, and the wanton damage to property, all of which marked both upsurges, were very much more extensive in the two days of heavy rioting in May last than they were in the entire period of rioting in June 1956. Very much more damage to persons and property was done in a shorter time in May 1958 than in June 1956.

The May 1958 disturbances also had in many places and on many occasions less of the character of spontaneity and more signs of organization than the disturbances of June 1956. What is more, the activities of the politically serious communalist core among the mass of rioters appeared this time to be directed towards a more drastic objective than mere "punishment" or "revenge." There were signs of an effort by organized communalist groups to direct the upsurge towards driving away the Tamil settlers from the Sinhalese majority regions and Sinhalese settlers from Tamil majority regions. They apparently aimed to make "inter-spersed living" psychologically and physically impossible.

In face of the range and intensity of the communal explosion and the consequent breakdown of the civil administration and of normal civilian life, the M E P government found itself compelled, after much hesitation and procrastination, to bring the Public Security Ordinance into operation. An "Emergency" was declared; the curfew was imposed;

the armed forces were brought into action to restore and maintain "Law and Order." Extra-ordinary powers were taken by the executive. The civil administration was subordinated to the military through the Governor-General and through "coördinators." The democratic rights and civil liberties of the population were sharply curtailed. In short the country was temporarily brought under dictatorial administration with the executive in complete control and the repressive aspects of the state brought to the forefront of administrative activity.

#### 2. THE SHIFT IN THE M E P POLICY

The communal explosion and the "Emergency" have come in the context of the M E P government reaching a general political impasse. The deterioration of its financial position had brought it to the point of incapacity to continue bringing forward even the mildly ameliorative measures which it had sought to pass off as socialism. Its inability to engage in any planned development of the economy has induced a rapid growth of unemployment, ever-rising prices of essential commodities, and even a back-sliding of the national economy itself. Consequently the M E P government had already come to the point where it could no longer keep up the pretence of a socialist policy. It had to enter into open and direct service of the capitalist class.

Already, before the communal explosion and the Emergency, there were clear signs that the government had taken this road. It not only announced the cessation of wage concessions to its own employees; it also came to the assistance of the private employers resisting wage increases. It beat down strikes with open police violence in both the public and private sectors. It impeded trade unions through the Trade Disputes Act.

In relation to foreign capital, the government ran away finally from its hitherto declared policy of nationalization of foreign owned plantations. In May it announced the postponement of such nationalizations beyond the period of its constitutional life. The accompanying guarantees to foreign investors assure the continuance of Ceylon's economic subordination to imperialism and maintenance of Ceylon as a field of exploitation for predatory international capital. Thus the M E P government came out openly in its service of foreign capital too.

The rightward drift of the M E P government did not go forward without internal crisis. Especially at the beginning of this year this drift enabled considerable intrigue within the government party, leading to a public clash between various ministers. The crisis was surmounted on the basis of an agreed shift to the Right — the Minister of Agriculture and Food withdrew the tea nationalization proposals which he had placed before the cabinet. The way was thus paved for the later abandonment of tea nationalization itself. There was not a murmur from the Minister of Agriculture and Food and his associates when the five-years' postponement of this subject was announced.

Events were thus exposing the M E P government's servitorship to the capitalist class when the May communal

explosion occurred. The behavior of the government in face of the explosion and after demonstrated clearly that the essential cementing factor of the M E P is Sinhalese communalism.

The May communal explosion did not of course come out of the blue. It derived from the whole previous course of M E P policy in the field of race relations and especially in regard to language. The essential aim of this policy is to relegate the Tamil community in Ceylon to a national status inferior to the status of the Sinhalese community. It is therefore a policy which is bound to evoke Tamil resistance ; and evoke resistance it did. The May explosion constituted an effort to crush Tamil resistance on the one hand and to sustain Tamil resistance on the other by mass direct action outside the bounds of the law.

The May explosion came on the heels of the Federal Party Convention's decision to launch Civil Disobedience by August 20th. Mass direct action undoubtedly began among the Sinhalese ; but it evoked a prompt response of the same character among the Tamils.

The attitude of the M E P government to the developing situation showed up the deep-rootedness of its Sinhalese communalism. In the initial stages when the main scene of the explosion was in the Sinhalese areas, it stood aside, hesitating to clash with the Sinhalese masses in communal action. When under the compulsion of events and of rising public opinion the government did at last intervene, it claimed that it had thereby forestalled a planned Tamil insurrection. Thus did it seek to justify itself and the Emergency repression to the Sinhalese communalists. Indeed, this amounted to an attempt to justify the Sinhalese communalists as a whole to public opinion.

\* \* \*

## 6. THE TASK OF THE PARTY

A fundamental task of the Party in the period immediately ahead is to organize the working class thoroughly and to prepare it politically for the battles that lie ahead. It must be clearly understood by the Party that extending its political base in the working class should be given top priority. In the performance of this task the Party has the advantage that the working class has emerged from the May events substantially free from the communal infection. The sections which succumbed to communalism in the highly infective environment of the last week of May can be won back to trade-union and political militancy without much difficulty. Further, there is reason to believe that the working class has not lost during the communal upsurge the militancy of the previous period. Held together by their unions in the workplaces at which they congregate, the workers have contrived to preserve their class solidarity and their class consciousness despite sectional lapses. The repressive conditions of the Emergency and the country-wide economic dislocation and decline ensure that this solidarity and consciousness will find militant expression.

An urgent task of the Party is to launch the struggle to win to the working-class banner the mass forces which are turning away from the M E P government or weakening in their adherence to it.

In the accomplishment of this vital task the Party has the advantage of the consequences of the Emergency repressions and the deteriorating economic situation.

The economic situation too is working against the M E P government both in the short-term consequences of the communal upsurge and in the long-term prospects. In the short-term consequences the central feature is the further shooting up of the already rising prices of essential commodities, due to general dislocation of the economy, the disorganization of distribution, the contraction of credit, and actual shortages in production. In the long prospects the decisive fact is that the administrative disorganization and the demoralization of the administrative personnel render the operation of development plans ineffective even if the effort to take them in hand

is possible. Ceylon under the M E P government is faced not with economic development but with economic decline.

It is thus the task of the Party immediately to take up actively and militantly the economic grievances of the workers, the general grievances of the masses under the repression, and the questions of price rises, unemployment, refugee rehabilitation, and the like, which can unite the urban and rural masses in action. In agitation around these questions the Party must learn how, despite Emergency restrictions, to keep the idea of direct action alive among the masses ; for it must be recognized that the readiness and even the proneness of the masses for direct action has been a feature of the period of M E P rule. Indeed, the communal upsurge of May was, in one way a perverse and undesirable expression of this proneness. The task is to harness the readiness for direct action to progressive political aims. In any event it is on the development of the readiness for direct action that depends the strength of the development of the trend to the Left and especially the evocation of a rural mass movement which can fuse with the movement of the working class. This feature in the mass situation is one of the advantages the Party must struggle to preserve and develop in the coming period.

A special task of the Party in the present situation is to struggle for every possible easing of the Emergency laws insofar as they hamper the class struggle, and ultimately to struggle for the removal of the Emergency itself. The Party must grasp and know how to make the masses understand that the Emergency, proclaimed in view of the communal situation, is desirable and convenient to the M E P government in respect of the class situation. It is a way of imposing class peace and preventing hostile political activity to the advantage of the M E P government. The task of the Party in this field is to struggle to clear the way for the exercise of normal democratic rights by the masses (freedom of speech, meeting, assembly, functioning of trade unions and other organizations of the masses ; civil liberties, normal legal process, etc etc). It is also a special task of the Party to struggle militantly and directly against communalism and communalist politics on every front.

In the fight against communalism we have many weapons. Of these the most powerful are the disruption of normal life and activity which communalism has already brought and the danger of the splitting of the country into two hostile states which the recent upsurge has made real. There is also the plain fact that the Sinhala Only policy can be forced on the Tamils only by extraordinary methods which set up the continuing danger of a military police dictatorship. Incidentally, these are also facts which can be used to hinder the drift to the U N P.

In connection with the task of fighting communalism it is necessary to prepare the masses to resist the increasingly insistent effort of the Sinhalese communalists to extend the communal struggle violently to another front. Anti-Indianism is being peddled once more by these politicians with the same recklessness that has been shown in conducting the anti-Tamil campaign. If the anti-Indian campaign is launched, the most compact, numerous, and strategically placed worker mass within the working class and in the country will run the danger of being diverted to a violent communalism of its own. This can only damage the working-class movement and weaken the class struggle of workers. On the other hand the Indian workers are so situated and organized that they can fight back against Sinhalese communal violence with an overwhelming violence of their own. If such resistance is conducted by them along the lines of the class struggle, it will strengthen the working-class movement generally in the fight against communalism and against the capitalist class itself. It will be a Party task of fundamental importance to prepare the non-Indian section of the working class generally to resist anti-Indianism. This will be an important part of the process of politicizing the working class. The politicizing of the Indian workers and the strengthening in them of a consciousness of their Ceylonese must of course go

simultaneously forward as part of the process of politicizing the working class.

Although the capitalist class, smarting under the electoral defeat of 1956 and heartened by the weakness of the government still makes the government the principal objects of its attack, nevertheless it should be remembered that at any decisive moment it will, considering the LSSP to be its principal enemy, launch a ceaseless offensive against the Party.

### 7. THE CENTRAL AGITATIONAL SLOGAN

The tasks set out above sum up into the overall task of immediately and sharply stepping up the struggle against the MEP government and of directing that struggle determinedly towards the earliest possible replacement of that government by a government which can heal the communal rift, carry through a programme of radical economic measures for the planned reconstruction of the country, and re-establish and deepen the democratic rights of the people and defend the independence of the country. The sharp rightward shift of the government to the open servitorship of local and foreign capital, the turn in its communal policy to the holding down of the Tamils in the interest of Sinhalese communalism, and the threat to the very existence of a single and independent Ceylon which this represents, the fact that the government has reached the point where it finds it difficult to maintain a normal democratic administration any more, and the manifest inability of the government to arrest the economic decline of the country and to lift it on to the road of planned economic development, all render this task not only necessary but urgent.

The time has come to call for the overthrow of the MEP government.

When the MEP government was installed in April 1956, the LSSP could not realistically pose before the masses the task of the overthrow of the MEP government. Indeed, it would have been incorrect to make such a call. The masses had risen enthusiastically in the elections of 1956 to defeat the UNP and to instal the MEP in its place because they took the latter to be a socialistic coalition which would be the people's instrument in challenging and defeating vested interests. There was also the fact that the communalistic policies commanded widespread support among the Sinhalese masses, who in their majority totally rejected the LSSP proposal to give Tamil parity of status with Sinhalese as an official language. The task of the Party in that situation was to provide the masses with every assistance in progressively recognizing the character of the MEP regime as one which, despite the socialistic demagogy of its propaganda, was bound hand and foot to the capitalist system, and which could neither solve the economic problems of the masses nor even settle the communal problems, which were becoming growingly acute.

To bring the masses progressively to the point where they themselves would recognize in the MEP government not their own instrument but that of the capitalists, the LSSP decided: a) to give its uncompromising leadership to the class struggles of the masses which were obviously impending, and b) in the parliamentary arena to be in opposition, while offering the MEP government "responsive coöperation" in the implementation of the progressive measures contemplated in their election programme. So far as the language and communal problems were concerned, the LSSP decided on a programme of "patient explanation" directed mainly towards the Sinhalese masses infected with communalism.

As time went on, the naive confidence shown by the broad masses in the new regime began to give place to some disillusionment regarding the capacity or readiness of the MEP government to tackle economic problems. This was increased by the rise of living costs and the growth of unemployment, particularly as it affected intelligentsia elements who had expected great things from the Sinhala Only policy. Corresponding to this change in the mass situation, the LSSP changed the form of its opposition in parliament to

one of "generalized criticism" of the MEP government, with support only for specific measures which could be recognized as progressive.

