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**INTERNATIONAL  
SOCIALIST  
REVIEW**

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# How A Minority Can Change Society

By George Breitman

**T**HE year 1963 was the most eventful in the history of the American Negro struggle. As it ended, people all over the country were stopping to assess what had happened, to think over what was done and what was not done, what was accomplished and not accomplished. Clifton DeBerry, the Socialist Workers party candidate for President this year, had an opportunity at the end of 1963 to make a coast-to-coast tour of most big northern cities and to learn something about the current thinking of Negro militants. He told me one of the things he had observed was the difficulty in getting across the idea about how much the Negro people can do even though they are in a minority, about how much they can do on their own, alone and unaided if necessary. He noticed this difficulty in speaking with Negro trade unionists, but not only them. He felt a lot more attention has to be paid to ways of explaining, in a logical, convincing manner, how much a minority is capable of accomplishing. He felt that misunderstanding on this point is one of the reasons why the idea of an all-black political party has not yet caught on with more Negroes.

Why is it so hard for many Negroes, even militant Negroes, to grasp the full potential of determined minority action? I would say there are three reasons:

First, the teaching, the influence, the propaganda of the whole capitalist system from cradle to grave are aimed at brainwashing the people; at convincing them, among other things, that minorities can plead and beg, but cannot do anything significant, cannot accomplish any big changes, until they have the consent of the majority. Above all is this idea burned into the minds and souls of Negroes, whose history is distorted or denied, and who are made to feel not only that they are a minority, but an insignificant minority, who have never amounted to much by themselves and who, without the stern supervision or benign direction of the great white fathers, would hardly know how to flush a toilet. In other words, for Negroes to comprehend how much a minority can do they must buck everything drilled into them from the beginning of childhood; they virtually have to make a revolution in their thinking.

There is a certain irony in these things taught by the capitalists because the capitalists are a minority

*This article comprises the text of a speech delivered at a midwest educational conference of the Young Socialist Alliance in Chicago, January 1964 by George Breitman, frequent contributor to THE MILITANT and author of a number of pamphlets written for the Socialist Workers Party.*

themselves—in fact, a much smaller minority than the Negro people. Yet this capitalist minority controls the whole country, lock, stock and barrel—its wealth, its means of production, its political structure—and therefore is a living refutation of what it tells us about the limits on what a minority can accomplish.

The second reason why it is hard to see the truth about what a minority can do is that the present Negro leadership, almost in its entirety, is enslaved by the ideas promulgated by the capitalist class, repeats and spreads those ideas, and does everything in its power to discourage the mass of the Negro people from taking steps genuinely independent of the white majority.

A third reason is that the radical movement, virtually the whole radical movement with the exception of the Socialist Workers party, although it approaches questions from a different standpoint than that of the ruling capitalist class, has failed to comprehend the essence of this question, and instead of promoting and encouraging both theoretically and practically an understanding of the dynamics and potential of minority action, in some ways even discourages it. An example is their attitude toward the Freedom Now party. I do not know of a single organization in this country claiming to be Marxist or socialist or communist that supports the Freedom Now party, except the Socialist Workers party. The Communist party, the Socialist party, the Socialist Labor party, the Progressive Labor movement—all are either flatly opposed to, or feel very uneasy, about the development of an all-black political party independent of the power structure and of the two major parties. And if you trace back the causes, you will find them to be most unMarxist, un-socialist and uncommunist failures to grasp the revolutionary implications of the independent struggles of the Negro minority.

**I** WANT now to examine some typical arguments by the present Negro leaders against such independent action. When the Freedom Now party was organized in Michigan a few months ago, the press was very much concerned about it. And every "big name" Negro who came to Detroit for several weeks thereafter was immediately buttonholed by the press and invited to make some statement on, or rather against, the Freedom Now party.

One of these was Rev. Martin Luther King, who obliged with the following statement: "I am opposed to anything or any party that teaches separation of the races because I am for integration. If the party is designed to get more Negroes interested in politics,

fine; otherwise I can see no good that can come from an all-black party. One-tenth of the population will never be able to dominate nine-tenths."

