

political affairs

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THE COLONIAL ERA

By **HERBERT APTHEKER**

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A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: HERBERT APTHEKER

The Life of the Party Begins at Forty

By Gus Hiall

IT HAS BEEN said, "Life begins at forty." Before I personally reached forty I looked upon this saying as a pep-up slogan for the old folk. Now, however, I believe it has some merit. This only proves it all depends from which side of the fence one looks at it.

The Communist Party of these United States has now reached this exalted plateau. If it is true that the saying "Life Begins at Forty" has some merit in the life of individuals, when applied to the life of our Party I think it is a profound prophecy, a very wise forecast of things to come.

Future historians will regard the first forty years of our Party with all its heroism, glory, excitement, struggle—yes, its mistakes and shortcomings—as the formative years, as the genesis of the Marxist-Leninist party that will lead American society to its next stages. This is the step that will remove even from men's thoughts and memory those practices wherein one man gets rich on the sweat and the bent back of others, the idea of inequality because of race or color of men's skin, and not only unemployment but of the very fear of being laid off—a fear that

gnaws on the nerves of every worker. It is a step to a higher form of civilization where man's education, health, livelihood, shelter, his overall well-being, will not depend on the fortunes or misfortunes of the individual in this daily dog-eat-dog scramble, but rather will depend on a society so organized and planned that together, like true brothers and sisters, the well-being and care of each is assured. The vehicle for this next step is history; its crew, the working men and women; its helmsmen the American Marxist-Leninist party. And this next step is Socialism, the initial stage of Communism.

The American Communist Party is a product of our American industrial and political system. Like mass production, the two-party system, the 50 states, Town Hall, the Bill of Rights—yes, like jazz and the blues and baseball—the Communist Party is a product of our very fibre and being. Those factors that gave birth and form to our trade-union movement, that gave birth to and fan the flames of class struggle—these very same factors gave birth to our Party. And you can argue, use terror, imprison its leaders, slander

it, and pass all the laws against it you like. But when you are through and open your eyes, if America is there, the Communist Party will be there.

When the soil is right, a plant or a tree will grow even under a sidewalk or an asphalt road. In the end these tender green stems will push up the concrete. You can trample on them, cut off that which comes to the top. But they will continue to grow. And so it is in the realm of thought, in the realm of science in general, and the science of Marxism-Leninism in particular.

This is the case not because some human agency so decided but because the necessities of life so dictated. As the system of capitalism becomes more and more unable to cope with the new problems arising from the new level of technology, as it becomes more unable to solve the problems that arise out of its very nature, the need for and the thought of a different and a new system grows. Thus the millions of workers, Negro people, small farmers, small businessmen, the victims and sufferers from this gluttonous, grasping system of human exploitation, of big business, look for a way out. They feel and know what is wrong but they do not know how or what to do about it until they find the light to illuminate the path, until they find that social science that embodies the best in man's thought and embraces the rich experience of like sufferers of exploitation throughout human history—the science of

Marxism-Leninism. This discovery leads them to the Party that is dedicated to the proposition that the next steps for America and civilization generally are Socialism and Communism, to a future where big business and its deeds will remain only as a nightmare in the dreams of those of us who have lived under capitalism. For the future generations it will fade away from memory, as has suffering from epidemics of cholera, and similar diseases from the memory of most Americans today.

Throughout history, one of the sure signs of a dying cause, of the passing away of a social system, has been the labelling by its ideologists of the exponents of something new, of a change, as "foreign agents." The far-sighted Englishman who saw the independence of America as inevitable was called a foreign agent. Thomas Jefferson, the promoter of our Bill of Rights and a staunch supporter of the French revolution, was so labelled. When all other arguments fall by the wayside, the demagogue plays on the patriotic sentiments of the people with the charge, "foreign agent."

This fraud is now embodied in the bill passed by Congress, the McCarran Act. And the Courts now insist that we, the Communist Party, become a partner to this deceit by registering under its provisions. The foreign agent charge is a fraud. Ideas, like anything else, can be shipped from one place to another but they will not take root unless

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the soil is suitable. It is entirely possible to ship and transplant vigorous, healthy rubber trees from Asia to Alaska. But they will not take root. They will wither and die because the climate and soil of Alaska is not suitable for rubber trees. The ideas of freedom, equality, justice, bread, shelter, Socialism take root because the system of capitalism has prepared the soil and fertilized it with the victims of hunger and disease and watered it with the blood and tears of the men and women who toil.

With the first wage workers who came to this country came the idea of trade unionism. The idea took root because the soil was prepared by the greed and the drive for profits of the men of capital. The Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish faiths were not born here; they were imports. The Bill of Rights embodied ideas from England and from the French revolution. The basic theory of the atom was unearthed by scientists in Germany, France, Italy, and other countries as well as the United States. But these facts do not make any of these concepts the machinations of foreign agents.

By the same token, our Communist Party is what the United States is. Our Party mirrors the highs and lows of our nation and our working class and people. This is our genesis. This is our first forty years.

Forty years ago the realities of American life not only gave birth to the Communist Party, U.S.A. It was also the beginning of an important

era in the history of our land. Forty years ago the stage was set for Wall Street to lead the march of American capitalism, through plunder, intrigue, bribery and murder, toward world control, and to the attainment of world economic and political power unprecedented for any nation. Capitalism had already, in the most brazen fashion, grabbed without payment the rich natural resources of our great land. It had at its command the ever-flowing mass of both skilled and unskilled workers of Europe. It used the power and the special territorial position of the USA to squeeze the maximum from both the victors and the vanquished in two world wars.

Through a government apparatus at its service, U.S. imperialism reached the position of top dog in the capitalist world, a point where it owned and controlled one half of the world's industrial production, a point where no serious challenge was forthcoming from any quarter. In large measure it sets its own terms on a take-or-leave-it basis. This era has had its effect on every phase of American life. It helped to mold the personality, the character known as USA. It has had its effect not only on our economics but on our politics, our ideology, and our culture. It has helped to give our trade unions a conservative hue. It has made of our land a nation ruled and dominated in every possible way by gigantic trusts unparalleled in history. It can truly be said, in the USA big business is king.

the present

Now, with this fortieth anniversary, the curtain is slowly descending on this era. As after an extended orgy—a forty-year binge—the lights are beginning to dim. The era of no serious challenge, of unrestrained and unending expansion, is coming to an end. The top dog is being replaced by a new set of actors. This is the beginning of an era of serious challenge, of uncertainties, of an accumulation of unresolved problems becoming steadily more aggravated. For American capitalism, life is not beginning. It is entering its decline. It is slowing up. Signs of hardening of its arteries are appearing.

Big business instinctively senses the changing relationship of forces and goes over to the offensive. This explains the anti-labor slave legislation, and the attempt to cut the heart out of the unions, as witnessed in the steel strike. And this explains the continued resistance to ending the cold war. Big business has not yet reached a dead end. It still can maneuver and pass the burden onto the backs of these who toil and onto the weak nations. But what is important is that we have now passed on to a new direction, and more and more we are going to feel the effects of the burden of unsolved problems.

What are some of these problems?

During these forty years the dollar sign has become the symbol of Wall Street's top dog status. America has grown smug and fat. An ideology has developed that says this is how things are and this is how

things are going to be. So, as if from the blue, we are now getting surprises. The world is not behaving as expected and is not like we thought it would be. As a result there is some shock and bewilderment. Our tranquility is being disturbed because now "we are being challenged." And the challenge seems to be coming from all sides. Here I want to discuss it as it appears from three particular directions.

* * *

During these same forty-some years a new economic and social system has made its appearance—the system of Socialism. This is possibly the most far-reaching event in human history, making its start in the war-ravaged, feudal, impoverished backward land of Russia and the numerous nations and nationalities enslaved by the Tsar—now the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has built its socialist economy and state over the seemingly insurmountable obstacles of armed intervention in its first year by the allied powers, of complete economic blockade and boycott by the world powers, of attacks by Japan and of the most massive mechanized armed onslaught of our times, the Hitler invasion.

Now, after some forty years, it stands as one of the world's two great economic, political, and military powers. Ten years ago the 650 million people of China threw out the corrupt gang of Chiang Kai-shek and have themselves taken the road to socialism. The Second World

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War opened the road to socialism for Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, and Albania, so that now we have in the world a *system* of socialist states, as well as one of capitalist states.

The economic advances of this socialist world have been nothing less than fantastic. But even so, and keeping the future in mind, one can say that so far they have repaired the damages from the destruction of the wars and have laid the industrial, scientific and political base for the big leap forward that is now on the threshold. This big leap forward will be the most gigantic step civilization has ever taken. The present seven-year plan is of such magnitude, such scope that it is very difficult to imagine it because our minds are used to the old scope and magnitude of phenomena. As an example, in the next seven years or less the people of the Soviet Union are going to produce more than they have produced in all of the past 41 years combined. China has been building socialism for only a few years and is now reaching or passing in some lines of production the older industrial countries of England, France and Japan.

We must ask ourselves: How is this profound change, the rise of the socialist camp in the world, a challenge to the United States of America? First, it must be clear that this is in no way a threat to the American people. It is a challenge because it is a showcase of

life, a demonstration of what socialism is and where it is going. It is interesting what Walter Lippmann says on this question. In his book, *The Communist World and Ours*, he states:

But we delude ourselves if we do not realize that the main power of the Communist states lies not in their clandestine activity but in the force of their example, in the visible demonstration of what the Soviet Union has achieved in forty years, of what Red China has achieved in about ten years. The tide is running in favor of communism, almost one might say by default.

This system of socialist states is a challenge because it is a defender of smaller and weaker states. It is an obstacle to the "take it or leave it" policy in trade or diplomacy. It is a challenge to compete in the arena of science, medicine, people's living standards. It is a challenge to compete for a lasting peace. And whether the United States accepts this challenge or not, it is a fact and a reality of present-day life. From now on, more than anything else, developments in the world will be shaped by the process and the result of the competition between these two world systems—socialism and capitalism.

* * *

The second source of the challenge is from the colonial world. The epic rise of the peoples in the enslaved nations is a major obstacle to the plans of big business. Like every-

thing else, the cost of extracting superprofits from the undeveloped lands is going sharply up. Cuba today is not the Cuba of past years. It is no more the unchallenged private domain and slave camp of the American sugar corporations. Cuba of today will not accept the treatment accorded a poor country cousin, and the Cubas of today all over the world not only demand but are in a position to get equal treatment in trade, diplomacy and respect on a par with all other nations. The heyday for imperialism is behind us. The day of independent, proud, self-respecting family of nations is with us to develop and to stay.

* * *

The third source of this challenge comes from the capitalist world. Some of our own internal difficulties plus the renewal and expansion of machinery and industry in countries like West Germany, Japan, and England, team up to place these nations in a much more favorable competitive position than has been the case in the past years. The favorable gap between our exports and imports has been steadily narrowing and in many lines has completely disappeared.

These adverse developments, American big business seeks to counter by stepping up its foreign investments, by building its plants abroad at the expense of the jobs of American workers. The monopolists have always placed patriotism and national welfare second to their own economic interests. In World War

II as many of you will recall, they refused to produce materials vital to the war effort because they had agreements with German trusts not to do so. They are no different today.

But the fact remains that today the uneven development of capitalism in different countries, in accordance with Lenin's thesis, must take place at the expense of the large Wall Street holdings.

This is the new environment, this is the developing new world in which the United States of America must find its place. To hang on to old concepts, relationships based on what used to be, would be disastrous. The beginnings of the "new look," the straw in the wind of the direction that the changed world demands can be seen in the exchange of visits by Premier Khrushchev and President Eisenhower, in the growing exchange in the fields of science and culture and in the exchange of tourists between the US and the USSR.

We can now take greater courage and our hopes can soar that—yes, it is in the cards—we can end the cold war, we can have lasting peace. This is good and welcome news to all Americans. To be able to live without fear of atomic war, to be able to plan for the future without fear of world destruction is a development on which you cannot put a price tag. No people would sell or part with such peace of mind for all the riches of the ages. But if world peace has no price, the cold war does. If

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big business would shift from its policy of cold war, we, the American taxpayers, would save well over forty billion dollars each year. The ending of the cold war would result in cold cash in the hands of every taxpayer.

It seems almost fantastic, but nonetheless it is true; there are powerful forces in our land who have an almost psychopathic fear of peace. Wall Street and its places of worship, the stock market, go into a fit of alarm whenever even rumors of settling the cold war are whispered around. The mere announcement of the Khrushchev-Eisenhower exchange was enough to send the prices of stocks downward. The expression "peace jitters" has now taken its place in the jargon of the financial circles along with such terms as bulls and bears, recessions and depressions. What more proof does one need of the incontestable fact that the interest in the cold war and the drive to keep it alive come from the citadel of big business?

* * *

What are some of the other unsolved problems that are piling up for our nation? Automation and the use of energy released from the atom are ushering in a new industrial-scientific-technological revolution. Common sense tells us that science in the service of man should be something to cheer about. But when science and new technology are in the hands of big business, whose interest is not the welfare of mankind but only the lust for more profits, then this great achievement.

this beautiful gift of nature turns into its very opposite. And it is sad to say that the first swallows coming home to roost as a result of this development are seen in the persistent army of unemployed in the midst of a boom in industrial production. New formulas and new solutions, even on a temporary basis, must be found to this problem.

Here also, we see proof of the old axiom of history that new productive forces usher on to the stage new productive relations—a new social system that will correspond to and be able to use the new technology. Life has now brought forth ample proof that the social system that can give mankind the maximum benefits from the energy released from the atom and from automation is socialism. While looking for temporary measures, this basic conclusion will more and more burn itself into the consciousness of mankind. In a way, we can say, if steam power was the force that gave impetus to the development of modern capitalism, atomic energy and automation are today giving impetus to the transition to socialism.

But the list of problems looking for solution continues to grow. During the New Deal days the Republicans forecast bankruptcy and doom because the total national budget had reached nearly nine billion dollars in 1939, and the national debt nearly 40½ billions. Now the national budget is close to 70 billion dollars, the major part of it for arms. And the debt our federal government

owes the big financial banks and insurance companies is at the 300 billion dollar level. Each year the ceiling is raised and another few billion dollars is added. As it stands now, each year the Government collects in taxes from the American people some eight billion dollars just to pay these financial institutions interest on this debt.

And the dollar is not only not a dollar any more. It isn't even half a dollar. Each month the announcement comes from Washington that the cost of living has reached a new record high. If a family twenty years ago received in wages \$57 a week, to maintain the same standard of living today, it would need over \$120.00. And so inflation climbs on and on.

To this list of unresolved problems we have to add the serious question of continually rising taxes. From \$40 per person in 1939, federal taxes have gone up to somewhere in the neighborhood of \$500 today. And the average family now pays out fully one-third of its income in taxes. Even more important is the shifting of the tax burden to the working people. Thus, in 1939, individuals with taxable incomes of less than \$5,000 a year paid less than 10 per cent of federal income taxes. By 1949, they were paying nearly 40 per cent. There has also been a big increase in excise, sales, and similar taxes, which bear most heavily on those with the lowest incomes.

No government body meets nowadays without passing some new tax

bill and in spite of these exorbitant taxes, every division of government is broke and in debt. America is beginning to resemble the last days of the Roman Empire before its demise where they finally had tax collectors to collect taxes from the tax collectors.

In this list we should include the crisis in our school system, in health and medicine, juvenile delinquency, the slums that are growing faster than the building of new houses. And in a special way, in a special place is the continued discrimination against the Negro people. In spite of some victories, basically this remains an unsolved problem, a national disgrace. Because the Southern states and many Northern states and cities are not carrying out the laws of the land, this is developing into a constitutional crisis.

The totality of these unsolved problems is the real America of 1959. This is the challenge to the American people. How we meet the challenge of this epoch in history will determine our lives as individuals, as a class and as a nation.

* * *

In varying degrees and in different ways, all groups and classes are beginning to react to these new features. Some of these movements and developments are clearly discernible. The present attitude of big business is clear. The unions and the established working rules are an obstacle to their plans to squeeze the maximum for themselves from the new technology. They want to reclassify

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and re-scale all jobs. They gleefully sense the pressure of the army of the unemployed on those employed and on the unions. The direction of big business is most clearly evident in the slave labor bills passed by Congress and in the unconditional surrender terms contained in the eight points put forth by the steel corporations on the eve of the strike. If this direction of the monopolies continues, America is in for hard sledding.

However, this is only the monopoly section of America. The great majority of our people, while not united or articulate, are beginning to show signs of resistance to the outlook and program of big business. The direction of this majority is seen in the movements and sentiments for peace, in the movements and fighting spirit of 18 million Negro Americans, the stirrings and growing alarm in the ranks of the trade unions, in the youth marches to Washington, in the response to the trade-union conferences on unemployment, and in many other ways. These are harbingers of what is to come, of the growing reaction to the challenge. These are the beginnings of the movement of the majority of Americans, the beginnings of the coalition against the outlook and practices of the big monopolies.