From the latter part of 1957 a new political situation developed, chiefly as a result of the strike struggles of the working class under conditions where the government was embarrassed by its deteriorating financial position and the soaring cost of living for the masses. In this period, which ended with the May 1958 communal explosion, the MEP government showed more and more openly that it was placing all its hopes on foreign loans and on winning the coöperation of the capitalist class. It made decisive moves to cement an alliance with the bourgeoisie; open strike-breaking of the crudest type with the police was followed by an open renunciation of further nationalization plans and a guarantee to foreign investments.

Already on the eve of the May communal explosion the LSSP recognized that the time had come for a call to the masses to replace the MEP government with an anti-capitalist government. Nevertheless, in view of the still persisting illusions in the government among sections of the masses, the LSSP regarded a call for the overthrow of the MEP government as still premature. But the May communal explosion, the Emergency that was declared, and the results that followed these developments, have so heavily eroded illusions in the government that a call for the overthrow of the MEP government becomes not only necessary but also real. It is a call which can and will evoke a mass response.

The call for the overthrow of the MEP government requires to be accompanied in the present situation with a call to the masses to replace the MEP government with the correct alternative. Further, this alternative requires to be specific enough to be an agitational slogan: namely, a slogan which defines not only the class nature of the government to be established but also its political composition. Specifically the slogan must answer the question: which party is to be entrusted with the task of governing.

As things stand today, the only national political party which can form a government that can heal the communal rift, carry through a programme of radical economic measures or the planned reconstruction of the country, and re-establish and defend the democratic rights of the people and the independence of the country, is the LSSP. We must therefore accompany the call for the overthrow of the MEP government with a call for the establishment of an LSSP government.

Regarding the LSSP government slogan two things must be grasped. On the one hand its object is to give a concrete content to the Party's permanent propaganda slogan of a Workers and Peasants Government. On the other hand it must be clearly understood that there is room within an LSSP government for others who are ready to take the course of decisive anti-capitalist measures, including the nationalization of banks, plantations, etc, and the implementation of the Party's language policy.

It is to be stressed that this central agitational slogan — "Down with the MEP government; forward to an LSSP government" — defines a task which is capable of becoming immediate quite suddenly. This possibility flows from the deep-going instability of the general political situation.

This instability is the product of the interplay of several factors. To begin with, the government has not the confidence of either the working class or the capitalist class. Big capital is actively intriguing against it; and capital generally, faced with a decline of profits, is actively discontented with the government. The working class is in active hostility to it. What with the disheartenment of its Sinhalese and Buddhist communalist backers and the general narrowing of its mass base, the government has no firm base from which to manoeuvre in the situation. There is then the continued estrangement of the Sinhalese and the Tamil communities, marking the failure of the government's communalist policies. The rapid growth of unemployment and the ever rising

prices of essential commodities, reflecting the backsliding of the national economy, introduce an explosive element into the situation which the sharpening struggle between the working class and the capitalist class can spark off suddenly, and conditions of apparent calm can give way precipitately to conditions of storm and upsurge.

The prevailing political instability reaches into the government itself and the government party. Despite outward appearances of a coming together, the group struggle within both the government and the government party, which has characterized the M E P government since its inception, becomes acute. Since these groups are guided principally by the pursuit of power and position, they react *unpredictably* to the pressures and counter-pressures of competing and clashing external forces. It is therefore always possible that, especially in a period of mass action, the government will suddenly fall apart and the government party, containing as it does so many politically unstable and indeterminate petty-bourgeois elements, get blown to pieces.

Of all the possible variants in the further development of the present political situation, there are broadly four of which we should take account. Two of these fall within the framework of constitutional procedures and two fall outside this framework.

Of the constitutional processes which are possible, one is

a general election through the defeat or threat of defeat of the government. The other, which is less likely, is a regroupment of parties, political groups, and elements within parliament.

Of the extra-constitutional processes we must take into account one, which is rather remote at present but which is always there as a possibility, especially in the Emergency, i e, a military coup from the right. The other is a mass uprising.

It is impossible to prophesy which one of these outcomes is likely in any particular situation and it is necessary to grasp that they are not mutually exclusive developments. The situation is such that any one development can merge in the other and be intermixed with it; and each may also alternate with the other in rapid and contradictory succession.

The Party must intervene in these developments with a view to the resolution in a progressive direction of the governmental and political crisis.

To do so effectively, the Party must acquire the necessary flexibility for quick manoeuvre. In utilizing thus the possibilities of the situation and of every turn of the situation, the Party will drive forward to its objective of the overthrow and destruction of the bourgeois state and its replacement by a workers' state supported by the rural and city poor. Down with the M E P government! Forward to an I S S P government!

## *From the Archives of Marxism*

# KARL LIEBKNECHT AND THE WAR

By G ZINOVIEV

### PREFATORY NOTE

January 15th of this year marks the fortieth anniversary of the odious assassination of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht by reactionary army officers with the complicity and encouragement of the official German Social-Democratic leadership. In commemoration of this tragic event, we are publishing here a slightly shortened version of a noted article

Karl Liebknecht did not all at once become the Karl Liebknecht that the international proletariat knows today. In his political activity there was a long-drawn-out period during which he was but little different from the other leaders of the German Social-Democracy. In that far-off time nothing suggested the international historic role that Karl Liebknecht was to fill during the war. Suffice it to say that during the 1905-1915 decade, in the struggle of the "Russian" currents, Karl Liebknecht more often stood nearer to the Mensheviks than to the Bolsheviks.

The "growing up" of the Social-Democratic Liebknecht into the Liebknecht of the Spartakusbund and of the armed insurrection took place during the world war. The international communist youth movement, that brings the youth up in an ardent love for Karl Liebknecht and quite rightly sees in him its best leader together with Lenin, must become acquainted with the real Liebknecht, with all the weak and strong sides of his political activity, all the more so in that Liebknecht's failings were not individual failings, but rather the failings of a whole wing (and not the worst one) of the international workers' movement. The figure of Liebknecht loses nothing of its greatness thereby. Lenin wrote that Rosa Luxemburg was mistaken on the question of the independence of Poland, that in 1903 she made an incorrect evaluation of Menshevism, that she was wrong about the accumulation of capital, that she committed an error in July 1914 with her support of a fusion of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks (at the so-called Brussels Conference called by the Second International), that she erred on several fundamental questions of the Russian revolution in her 1918 prison writings. "But," Lenin added, "despite these failings, she was and remains an eagle" — quoting thereby the well-known Russian verses to the effect that it happens that the eagle sometimes descends lower than the hen, but hens never rise in the air like eagles.

Naturally Karl Liebknecht also was and remains an eagle. The truth, the whole truth, about his life and his struggle, about his failings and his virtues, makes the genuine heroism of his stand during the first imperialist world war still clearer and more gripping.

on Liebknecht by Grigori Zinoviev, who, by one of history's grim variants, himself later fell a victim to a murder (after the judicial farce of a "Moscow Trial") by another executioner who, claiming to represent socialism thereby, treacherously sent some of its finest leaders to their deaths — Stalin. For what Stalin did to the great tradition of Liebknecht and Luxemburg, readers should consult, on p. 25, the article, "The Embezzled Heritage," by Comrade P Richards.

The name of Karl Liebknecht, as it has gone into world history, is inseparably connected with the war. The greatness of Karl Liebknecht consists in the fact that he succeeded better than anyone except Lenin in expressing with unusual forcefulness the turn in the proletarian revolution that took place in the working class of Germany and the other warring countries in connection with the first imperialist world war.

It is not especially necessary to recall that the working class of Europe which emerged from the first imperialist world war was not at all the same that it had been at its beginning. Every month of the imperialist world war was an enormous lesson for the international proletariat. Every salvo on the imperialist battlefields hit also the reformist pacifist illusions in those layers of the European working class which had entered the First World War with the feelings generated in them by the 25-year-long peaceful development of the Second International.

Blood poured out in floods. Every week tens and hundreds of thousands of men lost their lives. With every day, poverty, sufferings, and hunger grew. Already in the first months of the war, hesitations and doubts began to seize the patriotically disposed workers who were under the influence of the Social-Democracy. Soon the hesitations and doubts gave way to an ever greater hatred of the war, which the Social-Democratic leaders were calling the "great" and "liberating" war. It fell to Karl Liebknecht, we repeat, to express in the broadest and deepest way precisely this swing taking place in the mass millions of the working class; together with these masses, to drive through to revolutionary decisions; and, together with them, and in their name, to protest against the war with the whole might of his ardent heart. He succeeded better than anyone else in expressing the anger and pain, the sufferings and protest, and, developing therefrom, the ripening revolutionary determination of the best part of the European working class that the criminal hands of the bourgeoisie and their Social-Democracy had sent on to the imperialist battlefield.

In Barbusse's remarkable book, *Le Feu*, that gives a hitherto unequalled artistic description of the imper-

ialist war, the author shows us, in one of the work's most brilliant passages, how — the war was then at its height — the image of Liebknecht blended with the best aspirations of the workers and soldiers.

Liebknecht's strength came precisely from the fact that he had understood, when the war was going full blast, how to express with incomparable force the workers' passionate and flaming hatred for the war, and, together with this, their fresh and still partly naive hopes for an immediate revolution against the war.

Even before the war Karl Liebknecht was very strongly interested in the Russian revolution. He paid intense attention to the events of the revolution of 1905. But Liebknecht did not at that time succeed in forming a full and clear idea of the class significance of the Russian events: he found no correct estimate of Bolshevism and Menshevism. Until 1915 Liebknecht did not support the Bolsheviks.

Within the German Social-Democracy Liebknecht was in the left, Marxist wing. He had, however, no positions that especially differentiated him, no special sort of general platform on "German" questions. He stood for the need of anti-military propaganda at the moment when the "fathers" of the German Social-Democracy considered it "tactless" to speak about it. He paid great attention to the organizing of the youth at a time when the same "fathers" considered it almost a joke. (A negative and anything but benevolent attitude about the organizing of the youth was and still is one of the characteristic traits of opportunists). These were extraordinarily great merits in Liebknecht. By his stand for anti-militarist propaganda and his support of the youth organization Karl Liebknecht was in a certain way preparing his future role during the imperialist war. But these were the only "buds" that an outside observer could discover as fore signs of Liebknecht's future role in the coming war.

Liebknecht was in the left wing of the German Social-Democracy. But he considered this party to be his party, and the unity of the German Social-Democracy was, in 1914, still untouchable. Until the outbreak of the war and during its first period, Karl Liebknecht could not bring himself to form an open opposition to the majority of the German Social-Democracy and still less to think of a split. On August 4th 1914, on the occasion of the famous vote of the German Social-Democrats for the war credits, Liebknecht, who had led a hot fight within the parliamentary fraction against the vote, still limited himself in public to a weak protest. It was only on December 2nd 1914, at the voting of five hundred million additional marks of war credits, that Liebknecht made his declaration and, alone among the 111 Social-Democratic representatives, voted openly against the credits. But even this declaration of Karl Liebknecht was so indecisive that the Bolsheviks, in the article "Not Heroes," felt themselves obliged to say:

Now Liebknecht's declaration has also been published. In the first part, the character of imperialist piracy of the war is excellently stigmatized; the second part exhausts itself in proclaiming the slogan, "Peace." The conclusion so much contradicts the premises that it clashes like a discord. If all that Comrade Liebknecht says about the essence and causes of the war is correct (and it is undoubtedly correct), then for socialists the conclusion can

be only: transformation of the imperialist war into civil war.

