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DAMNED . . . AND BANNED . . . BUT GROWING! WHY?

Marxism has been damned incessantly and banned repeatedly—but *it has not been refuted*. Eighty years ago the butcher of the Paris Commune announced: "*Now we are finished with Communism!*" He was wrong. Twenty-five years ago, Hitler, taking power, shouted: "*We have destroyed Communism; we shall rule for a thousand years!*" In his first assertion, Hitler, too, was wrong; in his second assertion, he missed by 988 years.

While all this has been going on, disillusionment with and renegacy from Marxism have also proceeded. The disillusionment and the renegacy were always proclaimed as decisive evidences of the obsolescence or fallacy of Marxism. Yet, somehow, Marxism persists; and today has more numerous adherents than any other philosophy in the world.

In the United States there is one monthly magazine which is a partisan of that philosophy, which seeks, with the light it affords, to illuminate the domestic and the world-wide scenes. That magazine is *Political Affairs*; there, and only there in the United States, will one find the viewpoint of Marxism-Leninism conveyed every month. There, and only there, each month, will the reader be able to find what the Communists think—not what George Sokolsky or Walter Lippmann or Max Lerner say the Communists think, but what they think in fact and as expressed by themselves.

We believe these thoughts are more profound, more revealing, and more truthful than any others. Be that as it may, they are significant and must be weighed by any person who wants to understand the world in which he lives. To get those thoughts first-hand, quickly and regularly, you must read *Political Affairs*.

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A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: HERBERT APTHEKER

Ruthenberg and the Party's Founding

By Oakley C. Johnson

This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of the United States. Though harassed, vilified and persecuted by the ruling class, its state and its servitors, from the day of its birth, and though its epitaph has been repeatedly pronounced by over-eager gravediggers, the Party lives; and in this, its fortieth year, is once again increasing its strength and influence in our country. In connection with this anniversary, *Political Affairs* will publish several articles in the ensuing months.

On March 2, 1927, Charles E. Ruthenberg, first General Secretary of the Party, died; assessing his role and some of his main ideas, Oakley Johnson—author of the biography of Ruthenberg, *The Day Is Coming* (International Publishers)—at the same time polemizes against distortions of the man and his Party that have appeared in recent writings.—*The Editor*.

THEODORE DRAPER, in his *Roots of American Communism*,* tries, among other things, to circulate the idea that Italian-born Louis C. Fraina, not Charles E. Ruthenberg, was the chief founder of the Communist Party.

As a matter of fact, there were quite a number of people who had an important share in the Party's founding. Among the most prominent, in addition to Ruthenberg, were John Reed, Alfred Wagenknecht, and John J. Ballam. Fraina,

who was in Boston and was editor of the *Revolutionary Age*, was in this number. All of them played a part, and there were others, too—the head of the Socialist Party of Michigan, John Keracher, who was first to demand the setting up of a Communist Party; Alexander Stoklitsky of Chicago, head of the Russian Federation, who joined John Keracher in issuing the first call to organize such a party; and a New York dentist named Dr. Maximilian Cohen. If I am not mistaken, Dr. Cohen wrote the first draft of the Left Wing Manifesto, John Reed rewrote it,

* Reviewed by William Z. Foster in *Political Affairs* May, 1957.—Ed.

giving it is literary flavor, and Louis C. Fraina revised it, inserting some of his firebrand phraseology. The invitation to the Left Wing Conference held in New York in June was issued early in 1919 by three outstanding Socialist locals—Local New York (its Left wing section), where John Reed, Maximilian Cohen, William Weinstone and Isaac Hourwich lived; Local Boston, where Fraina and Ballam lived; and Local Cleveland, where Ruthenberg and Wagenknecht lived.

But within a couple of years or so, Maximilian Cohen was out of the party, Keracher withdrew, the head of the Russian Federation, Stoklit-sky, was deported to the Soviet Union, and Fraina was expelled.

Others who could indeed be mentioned as "founders" were Jay Lovestone, who tagged along after Ruthenberg, managed to get his job when Ruthenberg went to prison, and tried to take over after Ruthenberg's death; also Benjamin Gitlow, who in 1924 was candidate for vice-president—running mate of William Z. Foster for president—on the Communist Party ticket. But for twenty years or so Lovestone has been a favored government stool-pigeon, and Gitlow began his ghost-written literary career as author, many years ago, with the book, *I Confess*.

Now, with all these people present in the Convention in Chicago, September 1, 1919—three months after the Left Wing Conference which formally started things off—the dele-

gates voted overwhelmingly for Ruthenberg to be General Secretary and he was kept in that job until his death, except when substitutes did his work during his frequent prison terms.

Draper opens his argument by alleging that Ruthenberg's "outstanding" role—which he describes as a fabricated "legend"—"came at the very last stage," and that the Communist leaders attempted to "blot out Fraina's outstanding role" by simply ignoring his accomplishments and omitting mention of his name. This would imply that Ruthenberg was a sort of dark horse in radical politics who was suddenly shoved into prominence when the party was organized in 1919. Yet Draper acknowledges that Ruthenberg was the Ohio Left Wing leader seven years earlier and that two years before, at the St. Louis Convention of the Socialist Party, he was "the principal leader of the Left Wing." In the spring of 1919, at the Left Wing Conference, says Draper, Ruthenberg "stood out both as a successful organizer and as an eminent martyr." To describe seven years of leadership as emerging "at the very last stage" appears, indeed, like an attempt to "blot out" historic facts.

To be fair to Draper, however, we can concede that he appears to be unaware of some Socialist Party history. In 1912, Ruthenberg emerged as a *national*—not merely an *Ohio*—Left Wing leader. In Indianapolis in that year he achieved nation-

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prominence as contender for a socialist program in agriculture (*Proceedings, Socialist Party Convention, 1912*, pp. 82-87; Ira Kipnis, *The American Socialist Movement, 1897-1912*, p. 218), and as advocate of a reform in the organizational status of the language federations (*Proceedings, Socialist Party Convention, 1912*, pp. 86-91). Draper's references to Ruthenberg's prominence in 1917 and in 1919 are less than candid. In 1917 he was indeed "principal" leader of the Left Wing, as Draper concedes but does not explain, for he was the Left's leading member on the committee which drew up the famed St. Louis anti-war resolution; he was the first prominent leader (with Alfred Wagenknecht and Charles Baker) to be jailed under the Espionage Law; and it was after visiting him, Wagenknecht, and Baker that Eugene V. Debs delivered the anti-war speech that sent him, in turn, to prison. In 1919, Ruthenberg was indeed an "eminent martyr," to use Draper's choice of words, for he had not only recently come from prison but had just led a powerful May Day demonstration in Cleveland, demanding freedom for Debs and withdrawal of American troops from Soviet Russia, a demonstration which was attacked by troops and police, but which nevertheless won a great moral victory. So much for Ruthenberg's emergence "at the very last stage."

Draper is not aware of the importance of Left Socialist ideological

leadership in the Middle and Far West. The Left Wing Conference was held in New York, and the Left Wing Manifesto was issued in New York. From that point of view it might appear that Fraina, who was active in New York and Boston, *must* have been more important than Ruthenberg in Cleveland. This overlooks the fact that the demand in January, 1919, for a Socialist Party referendum on joining the Bolshevik-sponsored new international (planned but not yet formed) was initiated by three Socialist locals, of which two were western, Cleveland and Portland, the third being Boston. This preliminary nation-wide organizational move of the Left was a month before the Left Wing Manifesto was published, and five months before the Left Wing Conference. It also ignores the long roll of militant western socialist leaders, from Debs to Kate Richards O'Hare, William D. Haywood, J. Louis Engdahl, Robert Minor. Not only did the Communist Party select a midwesterner, Ruthenberg, as its executive secretary, but the Communist Labor Party (which later merged with the Communist Party and other groups to form the Workers Party) selected another Ohioan, Alfred Wagenknecht, as its executive secretary. This line of thought need not—but could, if necessary—be quite considerably extended.

On the other hand it was the 23-year-old Fraina who suddenly emerged into national prominence,

in the spring of 1917, exactly two years before the Left Wing Conference. He became known through his editorship of *The New International*, beginning in April, 1917, and of a successor to it, *The Revolutionary Age*, beginning in November, 1918; and his authorship of the book, *Revolutionary Socialism*, 1918. This is doubtless a terrific journalistic feat for a youth of 23, but the quality of ideas, too, should be examined.

Draper himself gives us a hint. In comparing Fraina to Louis Boudin, he says that Fraina had "more of the fervor and extremism of the true revolutionary." Concerning *The New International* which Fraina edited, he says it "was more extreme" than *The Class Struggle* controlled by a board of three editors. He says that Fraina in *Revolutionary Socialism* wrote "political prose poems" about his "peculiarly syndicalist" variety of "mass action."

This gives us the cue: Fraina was an extremist, and was recognized as such by many at that time. The writer recalls that in the Michigan movement in those days we called Fraina "Lefty Lou," because of his super-Left line. A party led by Fraina would have been an extreme Leftist "big mouth" party. Since Draper wanted to show the Party in that light, with plenty of vocal force and violence, he naturally wanted the founder to be just that type.

It is ironical that Draper, who worries about the "American roots" of the American Communist Party,

and tries to show that Communism is built entirely on force and violence, should want to put the foreign-born Fraina, chief exponent of force and violence, in the role of founder of the Party.

The divergence of views among the founding delegates, the forming of two Communist parties, and the frequent rise of factions posed many problems in firmly establishing the U.S. Communist movement. After noting that the majority group of the National Left Wing Council had "Fraina and Ruthenberg as its outstanding figures," and later that "The most important posts in the newly organized Communist Party went to Ruthenberg and Fraina," Draper proceeds to describe the welter of conflicting views, with emphasis on extremism, but in the process he unwittingly makes it possible for us to contrast Ruthenberg with Fraina.

To get a closer view of Fraina, let us see what he said about the great Steel Strike of 1919, led by William Z. Foster (Foster, by the way, did not join the Party till 1921, after Fraina and other extremists were either out or on the way out). This is what Fraina said, writing in *The Revolutionary Age* (Feb. 15, 1919): "These strikes, moreover, must always strive to cease being strikes and become revolutionary mass action against capitalism and the State. Every strike must be a small revolution, organizing, educating, and disciplining the workers for

the final revolutionary struggle."

A few months later, when Fraina became editor of *The Communist*, he wrote, "The revolution is the issue in the steel strike." This was October 11, 1919. All through Fraina's writings this pompous infantilism shows itself.

Ruthenberg, on the other hand, as Draper himself quotes him, took a different line. When the Central Executive Committee of the young Communist Party, of which Ruthenberg was General Secretary, talked of getting out a leaflet to the striking railway workers with extremist language, the "Ruthenberg group," says Draper, "showed its displeasure." "The Ruthenberg group . . . maintained that such a leaflet could be used by the government as a pretext for using force and violence against the strikers, that it would put the Party in a position of 'acting as the agent provocateur of the capitalist state.' . . ."

Clearly, Ruthenberg was already trying to direct the Party into policies adapted to and effective in American conditions. He was hampered at every step by the extremists, among whom was Fraina.

Slowly emerging in Draper's volume is a curious fact about Fraina which is likely to strike the reader when he reads that Fraina was once arrested for addressing a meeting in New York City. That fact is that Fraina had no jail record. He seems never to have gone to prison for radical activity. It is true that

jail terms are not a necessary measure of socialist effectiveness, but on the other hand it is hardly appropriate to equate a single arrest, as Draper seems to imply in the case cited, with the court fights that Ruthenberg put up, time and again, in defense of the Socialist and Communist parties. Ruthenberg's term at Sing Sing in 1920-21 was allegedly because of matter published in *The Revolutionary Age*, which Fraina edited—but Fraina was not tried. So gallant was Ruthenberg's fight in the courts for Communist legality that Draper is compelled to write: "To the day of his death, Ruthenberg was never free of his appeals from convictions, always living, so to speak, on borrowed time."

But the only "trials" that Fraina ever went through were his trials before Communist bodies, both in the United States and in the Soviet Union, as a spy and government agent. True, the trials were not fully conclusive in any case, but such a lot of smoke makes it difficult to believe that there was no fire at all. In one place, Draper is obliged to record that John Reed was among those who testified against Fraina, as Fraina himself admitted.

Fraina left the Party openly in mid-1922, with \$4,200 of money belonging to the movement. He had actually been out of it, as Draper concedes, many months earlier.

If we reflect on the case of Louis C. Fraina, who later became Lewis Corey, we must conclude that one

reason for Draper's desire to make him the Party's founder is, clearly enough, his extremism, as cited from Draper's own work. A second reason is Fraina's final desertion of Communism and of Marxism, an act which doubtless endears him to others as well. "In three articles in *The Nation*, entitled 'Marxism Reconsidered,' early in 1940," says Draper; "he [Fraina] went all the way—Marxism was a failure, and the mission of the proletariat was a delusion."

Draper correctly criticizes the Communist Party for omitting mention of Fraina in its later publications, particularly in William Z. Foster's *History of the Communist Party of the United States*. Foster agreed in a recent *Political Affairs* article that the omission was improper. Certainly the name of Louis C. Fraina belongs in a history of the American Communist movement. (The writer was assured by Foster that Fraina was in fact named in his original manuscript.) However, the omission of his name was not entirely without explanation. Consider the following: Fraina did not, like other renegades, become a public informer. Communists were disinclined to attack him and thus, perhaps, drive him closer to the enemy camp. There was, too, an extra sense of shame about him, because of his admitted involvement with confessed government agents. There were also, to be sure, some who were not fully convinced of Fraina's guilt, and even a

few (including his first wife almost up to her death) who hoped to bring him back to the movement. These doubts and uncertainties, which at the time led to the editing out of his name, certainly can no longer serve as an excuse for erring again in the same way.

THE NEED FOR UNITY

One of the outstanding qualities displayed by Ruthenberg during the Communist organizing period of 1919-21, and indeed during his entire political life before and after those dates, was his genius for unifying Left-minded groups for progressive action. Draper is more than once compelled to acknowledge this, but there are times, too, when he fails to understand, or deliberately misinterprets, Ruthenberg's stand for unity.

An instance of the latter is Draper's contention that Ruthenberg "made it impossible" for the Left Wing to emerge at the St. Louis anti-war convention of 1917 as a "fully developed, independent political force," because he mobilized the "Left behind a single majority resolution. Hillquit," says Draper, "succeeded in splitting the Left Wing."

To say this is to forget completely the purpose of the convention and the need of the hour. Congress was at that moment launching the United States into the war, and the Socialists, the only organized anti-war group in the country, had the duty of leading the peace forces. Ruthen-

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Ruthenberg showed his superior political sense and his higher moral understanding by uniting the entire antimilitarist strength of the convention through joining with Hillquit and emerging the Left in the larger cause. It was the supremely correct thing to do. Louis Boudin, the Left leader who refused to join in support of the majority resolution but led 31 followers to back a somewhat different anti-war statement, did precisely the wrong thing for that time and situation.

Another instance is the effort by Ruthenberg in the late summer of 1919 to unite the National Left Wing Council behind the convention already called by the Michigan-Federation leaders to organize a Communist Party, an effort which, had it been successful, would have organized the entire Left in one organization. Draped, however, says that Ruthenberg "capitulated" to the foreign-language federations, ignoring the paramount issue of unity. He also ignores a fact which he is compelled to report later on that Ruthenberg, far from capitulating to federation domination, *led the fight against it*. Ruthenberg intended to tackle one problem at a time, and it seemed to him then that the setting up of a single communist organization was the first need. As it turned out, the struggle for unity which he carried on required a solution of the federation question as well.

After the Communist Party was set up, and while negotiations were go-

ing on for unity with the Communist Labor Party, Ruthenberg tried to reform the party structure so as to subordinate the foreign-language federations, which were autonomous (as they had always been under the old Socialist Party) and, in their attitude to the Party proper, rather over-bearing. "To bring about a more centralized organization [Draper writes] and, incidentally, cut down the autonomy of the federations, it [the Ruthenberg minority] proposed that dues payments be made to the Party's district organizations rather than to the nine federations. In this way, financially at least, the federations would be made dependent on the central office of the Party instead of the other way round."

It is clear from the context that Draper did not know that Ruthenberg had had this same fight eight years earlier in the Socialist Party. The Communist Party had inherited this language federation chaos from the Socialist Party.

This business of foreign-language control—which is really of only historic interest today, for the Communist Party solved the problem long ago—constituted one of the chief obstacles to the forming of a truly United States Communist Party, with native leadership. (Compare how Engels used to call down the German leadership of the American section of the First International for a similar failure to stress native American leadership.)

Other efforts toward unity, at-

tested to by Draper himself, may be briefly summarized as follows:

Ruthenberg not only visited the Socialist Party emergency convention which met August 30 in Chicago but also the more or less spontaneous caucus of delegates who were ejected from it, "in the interests of Left Wing unity." The next day he attended the hastily called Communist Labor Party convention, and, says Draper, "proposed that the first order of business should be consideration of uniting with the other Communist convention scheduled for the following day (Sept. 1)." Then, at that other Communist Convention, which had been formally called weeks before for the purpose of organizing a party and to which Ruthenberg had tried to lead the CLP delegates, a motion to ask the CLP to unite was defeated by the Federation-Michigan votes—and Ruthenberg was one of five who by threatening resignation forced a reversal of this vote and the election of a committee to confer on unity. (Fraina, who had joined Ruthenberg in going to the Communist Party convention, also joined him as one of the five who protested—one of the few times when Fraina and Ruthenberg saw eye to eye.) Three months went by, and, reports Draper, "In January, 1920, therefore, the Ruthenberg group launched a unity campaign in earnest." Finally, Ruthenberg left the CP's central executive committee on April 20, 1920, taking a minority with him, and negotiated with the

CLP leaders to form the United Communist Party. The Ruthenberg organization, Draper comments again, "had made unity one of its chief causes."