* * *

Forty years ago Marxism was a theory as yet not fully tested at the bar of practice. This body of thought was obscured and distorted, and cov-

ered with the slime and barnacles from the sea of social-democracy, revisionism, syndicalism, dogmatic sectarianism and other such impediments. Lenin, the genius of our times, led the movement that washed and cleared away the foreign matter that had attached itself to this social science. And he advanced it further and gave it new vitality by bringing it up to date.

A "science" that is not based on the realities of life is not a science. A "science" whose only claim for serious attention is a series of quotations, traditions, old, outmoded standards—in other words, only the beaten path—will definitely not make the grade. And so it is with the science of Marxism-Leninism. This is a creative method of thinking, a virile body of thought. Like all sciences, Marxism is nothing if it is isolated, if it is separated from life, from practical activity. Marxism gives direction and illuminates the path for a movement, for action. But at the same time it learns, develops and matures through such movement and action.

Like all sciences, Marxism can test its vitality, test the all-sided correctness of its conclusions only in life, only in activity. Marxism that tries to live in isolation from action becomes brittle, becomes a set of pet formulas and will tend to swing from side to side. No science is a science if it is only an observer on the side lines. Science cannot develop solely by isolated contemplation. Marxism, like all scientific

knowledge, can truly be understood only in relation to activity and to the surroundings. Indeed, this concept of the inseparable unity of theory and practice is one on which Marx himself placed great emphasis and regarded as basic in his approach.

Creative Marxism does not give a license to ideas of revisionism. It is necessary to say this because all revisionism starts under the umbrella of fighting against dogmas. Revisionism sets aside what it considers to be the dogmas and then proceeds to substitute a new set of dogmas. In all cases the substitutions are dogmas picked from the ideological grab bag of the capitalist class.

The other side of the same coin is that it is not Marxism-Leninism to repeat theoretically generalizations as substitutes for answers and solutions, to problems and situations as life presents them—each with a specific set of circumstances, each with a specific past, each with a specific future. Therefore Marxism-Leninism is a general guide on how to approach each phenomenon, but, like all sciences, it arrives at a solution, reaches conclusions, on the basis of the general theory but specifically on the facts on hand, on the evidence set forth in the specific set of circumstances. Without such togetherness of theory and practice, theory will become a set of abstract phrases and practice will be a pendulum without a set course or field.

Today this social science, the sci-

ence of Marxism-Leninism, is a guide to life accepted by nearly half the world's population. Now it can be truly said that all contemporary politics, philosophy or social sciences are of any real significance only insofar as they are for and with Marxism or against Marxism.

* * *

These formative forty years of the Communist Party are many things to many men. To the men of big business the Communist Party has always been the handwriting on the wall, a thorn, a stubborn body of thought that resists all forms of attack whether coming from within or from without.

To the few weakhearted, who capitulated or fell under the spell of thought of the Madison-Avenue styled ideological sheep's clothing for capitalism, it has been a "wasted lifetime." To us, the fighters, the organizers, the dreamers of reality—the Marxists—the forty year span of our Party is a proud, exciting, heroic era of struggle, sacrifice, yes of honor, and warm comradeship.

To large sections of our people who are the victims of big business in one form or another, the Communist Party has been and is the one ray of hope—the advance detachment that will lead America to a life of total peace and prosperity, complete equality of opportunity—to a life of happiness and brotherhood on a level man has only visualized, in the pathway to socialism.

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"Monthly Review" on Booms and Busts

By Victor Perlo

ECONOMIC CRISES are one of the most harmful features of capitalism. There have been especially severe crises, causing frightful suffering among the masses, during the *general crisis* of capitalism, the historical period of the replacement of capitalism by socialism:

The contradiction between the social character of production and the private, capitalist form of appropriation of the results of production, which is the fundamental contradiction of capitalism, furnishes the *basis* for economic crises of overproduction. Thus the inevitability of crises is rooted in the system of capitalist economy itself. . . .

At the same time the course of each crisis, the form in which it appears, and its special features, depend also on the concrete conditions of development of the particular country concerned.

(U.S.S.R. Institute of Economics, *Political Economy*, textbook, 2nd edition, English translation, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1959, pp. 262, 264.)

It is vital for Marxists to examine concretely each business cycle, not only the crisis phase, but also the depression, recovery, and boom phases.

Since World War II the cyclical

movement of capitalist production has become much more complicated with the multiplied scale of state monopoly capitalism, particularly war economy, and with the emergence of a competing world socialist system. Old formulas will not give correct results. Adherence to fundamental laws must be combined with scientific determination of the effect on cyclical development of the new or greatly exaggerated features of the present historical period.

Economic crises intensify class conflicts. The working class can defend itself from capitalist oppression more effectively with an accurate understanding of the given state and prospective course of development of the business cycle. Nowhere is this understanding more vital than in the United States. In this, the leading country of world imperialism, crises are the most violent, and have the most pronounced effect on capitalist world economy.

How have American progressives coped with these problems? This article examines the record of the *Monthly Review*. Another article will review the record of *Political Affairs*, which presents the views of leading Communist Party theoretic-

cians. By exploring weaknesses in the past treatment of the problem, it is hoped, we may contribute to a further improvement in the Marxist analysis of economic trends in the United States, and thereby in the effectiveness of the struggles of the American working people against unemployment and crisis impoverishment.

* * *

Monthly Review has wide influence among progressive intellectuals. It is an "independent socialist magazine," generally sympathetic to socialism, but divorced from the political organization and struggles of the workers. Its editors, Paul M. Sweezy and Leo Huberman, are economist and journalist, respectively, of considerable accomplishments. Sweezy's main work, *The Theory of Capitalist Development*, is subtitled "Principles of Marxian Political Economy."

The editors analyze the economic situation in the United States at intervals of 6-9 months. Here we review their analyses for the period **December 1954 - November 1958**, covering a full cycle of business activity.

There are a number of good features in these reviews. [The editors take the position that crises are inevitable under capitalism, and persistently stress certain of the contradictions of the system. They also explain the anarchy of capitalism, and the close intertwining of economics and politics. Opposing the cold war

policies of U.S. imperialism, they expose big business profiteering through armaments, and attempts to use the military budget as a means of economic regulation.

Anarchy of production, and the relevance of political struggles, they show, make exact prophecy impossible, and bring a substantial element of uncertainty into the outlook at any time.

Yet the *Monthly Review* articles do appraise the situation, and indicate the most likely course of development in the view of the editors. This is quite proper. We cannot throw up our hands in despair, and avoid any look at the future because of the anarchy of capitalism and the vagaries of its politics. A scientific approach requires continuous attempts to penetrate more deeply into the morass of capitalist political economy, to improve the accuracy of our appraisal of the course of development, so that the working people can correspondingly adjust their tactics of struggle.

Despite its strong points, *Monthly Review* has a poor "batting average" in its economic appraisals.

In December 1954, economic activity was starting upwards from the recession or partial crisis of that year. Sweezy and Huberman saw a further decline as the immediate prospect.

By October 1955 production had already surpassed its previous peak of 1953. *Monthly Review* saw this as merely a temporary and partial re-

vival, to be followed shortly by a new and more severe drop—apparently within a few months. The journal failed to anticipate the further rise in output, and especially the sharp rise in capital investment that continued through most of 1956.

By September 1956, *Monthly Review* acknowledged the error of its 1955 appraisal, but fell into an opposite mistake. In actuality, production was already approaching its cyclical peak. But the editors saw no end to the boom in sight, and discussed forces which they thought might keep it going for a long time indeed.

In May 1957, just three months before the beginning of the latest crisis, Sweezy and Huberman had become confirmed in their opinion of the lasting character of the boom. They wrote "there would seem to be little danger . . . of a serious depression in the near future."

In February 1958, *Monthly Review* recognized the decline then well under way. It suggested this would prove to be a slump of moderate severity, with maximum unemployment of 7-8 million, and a drop of 12 per cent in real gross national product. While slightly exaggerating the ultimate depth of the crisis, this was the most accurate of the Sweezy-Huberman appraisals in the period under review.

By June 1958, production was starting up from its low point, the decline in investment was coming to an end, consumption was beginning to

rise. Within about nine months, the previous peak of production had been regained. None of this was visible to the editors, who saw a long-continuing deep crisis ahead:

A more likely course of development, however, would seem to be a continuation of inventory liquidation, a sharper decline in consumption than has yet occurred, and progressive cuts in capital spending programs as the full seriousness of the situation gradually dawns on businessmen . . . this is a major depression . . . when the recovery comes it will be weak and incomplete. What lies ahead is not full recovery but stagnation.

By November 1958, *Monthly Review* acknowledged that the recovery had come sooner than it had anticipated, but still believed that it would be incomplete, and followed by a period of prolonged stagnation.

Altogether, of seven appraisals, five were mainly inaccurate. One (Feb., 1958), was correct. It is too soon to make a final judgment on the November 1958 appraisal.*

There is nothing unusual in such inaccuracies. And even when wrong, *Monthly Review* does illuminate aspects of the situation ignored by the ordinary forecasters. Still, workers and progressive intellectuals demand a better performance. What are some

* Usually the appraisals were completed about the 10th of the month prior to the month of publication. Dates shown are months of publication.

of the sources of Sweezy and Huberman's errors?

EMPIRICISM

The typical capitalist, and bourgeois economist, sees that which is before his nose. He is excited by the particular features currently rising or falling most rapidly. Recording these features of the recent past, he automatically projects them into the future, although the real science of economic analysis must identify those features not yet prominent which will become decisive in the future.

He tends to overlook the cyclical character of capitalist development, and to rationalize the indefinite continuation of whatever trend is then underway. Theories of permanent prosperity crop up during every boom, while theories of stagnation come to the fore in every depression. Because bourgeois economists are supporters of capitalism, their empirical method is often biased. They are more unanimous in expecting an uptrend to continue than a downtrend. Some will predict the rapid ending of a downturn, feeling it their duty to the capitalists not to "rock the boat" with gloomy predictions.

Sweezy and Huberman, to a considerable extent, have fallen into this method, but without the optimistic bias of the supporters of capitalism. In 1954 and 1958, while things were going down, they could not see those forces still below the surface, which even at the time of writing were pro-

ducing an upturn. They could only see the indefinite continuation of the working out of contradictions in economic crisis.

In 1955, noting that the recovery to that point had been limited to consumers goods industries, they concluded that it could not spread to capital goods industries as well. But a year later, when capital investment had become the main feature, they assumed this would continue for a long time. A half-year later, when the investment boom was coming to an end, they extended its expected life indefinitely. As with the capitalists, the editors of *Monthly Review* became most optimistic just before the outbreak of a crisis, at exactly the wrong time.

I believe they fall into this trap because of an inadequate recognition of *all* of the main contradictions of capitalist economic development, a too-ready acceptance of bourgeois statistics and evaluations, and the "independent" socialism of the *Monthly Review*. This has a certain ivory-tower character, isolating it from political struggle and hence from a full understanding of life.

CONTRADICTIONS OF CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT

The standard modern bourgeois technique of economic forecasting, applied, with variations, by nearly all Keynesian and post-Keynesian schools, is to summarize statistical projections of various components

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of the gross national product. *Monthly Review* uses this technique. The November 1958 issue, for example, calculates on a \$8 billion rise in private investment, \$12 billion in personal consumption, and \$5 billion in government spending, for a total of \$25 billion. This is suggested as the likely rise in the gross national product over a year's period.

Sometimes users of this method are successful, when they can isolate factors which are basic to a given situation, and hence determine the arithmetic of all the other elements. Sweezy and Huberman were not successful. Their arithmetic was straightforward, but capitalist economy does not act by simple arithmetic. So by the spring of 1959 the rise in gross national product from a year earlier was \$50 billion, not \$25 billion; a difference sufficient to change the whole character of the recovery.

The essential weakness of the Keynesian technique is that it views capitalist economy as actually or potentially harmonious rather than necessarily operating within a network of contradictions. In particular, it ignores, or incorrectly interprets, changes in the rate of profit as a factor in cyclical development. Profits are the driving force of capitalist production. A crisis breaks out when capitalists cannot sell their product so as to realize a given rate of profit. A revival takes place when, in the course of a crisis and depression, the rate of profit has been restored to a point where capitalists will

resume investment (accumulation).

Here is a case in point. *Monthly Review*, in November 1958, observes that the recent rapid increase in labor productivity, 7% per year, will prevent any rise in employment, and hence in the demand for consumer goods on the part of workers.

This is only half of the truth. Like every other phenomenon, rising labor productivity has its contradictory aspects. It does undermine employment at a given level of output, and hence keeps down the consuming power of the masses. But it also increases the rate of exploitation of labor, and hence the rate of profits of the capitalists. It tends, therefore, to encourage fresh investments, first in working stocks, then in fixed installations. When this tendency becomes operative, increased employment and wage payments occur in the capital goods industries, and a derivative rise in consumption expenditures follows.

Which aspect will dominate depends on many circumstances. But one cannot hope to come out right most of the time without examining both aspects. This discussion illustrates another vital point. The welfare of the workers and the prosperity of the capitalists do not coincide, and are often in opposition. Elementary, of course. But too often forgotten when the business cycle is discussed, particularly when the main trade union center (AFL-CIO) systematically confuses labor's welfare with capitalist prosperity.

Today, as when Marx wrote, the recovery from a crisis is on the backs of the workers. In big business conferences held in the spring of 1958, employers welcomed the slump to the extent that it enabled them to put pressure on workers for higher production, to reduce costs and increase profits. The concentration of output in the most automated facilities, together with the marked intensification of labor, was the main specific form of the employer attack on workers during the crisis. It enabled the employers to restore the rate of profit and raise it to new high levels in 1958-59, much sooner than they expected.

It is this sharp jump in the rate of profit which accounts for the 200-point rise in the stock market, for the rapid upsurge of business confidence, for the new uptrend in fixed capital investment despite the fact that excess capacity is even more marked than it was two years ago. It is this which permits capitalist prosperity in the midst of long-continuing mass unemployment and suffering amongst the working class.

This is not the whole story of the recovery. The big corporations were able to increase the exploitation of labor and to begin to realize higher profits as rapidly as they did, because of the state-monopoly capitalist measures which they took. The most decisive of these was the very sharp upsurge in military orders during the first half of 1958, providing an added market, if one that made for

inflation, higher taxes on the masses, and a continuation of cold war dangers.

This was the two-pronged campaign of big business to deal with the crisis cut in profits—greater exploitation of labor and more military orders. Of course, the renewed prosperity is one-sided, of course it is unbalanced, of course it builds up conditions for a new and perhaps more severe crisis.

But it happened, and it characterizes the present situation. The weakness of the *Monthly Review* treatment of productivity increases was to look at it one-sidedly, not in all of its contradictory aspects. This would have shown the possibility of an early recovery, although not, by itself, its certainty.

In general, the capitalist cycle is governed by a complex net of contradictions, which may be summarized as follows:

1) The tendency of production and capacity to expand as rapidly as technically possible, *versus* the limits of the markets, especially consumers' markets.

2) The drive for ever-higher profits *versus* the struggles of the workers, the rising organic composition of capital, and the difficulties of sale at full value owing to market limitations.

3) The constant drive for new areas of operation, providing the objective basis for expansion, *versus* the resistance of petty commodity producers to being swallowed up,

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the resistance of peoples to imperialist oppression through foreign investments and bases, the resistance of the peace forces to war economy, and the struggle for position among the imperialist powers in a shrinking capitalist world.

An all-around appraisal of the economic situation requires taking into account all of these contradictions and their mutual interactions. Sweezy's book, *The Theory of Capitalist Development*, explores in great detail the relationship of the rate of profit to the business cycle. But in their recent treatment, he and Huberman concentrate too much on the capacity-market contradiction. The rate of profit is scarcely mentioned, and there are gaps in the treatment of the third-listed set of contradictions, as will be seen.

THE "TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION"

Apologists for the status quo have built up a system of supposed reforms which, in their combined effect, are expected to prevent crises. Some writers present one or another of these reforms as veritable panaceas bringing economic stability. During 1956-58, Sweezy and Huberman have fallen, successively, for two of these panaceas, although with more qualifications than offered by most bourgeois advocates.

The first panacea was the "technological revolution." In September 1956, *Monthly Review* observed that

investment was booming despite rising overcapacity. The situation was like 1929, but might end differently, because of "new elements" in the situation, particularly the "technological revolution." This consists of "New methods of production, automation, and related developments." It is "of very far-reaching scope," and "this technological revolution is now the *dominant* factor in the whole economic situation. A high and even rising level of investment is a natural accompaniment." Without direct statement, the impression is created that this can continue on a rising plane for an indefinite period, at least "the next few years."