In this statement I think Rev. King is guilty of counterposing "separation of the races" and "integration" in a completely false and unwarranted way. The Freedom Now party does not "teach the separation of the races." It recognizes that this is a society where the races are separated in fact, and attempts to utilize the separation that has been imposed by capitalism in order to change society and do away with the discrimination made possible by this imposed separation. King is well aware of this. He is a preacher, the head of a church which happens to be all-black. He does not reject or oppose this church because it is all-black. He knows that there is nothing racist about this church being all-black. It is the result of living in a racist society. And he works through this all-black church and tries to build it, at the same time that he advocates integration and seeks to utilize this all-black organization to promote integration.

Now why can't an all-black party do the same thing that an all-black church does, that is, take advantage of the separation created by this racist society in order to weld together the black victims of racism so that they can work to end racism altogether? Why not? Why is it permissible in King's eyes for Negroes to pray together, but not permissible for them to join together in political action in the way they find most effective for ending their oppression? Shouldn't King, if he is logical and consistent, propose that Negroes give up their all-black churches too because they are not integrated? Posed this way, King could reply, "But we have an all-black church because it's the only kind available to us." And the answer of the Freedom Now party could be, "Yes, and an all-black political party is the only kind available to us that we think has any chance of solving our problems." So King is confusing rather than clarifying the real relation between "separation" and "integration," which are not necessarily opposites at all, since the formation of all-black organizations and institutions may actually be a means of achieving the goal of "integration" instead of being in contradiction to that goal.

King's other remark was even more revealing: "One-tenth of the population will never be able to dominate nine-tenths." Maybe not, although I've already pointed out that the capitalists, a minority of less than one per cent, dominate the other 99 per cent of us. Anyhow, that's not the issue posed by the Freedom Now party. It is not the Freedom Now party's goal for the Negro one-tenth to dominate the white nine-tenths. Just the opposite—its goal is to keep the white nine-tenths from dominating and oppressing the black one-tenth. How to do this—that's the real difference between King and the Freedom Now party. Must the minority adapt itself in its methods and tempo to the prejudiced majority, just because it is a majority, and not do certain things because the majority will not like it? Or, can the minority end the domination of the majority by acting with complete independence from the majority ideologically, organizationally, politically—and *only* by acting independently? King prefers not to discuss this real difference. That's why he misrepresents his opponents' position with irrelevant talk about the inability of one-tenth to dominate nine-tenths.

### Randolph's Position

Another noted figure who came to Detroit at the time was A. Philip Randolph, Vice-President of the AFL-CIO and President of the Negro American Labor Council. He too dutifully came forward with a statement against the Freedom Now party, from which I'll read just the first two sentences: "Racial isolation in any form cannot register any influence on American political events. It is completely foreign to the political thoughts and actions of America."

It could be pointed out that what Randolph calls "racial isolation," in the form of all-white organizations like the Ku Klux Klan and the White Citizens Council, has registered plenty of influence on American politics. But I think it may be more useful to stress that in his eagerness to damn the Freedom Now party, Randolph here is really damning himself. By "racial isolation" he means all-black organization for the purpose of ending the isolation foisted on Negroes by a racist society. Randolph is so blinded factionally that he has forgotten his own role, the thing for which he will probably be best remembered; for it so happens that next to Marcus Garvey and Elijah Muhammad, Randolph is the American Negro leader who did the most in this century for what he now calls "racial isolation," that is, all-black organization.

The first March on Washington Movement, which Randolph organized in 1941, was all-black, and Randolph was foremost in insisting that it be all-black. Even though it did not materialize in a march, because Randolph yielded to Roosevelt and called it off at the last minute, that first call for a March on Washington in 1941 nevertheless accomplished more than the interracial march that took place last August, because it forced Roosevelt to issue the first FEPC order, which is more than the 1963 march accomplished. Instead of "isolating" the Negro struggle, I think it can be said that that all-black organization, small and imperfect though it was, did more to influence American life than any interracial movement has done since.

\* \* \*

**H**OW do you influence the course of events anyway? Is it done by strict adherence to the procedures and forms approved by the forces in power, or by following the rules they lay down? All experience, American as well as "foreign," testifies to the contrary. As long as you abide by their rules, either in the way you organize or the way you fight, they know they

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have little to fear from you and pay you little attention. The only valid test for all-black organization is this: does it at this time and under these circumstances help or hinder in mobilizing the masses for uncompromising struggle? It doesn't matter if whites, liberal or conservative, don't like it and call it all kinds of names. What counts is what the black masses think about it. If they think it is good, if it enables them more effectively to organize for struggle, then it can have a shattering impact on present-day American society and politics. Influence can be wielded in more ways than one, and that which helps the masses to organize is most "influential" in the long run.