These instances from Draper do not, to be sure, exhaust the list of Ruthenberg's services for unity. Before entering Sing Sing prison in October, 1920, he visited Debs who was in prison at Atlanta, and tried to persuade him to throw his influence behind the Communist Party newly organized by the Socialist Left with which Debs himself had always been affiliated. Ruthenberg was the chief battler at Bridgman for unity of the underground with the newly formed aboveground Workers Party. He was indefatigable and usually successful in winning over one after another of the language federations to the Workers Party. He wrote publicly in 1927 to the Proletarian Party, in a piece appearing in the *Daily Worker* just four days before his death, appealing to this last unaffiliated communist-minded group to join forces with the Workers Party.

ON THE "AMERICAN ROAD"

Let us now turn to the third question, that of an "American road to socialism," some aspects of which are illuminated by a study of Ruthenberg's life. True, this is a post-World War II question: it had not arisen in the current form and context during Ruthenberg's lifetime. But his approach in presenting the case for

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Marxism indicated his conviction that the building of socialism here would relate itself to the conditions found here, and to the traditions of our people.

He wrote, in 1910, that when American workers realize the nature of capitalism, "a new Declaration of Independence will be written and the right of the people to 'alter or abolish' the present system will be invoked." Thoughts and illustrations like this run all through his speeches and articles. He was most eloquent when, as in his various trials, he demanded for Socialists and Communists the constitutional rights that belong to all citizens.

Nevertheless, Ruthenberg's idea of an American road to socialism was at the same time tied up with something very much like proletarian dictatorship, long before 1917. When he ran for mayor of Cleveland in 1911, he was asked how he, as mayor, would settle the garment workers' strike then going on. "The Socialist Party . . . would use the political power it held to help the workers win this strike," he answered at a big rally which was addressed by all the mayoralty candidates.

Two years later, incensed by the lawless behavior of Ohio mine owners, he made a motion, which was adopted by the Ohio state convention in 1913, that "Socialists elected to office shall use their power solely in the interests of the working class."

If I may interpolate a personal reminiscence, I recall, when I became

a Socialist in 1912, how I was initiated into the idea of workers' rule. While teaching in a Michigan village school, I took part in the debates scheduled in the local farmers' grange, and on one occasion argued that the government should own the railroads. My opponent, a young socialist farmer, said he didn't want government ownership *until he knew who the government was*. Under existing conditions, he said, without a worker's government, he opposed to it.

I relate this incident to show that proletarian dictatorship is not a recent or foreign idea. It has been a part of our socialist heritage for many years. An "American road to socialism" is not likely to get very far without it.

Draper, digging around in the internal party debates of the spring of 1920, manages to quote Ruthenberg in a way that is enlightening in connection with the theme of an American road:

"It may be said, in all candor," Ruthenberg wrote, as quoted, "that up to this time our zeal has been more in the direction of faithful imitation of phrases than in Communist expression of the class struggle as it develops from day to day in the United States. Our crying need is a more precise and more understandable expression of Communism as part of the everyday working class fight in the United States."

The quoted extract shows that

Ruthenberg had a far more solid, more level-headed approach to political theory and practice than such of his contemporaries as Fraina.

Referring to the incipient possibilities for an American labor party at that time and the inability of the Communist leadership to move toward it, Draper admits that later in the same year there were "symptoms of self-criticism and recovery in the Ruthenberg tendency," but goes on to relate that Ruthenberg was "taken off to jail" and "his personal influence was removed" for that period. As a result, he says, "there was little evidence of reform in the United Communist Party." Draper demonstrates, again, not the slanders he tries to propagate, but the fact that there was internal struggle over policy, with Ruthenberg leading toward one that would fit American conditions.

In the Bridgman defense in 1921-22, Ruthenberg firmly insisted on the political rights of the Communist Party, and refuted the very kind of charges against it that the Draper book still retains. Ruthenberg hammered home the fact that "there was nothing secret" about the convention that organized the Communist Party, and "nothing underground about the organization it created." The government had driven the Party underground, by its arrests, jailings and deportations, he said.

When the Communist International urged the American Communists to work toward the forming

of "a legal, open, mass party," as Draper reports, the advice was right in line with Ruthenberg's ideas. Ruthenberg was not "enchanted by illegality," as Draper earlier falsely writes.

It should be remembered that Ruthenberg remained a member of both the underground and the above-ground parties until the former was dissolved, and in the later faction struggles, as Foster writes, "enjoyed the confidence of both warring groups" (*History of the Communist Party of the United States*, pp. 264-5). Ruthenberg was helpful in two ways: in bringing the Communist movement into recognized legal life, and in making the Workers Party a genuinely Communist organization.

I don't want to give the impression that Ruthenberg had in 1919-1921 an understanding of political matters that would fit without change into the present. Not at all. Times have changed since then, and conditions have changed. Furthermore, Ruthenberg made mistakes. Most of his mistakes, it seems to me, were of the nature of concessions to the extremist elements, such as Fraina and Stoklitsky. (Fraina and Stoklitsky differed with each other on various matters, but on loud talk about "revolution" they were as one.)

ON TRADE UNIONISM

In this country, historic questions concerning trade-union organization have appeared in each generation,

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from the days of the National Labor Union to the Congress of Industrial Organizations. These questions ranged from who should be admitted to labor unions (Negroes, women, skilled or unskilled craftsmen, small capitalists) to what form the unions should take, and from union and strike tactics to political and even international attitudes. Today practically all unions take a political posture on both national and international matters: the difficulty is that frequently their politics follow along after those of their capitalist employers, and are in the latter's interests.

Ruthenberg always took an active interest in trade-union work, often spoke before union-sponsored meetings, always supported progressive actions by the trade unions, and never withheld giving his own opinions on basic matters. He helped on occasion to form white collar unions, as of school teachers in 1914 and clerical workers in 1919.

In 1908 and 1912, at the Socialist conventions and in socialist periodicals, the great historic problem was craft-unionism versus industrial unionism, a matter which—though still today having a hang-over pertinence in practical organization—is by now almost academic. Ruthenberg definitely favored the industrial form of union, but he carefully kept from making this a dividing line in his cooperation with organized labor. When he discussed strike struggles that were current, he mentioned first one and then the other, giving credit

to AFL battles as well as to IWW ones.

He supported unemployment insurance, for example, as he did in the Chicago *Daily Socialist*, August 8, 1919, quite apart from the craft-industrial problem. When the organized carpenters of Cleveland, an AFL body, called for an amendment to the city charter to raise the minimum wage of city laborers, Ruthenberg mobilized the whole Socialist Party of Cleveland to collect signatures to put the matter on the ballot, and the amendment passed. The union leaders acknowledged that their success would not have been possible without Socialist aid, and Thomas J. Dolan, the city Federation's vice-president, publicly thanked Ruthenberg. In Socialist May Day parades in those days, entire trade union locals took the day off and marched under their own banners.

In the Cleveland *Socialist Year Book* of 1916, Ruthenberg made explicit his awareness of this problem of party-labor relationship, and, regarding the official Socialist Party policy of neutrality toward trade-union problems, he wrote: "We must bring into harmony with the political and cooperative movement the industrial wing of the workers' organizations. How this is to be achieved the future alone can tell, but we must keep it in our minds as part of the end to be sought."

Draper delights in describing how the Communist Party carried on a "war against the trade unions,"

basing himself on quotes from *The Communist* in October, 1919, at the time Fraina was editor. It was during this period that a policy on trade unions was beginning to be fought out within Communist ranks.

However, to bolster his argument about the Communist "war" on the trade unions, Draper quotes Ruthenberg's criticism of some of his opponents in the Communist discussion. "In the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party conventions of 1919, it would have been difficult to gather together a half-dozen delegates who knew anything about the trade union movement," Ruthenberg wrote four years later in *The Liberator* (quoted by Draper). Similarly, Draper quotes Ruthenberg's comment in *The Workers Monthly*, in which he says that "the Communist Party of 1919 stood outside of the labor movement, endeavoring to draw the workers into its ranks through agitation and propaganda" (p. 199). What these quotes show is that there were Communists who had a much different attitude toward trade unions than the one which Draper stresses, and that Ruthenberg was a leader among them.

Draper grudgingly concedes that "Communism succeeded . . . in taking over the radical tradition" of organized labor through such a leader as William Z. Foster. Draper's book in this respect may with some justice be regarded as an unintentional tribute to the Communist Party, which has all along democratically and per-

sistently fought its own errors and struggled through—as it still struggles—to clarity and unity.

ON IMPERIALISM

Ruthenberg was aware of the meaning of modern imperialism, and of the fact that the center of imperialism in this century is in the United States. He began to learn of Lenin's general line on capitalist imperialism in early 1916, when Alexandra Kollontay and S. J. Rutgers made lecture tours through the United States and contributed articles to the *International Socialist Review*. Lenin's *Imperialism: Highest Stage of Capitalism*, in which he expanded the content of previous articles, was published in 1916-17, and appeared here for the first time in 1919.

It is interesting that Draper does not refer to Lenin's *Imperialism* at all, though he does speak of other of Lenin's writings produced in the period dealt with in this work. In fact he does not even mention the term *imperialism*!

Marx and Lenin have shown the basic way to socialism, and through socialism to that truly democratic communist society in which man will make his own destiny, a destiny of achievements now undreamed and of happiness for all.

But imperialism fears Marxism-Leninism, especially since World War II in which the Soviet Union made the major contribution in defeating fascist Germany, after which

came the birth of People's China and a series of colonial revolutions. Now imperialism has embarked on a frenzied effort to reach the minds of the people. "In these conditions," says the 12-Party *Declaration*, "the imperialist bourgeoisie attaches increasing importance to the ideological molding of the masses; it misrepresents and smears Marxism-Leninism, misleads and confuses the masses."

It is in this light, surely, that we must understand the tremendous flood of writings about Communism by the *enemies* of Communism. Draper's *Roots of American Communism* is one of these, and is to be followed, according to the announcement in the Foreword, by two more books on the American Communist Party, the second by Draper himself and the third by David A. Shannon, all financed by the Fund for the Republic, which gets its money from the Ford Foundation. From a different source comes another CP "history": *The American Communist Party: A Critical History (1919-1957)*, by Irving Howe and Lewis Coser. These books, and hundreds of others, including novels, art criticism, and travel books—all with an anti-Marxist common denominator—are favorably reviewed in newspapers and magazines which themselves compete in anti-Communist propaganda.

Added to all these, and still great-

er in quantity, are the volumes of reports and studies and documents and transcripts published by the United States Government Printing Office, thousands of publications in huge editions, millions and millions of words.

The subject matter of these documents may be seen from the names of the chairmen of the committees, who include Senators McCarthy, Eastland, McCarran and Jenner, and the names of the witnesses, who include Herbert Philbrick and Whitaker Chambers. A corps of trained research workers, lawyers and writers are kept busy giving these data a solid, juridical, even scientific appearance. Money is no trouble, either for technical workers or for witnesses. The resources that can blow up millions of dollars weekly in atomic experiments and throw away more millions in military aid to Chiang need have no difficulty in paying for anti-Communist propaganda.

The danger of this propaganda must not be underestimated. It constitutes major obstacle to the party of Ruthenberg and Foster, and must be met by comprehending and disseminating the truth to the best of our ability. That truth points to the indispensable and noble contributions made by the Communist Party to the struggle here for equality, well-being, democracy, labor organization, peace, and Socialism.

The International Working-Class Movement*

By Nikita Khrushchev

COMRADES, our seven-year plan is a powerful moral support for the international workers' and Communist movement, for all democrats, in their struggle against reaction and imperialism. By making fresh progress in building Communism, the Soviet people will be doing their international duty by the international working class.

At present, there are Communist and Workers' Parties in 83 countries. Their membership adds up to more than 33 million people. That is a tremendous victory of Marxism-Leninism, a big gain for the working class.

Reactionaries of all hues have waged dozens of campaigns against Communism. But nothing can destroy the Communist movement, for it is an offspring of the class struggle of the proletariat, of all working people, and it represents their interests. Many Communist Parties in the capitalist countries are now having great difficulties. Reaction has launched a new frenzied attack on them, which, we are sure, will end in another failure, while our fraternal parties will emerge from

the test steeled and stronger than ever before.

In organizing its offensive against the working-class and Communist movement, international reaction resorts to demagoguery, to deceiving the masses with spurious tales about the so-called "free world." Imperialist ideologists try to dress up the anti-popular capitalist system. Prominent bourgeois leaders never fail to put in that the Western capitalist countries are "free countries," and the capitalist world, a "free world."

Indeed, there is freedom in the capitalist countries, but for whom? Not for the workers, of course, who have to go into the capitalists' service on any terms to avoid finding themselves in the vast army of people "free" of work. And not for the peasants, who are continuously menaced with being "freed" of their farms through ruin. And not for the intellectuals either, whose creative endeavor is hemmed in by monetary dependence upon the money-bags and the "spiritual guidance" of various loyalty commissions. Freedom in the capitalist countries exists for those alone who have money and, consequently, power. . . .

There was a time when in their struggle against feudalism, bourgeois

* This is a section from the Report to the XXI Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, delivered by Premier Khrushchev on January 28, 1959.—Ed.

ment*
revolutions proclaimed the slogan of liberty, equality, and fraternity, but it was proclaimed by the bourgeoisie primarily to elbow aside the aristocracy in order to pave the way for capital. After it consolidated its rule, it ignored the slogans more and more.

onger than
Today, though they still take advantage of the slogan of liberty, equality, and fraternity, the imperialists turn more and more frequently to outright dictatorship. There are sinister signs in the capitalist countries today of an upsurge of reaction and fascism. This is the reactionary path chosen by West Germany, where the Communist Party has been banned, democrats are persecuted, and fascist and revanchist organizations are given free rein. The trend towards open dictatorship has taken shape in France, where the democratic freedoms and the gains of the masses are being abused. The onslaught of reaction in France, a country known for its democratic traditions, causes concern to all friends of democracy and progress. The military *coups* in Pakistan and Thailand have shown that an attack is being mounted on the democratic gains of nations that have won national independence. The forces of reaction are rearing their head also in a number of other capitalist countries.

We are thus faced with a clear-cut general tendency, which obtains in many capitalist countries, rather than with isolated facts.

The reactionaries are using an old anti-popular weapon—they are doing

away with the democratic system and setting up "strong-arm" governments. But just as in the period when fascist dictatorships were established in Italy and Germany, the tendency towards the open dictatorship of the monopoly bourgeoisie is not a sign of strength, but a sign of weakness. Yet it should be borne in mind that under an unlimited dictatorship, reaction has a better chance of starting a reign of terror and repression, of suppressing all opposition, of indoctrinating the masses to suit its ends, of poisoning them with the scourge of chauvinism, and of freeing its hands for military gambles. For this reason, the people must be vigilant. They must be ever ready to repel the reactionary offensive and the threat of resurgent fascism.

Millions of people usually associate fascism with Hitler and Mussolini. But we must not rule out the possibility that fascism will revive in forms other than those which have already discredited themselves in the eyes of nations.

Today, when there is a powerful socialist camp, when the working-class movement has much experience in combatting reaction, and when the working class is much better organized, the people have greater possibilities of blocking the advance of fascism. Broad sections of the people, all democratic, genuinely national forces, can and must join hands against fascism. In so doing, it is very important to stamp out all vestiges of sectarianism, which is liable to obstruct the mobilization of the

masses against reaction and fascism. The unity of the democratic forces, above all of the working class, is the most reliable barrier to the fascist threat.

Who obstructs the unity of the working-class? Imperialist reaction and its henchmen in the working-class movement, such as Guy Mollet and Spaak, the anti-Communist-minded Social-Democratic leaders. We know all these chieftains of anti-Communism by name and do not count on them when we speak of joint working-class action. Most of the rank-and-file in the Social-Democratic parties are friends of peace and social progress, although their idea of how to win them is different from ours, from the communist idea. And it is precisely in the struggle against reaction and fascism that Communists and Social-Democrats should find a common language. It is high time for the representatives of all the trends in the labor movement, after casting off the mountebanks of anti-Communism, to sit around one table and work out a mutually acceptable platform of joint working-class action in defense of their interests, of peace. . . .

The meeting of representatives of Communist and Workers' Parties in November, 1957 showed that the fraternal parties are united in their views. The declaration of the meeting* was approved unanimously by all Communist and Workers' Parties, and has come to be a charter of international unity for the world Communist movement. The Dec-

laration condemned revisionism as the principal danger, and dogmatism and sectarianism as well. Life has proved the conclusions drawn in the Declaration to be correct. And we take guidance from them at present.

A further consolidation has taken place inside each Communist Party after the November conferences. The international Communist movement has also become stronger. The revisionists failed to turn any of the fraternal parties away from the Marxist-Leninist path. Miserable handfuls of opportunists, and individuals who have lost their bearings under the fire of the class enemy, were the only ones to follow them. This scum, which polluted the pure fount of the Communist movement, rose to the surface in the heat of the struggle and was discarded.

The contentions of the revisionists have been refuted by life, by the practical struggle of the working class, by the entire process of social development. Dashed to the ground are the principal revisionist theses—about changes in the nature of capitalism, the crisis-free development of the capitalist system and the peaceful growing of capitalism into socialism, and so forth.