By May 1957, *Monthly Review* put the case even stronger:

We are in the midst of an industrial revolution—really and not just as an after-dinner figure of speech . . . in such a period private investment tends to remain high regardless of the momentary relation between capacity and current output.

[Thus] there would seem to be little danger—of a serious depression in the near future . . . the depressive effect of excess capacity on investment is as weak as it has ever been, and may be incapable, at least for considerable periods, of offsetting the buoyant forces arising from technological, demographic, and fiscal conditions.

So the capitalists, because of rapid technological gains, will be able to overcome indefinitely the contradiction between their expansion of ca-

capacity and the objective limits of the market; between the rising organic composition of capital, which they are accelerating, and the given rate of profit. This is virtually the opposite of the previously-noted error of 1958, which ignored the rise in the rate of monopoly profit resulting partly from improved technology. Sweezy rather admired Schumpeter and regarded him as close to Marx in some respects. Here Sweezy is much closer to Schumpeter and his theory of innovations than to Marx.

The period of 1890-1910 was featured by rapid technical development. The conversion of pig iron into steel became general, the application of electric power to industry became important, and the motor vehicle became a significant factor in transportation. These technical changes required enormous capital investments, especially for electric power. Yet the period was far from depression-proof.

The decade of the 1890s was the worst in the United States for depressions, prior to the 1930's. And the 1900s were interrupted by two short crises, of which that of 1908 was quite severe. If one can generalize, it would have to be like this: a period of rapid technical development gives more scope to the development of contradictions, to the "excesses" of booms, and hence may be featured by *more severe* cyclical upsets than otherwise occur.

The world today is truly in the

midst of a profound technical-scientific revolution. Under socialism, its effects are wholly positive, as in the Soviet space triumphs and the accelerated growth rate of socialist economics, in which the scientific-technical advances play a significant part. Under capitalism, these also stimulate industrial growth, but along with it contradictory features which increase economic instability and lead to crises.

Soon after the May 1957 article, it became obvious that the idea of a "technical revolution" averting crises was nonsense. *Monthly Review* for June 1958 said: "Probably the most rapid rate of technological progress in capitalist history is proving wholly incapable of providing the investment outlets the system so urgently needs."

The editors criticize the First National City Bank for suggesting that new products and processes might come to the rescue, but do not acknowledge their own parallel mistake a year earlier.

BUILT-IN STABILIZERS

"Built-in stabilizers" are one of the most popular bourgeois crisis remedies. Through unemployment insurance payments, reductions in income tax withholdings, increases in farm price support payments, and some lesser items, part of the consumer incomes lost in a business decline are compensated by the government. This supposedly limits the fall in

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consumer spending, and so prevents the "vicious cycle" by which a downturn becomes a major crisis. These government supports result from legislation already in effect, they require no fresh Congressional action, hence they are "built-in."

Progressive economists as well as the more sober bourgeois economists have shown the limitations of the built-in stabilizers. They can slow the rate of decline in certain areas, but are not important enough, quantitatively or qualitatively, to alter major trends. Some are important concessions which ease conditions of working people, but they cannot be expected to put the unemployed to work.

Not unexpectedly, the recovery from the 1958 crisis revived propaganda about built-in stabilizers. Quite unexpectedly, *Monthly Review* (Nov. 1958) went for the propaganda in a particularly twisted form:

The 'automatic stabilizers' which were built into the economy during the Roosevelt era have successfully met the most severe test to which they have yet been subjected, and it is they which must receive credit for checking the decline and permitting certain forces of recovery to operate during the late spring and summer.

The chief automatic stabilizers are: (1) Strong trade unions which have prevented a collapse of the wage structure such as used to take place under the impact of mounting unemployment. In this depression, wage rates, far

from collapsing as they did after 1929, have actually continued to rise, though more slowly than in the previous boom. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this factor in the maintenance of the level of personal income. (2) Unemployment insurance . . . (3) Agricultural supports. . . .

Wage increases amounted to perhaps \$6-7 billion in 1958. Unemployment insurance payments and farm price support spending rose about \$2 billion each. The decisive item, to Sweezy-Huberman, as to others who use this version of the built-in stabilizers theory, is (1) strong unions and wage increases.

The argument is conceptually wrong. There is nothing "built-in" about the strength of the unions or their ability to obtain wage increases or maintain wage rates at a given time. The very existence of economically strong unions is currently under serious attack by the dominant capitalists. Despite the unions, employers resist wage increases whenever and wherever possible, and put over open or hidden wage cuts whenever they can. The bitter struggle over steel wages is an obvious case in point.

To include strong unions and wage increases among built-in stabilizers is to give the capitalists credit for really reconciling themselves to well-organized workers and to regularly raising their living standard. Actually, wage concessions are the uncertain and tentative result of labor's struggles against the really built-in laws of capitalist develop-

ment, which tend to increase competition among workers and push wages down; against the anti-union actions of employers and their politicians. Wage gains always have to be defended and consolidated, especially in a period of business decline.

The argument is invalid economically. It follows the line of the trade union underconsumptionists, that wage increases, by raising workers' purchasing power, are the decisive path to prosperity. The capitalists, of course, claim the opposite, that wage increases cause depression. This is not the place to rehash this old argument. Because of the contradictory nature of capitalism, changes in wage rates have a contradictory effect on cyclical economic trends. Besides, the range within which they fluctuate is rarely sufficient to have a major net impact on either total consumption, or the rate of profit, over a short period. Workers have to fight for higher wages, lest their living standards be slashed to bits in all stages of the business cycle. Trade-union leaders would do better to advise changing the system which resists decent living standards, rather than trying to present wage increases as something helpful to capitalism.

In the interests of historical accuracy, it is noteworthy that wage rates did not fall sharply in 1930. Only in 1931, after the business decline became extremely deep, did wage cuts become general. In fact, taking into account the different trends in living costs, it turns out

that both in 1930 and 1958 there was virtually no change in average real hourly earnings in manufacturing. Yet the 1930 crisis went on for two more years, while the 1958 crisis was soon stopped. Obviously entirely different causes were decisive.

CLASSLESS ATTITUDE TOWARD CRISES

The economic cycle is not a parlor game. At stake are the standard of living of the American people, the security or poverty of millions, whether or not the masses have roofs over their heads or enough food to eat. This does not come through in the *Monthly Review*.

Of course, to substitute compassionate wailings for scientific analysis would be cheap demagoguery. That is not the point. What is needed is a class viewpoint that relates the scientific analysis of economic trends to the class interests and immediate and potential objectives of struggle of the working class. Such an approach does not stop with fact-finding and analysis about the business cycle. Its decisive aim is to help in lighting the path by which workers can fight against the harmful effects of capitalist economic fluctuations.

This is an essential ingredient of the *Marxist* approach to economic questions, because Marxism is a class science, and Marxist political economy is integral to the political struggles of the working class.

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should be labor's attitude towards the business cycle? The editors of *Monthly Review*, in May, wrote there was "little danger—or hope, depending on your point of view" of a serious depression. Labor union leaders, wishing to stress their loyalty to capitalism, advance their demands as being "good for the economy" first, and good for labor second. Reactionaries often charge that Communists "hope for" a depression to undermine capitalism, although the Communist record utterly disproves this charge.

In fact, the immediate demands of the working class can only properly be stated in terms of being for better wages, for more jobs, for peace, etc., and not "for" nor "against" capitalist boom and bust. Labor cannot accept the responsibility for any part of the capitalist business cycle, or, with the real balance of forces in America today, pretend to be able to exert major influence on its course.

True, concessions can be won more easily in periods of capitalist prosperity. Better grab them! Because whether you do or not, the prosperity may not last long. And sometimes things work out differently. Hitler brought a militarized boom to German capitalists, but only misery and death to German workers. American workers won significant economic and social gains in the New Deal period of deep depression.

Correspondingly, any attempt to blame the misfortunes of capitalism, or predatory actions of the monop-

olies, on labor's struggles, *in the slightest degree*, must be rebuffed. Nowhere does this have more current relevance than in the dispute about wages and inflation.

ANTI-LABOR "INFLATION" SLANDERS

Over 100 years ago Karl Marx exposed to British trade unionists the capitalist argument that higher wages cause higher prices, and hence can bring no real gains to workers. Through succeeding generations, Marxists and many non-Marxist progressives and unionists have upheld this general position. Since World War II the American trade unions, despite their theoretical backwardness, have continuously showed the American people that price rises resulted from corporate profiteering, and could not be blamed on the workers.

Now that American big business has recovered from last year's fear of a prolonged crisis, it has begun a major propaganda campaign against wage increases, using this threadbare argument that wage increases cause inflation. President Eisenhower, in his 1959 annual economic message, carried this propaganda to the point of warning unions of government wage controls if they did not hold back on wage demands.

Surprisingly, Sweezy and Huberman lend aid and comfort to this campaign. Taking the specific line of liberal professors like Galbraith, they claim that big unions and big

employers in the "concentrated" industries combine to raise their wages and prices at *the expense of workers* in competitive industries and "consumers in general." This argument is developed in the November 1958 issue of *Monthly Review*, and also in an article by Sweezy in *The Nation*.

Contrary to Eisenhower's distorted statistics, and *Monthly Review's* generalizations, the facts show that over the five-year period 1953-58 wage increases won by manufacturing production workers have exactly matched productivity increases, so there has been no rise whatsoever in wage costs per unit of output. The substantial rise which did take place in prices of manufactured goods, and in the cost of living, has represented an increase in the rate of exploitation of labor, and not any "push-pull" inflation. The situation is pretty much the same in more or less monopolized industries, in better or worse organized industries.

Further, a fully consistent labor position must strive to win as large wage increases as are politically possible, and to combine this with whatever controls are politically possible to force down prices charged by monopoly corporations. Wage gains can be won, and inflation curbed, only by struggle against the tendencies of a highly monopolized imperialist armament economy; not by labor "restraint" and knuckling under to the harmful effects of this economy.

IMPERIALISM AND WAR ECONOMY

U.S. imperialism seeks its new areas of expansion abroad in foreign investments and at home through an increased military budget. Appraisal of the economic situation requires close attention to these subjects and to the political struggles around them.

Bourgeois economists tend to underestimate the importance of world economy in U.S. trends. They point to the small percentage of the American gross national product represented by exports, to suggest that this is not a major factor. However, these exports are like the above-water portion of an iceberg. The bulk of foreign economic activity is that carried out by U.S. corporations through foreign investments. It is only within the last few years that the capitalist sources have given a rough picture of the enormous volume of foreign investments, and of the very high percentage of monopoly profits derived from this source.

In particular, a sharp jump in foreign investment activity and in foreign trade played a major role in the 1955-57 boom. Unfortunately, *Monthly Review* virtually ignores this whole area.

Through the years *Monthly Review* has exposed the use of war economy by big business as a source of high profits and as a means of keeping business active. This position of Sweezy and Huberman is

one of their strongest points, a real contribution to the cause of peace.

The September 1956 issue warns that in the event of a serious slump, the ruling class would push for a greatly expanded arms budget. The March 1957 issue states that the "Big Boys" are worried about deflation. "And to that worry there is a standard reaction—more cold war, more arms spending. Hence the Eisenhower Doctrine. Hence the proposed bigger military budget for fiscal '58. Hence no deals with Moscow." The February 1958 issue opined that before the decline got completely out of hand, American capitalism would turn to its "ultimate resort" of the postwar period, "a massive increase in military and related cold-war expenditures . . . which will doubtless and in due course be solemnly presented to us by pundits and scholars alike as a brilliant vindication of the free enterprise system."

Even as this was written new military orders were being issued at a rate of 50% higher than a year earlier, amounting to a rise of \$9 billion at an annual rate. This accelerated military ordering was maintained through the first half of 1958, and continued at a somewhat slackened pace in the second half of the year.

The spurt in armament orders was widely advertised in official and unofficial statements from Washington as the key item in the Administration's anti-recession program, and

its excuse for not putting into effect various relief and public works measures. Then in the summer of 1958 the intervention in Lebanon and the crisis over Quemoy put an end to inventory liquidation, and helped bring the turn in economic activity.

In short, Sweezy-Huberman's warnings proved all too true. But neither the June nor November 1958 economic surveys in *Monthly Review* noted the rising war orders and military threats, nor their role in the economic recovery. Instead, as already noted, *Monthly Review* followed the "pundits and scholars" in giving capitalism at least qualified credit for economically decisive "built-in stabilizers." This lapse is puzzling.

In this area, also, more than analysis is called for in an anti-capitalist journal. Working people require a program of struggle against the monstrous program of armaments and war threats, a program for peaceful jobs to more than replace those now provided by military orders. Certainly East-West trade, low-cost housing, federally aided non-segregated school construction, etc., are less profitable to the monopolies than lush armament contracts. But by that very fact they provide twice as many jobs to workers per dollar spent. The task of peace lovers is to convince the masses of this, to convince people of the need to fight for a program of peaceful jobs as they fight for better

wages, rather than accepting the natural tendency of modern imperialism to subordinate everything to arms economy.

Progressives have been hammering at this theme for years, and not fruitlessly. It has become vibrant, immediate. The tremendous success of Premier Khrushchev's visit, the mass popularity of his disarmament and trade proposals make much of this perspective alive and real for tens of millions. If progressive Americans multiply their efforts on behalf of such a program, chances are excellent that the people will act and win significant victories in the near future.

Victories can be won in such

a fight, just as partial victories have been won for generations in the fight against the tendency of capitalism to lower labor's living standards. Only in the fight for peace and for their economic interests can the American people in this century learn the need to fight for socialism.

The author is well aware of the fact that *Monthly Review* has no monopoly on error among Left and progressive writings on the economic situation. He anticipates improvement in his own economic analyses as a result of the work on this article. I hope that it will be used constructively by all concerned.

Readers will be interested in an excellent 50-page pamphlet by Felix Greene, formerly chief of the British Broadcasting Company's American bureau, entitled *What's Really Happening in China?* It is based upon extensive first-hand observation and is published by City Lights Books, 261 Columbus Avenue, San Francisco 11, California; its price is \$1. Less friendly to the New China, but still an important corrective to the fantastic falsehoods of the U.S. press, is *Impatient Giant: Red China Today*, (David McKay, N. Y., \$4.50) by Gerald Clark, chief foreign correspondent for the *Montreal Star*.—The Editor.

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Hail the People's Republic of China!

By Shirley Graham

Quite recently, Shirley Graham, the well-known American author, together with her distinguished husband, Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, visited the People's Republic of China for several weeks. On the momentous occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the founding of that Republic, we are proud to bring our readers this eye-witness report.—The Editor.

1949 IS ENSHRINED in the voluminous records of China as the Year of Liberation. It was a year of culmination, of fulfillment, of endings and of beginning. Not ten years, not twenty years, not fifty years, but for hundreds of years the people of China had been struggling to free themselves from harsh oppression, from cruel domination, vicious exploitation and degradation which has only been equalled on the continent of Africa. This continuous struggle was misrepresented in the West by means of various guises. During the last hundred years the struggle was divided into numerous "barbarous uprisings" against "advancement" and "civilization." When China was not revolting, it was, according to the West, "slumbering" behind its Great Wall. The truth is that slumbering, immutable, tranquil China was ever a myth. To quote Mao Tse-tung: "By their number and their size, the revolts we find throughout the history of China have no equal in the whole of world history." Yet, China has survived as a vast

country, a nation and a government!

Chiang Kai-shek was only one of the many heads of China's government who betrayed his people. But by the end of 1948 his soldiers were wondering why and for whom they were fighting. From Chiang's capital, Nanking, came furious commands that the soldiers die at their posts rather than surrender, but in the final two months of that year the People's Army took 327,000 prisoners. In January, 1949, Ch'en Yi captured Nanking and Shanghai. A few days later Peking surrendered without resistance. Chiang Kai-shek fled to Szechuan Province where he thought powerful war lords could sustain him. But the people of Chung-king, where he set up headquarters, assisted by the peasants, defeated the war lords and drove out Chiang and his followers. They dropped down to Canton.

In April news flashed around the world that Canton had fallen to the People's Liberation Armies and that Chiang had fled to Taiwan. We, who were in Paris that spring at-

tending the World Peace Congress, sat in the Salle Pleyel and by short wave radio heard the rejoicing of the people of Canton.

Peking, October 1st, 1949: Mao Tse-tung walked out onto the balcony of the Imperial Palace, overlooking Tien An Men. He was greeted by a half million men, women and children gathered in the square. When the cries died down, Mao Tse-tung stepped to the microphone. They say his voice trembled as he pronounced these words:

"In the name of the Consultative Political Committee and of the Chinese People, I proclaim the People's Republic of China."