I will cite only one more example of the kind of reasoning employed by Negro opponents of independent minority action. Also attacking the Freedom Now party was Alex Fuller, Vice-President of the Detroit AFL-CIO Council. He said: "We can continue to make gains only by working with people of good will. It is a serious mistake when minority groups, now on the threshold of making tremendous gains for Negroes . . . separate themselves from others who are working for the same objectives . . . We cannot afford to separate or isolate ourselves . . . We stand on the side of all democratic-thinking people who believe and advocate first-class citizenship for everyone. We cannot do it alone."

Translated, what Alex Fuller means is this: Negroes can't get anywhere, Negroes can't get anything, unless

they remain in the Democratic party; therefore they must wait until the Democrats are ready. But the truth is somewhat different. Negroes will never get first-class citizenship in a thousand years so long as their political power remains tucked away in the vest pocket of the Democratic party. If they have to depend on and wait for the Democrats or the Republicans, and similar "people of good will," their children and their children's children will never know the taste of freedom.

Nobody in his right mind wants to separate "from others who are working for the same objectives," but it is a lie to pretend that the Democratic party, any more than the Republican Party, has the "same objectives" as the Negro people. If that were the case the present massive Negro revolt would have no purpose or meaning. The objective of the major parties is to quiet the Negroes with a few token concessions, while the objective of the Negro people is freedom.

Surely there's a difference here, and it is just this big difference that separates Negroes from Fuller's "democratic-thinking people." Negroes want freedom now, and "democratic-thinking people" want them to have it later. The only way Negroes can prevent "separation" from the liberals on this issue is to give in to them and let them decide when and where and how much freedom Negroes shall have. That's what Alex Fuller and the other Negro leaders have done and what they want the Negro people to do or keep on doing. But the tendency favoring the Freedom Now party has decided that a hundred years of political dependence on these democratic-thinking people of good will is enough, because such dependence, far from bringing them to "the threshold of tremendous gains," will lead only to another hundred years of the same. They have made their declaration of political independence, and now they are striking out on their own, determined to use their political power for themselves first, last, and all the time.

### Characteristics of Negro Minority

Before proceeding to our examination from a Marxist point of view of how much and not how little a minority can do, I should make clear that I am not talking about just any minority, but about a minority with certain characteristics, certain features, and a certain history. And also, yes, I am talking about a minority of a certain size. Let me get the size question out of the way first.

Obviously, not every minority is big enough to do the things I am talking about. Size is important too. If there were only two or three million Negroes in this country, which is approaching a population of 200 million, they could not accomplish what a minority of 20 million can. But 20 million is a big force, big enough to tear things up, big enough and weighty enough to appreciably affect the course of events. After all, how many countries in the world, not only the new ones in Africa and Asia but also the old ones in Europe and the Americas, have a population of 20 million? Out of more than 100 countries, not more than 25 at the most, so that around three-quarters of the countries in the world are smaller in population than the Negro people of the United States.

Size and relative weight are not the only important factors to be considered. A minority of even 40 million cannot do much if satisfied with its conditions or in-

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different and apathetic about them. As important as size, or more important, in deciding what a minority can do are social, economic, political, historical, and psychological factors.

What I am trying to say is that what a minority can do depends on whether or not it is oppressed and exploited because of some minority trait or feature, is separated out by society for special inferior status, is denied equal treatment, opportunity and rights; whether or not it is at the bottom of the social ladder so that when it rises it shakes the whole structure; whether or not it is a part of the most productive and potentially most powerful force in the modern world, the working class, and yet at the same time is denied the full benefits of membership in that class; whether or not the oppressive and exploitative society in which it exists is stable or in crisis, challenged on all sides and therefore no longer able to maintain the status quo; whether or not this minority believes that it can take advantage of the crisis of society; whether or not it is affected by and responds to the great tides of change and revolution sweeping the globe and has a sense of kinship and solidarity with the masses rising up and changing the rest of the world; whether or not its oppression tends to knit it together for common action and goals; whether or not it is compact and so situated geographically that it can act with maximum cohesiveness and impact; whether or not it has learned to see through the brainwashing which the ruling class uses to keep this minority in subjugation; whether or not it has lost patience as well as respect for the majority; whether or not it sees any further reason to continue believing in promises or in gradualism; whether or not it has the capacity to free itself from the influence of conservative leaders who have always held it back and to replace them with more militant and revolutionary leaders; whether or not it realizes it never has made any gains except by fighting for them; whether or not it has the capacity to defend itself against terror and violence; whether or not it is developing a militant and radical consciousness, ideology, philosophy and methodology of its own that can motivate and spark sustained, audacious and independent struggle.