* * *

The international Communist movement has criticized the views and policies of the Yugoslav revisionists. The leaders of the League of

* The *Declaration of the Twelve Communist and Workers' Parties* (1957) is available as a 10-cent pamphlet from New Century Publishers, New York City.—Ed.

revisionism as dogmatism. Life has been drawn in the past. And we are at present. It has taken the Communist Party conferences. The movement. The re- any of the from the Miserable and individ- ir bearings class enemy, follow them. ed the pure movement, heat of the ed. ne revision- life, by the e working ss of social the ground ist theses— ure of capi- opment of the peaceful o socialism,

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Communists of Yugoslavia contend that the Marxist-Leninist parties started an ideological campaign against them because they had refused to sign the Declaration. But this is utterly false. It is the Yugoslav leadership which, in contradiction to the Declaration, came forth with its revisionist program, in which they attacked the Marxist-Leninist positions of the international Communist movement. I ask you, could Marxists really have ignored these facts? Of course not. This is the reason why all the parties which uphold Marxism-Leninism criticized the program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

Our position in regard to the views held by the Yugoslav leadership is clear. We have defined it repeatedly in all frankness, while the Yugoslav leaders keep twisting and turning and evading the truth.

They want to conceal the substance of their differences with the Marxist-Leninists. And this substance is that the Yugoslav revisionists deny the need of international class solidarity, that they have abandoned working-class positions. They are trying to tell the world that there are two blocs in it, two military camps. Yet everybody knows that the socialist camp, which embraces the socialist countries of Europe and Asia, is not a military camp, but a community of equal nations fighting for peace and a better life, for socialism and communism. The other camp is the imperialist camp which seeks at any price to maintain its system

of oppression and violence, and threatens war. We did not make up these camps. They emerged in the process of social development.

The Yugoslav leaders claim that they stand outside all blocs, above the camps. Yet in point of fact they are in the Balkan bloc, which consists of Yugoslavia, Turkey and Greece. It may be recalled that the latter two countries are members of the aggressive NATO bloc, and that Turkey is also a member of the Baghdad Pact. The leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia resent our telling them that they are sitting on their own Yugoslav chair. But for some reason this Yugoslav chair is held up by the American monopolies! And it is precisely this "no-bloc" position, this neutrality which the leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia so highly extol that has a distinct whiff of the American monopolies, which keep giving handouts to "Yugoslav socialism." The history of the class struggle knows of no case when the bourgeoisie materially or morally supported its class enemy or assisted in building socialism.

The crucial test of a country's administration is the progress it makes in developing the national economy, raising the culture and well-being of the people. We Soviet Communists think our road to socialism, shown us by the great Lenin, is the right one. By following it the Soviet Union has scored many victories, which have amazed the whole world. All the People's Democracies

have followed the road blazed by the October Revolution, Lenin's road, and have also made remarkable progress.

And who achieved the least results? It is that very party, that very country, whose leaders extol their so-called Yugoslav road as being the only right road. People look at it this way: the best road is the road which leads to the best possible economic and political results in the shortest time. And if we compare the living standards in the socialist countries, we shall find, as indicated in economic publications, that it is rising much more slowly in Yugoslavia. Yugoslav practice itself refutes the theoretical "discoveries" of the Yugoslav revisionists.

If Yugoslavia is behind in its development, if it does not march, but rather zigzags, along the socialist road, the responsibility for this falls entirely on the revisionist anti-Marxist line of the leadership of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia which has its own special idea about the role of the Party in building socialism. The Yugoslav revisionists minimize the Party's role and, in effect, reject Lenin's teaching of the Party being the guiding force in the struggle for socialism.

The Marxist-Leninist Parties watch the developments in Yugoslavia with concern. The fraternal peoples of Yugoslavia have at the price of great sacrifice, with Soviet support, liberated themselves from German and Italian occupation, have overthrown the rule of their own bourgeoisie, and

taken the road of socialism. Yet now the policy of the Yugoslav leadership aimed at opposing Yugoslavia to the socialist camp and the international communist movement, may lead to the loss of the socialist gains made by the Yugoslav people.

We have the very friendliest feelings for the fraternal peoples of Yugoslavia, for the Yugoslav Communists those heroes of underground and partisan struggle. In a number of questions of foreign policy we hold common views. We shall continue to develop trade with Yugoslavia on a reciprocal basis. We shall work for cooperation with Yugoslavia in all questions of the anti-imperialist struggle, for peace, on which our attitudes coincide.

How will matters stand in the Party sphere? That will depend on the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. Its leadership has isolated itself from the international Communist movement. Therefore, it is now up to the League of Communists of Yugoslavia to make a turn towards rapprochement with the Communist Parties on a Marxist-Leninist basis. This would also be in the interest of the Yugoslav people.

* * *

The Communist movement has dealt revisionism crushing blows. But revisionism is not dead yet. It must be borne in mind that the imperialists will in every way seek to support and rally the revisionists.

There is also the need to combat dogmatism and sectarianism, which

impede the development of Marxist-Leninist theory and its creative application, and cause the Communist Parties to lose contact with the masses. Lenin's injunction to strengthen the connections with the masses, to give utmost heed to the voice of the masses, and to stand at their head, is sacred to all of us Communists.

As regards relations between the fraternal parties within the framework of the international Communist movement, we have always followed Lenin's approach. Lenin taught us that these relations are to be built upon the equality and independence of the national detachments of the international working-class movement, upon the principles of proletarian internationalism. It is precisely because all the parties have equal rights that they maintain relations of confidence and voluntary cooperation, that they voluntarily and consciously seek joint action as component elements of a single great army of labor.

All the Communist Parties are independent and shape their own policy, proceeding from the concrete conditions in their respective countries. They have scored successes in their work, are steadily extending their influence, increasing the number of their followers, and winning prestige in all sections of the people.

Imperialist ideologists, and the revisionists who take their cue from them, strive in every way to undermine the growing influence of the

Communist Parties and spread the spurious tale about the Communist movement being "made in Moscow" and about the Communist and Workers' Parties being dependent upon the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Yugoslav revisionists, who allege that our Party seeks "hegemonism" in regard to the other parties, show particular zeal. They went so far as to include a thesis on "hegemonism" in their program. They contend that our Party interferes in the internal affairs of other countries and wants to control the other Communist Parties. And the reactionaries are very grateful to the Yugoslav revisionists for this slander. . . .

It is ridiculous to think that a political party of the working class, which often has hundreds of thousands, and sometimes millions of members, could be organized in any country from outside. No one will believe, for example, that the Italian Communist Party of 2,000,000, the French of 500,000, the Indonesian of 1,500,000, the Indian of nearly 300,000 and the other fraternal parties have been "established by Moscow" and that their members are "foreign agents."

It was not due to some center "planting" Communist Parties in all countries that they have come into being. No miracle of that kind is possible. The history of social development reveals that Marxist parties come into being with the emergence and growth of the working class. This means that the Commu-

nist movement came into being as an objective necessity, that it was born of the very living conditions of the working class in each country. There are classes in all the capitalist countries and, consequently, there are political parties there which represent their interests. The Communist Parties are political parties of the working class and they will exist as long as there is the working class.

It is just as naive to think that the millions of people in the Communist Parties can be told from outside what they are to think today and what they are to do tomorrow.

Some say that the "dependence" of the Communist and Workers' Parties on Moscow is corroborated by statements to the effect that the CPSU stands at the head of the international communist movement. In saying so they refer to the well-known clause in the Declaration of the Moscow Conference, which says that "the camp of socialist states is headed by the Soviet Union."

The Communists of the Soviet Union and of all the other countries think that thereby tribute was paid to our country and to our working class, which has, under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by the great Lenin, been the first to carry out the socialist revolution, the first to take power. In these forty-odd years we have travelled a long way along a difficult road of struggle and victory and have built up a powerful state, the bulwark of all the socialist countries and of the world communist movement.

We convey our hearty thanks to the fraternal parties for this appreciation of the historic role of the Soviet Union and the CPSU.

It must be emphasized, however, that there has always been complete equality and independence for all the Communist and Workers' Parties and the socialist countries in the Communist movement and in the socialist camp. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union does not control any of the other parties, the Soviet Union does not control any other country. There are no "superior" and "subordinate" parties in the Communist movement. All the Communist and Workers' Parties are equal and independent. All of them bear responsibility for the destiny of the Communist movement, for its failures and successes. And each Communist and Workers' Party bears responsibility to the working class, to the working people of its country, to the international workers' and Communist movement. In their struggle for working-class interests, for socialism, the Communist Parties combine the universal tenets of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete historical and national conditions in their countries. Only a Marxist-Leninist Party connected with the working class, with the people of its country, is able to know the concrete conditions of struggle; it alone can work out a political line conforming to these conditions and taking account of the traditions of the working-class movement in its country.

And this is so in reality. All the

Communist and Workers' Parties exist and struggle on the basis of complete independence and proletarian internationalism, of voluntary cooperation and mutual assistance. This is how our Party understands the nature of the relations between the fraternal parties.

As for the Soviet Union, its role is not in controlling other countries, but in having been the first to blaze the trail to socialism for mankind, in being the most powerful country in the world socialist system and the first to have entered the period of extensive building of Communism.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union was built up by Lenin in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. We Soviet Communists have not only mastered Marxism-Leninism, but have defended it against enemies of all hues. Guided by this teaching, the Soviet people, with the Communist Party at their head, have built socialism in grim struggle and are striding confidently forward to Communism, have always loyally followed the great international teaching of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and shall always do so. Figuratively speaking, our Communist Party regards itself as one of the forward detachments of the world Communist movement, the detachment which is the first to be taking the summits of Communism. And on our way to Communism we shall not be stopped by any avalanche or landslide. Nobody can make us

turn off the path leading to Communism.

We have always held the view, and still do so, that none must retire to their national "domains" and withdraw into their own shells. We think that the might of the socialist camp must be reinforced in all ways and that the unity of the international Communist movement must be further cemented in accordance with the principles adopted by all the fraternal parties in the Moscow Declaration.

Concern for the solidarity and strength of our ranks is the supreme international duty of each Communist and Workers' Party. *Success in the national cause of the working class is inconceivable without the international solidarity of all its detachments.*

We are brought together by the great common purpose of liberating the working people, of fighting for universal peace. We have one common concern—the concern for the welfare of nations, for their prosperity and security, their happy future, which can only be achieved on socialist lines. We are united by the great teaching of Marxism-Leninism and by the struggle to put it into practice. We shall always preserve the purity of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. We shall fight against opportunists, against revisionists of all shades, and shall always be loyal to the working class. It is in this that we see our international duty to the world Communist and workers' movement.

A Letter to Mao Tse-tung

By William Z. Foster

As the "Year of the Great Leap Forward," 1958, drew to a close, William Z. Foster sent a personal letter of congratulations and analysis to Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the Communist Party of China. Shortly thereafter, an acknowledgment and commentary upon this letter arrived from Mao; this exchange, which we know will be of great interest to our readers, is published below in full.—
The Editor.

December 19, 1958

Mao Tse-tung

Chairman,

Chinese Communist Party

Dear Comrade and Friend,

May I extend my heartiest congratulations to the great Chinese people and its Communist Party, through you, for the glowing success of your tremendous revolution, which is now inspiring the world. I am sorry that I have not been able to come and visit your country in person, hence I am taking this occasion to express these greetings through this letter. I am 78 years old; I have been confined to my room for the past 14 months with a paralytic stroke; and I am held under two police indictments, each of them carrying penalties of from five to ten years in prison—so my chances of getting to revolutionary China are pretty slim, although I have not given up my efforts to get a passport, that will enable me to visit the countries of Socialism. Incidentally, I hope to get better medical treatment in these

countries than I can possibly get here in the United States.

Although you undoubtedly know it, the Chinese, principally workers, have played a very considerable role in the history of the Western part of the United States. They began to immigrate into this area in the early 1850's, at the time of the famous Gold Rush in California. From then on, they were to be found for many decades in all the mining camps, lumber woods, ranches, and construction works of the great West. They built the principal railroads of California, and particularly they constructed, in the latter 1860's, the western half of the Central Pacific Railroad, the first transcontinental railroad in America, an heroic achievement. They had to contend with much chauvinism, intimidation, and violence, which reached its heights during the 1880's, when the National Exclusion Act was passed, which, rigidly enforced, practically stopped all immigration from Asia. This treatment was characteristic of how

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American capitalists have always created national minorities, worst of all those of a different color, such as the American Indians, Negroes, Japanese, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Filipinos, etc. In the early years of the immigration, as many as 100,000 Chinese came in one year to the United States. There are still, despite highly restrictive governmental policies, about 118,000 Chinese in the United States, and small colonies of them, occasionally marked with distinctive Chinese architecture and customs, are to be found in such leading cities as San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Chicago, and New York. These masses, as you know, have been profoundly stirred by the Chinese Revolution.

As an American worker, I am ashamed of the outrageous policy of intimidation, employed by the great monopolies which control the imperialistic government of the United States, to try to strangle the Chinese Revolution, and to prevent the Chinese people from carrying forward their heroic achievements in the building of Socialism and Communism. In the domineering relationship that the United States is trying to force upon China in the Taiwan Straits, and in its general support of the Chiang Kai-shek bandits, is to be found a true reflection of a brutal imperialism which until recently was enforced all over Asia, Africa, and Latin America, but which is now rapidly being ended by the rise of the Chinese, Indian,

African and Latin-American peoples of those areas.

What insolence the American imperialists have, to try to force such a policy as they now have towards China. They would cry out in wild indignation if any power were to attempt such outrages in their ports and against their country as they are daily practicing against People's China. They have brought their battleships to the very coast of China; they are attempting to bomb, capture, and hold Chinese cities; they are carrying through an unparalleled economic blockade; they are trying to bar the Chinese people from proper representation in the United Nations; they keep the threat of imperialist war hanging constantly over the heads of the Chinese people, struggling in a heroic fashion to free themselves from the poverty and misery which grew out of the tyranny and oppression of the past.

But the Chinese people, in their swiftly growing strength, can afford to laugh at these gymnastics of the "paper tiger." They know that the American blockade and war threats cannot possibly prevent the growth of Chinese Socialism. Particularly do the imperialists know that they are powerless against the international solidarity of the Socialist world, headed by the Soviet Union, and of which People's China is such a vital part. Immense China is irresistibly expanding, and all the power of world imperialism cannot stop it. Before long, the United States will find itself in an entirely untenable

position with relation to People's China. It must retreat; already it is learning that its erstwhile policy of counter-revolution against China, is full of disaster to itself. Throughout America, there is a strong and growing resentment against the Eisenhower-Dulles-Truman anti-Chinese policy. This was undoubtedly a powerful factor in the decisive political defeat of the Eisenhower Republicans in the November, 1958 elections. The expanding conviction is that these policies must end in disaster for the United States unless they are rescinded. Already there are vast numbers of Americans, not only workers, but large sections of other classes as well, who realize that the United States has got hold of the unconquerable Chinese Dragon by the tail, and the sooner it lets go the better for itself.

A deplorable feature of the situation, is the insufficient level of resistance, developed by the American working class against this imperialistic abuse of the Chinese people. As you know, however, the important trade unions of America are headed by men who have no Socialist ideology, and who have not even built a Labor Party. Frequently, they are as violent war-mongers as the capitalists themselves. Their sense of international solidarity, especially towards Socialist peoples and people generally who have suffered from imperialist oppression, is very low. Nevertheless, during the Korean War, from 1950 to 1953, there was a strong opposition waged by the ad-

vanced workers of the United States, under the leadership of the Communist Party, and in the face of unparalleled government oppression. The prestige of People's China is constantly and rapidly rising in the United States. American public opinion is in a state of continual amazement at the revolutionary achievements of the Chinese people.

During the past generation or so, the great question has been the swift Socialist development of the USSR, which has amazed the whole world. It has been my good fortune to have seen this revolutionary development from close up, having visited the Soviet Union thirteen times since the earliest days of the revolution. Now there is the spectacular Seven Year plan, which will surely give world Socialism an unprecedented shove ahead. It has been a great inspiration to watch the Socialist overtake the capitalist countries one after the other. Above all, is the realization of Lenin's slogan for "overtaking and surpassing" the United States by the Soviet Union. The meaning of this is clear for all to understand. It signifies the overcoming of the old capitalist world by the new world of Socialism. The USSR is blazing the way for the world, industrially, theoretically, culturally. Increasingly, those capitalists who are not utterly blinded by ignorance and hatred, are beginning to realize this. Now comes People's China, in its turn, to startle the world with its incredible growth in every constructive direction. Its long 25 years of bitter civil

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and imperialist war, are bearing their final fruit of marvelous Socialist development. I must say that not only am I thrilled at the tremendous growth registered, but I am literally overwhelmed by it. The current "great leap forward" in China is simply studded with dazzling achievements, both industrial and agricultural. The perspective of China, which for decades was presumed to be hopelessly decrepit, now blazing ahead, with the perspective of surpassing Great Britain—once the outstanding leader of the capitalist world—in a very few years, is simply overwhelming in its revolutionary implications. I am especially intrigued by the new communes being set up throughout the country at the usual Chinese lightning-like pace. This undoubtedly will still further hasten the extremely rapid rate of Chinese revolutionization. But the wonder of the communes is matched largely by the marvelous democratization in steel, chemicals, agriculture, etc. that your people are bringing about. To one raised in a capitalist industrial country such as the United States, where the industries are so heavily massed in gigantic plants, it is hardly believable that the Chinese people could carry on such an enormous industry with such tiny units. And unless I am very much mistaken, the presence of these small units will hasten, not retard, the growth of the very largest and most efficient industrial plants. One can hardly imagine how far advanced the Chinese will be by the time the

historic Soviet Seven Year Plan is completed. With what enthusiasm the Chinese people are building Socialism, after having been robbed and abused so many years by the local exploiters and foreign imperialists! The American people can hardly be said to understand faintly, even, the tremendous events that are now taking place in the Socialization, and even the beginning of Communization, in China.