No one moved, no one uttered a sound as the red silk flag with five gold stars, symbol of the Union of the Five National Classes of China, was slowly hoisted to the top of a gigantic mast which had been erected on the Tien An Men. In those moments the people of China held their breath!

* * *

On this October 1st, to celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of the People's Republic of China, one cannot estimate how many millions of Chinese and friends from all parts of the world will mass in Tien An Men! This is the largest square in the world. Even in past years it held more people than could crowd into Moscow's huge Red Square. But, when we were in Peking this year all avenues approaching Tien An Men

were being widened and beautified.

At least a square mile opposite the Imperial Palace had been cleared of small, congested buildings. In the center of this clearing a handsome monument to the fallen heroes of Liberation had been erected. The monument faces what was then a mammoth steel frame whose girders reached higher and higher each day of our stay. Three shifts of workers were busy around the clock on this building. Sparks flying from drills were like fireworks in the night. And always there was a crowd around looking up, eager to inform the stronger that this was to be the fine, new Hall of Congress. On the other side of the clearing a large Museum was under construction.

Many visitors have testified to the transformation of Peking since 1949: no filth, no smells, no beggars, no rickshaws, no prostitutes, no children or old people dying in the streets. You have read of how the Chinese people literally move mountains, level valleys and change the course of rivers. Yet, I was not prepared for the changes to be noted from my balcony window between the first week in March, when we left Peking and the middle of April, when we returned. When we left after the city, trolley cars with all the noise accompanying trolley cars anywhere, were trundling up and down in front of the Peking Hotel. When we returned there was not even a sign of the tracks. Large, silent buses moved along the wide avenue. When

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we left, the side of the street was torn up—sewer pipes were being laid, sidewalks were being widened, etc. When we returned, plants and shrubs were blooming in parkways along both sides. The steel frame which I could see from that balcony was no longer merely a steel frame—a marble building topped by a slender tower was in evidence, around which a terraced garden was being laid out. Pei Kwang-li was able to tell me details of the auspicious opening on October 1st.

Pei Kwang-li was the pretty, vivacious interpreter who accompanied us on our seven-thousand kilometer swing about China. She was delicately made, with dainty hands and feet, though her short legs proved to be sturdy and tireless. Her skill with the English language is remarkable. She and her husband are employed by the Association for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries—our host together with the Chinese Peace Committee.

Our last days in China were hectic—so many people yet to see, so many places yet to go. (I never did get to the Great Wall!) And Kwang-li was breathless in her eagerness not to let us miss anything. On a bright, windy morning when we two set out after only a few hours sleep, I asked:

"Will you take a little rest after we're gone, or will you be starting off with other visitors?"

Kwang-li smiled. "No more trips for me for a while. I'm going to work at building the new Congress

Hall. I asked for the assignment."

"What will you be doing?" I just could not imagine little Kwang-li climbing over steel girders.

"Laying bricks, probably," was her reply. "I've done that before and I'm pretty good at it. But it doesn't matter what job they give me. I wanted the opportunity to some day tell my children that I myself, with my own hands, helped put up our Hall of Congress." Her black eyes shone. "When the government enters the Hall, October 1st, I'll have special reason to rejoice."

Special reason to rejoice—because she is given the opportunity to work with her hands on a hard construction job!

But Kwang-li is China! Throughout the land I saw more people working harder than I have ever seen before. And while they work they radiate joy!

* * *

Who in the West has not heard of the lowly state of Chinese women? Even in the highest circles of Old China the woman was owned body and soul by her father, her brothers, or husband, even her Eldest Son. If the woman of the upper classes managed to survive, to bear sons and to reach old age, she would be able to release some of her misery and frustration by bullying, beating and torturing the young wives and concubines of her sons. The peasant and working woman were usually denied even this "compensation." The pass-

ing of "traditional family life" has been deeply deplored by critics of the New China. It is a cause for much thanksgiving among the people of China themselves.

The "family life" of the poor was wretched beyond description. It was common practice to strangle girl babies at birth. And perhaps that was the kindest thing to do. For each year added to the burden and woe of the little girl. In my ignorance I had thought that the practice of binding feet was confined to the rich—and this was hard enough even for the child who could be given some assistance. But I learned in China that except for a few agricultural districts—where women were customarily worked in the fields—foot binding had been a national practice. Thousands of little girls were thus rendered incapable of foraging for the scraps of food to sustain life. They died by the thousands in holes and corners into which they dragged their tortured bodies. And what did "enlightened" Westerners who brought "civilization" and "Christianity" to China do for the Chinese women? Read the records of Church orphanages! Ask the sailors of the world! The brothels and dens of waterfronts bore witness.

On a soft, moonlit spring night I and a young woman resident of Shanghai walked arm in arm along the Bund. This is a broad promenade which curves about Shanghai's harbor. A park strip, with benches, skirts the water's edge. Behind the

park is a wide, paved thoroughfare which passes before an unbroken facade of what was once capitalistic and imperialistic might. Here, proudly facing the harbor, are handsome buildings which had housed the Bank of England, the Bank of France, the Bank of Italy. Now, behind the tall, narrow windows and imposing granite is the Bank of the People's Republic of China and other business houses which have to do with China's rapidly expanding commerce and industry.

I noticed a particularly ornate entrance and asked what it was.

"That used to be the British Club," explained my friend, "only Englishmen and their Chinese servants allowed. They boasted that it had the longest bar in the world."

"What became of it—the bar, I mean?"

"Oh, it's still there. Now the building is the International Seamen's Club."

We crossed over from the parkway that I might have a better look around this Seamen's Club. No drunks, no rowdies of any kind, no danger to two women walking along the Bund at night. Back at the hotel an hour later, my husband told us,

"When I was in Shanghai in 1936 such a stroll would have been unthinkable!"

Today Chinese women walk the streets of cities, villages and country lanes in safety, free and independent. They go to school, they organize

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they attend the theatre. Their Con-specialists, more safe-guards forstitution stipulates: "In the People's health. Republic of China women enjoy equal rights with men in all spheres—political, economic, cultural, social and domestic." "The state protects marriage, the family, and the mother and child."

Chinese women take their rights and their responsibilities seriously. Along with men they are using their hands and their intelligence to change the features of their motherland and to build their country into a strong, bountiful and happy socialist state. They are elected and serve in government. At the district and township level, 20.5 per cent of the deputies are women, totalling over a million in all. Madam Soon Ching Ling is now Vice-President of the Republic. With us on numerous occasions in China and attending the World Peace Council with us in Stockholm, was Madam Li Te-chuan, Minister of Public Health. Madam Li Te-chuan is a witty, vigorous woman in her early fifties. Efficiency, warm human interest and buoyant spirits radiate from her. She speaks excellent English and it was easy for us to go around together. Thus, I saw numerous examples of how she is guiding the people away from age-old habits detrimental to health and into ways of better and more bountiful living. Everywhere clinics and hospitals are being set up. Mme. Li Te-chuan travels throughout the land and always she is calling for more doctors, more nurses, more child-care

* * *
Seated next to the pretty wife of the Vice-Premier at Dr. Du Bois' birthday banquet was a handsome, dignified woman whose smile was always gracious. She speaks no English but we conversed through an interpreter. She was Madam Shih Liang, Minister of Justice. Her duties now deal more with rehabilitation than with punishment. Ten years after founding the Republic, crime is at a minimum in China. I asked about juvenile delinquency. It was some time before anyone could understand my question. The phrase "juvenile delinquency" cannot be translated into Chinese. When, finally those around me grasped what I meant they were rather shocked. I was told that in China if a young person neglected duty, was careless or showed tendencies towards wrongdoing, it was because he had not been properly guided and had not been integrated into the social group. It was explained that when Shanghai and Canton were liberated there were many young petty thieves, beggars and prostitutes who were taken into the *care* of the State, healed in body and spirit and, for the first time in their lives, *offered the opportunity of living a clean and rewarding life.* These young people were never treated as criminals, but as *victims.*

After traveling about China I better understood why there was little place and no reason for juvenile de-

linquency in a land where every young person *knows* he is *important* and that he is needed. The most agile minds are richly rewarded for effort in any creative activity. Recognition, appreciation and praise give the youth every incentive to harness his energies for constructive efforts. There is no reason for frustration, discouragement or feelings of insecurity.

The Minister of Supervision, corresponding somewhat to our Secretary of the Interior, is Madam Chien Ying. She is small and almost frail in appearance. Her keen, black eyes look out direct from a serious, young face. Her hair hangs in a severe, straight bob. They say that her departmental records are exemplary for detail and accuracy.

These women in government might be called exceptional. What of the great masses of Chinese women? I saw women plowing in the fields, pulling heavy loads and digging ditches; I saw women flying planes, serving as militia and directing traffic. The entire train crew which carried us from Canton to Shanghai was composed of women; one of the pilots on the deisel-propelled steamer which took us up the Yangtze River, over rapids, through mighty gorges, four days and nights through a dangerous channel, was a woman. Women are in industry (my husband was shocked upon seeing a young woman driving a mighty engine in the Wohan Steel Plant), in science, in business, in education.

Most of the doctors in China are women; a women's surveying team drew up the blue prints of the Chiu-chuan Basin in northwest China. It is said of Lo Shu-Chen, one of Peking's postwomen, that she has never mis-delivered any of the more than 1,000,000 letters that have passed through her hands. Chen Shu-chuan and Yang Chu-chen, two Wuhan housewives, succeeded in making oxalic acid from saw dust—their product being superior to that produced in Japan. An oxalic acid plant now goes into operation in Wuhan under their supervision.

Indeed, the women of China greet the Tenth Anniversary of their liberation with happiness and joy. From across the seas, I stretch out my hand to you, Valiant Sisters, and repeat what I said when I looked into your beaming faces:

"You are an inspiration and a hope to all oppressed women in the world. Look up, my sister Negro women of North and South America, look, women of the West Indies, look, scarred women of Africa! See the People's Republic of China on this happy Anniversary Day!"

* * *

Ten years after founding the People's Republic, a united China faces the world, united in a sense never achieved by the mightiest of its emperors. This vast land sprawling over the continent of Asia, measures 9,600,000 square kilometers, making it the third largest country in the world. Its population is over 680

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millions. The first overwhelming impression of China is of its many people. They were all along the way as we drove in from the Peking Airport—on foot carrying loads on their backs, driving carts, pulling carts, on bicycles, oil tanks, in pedicarts and motor trucks. They were in the nearby fields, working on constructions going up along side the road. As we approached the city gate the throng multiplied; by the time we passed through the gate the car was forced to slow down and to move carefully. People were on all sides. And they differed in color of skin, in size and in contour of face.

I was to learn that between six and seven per cent of the 680 million people of China belong to national minorities which in the past were driven or fled into mountainous or distant border regions. Oppressed and exploited by the ruling majority, despised, excluded from development, hunted down by Japanese invaders and enslaved by Kuomintang rulers, many of these people lived in the most primitive conditions. The People's Government names fifty-one different minority nationalities which were separated from each other and from the dominant majority by location, language, customs and rigid laws. This classification can be even larger if dialects and other distinct characteristics such as religion and tribal markings are taken into account. The one common denominator among all these minorities was fear and hatred towards other peo-

ples. No matter how primitive was the social system, whether it were tribal, slave or feudal, each nation had its small ruling class at the top, with its mass of degraded toilers at the bottom. Each group had its fierce religious taboos, superstitions and priesthood.

In some cases the minority people had been the original inhabitants of the land at the time of the Han invasion over two thousand years ago. When the Manchus came to power they imposed cruel oppression on all non-Manchu nationalities. Even the proud Hans were forced to till the earth. In time, however, Han landlords shared with Mongol princes and Manchu nobles in holding high position and ruling all others. Gradually the Manchurians were absorbed by the Hans until by the beginning of the 20th century only the Manchu dynasty could be sure of "pure" Manchurian blood and only in the Imperial Court and in a small northwest section, was the language of the Manchus spoken or written.

Not all minority people were concentrated in a particular territory. As example, the Huis, numbering about 3,900,000 are scattered throughout China. These people are descendants of Arabs, Turks, Persians who migrated to China between the 8th and 9th centuries. Sometime later, Arab and Persian merchants began arriving in China. During the Tang and Sung dynasties many of them made their homes there permanently. These were Muslims who brought

their faith with them. Records show that in 878 A.D. there were 200,000 foreigners (mainly Muslims, but also Christians and Jews) in Canton alone. But up to and through Kuomintang rule the Huis suffered long and continued persecution. As late as 1948 two mosques—one in Peking and one in Tientsin—were destroyed by Chiang Kai-shek's troops. To escape discrimination in education and employment many Huis, like other minority people, concealed their origin.

Such was the situation with regard to minorities when the People's Republic of China was established in 1949. Years of wars and constant struggle since the Manchu dynasty was forced to abdicate had brought little change for them, except that they probably suffered more than other people in the continuing wars. It was the immediate task of the New Government to convince these peoples that the triumph of the Liberation Armies was their triumph, that they too had been liberated from the old life. Article III of the People's Republic of China set forth the proposition:

The People's Republic of China is a single multi-national state.

All nationalities are equal. Discrimination against, or oppression of, any nationality, and acts which undermine the unity of the nationalities are prohibited.

All nationalities have freedom to use and foster the growth of their spoken and written languages, and to preserve

or reform their own customs or ways.

Regional autonomy applies in areas where people of national minorities live in compact communities. National autonomous areas are inalienable parts of the People's Republic of China.

It is not surprising that I, who spring from two minorities in America—Indian and Negro—should have chosen this aspect of People's China for special study. My induction came first in the College of Nationalities in Peking. Afterwards I visited various Regional Institutes of Nationalities scattered throughout China. Wherever possible I went to national minority communities, talked to their leaders and their people in rural areas and in towns, visited their schools, health centers, took pictures of children. Even in our short stay in China I learned so much that I plan to set forth my findings in a book which will present an introduction to methods used and results already attained towards unifying and advancing all the 680 million peoples of China.

Chou En-lai explains, "The fundamental aim of our policy is to transform the Chinese People's Republic into a large and happy family composed of all its nationalities."

Enthusiasm for the rate and quality of China's advance is often met with a skeptical, "I just don't believe it. There are no miracles in this world!"

Call it anything you choose! But here are facts:

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western Szechuan would have been classified among the most backward peoples on earth. They scraped a precarious living from rocky, dry soil, hunted wild animals, wrapped themselves in skins and slept on the ground. A rigid system of caste divided them into Black Yi and White Yi. Western whites will be surprised to know that the Black Yi were the "ruling class," the White Yi either slaves or bondsmen whose children were born into slavery. Actual living conditions of the masters were almost as bleak and harsh as that of the slaves. Ignorance, superstitions, fears wrapped them around. The masters were constantly fighting among themselves.

On October 1st, 1959 the Yi people, beating their traditional drums and with banners flying will march proudly into the great Tien An Men square to the acclaim of all China. Today the Yi People are among the first in the world successfully to pass from a slave society to Socialism, completely jumping over Feudalism and Capitalism!

* * *

One is constantly struck in China with the juxtaposition of history and the present. History is all around, deeply rooted, but part and parcel of contemporary living. While in the far west, we were taken to see a navigation project on a tributary of the Yangtse River. Our car wound around a mountain and stopped in sight of a Buddhist Temple. We

climbed steps in the side of the cliff and reached gardens surrounding a lovely pagoda. Below us flowed the river coming from distant purple mountains, turning and curving through a misty landscape. We could see where a power plant was being built a mile or so up the valley. There were the locks which at this spot divided the river into two parts. When we moved to the other side of the balcony we discovered that we were on top of a rocky projection which had been cut away from the mountain. In the man-made chasm below swirled the branch of the river which time after time saved the channel. We were told how the locks functioned, how they were kept clear of debris, how the exact flow of the water could always be determined. We marveled and exclaimed over the excellence of modern engineering. The Chinese smiled and explained gently that this engineering feat had been accomplished two thousand, four hundred years ago! They added that recently certain canals had been extended to reach farther into arid lands. Later we were taken inside the building and shown the huge stone image of the original engineer and the stone tablets upon which he had inscribed his plans.

As a boy Mao Tse-tung, though forced to read the classics, much preferred the legends and sagas of the Chinese people. He read them over and over. In 1936 when Mao wrote his book *The Strategic Problems of*

the Revolutionary War for the Military Academy of the Red Army he drew all his examples of strategic retreat from Chinese historical novels, from the battles of the States of Lu and Ch'1 in 684 B.C.; of Ssu and Han in 202 B.C. and of Hsien and Han in 23 B.C. It was Mao Tse-tung's unerring skill in strategic retreat which time after time saved the greatly outnumbered and starving bands of the Liberation Army from annihilation. The Long March was actually a retreat, but it was a retreat so conducted that it became a powerful and invincible sinew of victory. Mao Tse-tung spoke to his soldiers and to peoples in the most backward areas in terms of the story-tellers and singers of ballads, recalling to their minds the exploits of heroes who had struggled for freedom two thousand years ago. And the people understood.