At this stage of the war Liebknecht expressed only the workers' elementary drive for peace and the first glimmerings of understanding of the imperialist character of the war among the Social-Democratic workers. It was only in the Summer of 1915, when the first Zimmerwald Conference met, that Liebknecht approved the Leninist slogan of the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war. Karl Liebknecht had by then been called to military service and could not take part in the work of the Zimmerwald Conference. He sent a letter to the Conference, however, ending with the words: "Not civil peace, but civil war, is the password for the day."

At this time there was being formed the Spartakus group, that played so glorious a role in the history of the German revolution. At the head of this group stood Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, Liebknecht as the political leader and agitator, Rosa Luxemburg as the theoretician and ideological initiator. Just the first appearance of this group won from the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democrats a hatred that was an honor for it. The historical significance of the first actions of the Spartakus members is indubitable. Nevertheless there cannot be passed over in silence the fact that the Spartakus group in the first period of its existence still did not have a resolute Bolshevik programme. The members who represented this group at Zimmerwald and at Kienthal went partly with Martov against Lenin. Organizationally the group still remained tied up with the broadest union of oppositional German Social-Democrats who later founded the U S P [Independent Socialist Party].

The theoretical position of Karl Liebknecht was also at this period not yet thoroughly worked out. Nevertheless the figure of Liebknecht from this time on grew not merely daily but hourly. Mobilized into military service, he continued his anti-war propaganda in the army, and neither the state of siege nor the moral poison of the official Social-Democracy intimidated him. His "comrades" of the Social-Democratic Party did not fear even to present him as crazy. The deadly hatred of the Prussian military regime followed his every step. But Karl Liebknecht's determination grew only the more, the timbre of his voice was hardened, and his revolutionary will was all the more tempered. At the head of a handful of Berlin workers he demonstrated on the Potsdammer Platz, to raise openly the banner of the fight against the war. This demonstration of the Berlin workers, relatively weak numerically, under Liebknecht's leadership, will go down in world history as one of the most famous episodes which testifies to the great boldness of this fighter for the proletariat during the darkest years of the war.

At that time Karl Liebknecht issued the famous slogan: "The enemy is in your own country! Turn your bayonets against your own bourgeoisie!" These words had the effect of a bomb. It is necessary to have lived through that time of war to understand what an effect these words of Liebknecht must have had. For these bold words, German militarism, to the approving murmurs of the official German Social-Democracy, sent Karl Liebknecht to jail. But even in prison Karl Liebknecht remained the banner-bearer of the German workers. And it was just there that he became the banner-bearer of the world revolution.

The longer the imperialist war went on, the higher grew the mountain of corpses, the more dreadful the situation of the working class became, the greater became the discontent of the toilers and the revolutionary determination of the proletarians in all the warring countries, and the brighter Liebknecht's name shone out to the workers in the bloody darkness of the imperialist war. At that time, the name of Liebknecht was known to far wider circles than the name of Lenin, who was in those days forced to act directly only in the illegality of the emigrés.

The Russian revolution broke out. From prison Karl Liebknecht sent the Russian workers a fiery message of support. At this time Karl Liebknecht began to become convinced of the full correctness of the position of the Bolsheviks. His former "friends," the Russian Mensheviks, including all the "radicals," showed themselves to be as vulgar social traitors as the Scheidemanns and Eberts. Only the Bolsheviks brought Karl Liebknecht's programme, his slogans, and his name to the mass millions of workers and soldiers set in motion by the revolution. In the 1917 July Days Lenin and those comrades standing nearest him experienced a fate that was close to Karl Liebknecht's — an effort was made to slander them, too, to cover them with mud, as had been done with Liebknecht, and they also were branded as "agents of foreign powers," and were put in prisons and fortresses as "enemies of the fatherland." And those who were only yesterday their comrades of the party and of the International, the Libers, the Dans, the Tseretellis, and the Chernovs, had their hand in these shameful calumnies.

Through the thick walls of his prison the news of events in Russia penetrated to Liebknecht. With ever growing interest Liebknecht collected every bit of news from the first country in which the revolution had broken through the fiery ring of war. He enthusiastically greeted the Bolsheviks' October victory while still within the walls of the same prison. The Bolsheviks had seized power. They are proud to have had the friendship and total and unreserved political support of a fighter like Karl Liebknecht.

For a few months the proletarian revolution in Russia made a triumphal march from victory to victory, as Lenin expressed it. But now the first great international difficulties rose up before it. German imperialism was still sufficiently strong to force the revolution to pass through the Brest[-Litovsk] period. In the discussions inside the Bolshevik Party about the permissibility of signing the Brest[-Litovsk] peace, the name of Liebknecht played no small role. In Germany the revolutionary wave was certainly rising. The victory of the German revolution could be expected, not each month, but each day. If Liebknecht wins, he will naturally free us of all our difficulties and correct all our stupidities, said Lenin to the "left" communists, but it does not follow therefrom that we can permit ourselves to commit many stupidities and that we can in the present correlation of forces refuse to sign the Brest[-Litovsk] peace.

The Russian revolution signed the Brest[-Litovsk] peace. This fact provoked from all the social-patriotic elements of Russia an unprecedented explosion. Petty-bourgeois patriotism reached white heat. The leaders of the Second International throughout the world, including Germany, for their part did everything in their power to slander the Bolsheviks, to cast suspicion on

the motives for their action, and to put them in the most unfavorable light in the eyes of the working class of Western Europe. Once more it was Karl Liebknecht who from prison gave the signal to the best part of the German working class as well as to the European proletariat. He said to the West European workers: If the first proletarian revolution must accept the harsh Brest[-Litovsk] peace, the Bolsheviks are not to blame for this: in the first place it is the fault and the misfortune of the West European workers themselves in that up to now they have not been able to go to the aid of the Russian revolution in an adequate way.

Meanwhile the strength of German imperialism was declining more and more and approaching complete exhaustion. With ever greater speed the revolutionary crisis in Germany drew near. The war-crushed masses drove toward the revolution. The official German Social-Democracy did everything it could to keep these masses under the yoke of imperialism. But it was already too late. The military defeats of Hindenburg and Ludendorff precipitated the collapse. Every day, every hour, the German workers grew more revolutionary. Karl Liebknecht was their banner-bearer, their leader. Liebknecht's fame shone forth to all the oppressed, all the revolutionary workers of the world.

The revolutionary movement of the German workers and soldiers freed Liebknecht from prison. Directly on emerging from prison Liebknecht went at the head of a powerful workers' demonstration to the building of the Berlin Soviet Embassy, before anything else, to bring his greeting to the Russian proletarian revolution. He took off his hat to the red flag of the Soviet republic: his first speech in revolutionary Germany was in honor of the Russian revolution and the Soviet power.

From this first minute on, Liebknecht's whole work was uninterruptedly at the service of the proletarian revolution. Around the Spartakus members there rallied the whole revolutionary part of the German working class. Liebknecht's name was a torch that showed the way to the growing ranks of the revolutionary German proletariat. Daily and hourly the influence of the Spartakus group grew.

But the German bourgeoisie and the German Social-Democracy were incomparably better organized and cleverer than the Russian bourgeoisie, the Russian Social-Revolutionaries, and the Mensheviks. Above all else they were studying the experiences of the Russian revolution. If the Kerenskys, Tseretellis, Chernovs, Libers, and Dans, who had the power in their hands, launched the slogan, "Continuation of the war to a victorious conclusion!", the Scheidemanns and Noskes, as well as Ebert, who also had been given power, launched above all the slogans, Conclusion of peace at any price! Peace with the Entente imperialists; war with the revolutionary workers! Peace with Clemenceau and Lloyd George — war against Karl Liebknecht and Lenin! These were the slogans of the "Social-Democratic" government that came out of the November revolution. The Eberts and Noskes cold-bloodedly used the readiness to fight of the German revolutionary workers, who were driving for action, to lead them into a premature uprising and then stifle it in the proletariat's blood. This criminal plan of the "fathers" of the German Social-Democracy was successfully prepared and carried through to the end. The January uprising of the men of Spartakus was stifled in the blood of Germany's

best workers. The young German Communist Party was by a treacherous murder of their best leaders, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg — deprived of their leadership. Only the day before, Noske and Liebknecht, Ebert and Rosa Luxemburg, were still members of the one and only "united" German Social-Democratic Party. Today Noske and Ebert are the murderers of Liebknecht and Luxemburg. Not only by his life and struggle, but also by his heroic death, Karl Liebknecht served the great cause of the German revolution. The circumstances of his death enabled the German workers to realize how decomposed was the German Social-Democratic Party, the same party that to this very day is the first paladin of bourgeois domination.

In the analysis Lenin made, in 1921 after the March action, of the causes of the defeat of the revolutionary uprising in Germany, he said the following in the "Letter to the German Communists":

At the critical moment, the German working class did not yet have a genuine revolutionary party, as a result of delay in splitting, as a result of the influence of the fatal tradition of unity of the soldout men devoid of character (Kautsky, Hilferding, and C°), the whole gang of lackeys of capital (Scheidemann, Legien, David, and C°).

As a result of delay in splitting! It was just that mistake that the Bolsheviks had not made. Already long before the war they had split with the Mensheviks. The enormous advantage possessed by the Bolsheviks was that they went into the war and therefrom into the revolution as an independent Bolshevik party whose hands could not be tied by "unity" with the Mensheviks. That was the guarantee of the Bolsheviks' victory.

Enriched by the "Russian experience," and driven

to paroxysm by the imminent proletarian revolution, the German and the whole international bourgeoisie, the leaders of the German and the whole international Social-Democracy, did everything to make the not yet reënforced ranks of the ill-armed revolutionary workers fall into a trap and to smash them as quickly as possible. The workers, inhumanly tormented by the war, pushed for insurrection. "Hatred led to a premature uprising," said Lenin.

Over the corpses of the Spartakus workers, over the corpses of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, the Social-Democracy led the bourgeoisie in "free" Germany (which was called by the first "Social-Democratic" government, to the derisive hoots of the workers, a "socialist" republic) to power, which it held thereafter. The German proletariat has paid dear for the delay in splitting away from the Social-Democratic Party, for its failure to make a solid and strengthened Bolshevik Party.

The heroic uprising of the men of Spartakus was fought down, but it sowed the seeds of victory. Those seeds are germinating.

The way from the official Social-Democracy to "Spartakism" is, naturally, an enormous step. The way from the Spartakusbund to the Bolshevik Party is a still greater stride forward. But the way from Bolshevism to "Spartakism" would be a step backward.

From Liebknecht forward to Lenin! If Karl Liebknecht were still alive, he would be the first to say that precisely this, and not the contrary, must be the way of the revolutionary proletariat. Liebknecht himself was going just this way, and only the treacherous bullet that killed Liebknecht prevented him from leading the German proletariat further along this road.

### TROTSKY'S DIARY IN EXILE — 1935

*Trotsky's Diary in Exile — 1935.* Translated from the Russian by Elena Zarudnaya. 218 pages, Cambridge (Harvard University Press), 1958, \$ 4:

As a revolutionary militant, Trotsky did not usually resort to the literary device of a diary; but at certain periods of his life, when he found himself in a sort of captivity, he set down notes on paper. This was the case in 1935 at a moment when — the French government having just notified him of a new expulsion order, and there being no country that would grant an entry visa — Trotsky was forced to live in a village in the Dauphinois, under a police surveillance that deprived him of normal conditions for work, without a secretary, and receiving his mail only at rare intervals. He noted down, more or less daily, remarks and observations, both on political events and on his reading, on the incidents of his life and that of his companion Natalia, the fate of his family in the USSR, etc. Soon after his arrival in Norway, he again found normal conditions for work, and... forgot this "diary," which was rediscovered in the archives deposited at Harvard University.