The United States, which looks with hostility, even though it does not understand what it sees, is notorious for the hatred with which it is treating People's China. This in spite of the fact that the American people as a whole have a kindly feeling for the Chinese masses. The dominant imperialists, however, are using every possible means to defeat the country and to prevent the growth of its industrial system. Underlying this hatred is real fear. The imperialists who own and govern the United States know very well that if they find it impossible, as they do, to dominate the world in the face of the militant USSR, they will find it doubly impossible when alongside of the Soviet Union, they have to confront a People's China at its side, doubly or triply strengthened by a few more years of growth. The continued expansion of the USSR and of People's China, will mean not only the growth of these two countries individually, but of world Socialism as such. The hopes of the American imperialists and their running dog, Chiang Kai-shek, are

more than foolish in thinking that People's China can be overthrown by an attack from the outside, and they are even more idiotic in believing that swiftly expanding China can be overthrown by an internal revolt.

In my opinion the combined Socialist countries are already much stronger than the combined imperialist countries. Perhaps the most definite sign of this is the ability of the Socialist countries, exercised for the last ten years, to prevent the imperialist countries from carrying out the general war that they have had so much in mind in this period. Undoubtedly, the imperialists, coming out of World War II, with no war damage done to the United States, with their monopoly of the atom bomb, with their enormous spread of an industrial and military machine, and with practically all the Socialist countries, including the USSR and China, deeply devastated by World War II, they thought they would have an easy time of it to knock out Socialism and to establish their American imperialist control throughout the world. But they were completely disappointed—the revolutionary people not only fought the imperialist armies, led by America, to a standstill in China, Korea, and Indo-China, but they also built up a powerful military machine of their own, and most of all they broke the atom bomb monopoly of the United States.

Altogether, they made it quite impossible for the imperialists to wage

their hoped-for world war. The latter could not have won such a war anyway; all they could have succeeded in doing was to bring about the destruction of the capitalist system and the spread of world Socialism. But they could have nevertheless largely devastated the world, which the Socialist peoples, as the elementary force of world peace, would have to prevent at all costs. This decisive defeat of the imperialists came to a head at the "summit" conference of 1955 in Geneva. In my opinion this defeat was basic for the capitalist system. The world task now, as I see it, is for the revolutionary forces to push ahead with the building of world Socialism, while at the same time they hold the capitalist warmongers in leash. Admittedly, this is an extremely difficult task. But it is a fatal process for the capitalist system. Peaceful coexistence must be fought for militantly.*

The capitalist general crisis grows more difficult. All the big capitalist countries are sick, and getting sicker, despite their war-bred prosperity and their Keynesian policies for meeting the cyclical economic crisis. In the United States, there are now well on to 4 million unemployed, and the whole economic system is shaky. There is real pessimism and confusion in the ranks of the capitalists,

* The *New York Times* in a dispatch from Hong Kong, citing this communication from Foster, "quoted" only this sentence and rendered the word "militantly" to read "militarily." A letter from Foster to the *Times* calling this "mistake" to the paper's attention was ignored by the Editor; but somewhat later, again in a dispatch dated Hong Kong, and well buried in a one-inch item, the *Times* made the correction.—Ed.

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particularly since the launching of the Soviet Sputnik, and the sensations that were created here regarding the Soviet educational system and scientific progress. Never were the imperialists so deeply alarmed at the Soviet's progress as now. They know very well that they and their colleagues are now incapable of running the world. They do not dare even to think of what the situation will be once People's China really gets under full steam in its economic, political, and cultural development. No wonder that the churches are growing so rapidly; capitalism is turning more and more to prayer to try to save itself.

As things now are, and as will increasingly be the case, the Socialist countries and their allies now have the essential responsibility for leading the world. They are definitely responsible for saving it from the disasters created by a decaying capitalism which is trying to save itself, while they push ahead with their constructive Socialist program. They have to prevent imperialist war; they have to avert capitalist sabotage of the progress of the world: they have to shield mankind from the repeated disasters of economic crisis. They have to push through with the defense of the countries of Socialism and anti-colonialism; they have to bring about the industrialization of the less-developed countries; they have to increasingly civilize the world in many directions; they have to protect and advance the people in connection with the innumerable

tasks of world Socialism. They have to overcome capitalist pests that are undermining humanity.

In recent years, the world Socialist forces, and their tasks, grow more and more complicated, and yet more simple. The Socialist Revolution is proceeding along three major channels: First, there are the definitely Socialist countries, possessing political power, armed with Communist Parties, and guided by Marxism-Leninism—they are the real leaders of the Revolution. Second, there are the many anti-colonial countries that have broken from the imperialists; they are not as clear-sighted revolutionists as the first group, but they are essentially anti-imperialist in nature, and their masses are manifestly related politically to the Socialist countries rather than to the imperialist countries. Third, there are the mass democratic organizations in the capitalist countries—such as the workers' political parties, trade unions, cooperatives, women and youth organizations, peasant movements, national groups, etc., running to many scores of millions. These democratic bodies, often led by opportunists and possessing pro-capitalist programs, are not so easy, however, to identify as vital segments of the revolutionary movement, and this is too often not done. Despite their leadership, however, which is often anti-revolutionary, their masses are by their history and by their daily struggles a part of the fundamentally revolutionary movement. They reflect the revolution in the im-

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perialist-capitalist countries. The clear-cut Socialist movement of the world should realize this fact more clearly and be more definitely guided by it. We must give concrete leadership to all three of these main channels of revolutionary, or potentially revolutionary, forces, no matter how different may be their immediate problems, leadership, programs, and tactics of struggle.

The United States, at least until the present time, has been one of the hardest lands in the world in which to build a Socialist movement—its difficulties are vastly different, for example, than those of China. The American labor movement dates back to the American Revolution, of 1776—in respect to some of its features, such as local labor papers, local labor parties, etc.—it is about as old, or even older, than that of Great Britain. I was practically raised in the labor movement. My first strike was in 1893; I joined the Socialist Party in 1900; I became a syndicalist in 1909; and I joined the Communist Party early in 1921. The United States got its first Marxists (German immigrants, many of them co-workers of Marx and Engels) in the 1850's, and its first Socialist Party was formed in 1876. During this long period, the country was notorious for the violence of the class struggle; many of the hardest fought strikes in the history of the industrial world took place in the United States. Time and again, the American working class, made up of innumerable racial and national groups, has proved its

splendid fighting qualities.

Meanwhile, the capitalist class has built a powerful and a relentless organization. With about one half of the production of the capitalist world, they have come to dominate the capitalist world very largely, they have constructed a huge capitalist system, and they would dominate the entire world, Socialist as well as capitalist, if they possessed the power to do so. But there is the greatest limit upon their power. With all their wealth and strength, they have not been able to bring the Socialist forces of the world under their control. Here is their fatal weakness, a think that will eventually bring about their ruin.

Under these harsh circumstances, the American workers and their allies have not been able to construct a powerful revolutionary movement. True, they have built, under infinite difficulties, a trade union movement of some 18 million members; the Negro people, 18 million strong, are the most militant section of the American working class, and have strong organizations; there are powerful farmer movements; also youth and women's movements, etc. These organized millions, despite unreliable leadership, and imperialist corruption policies on the part of the employers, are able to exercise a force which exerts a very considerable influence upon the course of the country.

They have not done so well ideologically, however, as organizationally. Marxist Socialism is very weak

among them; their predominant idea (pressed upon them by the tremendously powerful capitalist propaganda machine) is a confused sort of Rooseveltian Keynesim (People's Capitalism, the capitalist ideologues call it.) As American imperialism has made its tremendous progress, by semi-subjugating the other capitalist and undeveloped countries, this situation has grown worse. Thus, fifty years ago, about one-fourth of the trade union movement openly defended Marxism; now, if one should give the figure as ten percent (fringe unions) it would be putting it strong. There is no Labor Party in the United States, nor have the workers any other mass political organization of their own. In their overwhelming majority, insofar as they function politically at all, they go along with the two old capitalist parties, principally the Democratic Party, both controlled by the monopolists. The several Left parties are very weak. There is also no Social-Democratic Party at all, except a tiny sect of three or four thousand. The Trotskyites are also a tiny group, and of even less significance; and the Socialist Labor Party (DeLeon) also has but a very small fraction. In the recent elections, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party polled at least 40 million votes that should have gone to a Popular Front party, while the combined five Left-wing parties polled hardly one hundred thousand votes nationally.

From the foregoing pages, showing deficiencies of the American la-

bor movement, it would seem that this country is in an almost impossible position in fighting its way towards Socialism. But it would be a mistake to undersell the American working class. Despite its present poor showing in the period of full-blown American imperialism, it has a good fighting record. Besides, there is a new element entering into the picture, which we would do well not to overlook. This is the influence of the international democratic and Socialist fores upon the American situation. In many respects, this is of great importance to the American working masses. Take for instance, the situation of the Negro people; obviously the strong democratic influence of the world has compelled the United States capitalists to modify in very material respects their outrageous Jim-Crow system, which has been forced upon the Negro people for centuries past. Thus, in the United States Army, the government has been compelled to abolish the Jim-Crow system which separates troops into white and Negro regiments, as it would be impossible to bring troops of this segregated character into the modern democratic world outside of the United States without being severely condemned.

By the same token, the United States has been compelled by foreign democratic pressure to outlaw its purely white schools, hotels, buses, etc. and to admit Negroes to them, at least formally. Of course, every means is taken to evade these laws. It has also been compelled to put

a bridle upon the lynch murders of Negroes, which not so long ago were frequent and shocking occurrences. This foreign pressure in behalf of the Negroes has been an enormous factor in the American class struggle. By the same token, the American imperialists have been compelled to at least soften some of the hitherto unbridled exploitation and barbaric oppression of the white workers that were common in the United States, such as Ku-Klux-Klanism, McCarthyism, and the like. These foreign democratic tendencies, we may be sure, will become more and more prevalent, and more and more powerful. Undoubtedly, international democratic pressure gave considerable assistance to the resistance of the American workers in the recent defeat of menacing McCarthyism in the United States. The imperialists in the United States will find that in order to defend their barbaric system in the United States, they have to contend not only with the working forces in the United States, but increasingly on a world scale. The United States could not appear effectively as the leader of the "Democratic" world if it allowed such outrages to proceed unmolested in its own territory.

Throughout its history, the Communist Party did very much better than any other Left Party. It had ordinarily from three to ten times as many members, and vastly more influence, than all of them put together. This was because it was based upon Marxism-Leninism in its theory and

practice. Despite numerous mistakes made, our Party was incomparably more effective among the masses than the other parties. Around 1935 it reached a figure of approximately 80,000 members. About this time our Party began to meet with a series of disasters, the substance of which was a continuing attack by ruthless imperialism upon the Party. These disasters included: the expulsion from the CIO in 1940 of 11 Left unions with about one million members; the Browder revisionist Party leadership (which actually abolished the Party), and which cost the Party about 15,000 lost members; the violent war propaganda carried out by the government, many trade union leaders, etc., which adversely affected many members; the long government offensive against the Party (beginning about 1948), including the arrests and jailings of many leaders and the driving of the Party almost entirely underground, which cost the Party many thousands of members; a number of mistakes made by the Party, such as the formation of the Progressive Party in 1948, which also cost us many thousands of members; the effects of the Stalin Cult of the Individual, which seriously undermined Socialist propaganda in the United States; and along the poisonous effects of American prosperity corruption, with its theory of American exceptionalism, and the like. Altogether, in 1955, the Party developed an acute crisis of revisionism, which almost destroyed the Party. This meant the loss of

many more thousands of members. As things stand now, our Party, with its membership reduced to a very low figure, is gradually recovering from the serious crisis, in which it has been living. In the main, the revisionists are defeated. Undoubtedly, American imperialism, with its many agents, has been trying to demolish the Party, but has failed.

The foregoing may give you some vivid pictures of the situation in the United States, as well as indicate my own admiration of the splendid Chinese Communist Party under your leadership. I hope that, in spite of all difficulties, the time will come when I may be able to see you and become acquainted with you at first hand. I trust that your health is of the best. Please give my best regards to all your comrades.

Comradely yours,

W. M. Z. FOSTER

P.S.—I am sorry that I cannot sign my name, since my right arm is still paralyzed.

MAO'S REPLY

Jan. 17, 1959

Dear Comrade Foster:

Thank you ever so much for your letter of December 10, 1958. From your letter, full of warmth and enthusiasm, I could see you, the soul of the great Communist Party of the United States, and the soul of the great working class and people of the United States.

The Chinese people know that United States imperialism has done

many bad things to China and to the whole world as well; they understand that only the United States ruling group is bad, while the people of the United States are very good. Among the American people, although many of them have not yet awakened, only a tiny part are bad, the overwhelming majority are good. Friendly relations between the Chinese and American peoples will eventually break down the barriers put up by Dulles and his like and develop more extensively with each passing day.

Although the Communist Party of the United States is temporarily in a situation which is none too smooth, your struggle is highly significant and is bound to bear rich fruit. Dark night has its end. The reactionary forces of the United States are now running their heads into stone walls everywhere, which shows that they will not have many days to rule. Right now, over there in your country, the situation in which "the enemy is strong and we are weak" is entirely a temporary phenomenon. It will certainly develop in the opposite direction.

Allow me, on behalf of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people, to extend hearty greetings to you, glorious fighter and leader of the American working class, and wish you an early recovery. I warmly welcome your coming to China for medical treatment and convalescence, if it is possible for you to do so.

With Communist greetings.

IDEAS IN OUR TIME

BY HERBERT APTHEKER

DEMOCRACY, FOREIGN POLICY AND PEACE

I

Back in the sports section of a recent issue of the *New York Times* (Feb. 5, 1959, p. 40, to be precise) appeared an item that seemed to me quite out of place; I didn't even find it sporting. It consumed two inches, was datelined Ciudad Trujillo and read, in its entirety, this way:

Two U.S. Representatives delivered words of praise for Generalissimo Rafael L. Trujillo today at a joint session of the Dominican Republic's Congress.

Gardner R. Withrow, Republican of Wisconsin, said the country had been fortunate with a Government that had brought peace and prosperity. Donald L. Jackson, Republican of California, referring to the strongman label given to General Trujillo, said the history of all nations was the history of men who were strong. He said the people of the United States venerated the strong men of their history.

There are several puzzling matters connected with this news item, in addition to its being put in the sports section of the paper. For example, with the United States Congress in session what were Representatives from Wisconsin and California doing in the Dominican Republic's Congress? Had they gotten lost, wandered in, and decided that one Congress was as good as another? Who paid their travel expenses down to Trujillo-land? Were Withrow and Jackson representing the U.S. Congress; were their speeches delivered in some sort of personal capacity, or were they official greetings?

In what school of democracy did Congressman Jackson learn that history was made by Strong Men; does not Congressman Jackson take an oath to uphold the Constitution, whose opening words are: "We, the People. . ."; does he think this is a mis-print for, "We, a few Strong Men . . ."? It was somewhat inappropriate, I thought, to speak with moderation, for a U.S. Congressman to stand within earshot of a murdering and plundering and torturing Generalissimo, just one week before the birthday of Abraham Lincoln, and tell him that the American people have always venerated strong men.

The timing of the Withrow-Jackson visit was interesting, too. It followed by a few months the greetings brought the same Dominican Congress and

fuhrer by Senators Eastland and Jenner; while Jenner has since retired, Eastland remains, and heads the Judiciary Committee of the U.S. Senate. It occurred as all Latin-Americans were hailing the overthrow of Batista, at that very moment in refuge in the Dominican Republic. It came as Trujillo was reinforcing his borders and buying new death-dealing instruments from Free World operators. And it came as the press was announcing the existence, since 1947, of an American-wide mutual assistance pact, including the United States and the Dominican Republic, whereby all signatories pledged the use of their navies to withstand attempted landings or invasions upon the coasts of any one of them. Folks on the East Coast and Gulf Coast of the United States may rest easier now—Trujillo's fleet is pledged to assist ours in warding off an invasion; and Trujillo has been pledged the assistance of the United States Navy! That is a sporting arrangement if I ever saw one!

While praise for Trujillo was reverberating in the halls of the Dominican Congress, the rafters rang, in the halls of our own Congress, with impassioned denunciations of the "barbarism" of the revolutionary justice being meted out in Cuba. Others, especially Joseph North in *The Worker* and Carleton Beals in *The Nation* and *Christian Century*, have made the necessary and valid comments on this: the silence in Congress while Batista's regime was slaughtering twenty thousand patriots; U.S. diplomatic, military and financial support to the Batista-torture regime; the one-billion dollar investment in Cuba by U.S. Big Business which dominates as it exploits that nation's economy.

I would add a thought that I have not seen others express. Just as the law is fundamentally an expression of class rule, so the extreme penalty of the law—capital punishment—has been applied with careful regard for class relationships. In the Middle Ages "pleading clergy"—*i.e.*, literacy—made one immune to execution, for the very good reason that the poor were illiterate. Since then, wherever class-exploitative societies have existed, this pattern has appeared; Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis are unharmed and later beatified, but Nat Turner and John Brown are hanged and later labelled insane. The gallows, electric chair and gas chamber in the United States have taken the life of not a single millionaire, but they have claimed their victims among the poor, despised—and, especially, the non-white—by the thousands.

It is this point, in a way, that Milton emphasized when he hailed Cromwell's execution of Charles; the King's head is no better than another man's and if it tops a treasonous body, let it be removed. With the stroke of the axe, felt Milton, would be uprooted the idea of the King's divinity, an idea that had cost humanity oceans of blood. And now, here in Cuba, stood in the dock the captains and the majors, the high and mighty ones. For them to smash the skull of a peasant, and rape his wife were routine matters necessary to the maintenance of "law and order"; besides, what was the worth of a peasant's head and who was concerned with the feelings of a poor woman? Now to have the major and the captain in the dock and to have the peasant's son and wife point accusing fingers and demand justice and to get it is analogous to, but

more important than, having Cromwell behead Charles and having Milton hail it as a stroke for human freedom.