* * *

You cannot be long in China without realizing that you have plunged into an ocean of civilization. One senses the millions and millions

of Chinese without at all being stifled by them. A Chinese crowd never crushes or smothers. Each of its individual parts is intelligent.

While in China every one of the thousands of Chinese whom we encountered in the weeks of travel treated us as though he or she was our individual host, responsible for our well-being and happiness. This was just as true in the country, hamlet or commune as it was in the city, on a university campus or in a theater. It was as true of the butler in the hotel suite in Shanghai, the youngster who drove our car in Peking, as it was of the Premier of the People's Republic.

In the past hundred years Westerners have come to interpret Chinese forbearance as apathy, Chinese silence as dullness and Chinese gentleness as weakness. There are those who close their eyes and minds to the proclamation made on Tien An Men square October 1st, 1949. The West would be wise carefully to re-examine its position. Look at the map! China does not slumber!

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IDEAS IN OUR TIME

BY HERBERT APTHEKER

NOTES ON A JOURNEY

For 8 weeks, from mid-July to mid-September, it was possible for me to visit Hungary, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and the German Democratic Republic. I had never been to these countries before. We (my wife, teen-age daughter and myself) were in Budapest and Szeged; in Moscow, Leningrad, and Tashkent; in Prague, Lidice, Karlovy Vary, Pilsen, Brno, Bratislava; in Dresden, Potsdam, Stalinstadt, Berlin. And we did not confine ourselves to cities; we stood in cotton fields in Uzbek and hop fields in Bohemia.

What did we see, in these lands, three of which are building Socialism, and one of which is building Communism? Of course, there were vast differences among regions of the same country, let alone among the several countries, themselves; also, the impressions were so numerous and are so fresh that estimations and evaluations are still only half-formed.

Some things made an especially memorable impact—for instance, the Hungarian Government has renamed the street that passes just behind the U.S. Embassy in Budapest; it is now "Rosenberg Couple Avenue." But, at least for the present, I do not wish to write of such flashes. Rather, I would like to try to convey some of the central experiences, the overall impact, the outstanding features.

First, dignity. Every man and woman and child is important and all institutions, habits, and attitudes convey this fact. I know, of course, what the "Free World" stereotyped propaganda insists: that in socialism—in its "totalitarian" embrace—all individuality is lost and Man becomes a mere robot. This propaganda as a whole is nothing but a conglomeration of colossal lies; but of all the lies, I think this one, which insists on socialism's de-humanizing effect, is the most horrendous. In the Lands of Socialism one sees at once, if he is capable of seeing at all, that each citizen belongs; he participates; he contributes; he is esteemed. Each task is of consequence; all are part of a great collective; all are working *together* (talk about McCall's "togetherness"!) for agreed upon and understood and significant aims.

Second, a sense of purpose. On my return I saw this commented upon in one of the columns by Walter Lippmann, possessor as he is of one of the finest minds still in the employ of the American bourgeoisie. He contrasted what he had sensed in the Soviet Union with what prevails in our own country and wrote (September 17, 1959): "The critical weakness of our society is that for the time being our people do not have great purposes which they are united in wanting to achieve." The people in the Lands of Socialism are an eager people; there are not enough hours in the day for them. They have much they want to do and

they want to get on with it. Apathy, ennui, cynicism are absent in the Lands of Socialism that I visited.

Third, a lack of tension. This is, perhaps, for an American, the single most palpable difference between capitalist and socialist societies. With all the eagerness and high purpose, there is a sense of calm. People do not appear to be in a hurry, though they certainly do not move slowly. People are not fighting each other, or the boss, or the landlord, or the tax-collector. People do not shout; it is extremely rare to see a display of displeasure or anger. Children do not cry; faces are at ease. In factories there is a steady pace of work, but there is no rushing and no fawning. There is no keeping up with the Joneses, no conspicuous consumption. There is participation in a collective, a fraternal collective.

Fourth, the position of women. Men and women appear to be fully equal especially in the Soviet Union. And there is no nonsense about this, as there is in our country, with sly "joke:" as to who is "really" boss; and "scholarly" statistics as to who "really" has the money, or "profound" psychological studies concerning the "dominated" American male and other such Sunday-supplement balderdash. In the Lands of Socialism, men and women are equal and unless you see it, coming out of capitalism, you can't really believe it. The women are well groomed, on the whole; but they are not on display. They are working and producing; they are full-fledged citizens with all the rights and duties of men. Your ship may be piloted by a woman; the person in charge of the power plant may be a woman; the editor-in-chief of a publication issued in 9 languages and having about 70 editorial workers may be a woman; the Cabinet Minister may be a woman; the Prime Minister of a Republic may be a woman; the worker handling the crane may be a woman. In all cases, they may be men or women; one never knows or assumes or, apparently, notices. The relationship between men and women—and girls and boys—therefore, has a freedom and comradeship about it, a functioning equality, that is, really, for at least one visitor from the "Free World," quite astonishing and heartening.

This is closely connected with another phenomenon in the Lands of Socialism that particularly strikes an American. I have reference to the absence of sexuality. It is not only that one sees no pornography and salaciousness; it is also that the whole attitude towards sexual relations is mature. It is not a matter of exploitation or snideness. Again, this is not a question of the absence of prostitution, and it has nothing to do with prudishness—which certainly is not present.

Fifth, the position of children: In the Lands of Socialism, during the Summer months, one must go to the creches and the camps to find the children; in the big cities children are a rarity. But wherever you see children, they are of course, as beautiful and sweet and wonderful as children are everywhere. Still, here in Socialism, there is something more, too. First, the youngsters are the best-dressed people; and they radiate health. As I have said, they are busy talking, playing, watching, but one never sees them cry. In Peterhof, a former play-

ground of the Czars not far from Leningrad, I saw a youngster fall and hurt his lip rather badly. He was not more than four years, certainly, and his mouth was bleeding rather profusely; but the youngster did not cry. He went to mother, who busily attended him and kissed his head and put cold water to his wound, and in a minute or two he was off on another adventure, among fountains built for Czars and their favorites.

In the country, an hour's drive from Leningrad, we visited a camp for the youngsters of electrical workers of the city. There were 525 children, and seventy people on the staff—dentist, physician, four nurses, teachers, athletic directors, counselors. Dozens of buildings, a hospital, a dental clinic, sports fields, fishing, boating, gardens, study, a camp paper—everything free for all the children for seven weeks. There were scores of such experiences—a new school in the German Democratic Republic, with a new creche on one side of it, a new kindergarten on the other, and a new athletic field just behind it and swarms of children showing everything off proudly to beaming parents and grandparents, with the Minister of Education (veteran of seven years in concentration camps) there and all the workers who helped put up the structures also there, and bands, flags, speeches; a creche in Hungary; a nursing home in Czechoslovakia. Everywhere, the slogan is: everything for the children, our present life and our future hope. The very stones weep for joy; I think this would be enough to move even both our Hoovers!

Sixth, the position of youth: The people in the Lands of Socialism, particularly the young people, cannot understand the problem of juvenile delinquency. That, for example, eleven boys have been murdered by other youngsters in New York City alone between February and September of 1959 would appear to them to be quite incredible. In general, crime is infinitely less there than here, and crimes of violence occur with extreme rarity; but that there should actually be a serious problem of violence and destructiveness and criminality among youth is, as I say, simply unbelievable. There remains overcrowding in housing, but there is nothing like the slums of New York or Detroit or Washington in Socialist cities. And the society is geared to give youngsters things to do, for, of course, this is the time of life when one is most energetic, most enthusiastic; when one is brimming over with the wonder and joy of living.

There were two particular experiences I had with Western young men that were interesting, I think, and revealing. Sitting in the lobby of a large Moscow hotel, there was a London *Daily Worker* on a side table near me (that paper and our own *Worker* were on sale, together with papers and magazines in many other languages in one of the book-stalls in the lobby). A young Englishman took a chair just the other side of this side-table, picked up the paper, leafed it and flung it down. "Is this printed here?" he asked. "No," I replied, "as you can see it says *London 'Daily Worker.'*" "Well," he said, "all these things look the same to me. It's terrible that they do not sell any really English-language papers here, like the *Times.*" "You know," I said, "I have not yet been in London, but I am going. And when I reach the lobby of my hotel I shall ask for *Pravda*. Tell

me, will they have it there?" "No," he said, after a moment's thought. "I think not. You have a point there."

An American medical student remarked to me that he had had a conversation about freedom with—as he put it—"a Communist in Leningrad." "I said to him: 'Now, look, suppose I didn't like Lenin; could I get up and say so around here?'; and the Communist from Leningrad said to me, 'Well, I guess so, but I must say, people would think you are crazy.'" The American said that it was just hopeless to talk about freedom to "them." Two days later, leaving the dining room after breakfast, this same young man, carrying a package in his hand stopped me, and said he wondered if I could help him. I asked what was it, and he explained: "I saw these books by Marx and Engels and Lenin in English here and I've always wanted to read some of this stuff and they are priced so cheap that I bought them and here they are," he indicated the package. "And?" I asked. "Well, the point is," he said, "I don't know what to do with them. I mean I can't take them home with me because the customs inspector might see them." "Why don't you mail them home, and indicate that you had sent books on your customs declaration. Perhaps that would be all right?" I suggested. "Oh, no," replied the student, "my father might open the package and then what would I do?" "Well," I went on, "maybe you could mail them to yourself in care of your medical school?" "God," he said, "that would never do. Suppose they opened the package there—they might throw me out!" I confessed I had run out of suggestions—except that perhaps he might read these fearful books while he was here in Moscow—"between interviews," I could not resist adding, "with Soviet Communists about freedom."

Everywhere, in Socialism, there are particular institutions for the younger people—their own palaces and halls, their own places of recreation, their own stores, their own organizations, their own magazines and papers, their own sports stadia. And, of course, all education is free and more than free—one is paid by society to learn and to improve, for what investment is more precious for society? Everywhere, there are provisions for apprentices; all factories have special departments—sometimes, special buildings—where the young workers, the learners, are being taught by master workers, and where they can actually produce on the job. They work perhaps 3 or 4 hours, perhaps two or three days and combine study with work. Nothing is more important than these young people—these teen-agers, as we call them; and the whole social order exudes this sense of values and a feeling of pride and confidence in the up-and-coming generation. It is the generation that will see Communism and will build even better than we and will live in a really human and peaceful world; it is for us now, the older ones, to be sure that they are ready and worthy of all this. That is the feeling concerning the young people in the Lands of Socialism.

The old do not fear the young—he wants my job, he has more strength than I, he has learned new and better ways and will push me aside; the young do not hate the old—he treats me as an enemy, he will not help me along, he ridicules me. Neither has any reason to hate or suspect the other; both have all the reasons in the world to help and to respect each other. This brings us to,

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Seventh, the sense of security: No one is haunted by the fear or the actuality of unemployment; it does not exist and it cannot exist. No parent fears that he has too many children, whom he cannot feed, or send to school, or assure good health. Everyone has enough and more than enough to eat, everyone is entitled to an excellent education, and everyone is entitled to the best possible health care. For the old, there are adequate pensions; and the pensioner may continue to work if he will. The old are honored for what they have done and for their skills and their experiences.

Eighth, the use of leisure: In the newer lands of Socialism, the eight-hour day prevails, with seven hours for those doing especially difficult work; in the Soviet Union, the seven-hour day already is not uncommon, with six hours for those doing difficult work. And as the next immediate years roll on, these hours of work will be shortened further.

I think, as I see and learn these things, of Thomas More's *Utopia* (set in America, of course) where, over four hundred years ago, the Englishman wrote of that wonderful place where the work-day lasted but six hours, and culture flourished and there was scope for "the garnishing of the minde."

Meanwhile, wages rise and taxes and other costs continue to decline. Hence, scores of millions of people have a newfound leisure and it is being used richly in socialist countries. In the late afternoon of any day one will see on the Moscow river scores of boats with working men and women, racing, fishing, loafing. On one day on this river I myself saw eighteen different rowing crews from factories practicing, with professional equipment, for all the world like Oxford competing with Cambridge. Concerts galore, amateur shows, circus, sporting events, gymnastics, chess tournaments, swimming, tennis, soccer, sailing. Millions upon millions of working men and women and their children filling their leisure hours—quite apart from the minimum of 18-days paid vacations—individually or collectively with real pleasure. And in all the Socialist countries, the art museums, libraries, museums of revolutionary history, former palaces of Kings and Czars, dukes and barons, are crowded with working people absorbing the treasures of the past.

Ninth, the conquest of culture: In socialism, culture belongs to the masses, We've read this often enough; but it is something else to see it. William Saroyan, after visiting the Soviet Union for some weeks, remarked that he had witnessed *The Triumph of the Book*. There are more bookstores in Moscow than there are saloons in New York; and what is true of Moscow in this regard is true of Berlin and Dresden, of Budapest and Szeged, of Prague and Brno. It is true also of Tashkent, capital of the Uzbek Republic, 2300 miles east, southeast of Moscow, in the middle of Asia. It's a new experience to find one's cab-driver reading Proust and the elevator operator deep in Gorky; in the window of a bookstore in Szeged I saw books by Upton Sinclair (*Jimmie Higgins*), Romain Rolland, Bernard Shaw, Martin Anderson Nexo, Faulkner, Hemingway, Robert Burns. In the smallest villages, bookstores and easily transportable book-stalls abound; books are published in fantastic printings—three, four hundred thou-

sand copies in one edition—and this after they have appeared in serial form in popular magazines.

In Tashkent, we attended a concert under the stars; all Uzbek music and Uzbek artists. The audience here, as everywhere in socialism, made up of working men and women very alert and discriminating, and quite articulate. Written suggestions are thrown up to the stage and a sense of vibrancy fills the hall. One performer begins to recite with great passion; the language is strange to us and yet, with his artistry, he conveys even to us the meaning of Shakespeare's "to be or not to be" from Hamlet. He goes on for several minutes; the hall is perfectly still, and then when he concludes it rings with applause. Hamlet in the Uzbek language, under an Asian moon, before 3,000 people in the heart of Asia!

In Margaret Island, in Budapest—formerly the exclusive playground of the rich and the aristocracy—we attend another open-air performance, this is a light opera; and here are 6,000 working men and women enjoying "The Merry Widow." In Szeged, the government re-institutes a traditional cultural festival that had been suspended for over twenty years; here a whole week of opera and concerts, with 5,400 people in attendance each evening and looking around one sees that the audience is made up of peasants and workers, many of them quite old and perhaps hearing the classical Hungarian operas for the first time in their lives—surely for the first time in such splendid settings. The Berlin Opera, carefully and beautifully restored, performs in all its splendor and with the finest artistry; but, again, it is factory workers who are here in the greatest numbers.

In one of the Parks of Culture and Rest in Moscow we happened upon a concert; about 1,000 people were listening, and other thousands were at other attractions and amusements within the vast area. A young woman—perhaps 25 years old—was introducing the performers and prior to their playing was explaining the history of the instrument they were about to play, telling of the life of the composer about to be performed, and something about the specific compositions. She was filled with her subject, brimming over; she lived for music, as one could see in a moment. It was beautiful to see her doing so well what she so wanted to do, and being listened to with such interest and with such an evident touch of pride amongst the older people present. At one point, someone in the audience flung up a note and the young woman picked it up at once and read it; the writer thought she had made a mistake and had confused the works of two composers. No, she said, their work was similar, but she had not made a mistake. Another member of the audience suggested that there should be more audience participation in these kinds of evenings and urged that those responsible for organizing them think how best to promote this. Above all, of course, was the music which was almost as lovely as the young woman.

Tenth, the sense of pride: In the Lands of Socialism—again, especially in the USSR—there is an intense sense of pride in the accomplishments of their society. This sometimes becomes a real sensitivity which it is rather easy to affront. It stems from the feeling of participation and joint effort and from the reality of sharing in what has been done. Visitors from capitalist cities—and

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particularly those from New York City—were astonished at the cleanliness in the socialist cities. This is true everywhere in socialism; it is striking, for example, in Tashkent, an Asian city of one million people. But it is especially true of Moscow, a city now of over five millions. That city is spotless; the sidewalks and gutters have no litter and the subway stations and subway cars are immaculate. This, by the way, is true despite the absence of police—one of the most striking things about the so-called "police states" is the scarcity of policemen. (For one coming from New York, with its 30,000 uniformed cops, this was an unusual feature of urban life in socialism.) The cleanliness is the result of pride and of a sense of common responsibility. It appears, too, in the great pleasure that everyone has in showing the stranger and the visitor some fine spot, or some signal accomplishment, or some outstanding individual. In an unassuming way, all triumphs are the property of the whole society and at the same time, each person's very own.