Before going on to this unpublished document of Trotsky, one cannot refrain from smiling at the preface by the university dons who edited it. Imbued with bookish knowledge, these gentry express an unusual incomprehension of men, events, and ideas. For them, the turn from the reform of the Third International to the struggle for the Fourth International is "the abstract political level of Trotsky's crisis in exile"; the general character of the man is that of the "revolutionary intellectual in politics, the 'outsider' with his ideologies." These Harvard gentlemen see politics only at the level of US bourgeois parties. Astonished to find in Trotsky a man of a deep sensitivity, they cannot understand that in this diary there are to be found "no ideological doubts or even soul-searching." We can imagine into what a laugh Trotsky would have exploded on reading such lines about himself.

But let us leave these distinguished university scholars, and come to Trotsky's diary itself.

On all the purely political part there is no need to insist. The notes here relate above all to the events that were then occurring in France, between the reactionary coup de force of 6 February 1934 and the rise of the Popular Front: they have been worked up, in a much more finished form, in articles which the Fourth International reprinted a few months ago in French.<sup>1</sup>

The interest of this diary lies in the fact that it gives an insight into the Trotsky of the last exile, of the Trotsky who, after having created and led the Red Army in the first years of the revolution, had been exiled and harried by Stalinism. In the literature about Trotsky, there are many remarkable pages written during the extraordinary years of the Russian revolution, describing either the pre-1917 militant, or "the sword of the Revolution" (Radek); but up till now it is at best only episodically that anything has been written on the last period of his life, from 1928 to 1940, on years such as none of the great revolutionaries ever experienced. After he had twice in his life been at the head of a revolutionary movement, after he had held second place in the leadership that removed one-sixth of the globe from capitalist domination, the state thus created had turned its forces against him, had driven him out, and had forced him to live a life alien to his temperament: he was everywhere under observation, he could not mix freely with people, his activity was inevitably

<sup>1</sup> For details, see advertisement, p. 72.

limited to a small number of persons. He was cut off from his companions-in-arms, who were to be broken by Stalinist terror. Still more, in the workers' movement outside the USSR, he no longer had any comrade of his own generation; those who joined him were young people — of whom many turned out to be migratory birds incapable of resisting the rigors of the climate caused by the parallel rises of fascism and Stalinism — young people with whom, in spite of everything, he could not have as close relationships as with men of his own age. And lastly, though no great revolutionary has escaped the infamies and calumnies of those whose existence and petty interests he disturbed, nobody — not even Blanqui — experienced such an avalanche, such a downpour of muck and lies, backed by the authority of the first workers' state. And they are still far from having been wholly swept away.

Trotsky, whose personal life and revolutionary activity were one and the same, gave many details about himself in his autobiography; but that ended practically at the beginning of the third exile. In addition, there were depths in his being that could be glimpsed by living close to him or by reading his works, but which he did not reveal: he was not "soul-searching," to use the expression of the Harvard university scholars, but his deep inner life can perhaps be appreciated, more than in any other of his writings, in the "diary" that has just been published.

★

There are, in this diary, as one might expect, abundant reflections about literature and art. Though in many other fields there have not been lacking Marxists of uneven value, in the field of aesthetics on the contrary, those who contributed something, can be counted singly. Marx, Engels, and Lenin, in this field, did not go beyond a few remarks, though these were worthy of their genius. Mehring and Plekhanov were the first to work in this field. Trotsky has, without any doubt, made a most considerable and eminent contribution. But at the very moment when "destalinization" has affected Communist intellectual circles, they not only do not dare look Trotsky's way in the matter of the analysis of Stalinism and the economic and political problems of transitional regimes (that would run the risk of leading them to revolutionary conclusions), but they are also unaware of Trotsky's work as a Marxist literary critic. Among the causes of this state of things, there is evidently the difficulty, the impossibility, of disassociating the two fields in an absolute way, but there is also the fact that Trotsky, showing himself to be an incomparable master, stimulating the thought of his readers in whatever field he treats, never resorts to the fashion of the professors, never pontificates, and his thought always concerns itself with the immediate present, yet without losing historical perspective. What has not been said of late about Soviet literature? In any case, nothing as concise and profound as this note made in the diary under the date of 9 March 1935:

Aleksey Tolstoy's novel, *Peter I*, is a work remarkable for the immediacy of its feeling for the remote Russian past. Of course this is not "proletarian literature": as a writer A. Tolstoy has his roots in old Russian literature — and world literature as well, naturally. But undoubtedly it was the Revolution — by the law of contrast — that gave him (and not him alone) an especially keen

feeling for the peculiar nature of Russian antiquity — immobile, wild and unwashed. It taught him something more : to look beneath the ideological conceptions, fantasies and superstitions for the simple vital interests of the various social groups and of the individuals belonging to them. With great artistic penetration A. Tolstoy lays bare the hidden material underpinnings of the ideological conflicts in Peter's Russia. In this way individual psychological realism is elevated to social realism. This is undoubtedly an achievement of the Revolution as an immediate experience and of Marxism as a general doctrine.

Mauriac, a French novelist whom I do not know, an Academician (which is a poor recommendation), wrote or said recently : we shall recognize the USSR when it produces a new novel of the calibre of Tolstoy or Dostoievsky. Mauriac was apparently making a distinction between this artistic, idealistic criterion and a Marxist, materialist one, based on relations of production. Actually, there is no contradiction here. In the preface to my book *Literature and Revolution* I wrote about twelve years ago :

"But even a successful solution of the elementary problems of food, clothing, shelter, and even of literacy, would in no way signify a complete victory of the new historic principle, that is, of Socialism. Only a movement of scientific thought on a national scale and the development of a new art would signify that the historic seed has not only grown into a plant, but has even flowered. In this sense, the development of Art is the highest test of the vitality and significance of each epoch."

However, it is impossible in any sense to represent the novel of A. Tolstoy as a "flower" of the new epoch. It has already been stated why this is true. And the novels which are officially regarded as "proletarian art" (in a period of complete liquidation of classes!) are as yet totally lacking in artistic significance. Of course, there is nothing "alarming" in this. It takes some time for a complete overturn of social foundations, customs and assumptions to produce an artistic crystallization along new axes. How much time ? One cannot say off-hand, but a long time. Art is always carried in the baggage train of a new epoch, and great art — the novel! — is an especially heavy load. That there has been no great new art so far is quite natural and, as I have said, should not and cannot alarm anyone. What can be alarming, though, are the revolting imitations of a new art written on the order of the bureaucracy. The incongruities, falsity and ignorance of the present "Soviet" Bonapartism attempting to establish unlimited control over art — these things make impossible any artistic creativity whatsoever, the first condition for which is *sincerity*. An old engineer can perhaps build a turbine reluctantly ; it would not be first-rate, because it had been built reluctantly, but it would serve its purpose. But one cannot, however, write a poem *reluctantly*.

It is not by accident that Aleksey Tolstoy retreated to the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth in order to gain the freedom essential to the artist.

In addition to general observations like the foregoing, how many remarks about a book or an author ! In 1935, Jules Romains, the first volumes of whose *Hommes de bonne volonté* had appeared, was setting out in politics. In a few lines Trotsky judges him as both politician and writer :

As a writer (and even more as a politician) he is evidently lacking in *character*. He is a spectator, not a participant. But only a participant can be a profound spectator. [...] A spectator like Romains can be a *remarkable* writer, but he cannot be a *great* writer.

One day chance caused Trotsky to read Frapié's *La Maternelle*, a winner of the Goncourt Prize in a period when

this distinction made less fuss. About the work of this author, of whom he knew nothing, Trotsky wrote :

[...] He shows very courageously the back yard — and the darkest corner of the back yard — of French civilisation, of Paris. The cruelty and meanness of life strike hardest at the children, at the smallest ones. Frapié, then, set himself a problem of looking at present-day civilisation through the frightened eyes of the hungry maltreated children with hereditary vices in their blood. The narrative is not sustained artistically ; there are breakdowns and failures ; the heroine's arguments are at times naive and even mannered ; but the author succeeds in creating the necessary impression. He knows of no way out and does not even seem to be looking for one. The book is charged with hopelessness. But this hopelessness is immeasurably higher than the smug and cheap recipes of Victor Margueritte.

The same acuteness of observation, joined with the same superior ability to deduce general ideas and social conclusions, is to be found again when, leaving the field of literature, he notes the contacts he was having with people, inevitably forced contacts with various "authorities" and official figures, or inevitably brief and scarcely developed contacts with people who, more often than not, did not know who he was. Prosecuting attorneys, policemen, clerks of court, prefects, hotel or pension proprietors, barbers, etc. Little touches, graphic and full of irony, toward officials anxious not to get on his account into any trouble that might impede their careers. And these words that cannot be read without their evoking so many miserable memories :

There is no creature more disgusting than a petty bourgeois engaged in primary accumulation. I have never had the opportunity to observe this type as closely as I do now.

Always extremely sensitive to the contrasts between human progress and knowledge and superstition and prejudices, and the combinations that result therefrom : the radio on the one hand, and, on the other, the manifestations at Lourdes or a royal ceremony in England. On the plane of intelligence, Trotsky does not fail to conclude :

There is a much greater distance between Baldwin and Lenin, as intellectual types, than between the Celtic druids and Baldwin.

He is on the level of Marx, Engels, and Lenin ; with them he breathes the fresh air of the mountains, which clears out lungs full of pettiness and insolence, obsequiousness and ignorance. From the pages of this diary, let us excerpt a few all-too-brief lines on Engels, "one of the finest, best integrated, and noblest personalities in the gallery of great men" :

Alongside the Olympian Marx, Engels is more "human," more approachable. How well they complement one another ! Or rather, how consciously Engels endeavors to complement Marx ; all his life he uses himself up in this task. He regards it as his mission and finds in it his gratification. And this without a shadow of self-sacrifice — always himself, always full of life, always superior to his environment and his age, with immense intellectual interests, with a true fire of genius always blazing in the forge of thought. Against the background of their everyday lives, Engels gains tremendously in stature by comparison with Marx — though of course Marx's stature is not in the least diminished by this. I remember that after reading the Marx-Engels correspondence on my military train, I spoke to Lenin of my admiration for the figure of Engels. My point was just this, that when viewed in his relationship with the titan Marx, faithful Fred gains — rather than diminishes — in stature. Lenin expressed his approval of this idea with alacrity, even with delight. He loved Engels very deeply, and particularly for his wholeness of character and all-round humanity. I remember how we examined a portrait of Engels as a young man, dis-

covering in it the traits which became so prominent in his later life.

★

At the moment that Trotsky was writing his diary, the Stalinist repression, which had already hit heavily at the oppositionals, was about to pass on to a new stage by striking at their families and friends: only a year later the first big "Moscow Trial" began. Trotsky, who had already been hit by Stalin through several members of his family, saw several others threatened. Trotsky and his companion Natalia were going to be painfully affected already in 1935 by the arrest of their youngest son, Sergei, who, having in his childhood turned away from politics, had become a teacher in an institute of technology and was devoting himself entirely to his technical work.

Anyone who was close to Trotsky and Natalia in these years of exile when they were to learn of the suicide of Zina, the disappearance of Sergei, and the death of Liouva, cannot read many pages of this diary without reliving painful hours and without making the striking rediscovery of the incomparable example of these two beings, suffering deeply but showing to the entire world, to the few friends, and to powerful and shameless enemies, a firmness of character of the highest inspiration for young revolutionaries.

In this diary one learns of Trotsky's and Natalia's worry about the way that their son Sergei, lacking in political interest, would stand up to his executioners, inspired by an insatiable hatred. Some months ago an unimpeachable witness came to us to bring an account of a chance encounter in 1937, between a communist militant and Sergei, in a prison of the G P U; Sergei, he informed us, behaved in a way full of the dignity and courage whose example he had had before him in his parents.