That is why Honorable Gentlemen in the U.S. Congress and leading editorial writers of the Free World press, who kept mum when Batista turned all Cuba into a human abattoir, now cry havoc when the butchers are stopped in their bloody work and are made to suffer the extreme penalty for their viciousness. That is why Luce's *Life magazine* gloried in the pictures showing scores of victims being shot down in cold blood and being hanged by their ankles and being burned alive in the streets of Budapest by "Freedom Fighters"; and why that same magazine was horrified at the executions by firing squads, after summary trials, of Batista's Bloody Boys.

II

Two notes have crept into the reports from Washington concerning arms policy that are of the gravest consequence. One indicates that serious thought again is being given at the highest level to "preventive" war; the other is the calm assumption that atomic and nuclear weapons now constitute conventional weapons so far as the U.S. government is concerned. As for the first, *Newsweek* of February 5, 1959, under the heading "Inside Story," said these thoughts were circulating in the Pentagon:

Stop promising piously that the U.S. will not strike the first blow and never start a war. Make it clear that we will do just that if forced to by the Soviets. That startling switch in policy is being urged behind closed doors by top Air Force strategists.

This trial balloon is not as "startling" as *Newsweek* says; in Truman Administration, Secretary of the Navy Matthews openly advocated the launching of a preventive war against the Soviet Union. Moreover, as was pointed out in these pages some months ago (October, 1958) the President of the United States has stated that he did not believe it was U.S. policy necessarily to wage for the first blow in the next major war.

Readers of *Political Affairs* might want to ask their Representatives and Senators and the President who these "top Air Force strategists" were; by what authority were they dropping loud hints of the need for "preventive" war and what was being done to stop such monstrous talk and to discipline officers responsible for it?

The remark concerning alteration in weapons policy was not made in the form of a rumor and did not come from unnamed sources. It appeared, on the contrary, in testimony offered before the House Armed Services Committee by Secretary of Defense McElroy. The Associated Press dispatch from Washington, dated Feb. 4., conveyed the heart of Mr. McElroy's testimony in the two paragraphs:

Mr. McElroy said conventional forces suitable for limited conflicts are being maintained, but he went on to say that a conflict on the scale of

the Korean one would not be considered today as a limited war.

Reminded that American forces in Korea operated under orders not to use nuclear weapons, he said: 'It was limited to weapons, but I think there is some doubt as to whether it would be so limited today.'

The Defense Secretary of the United States is stating that a future Korean War would not be considered a limited one, that it would be fought, so far as the United States is concerned, with every weapon at its command. In this, he is altering drastically the scope of what was hitherto generally held to be a limited war; he is dropping practically all limitations upon the use of all weapons, and he is sliding over the distinction hitherto made not only between conventional weapons and atomic weapons, but that made between conventional weapons and nuclear weapons. The Eisenhower Administration moved slowly and without public preparation to adopt the view that atomic weapons were conventional ones; it has reorganized the armed forces into pentatonic divisions for the employment of atomic weapons and the tables of equipment of U.S. divisions have been altered in accordance with this change. But the Administration seems now to have dropped the distinction between atomic and nuclear weapons—a distinction in destructiveness as great as the difference between TNT and atomic weapons.*

If this is added to the renewed "preventive" war talk; the press conference of the President where support was offered to such talk; and the remark by the President at that same press conference that he did not "think" the use of atomic weapons had to wait on the personal authorization of the President but that theatre commanders were now empowered to use such weapons if they felt their command was in danger—if all this is added together, one has a development in State Department and Defense Department policy of the most dire portent for humanity.

Increasingly one notes discussions of the techniques of launching "preventive" wars, with military experts considering not whether this should be done, but how it should be done. There was, for example, the long article by Colonel Richard S. Leghorn in the *U.S. News and World Report* some time ago (Jan. 28, 1955), urging that, in a preventive war, our initial assault be directed not at major cities, but rather at the retaliatory forces of the USSR.

Very recently, Bernard Brodie—Senior Staff Member of the RAND corporation—the civilian, strategic-planning arm of the U.S. Air Force—noted for two very influential studies (*The Absolute Weapon*, 1946, and *A Guide to Naval Strategy*, 1958) in a preliminary report on "The Anatomy of Deterrence" (*World Politics*, Jan. 1959) wrote the following paragraph, of some length and of greater consequence:

The philosophy of deterrence also takes account of the enormous American cultural resistances to hitting first in a period of threatened total war.

* For data explaining the difference between atomic and nuclear weapons see Linus Pauling, *No More War!* (N. Y., Dodd, Mead, \$3.50), especially pp. 14-31.

This is not to say that it is out of the question that we should do so. It is possible that we will build so much automaticity and sensitivity into our retaliatory response that it could be triggered by an 'indication of hostile intent' rather than an hostile act. Such a development would probably be attributable more to absent-mindedness on the part of our political leaders than to design, but such absent-mindedness is commonplace in peacetime in the area of strategic decision. Also, we must not forget that there is likely to be a threshold of "intolerable provocation" short of direct attack upon us, even though we cannot determine before the event where that threshold is or ought to be.

These general considerations, moreover, must be placed within the context of the mounting tension relative to Berlin and the entire German question, where the State Department seems intent on maneuvering the United States into the position of occupying forever a split German, half of it directed by rehabilitated Nazis, and dotted with missile bases pointing east and manned and loaded with hydrogen-bomb war-heads. And in the midst of this delightfully peaceful posture, eminent figures calmly discuss "shooting our way" into Berlin; Admiral Burke of the Joint Chiefs of Staff tells the Charleston, S.C. Chamber of Commerce on Feb. 19 that "we" can utterly destroy the USSR; and Professor Henry A. Kissinger, director of the International Studies Institute at Harvard, and author of the very influential study, *Nuclear Weapons and Limited Warfare** announces, in Hamburg on Feb. 9, that he would favor total war if necessary in order to protect "the freedom of Berlin."

III

The power of the advocates of such a fate for mankind happily is far from unlimited; which is why such a fate has not yet befallen mankind, and may be averted altogether. Yet their power continues immense and their tempting of the fates goes on. Enough of this is made public—tardily, of course—to prove the critical need for the sharpest reversal of U.S. foreign policy.

Stewart Alsop, the syndicated and reactionary columnist, writes in the *Saturday Evening Post* (Dec. 13, 1958) on "The Story Behind Quemoy." He states that the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States played a major role in almost precipitating war between the United States and China. Alsop declares that since 1950 the CIA has supported and directed armed raids upon the Chinese mainland repeatedly and that these were sometimes of battalion strength. Alsop writes that a CIA cover operation under the name "Western Enterprises, Inc." has been in charge of raids upon the mainland from Quemoy and the Tachens, and that these raids were a basic stimulant of the "brinks" which almost brought the world to the ultimate catastrophe.

Charles Edmundson, former Washington correspondent of *Fortune* and at various times in the employ of the U.S. Foreign Service, writes in the February,

* Reviewed at length by the editor in the issue of July, 1957.

1959 *Progressive* not only of the CIA activities against China, but adds:

Not long ago I asked a distinguished career ambassador, "When CIA operatives are at work in the country to which you are accredited, don't the incidents which they create shape policy in such a way as to take control largely out of your hands?" "I couldn't agree with you more," the ambassador replied. He told of CIA activities in his country which has damaged American prestige and influence over a whole continent.

In view of such charges and such data, from writers of this type—and the abundance of additional, fully documented material*—is it not the duty of

those who value the good name of the United States, who favor the democratic process in government, and who do not want war, to protest this scandal and to demand a thorough investigation of the CIA, a revamping of its policies, and its subordination to the control of the Congress of the United States, from which today it is entirely, though unconstitutionally, free?

IV

In the United States there is a continuing and developing tendency to deny the postulates of democracy and to insist that the whole idea of democratic government is a myth for children or a facade to hide from the naive the basic realities of social order. The material root feeding the development of this ideological trend is the mounting pressure generated by capitalism in crisis. Within the United States, because of the relatively high standard of living still possible, the trend shows itself most clearly in efforts to rationalize United States foreign policy, which increasingly serves as the bulwark of ultra-reactionary regimes and the chief obstacle to efforts at social progress.

While the effectiveness of the whole democratic apparatus within our own country has been severely undercut in recent years—by militarization, bureaucratization, the spread of secrecy, the corruption of regulatory agencies,** etc.—it is in the crucial areas of military and foreign policy that effective control has been taken out of the hands of the people and, in fact, out of the hands of the Congress. An excellent account of just how this has been done, going back to 1946 and carrying the story to mid-1957 will be found in the study of *Arms and the State*, by Walter Millis, with Harvey C. Mansfield and Harold Stein (Twentieth Century Fund, N. Y., \$4).

One level of the rationalization—the daily newspaper level, as it were—is typified in a recent column by C. L. Sulzberger, in the *N. Y. Times* (Jan. 5,

* Readers will find much of this in this writer's *Truth About Hungary* (N. Y., 1957), especially pp. 69-119; a news report from Taiwan on this type of activity appeared in the *N. Y. Times*, Nov. 14, 1958. See also the very moderate account by Harry H. Ransom, *Central Intelligence and National Security* (Harvard Univ. Press, \$4.75), especially chapter IV.

** "The moral rot" corroding federal regulatory commission is laid bare by Bernard Schwartz in his *The Professor and the Commissions*, just published by Knopf, N. Y., \$4. The quoted words are the author's.

1959). Mr. Sulzberger says that "Washington and other democratic capitals are disturbed by a world trend toward military rule." He continues: "We must consider the paradox that, although we instinctively dislike military dictatorship, our own foreign policy tends to encourage its spread." The paradox arises from the fact that though the United States government allegedly favors democratic government and freedom generally, yet in order to assure the military capacities of states neighboring on the Socialist world and in order to maintain internal order within those states we pour enormous quantities of arms into their hands, build up their armies, and thus lay the groundwork for the seizure of power therein by naked and brutal military dictatorships. "We are hoist," writes Mr. Sulzberger, "in a sense, with our own petard." Nevertheless, Sulzberger's conclusion is that "we should not be too distressed at its [democracy's] ugly substitute in inexperienced lands"—and one of the cold war's costs is this undercutting of democracy, something Mr. Sulzberger labels a "truism."

There is another reading of the admitted facts—as we have had occasion to point out more than once in the pages of this magazine—which eliminates the paradoxical and makes for the logical explanation of U.S. foreign policy and its results. Basic to that policy is alliance with reactionary regimes because the policy is a reactionary one, and basic to a pursuit of that policy is the undercutting of democratic processes because that policy is anti-democratic in intent. "We" are not hoist upon our own petard; "our" petard is aimed at the heart of world-wide movements for national liberation, economic progress and social advance.

An argument against democracy upon a somewhat more sophisticated level than that enunciated by Mr. Sulzberger was forthcoming recently from the brother of the Secretary of State—that is from the Mr. Dulles—Allen W.—who heads the Central Intelligence Agency, whose democratic activities we have touched on earlier. This argument was made public in a Washington dispatch by Dana Adams Schmidt, published in the *N. Y. Times*, December 8, 1958. Mr. Schmidt, as Mr. Sulzberger, reported concern in Washington over the appearance throughout the Free World of military dictatorships; he added there was questioning as to "why the democratic system is ailing in so many parts of the world."

The CIA-Dulles discussed this matter, stated Mr. Schmidt, at a recent meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Practicing Law Institute in New York City. In his address, Mr. Dulles recalled a letter written one hundred years ago by the English historian Thomas B. Macaulay to an American, wherein the Englishman had warned that the real threat to liberty and to civilization lay in democracy itself; that this threat had not seriously materialized in the United States as yet because most of the people there were not yet hungry; but that when that condition did appear, when the New World too was overrun with an excess of population in terms of possibilities of production and of distribution, then the supreme test would come and then either some dictator would take power or the masses themselves would plunder the land and lay it waste as was the Roman Empire laid waste some fourteen hundred years before.

Macaulay is restating the riddle of riddles for bourgeois political thinking—how to reconcile the theory and the condition of popular sovereignty with the fact that the means of production are the private possession of a minority class; how to keep the masses from exercising that political power to transform the nature of the state from an instrumentality for the protection of the private ownership of the means of production into an organ for the elimination of such private ownership and its replacement by social ownership and social appropriation.

With these alternatives, monopoly capitalism always has in the past chosen the path of naked dictatorship—that is, of fascism—and this again is a fundamental explanation of the developments of the past fifteen years in the implementation of U.S. foreign policy. Of special interest is the assumption by the elite that there are but two alternatives—their system of elitism enforced by brutal dictatorship or some kind of mass barbarism, a period of sheer chaos, which obviously must be highly temporary and will last only until the natural and immutable superiority of the elite reasserts itself.

This is at the heart of all "demonstrations" of the impossibility of democracy. It really is nothing but an insistence or assumption that the rich are rich because they are "better" and the poor are poor because they are no good. It really is the insistence or the assumption that those who rule do so because of a superior capacity; and that, in fact, exploitative social orders reflect nothing but natural adjustments to inherent qualities of the classes themselves. This idea of the "natural" quality of any existing status quo is particularly significant for the capitalist order, coming as it does in protest against the regulatory features of feudalism and bringing with it the concepts of modern science, of the Age of Reason as contracted with the preceding Age of Faith.

A good example of the statement of this idea is in a recent essay by August Heckscher, now Director of the Twentieth Century Fund, and lately chief editorial writer for the *N. Y. Herald Tribune*. Writes Mr. Heckscher:

In every great society the decisive element has been very different from the rather pitiful individuals who produced and consumed the necessities of life. What has been decisive has been the men who lived by action; the users, the possessors, those who have availed themselves of what is at hand, creating out of durable things new combinations and possibilities of the spirit (*The American Scholar*, Winter, 1958-59, pp. 18-19).

One must be grateful to Mr. Heckscher for placing the question squarely. I am reminded of the protests of the slaveowners in our own country one hundred years ago that they could not free their slaves for if they did "who would take care of them?" And by "them," the slaveowners meant the slaves, not themselves. They meant that they had been caring for their slaves all the years of slavery. The slaves had cooked their food, raised their crops, nursed their children, heated their homes, driven their carriages, and they had been taking care of the slaves. As the spokesmen of the slaves said—those who had them-

selves been slaves—Douglass, Bibb, Tubman—"We've been taking care of ourselves and of you and we've been doing it with you riding on our backs. We'll be able to manage very nicely, thank you, if we don't have to carry you around, too; we'll take care of ourselves very well, indeed, though we're not so sure about you."

This argument for the necessary nature of elitism, no matter what the form or the name of government may be, which bases itself upon the assumed incapacity of the masses—in what consists this incapacity? What is it that "the rather pitiful individuals," who are "only" responsible for producing life's necessities—what is it that they are incapable of? Can they not make bread and shoes, build roads and bridges, roll steel and tend the sick? What is it, after all, that the "users and possessors" have been capable of that the others have not? *Is it not the capacity to rule?*

Does not the negation of democracy, the declared necessity of elitism, come down to the assumption that the masses are incapable of ruling? Is it not true that they have in fact *done* everything else and kept the world spinning about? They have not ruled, for most of history and over most of the globe; but that is surely no proof that they are incapable of doing so. On the contrary, it is proof that societies have been arranged hitherto in such a manner that they were in fact ruled. And this was based, ultimately, upon the fact that the "possessors" were exactly that; but suppose they are dispossessed? Suppose masses become the possessors as well as the producers? Might they then not learn how to rule and will not rule then be infinitely easier since its essential task will be direction and guidance rather than misrule and deception?

It is the fact that in the Soviet Union, and now among seven hundred million additional peoples, the era of the full implementation of popular sovereignty, in all spheres of life and increasingly in full reality, is established and well advanced; it is this fact which is the great historic meaning of the Bolshevik Revolution, of the endurance for forty years of the Workers and Peasants State, despite intervention, boycott, and war; despite human failings, errors and crimes.

There is an answer to Macaulay's riddle that so distresses the Dulles Brothers. And I mean an answer cast within the framework of the riddle itself, not one that seeks to find resolution by shifting the base of the problem or by delaying its urgency, notably through overseas investment and exploitation which, historically, has been the "answer" of maturing capitalism.

In the riddle's own terms, the answer is that the logic of popular sovereignty does not represent barbarism; it represents the fullest flowering of rule by, for, and of the people. For this the people are fully "capable"; in fact, for this only the people are capable. There is no alleged ill of democracy that cannot be overcome—by more democracy, not less. There is much to learn in the proper exercising of this new kind of rule, which really isn't rule, particularly since it represents an effort altogether unique in human experience. But great advances have already been made; and the failures and errors in this endeavor are as nothing compared with the failures and errors—and the fundamental antagonism of interests—represented in class-exploitative rule.

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On Revolutionary Activity: A Talk to Israeli Immigrants

By Meir Vilner*

THIS CONFERENCE, the fourth in a series of area conferences of new immigrants from Poland that have been organized by the Communist Party of Israel, proves, as did the previous conferences, that everything which is good and honest among the new immigrants from Poland, is beginning to consolidate itself around the Communist Party of Israel.

The new immigrants have learned here from their own experience, and the activists among them, those who in the course of many years fought in the revolutionary movements in Poland, *have again become convinced*, that capitalism is worse than socialism; that the light in a capitalist country finds itself against a general background of darkness. Contrariwise, the shadows in a socialist country are found against a general background of light. The darkness in a capitalist country is the essence of that regime and can be liquidated thoroughly only with a change of the regime.

It is natural that many of the new

immigrants from Poland, particularly those that were members of the Communist Party and afterwards of the United Polish Workers Party, are still seeking to answer the question: How did this happen? How did it come about that they left a socialist country, surrendered to temporary difficulties and migrated to a capitalist country?

Some of them regard themselves as "traitors" to the revolution, to the ideals of communism, and therefore they assume that it is no longer proper or possible for them to swim with the revolutionary stream. There is supposedly nothing more left for them to do, other than to lament their bitter fate, that they had cut themselves off from their revolutionary movement and that though healthy they laid themselves in a sick bed.