Eleventh, the absence of exploitation: This is, of course, the single greatest fact in socialism. No one is robbing anyone else; no one is dependent upon anyone else, in any subservient sense. This is the secret of the great sense of dignity everywhere apparent, and of the absence of tension that is equally apparent. Unfair advantages are not built into the society; and everything is geared towards equalizing possibilities for everyone. The whole tone is to work together, to go up together, to move as a unit and to pool one's strength and get a greater strength. The intense competitiveness and aggressiveness of our "way of life" is missing. The incentive structure is quite unlike ours; there is no drive towards individual "success," which in our terms would no longer be understood in the USSR and which in the less advanced countries building socialism is already looked down upon as a hangover from bourgeois ethics.

The absence of exploitation applies with special force to the absence of racism, which immediately hits an American visitor, especially one who visits the Asian Soviet republics. Despite aberrations and failures in the past on the national question, in one form or another, the whole structure and character of society is geared towards assuming each man and woman to be as worthy and as important as the next one, quite regardless of the color of his skin, the texture of his hair or the shape of his face.

In Tashkent, I visited the head of the Historical Institute of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences. He was an elderly man who gently conveyed to me his feeling that my own country was still too young to have a history! I asked him how many history books dealing with the past of the Uzbek people had existed up to the coming of Soviet power. "One," he said, "and that was by a Russian. Of course, it was no good." "And how many are there now?" I asked. "Today," he replied, "we have about 600 different volumes on the history of my people, in our language, of course, and most of them by my compatriots."

Twelfth: the craving for peace. To have a peaceful future is the dearest yearning of the peoples living in Socialism. There is no group and no agency

desiring anything else for any reason; and the whole mass desires peace above all else. The decisive difference in the experiences of most Americans and most Europeans is that to the former war has been a rather distant and exciting interlude, while to the latter it has been a fearful and directly felt nightmare. This is true above all of the Soviet Union, for in the USSR *twenty million people were killed* (about 75% of them, men) during World War II; 50 percent of urban housing and 25% of rural housing in the European part of the Soviet Union was destroyed in that war; hundreds of thousands of public buildings of all description were demolished; millions upon millions of cattle, horses and pigs were annihilated. And war meant the full horrors of fascist occupation and fascist enslavement.

In this connection, I visited Ravensbruck, the concentration camp for women and children that the Nazis established near the little town of Furstenberg. The German Democratic Republic has erected a Memorial on the site of this camp (it was opened officially on September 12). Here 92,000 women were slaughtered and hundreds of children with them; and more thousands were "prepared" for shipment to other camps. (The Red Army, in capturing the camp, freed 45,000 occupants.) We looked upon the barracks, the punishment cells, the rooms where fiendish surgical experiments were conducted, the dormitories in which six women "slept" on one bed, the specially built and sound-proofed execution chambers, the ovens. *Here were women and children, women and children*—this is the refrain that sounds in one's ears as he makes the rounds of the now silent locale of infinite pain. A Soviet Army officer accompanied me as we toured the awful spot. He said: "This is a monument to what capitalism and militarism driven mad can do." And he added: "Do you think an officer in Adenauer's army would say the same thing?"

All this, and much more is what war means to the European—to those who now live in the USSR and Hungary, Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, as I saw myself. And now, with peace, each day life becomes better and better; each day they are building a more joyous life for themselves and their children. So, when they see an American they look at him carefully to discern if he understands just a little bit; and then they try to help him understand more. And they end always with the cry: Fight for peace!

Given peace—for another ten, twenty years—and they will more than hit the moon and circle the sun; they will build such lands of joy and dignity, of pleasure and creativity as to ennoble forever the meaning of Man.

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Marxism and the Cuban Revolution

By National Committee, Popular Socialist Party

THE CUBAN revolution has developed in an original way, with certain characteristics and peculiarities of its own.

Some people, among them Francisco Pares, the publisher of *Informacion*, attempted to take advantage of this fact in order to present the Cuban revolution as something unique and exceptional, as an event that contradicts the materialist conception of history and the basic theses of Marxism.

Such efforts are not unusual.

Over the past hundred years, bourgeois and reactionary teachers have been exerting themselves to prove, with one or another argument, that neither Marxism nor the materialist conception of history is applicable to current developments.

One of these propagandists of the "defeat" of Marxism asserted the Cuban revolution had smashed "Lenin's myth" that it is impossible in a revolution to win against the army. Of course, there is no such myth, because Lenin never said any such thing.

The myth was built upon a sentence of Mussolini's ("a revolution can be made with the army or without the army, but not against the army"), whose express purpose was to justify his betrayal of the revolution and of socialism.

Neither Lenin nor any Marxist has ever supported this kind of theory, which would condemn peoples to give up revolution; which would justify those individuals in our Latin-American countries who raise the army to the position of supreme authority on all national questions; and which would thereby make any change dependent upon a *coup d'etat* or action undertaken by military leaders.

What the Marxists have maintained is that the bulk of the armies, no matter how reactionary the policy of the State, can be influenced by the popular revolutionary movement, can be convinced to refuse to fire against the people, or refuse to fight for the reactionaries, or even to go over to the ranks of the people, because the main body of the armies is recruited among the peasants and the poor people of the cities.

What Lenin said was:

Marxism differs from all the primitive forms of Socialism in that it does not tie the movement to just one definite form of struggle. Marxism allows for the most varied forms; besides, it does not "invent" forms, but limits itself to generalizing, organizing, making known the forms of struggle of the revolutionary classes as these forms themselves emerge in the course

of the movement. . . . Marxism does not irrevocably renounce any form of struggle. Marxism accepts all forms of struggle and adopts them in accordance with the given concrete conditions at a particular moment in a particular place.

* * *

This assertion projects a monstrous falsehood, because it tries to identify the proletariat with the faction of Mujalist traitors who actually were against the revolution; it tries to identify the mass of workers with the official bureaucratic trade-union apparatus manipulated by Mujal and his cronies as an instrument opposed to the struggles, the protests, demands and mobilizations of workers and white collar employees.

The workers went into action and struggled against the tyrannical power from the very moment it was established.

Throughout these past years, their struggles were neither few nor small in spite of all the government repression, carried out with the direct cooperation of Mujal's gang, such as taking over the trade unions, decimation of the leadership, prevention of parades, removal of workers, etc.

Such important strikes as the one in December 1955 which, although at the start the issue was payment of the differential to the sugar workers, assumed a political character and achieved a high popular level in various places; the railway workers' strike in Oriente and Camaguey; the bank clerks' strike; the August

strike and even the April strike that was smashed—all these weakened the tyrannical power, shook it, and helped create the conditions for its overthrow.

The constant threat of strike kept a large part of the repressive and military forces of the tyrannical power nailed down in the cities preventing their concentration in the areas of armed struggle.

The revolution had the active and determined support of the workers throughout its whole development even though certain circumstances did not allow the mass action of the workers to become, at the given moment, the fundamental factor in the overthrow of the tyrannical power. That factor, as we know, was the armed struggle of the Rebel Army.

This peculiarity of the Cuban revolution, which had already occurred in the Chinese revolution as well, neither denies nor contradicts any fundamental thesis of Marxism-Leninism, since Marxism-Leninism never claimed that the revolution in all its phases and at every step must have as its decisive factor the action of the working class.

What Marxism-Leninism does assert is that the working class, by its position in production, by its living conditions and by the organization given it by its concentration in industrial centers, is the most consistent and most profoundly revolutionary class in present-day society. The working class has no connection with

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exploitation other than that it suffers from it at the hands of the imperialists and capitalists. Therefore it can proceed resolutely to the suppression of all forms of exploitation no matter who practises it. **The working class**, therefore, is in a position to support the revolution, to make it advance without interruption, to place itself at the head, together with all the revolutionary elements in society, in alliance with the peasants, to destroy capitalist exploitation and build socialism. **The struggle against capitalism and for socialism cannot be based on any other social class.**

Neither the Cuban revolution in its totality nor the peculiarities of its development, contradict or deny the principles of **Marxism-Leninism** nor the materialist conception of history, although it may have, like every important revolution, new lessons and peculiarities which must be examined, **generalized and assimilated** by all Marxist-Leninists and all revolutionists.

In reality, it is only **Marxism-Leninism** that offers a consistent theory to interpret and explain the phenomenon of the Cuban revolution, to project its program in accordance with historical needs, to defend it and advance it.

There are those who have argued that if the Cuban revolution is to triumph, it must develop free of any ideological "shackles"; it must act according to a sort of pragmatism which applies only to practical matters, which sees each problem by

itself and solves it without any connection with the rest.

Marxism is no ideological strait-jacket.

Marxism, contrary to what its slanderers believe or pretend to believe, is not a dogma; it is not a prescription file containing unchanging formulae to be applied to all situations; it is not a fixed method which hinders our observing and explaining new phenomena in society or confirming the special and distinctive aspect of every revolution and every situation.

The classical Marxists have always insisted that Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action.

Mao Tse Tung has explained very precisely that the task of revolutionists is to apply the universal truth of Marxism to the concrete practice of a given situation in a particular country.

If we evaluate the progress of the Cuban revolution by Marxist standards, we can understand its development more clearly.

All parties, tendencies and classes concurred in the overthrow of the tyrannical power even though they set out from different political and social points with regard to other purposes of the revolution.

The fact that the overthrow of the tyrannical power occurred at the hands of the Rebel Army, headed by Fidel Castro and consisting basically of poor peasants, workers and elements of the petty bourgeoisie, determined the speed of the revolution's

advance.

Every action following the overthrow of the tyrannical power has meant a step toward releasing the social forces which really oppose each other behind their political frameworks.

It can be seen clearly: behind the tyrannical power were the forces of the imperialists, the landowners, the money-lenders, the tycoons of exploitation, the great vested interests. Behind the revolution were the peasants, the city petty bourgeoisie, the workers and, in an irresolute way, the bourgeoisie.

At one extreme of the situation are the enemies of the revolution.

In the revolutionary camp, on the one hand, there were those who considered the struggle against the tyrannical power as part of the struggle of the whole people against backwardness, oppression and misery, who wanted not only to overthrow the tyrannical power but to set Cuba free, to eliminate the semifeudal remnants and to open wide the highway to progress, democracy and advancement for our country; on the other hand, there were those who saw in the overthrow of the tyrannical power the end of the struggle, those who wanted to stop at institutional and political reforms and some sort of economic and social measures.

On one side were the determined revolutionists, against the professed counter-revolutionists, and in between, the unstable elements, who

are good one day and bad the next, the half-way revolutionists, the reformists.

As at every moment of the struggle, so now, too, policy and activity must determine whether the revolution is being diverted, stopping and receding, or whether it is developing, advancing and growing to the point of achieving the great historic objectives of national liberation, agrarian reform, industrialization, social progress, democracy and peace.

If revolutionary ideology prevails—the ideology identified with the people—the revolution will advance and triumph; if a non-revolutionary ideology prevails—a reformist ideology, the ideology of Plattism,* the ideology which is identified with the exploiting classes—the revolution will stagnate, will fall into compromise with imperialism and will crumble or will be overthrown by counter-revolution.

Marxism helps revolutionary ideology to prevail. Marxism helps unite all revolutionary currents into one common activity for the advance of the revolution.

Marxism is a creative theory.

Marxism provides for all Cuban revolutionists the method and the principles for finding adequate solutions to the complex and difficult problems presented by the perspective of the long-range development of

* This has reference to the Platt Amendment forced on Cuba, in 1901, by U.S. imperialism in an effort to insure Cuba's subordinate position.—Ed.

the Cuban revolution and its forward movement.

We Communists must intensify our struggle to master Marxist-Leninist theory and apply it to our work.

In the practical application of Marxism we face two main dangers:

On the one hand, the danger of not taking into account, or not taking sufficiently into account, the special features of the situation, the specific characteristics of our revolution, the new and different forms it adopts and the special situations that arise. This would separate us from life, make us ignore the real circumstances around us, would remove us from the masses and would lead us into dogmatic and sectarian errors.

On the other hand, the danger of exaggerating the peculiarities of the moment and the specific details of the development of our revolution; of raising our revolution to the category of something unique in which the universal experience of the revolutionary and workers' movement has no

application; the danger, on the pretext of national peculiarities and the special features of our revolutionary development, of divorcing ourselves from the universal truth of Marxism, and therefore falling into theoretical confusion, into exceptionalism, into errors of an opportunist and revisionist character.

We have to avoid both dangers.

We have to avoid any temptation to copy or repeat mechanically the experiences of other countries or of our own past; we have to avoid any attempt to fit living, changing, complex facts—exceptional in form and combination—into preconceived formulae.

At the same time, we must reject any tendency to discard the rich and valuable experiences of our national past and those of other countries; we must not scorn the value of Marxist analyses or the search in Marxist-Leninist principles for the necessary guidance to solve the complex and difficult problems presented by the Cuban revolution in its development.

The Two National Revolutions in Iraq

By Zaki Khairy

ON JUNE 30, 1920, a national revolution broke out in all parts of Iraq. Its goal was to smash the colonial order which took the form of British occupation and the mandatory system. Under this, Britain and France divided between themselves the Arab countries which had been under Turkish rule prior to World War I.

The outbreak of revolution 39 years ago provides evidence of the deep-rooted revolutionary spirit and political consciousness of the Iraqi people even during the period when patriots had little experience with imperialism, and especially with British imperialism—the oldest, most clever and most devious. The Iraqi people had had much experience with revolutionary struggle against the feudalist, militarist Turkish rule with all its open barbarism and cruelty, whose only method was “strike and strike again.” All it succeeded in doing throughout four centuries was to gather all the people against it with the exception of a small group of its beneficiaries. Among these were a number of feudal families which had lived in Iraq but had retained their Turkish identity.

During that period there was not in Iraq a significant number of workers, let alone an independent political structure. Even the bourgeoisie was very small and economically weak, and with a short history of political activity and experience. For it did not begin to engage in political activity until after the 1908 Turkish bourgeois revolution. As for the class of national landlords it did not take part in the nationalist movement until broad segments of the people had been drawn into the field of political activity against imperialism.

The revolutionary movement against imperialism had a democratic aspect in spite of the social and economic backwardness of Iraq at that time. The nationalists set as their goal a national parliamentary form of government in which power was to be placed in the hands of representatives of the people in an elected parliament.

The leadership of the revolutionary movement was in the hands of bourgeois political parties, bourgeois intellectuals, national landlords and religious leaders. The most powerful centers of revolution were in the cities such as Baghdad, Najaf, Karbala and Mosul. Most if not all of the army officers were outside the country, in the Syrian army. Be-

* This article, written especially for *Political Affairs*, is by the editor of the daily paper, *Libad Al-Shaab*, organ of the Communist Party of Iraq—Ed.

cause of this fact, they played a limited role in the revolutionary movement. The revolutionary army of about 100,000, most of them peasants, was badly in need of regular officers.

The revolutionaries had only rifles, most of which were quite old. Many of them did not have any firearms. They were fighting a large, modern army, well equipped with heavy arms, airplanes and gun boats, behind which stood the unlimited resources of a wide empire emerging as a victor from World War I.

The revolutionary army was able to wage a gallant fight which lasted about six months, with casualties estimated by the enemy at more than 8,000, in spite of the lack of a unified military command and a central political leadership, and in spite of the absolute military superiority of the enemy. The latter was forced to give up direct imperialist rule in circumstances which were not internationally favorable to us, as is the case today. The Soviet Union was then still very weak, still engaged in the exhausting interventionist war. The Russian people were in the seventh year of fighting begun in 1914. Imperialism was then still very strong.

Our first nationalist revolution, the revolution of 1920, did not end imperialist rule. But it did end *direct and total* imperialist rule and laid the cornerstone for a national government and the formation of a national army as an important in-

strument of national rule. That is to say, it put in the hands of the people an important method of achieving national sovereignty. It put the people in a better position than previously to fulfill complete national rule and independence. More important than that, it taught the people that by unity and revolutionary struggle it can force imperialism to retreat, partially or totally, that it can achieve partial or complete victory over imperialism in proportion to the strength and all-inclusiveness of the unity of the national forces and to the steadfastness of its political leadership toward the enemy.

The political leadership of the first Iraqi national revolution was at the beginning in the hands of national bourgeois parties in the cities. But when armed revolution broke out in the countryside, the bourgeois parties became unable to retain this leadership and it soon passed to the national feudalists (at that time most of the feudalists, with the exception of a handful of the biggest ones, were anti-imperialist), who as a result of their social position did not show enough militancy toward imperialism.