Among the very moving lines in this diary, perhaps the most touching of all are those that Trotsky devotes to Natalia: they must be read; any commentary would be too poor.

★

In this diary, Trotsky appears also to be concerned with the idea of death — purely as a revolutionary conscious of the tasks he is accomplishing — and seems to have felt certain premonitory signs in himself:

My high (and still rising) blood pressure is deceiving those near me about my actual condition. I am active and able to work but the outcome is evidently near.

What he feared was not sudden death but prolonged invalidism, and, in that case, he declared flatly that he intended a "suicide" like that of the Lafargues. But at the same time he could not fail to think that, under the conditions of the fierce slanders of the Stalinists against him, this would run the risk of giving rise to erroneous and malevolent interpretations; and so he considered it indispensable to reaffirm in a few lines his unshakable conviction in communism and in the future of humanity, in case he should have been led to take such a decision.

Many other passages give food for thought, whether it be his regret at not having had more time to devote to philosophy, or that dream in which he was talking with Lenin. But of this diary, which was not written for publication and which was forgotten by Trotsky among his papers, it is not possible to fail to reproduce this passage, where a Marxist treats of the role of personality in history, this personality being himself, with impressive objectivity:

Rakovsky was virtually my last contact with the old revolutionary generation. After his capitulation there is nobody left. Even though my correspondence with Rakovsky stopped, for reasons of censorship, at the time of my deportation, nevertheless the image of Rakovsky has remained a symbolic link with my old comrades-in-

arms. Now nobody remains. For a long time now I have not been able to satisfy my need to exchange ideas and discuss problems with someone else. I am reduced to carrying on a dialogue with the newspapers, or rather through the newspapers with facts and opinions.

And still I think that the work in which I am engaged now, despite its extremely insufficient and fragmentary nature, is the most important work of my life — more important than 1917, more important than the period of the Civil War or any other.

For the sake of clarity I would put it this way. Had I not been present in 1917 in Petersburg, the October Revolution would still have taken place — *on the condition that Lenin was present and in command*. If neither Lenin nor I had been present in Petersburg, there would have been no October Revolution: the leadership of the Bolshevik Party would have prevented it from occurring — of this I have not the slightest doubt! If Lenin had not been in Petersburg, I doubt whether I could have managed to overcome the resistance of the Bolshevik leaders. The struggle with "Trotskyism" (i. e. with the proletarian revolution) would have commenced in May 1917, and the outcome would have been in question. But I repeat, granted the presence of Lenin the October Revolution would have been victorious anyway. The same could by and large be said of the Civil War, although in its first period, especially at the time of the fall of Simbirsk and Kazan, Lenin wavered and was beset by doubts. But this was undoubtedly a passing mood which he probably never even admitted to anyone but me.

Thus I cannot speak of the "indispensability" of my work, even about the period from 1917 to 1921. But now my work is "indispensable" in the full sense of the word. There is no arrogance in this claim at all. The collapse of the two Internationals has posed a problem which none of the leaders of these Internationals is at all equipped to solve. The vicissitudes of my personal fate have confronted me with this problem and armed me with important experience in dealing with it. There is no one except me to carry out the mission of arming a new generation with the revolutionary method over the heads of the leaders of the Second and Third International. And I am in complete agreement with Lenin (or rather Turgenev) that the worst vice is to be more than 55 years old! I need at least about five more years of uninterrupted work to ensure the succession.

To conclude these few reflections on this brief diary which evokes so many things in us, we cannot do better than to apply to Trotsky the diary's words on Engels, that fit Trotsky himself so well:

Engels' prognoses are always optimistic. Not infrequently they run ahead of the actual course of events, But is it possible in general to make historical predictions which — to use a French expression — would not burn some of the intermediate stages?

In the last analysis E. is always right. What he says in his letter to Mme Wischnewetsky about the development of England and the United States was fully confirmed only in the postwar epoch, forty or fifty years later. But it certainly was confirmed! Who among the great bourgeois statesmen had even an inkling of the present situation of the Anglo-Saxon powers? The Lloyd Georges, the Baldwins, the Roosevelts, not to mention the MacDonalds, seem even today (in fact, today even more than yesterday) like blind puppies alongside the farsighted old Engels.

PIERRE FRANK

## MUCH ADO ABOUT NOT MUCH

Boris Pasternak: *Doctor Zhivago*. Translated from the Russian by Max Hayward and Manya Harari. 510 pages, London (Collins and Harvill Press), [1958], 21 shillings.

Poor Pasternak.

This distinguished lyric poet — treated as a lay-figure, picked up like a handy club by the political propaganda-bruiseurs of West and East to belabor each other over the head with in the most spectacular international literary cause célèbre for many a year — must be feeling morally black-and-blue. And all he did was to write a novel — a novel of no particular distinction which, authored by someone else or published in other circumstances or at another time, would have passed relatively unnoticed.

This is not to say that the novel is either untalented or uninteresting.

As for talent, its language, as we might expect from Pasternak, is repeatedly lighted by flashes of poetry — a candle-flame in a window “keeping a watch on the passing carriages and waiting for someone”; a “moonlit night as astonishing as mercy”; thunder “as if a plough had been dragged right across the sky”; “a loud talkative wind in the night” — such brilliant touches are legion. Descriptions of nature and atmosphere, which in most novels are skip-scanned by the impatient reader, here hold him — sometimes breathless. Conceived in the broad-canvas many-charactered tradition of Gogol or Tolstōi, the first third of the book, devoted to the early and separate lives of the personages who are later to interweave a tangled skein, builds up increasing interest in them. With the exception of a few excessive coincidences, the plotting is not implausible. It is, in sum, a competently planned and skilfully written book by a man of patently great literary gifts.

What about it is disappointing, boring, and even at times positively embarrassing, is its content, particularly in the second half. *Dr Zhivago* turns out to be just one more novel of petty-bourgeois intellectual disillusion with life in the world as it is, like hundreds published in the West since Mr T S Eliot opened the period with his tone-setting poem, *The Waste Land*, one more novel of disappointment in the revolution by people who never understood it in the first place, like scores published in the West by tired-radical writers. In such works, the principal characters are typical “advanced” middle-class intellectuals of the period of the exhaustion of bourgeois culture sagging toward ultimate collapse: intellectuals in the sense that they are neither creative “makers” nor active “doers” but merely critical observers, who sit around thinking sensitively about their souls, enquiring what is life’s “meaning,” groping for some all-explanatory philosophy or religion, and resenting changes that they cannot predict, guide, prevent, accept, or even explain. Vaguely “liberal” and “progressive” in politics, they do not join in them, and, expressing their own political notions in language of lofty imprecision and intuitional impressionism, consider the scientific terminology of Marxism to be so much insupportably repetitious jargon. Their intellectuality has outrun their intelligence, and their fascination with their own psyches has distorted their judgment of the comparative importance of their individual actions and of external events. Their resultantly pretentious self-centredness makes them, to anyone with a more objective sense of proportion, passably tedious. In fine, they are not particularly evil or malevolent, but just supernumerary.

Against a Paris, New York, or London background in some commonplace year, such accounts of ever so sensitive introversion have proved tiresome enough; what makes *Dr Zhivago* rather shocking and indeed a little grotesque is that the egocentric activities and solipsistic soul-searchings of

its principal characters are played out against the titanic background of some of the most tremendous events in the world’s history — the Russian revolutions and the consequent upheavals — in which these personages are non-committed, non-participant, and pretty nearly non-partisan.

Granted, a portrayal of the civil war in Siberia, for example, mounting reciprocally through brutality, reprisal, and counter-reprisal to a hallucinating horror of cruelty, is a more realistic picture than the usual portrayal by the high-class hacks of Stalinist “socialist realism,” suggestive of the “good guys against the bad guys” mentality of a 10-year-old comic-book and television addict; but when the novel’s characters are plainly unable to distinguish which side started the civil war and began this nightmare of competitive terror, and indifferent to the fact that one side was fighting for the ideals of liberating socialism and the other for the re-establishment of the overthrown regime of exploitation of man by man, then what we face is not objectivity but just plain insensitivity, and on a historic scale.

The fact that so large a part of the action is laid in Siberia results from the protagonist’s decision to get away from the central arena, to withdraw from history, as it were, by abandoning the medical profession in Moscow and taking his family to a remote rural spot where he can try to engage in self-sufficient subsistence farming. This decision is nowise fortuitous but most characteristically flows from the hero’s entire egocentric attitude to the gigantic struggle by which he is surrounded and which he sees only in terms of the undoubted privations and vexations in daily life that result. It also very probably reflects the author’s sense of his inability to handle the tremendous period in its full scope and sweep and his resultant need to reduce his canvas by this device to a few figures (if possible a microcosm), much in the same way and for the same reasons that Mr Ernest Hemingway did in his far better (indeed, very fine) novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* — and as Tolstōi in his masterwork, *War and Peace* (to which *Dr Zhivago* has been ludicrously compared by interested Western propagandists), did not.

It is also characteristic that, in a gallery of quite elaborate portraits of people in the period of the revolution and the civil war, there is not one of a serious communist. The anti-White partisan leader, Liberius Avercievich Mikulitsin, though fighting on the Red side, is hardly a communist by any serious definition. And the others, briefly touched on in passing, are sketched as clowns and chatterers. It is tempting to hypothesize that Pasternak, living decade after decade in an ambience where Stalin’s nightmare distortions were presented as communism, fell into the vulgar booby-trap of assuming that Stalinism is somehow inherent in Bolshevism, and unconsciously committed the anachronism of treating the Leninism of 1917-23 as if it were the Stalinism of 20 to 30 years later. But it is far more probable that Pasternak, no party member, simply never understood communism in the first place, and that his offhandedly pejorative treatment of it in *Dr Zhivago* comes, not from any vengeful and mis-directed hatred of communism, but from an ignorant private dismissal of it.

The parallelism of the disenchantment between Pasternak’s novel and the spate of similar novels in Western countries is also not fortuitous, but has identical class origins. That is, it arises from the fact that they treat characters whose attitudes and interests reflect bourgeois culture in decline. What! in the Soviet Union? But yes. Fully formed long before the revolution exploded around them, and on the

whole uninterested in if not hostile to it, these people continued to be fundamentally unchanged by the social change around them. The "solutions" to which they cling in their stoical depression are enough to make a reader heave a discouraged sigh: Zhivago at the end is still clutching some vague notions of Christianity and other philosophies, much as his Western opposite numbers sit around practising Zen Buddhism or seriously discussing Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Jaspers.

In fine, if *Dr Zhivago* is, because of its footling characters' tiresome solipsism, disappointing as an artistic production, it has great documentary interest precisely as a portrayal of this disappearing sub-class, and if, in half a century, it is no longer read as literature, it will very probably be still providing a rich mine for social anthropologists.

Pasternak would of course have the formal right, like any novelist, to reply that the beliefs of his protagonist are not necessarily his own, and that he was only objectively, with no interjection of auctorial opinions, portraying ideas and behavior for which he has no sympathy; and indeed he might plausibly back up this argument by pointing out that the gradual demoralization and ultimate collapse of his hero are intended to show the bad end to which persons of such mentality are very likely to come (the mediocre poems of *Dr Zhivago* also contribute to this hypothesis in that it seems impossible that they were ever seriously written as his own by Pasternak). If this hypothesis were true, the novel would have constituted a remarkable tour de force, and the East-West battle over it would prove to have been such a gargantuan irony (since each side would thus have been defending, by misunderstanding, the opposite of the position that it thought it was) that one is tempted gleefully to accept the hypothesis. But alas, from the internal evidence, the author's identification with his hero and his sympathy for the circle around him are too obvious, and one must with regret psychologically equate Pasternak and Zhivago.

The East-West dispute itself gives grounds for further speculation, and also requires the rectification of some exaggerations created in its course by Western propagandists.