It is in this connection that I wish to clarify our position, the position of the Israeli Communist Party. Our Party does not agree with these moods of despair and helplessness that have appeared among the most conscientious, the most revolutionary section of the new immigrants from Poland. It must be clear to each of the new immigrants from Poland

* The author of this article is an outstanding leader of the Communist Party of Israel. It is based upon a speech which he delivered at a meeting of recent Jewish arrivals from Poland, held in Natanya on September 26, 1958; it is translated by Sidney Resnick from the Tel Aviv weekly, *Free Israel*, dated October 2, 1958.

that the Communist Party will judge everyone, first and foremost according to what he will do, how he will conduct himself, here in Israel. *We will see a revolutionary, a Communist in everyone who will engage in revolutionary, Communist activity here in Israel.*

It must be clear that when a revolutionary displays a weakness in certain situations, or makes an error—he is still not disqualified. What is decisive is what he does afterwards. If he resumes in the new conditions the revolutionary struggle, then he is a revolutionary. A revolutionary can also make an error and still remain a revolutionary. Hence, there is no place for attitudes of self-disqualification on the part of a section of the new immigrants from Poland. The Communist Party of Israel will receive with open arms every toiling person who stands on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, who is ready to struggle for the realization of the program of the Israeli Communist Party and to fulfill the instructions of the Party Statutes.

There are many forms of the progressive struggle in Israel in the ranks of the Maki [C.P. of I.] or near it. This struggle is the most proletarian, the most patriotic struggle. Such a struggle on the part of the new immigrants from Poland can be an important contribution to the general struggle of the Israeli toilers for better and more humane living conditions, for a change in the official Israeli policy and government, for

transforming Israel from a satellite of aggressive colonialism to a really independent and peace-loving nation, a home and a fatherland for the laboring people, for its Jewish and Arabic inhabitants, a part of the mid-East which is freeing itself of the foreign yoke.

We have heard here at this gathering of working people, new immigrants from Poland, sharp discussions about the Israel reality. We have heard of the difficult and bitter struggle for jobs, simply for a day's work, for bread and a decent roof over one's head. We have heard the unnerving revelation of the refusal to aid a sick person "because we do not cure Communists," and this happened to a man who fought the Nazis with arms in his hands.

Comrades, this is capitalism! This too is the class struggle and the enemy here resorts to barbaric methods because he has no conscience.

Comrades have spoken here of the heavy political-economic pressure, of the fact that getting a job is dependent on a membership card in the Mapai, of the anti-Communist and anti-Soviet hate campaign conducted by the three government parties, the Mapai (The Labor Party), the Achduth Avodah (The Unity of Labor Party) and the Mapam (United Workers Party), particularly among the new immigrants from Poland. Not accidentally have we heard more than once in this discussion the words "fear," "fright." This is the most terrible thing in the Israeli

reality. After many have been able to overcome, or are overcoming, the political and spiritual crisis in which they found themselves for a certain time, there remains the chief obstacle to fulfill human dignity—fear. . . .

How can one explain this condition of fear? The economic terror is the most terrible thing in Israel. The right to work, the right to bread, for oneself, for one's wife and children, the right to medical attention—is in many cases dependent on political convictions or party adherence.

This fear must also be conquered. The Ben-Gurion "democrats" and their followers utilize this fear for their own interests. There are also unemployed Mapai members. Of course, it is more difficult for an isolated person to struggle. But a revolutionary collective is capable of mobilizing public opinion, the uncorrupted people regardless of political conviction or party adherence, in order to fight against those who torment human dignity, against the humiliation of the individual, against the ugly speculation, for the right to work, for the right of a roof over one's head and for medical treatment. . . .

Comrades here have very correctly indicated that the majority of new immigrants from People's Poland, who were connected with the revolutionary movement, did not betray their revolutionary ideals. This is true in regard to the workers as well as the intelligentsia. We absolutely agree that one mustn't gen-

eralize the cases of betrayal, of joining the ruling parties in Israel, the Mapai, the Achdut Avodah and the Mapam, surrendering all principles, seeking government positions and "comforts" in order "to get settled." Those who sold their soul and conscience and even joined Israel reaction in its campaign of incitement against the Soviet Union, against the entire socialist camp and against the Communist Party of Israel are a small minority. They are essentially unprincipled careerists who went along with the authorities in People's Poland and here, too, go along with the government parties.

But those who stand with the revolutionary movement in Israel, at whose head is the Israeli Communist Party, are still a minority. They are in the hundreds, possibly in the thousands, but still a minority. The vast majority of new immigrants from Poland is still almost completely preoccupied with everyday worries and troubles. They are seeking a way to secure the existence of the family and they are not prepared for any kind of revolutionary activity no matter what the form. A section of them is afraid. Another section is influenced by ideologies that are opposed to Marxism-Leninism, to the Communist movement. But the largest section has still not "found time" to think, being as they are sunk in everyday troubles and problems.

We must arouse the heart, the mind and the conscience of these

masses of new immigrants, and guide them in their struggle for bread, jobs, and security, for humane living conditions and decent treatment on the job. We must awaken in them anew the revolutionary political thought and bring them into revolutionary activity. In this way we will not only strengthen the progressive movement in the country, but we will also help the immigrants to straighten their backs, to feel themselves again as people who act in accordance with their conscience. In this way we will return to them the true joy of living which comes to people only when their deeds are in harmony with their convictions.

This does not mean that we do not need an ideological offensive. There are forces in Israel who attempt to cause political and ideological demoralization especially among the new immigrants from Poland. In the "pioneering" ranks one finds the Mapam. This party, which participates in Ben Gurion's pro-imperialist and militarist government, gives a "Leftist" cover to the traitorous policy of the Ben Gurion government in regard to the working class and in regard to the State of Israel.

The Mapam has a special task in the service of the bourgeoisie: to sow the seeds of "refined" anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism among the workers with Left leanings. This party which with all its might opposed the ending of the British colonial rule over Palestine, maintaining that there must first be created, with

the aid of the foreign occupant in the course of another 20-25 years (until 1972) a Jewish majority in Palestine; this party which under the name of Hashomer Hatzair (The Young Guard) posted placards together with the fascist Betar which called for a ban on Arab agricultural produce under the slogan: "Buy only Jewish fish," "Buy only Jewish carrots"; this party which resisted, even more than the other parties in the government, the withdrawal from the Gaza strip and Sinai areas which were occupied in the aggressive war in alliance with the French and British imperialists, in November, 1956. And all this in the name of "Revolution," of "Greater Zionism" and even "Marxism."

It is understandable that in all questions that are of mutual interest for us and Mapam, at least according to their declaration, we struggle for a united front with them. For many years we have fought with all our strength for the united action of the working class, and particularly for united action between the Maki and the Mapam on issues of mutual concern, in the struggle for peace and to defend national independence, democratic freedoms and the everyday interests of the toilers, as well as to end the "ghetto" regime, the oppressive military regime directed against the Arab population in Israel. But the Mapam leadership steadily rejects every proposal for concrete unity of action, putting forth ideological unity as a condition for united

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action in specific political and trade-union matters. In other words they are not agreeable to united action as long as we do not adopt the ideology of the Jewish bourgeoisie, their bourgeois-nationalist ideology—Zionism.

We on our part do not make unity of action with Mapam or with any other force conditional on the basis of a progressive minimum program—of their adoption of the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. For them to even raise ideological conditions is absurd, because when ideological unity exists there is one party and there are no problems of united action or working together.

Besides being chauvinists, they are also sectarians and they are not ready to cut themselves off from Ben Gurion's apron strings or from Israel reaction generally, though on many vital questions they express their non-agreement with the policy of the Ben Gurion government. These declarations appear in order to quiet the uneasy conscience of their comrades and in order to mislead the progressive sections of the toilers, among them the immigrants from People's Poland. In the political reality of our country Mapam serves as the "Left" assistant to Ben Gurion and bears the full responsibility for the crimes of the Ben Gurion government in which it participates, against the working class, the Arab population, against the peace and security of Israel. It is no accident that Mapam receives yearly

aid of over a million dollars from the money collected by the United Jewish Appeal which is conducted in the United States. . . .

In conclusion, a few words on the perspective of the struggle. The enemies of communism seek to arouse moods of distrust in the prospects of the revolutionary forces in our country. They, and the Mapam leaders in particular, declare: The Communists here are few in number and they have no future.

To this one can reply, as Lenin did to the German workers who turned to him after the historic vote in the German Reichstag, after the betrayal by the Social Democracy when it voted for the war budget in 1914. The German workers asked him: Only one solitary Liebknecht voted against the war budget. All the other deputies, including the Social Democrats voted "yes." What are the prospects of Liebknecht's course? Lenin answered: If Liebknecht does not please you, you can go with the bourgeoisie and with the traitors. But the solitary Liebknecht is the one who represents the conscience and the compass of the German people. He is the one who represents the future of Germany!

As is known, the Mapam voted in the Knesset [Israel Parliament] for the war in Sinai, despite its opposite assertions prior to the outbreak of the war.

Quantity alone is not decisive. The decisive question is: who is right,

which conception expresses the objective laws of historic development? Which ideology must inevitably win, regardless of the present day, temporary relations of forces? The Bolsheviks in the Czarist Duma did not have more deputies than the Maki has now in the Knesset. Were the S.R.'s and Mensheviks, who with the help of the bourgeoisie, had more deputies in the Duma—were they therefore right, did they represent the future Russia? History has proved that only Marxism-Leninism, only the Communist Parties, can lead the working class of every country to complete national and social emancipation.

It is particularly ridiculous to hear such "quantitative" arguments from a petty bourgeois party as the Mapam, which has after all, despite the favorable conditions for its work, only nine deputies in the Knesset. The Mapam has only three more deputies than the Maki whose conditions of activity are much more difficult from every viewpoint, which swims against the filthy stream, and which has in all situations defended the national honor of the Israeli people, faithfully upholding the banner of peace, independence, and socialism and has not been intimidated by threats or terror.

He who swims with the reactionary stream of Ben Gurionism which is leading Israel to the abyss, against the billion, seven hundred million inhabitants of Asia and Africa, against the Arab peoples who are

liberating themselves and straightening their backs after centuries of oppression and national enslavement—he is a traitor to his people and fatherland. We, the Israeli Communists, fulfill the task not only of being the vanguard of the workers in Israeli society. We also fulfill the historic task of national salvation, a noble, patriotic task.

Those who swim along with the reactionary tide in all its shadings are still the majority in Israel, but this is a temporary majority which will tomorrow be a minority. We who go against the reactionary tide in Israel are still a minority, but this is a temporary minority which will tomorrow become a majority. We are a part of the international Communist camp, a part of progressive humanity which is leading to eternal peace, and to the abolition of every type of class exploitation and national oppression.

Comrades, there rests upon each one of you and on all of you together the responsibility of revolutionary struggle in Israel, within the confines or close to the Israel Communist Party. Passivity, helplessness and aid reaction. The Communist Party wishes to see in the new immigrants from Poland, who possess great revolutionary traditions, revolutionary fighters in Israel. Revolutionary activity in Israel, this is the path. The Israel Communist Party will help you in getting on this path, the proletarian and patriotic path.

On Questions Concerning People's Communes

(Part II)*

By Central Committee, CP of China

THE PEOPLE'S COMMUNES must have plans for production, exchange, consumption and accumulation. Their plans should be subordinated to the State plans and to the administration of the State. In working out their plans, the People's Communes should, at the same time, fully develop their own characteristic features and their initiative.

Development of production is the key to the consolidation and advance of the People's Communes. The correct policy of the People's Communes for the development of production should be: to ensure the simultaneous development of industry and agriculture, and of production for their own consumption and for exchange in accordance with the principles of unified State planning, of adaptation to local conditions and of running the Communes industriously and thriftily. In every respect of production and capital construction, thrift must be observed, careful plans worked out, and manpower, material and financial resources used as rationally as possible; production costs must be reduced, expenditures cut down and income increased. Extravagance and waste among some functionaries of the Communes following a bumper harvest should be prevented and opposed.

In agricultural production, shallow ploughing, careless cultivation, and "big acreage, small output" should be gradually replaced by deep ploughing, intensive cultivation and "small acreage, big output." Farming should be carried on with the fineness of gardening and agricultural production should be mechanized and electrified to bring about a big increase in yields and labor productivity and to gradually reduce the acreage under cultivation and manpower engaged in agriculture. . . . In short, as on the industrial front, a great revolution must be carried out on all the fronts of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, farm side-occupations and fishery so as to bring about a thorough transformation of the face of agriculture.

People in the past often worried about our "over-population" and the relatively small amount of land available. But this idea has been overturned by the fact of the 1958 bumper harvest. In so far as we succeed in seriously popularizing the experience gained in getting high yields through deep ploughing, intensive cultivation, layer-by-layer fertilization and rational close planting, it will be found that the amount of arable land is not too little but quite a lot and it is not a question of over-population but rather shortage of manpower. This will be a very big change. In the next several years, local conditions permitting, we should

* The first half of this article appeared in the February issue.—Ed.

try to reduce the area sown to various crops to about one-third the present acreage. Part of the land so saved can lie fallow or can be used for pasturage and the growing of grass fertilizers; the rest can be used for afforestation, reservoirs and the extensive cultivation of flowers, shrubs and trees to turn the whole land, with its plains, hills and waters into a garden.

By these means, firstly, it will be possible to greatly economize the use of water, fertilizer and manpower, and considerably increase the fertility of the soil. Secondly, it will make full use of every mountain, river and forest and the pasture land, and greatly develop the comprehensive management of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, farm side-occupations and fishery. Thirdly, it will transform our natural environment and beautify the whole country. This is a great deal that can be realized. People's Communes throughout the land should work to realize this aim.

• • •

People's Communes must go in for industry in a big way. The development of industry by the People's Communes will not only accelerate the industrialization of the whole country but also promote the realization of ownership by the whole people in the rural districts, and reduce the differences between town and countryside. According to the differing conditions in each People's Commune, an appropriate part of the labor force should be switched, step by step, from agriculture to industry to develop, according to plan, the production of fertilizer, insecticides, farm implements and machinery, building materials, the processing and many-sided use of agricultural produce, the

manufacturing of sugar, textiles and paper, mining, metallurgy, electric power and other light and heavy industries. Industrial production in the People's Communes must be closely linked with agricultural production; it should, first of all, serve the development of agriculture and the mechanization and electrification of farming; at the same time, it should serve to meet the demands of Commune members for daily necessities, and serve the great industries of the country and the Socialist market. The principles of adaptation to local conditions and obtaining raw materials locally should be fully taken into consideration; in order to avoid increased costs and waste of labor power, industries should not be set up in places where there are no raw materials or where they have to be brought from places very far away. With regard to production techniques, the principle should be carried out of linking handicraft with mechanized industry, and crude methods with modern methods of production. All handicraft industries which have good foundations and prospects for expansion must continue to be developed, and gradually carry through the necessary technical transformation. The mechanized industries must also make full-use of locally-produced iron, steel, lathes and other raw materials and equipment produced by native methods and employ native methods themselves; and gradually advance from crude to modern industries, from small to large enterprises and from a low to a high level.

Whether in industry or agriculture, People's Communes should develop self-supporting production which directly meets their own needs, and they

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should also develop commodity production on as wide a scale as possible. Each according to its own characteristics, and under the guidance of the State, every People's Commune should carry out the necessary division of labor in production and exchange of commodities with other People's Communes and State-owned enterprises. Only in this way can the economy of the whole society expand at a faster rate, and every Commune get, through exchange, the machinery and equipment required for the mechanization and electrification of farming and the consumer goods and ready cash required to meet the needs of Commune members and pay them wages, and ensure that wages increase year by year. . . .

* * *

It must be stressed that during the course of a necessary historical period, commodity production by the People's Communes and the exchange of commodities between the State and Communes and among the Communes themselves must be greatly developed. Such production and exchange of commodities are different from those under capitalism, because they are conducted in a planned way, on the basis of Socialist public ownership and not in an anarchical way on the basis of capitalist private ownership. Continued development of commodity production and continued adherence to the principle of to each according to his work are two important questions of principle in expanding socialist economy. The whole Party should have a unified understanding of them. Some people, while attempting to "enter Communism" prematurely, have tried to abolish the production and exchange of commodities too early, and to negate at

too early a stage the positive roles of commodities, value, currency and prices. This line of thinking is harmful to the development of Socialist construction, and is therefore incorrect. The People's Communes in rural districts should distribute their own incomes properly on the principle of running the Communes with industry and thrift. To speed up production, the proportion of accumulation should be appropriately increased, after production costs, administrative expenses and taxes have been deducted from the gross income. But on the basis of the development of production, the portion of income used to meet the individual and collective expenses of Commune members (including the portion spent on public welfare, culture and education) should be increased annually, in order to improve the livelihood of the people year by year.

The introduction of a distribution system which combines the wage system and the free supply system in that part of the income allotted to Commune members for their own consumptions, is a form of Socialist distribution created by China's People's Communes and at the present time it represents the earnest demand of the broad mass of members. As stated above, this distribution system embodies an embryo of Communism but in essence it is still Socialist—based on the principle of "from each according to his ability and to each according to his work."

The proportion of wages and free supplies in the total amount allotted to members should be determined in the light of the varying conditions of development of production in the Communes. At present, in fixing the

ratio between wages and free supplies, care should be taken to avoid as far as possible reducing the income of households which have relatively few members but are strong in labor power; in general, it should be made possible for more than 90 per cent of the members to increase their income compared with the previous year while the rest should get no less than in the previous year.

At present, the scope of free supply should not be too wide. The application of the free supply system is not to make the life of the people uniform. Under the systems of Socialism and Communism, the needs of the people are on the whole similar while varying according to the individual. Therefore, in the future, as well as at present, care should be taken to ensure as far as possible that members have suitable freedom of choice within the framework of the free supply system.