Their mouths started to water at the first political deal imperialism offered them. The imperialists thus formed a fake national cabinet with Abrul Rahman Nahsib (Al Gailani), an absentee landlord, as premier. Through this deal they succeeded in dissipating the revolutionary army. The feudal leaders

with their armed forces started to withdraw, one after the other, without giving any notice. This disorderly withdrawal was a catastrophe for the army of the revolution and a deathblow to the revolution itself.

Thus the two "owner classes"—the bourgeoisie and the landlords—proved incapable of leading a successful revolution against imperialism at a time when they were at the acme of revolutionary struggle, when they did not have such common interests with imperialism, and when they did not face the "specter of communism." The field was entirely open to them at that time, since there was no political structure or organization of the working class, and not a single Communist.

* * *

The Iraqi people did not give up its revolutionary struggle against imperialism even after the failure of the 1920 revolution. In 1921, the revolutionary spirit was still high among the people and there was a possibility of organizing a new armed revolt. The imperialists realized that they could not overcome by force alone another and a greater revolution than that of 1920. Hence they hastened to include Iraqis in the ranks of the government and made Faisal King, as a false front for national rule, to deceive the people and deter them from revolutionary struggle.

But the people continued its struggle against the mandatory rule and

against the double rule—against the imperialist rule and its false new face. This struggle was under the leadership of national bourgeois parties, whose political struggle was characterized by inconsistency. They fought for a while and made peace at other times, waiting for "suitable circumstances," that is, circumstances in which struggle did not demand great sacrifices of bourgeois interests.

The Iriqui people fought great battles, such as the struggle against the first treaty to consolidate the mandatory system, or the double unity of the fraternal Arab and Kur- in 1924, and against the secession of the northern province of Mosul from Iraq. Thus was consolidated the unity of the fraternal Arak and Kurdish nations in their combined struggle against Turkish rule and British imperialism.

The Iraqi people struggled again in 1927 and 1930 against the British-Iraqi treaty. They fought against high taxes and against the economic crisis, with a general strike lasting two weeks in July, 1931. The peasants made a series of armed uprisings in 1935 and 1936 as a result of unjust laws, feudal takeover of public land and feudal levies.

In 1933 the national bourgeois parties faced a crisis. At first they fought against the 1930 treaty which restricted the independence and sovereignty of Iraq. Later, when the 1930 treaty was applied and when, as a corollary, Iraq was admitted to the League of Nations in October,

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1932, these national bourgeois parties felt that most of their aims had been fulfilled, since Iraq had become formally an independent, sovereign country. They failed to see the heavy fetters on national sovereignty. Hence they agreed to a compromise with imperialism, accepted the political deal in toto and went along to exploit it for their own narrow class interests.

An exception must be made for the Left wing of the national bourgeoisie under the leadership of Mohammad Jaffair Abu Timman, who took a stand against the policy of compromise with imperialism. But instead of carrying on the struggle within the National Party, he declared his withdrawal from politics in anticipation of better circumstances. In 1935, all bourgeois political parties dissolved, claiming that national aims had been fulfilled and that this required dissolution of parties and closing of ranks.

The fever of fascism had begun to invade Iraq and the Government suppressed what little freedom the old constitution guaranteed, and so the people were denied for many years any legal means of expression or protest. But the Iraqi people did not give up the struggle. Thus, when the bourgeoisie gave up, even though temporarily, the leadership of national struggle, a new voice was heard, a young but strong and daring voice. It as the voice of the growing working class in Iraq, which came forth as an independent

political force for the first time in 1934, represented by its vanguard, the Communist Party. The Party came along to fill the vacuum left by the national bourgeoisie in the leadership of the national liberation movement and to play an ever-increasing part in the leadership of this movement to free the people from imperialism, feudalism, reaction and royal despotism, disguised with a lame constitution which was never implemented.

The birth of the Communist Party of Iraq a quarter of a century ago was a landmark ushering in a new stage in the national liberation movement, a stage of no truce with imperialism until final victory. The Communist Party remained the only organized political party in the national movement until the end of World War II. Its struggle and perseverance in political activity were an inspiration not only to the working class and the laboring masses, but also to the national bourgeoisie, who had returned to political activity during the war through the press and reorganization of its political parties. These parties, such as the National Democratic Party, had a clear democratic aspect, more deep-rooted than in the national bourgeois parties dissolved before the Second World War.

During the period between the end of the war and the glorious national revolution of July 14, 1958, the national bourgeois parties were active at times and inactive at others, ac-

cording to the ebb and flow of the national movement. The Communist Party, however, waged a relentless fight at all times, even during the darkest periods when it received the heaviest blows, as in 1949 when most of its organizations were smashed and most of its leaders executed or imprisoned. At times the Party fought in cooperation with other patriotic parties while at others it met with no such cooperation.

During that period (1945-1958), the working class and the Iraqi people waged fierce struggles against imperialism, feudalism and the corrupt, reactionary royal regime. The role of the working class in these struggles became greater and greater, as did the political leadership of the Communist Party. The broad masses of the people became experienced in all kinds of struggle, and in big battles on the streets of the cities and in the countryside. The whole people were undergoing a political and military drill for the revolution and their political consciousness was on the increase.

The Iraqi army has been an integral part of the people, especially since the application of the draft in 1935-36, and was not isolated from them as was intended by reaction. The national and social political consciousness which began to penetrate its ranks in 1935-36 increased during the Second World War, when its national feelings were hurt by British imperialism, and also during the Palestine war. It was greatly

affected by the struggles of the people in the uprisings of January, 1949, November, 1952 and the autumn of 1956, and it became increasingly difficult for the imperialists and their allies to use the army as a willing tool against the people. This success of the nationalist movement was a sure guarantee for the success of the glorious national revolution of July 14.

The main guarantee of the revolution's success has been established by the formation of the National United Front in March, 1957, when all the political forces opposing imperialism, feudalism and the corrupt royal regime were unified. This meant the unification and mobilization of all the forces of the people against the enemy, which is the basis for the success of any real popular revolution.

* * *

The July 14 revolution is a great one indeed, since it is a revolution of the people. It is not a revolution of one class or stratum, nor of one party, no matter how strong, but of the entire people with all its national democratic classes and strata, namely those in opposition to imperialism and feudalism. All these, loyal to the people and to the common national cause on the basis of the National United Front, took part in it. The main force in this front is the alliance of the workers and peasants forming the overwhelming majority of the people. From the first hour

of the revolution, the people filled the streets and squares, embracing the gallant forces of its army and blocking the way against imperialist agents. These were immobilized, could not take any move and could only find refuge from the wrath of the people in the jails which had been erected by them for their adversaries.

To the working class and the whole people, the revolution means complete political freedom, first and foremost the freedom to organize political parties for the various classes of the people, as well as freedom for labor unions and all social and democratic organizations. Above all, it means that power resides with the people, who exercise it through their elected representatives, belonging to parties, in a legislative assembly with full authority and whose members must account to the voting masses.

The revolution has smashed the political and military imperialist control over Iraq, freed the foreign policy of Iraq from this control and made it possible to establish political relations on an equal footing with all countries, especially the socialist countries. To a large extent, it freed the country's economic relations, particularly with the states in the socialist camp. However, the national economy of Iraq has not yet been entirely freed from imperialist control and from the exploitation of foreign monopoly capital, which still owns and controls the

production and export of oil, the most important economic resource of the country and almost equal in value of output to the total of agriculture and other national industry combined.

To the peasants, who form over seventy per cent of the population of Iraq, the revolution means delivering them from the oppression of the landlords to whom they had previously had to pay a levy exceeding fifty per cent of the total agricultural produce. The Agricultural Reform Law dealt a severe blow to the biggest feudalists, although it did not entirely smash feudalism.

The law did not espouse radical agricultural reform, but laid an upper limit to feudal land ownership and, even if literally applied, would leave about half the peasantry landless. But the revolution and the Agricultural Reform were a great stimulus which moved broad masses of the peasantry to revolutionary activity and to organize themselves. They also put an end to the authority of the landlords with the fall of their royal system and imperialist domination in Iraq, so that their influence in the countryside became considerably weaker.

The greatest revolutionary gain of the peasants was their peasant societies and the Union of Peasant Societies with all its branches—in other words, the unity of the peasants, particularly their political unity, which gives significance to their large numbers, carries special weight

in the balance of forces and makes their alliance with the working class the leading force in the new society. These are the gains which will free them completely from the authority of the landlords and from feudal levies, and which will secure for them land, their basic and just demand.

As for the national bourgeoisie, the July 14 revolution was the first point of departure in its life toward developing freely not only in opposition to imperialism and feudalism, but also in opposition to the big financiers (the compradores and bureaucrats) who were the agents of foreign capital and under the protection of the old, defunct order. Thereby a new stratum of the petty bourgeoisie rose to the ranks of the middle bourgeoisie during one year of the revolution.

It is for these reasons that the new republican order receives wide support from all classes in opposition to imperialism and feudalism. And this is precisely why it encounters such vengeful hatred from imperialism and reaction, particularly in the neighboring states. The source of this hatred is fear lest the contagion of revolution should spread to the enslaved peoples in these countries.

However, this defensive position

took on offensive forms—to return Iraq to the orbit of imperialism and enslavement. Among these was the attempt to reoccupy Iraq by the British forces, which were landed in Jordan only two days after the revolution. Then came the conspiracies fed by the United States in the first place and carried out by Abdul Nasser. There followed the malicious British scheme, which does not now take the form of direct attack but resorts to cunning maneuvers to deviate the national policy pursued by the Republic and aims at splitting the national ranks.

History has recorded many revolutions where the people secured initial victory over its enemies but lost the last round, so that the counter-revolutionists triumphed either through violence or deviation. To avoid a fate similar to those unsuccessful revolutions, we have to be united and vigilant towards the enemy of the people.

Firmness towards its enemies is the sensitive index for the measurement of the vitality of any popular revolution. The recent revolution in Cuba is a school for every small nation surrounded by its enemies and carrying out a revolution against a despotic and dictatorial rule which has lasted a long time.

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Eyes on Labor

By Ed Martin

The American labor movement is a huge, powerful, sprawling creation of the American working class. It belongs to us who belong to it. We built it. We keep it going. It is as honest, as class conscious, as efficient in our interests, and as devoted to the preservation of capitalism as American workers are. It commands our respect because it is a class institution, built by a class movement, to wring class benefits from the American economy. It commands our respect and our love because its strength and its failings are the reflection and the sum of our own strength and failings as working men and women.

It is useful to dissect our labor movement, to analyze and probe, to lay bare the sources of bourgeois corruption within it. But it will never be moved forward by analyses alone, and particularly not by analyses which are inadequate, which substitute sweeping suggestiveness for thorough investigation and carefully reasoned conclusions. It will be moved forward when we act on knowledge of its ins and outs, when we respect it for what it is, when we confidently add to it the sum of our own devotion, the love we bear our fellow men, as well as the methods and the goals of Marxist-Leninist thinking.

From this raised ground, I view the beginning of our Party's pre-convention discussion. Milton Rosen's article, "The Party and the Labor Movement"

(*Political Affairs*, May, 1959), is what drove me up this hill.

The amazing quality of his article is that one can agree with almost all of its central propositions, yet disagree with what they add up to. The tip-off that something is missing, somewhere, comes when one measures it, as I did, seeking how much in it would help me in my old, conservative building-trades union.

The first useful guide is negative: that we must not echo positive demands and programs coming from on top and that we must not criticize for the sake of criticism. This warning is elementary enough, but it is a reminder that we do, or should, have something to add to each situation.

That added something is often enough in the implementation of a constructive executive board recommendation, or in a deeper interpretation. What counts is not echoing, not indiscriminate attack, but putting the constructive recommendation in a context which leads to wider understanding and broadened action.

Comrade Rosen's skepticism of those who would rest "solely on the accomplishments of Socialism in other countries," is most welcome, as is his proposal to "describe what Socialism will mean to workers here . . . its benefits, advantages, the magnificent life that it will create."

Another service is his suggestion that mass production workers combat

speed-up by demanding the right to negotiate their production rates. Some skilled trades long ago either banned piece work in their by-laws or, in every day practice, found means of defeating speed-ball demands. These measures have never wholly stopped the tide, as witness the specialization and speed being demanded of Southern California building tradesmen, but, despite prohibiting clauses in the Taft-Hartley Act, they have been of some protection to the trades resorting to them.

The truth is, though, that piece work, production quotas, production bonuses, moonlighting, and overtime in the midst of unemployment are all part of workers' lives. Under capitalism, they dull class instincts, drain off class consciousness, and suggest the pernicious notion that there are ways, after all, by which a working man with a working wife can beat the system. Where piece work, bonuses based on production quotas, overtime and moonlighting can be abolished, they should be. Where they can't be, the demand for the right to regulate production rates may help "sharpen the struggle," as Rosen suggests.

We must "give direction to the class, not to the leaders," Comrade Rosen advises us, and he adds, "If the leaders will not do the bidding of their class, then they will be swept aside."

It is here that we stand on the fateful border. The idea of giving direction to the class is, again, not new, but well put and open to much fruitful elaboration. It carries within it, for example, a true description of the Party's role in labor, of patient, devoted work to attain mass influence, a merging which preserves identity, a modesty which includes vigorous and clear affirmation,

leadership seeking neither office nor reward . . . the combination, in short, of exact knowledge and human tenderness.

Such a Communist knows in his bones that his work is to give direction to the class and, through the class, to the leaders. He is not emasculated by the concept that all labor leaders are sell-out artists, saturated in capitalist ideology. He knows such leaders exist. He may even have had to fight thugs in his own local at one time or another, but he recognizes these as infallible marks and signs that American labor is not class conscious, in any full sense. He knows that Meany has threatened Wall Street with a labor party and is demanding a 35-hour work week. He knows, too, that Meany violently attacks the Soviet Union and has boasted that he has never led a strike! Yet his Communist perspective is not summed up in the words, "Give direction to the class, not the leaders." It can only be summed up by, "Give direction to the class, and, through the class, to the nation."

A small difference in wording; a vast difference in meaning. Consider, for example, how far off Comrade Rosen is in his estimate of the Rarick Dues Protest Movement. He may be right that the Party never fully realized the importance of this movement, although the *Worker* carried a number of articles on it. A comprehensive analysis of the Rarick Dues Protest Movement is still in order, as Rosen suggests. But how can any leading Communist suggest that this dues protest might be even more important than the AFL-CIO merger? How, in particular, could he even guess that it might be as important as the merger

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if a comprehensive analysis of it is still in order? Doesn't one make studies before drawing such sweeping conclusions?

And just what was that movement? Chiefly, it was what it said it was, a protest against increased dues payments. By themselves, such protests have no dependable class content. They are sometimes a measure of disgust with a corrupt and useless union leadership. At other times, they are a whip in the hands of company agents against an honest union administration. They may well reflect the dregs of anti-unionism, as paraded on McClellan's witness stand. They must be judged in each circumstance, both analytically and comprehensively.

In its special setting, the Rarick Dues Protest Movement may have been a great portent of prevailing moods among basic workers. If we had known more about it, as Rosen suggests, we might be in a better position today. In the absence of such extended knowledge, however, there is only one meaning to Rosen's appraisal: that merging the AF of L and the CIO could as well hasten fascism as promote labor welfare. Only one who views the great merger of both houses of labor as a merger solely of the worst features of both houses could consider a dues protest movement, however widespread in a big union, as perhaps of equal importance. Rank and file cynicism about where the money goes, joined with a demand for a bit more democracy in the union, is no tower of strength to pose against the huge bureaucracy of the merged labor movement, if that is the thinking beneath the surface of Comrade Rosen's careless equation.

The danger to the labor movement does not come primarily from its entrenched bureaucracy, as the Trotskyists insist. The strength of the labor movement is not rooted in sullenness about paying dues. The danger to American labor comes from giant US corporations which have never accepted unions. The strength of American labor lies in its substantial unity and in the fact that its leadership, for the first time in many years, is compelled to face real job and cost-of-living problems. Both in its scope and in its specifics, the economic and political program which organized labor espouses today is far ahead of anything which the American Federation of Labor ever projected before, even in New Deal days.

It is easy to duck this impressive fact and to attack all labor leaders for their capitalist and cold-war mentality, brashly threatening them with extinction. It is more to the point, though harder, to wrestle in the hot sun with a labor program which clashes with Big Business in home field and supports Big Business abroad.

American workers are capitalist-minded. Even some American Communists have been deluded, in times past, by what Satan showed them from the top of Mount Free Enterprise. The problem is not how to ignore or go around the capitalist-minded members and leaders of labor. The problem is how to give direction to the class and through the class to the nation.