On the question whether, in attributing Pasternak the 1958 Nobel Prize for Literature, the Committee was actuated primarily by stupidity or malice, there seems little doubt. It can of course take refuge behind the fact that the prize is given for the work of a writer's whole lifetime, and Pasternak's reputation as a poet is a solid one. But his main poetic work was written and published prior to 1934, and the Committee's timing in awarding the prize only when Pasternak had just written a first novel that was largely suppressed by the Soviet authorities, really gives the show away, and any pretense that the Committee was naïve can be met only by benign or angry incredulity.

Where there was stupidity, equaled by malice, was in the hysterical and foul-mouthed reaction of a sector of the Soviet bureaucracy. Even from its own ignoble point of view, its behavior was self-defeating, since, instead of letting a nine-days' wonder pass and be forgotten, it added to capitalism's provocative honor a further aureole of martyrdom. And more seriously, from the viewpoint of those of us who call untiringly for cultural liberty in the U S S R, China, and the "people's democracies," it was undeniably a discouraging set-back.

But here it is necessary to make a sharp corrective in the picture of cultural Schrecklichkeit luridly daubed by capitalist propagandists. The attack on Pasternak was very far from being unanimous. No top writer contributed to the stream of abuse. No top party leader participated in the attacks, the highest-ranking (and incidentally the most violent) detractor being the Moscow Komsomol leader. The majority of writers and of students did not take part in the campaign of denigration. There is even some reason to believe that Pasternak may have been protected sub rosa by Khrushchev himself. For the attack was obviously launched by the Stalinist intellectual die-hards against the general liberal policy in the sector of the arts, and it is quite possible that through Pasternak it was Khrushchev himself who was ultimately aimed at. But the Stalinist apparatniki this time ran into broad resistance in both artistic and university circles.

Nor were the measures taken, though spectacular, extremely severe. Pasternak was not arrested, or molested, or even deprived of his government-provided dasha (like poets of his calibre in Western countries, whose governments also naturally supply them with country-houses and secure incomes [?]). Though his book was not published in mass editions, he was forced to refuse the Nobel Prize, and he was expelled from the writers' union, he was not prevented from further writing; and it now appears that he was able to print and distribute privately several thousand copies of his book. In short, bad as the situation is, something has changed in the Soviet Union: there has been a deplorable relapse in freedom on the cultural front, but it is only partial, there is no return to the Stalin-Zhdanov period, and the pattern continues to be two steps forward, one step back.

Within the framework of this process, the Pasternak "case" will soon diminish from the grotesque hullabaloo of recent months to its proper proportions, which are, in terms of the novel's merits, relatively minor. Poor buffeted Pasternak: let us hope that, after this infelicitous incursion into the field of the novel, he will return to Helicon and produce more poetry of the early quality that gave him fame.

PATRICK O'DANIEL

# News of the World Workers' Movement and of the International

## Argentina

### THE GENERAL STRIKE

January 19th and 20th 1959 were marked by a new struggle of great scope by the Argentine proletariat.

Even before the various trade-union leaderships issued the call for a general strike to back up the workers of the national meat-packing plants, who were undergoing the assault of government repression, the general strike had already become effective on January 18th.

The toiling population of the entire country was swept up into the movement. It wanted thereby to express its opposition to the government's policy and its "austerity" programme. Frondizi, the new man of the industrial bourgeoisie, is trying to apply a policy aimed at restabilizing the badly compromised economic and financial situation of the country, by means of a substantial lowering of the masses' living levels.

Since the fall of Perón, Argentina has accumulated a trade deficit of \$ 1,000 million. At the same time, the country's industrial production has ebbed considerably, and the whole of its economy is still disorganized. The toiling masses are obliged to face not only a steady rise in the cost of living but also a spread of unemployment.

Capitalist policy, aiming at stopping inflation and giving a fresh start to industrial production and foreign trade, is working at reducing the masses' living level while offering guarantees and various advantages to native and foreign private capitalists.

The turning back of nationalized enterprises to private hands, as well as the participation of imperialist capital in the exploitation of the national wealth in oil and other sources, complements the government's programme of "austerity" and "stabilization." Frondizi's trip to the United States, made during the very days of the general strike, had as its goal the obtention of further North American financial aid to back up this policy.

The success that the general strike had with the population

was significant of the scope of the opposition that this policy arouses among the toiling masses. The three groupings into which the Argentine trade-union movement is currently divided (known by the number of organizations which each comprises: "the 62," "the 32," and "the 19") were obliged, much against their will, to back up the spontaneous strike movement. But the sectarianism and cowardice of the overwhelmingly majority Peronist leadership (that of the 62 so-called "Córdoba" organizations) prevented achieving a united front of all the trade-union organizations and permitted the other trade-union federations to limit the movement to only 48 hours.

The degree of discipline and combativity of the Argentine masses during the national general strike, despite the ferocious repression of the government, which put the workers under military mobilization, arrested and deported hundreds of trade-union leaders, and hurled the army against the workers, was extraordinarily high.

In spite of the partial success that the government scored as a result of its extraordinary repressive measures, of lack of coördination and cowardice among the trade-union leaderships, the masses will learn great lessons from this new and very serious class battle in Argentina: need of the organization at the rank-and-file level of factory and neighborhood committees; united front and unification in a single trade-union federation; and an independent workers' class party based on the unions.

A pre-revolutionary situation is rapidly ripening in Argentina, a country where the working class has in recent years given innumerable signs of its extraordinary fighting potentialities.

By the forging of organs capable of unifying the struggle of the toiling masses on an adequate transitional programme, it is possible to pass over to a revolutionary situation.



## Belgium

### THE WORKING CLASS BREASTS THE STREAM

In contrast to its French class brothers, bemused by the collapse of the Fourth Republic and only now tardily beginning a "slow burn" as the material results of Gaullism's victory are concretized for them in spurring prices and reduced security, the Belgian working class has, during the last quarter, shown a steady, conscious, successful, and very heartening militancy.

Clouds had been for some time gathering over the Belgian economy, and the Belgian bourgeoisie, like those of other European countries, was not slow in passing the first effects of the recession on to the workers. In the great Borinage coal basin, many mines had been closed as "marginal," and so many other closings were threatened that not only the daily bread of the miners but the whole economic life of the region was menaced. For a year now, the textile industry at Verviers, Ghent, and Alost, and the metal industries of the Hainault and Brabant regions, had been victims of similar measures. Careless of all save profits, Belgian capitalists were transferring their capital elsewhere in Belgium and abroad — especially to Canada — in search of higher returns. Commercially unsalable coal was piling up mountain-high at the mine-mouths, 7,500,000 metric tons of it — a quarter

of a year's production. The working class was understandably growing more and more uneasy.

It was in this ambience, which elsewhere had largely produced retreat or inaction, that the Belgian working class counter-attacked: near the end of November two strikes were launched for wage-demands. The nation-wide walkout of the tramway workers, fully backed by the general public, needed only two days to win its demands. Even more important was the strike, also nation-wide, in the gas and electricity industries. For five days 10,000 strikers paralyzed the entire economy of Belgium, bringing holidays to half a million other workers. They kept production of gas and electricity to about 25 % of the average, and apportioned this out for emergency and humanitarian uses with an administrative and technical discrimination and efficiency that sent chills down the spines of the capitalists who had so long blathered that without their administration the workers were helpless that they had begun to believe it themselves. The strike was a success, winning its main demands.

The bourgeoisie was thoroughly frightened. The conservative press waxed furious. Numerous bourgeois deputies and senators readied legislation to illegalize strikes by public-

service workers and limit the right to strike by other workers. But the dominant Catholic party, which had won the close June elections by a demagogic outbidding of the Socialists in reforms within the capitalist framework, proved on inner consultation to be divided on the matter. For big elections for the factory-committees were about to be held, and the Catholic trade-union federation complained that, if the party tried to limit the right to strike, the Socialist Fédération Générale du Travail would win in a landslide. So the bourgeoisie, with ill grace, had to put its rod back in pickle.

In the FGT itself, meanwhile, the left-wing Renard tendency had been driving successfully for the adoption of a bold programme that includes the nationalization of the coal mines and all power, free health service, and control over the ten great holding companies that dominate the entire Belgian and Congolese economies.

On the political level, the Belgian Socialist Party (PSB) had meanwhile been preparing for its national congress by a series of regional ones. In these it became everywhere clear that the rank and file was profoundly disturbed by the loss of the June 1st elections, and was increasingly swinging over to the opinion of the left wing that the defeat had come from watering down and practically wiping out the socialist programme in order to hang on at almost any cost to the alliance with the Liberals in the coalition government. A steady groundswell grew for an adoption by the party of a programme of structural reforms similar to that of the FGT.

At the National Congress itself, held near the end of December, Party President Buset started off in the old key by calling on the delegates to approve the odious speech made shortly before in the Chamber by former Socialist Premier van Acker, in which he had reminded the rightist government of his own expertness in ways to deal with strikers. The congress reacted by hooting and booing. A new key was set.

And it was in that key that the most important speech at the congress was made. It was delivered by André Genot, one of the national secretaries of the FGT and spokesman for the powerful Namur Federation of the party. With vigor and acid humor Genot demolished the draft resolution presented by the party's Bureau, particularly reproaching the party leadership for its integrating itself into the capitalist regime and indefinitely postponing the socialist transformation of society.

The atmosphere rapidly became electric, the speech was repeatedly interrupted by wild cheers, and when Genot concluded, the Liege delegates burst out into the *International*, which was quickly taken up by the whole congress. The Bureau, embarrassed, was forced to get to its feet. Van Acker refused, which provoked a redoubled outburst of hooting and boos aimed at him. It is not often nowadays that congresses of the Social-Democracy produce such an atmosphere.

The party's bureaucratic structure and election methods were such that the apparatus, though badly shaken, was in its majority reflected, though with van Acker it was only by the skin of his teeth, and a new leftist deputy, J - J Merlot, entered the Bureau. But on policy, the drive of the left wing forced the leadership to move considerably leftward, giving up its own draft programme and adopting one quite close to that of the FGT. It is true that the technical

means at the disposal of the bureaucratic leadership and the characteristic centrist hesitations of the left-wing leaders did not permit — despite the exceptional atmosphere of the congress — a complete reversal of the tendency of the Bureau and the adoption of plans for immediate action along the lines of the new policy. But within six months a new National Congress is to be held, devoted to the programme's application, and here it will be demonstrated whether, as we hope, the left wing will in the interim have been able further to build up the already rising self-confidence of the rank-and-file members in their ability to force their recalcitrant leadership away from its merely electoral manoeuvrism and toward structural transformations along the path to socialism, and, in case of refusal by the more conservative elements, partially to replace it.

Thirdly, in late January and early February, the Belgian workers gave a further demonstration of their fighting spirit and their ability to breast the reactionary tide. The textile and metallurgical industries all along the French side of the Franco-Belgian frontier depend to a considerable degree on some 40,000 Belgian workers who cross the border each day to work. The recent deGaulle-Pinay devaluation of the French franc cut their wages, when transformed into Belgian francs, i.e., their real purchasing power, by some 18%. At the time of the Gaillard devaluation of the French franc in August 1957 the frontier-workers had succeeded in wresting from the French bosses a compensatory exchange-bonus, partly underwritten by the French government; and this time they made a similar demand. How badly such compensating bonuses were needed can be judged from the fact that at the new exchange-rate the wages of some of the frontier-workers came out to less than Belgian unemployment pay.

But in the new atmosphere of anti-working-class arrogance adopted by the majority of the French bourgeoisie since Gaulism came to power, the French government and the French bosses contemptuously refused. Unhesitatingly the Belgian frontier-workers went on strike, first on the northern or textile sector, a week later on the southern or metallurgical sector. Disturbed, the Belgian government tried to negotiate with the new masters in Paris, and received a brush-off. Victimized discharges against Belgian union delegates were indulged in by the French bosses, as well as threats to fire other workers en masse. As we go to press, the negotiations have moved up from the level of functionaries to that of foreign ministers, and the Belgian frontier-workers are maintaining an unbroken front.