In short, I am talking about characteristics that fit the American Negro people or which they are in the process of acquiring at an extremely rapid rate. Of the many things such a minority can do, I shall now list some, not necessarily in the order of their importance:

### What a Minority Can Do

1. It can force serious concessions from the ruling class. Anyone who expects the capitalist class to grant full and genuine equality to the Negro people is going to be sadly disappointed, because equality is simply not compatible with, or possible under, a social system of the type that we have in the United States today. But that is no reason for Negroes to stop trying to get whatever they can squeeze out of the ruling class until the time comes when it can be deposed. Militant struggle can force the present ruling class to lift some of the existing racial restrictions and barriers in the form of more rights more jobs, better jobs, better schools, better housing, less police brutality, and a greater measure of formal equality before the law. Negroes will not settle for such partial gains and concessions, but they would

be fools not to fight for them and take them and utilize them to press for other and more fundamental changes.

2. A minority, properly oriented and led, can go much farther than it has thus far gone to make the present system unworkable and intolerable. Bayard Rustin calls this "social dislocation" (and warns against its "limitations"). Rev. Albert Cleage, chairman of the Freedom Now Party in Michigan, calls it "a strategy of chaos" (and urges its application be expanded). Others give it the name of "mass civil disobedience." Whatever you call it, it has barely been utilized in America up to now. It consists of making the system so inconvenient and expensive that white people will be forced to ask themselves whether continued discrimination is worthwhile and whether in their own interest they should not help to do away with it altogether.

It means lying down, interposing your bodies on the airport runways, on the expressways, at the plant gate, at the school entrance, at the bank, at the points of production, and the points of distribution, and the points of transportation, and throwing a monkey wrench into the wheels of the system, attempting to paralyze it, to bring it to a stop. It means saying: "If we Negroes can't have decent and equal schools, then let's not have any schools. If we can't have jobs and job equality, then let no one be able to work. If we can't vote, then let no one be able to vote. If we can't belong to the unions as equals, then we don't care what happens to the unions." It means carrying the principle of the sit-down strike, which stops production, much farther and into entirely new areas of social life.

I say that this has hardly been exercised as a full-scale weapon of the Negro minority, but I have no doubt that it will be. Already some members of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, headed by Diane Nash Bevel, have proposed such action and have had it rejected by moderate leaders like Rev. King, who talks about civil disobedience but is mortally afraid of really unleashing it without restriction on a mass scale. The sit-ins, the lie-ins, the wade-ins, etc., were just a small, faint, preliminary version of what is still to come in a giant size and to the accomplishment of deep social convulsions and conflicts. To avoid misunderstanding, let me say that what I am talking about here is not pacifism but an all out struggle, which will be the equivalent of a general strike when it reaches full flower. And a general strike usually tends to pose questions about who shall have power in the land.

3. A minority can, merely by carrying through its fight for democratic rights without compromise, help to educate and radicalize the American people, especially the youth in whose hands the future lies. In fact, it is already doing so. You in this audience of young socialists and young radicals know better than anyone else how profoundly your thinking about the whole world has been influenced by the Negro struggle; how their fight for equality enabled you to see through the official myths about "democracy" and "the free world," to understand the brute reality of the capitalist power structure, to reach new conclusions about capitalism and socialism. Not only the Cuban revolution, not only the danger of atomic war, but something much closer to home, the Negro revolt, has helped to educate or re-educate you, to shed the blinders of liberalism, and to persuade you to dedicate your lives to the fight for a better world. In this respect you are not so much unique as early, because the deepening

struggle of the Negro minority will have similarly healthy effects on other young people and on some of the not completely hopeless older people as well.