Wages must be increased gradually as production expands. At present after deducting the items freely supplied, the wage scale in the rural areas can be divided into 6 or 8 grades. The highest grade may be 4 or more times as much as the lowest grade. But the differences should not be too great, for then they would not conform to the actual differences in the skill of labor now existing in the rural areas. Certain differences between the wage levels of different areas are permissible. At present differences between wage grades in the city are greater than those in the countryside, and this is necessary. In the future, as a result of the tremendous rise in production, everyone will be much better off, and whether in city or countryside, such differences between wage grades will be unnecessary and

will gradually disappear. That will be nearing the era of Communism.

The reasons that wage levels in the city are generally higher than those in the countryside are many-sided (including the factor that living costs are higher in the city), and this is also a temporary situation which should be explained to the peasants. Some Commune members, apart from working in the villages, also receive money sent home by other family members who are away in cities or elsewhere (such as workers, army men, functionaries and overseas Chinese). Work should be done to dissuade other members from wrangling about this. In distribution within the Commune, such members should be treated the same as others without discrimination in regard to free supplies and wages allotted, and they should not be urged to make special investments or contributions to the Commune. If they rely on their family members away from home for the whole of the livelihood, the Commune should not interfere, but it may stop supplying them with the usual allotments. Those who leave home for study, apart from those whose needs are covered by the State or can be covered by their own families, should be supported by the County Federation of Communes, according to the standards laid down by the schools.

* * *

The more the cause of Socialism develops and the more abundant social products become, the more abundant too will become the means of livelihood allotted to each individual. Some people think that the switch over to Communes will call for a re-distribution of existing personal consumer items. This is a misconception. It should be pub-

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licized among the masses that the means of livelihood owned by members (including houses, clothing, bedding and furniture) and their deposits in banks and credit cooperatives will remain their own property after they join the Commune and will always belong to them. When necessary, the Commune may borrow the surplus housing space of members with their consent, but the ownership still belongs to the owners. Members can retain individual trees around their houses and small domestic animals and poultry; they can also continue to engage in some small domestic side-occupations on condition that these do not hamper their taking part in collective labor.

Debts still owed when the People's Communes were established should not be declared cancelled irrespective of whether these are between individuals, between the Commune and its members, or debts contracted by Commune members with banks or credit cooperatives. These debts should be repaid where conditions permit and where the conditions do not allow of them being repaid for the time being, they should be held over.

The People's Commune is the organizer of the production and life of the people and the fundamental purpose of the development of production is to satisfy to the maximum extent the constantly growing material and cultural needs of all members of society. In leading the work of the Commune, the Party must give all-round attention to the ideological development, production and livelihood of Commune members.

It must care for the people and correct the tendency of seeing only things and not people. The greater the labor

enthusiasm of the masses, the greater attention should the Party pay to their well-being. The more the attention paid by the Party to the livelihood of the masses, the greater will be their enthusiasm in work. It is wrong to set production and people's livelihood against each other and imagine that attention to the livelihood of the masses will hamper production. Of course, it is also wrong to put a one-sided and improper stress on improvement of the people's livelihood without regard to the raising of their level of political consciousness and the development of production, and not to advocate hard work for long-term interests.

Communists have always held that in a Communist society labor will be changed "from a heavy burden into a pleasure" and will become the "primary necessity of life." There is no doubt that the working day will be greatly shortened in future. With the development of mechanization and electrification, we must strive to introduce the 6-hour work day within several years. Our intensive work at the present time is creating conditions precisely for the 6-hour work day and even shorter working hours in future. At present, the system of 8 hours' actual work and 2 hours' study should be put into effect in both city and countryside. During the busy farm season or when other work in the rural areas is particularly heavy, working hours may be appropriately extended. But, at any rate, 8 hours for sleep and 4 hours for meals and recreation, altogether 12 hours, must be guaranteed every day and this must not be reduced. It is true that there is a labor shortage at present, but a way out must be found in stressing the successful implementation of

tools reform and improving labor organization and not in extending working hours. Special attention must be paid to safety in production, and labor conditions must be improved where possible in order to reduce to the minimum or completely avoid work accidents. Sufficient rest must be ensured to women both before and after childbirth and they should also get the necessary rest during menstruation when they should not be asked to do heavy work, to get their feet wet in cold water or work at night.

* * *

Community dining-rooms should be well run. All Commune members must be assured of enough to eat and good and clean food, suited to their national and local habits. Community dining-rooms should have dining halls, and they should run efficiently their own vegetable gardens, bean-curd mills, bean-noodle mills, and condiment shops; they should raise pigs, sheep, chickens, ducks and fish. The main food and dishes should be varied and appetizing. Nutrition specialists should be consulted to make sure that the food contains enough calories and the nutriment needed by the human body. Where necessary and possible, special food should be provided for the aged, children, invalids, pregnant women and nursing mothers. Certain Commune members may cook at home. Community dining-rooms should be managed democratically. Their administrative staff and cooks should be chosen from among those who are politically reliable. It is best that they be elected democratically.

Nurseries and kindergartens should be run well, so that every child can live better and receive a better educa-

tion there than at home, and so that the children are willing to stay there and the parents are willing to put them there. The parents may decide whether their children need to board there, and may take them back home at any time they wish. In order to run nurseries and kindergartens well, Communes should train a large number of qualified nurses and teachers.

The "Homes to Honor the Aged" should be run well, so as to provide better dwelling places for those old people who have no children to rely on (those who enjoy the "Five Guarantees"—food, clothing, fuel, the bringing up of children and burial).

Communes must ensure the successful running of primary and secondary schools and adult education. Universal primary school education should be instituted in the rural areas throughout the country. Full-time secondary schools and half-time secondary agricultural schools, or other secondary vocational schools, should be well run and universal secondary education should be introduced step-by-step. Earnest efforts should be made to eliminate illiteracy, organize various kinds of spare-time schools and carry on political education, literacy classes and technical education for adults. In reducing the differences between manual and mental labor, the institution of universal education among the working people, and the gradual raising of their educational level, is an important step which must be carried out conscientiously. The Communes, in addition, must also select and send a number of young people to study in senior secondary schools, secondary vocational schools and institutions of higher learning in the cities so as to train fairly highly educated

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working personnel for the State and the Communes. The principle of combining education with productive labor must be carried out thoroughly in all schools, without exception. Children above the age of 9 can take part in some kinds of labor to an appropriate extent, so as to cultivate the habit of work in childhood and stimulate their physical and mental development; but strict attention must be paid to the health of the children, they must only be assigned light work in short spells and suited to their physique and their interests.

Ideological and political work among the staffs in community dining-rooms, nurseries, kindergartens, Homes to Honor the Aged, primary schools, public health centers, clubs and shops must be strengthened and efforts made to give positive guidance to public opinion so that the whole of society and all in the Communes regard the successful running of community dining-rooms, nurseries, kindergartens and other collective welfare undertakings and satisfactory work in the catering services, as a lofty task of service to the people. The attitude of the exploiting classes in looking down on work which concerns the daily life and welfare of the masses and work in the catering services, must be criticized and corrected. . . .

The construction plans of townships and village settlements should be thoroughly discussed by the masses. We stand for the abolition of the irrational, patriarchal system inherited from the past and for the development of family life in which there is democracy and unity. This stand has been warmly received by the masses. Therefore, in building residential quar-

ters, attention must be paid to making the houses suited to the living together of men and women, and the aged and young of each family.

* * *

There are a considerable number of stupid fellows in the world, including Mr. Dulles of the United States, who frantically attack our People's Communes. This Dulles knows nothing about our country, but he pretends to be a China-expert and feverishly opposes the People's Communes. What makes him particularly heartbroken is that, as is alleged, we have smashed that very, very wonderful family system that was handed down over thousands of years. It is true that the Chinese people have broken the feudal patriarchal system. It must be known that this patriarchal system has long since ceased to exist in capitalist society and that this is a matter of capitalist progress. However, we have gone a step further to establish a democratic and united family, something that is rare in general in capitalist society.

Only in the future, in those places where the Socialist Revolution has been carried out and the capitalist system of exploitation of man by man has been eliminated will it be possible to establish such families universally. As to nurseries, kindergartens and workers' canteens in the factories, these also first appeared in capitalist society. But, under capitalism, all such undertakings established by the bourgeois are capitalist in nature and are aimed to facilitate the exploitation of men and women workers by the capitalists. On the other hand, such undertakings run by us are Socialist in nature and they facilitate the development of Socialism and the liberation of the individual per-

sonality of man. They have truly and completely emancipated the mass of women and enabled the children to receive better education and care. That is why they are warmly welcomed by all the working people, and primarily by the mass of women.

The organizational principle of the People's Commune is democratic centralism. This principle must be applied in the management of production, in distribution of income, in the livelihood and welfare of Commune members and in all other aspects of work. . . .

There must be both discipline and democracy in the labor organization in the People's Commune. What we call getting organized along military lines means getting organized on the pattern of a factory. It means that labor organization in the People's Commune should be as organized and disciplined as in a factory or the army; this is necessary in large-scale agricultural production. The forces of large-scale agricultural production, like the forces of large-scale industrial production, are an industrial army. The modern industrial army was organized by the bourgeoisie, each factory being like a military camp. The discipline for the worker standing before the machine is as rigid as that in the army. The industrial army in Socialist society is an industrial army of a single class, the working class (which has got rid of the capitalist who exploited surplus value), and has put into force in the working class a vigorous and lively democratic centralism based on voluntariness. We are now applying this system to the rural areas, thus establishing a Socialist industrial army for agriculture based on democratic centralism, which is free

from exploitation by the landlord and rich peasant and which has risen above the level of small-scale production.

* * *

Militia organizations should be set up at corresponding levels of the production organizations in the People's Commune. The leading bodies of the militia and production organizations should be separate and, in principle, the commanding officers of the various levels of the militia, such as regimental, battalion and company commanders, such not be concurrently directors of Communes and Administrative Districts (leaders of Production Brigades) and leaders of Production Teams. These commanders should take part in the administrative organizations of the same levels in the Commune as their members, and they will receive dual leadership: from the administrative organizations of the same level and the superior commanding organizations of the militia. The militia should be equipped with necessary arms produced by arsenals set up locally. The basic units of the militia should undergo military training, according to a set schedule, while the ordinary militiamen should also get appropriate training after work; this is to prepare conditions for turning the whole nation into soldiers. The broad mass of working people in our country greet the militia system warmly, because, in the course of their protracted revolutionary struggle against imperialism, feudalism and their running dogs, the Kuomintang reactionaries, they came to realize that only by arming themselves would they be able to overcome the armed counter-revolution and become masters of the land of China; and after the victory of the Revolution, they have come to see

further that there are still imperialist pirates abroad who are clamoring every day about wiping out this People's State. Therefore, the whole of our people are determined to continue to arm themselves, and they declare: be warned, you pirates bent on plundering us; do not dare to make a vain attempt to harm our people engaged in peaceful labor; we are fully prepared! If the imperialists should dare to unleash an aggressive war against our country, then we will turn the whole nation into soldiers; the militia will cooperate with the People's Liberation Army and at any time replenish it to utterly crush the aggressors.

There should be both centralism and democracy in all organizations of the People's Communes, including the militia organizations. The People's Communes should not only organize the people's production work but the people's livelihood as well. In order to do their work well, the Communes must practice a high level of democracy, consult the masses on all matters, faithfully represent their interests and reflect their will. Therefore, while "organizing along military lines, working as if fighting a battle and living the collective way," the Communes must implement democratic management. It is absolutely not allowed to use "getting organized along military lines" as a pretext, or make use of the militia system which is directed against the enemy to infringe in the least on democratic life in the Commune and the militia organizations. The People's Commune is the basic organization of our country's State power; only by ensuring democracy in the Commune will it be possible to create throughout the country a vigorous and lively political situa-

tion in which there are both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, both unity of will and personal ease of mind.

* * *

In running a People's Commune well the fundamental question is to strengthen the leading role of the Party. It is only by strengthening the Party's leading role, that the principle of "politics in command" can be realized, that profound Socialist and Communist ideological education among the cadres and Commune members and struggle against all kinds of erroneous tendencies can be conducted, and that the Party's line and policy can be put into execution correctly. There are some people who think that with the emergence of the Commune the Party can be dispensed with, and that they can practice what they call "merging the Party and Commune in one." This kind of thinking is wrong.

In its work in the People's Commune, the Party, besides its essential task of ensuring that the correct line and policy are put into effect, should also pay attention to educating the Commune staffs to develop good styles of work—first of all the mass-line and a business-like style of work.

Following the 1957-1958 rectification campaign, the Party's mass line achieved a new, great victory. The great leap forward in Socialist construction and the setting up of People's Communes throughout the rural districts are two signal marks of this victory. The mass-line working method of the Party is the life blood of the People's Communes. The setting up and consolidation of the People's Communes is impossible without the mass line, without the full faith of the people in the Party

and in the People's Government, and without an upsurge in the revolutionary zeal of the masses. Therefore, leading functionaries of all levels in the Commune must put the mass line thoroughly into practice in every type of work tackled. They must look upon themselves as ordinary toilers, and treat the Commune members with a comradely attitude. Kuomintang and bourgeois styles of working to coerce the masses are strictly prohibited. Because of the big leap forward in production and the victory in setting up Communes, some cadres are beginning to get dizzy with success and, unwilling to do the patient work of educating the masses by persuasion, they are exhibiting certain rude attitudes. Though these are individual cases, they should make us keenly vigilant.

In all its work, the Party should hold fast to the principle of combining revolutionary zeal with a scientific spirit. The great leap forward in 1958 has achieved an unprecedented victory for Socialist construction in our country. Now, even our enemies find it impossible to deny the significance of this victory.

But we must never overlook our small weak points because of big achievements. On the contrary, the bigger the achievement the more we need to remind our cadres to keep cool-headed and not be carried away by the flood of news of victory and become unable or even unwilling to see the weak points in their work. One tendency meriting attention in the present work of Socialist construction is exaggeration. This is incompatible with the practical working style of our Party, and is harmful to the development of our Socialist construction. We must do our

economic work in a more thoroughgoing way. Our leading personnel at all levels must be good at differentiating between the real truth and false appearance and between demands which are justified and those which are not; in assessing conditions, they must strive to keep close to objective reality. Only by doing so can we work out and carry through our plans on a reliable and solid basis.

In order to promote the consolidation of the People's Communes and ensure an even bigger leap forward in industry and agriculture in 1959, the Communist Party Committees of the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions should, in compliance with the requirements put forward in this Resolution, make full use of the 5 months from December 1958 to April 1959 to tidy up the People's Communes in their areas by doing educational propaganda, checking over and consolidating them.

In the course of checking over the Communes, it is necessary in the first place for leading personnel to make earnest self-criticisms and listen with modesty to others' opinions, and on this basis, mobilize the masses with great daring to air their views freely and frankly, carry out debates and post up tatzupao [written opinions posted on the walls for everybody to read], cite good examples of both men and things, criticize wrong ideas and bad styles of work, sum up experiences, point out correct directions and develop a thorough-going Socialist and Communist ideological education movement.

In the course of checking over the Communes, it is necessary to carry out an over-all and thorough check-up of the production plan, distribution, wel-

fare facilities, management, financial work, organization and leadership in the Communes. The organizations of the Communist Party and Communes should be carefully checked over at the same time to guarantee that the leadership of the Communist Party and Communes at various levels are activists loyal to the interests of the people and to the cause of Communism. In addition, the finest people who have been tested in the big leap forward and People's Commune movement and are qualified for Communist Party membership, should be enrolled in the Party.

Problems related to the style of work of Communist Party members and cadres should be dealt with through Party education and frank airing of views by the masses. In dealing with these problems, attention should be paid to safeguarding the zeal and initiative of the cadres and masses, and the principles of "unity-criticism-unity" and "taking warning from the past in order to be more careful in the future" and "treating the illness in order to save the man" must be observed.

Those who have committed errors but are willing to correct them should be criticized seriously but treated with leniency. The masses should be mobilized to purge out of the leadership those alien class elements who have smuggled themselves into the leadership and those who show a very bad style of work and have never corrected their errors even after being repeatedly admonished.

Serious and complex class struggles are going on not only abroad, in the capitalist world, but also here at home. It is necessary to educate the masses to increase their revolutionary vigilance

to prevent disruptive enemy activities. Whether former landlords, rich peasants and counter-revolutionaries and other people deprived of political rights should be accepted as members or probationary members of the Communes, or remain to work under supervision, should be discussed and decided by the masses dealing with each case on its merits in the course of checking over the Communes.

The work of checking over the Communes should first be carried out in one or two Communes as an experiment in each county. That is to say, help should be given to the comrades in one or two People's Communes to get things going well in a fairly short space of time, so as to acquire experience, set examples and then popularize the experience gained. Every province, municipality and autonomous region should organize its investigation group composed of a thousand, several thousands or ten thousand people for the check-up, and the First Secretaries of the Communist Party at the provincial, regional and county levels should personally lead the work of checking over the Communes. These investigation groups should draw comparisons between different regions, counties and Communes, organize mutual visits, call on-the-spot meetings to develop the good points found and overcome the shortcomings discovered, mobilize enthusiasm for the work, and find out ways of concretely solving current problems and promptly popularizing successful experience. In short, through these check-ups, the work of the People's Communes in the country must be generally carried one step forward.

On the Negro Question (A Discussion)

Los Angeles

Popular impressions to the contrary, the concept of a Negro nation in the U.S. did not originate with the Communists. It has been given expression by Negro spokesmen before the Civil War and since. Martin Delany, for example, wrote in 1852: "We are a nation within a nation:—as the Poles in Russia, the Hungarians in Austria, the Welsh, Irish and Scotch in the British Dominions." (*A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, edited by Herbert Aptheker, pp. 326-27).