And finally, as we go to press, the dramatic news breaks in radio bulletins that the coal-miners of the Borinage, their patience at an end, have spontaneously begun a general mine strike which the leadership of the two main unions are hurrying to "officialize." And not merely for wage demands, but for the nationalization of the mining industry. There is even talk of a march on Brussels.

In a Europe where, under the misleadership of the Socialist and Communist Parties, the workers are either just holding their own or are already in retreat, perhaps it is the moment to reapply what Rosa Luxemburg said back before 1914, that other European workers should learn to "speak Belgian."



## Bolivia

### CRISIS AS A REGIME : THE SILES GOVERNMENT LURCHES ON

The well-nigh unique situation in Bolivia has persisted for another quarter: in a nation staggering along in such political, economic, and social crisis that its continuance seems impossible, a beleaguered and internally quarreling government shows itself incapable of governing, while the toiling masses have not yet found the way to throw it off their backs. In a way suggestive of the French dictum that

"only the provisional lasts," the crisis of the regime has become practically crisis as a regime.

In its present form, the Siles government has visibly outlived itself. Siles himself is reliably reported to have spent the New Year period negotiating with the heads of the opposition press looking for some sort of deal with the "rosca." The "trials" of the fascist Falange conspirators of

October 21st are being speeded up, and are expected to end in their going scot-free. Meanwhile a previous conspirator, Inofuentes, has been promoted, and another, Guzmán Gamboa, confirmed in his post as head of the carabinieri, the national militarized police. To reassure the rosca, the "Control Político" has been "dissolved," but its anti-worker functions will obviously be continued under some other name. Among the various governmental "solutions," there is much talk of a junta of "strong men" such as Guevara Arze, Peñalosa, and Andrade, and the renewed possibility of Paz Estenssoro as president to neutralize some sectors of the trade-union and MNR bureaucracies. But the essence of the governmental situation lies in the fact that not even the proponents of the divers rival measures have much hope that they will provide a lasting solution.

In the agricultural sector, the Third Peasants' Congress at La Paz has just shown its lack of confidence in the government and its Ministry of Peasant Affairs and Council of Agrarian Reform. The congress, carefully prepared by these government organizations to rubber-stamp their activity, blew up in their faces. The peasants, geographically atomized and not yet well organized nationally, have for a longer time than the miners and industrial workers continued to feel confidence in "their" MNR government, although, as formidable explosions in the Yungas, Northern Potosí, and Ucureña have demonstrated, they are instinctively disposed, once convinced that they are being fooled, to the most violent direct action; and by now the feeling has become well-nigh universal among them that the agrarian reform has become paralyzed, and that the functionaries of the government's organizations for installing it are, on the contrary, in alliance with the latifundists, the gamoneros, if not themselves becoming big landowners by various frauds and seizures. Sparked by the La Paz Federation, the congress called back Ñuflo de Chávez, and invited Lechín to come and address it; showed total lack of confidence in the government; and elected new rank-and-file delegates to the new leadership. These steps alone, however, though plainly progressive, are visibly insufficient: only by overcoming their atomization by organizing themselves on a national scale in such a way that they can move as one man, only by allying themselves closely with the unions of the miners, railwaymen, and factory-workers, and only by adopting a full anti-capitalist programme, can the peasants really ensure the land to those who work it.

In the mining and industrial sectors, the government, still pig-headedly trying to drive through the "stabilization" plan of Yankee imperialism, has kept up its unceasing campaign either to fire workers, especially the most militant elements, or to persuade them voluntarily to throw up their jobs. Checked by the workers' resistance at Pulacayo, it tries again at San José; stopped at San José, it makes an attempt at La Unificada; blocked at La Unificada, it turns to the national glass factory. And, now that the railwaymen have thrown off their backs the notorious bureaucrat Sanjinés, the government discovers that hundreds of railroad workers are redundant. As a further method of driving the "surplus" workers back to the land, the government has threatened to unblock the controlled prices at the mines' "company stores," the pulperías. So far, the working class has successfully beaten back the government's attacks on almost every front.

In La Paz itself, the government's weakness was nakedly revealed in its inability to smash the long and bitter strike of the bank employees. Here, naturally, predominate middle-class elements, who for long were the enthusiastic central nucleus of the MNR membership, and it is an accurate measure of the degree of revolutionary development in Bolivia that they fought "their" government so militantly, and stood up, in their majority, against all threats.

And threats were not lacking. First, the government held a night rally of local comandos (its private MNR army of thugs and killers), with shooting in the air and a speech by Guevara Arze full of menaces to the bank employees.

But support for the strike only increased: the Emergency Committee of the national trade-union federation, the C O B, came out for it. The bank employees' leaders declared a hunger strike, and the C O B leaders threatened to follow suit.

The government decided on really large-scale intimidation, calling for an afternoon "mass concentration" in the Plaza Murillo in front of the government palace. On the one hand, they brought to La Paz the notorious Huanuni comandos, who preceded the rally by marching through La Paz firing off their guns at the top floors of houses. On the other hand, they closed all factories and offices, with threats to fire any workers or clerks who did not attend the rally. They even dared close the municipal markets, to the loudly expressed rage of the redoubtable market-women. Not all these efforts succeeded: the crowd was the smallest that Siles had ever assembled. At previous rallies, to give an impression of union support, the government had collected a few men carrying worker or peasant union banners, even though not followed by any delegation; this time, the organizers did not succeed in utilizing even this device. Only a few government functionaries, terrified of losing their jobs, were marched in.

The speeches from the balcony of the Palacio Quemado had divergent lines. MNR Executive Secretary F Álvarez Plata savagely attacked the left, both the Trotskyist P O R and the left wing of his own party. The speeches of Guevara Arze and Aguilar, on the other hand, attacked the right, the fascist Falange Socialista Boliviana. They spoke of the bank employees as good MNRistas who had been momentarily led astray, but said that all MNR members would now work together. President Siles Zuazo himself, taking a line between the two, attacked MNR members who were "stabbing the government in the back." He startled the audience by one emotional outburst: "I am not going to resign. I am going to end up like Villaroel or Busch!" Seeing that President Villaroel had been hanged on a lamp-post in that very plaza by an angry mob, and that the mysterious death of President Busch has never been satisfactorily clarified, this statement was to say the least extraordinary, and both reflects some severe inner crisis in the MNR leadership and reveals Siles's well-founded fear of the masses.

The spreading influence of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario, Bolivian Section of the Fourth International, and the growing hatred felt for it by the capitalists and the pro-capitalist elements in the labor movement, has been revealed in this last quarter by an increasingly extensive and despicable campaign against it, in which falsifications, amalgams, and arrests have been combined.

It opened with an anti-P O R series by one Armando Morales (a former MNR member who has gone over to the Falange) on the San José radio, of which he and his brother Alberto have captured control. It was centred largely against Comrade Fernando Bravo, letters of whom were falsified in such a way that he seemed to be advising the miners voluntarily to give up their jobs. In this tactic is readily seen the hand of Lechín, Guevara, and Aguilar.

The Lechín-Torres tendency utilized preparation of a miners' union conference to brand oppositionals within their own tendency as "agents of the P O R." Looking for a scapegoat to divert the miners' anger for the firing of hundreds of workers at Pulacayo, the mine administration hit on one Cabrera, who had compromised himself by supporting the firings. It accused him of being a PORista and the P O R of supporting the firings, an accusation repeated by the union bureaucracy.

In the strike of the bank employees, dissident Trotskyist Guillermo Lora, serving on the employees' side in a commission of arbitration, voted for the employees. The government thereupon accused the P O R of being the sole promoter of the strike, arrested Lora, and issued warrants for numerous P O R leaders. It caught Comrade Víctor Villegas; the others, warned in time, took cover and went on working.

In the union field, in view of the unmilitant and untrustworthy functioning of the present bureaucratic leadership of the C.O.B., some 30-odd national unions and regional inter-union organizations met at the mining centre of Catawi to sign a highly militant and revolutionary Inter-Trade-Union pact for mutual defense and the implementation of an advanced programme. This is a progressive step, but, as

the P.O.R. tirelessly points out, only the holding of an Extraordinary Workers' Conference, which will reorganize the C.O.B., coördinate the all-too dispersed workers' and peasants' struggles on a national plane and drive for the constitution of a workers' and peasants' government, can really put an end to the present state of semi-permanent crisis in Bolivia.



## Congo

### ANOTHER AFRICAN AREA RACES FOR INDEPENDENCE

The bourgeois press has given the spectacular events of Leopoldville sufficient coverage (for once) so that in our limited space we can concentrate rather on informing our readers about their background and first results.

The "Belgian" Congo represents the most important profit base for imperialism in all colonized Africa. About half the world production of uranium comes from the mines of the Katanga. The Congo is also an important producer of copper, tin, manganese, and various rare metals. The powerful Union Minière du Haut-Katanga and a few other companies controlled by the Société Générale de Belgique dominate the Congo and directly control some 60% of all the assets of the colonial companies there, which, according to their stock-exchange prices, amount to some 125,000 million francs (about \$ 2,500,000,000 or £ 900,000,000). The profits of the big companies bring the Belgian bourgeoisie one third of its overall income, as much as those from the Belgian metal and mining industries combined.

The Congo's population is given officially as 13,500,000 Congolese and 105,000 Europeans, of whom three quarters are Belgians. Three and a half million Congolese live in the cities or in special settlements around the mines, factories, or plantations. At the beginning of 1957 1,200,000 of them, or 39% of the male population, were wage-earners; wage-earning women were only between 5,000 and 6,000. Beginning in 1957 the decline in world prices of copper and other ores reduced the wage-earners by some 50,000, and in 1958 this figure was more than doubled. Unemployment is thus severe, and there is no provision for unemployment benefits.

Scarcely 15% of the wage-earners are skilled, and unskilled laborers have a minimum wage that ranges from 6.50 francs (about 13 US cents, or a shilling) a day at Kivu to 17 francs (about 34 US cents, or 2s 4d) a day at Katanga.

The rise of nationalism in the Congo commenced late and was therefore all the faster when it began. In 1956 a timidly nationalist organization, patronized by the Catholic missions, published a first manifesto on "African consciousness." A year later the "Congolese Socialist Action" was born. Each was in touch with the Belgian trade unions of corresponding tendency.

But another organization, tribal in inception, rapidly gathered the sympathy of the native population in the Lower Congo. This was the ABAKO, whose leader, Kasavubu, was elected mayor at Leopoldville in the first municipal elections in the three largest cities, held in December 1957.

Other nationalist groupings were formed in 1958. One of them was even able to send delegates to the Accra Conference (see the editorial note thereon in the present issue). It was on the occasion of a meeting called by the ABAKO to report on the Accra Conference that the first incidents occurred on January 4th. That meeting was suddenly forbidden by the authorities. The audience assembled, and the decision was reported to them. Though indignant, they complied, and poured into the street, shouting "Independence!" A policeman ordered them to be silent. When one refused, he was seized and forced into a jeep. The fourth man so seized resisted, and, when punched by the officer, knocked him down. Another officer fired on the resister. The outraged crowd rushed the police, and there began the incidents widely reported in the world press.

In three days of punitive raids, the police and other repressive forces killed at least 150 men, women and children (72 are admitted officially) in a reign of terror reminiscent of the casbah in Algiers.

At Brussels at first indecision reigned. One sector of the ruling class was for an Algerian-type policy; another for a solution of the Ghana type. The three main governing forces—the big capitalist companies, the Church, and the Royal Palace—finally chose the latter solution, and in so doing made an extremely abrupt turn.