4. A minority not only can educate other forces but can set them into motion too. It can stimulate them to fight for their own needs and interests through the power of example as well as the power of pressure. You heard one illustration of the power of example this morning—the report about the rent strike which began among Negroes in Harlem and is now spreading to some white sections of the population in other parts of New York City. Another small but striking example occurred in Detroit last summer. A militant Negro demonstration in front of police headquarters, to protest the police shooting of a young Negro woman in the back, came to the very brink of a physical clash. That was a Saturday, and it was followed two days later, on Monday, by another demonstration at another police station, near which cops had shot a young white man in the back. This second demonstration, involving mainly young whites, *raised the same slogans as the first* and culminated in a pitched battle with the cops after the youths had thrown rocks and bottles at them. Not long ago I noticed a small newspaper item about some airline strike pickets who had been picketing up and down outside the Newark terminal for a long time, with little public attention paid to their grievances. One day they suddenly decided to go inside the terminal and demonstrate there, which was prohibited by an injunction. Quickly arrested, they were asked what had got into them. Their explanation was that they had seen that Negroes were able to get action by sit-ins and by going places where they weren't supposed to, so they thought it was a good idea to do the same.

These are all small-scale illustrations, but bigger and better ones are in the offing. The rulers of this country are well aware of the stimulation-and-contagion effects of militant Negro struggle. That is one reason why they want to stop it before it goes too far and explains the hasty turnabout that induced the previously indifferent Kennedy administration to suddenly introduce civil rights legislation last year.

5. A determined minority can also divide the majority, can actually split it up at decisive moments and junctures. This, of course, is one of the best ways of reducing the disadvantages of being a numerical minority, because it drastically changes the odds against the minority. The Socialist Workers party's 1963 convention resolution\* showed how this process has operated historically. If our analysis and theory are correct, this isn't a matter of history only, but of the present and the future. Let me refer briefly to the Civil War as an example of the process which can split the majority.

**T**HE Civil War was not just a conflict between abstract and impersonal forces, between Northern capitalism and Southern slavery; it was a struggle between classes and living people. No one played a greater role in stimulating and progressively resolving that conflict than the slaves and ex-slaves. Again and again in the three decades before the Civil War the

rulers of the North and the South decided to avoid a final showdown by compromising over the slave question. Great hopes were raised and brilliant reputations were made overnight by these eminently "reasonable" negotiations and agreements reached over the bargaining table in Congress and then enacted into law. But the slaves were not consulted about these great compromises. They would not have consented to them anyway, because they left the condition of the slave unchanged, that is, intolerable. So the slaves continued their own independent efforts to become free, just as if these great compromise agreements had never existed.

They continued, just as before, or more so, to run away by the thousands and tens of thousands, to commit sabotage and arson, and to engage in various forms of civil disobedience, self-defense and insurrection. These independent actions of the slaves helped to prevent the compromises from working and to stimulate the birth and growth of abolitionism among whites, who threw their weight onto the scales against further compromise. Thus the slaves reopened and widened the gap between the South and the North every time the great compromise statesmen tried to close it.

By acting in every way they could to defend and liberate themselves, the slaves drove a wedge between the slaveholders and those who wanted to compromise with the slaveholders. By acting in self-interest, and alone when they had to, the slaves divided the whites politically and morally and deepened the divisions to the breaking point. That, above everything else, is what made the struggle irrepressible, constantly widened the breach and deepened the division among the whites, and led inexorably to civil warfare. And then, at the crucial moment, after the outbreak of the war the rulers on both sides had tried so hard to avert, the Negroes pressured the northern government into accepting a revolutionary emancipation policy and completed the process by providing what the reluctant Lincoln later admitted was the military balance of power in the war itself. All this happened without a conscious plan, you might say instinctively. Imagine what will happen when the Negro militants absorb this lesson from history and then consciously work out a strategy to fully utilize this process that is set in motion by the elemental desire of the masses to be free!

We can expect, we can be certain, that the deepening of the Negro struggle for equality will have similarly divisive effects on the white majority in our own time. The majority is not homogeneous anyway; it is strained and torn and in conflict over a thousand questions of policy and class interest. A skillful leadership of the Negro minority will know how to pick the right place to drive new wedges, to deepen already existing and potential differences among the whites, to sharpen their conflicts, to set them fighting each other, and, in the process, as the SWP 1963 convention resolution also says, to find mutually beneficial alliances with those classes and forces whose interests are closer to those of the Negroes against those forces that are most hostile to the Negroes.