Nor did Communists invent the national question. The national question had its origin in the rise of capitalism. In his masterly exposition of the national and Colonial Question—Stalin pointed out: "A nation is not merely a historical category, but a historical category belonging to a definite epoch, the epoch of rising capitalism. The process of elimination of feudalism was at the same time a process of amalgamation of people into nations. . . ." (.13)

Marxian contribution to the national question lies, in part, in the clarity given it by Lenin and Stalin, the unequivocal manner in which they presented and applied it, and their extension of the principle of self-determination to include not only the oppressed and dependent white nationalities of Europe, but the non-white peoples of the world as well. In this they took sharp issue with the social-imperialists in the Second International

who considered the right of self-determination to be applicable only to the Irish, Poles, Czechs and other white nationalities. As Stalin remarks:

" . . . In the era of the Second International it was usual to confine the national question to a narrow circle of questions relating exclusively to the 'civilized nations.' . . . The tens and hundreds of millions of the Asiatic and African peoples suffering from national oppression in its crudest and most brutal form did not as a rule enter the field of vision of the 'Socialists.' The latter did not venture to place the white peoples and colored peoples, the 'uncultured' Negroes and the 'civilized' Irish, the 'backward' Indians and the 'enlightened' Poles on one and the same footing. . . ." (*Ibid*, p. 111.)

The projection in 1928 of our theoretical position on the Negro Question in the U.S. in which we characterized as an oppressed nation the historic Negro majorities in the Black Belt, evoked the berserk rage of Southern planters and other beneficiaries of the jimcrow system. Quick to recognize the revolutionary content of our position, these circles unleashed a furious and sustained attack on our Party, which continues to this day. In this they were valiantly aided by Negro reformists who obligingly distorted our position as advocacy of wholesale segregation of the Negro people in a jimcrow state—a grotesque proposal previously advanced, in the 49th State movement, by Negro reformists themselves.

Our Party, which stood firmly by its position throughout the turbulent 'thirties, began a retreat from that posi-

tion in the early 'forties under the influence of Browder revisionism. This retreat culminated in 1956 in the amazing pronouncement by Comrade Dennis (*Political Affairs* for May) that, without consultation with the membership, our position had been "modified in fact dropped."

In now throwing open the question for discussion, the National Committee is to be commended. It is to be hoped it will encourage a thorough-going discussion on this important and complex question and combat any tendency to impose a decision from above. Should the latter occur, the suspicion would be unavoidable that the reopening of the question was merely intended to legalize the arbitrary and undemocratic 1956 action of the national leadership.

The Draft Resolution now before the Party, as well as the article by Comrade Jim Jackson ("New Features of the Negro Question in the United States") on which it is based, both published in the Jan. 1958 issue of *Political Affairs*, bluntly declare that our Party was in error in characterizing the Black Belt Negro majorities as a nation. This conclusion of original sin is, according to the Draft Resolution, "compelled" by "a major alteration in the geographical distribution of the Negro people," occurring, if you please, several decades after we adopted our position of the Negro people as a nation; plus, of all things, the Negro people's "common psychological make-up" miraculously metamorphosed into "the main currents" of the "thought and leadership" of the Negro bourgeoisie "in the struggle for advancement and freedom."

Thus the shifts of Negro population

and the "thought and leadership" of a bourgeois notorious for its consistent efforts to direct the Negro movement into reformist channels, harmless to the oppressors, are presented as "compulsive" factors at variance with the Marxist-Leninist definition of a nation:

"A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and *psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture.*" (Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, p. 8. Emphasis added.)

How valid is the "compulsive" conclusion, based upon these two alleged "variants," that there is no Negro nation in the Black Belt? It is, of course, undeniable that for several decades now there has been in process a mass flight of Negroes from the terror-ridden Black Belt to urban centers, North and South. But does this mean there are no longer any significant Negro majorities in this historic area of Negro concentration? This question is answered in the negative by Comrade Jackson himself who, in *Political Affairs* for October 1958, noted that between 1940 and 1950 there was a reduction from 180 to 170 of the Black Belt counties of absolute Negro majority. (Other figures give the decline as from 180 to 156.) But is a loss of ten counties, or even of twenty-four, so decisive as to constitute a "compulsive" factor for revising our theoretical position of a Negro nation? And do Marxists limit the Black Belt area to majority counties, anyway? Or do we take into account the gerrymandering devices by which Negro majorities are often wiped out, as in the recent carving up of Macon County, Alabama,

among three neighboring counties?

Under Proposition 2, and subheaded "the element of common psychological make-up," the Draft Resolution declares:

"Taking into full account all that is distinctive in this feature of the nation-like development of the Negro people, nevertheless, this is not determinative for either the solution or representation of the Negro question in the United States. The main currents of Negro thought and leadership in the struggle for advancement and freedom, historically, and universally at the present time, have projected their programs from the premise that Negroes individually and as a people are no less Americans than any other claimants. Only in describing the dimensions of their oppression have the Negro people represented themselves as a people apart from the American nation."

Such a basically one-sided analysis of the Negro movement is not only undialectic but patently false and distorted. There never has been, and is not today, any universal acceptance by the Negro people of the program of the Negro bourgeoisie, as here implied; nor any generation of Negroes in which the concept of Negro nationhood has not been raised, if frequently in unscientific terms. It was raised, for example, by the Garvey movement, largest Negro mass movement in the history of the country, by the 49th State movement, etc. It is today a part of the program of the burgeoning Negro Moslem Movement, with its rabid creed of hatred of *all* whites.

And almost a decade before the Party adopted its position of the Negro people as a nation, the slogan "Self-determination for the Negro Majorities in the Black Belt" had been put forward by the Left-wing African

Blood Brotherhood in an elaboration of the demand for Negro self-determination raised by this writer in editorials in *The Amsterdam News* in 1915, 1916 and 1917.

In advancing the "compulsive" conclusion that the Negro people are not a nation and have no claim on the right of self-determination, the Jackson article and draft resolution commit the not unfamiliar error of contraposing two definite trends in the Negro movement: 1. the historic resistance of the Negro people to jimcrow oppression and their fight for full equality in the American scheme; 2. the welding together of the Negro people and the development of their national consciousness in the process of that fight.

It is mainly on the first trend (and rejection of the second) that Jackson bases his contention that there is not now *nor ever was* a Negro nation in the Black Belt. His voluminous data on population shifts, long-range economic changes (i.e., gradualism) etc., are merely incidental material to his thesis that the Negro people "*are a historically determined component part of the American nation in the United States,*" which "*is a historically derived national formation, an amalgam of more or less well differentiated nationalities.*"

To him the "Melting Pot" concept and the Negro people's fight for full equality automatically cancel out the concept of a Negro nation. One wonders what would be his conclusion had the Negro people accepted passively the atrocious conditions imposed upon them? Would the absence of resistance have given validity to the concept of a Negro nation?

Certainly the demand for self-deter-

mination, for the right of the Negro people to determine their destiny, is not in contradiction to the proposition that Negroes fight for the fullest rights as Americans. These two currents in the Negro movement supplement each other and constitute a harmonious whole.

And what is the alternative to our position offered by Comrade Jackson? The old-Social Democratic argument that Negroes are workers, period; i.e., they have no problems apart from the general problems of the working class. They are, he says, "an oppressed urban working people." And into this category he lumps both the Negroes in the South and those in the North and West, in bland disregard of the far more terrible and all-sided nature of Negro oppression in the South.

The Negro people, he admits, "retain special national features and nation-like characteristics which manifest themselves (among other ways) in a universal conception and consciousness of their identity as a distinctive people. . . ." But he makes the admission only to brush it aside. It is, for him, not "the decisive determinative." He writes that "The national question exists in an infinite variety of forms and Marxist science provides guide lines for the theoretical representation and solution of each particular manifestation and formation of the national question." But, except for the wholly irrelevant quotation from Marx that "mankind sets for itself only those tasks it can achieve," Jackson offers not a single Marxist guide line to buttress the position expressed both in his article and draft resolution that resistance by a people to national oppression, and that people's fight for full

equality, negate their status as an oppressed nation and their right to self-determination, in whatever way they might desire to exercise that right.

All of which is highly reminiscent of Lenin's caustic criticism of the Polish Social-Democrats: "Objectively, the Polish comrades want to make Marxism 'more profound,' but they do it very awkwardly. . . ." (*Collected Works*, Vol. XIX, p. 273.)

The manner in which Comrade Jackson uses his out-of-context quotation from Marx to argue that the one course of development he sees in the Negro movement "is in conformation with the first law (sic) of Marxism that 'mankind sets for itself only those tasks it can achieve,'" is tantamount to saying that since certain basic democratic rights are impossible of attainment under capitalism, they should not be fought for. On that sort of reasoning, Lenin commented:

. . . the refusal to advocate the right of self-determination is equal to the worst opportunism. . . .

In fact, this narrow-mindedness is clutched at by the opportunists of all nations who fight shy of the ideas of 'storms' and 'leaps,' believe the bourgeois-democratic revolution is over, and reach out for the liberalism of the Kokoshkins. (*Selected Works*, Vol. IV, p. 291.)

How well those "succeed" who blithely essay the task of making Marxism "more profound" was pointed up at the '46 Plenum by Comrade Jim Allen (himself today in this category):

". . . I always found that where someone who opposes our position of the Negro people as a nation, tried to present an alternative position to be in accordance with realities, to be scientific in its basis, tied up with current

issues and struggles of the people, he has not been able to do so in scientifically correct terms. He has had to fall back in his discussion of the Negro question only really outmoded concepts such as race or pure class or labor or castes. And what else is the meaning of national racial minority? Because as Marxists we certainly cannot accept a racial category as a point of departure." (*The Communist Position on the Negro Question*, p. 33).

That statement retains its validity today despite the fact that this same Comrade Allen later came up with the monstrosity that the Negro people are "an oppressed racial-national minority, or," he added, "as Comrade Jackson puts it a racially distinct oppressed nationality." (Allen, "Some New Data Toward Understanding the Position of Negroes in the U.S. Today." *National Discussion Bulletin* No. 2, Fall of 1956).

In neither article nor draft resolution does Comrade Jackson consider the impact on the Negro people of the rise of independent Negro nations in Africa, the emergence of China as a great power—the impact, in brief, of the mighty colonial national liberation revolution sweeping Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Yet can it be denied that these tremendous and inspiring events are influencing the thinking and outlook of the Negro people, and must inevitably accelerate the development of their national consciousness, particularly in view of the patent hostility of U.S. imperialism to the colonial peoples' freedom fight, and the present stalemate in the school desegregation fight, resulting from the "massive resistance" of the Dixiecrats, as reflected in terroristic acts and enactment of a slew of anti-Negro legislation, and the

unparalleled refusal of the federal government to enforce a mandate of the U.S. Supreme Court?

It is axiomatic that a Communist program on the Negro Question must meet the Marxist criterion as to whether that program has a clear anti-imperialist orientation and is not, in Lenin's words, confined "to agitation for changes which do not require the removal of the main foundations of the old ruling class, changes that are compatible with the preservation of these foundations." (*Selected Works*, Vol. IV, p. 145).

The basic weakness of the Negro liberation movement today is its limitation to the specific immediate demands, whereas what is needed is for us to raise the level of the movement, as the late Ed Strong pointed out at the '46 Plenum, to qualitatively higher levels—through an *active and equal* alliance with Organized Labor and other progressive groups in the country, together with the closest tie-up of the Negro movement with the colonial freedom movement. This can be accomplished only through truly revolutionary program on the Negro question which recognizes the Negro nation and advances the slogan of self-determination as a *potential* weapon to be seized by the Negro people when they are ready to use it.

That there is not now any broad popular awareness of nationhood among the Negro people is immaterial. Objective reality does not depend upon subjective recognition. And to say there is no broad popular awareness of nationhood is not saying there is no such awareness among growing sections of the Negro people.

CYRIL BRIGGS

SCIENTIFIC METHOD

In expressing agreement with the general direction of the National Committee Draft Resolution on the Negro Question, it seems to me that it suffers from the lack of an evaluation or critique of our past position. The failure to make such an evaluation makes it appear that the loss of a Negro majority in ten counties has changed the entire picture, which of course would be ridiculous.

To evaluate our past position, it must be viewed historically. The pre-Communist radical movements in the United States did not concern themselves basically with the Negro question. In fact, the entire Second (Socialist) International was notorious for its complete disregard of the colonial and national question, except in so far as the so-called "civilized" oppressed nations were concerned, such as Ireland and Poland. One of the great contributions made by the Bolshevik Party was its work on the national and colonial question, and it was to be expected that under the influence of the Communist International and the C.P.S.U., the newly-formed American Communist Party would begin to concern itself most seriously with the Negro question in the United States.

The first attempts were made to study the history of the United States from a Marxist viewpoint, and some fine work was done in this field. The Party pointed out that the betrayal of Reconstruction after the Civil War meant that the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the South had never been completed; that the plantation system of slavery had not been broken up; and that the oppression of the Negro

people had been transformed from that of oppression as slaves to a semi-feudal type of oppression, based on the sharecropping system. In this period, the status of the Negro people in the South was predominantly that of a *peasant people*, tied to the land under semi-feudal conditions. It became obvious that the status of the Negro people *throughout the United States* was determined by this failure to uproot the slave system, and that the oppression of the Negro people was not simply the oppression of a *class*, but that of an entire people.

In light of this analysis, it is understandable that the U.S. Communist Party came to the conclusion that the Negro people in the Black Belt of the South constituted an oppressed *nation* as defined by Stalin, and that the slogan of self-determination represented the fundamental long-range slogan for the Negro people in the South.

Basing itself upon this theoretical conclusion, the Communist Party played a glorious role in the struggles of the Negro people. As a result, two important propositions have become part of the thinking of large sections of the people of the United States, far beyond the Left and those directly influenced by the Left. These propositions are:

1. The Negro people in the United States suffer a *special* oppression, which effects all segments of the Negro people, and which shows up in every phase of Negro life.

2. The failure to complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the South, and the consequent denial of democracy to the Negro people, have held back and distorted the development of democracy for *all* the people

of the United States.

However, it seems to me that there were at the same time serious errors in our previous position, which also must be seen historically to be understood properly. Our theory of the Negro people as an oppressed nation in the Black Belt, with the right to self-determination, was developed in the period of crisis in the United States, which was part of the *general crisis of capitalism*. Fascism was developing in various countries as the political consequence of this general crisis. In this period, I believe that we made two serious errors:

1. We thought that because capitalism was in a general crisis, capitalism in the United States had no possibility of further development, and that therefore the *economic base* of the South would not change—i.e., that the plantation system would remain, that the South would not become industrialized but would remain basically an agrarian region. Therefore we believe that the Negro people in the South would remain under capitalism basically a peasant people tied to the soil under semi-feudal conditions.

2. We believed further that since finance capital was moving toward fascism as the political solution of the problems presented by the general crises, there were little or no possibilities for any real extension and development of democracy in the United States under capitalism. Therefore, we believed that the struggle for Negro rights could not achieve significant victories within the framework of the United States Constitution.

The statistics presented by Comrade Jackson, and other material which has accumulated in the past several years,

show that we were wrong in our position that the economic situation in the South would remain basically unchanged. Due to industrialization and the mechanization of agriculture, the entire South has moved away from a backward, agrarian economy, and a corresponding shift has taken place among the Negro people, with the Negro working class replacing the Negro peasantry as the most numerous and most significant class. This fundamental change in the economic base *must* compel us to revise our theory and, in my opinion, to recognize that our original theory was based upon an incorrect analysis of the trend of economic development.

The second error is one that has plagued us in many other fields, and it is my impression that those who have expressed themselves in the debate so far as opposed to the resolution are primarily affected by the conviction that it is impossible for the Negro people to win important victories within the framework of the United States Constitution. The Negro people themselves do not seem to share this thinking, as witnessed by the forms and methods of their struggles. While it is correct that permanent and fundamental solutions for the problems of the Negro people, as for the working class, will be achieved only under socialism, as long as we have this concept that it is impossible to make major and significant advances under conditions of bourgeois democracy, we will only find ourselves further and further isolated from the struggles of the Negro people. You cannot participate wholeheartedly in a struggle if you are convinced that it is doomed to failure, or if you do so from a "superior"

point of view, in order to be able to say "I told you so" after the struggle has failed. And without the full participation of Communists, the struggles of the Negro people will never spontaneously advance to merge with the movement of the working class for socialism. The position expressed by the National Committee resolution in my opinion will help to place us in full sympathy with and participation in the struggles of the Negro people, if we absorb the full meaning of this position and express it fully in our practical work.

It seems to me that as people who aspire to be *social scientists*, taking a scientific, Marxist approach to the problems of our class and our society, we should understand the use of the hypothesis in science. On the basis of available facts and knowledge, scientists develop a hypothesis—that is, a generalization into theory from those facts. On the basis of this hypothesis, the door is opened to further investigation, research, analysis, experimentation. The knowledge and understanding gathered from this further investigation then compels the scientist to revise, correct, expand, and in many cases, *discard* his original hypothesis and develop a new one. This process

continues. If it ever stops, if any hypothesis becomes frozen, then scientific progress stops. But each hypothesis, even if later proven inadequate or incorrect, makes a necessary contribution because it is on the basis of that hypothesis that the science advanced.

I believe that our original position on the Negro question was a hypothesis, the best we could develop on the basis of the facts at our command and our knowledge and understanding of Marxism. Working on this hypothesis, we made valuable and permanent contributions. Our trouble was that we regarded this not as a hypothesis, but as the Ten Commandments handed to Moses on the mountain. As a result, our hypothesis dialectically became a hindrance rather than an aid. Our present resolution I also regard as a hypothesis—the best, despite minor corrections that can be made immediately, that we can develop now on the basis of the facts available and our understanding of Marxism-Leninism. It will be valuable to us *as long as* we treat it as a hypothesis, ready and eager to revise, correct or discard it as further progress dictates.

E. S.

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