Whereas heretofore the paternalist administration had tried to head off any aspirations for independence and to prevent the formation of a Congolese intelligentsia, the January 13th declarations by the King and by the government announced elections, offered independence, and promised the rapid formation of negro administrative cadres. It has since been announced that a whole series of new administrative posts are to be urgently created by transferring to the Congo various colonial state and semi-state services and organisms now in Brussels. Belgian financial groups are offering scholarships to Congolese students and even some 20 million francs (about \$ 400,000 or £ 143,000) for them to build themselves a home!

The meaning of the turn is clear. Comparing the French and the British tactics in face of the irresistible colonial revolution, the determinant sector of the Belgian bourgeoisie appears to have decided that it is better to concede the political semblance of independence provided it retains under cover full economic and financial control, rather than, by refusing any concessions, to risk rapidly losing everything. By its tactic, in an atmosphere of friendship and cooperation, of rapidly forming a Congolese petty and middle bourgeoisie composed especially of well-paid agents of public and private administrations, it hopes to create a new social layer of pro-Belgian "moderates" as "leaders" to hold the nationalism of the masses within limits that do not too immediately threaten its own billions of investment and annual profits. It figures that the working class, which, despite its numbers, is still not highly organized, would not immediately be able to exercise pressure on the new stratum in formation.

But, needless to say, there are bourgeois forces opposing this orientation. "Ultra" organizations are mushrooming among the Europeans in the Congo. They find allies in the police and the administration. They openly declared that the political pledges made to the Congolese by Messrs Eyskens and Van Hemelrijk are "null and void," and that they will not accept them. Open sabotage of the government programme has appeared in the administration; arbitrary mass arrests and judicial irregularities continue despite their being exposed by the Belgian Socialist press. Provocations are resorted to in order to start the infernal reciprocating action of repression, reprisal, counter-reprisal, terrorism, and counter-terrorism that has in Algeria dug such a terrible gulf between the populations. And the ultras in the Congo have in Belgium allies and sympathizers who are already trying to kindle flames of nationalism and racism. Developments promise to be more stormy than the shrewder sector of the Belgian bourgeoisie proposes.

But neither British-style craft nor French-style terror shall succeed in preventing the Congolese toiling masses from winning rapid, unconditional, and genuine independence.

## Great Britain

## TORY GOVERNMENT OPENS ATTACK ON COAL-MINERS

After years of shortage and exhortations to the British miners to work extra hours and make special efforts to increase production, the Tories through the so-called National Coal Board have now announced their intention of closing down some 36 uneconomic collieries. This means the sacking of 13,000 miners, and even the Coal Board dare not claim that more than 8,000 can be found work at other pits. In the worst-hit areas, moreover, South Wales and Scotland, general unemployment is three or four times the national average. Even those who are found alternative work will have to uproot themselves, with little prospect of getting new homes for their families. It is no exaggeration to say that this is the biggest attack against the British working class the Tories have dared make since they were elected in 1951.

The miners have always been a particular object of hatred to the Tories, for they have always formed the militant vanguard of the British workers. The hatred is cordially returned by the miners: there are no Tory MPs from the mining areas.

In the 13 years since the mines were nationalized, private industry has battered on the miners and consumers of household coal. It was not charged the economic price of coal, according to the laws of supply and demand, but systematically undercharged — as it still is today.

But it is precisely on the law of supply and demand and the economic price for coal that the capitalist press now demands that the Coal Board base its decisions in face of the growing coal glut. And the Board, composed largely of old managers and capitalist elements, plus ex-trade-union leaders, refusing to consider the reduction of hours to meet diminishing demand, is trying to operate on this basis — as far as it dares without provoking too much resistance from the miners.

And how are the miners' leaders responding to this attack? The right wing who control the leadership have torpedoed any campaign; in fact, at the December meeting of the N C, it was decided on the one hand to take no action on the closure

of the pits, and on the other hand to give the National Coal Board maximum coöperation to ensure the least possible hardship to any man concerned in the closures. This boils down to completely passive acceptance of the position.

The Stalinist leaders who control the union in areas worst hit by the closures (South Wales and Scotland) have organized a campaign of protest meetings, lobbying of parliament, etc. At the same time they have talked of a united front of miners, religious communities, capitalist-controlled chambers of commerce — in fact, all sections of the community. They have made the closing down of open-cast mining a main plank of their programme: in other words they propose to sack workers who work above ground instead of those under ground. They must act militant enough to ensure the election of their candidate, William Paynter, as general secretary of the union; but will not go to the degree of taking real action, e.g. a national mine strike.

Yet in the absence of any alternative leadership, there is little doubt that the CP will gain in influence by even these half-way policies.

There are signs that a new consciousness is slowly arising in the mines. There is talk of a rank-and-file movement for militant action in South Wales. But the confusion caused by the complete betrayal of the old leadership, the tactics of the Stalinists, and the long years of complacency, will probably make this a slow process. Such a development is inevitable, however, and its rhythm will to a considerable extent depend on the speed with which the still numerically limited Trotskyist cadres increase and win leadership. As their ideas and the miners' fighting spirit become organically united, there will be forged a force which British capitalism will have cause to fear.

Meanwhile, with a sense of international solidarity, the British miners are intently watching the drastic direct action taken by their Belgian class and craft brothers of the Borinage under identical provocation by a government board.



## Uruguay

## WORKERS OCCUPY BIG TYRE PLANT AND OPERATE IT THEMSELVES

Details have tardily arrived concerning a relatively isolated but highly significant action of the workers in Uruguay. The 2,000 "gum-miners" of the big FUNSA tyre-plant at Montevideo had gone on strike. Management's attitude in negotiations angered them so that they decided not only to occupy the factory but to run it themselves. In face of dire predictions that without the supervision of the bosses everything would come almost immediately to a standstill, if not to a catastrophe, they demonstrated that they were perfectly well able themselves to manage a plant in which many processes are of notorious complexity. The factory ran smoothly, and productivity was high. So was morale, and so were the workers' spirits. Word of their action spread through the city: other workers came to cheer them; the university students immediately offered an alliance. The bosses were staggered: after 48 hours they stopped talking tough and signed an agreement on the workers' terms. Among its most important provisions were: the recognition of the factory council with certain rights of control, and the acceptance of a guaranteed monthly wage plus the sliding scale of wages based on the cost of living—for the first time in Uruguay.

The Uruguyan workers were jubilant, and they learned fast from this experience. In succeeding strikes in OSE, Radel, Conatel, Spiller, Samic, and TEM, the workers adopted the tactic of full occupation.

*Frente Obrero*, the fortnightly organ of the Partido Obrero

Revolucionario, Uruguyan Section of the Fourth International, stressed for the country's workers two of the main lessons of the experience: that it put a stop to the eternal nonsense about the incapacity of the workers to run industry themselves without the need of straw bosses, company police, and bourgeois administration; and that it struck a decisive blow at the idea of the "sacredness" of private property and the "sacredness" of business secrecy. The paper wisely cautioned that an experience so isolated is by its nature limited and cannot be long maintained; but what it urgently poses is the necessity of the statification of all industry and general planning of production. And—a point of particular timeliness with the growth of unemployment—*Frente Obrero* called on the workers, after this convincing experience, to refuse to accept any future closing down of plants simply because their bosses cannot make sufficient profit out of them, throwing their workers out of work and into misery, but instead to demand immediate nationalization of such plants and their functioning under workers' control—control of production, accounting, and distribution.

Sparking the operation at FUNSA were several members of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario. And their policy and activity were such that a group of other FUNSA workers, headed by one of the principal strike leaders, José Manganeli, joined the party as a result.

On Press - Order Now

THE THIRD VOLUME OF  
**Les ÉCRITS de LÉON TROTSKY**

With an Introduction by Michel Pablo

*On Germany* : Et maintenant ?

La seule voie

L'Allemagne, clef de la situation internationale

Qu'est-ce que le national-socialisme ?

Le tournant de l'Internationale Communiste et la situation en Allemagne

Contre le national-socialisme

Au sujet du contrôle ouvrier

Entretien avec l'ouvrier social-démocrate, etc.

*On Spain* : La Révolution espagnole et les tâches communistes

La Révolution espagnole et les dangers qui la menacent

L'Espagne, dernier avertissement

Dix commandements du communiste espagnole, etc.

This volume, of about 500 pages, sewn and paper-bound, is priced at 1600 French francs (\$ 3.25 or £ 1/4).

Recently Issued

**Volume III: Où va la France?**

With France launched on the Gaullist adventure, this volume, casting light upon underlying historical sources and often revealing historical parallels, is of a singular timeliness today. It contains : An Introduction by Pierre Frank ; The Preface to the French edition of 1936 ; Où va la France ? (October 1934) ; Encore une fois, où va la France ? (March 1935) ; Front populaire et Comités d'action (November 1935) ; La France à un tournant (March 1936) ; L'étape décisive (5 June 1936) ; La révolution française a commencé (9 June 1936) ; Devant la seconde étape (July 1936) ; Biographical notes and an index. This volume, of 192 pages, sewn and paper-bound, is priced at 500 French francs (\$ 1.10 or 8 shillings).

Those who order volumes II and III before the appearance of volume III may obtain both for a combined price of \$ 4.00 (£ 1/8). Orders to :

**PUBLICATIONS DE "QUATRIÈME INTERNATIONALE"**

64 rue Richelieu . Paris 2ème

An Indispensable Handbook

**THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL**

**WHAT IT IS**

**WHAT IT AIMS AT**

By MICHEL PABLO

This convenient pocket-size pamphlet of 32 pages, the text of the lecture given at the Summer School of the Independent Labour Party, at Ruskin College, Oxford, on August 12th 1958, provides in concentrated form the history of the formation and growth of the Fourth International and the essence of its programme. Price: 20 U S cents or 1 shilling. Orders to

**SAL SANTEN Berlagehof 36 Amsterdam W Holland**

In Great Britain: Sam Bornstein, 21 Sidney Street, London E 1.

In the Far East: Lanka Sama Samaja Party, 49 Driberg's Avenue, Colombo, Ceylon.

## *Some Publications of the Fourth International*

### OTHER THEORETICAL ORGANS

*Quatrième Internationale* (French)  
*Die Internationale* (German)  
*Revista Marxista Latinoamericana* (Spanish)  
*De Internationale* (Dutch)

### RECENT BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

Léon Trotsky: *Écrits, 1928-1940, tomes I et II*  
Léon Trotsky: *Les Bolcheviks contre Staline*  
Michel Pablo: *La Guerre qui vient (Capitalisme ou Socialisme)*  
Michel Pablo: *Dictature du prolétariat, démocratie, socialisme*  
Michel Pablo: *The Fourth International — What It Is; What It Aims At*  
Ernest Germain: *Les Problèmes économiques de l'URSS*

*Orders to: Sal Santen, Berlagehof 36, Amsterdam W, Holland*

## *Public Organs of Some of the Sections of the Fourth International*

Argentina: *Voz Proletaria*  
Bolivia: *Lucha Obrera*  
Brazil: *Frente Operario*  
Ceylon: *The Samasamajist*  
Chile: *Vanguardia Proletaria*  
France: *La Vérité des Travailleurs*  
Greece: *Εργατική Πάλη (Workers' Struggle)*  
Italy: *Bandiera Rossa*  
Japan: **世界革命** (*World Revolution*)  
Peru: *Voz Obrera*  
Uruguay: *Frente Obrero*

*Subscriptions may be channeled through:*

SAL SANTEN

Berlagehof 36, Amsterdam W 49, Drieberg Ave., Colombo, Ceylon

LANKA SAMASAMAJA PARTY

SAM BORNSTEIN

21, Sidney Street, London E1