Under certain conditions, therefore, a minority, just by fighting for its own rights, can divide the majority into two or more minorities locked in combat with each other. This in turn can result in bringing to power

\**Freedom Now: The New Stage in the Struggle for Negro Emancipation*, Pioneer Publishers, 25c.

a different kind of majority, not based on color, in which the original minority can take a leading part.

Those who confine themselves to scratching the surface can see only the limitations of being a minority, which leads to lamentation, pessimism, and self-induced paralysis or subservience. But when we examine the situation in all of its complex and contradictory reality, probing it deeper and from all sides; when we study majority-minority relations in motion as well as when they are standing still; when we perceive that the majority has problems too, and weaknesses, and many points at which it is vulnerable and susceptible to successful attack, and that these majority problems and weaknesses are becoming more acute than ever before, then we find, not just limitations for the minority, but also infinitely varied and promising openings and opportunities for transforming, transcending, and overcoming limitations.

6. The Negro minority is also in a position to upset the whole political structure of this country — just by “going it alone” in politics, just by the decisions Negroes make about how to use their own votes and their own minority political strength. Our 1963 convention resolution explored this question too, before the present Freedom Now party was started, but it bears restatement because it is such an effective refutation of black liberals who contend the Negro is politically impotent and “destined to fail” if he acts on his own in politics.

Negroes can form their own party. Negroes can run their own candidates against the Democrats and Republicans. Negroes, because they are already a majority in many districts, thanks to the segregated housing system that jams them tightly together in the big city ghettos, can, right now or any time they form their own party, elect dozens of black candidates to Congress from these districts and hundreds of state and local representatives. In this way they can get representatives in public office who will be responsible and accountable to the Negro community instead of to the corrupt major party machines. And since this bloc of black representatives will not be small, it will enable them to hold and wield a certain legislative balance of power and to compel bigger concessions from the power structure than the tokens and crumbs they are now thrown; all of this, you notice, without any drastic change yet in political relations — just by taking advantage of the political and electoral conditions created by segregation, by refusing to vote Democratic or Republican, by voting black. This would mark a real advance at least in the number and quality of Negro representatives in office, but that would be only a part of the result of independent political action.

By forming their own party, Negroes can paralyze the Democratic party and rock the whole political structure to its foundations. Without Negro votes, the bell will toll the doom of the Democratic party. Without Negro votes, the Democratic coalition with the labor movement will be undermined and destroyed. Without Negro votes for that coalition, the unions will be forced to reconsider their political orientation, and this will encourage and strengthen the union forces who will eventually form an independent labor party. Without Negro votes, the present two-party system will pass from the scene and be replaced by something different, out of which Negroes may be able to acquire new and more reliable allies than up to now. And all of this can be accomplished by the simple device of

forming a Negro party and running independent Negro candidates. Really, when you think about the potential, you can almost pity the ignorance of those Negro leaders who preach that Negroes are incapable of any political role other than tagging along behind the liberals.

7. The last on my partial list of things the Negro minority can do should be of special interest to another and smaller minority — socialists, white and Negro. I am convinced that if militant Negroes, not yet socialist, are not so concerned with this point now, they will be later, as their continuing political experience draws it to their attention. At any rate, my point is that the Negro people, although a minority, can, with consistently revolutionary leadership, lead the American working class in the revolution that will abolish capitalism.

We have long held the view that while the Negro struggle is the struggle of an oppressed minority for democratic rights, for equality, it tends, because the masters of this country are both unwilling and unable to grant equality, to become part of the general movement of the exploited and oppressed to abolish capitalism and proceed toward socialism. In this tendency to pass over from democratic to socialist goals, to pass beyond the capitalist framework that now envelops it, the Negro struggle is similar to the colonial struggles, which also take off from democratic aims, such as independence and self-government, but find themselves unable to attain those democratic aims until they wrench the imperialist boot from off their neck. The Chinese call this process the “uninterrupted revolution,” and Leon Trotsky called it “the permanent revolution.” But that is not what I am discussing here. What I am talking about now is something else — the capacity of the Negro people to lead the working-class revolution to replace capitalism with socialism.