A good general piece of advice in this field is not to tell us in a printed article what no Communist leader would tell us in a give-and-take conference about specific experiences in the unions we belong to. A printed article

should not seem solemnly to advise us to make an all-or-nothing fight to dump all top leaders when the odds are 100 to 1 that the same man whose article lends itself to that interpretation would never, in an actual conference, leave me or any other active trade unionist with any such blanket impression.

The next thing is that some of our Party members can no longer be dragged to their union meetings. Consequently, they don't know what is new in labor and how many doors are open to them today that were slammed shut yesterday. If they read Comrade Rosen's piece, they will not be able to sort out what is constructive in it. They will see only what confirms their own dead feelings about dead and corrupt top leaders.

Comrades, the revolution is not going to take place tomorrow. We have time to be good-natured in our unions, to have a drink with the guys, to organize family picnics, if there are no regular union social events. We can't move people if we distrust them, fear them, spurn them, scorn them, shun them, or see them only on urgent business. Communists aren't machines and neither are the people around us.

Our labor leaders, big and little, are under the gun, too, not, of course, as workers are, but for all their huge salaries and hot expense accounts, they fight the "right-to-work" laws even more fiercely than the rank and file does, and for the excellent reason that no unions, or weak ones, mean no lush jobs. What else does it mean when local leaders who have spent a life time stamping out militancy and expelling militants themselves urge the

rank and file into clear-cut labor political action.

The next thing is to put labor's sound economic and legislative program into action. At the same time, we must attack labor's subservience to a foreign policy which is not in the interest of the American working class.

We should begin by studying what labor's program is and by watching labor's activities in support of its program.

That keen-eyed militants in labor's independent, progressive, and Left field are studying and watching is shown in two lead labor articles in the *People's World*, May 30. One story reports the California Federation of Labor's unemployment compensation caper. Governor Brown had already announced that this measure would up jobless compensation from \$40.00 to \$55.00. And it would have—for all workers earning more than \$134.00 a week. The ILWU uncovered the skull-dugger. The Teamsters and aroused delegates to AFL-CIO central bodies upstate demanded investigation by their officers. The NAACP protested that the "improvement" in compensation rates would help only on jobs which most Negroes (and Mexican-Americans) could not get. The Governor was furious at having been "misled" by top labor and business lobbyists. The package was broken open on the floor of the Legislature. A more inclusive bill passed both houses.

The other big labor story in the May 30 *People's World* reports the CFL switch on Governor Brown's labor "reform" bills. With the AFL-CIO belatedly opposing the Kennedy "reform" bills in the US Congress, it is hard for the rank and file to know which is the

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horse and which the cart. We do know, however, that the first to denounce the dangers of such measures were the Independent Unions, the Party and those close to it, and the *Worker* and *People's World*. There even seemed to be little value to our protests, except to make the record.

Those who pretend not to know the "role" of the Party, its press, and others on the Left; those who forget ever to consider the significance of the Independent Unions, within the total labor picture, should ponder these two developments. Their elements are almost surely present in each industrial state. They are positive illustrations of not echoing what comes down from the top and not attacking indiscriminately. The first, in particular, is an example, par excellence, of allied action between labor and jim-crowed national minorities.

Even amidst all the blindness, bitterness, and dishonesty of our country's present foreign policy, we can find ways to be of service to our own working class in that field, too. And, again, it is not a question of attacking labor's subservience to the foreign policy of US big business just for the sake of attack. Because we are American working men and women, because it is our working class whose support is being obtained for atom-bomb diplomacy, and because most of us, with our fellow workers, would be among that 40 million who U.S. Civilian Defense estimates would lie dead after the first exchange of blows, we would have to be stone deaf not to hear duty's call. The question, then, is how to go about discharging our obligation.

Labor's official support to big business imperialism has two sides: support

to the State Department and to bellicose statements of national Republican and Democratic leaders, generals, and the like, and direct expenditures of labor funds to support roving labor "ambassadors," abroad.

Before turning to more specific proposals for combatting such evidences of ruling class ideology in labor, we should spend a few moments on three general suggestions which Comrade Rosen offers. The first two, that the profit be taken out of "defense" and that industries be nationalized, can be discussed together. The third, that we expose and denounce the "false concept" that arms making creates jobs, needs separate consideration.

Although a demand to take profits out of "defense" and to nationalize industries will kick off much useful discussion about possible governmental economies, war profiteering, tax reduction, and public ownership, all such ideas have to be carefully qualified, for they have no fixed class content. Chiang Kai Shek was for nationalizing Chinese industry, perhaps to help his friends loot the whole Chinese economy. In our own country, many facilities are publicly owned: housing projects, municipal water, power, and transit systems, county port facilities, federal power and reclamation projects, the Post Office, Navy yards, Army arsenals, oil and timber reserves, and atomic energy installations.

That islands of public ownership under capitalism are frequently a tremendous racket for bond holders and bankers can be clearly demonstrated both from the older history of city-owned transit systems and from the political and economic facts of life of the present-day toll road authorities.

That the nation's oil reserves can be plundered by privateers was proved in the Teapot Dome scandal. That the fruits of federally-owned power facilities can be stolen, if strict watch is not kept, was shown in the Dixon-Yates deal. And that billions of dollars worth of research, plants and equipment, publicly paid for and owned, can be wholly controlled by the biggest U.S. corporations and hugely profitable to them is amply proved by American experience with the development of atomic energy. The point here need not be labored, but it should be held in mind, along with labor's proper demand for full bargaining rights with public bodies, as among the qualifications which we should introduce into any general discussion of nationalizing industry.

We shouldn't paint ourselves into a corner, either, by saying, or seeming to say, as Comrade Rosen does, that arms making creates no jobs. Hundreds of thousands of American workers do support their families by working in munitions plants, airplane factories, not to mention government-owned Navy yards, Army arsenals, bases, and depots. It may be true that spending for civilian purposes makes more jobs than military spending, although that conclusion, too, involves a host of economic complexities and disagreements. But I hope we are not about either to assert or to suggest through a peace-time job program there is some way, after all, for capitalism to avoid booms and busts.

Of course we have a program for peace-time jobs, under capitalism. We support the demand of the Building Trades Department, AFL-CIO, for vast public construction. We demand a

30-hour work week, with no reduction in pay. We fight speedup. We demand fair employment practices. We demand special training and special compensation for young people who have not held their first jobs and for workers turned out by automation. We urge steep reductions in taxes in workingmen's wages and homes. We oppose consumer taxes. We support a wide variety of fringe benefits, scholarships, paid vacations, supplemental unemployment compensation, medical and pension plans . . . all at the expense of the employers.

As members of the working class, we help win these improvements, and we share in them, too. Unless we have taken leave of our Communist wits, however, we do not regard them as a cure for capitalism. They are immediate benefits to the working class, which makes them desirable in themselves. Won in a struggle with the class enemy, they also represent part of that interacting chain, that trail of mounting quantity, which, under dialectical law, may be expected, in time, to erupt into qualitative change.

It is a question of consciously strengthening the position of the working class, under capitalism, both through benefits won and through lessons drawn from defeats, until the capitalist system, being unable to proceed in its old way, is replaced. It is the end of capitalism and the beginning of socialism.

It is exactly this kind of reasoning which I have in mind when I suggest, as I did earlier, that we can effectively contradict the false general statements of imperialist foreign policy by thrusting against them particular actions or statements which are clearly in the in-

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terest of working men and women and therefore, also in the interest of the American nation and of working men and women in other lands, too.

For example, when England makes a big trade deal with the USSR, as it just did, we can point out how many British workers that order alone will put back to work, and it will not be difficult, either, to express the hope that more normal trade relations in the world will possibly promote peace. Similarly, we can make studies and publish them, showing what our traditional commercial ties around the Pacific Rim have meant to this country, and how many jobs in manufacturing, transport, and warehousing we can gain just by re-establishing ordinary capitalist trade relations throughout this huge area.

We should also press the exchanging of trade-union delegations, as part of the cultural exchange program between the US and the USSR, and as a means by which labor may find out for itself, not only what socialist lands are doing, but to what extent trade with them will strengthen our own job security.

The Soviet Union declares that it will have, seven years from now, the shortest work week, the highest pay, and the best working and living conditions in the world. American labor, whose patriotism is now muffled in cold war declarations, could take much proper pride in a clear challenge to Soviet labor to see who will actually be better off, in seven years, we or they. The grand prize in this contest will be substantially improved living for the workers of both countries and a better chance for the world to work in peace.

We can fight imperialism at the precinct level, too. During the 1958 elec-

tion, American workers took their politics more from their union halls than from any other single center. This welcome development has not changed the fact, however, that actions in working class communities, discussions in the churches, fraternal orders, and public forums of all sorts all affect the thinking of the men and women of labor. Farming and working class women, for example, share the concern of all mothers with the effects of radioactive fallout on unborn children. Vigorous expression of that concern will move fathers as well as mothers toward the most important single disarmament step. Election campaigns are of traditional effectiveness, too, in broadening the citizen's and the worker's view of the issues which touch him most closely.

More specifically within the scope of Party work in labor, lies the dispatching of labor-paid cold warriors throughout Central and Latin America, Africa, Europe, and Asia. Labor should have a foreign aid program of its own, not one that dances attendance on the State Department. Of crying concern to the dues-paying member of U.S. labor is the runaway shop, the plant that runs, not just South for cheaper labor, but clear out of this country.

Can our steel workers, oil workers, auto workers, rubber workers, aluminum workers, and the rest who work for American giants with factories in foreign lands begin to think of negotiating not only industry-wide agreements covering all workers in the United States, but international agreements fixing the same wage scales for all the workers in all the run-away foreign plants owned by U.S. capital? To what extent can the U.S. labor

movement make this an issue for every labor union in the world, Left, Center, or Right?

The AFL-CIO can well afford to spend millions to help raise wages and improve conditions, not only in our own blighted South, which stinks throughout the world, but to reduce and eventually to eliminate the differentials between hourly wage scales here and abroad. Unless we want more and more plants to run away, both to the South and to other cheap labor areas in the weaker capitalist countries, American labor must put into practice an internationalism new to this working generation, a foreign policy of workers, addressed to workers. Sending labor-paid "ambassadors" all over the world is not wrong in principle. What is wrong is for them to fetch water for run-away, anti-labor American corporations, to carry into the labor movements of other lands the rigid, bitter, political thinking which supports the cold war needs of U.S. business.

However useful anti-Communism is to the corporations, it will retard rather than help labor if our goal is to protect our own standards by bringing up those of the rest of the world's workers. If we want another contest, having only constructive results, let American labor challenge Communist-led labor, or any other labor, to find the quickest and best way to unite the working class of the world for an all-out assault on starvation wages. And if all of us can't unite, then let us find parallel paths to that worthy goal.

And now a word on just what American labor's foreign policy planks are. Every informed person knows the war-like statements which issue from President Meany, from the AFL-CIO

Executive Council, and from the various local and state bodies. These statements are often more extravagant than the utterance of members of the ruling class, itself. Yet we ought to look further into the resolutions and documents of the labor movement.

"The preservation of peace and freedom is the burning issue of our time," begins the foreign policy section of the merger document of the California Federation of Labor. "American labor," it continues, a few paragraphs further along, "supports the aspirations of all colonial and oppressed peoples to national independence and human freedom."

The document calls for "re-examination, revision, and strengthening of our foreign policy so as to capture the initiative for the free world in the struggle to make peace secure and to promote freedom for all men." It pledges active support "of all just demands of the colonial peoples for national freedom, self-determination and full partnership in the family of nations" . . . for "strengthening the influence and effectiveness of the United Nations as the world's best hope for peace and human progress" . . . for "international cooperation in the atoms for peace program," for "expansion of cultural, political, and economic relations with the countries behind the Iron Curtain."

And the section ends urging the United States to "pursue every honorable means of achieving international disarmament, including an effective ban on nuclear weapons testing. . . ."

We venture to suggest either that such forceful peace expressions as these are to be found in existing resolutions and documents of other state and city

central bodies or that, as occasion arises, they can appropriately be presented in such bodies. Our Party, with the help of its active trade unionists, needs, among other things, to put out material which will show the labor movement, as well as the nation, why we support such peace planks as the California merger document affirms. We must show why, in our opinion, those individual planks add up not to support of cold war, but to abandonment of all cold war positions.

We are missing an important legal bet, too. GOP Attorneys General are pressing conspiracy charges against labor organizations and leaders. This ancient doctrine is one of the earliest legal weapons used to cripple strikes and union organization. Most early anti-strike injunctions were based on it. It came to extensive life with the indictment of Communist leaders in 1948, under the Smith Act. It gained further currency when Mine, Mill and Smelter Worker national leaders were indicted for conspiracy to falsify the non-Communist affidavit required under the Taft-Hartley Act. It was extended in the Cleveland case to include both union leaders and Communist Party leaders. The Teamsters have had a number of conspiracy raps thrown at them, and the latest indictment is of the New York I.L.G.W.U., where labor is carried back to underground, once again, trial for conspiring to violate the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.

Big Business must break labor's political power. It must divide labor from its chief allies. This is to be done through direct attack on the steel workers, through pressing phoney inflationary charges in connection with labor's need for wage increases, by subjecting

workers in other industries to lost time, while the steel trust forces its inventories down. The GOP Department of Justice seeks mischievous court precedents. The Taft-Hartley Act, which opens the gate to "right-to-work" laws, cripples organization in the South, and screens militants out of labor leadership, is bulwarked and protected on the statute books, while "mild" labor reform bills become the issue.

And the great landslide Congress, the chief monument to labor political activity, sits regally on its fat, either doing nothing or "mildly" aiding labor's enemies.

The net short-term balance is against labor. As anti-labor pressure mounts, events properly assisted by good works, will more and more isolate the war makers and more and more bring uppermost both the need and the opportunity for political action of the type we saw in the campaigns which defeated the "right-to-work" initiatives. The AFL-CIO Executive Council, for example, announced in May its intention to carry a repealer fight in states which passed "right-to-work" laws prior to 1958. Although the states were not named, they lie mostly in the South. Is it better for us to mourn the "death" of labor's fight to organize the South? Or is it better to jump in with local union resolutions and special donations to touch off an all-out political offensive to uphold labor's right to exist in the South?

The question is not whether we will wake up some day to find a big movement raging in the labor movement. That movement was raging only last year, led by the country's labor leaders, themselves. It has damped down now,

but swirls just beneath the surface and will rise in the political battles just ahead.

Our Party was part of that movement. We were engaged in that skirmish with the class enemy. If we had been more confident and more numerous, we could have served the labor movement more effectively than we did.

No one in our Party, high or low, can say or imply, therefore, that our Party is on the outside analyzing and pin pointing. As long as one Communist stands on the floor of one union breathing class consciousness into its members and struggling to implement union policy in a class conscious manner, our Party is inside at least that much of the labor movement.

I am not a cynical worker. I am not a cynical Party member, either, yet I sometimes wonder which is the greatest problem: deepening class consciousness among American workers or driving home to American Communists how far the labor movement is ahead of where some comrades seem to think it is. These may be two aspects of one problem, of course, as I strongly suspect. And I am not at all suggesting that, because the American labor movement is further ahead than many in our Party know, there are therefore no problems about its policies, attitudes, and leadership. On the contrary, those problems are the greater problems of a united and programmatically advanced movement. What I am trying to say is that this labor movement stands in a particular relationship with a very fat and very greedy capitalist class and that there is room in labor today for every Communist worker to do something constructive.

This is the root of my difference with Comrade Rosen's article. He describes the general situation. Some of his proposals are quite workable even though they are far from constituting a labor program. His criticisms of the cold warriors of labor are justified, although he sees labor leaders as too sharply separate in their thinking from the membership as a whole. The net effect of his article, unfortunately is that, aside from the spirit shown in protesting dues and in certain wild cat strikes, American labor is a pretty hopeless mess.

That is not why I am active in my union. I am attracted by our State Federation of Labor's political and legislative program. I hate to see my fellow workers used up, beat out, crippled, and laid off in their forties all because of terrible working conditions in much of the area covered by my union. I need its protection on my job. It needs my help in combatting those conditions and in promoting its general program. I don't live for those moments when I can inject a broader, class perspective into a discussion on the floor or on the job, but I try not to miss them.

If I lapse into the minutely personal, set it down to a deeply ingrained belief that our attitudes often count as much as what we know and have to say. If we see no splendor in those around us, if we can't love the individuals we meet for what they can be, if for nothing else, and if we can't understand and respect all the good in the labor movement, we will be without living influence. In fact, we won't be able for very long even to force ourselves out of the house at night and down to the meeting hall.

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