To grasp this idea we must rid our minds of the conception that any social revolution in general or any working-class revolution in particular has to be led by a majority. I will try to illustrate this by going back to the first victorious workers’ revolution, the Russian revolution of 1917. It was victorious because it had the support of a majority of the Russian people. But it was not led by any class, or by any vanguard of a class, that comprised the majority of the population. It was a revolution supported by the majority, and it could not have succeeded without that majority support, but it was led by a party that represented a class that was a minority of the country.

We call it, and it was, a working-class revolution. But out of 150 million people in Russia in 1917 the workers were a small minority. There were probably no more than 10 million workers, and that included agricultural workers, some of whom were workers only part of the time. Counting their families, they made up about 15 or 16 per cent of the total population. Yet this class, with a proper leadership in the form of Lenin’s Bolshevik party, was able to lead a revolution that abolished capitalism in Russia.

This is one of the things that befuddled and ruined the Mensheviks, the Social Democrats, and other white liberals of that day. As they understood Marx’s analysis of the conditions needed for social revolution, it could not take place and should not even be attempted until the country was industrialized to the point where the working class was a majority of the population, as

in England then or in the United States today. And if it was attempted before the workers were a majority of the population, it was, according to these people, bound to fail. And they were so sure the Russian revolution was not according to either Hoyle or Marx that most of them pitched in and did their utmost to make it fail.

But they misunderstood Marx and Marxism, as fortunately Lenin, Trotsky, and others did not. A socialist revolution can be led by the working class even when the working class is a minority, provided that working-class minority can get an alliance with, and support from, other non-capitalist forces and classes in the country. In Russia this meant an alliance with the peasants, who constituted around seventy-five per cent of the country. The working-class minority was able to lead the Russian revolution and lead it to victory, not only because it took advantage of the crisis of the capitalist class in the war, not only because it had a qualified leadership, but also because it worked out an effective alliance with the most oppressed sections of the peasants. This alliance was designed to meet the most pressing demands of the peasants, but it did not make any concessions to them about the need to throw the capitalists out of power; and it was based, first of all, on the needs and interests of the working class minority, because the workers were the backbone of the revolution, the most revolutionary force in the country, and represented the historic march of social progress.

Now why, in discussing the American revolution of the 1960's and 1970's, have I gone all the way back to 1917 and far-off Russia? I did so because I thought it would throw light on the distinction between the *making* of a revolution and the *leading* of a revolution, on the leading role that a minority can play, on how dogma can blind one to the leading role of a minority, and on how the successful leadership of a working-class revolution by a minority class depends partly on its ability to make alliances with other exploited classes and groups. I know I am not proving anything about America by this reference to Russia, but perhaps it can help us to look at the role of revolutionary minorities in a fresh way.

The working-class revolution has to be led by workers through their independent party, or parties, or councils. That's one of the things Marx taught us. But Marx never said anything about the revolution having to be led by white workers. He only said by workers — by the most revolutionary workers. The Negroes in this country are a racial minority, but that is only one of their aspects. It would be truly fatal to forget their other primary aspect, namely, that in their overwhelming majority they are proletarian in composition. In fact, Negroes are more proletarian than whites in this country. Negroes are an important section of the working class as well as a racial minority. Unless we are blind, we must see that they are at present and will probably remain the most radicalized section of the working class, the section of the working class that has the most to gain and nothing to lose from social revolution. If this is true, then why should it be so hard, when we are discussing what a radical minority of the working class can do, to conceive of the possibility that it may lead the rest of the working class and its allies in the revolution that will abolish capitalism?

As a matter of fact, that is just what Leon Trotsky,

who did so much to rescue authentic Marxism for my generation and yours, was trying to teach us twenty-five years ago when we set out to reach a correct and revolutionary analysis of the Negro struggle. Things were different in 1933, before the CIO, and in 1939, long before the current radicalization of the Negro people. But let me read you some things Trotsky told us in the 1930's\* and see if they do not apply with even greater validity and relevance to the changed conditions of the 1960's. My first quotation is from a discussion in Turkey between Trotsky and an American, thirty-one years ago, at the depth of the depression and before the CIO was formed. English was not Trotsky's native tongue, and his English was not too good, but his ideas were. He was talking, in 1933, about what would happen when a mass radicalization began in America, and he said:

**"I believe that by the unheard-of political and theoretical backwardness and the unheard-of economic advance the awakening of the working class will proceed quite rapidly. The old ideological covering will burst, all questions will emerge at once and since the country is so economically mature the adaptation of the political and theoretical to the economic level will be achieved very rapidly. It is then possible that the Negroes will become the most advanced section. We have already a similar example in Russia. The Russians were the European Negroes. It is very possible that the Negroes also through the self-determination will proceed to the proletarian dictatorship in a couple of gigantic strides, ahead of the great bloc of white workers. They will then furnish the vanguard. I am absolutely sure that they will in any case fight better than the white workers. That, however, can happen only if the communist party carries on an uncompromising merciless struggle not against the supposed national prepossessions of the Negroes but against the colossal prejudices of the white workers and gives it no concession whatever."**

That was 1933. Six years later, in 1939, Trotsky discussed the Negro struggle with another delegation from the United States, and, touching on the conditions that make workers conservative or radical, he said:

**"If the workers' aristocracy is the basis of opportunism, one of the sources of adaptation to capitalist society, then the most oppressed and discriminated against are the most dynamic milieu of the working class. We must say to the conscious elements of the Negroes that they are convoked by the historic development to become a vanguard of the working class. What serves as a brake on the higher strata? It is the privileges, the comforts that hinder them from becoming revolutionists. It does not exist for the Negroes. What can transform a certain stratum, make it more capable of courage and sacrifice? It is concentrated in the Negroes. If it happens that we in the SWP are not able to find a road to this stratum, then we are not worthy at all. The permanent revolution and all the rest would be only a lie."**

**L**ET me repeat just three of those statements now: It is "possible that the Negroes will become the most advanced section." It is possible that the Negroes "will proceed to the proletarian dictatorship . . . ahead of the great bloc of white workers." "The Negroes are convoked by the historic development to become a

\*Documents of the Negro Struggle (1933-1950), Pioneer Publishers, 65c.



vanguard of the working class." What Trotsky was trying to get us to understand twenty-five and thirty years ago, it is plain, was the possibility that the Negroes could lead the working-class revolution. Our party tried to understand this and to express it in the very first resolution on the Negro struggle it ever adopted, which made it the first party ever to put this idea forward. Let me read the first two sentences of that resolution, which is reprinted in full in *Documents on the Negro Struggle*, and which was adopted by the Socialist Workers party convention in 1939:

**"The American Negroes, for centuries the most oppressed section of American society and the most discriminated against, are potentially the most revolutionary element of the population. They are designated by their whole historical past to be, under adequate leadership, the very vanguard of the proletarian revolution."**

So what I have been trying to say, in stating that the black minority can lead the white majority of the working class in the coming social revolution, is not really new, because the Socialist Workers party explicitly stated that concept in a formal convention resolution in 1939, before most of the people in this hall were born.

Then why does it seem new to many of us? Because, I am sorry to say, there can be a big gap between accepting or even repeating an idea in a general way as logically correct, and grasping in all of its concreteness a profound truth that flies in the face of all prevailing opinion and prejudice, absorbing it and making it a part of you, a central part of your thought and your action. There is also a considerable difference between accepting a general proposition that may turn out to be correct at some indefinite future time and accepting it as a possibility, or even a probability, that can have the most far-reaching consequences for you right now or in the near future.

Although in 1939 we accepted the idea that the Negro minority can lead the working-class revolution and readily adopted that as the official position of the Socialist Workers party, the truth is that it was only a surface acceptance and adoption. We were not yet ready, despite what we put in our resolution, to fully understand what Trotsky was trying to get us to see. And six or seven weeks after our 1939 convention adopted this resolution, J. R. Johnson, the chairman of our party's committee on Negro work at that time, who had been under Trotsky's influence the chief author of the resolution, wrote in our paper an article referring to the resolution. Johnson said that while the idea in the resolution was correct, and while "the place of the Negro is in the very front," nevertheless the formulation in the resolution was an "overstatement." Instead of saying that the Negroes are destined to be "the very vanguard," he wrote, it would have been more correct to say that they are destined to be "in the very vanguard." This was a real weakening of the idea Trotsky had tried to persuade us of. Although it left the Socialist Workers party with the most advanced position on the Negro struggle, it was a definite step backward.

But now, with Trotsky long dead, I think we are able to return to that original unweakened idea and see it in an entirely different light—not as an overstatement, but as a cold, hard, factually correct appraisal of a vital possibility that can crucially affect

the future of all Americans. Because what Trotsky could not teach us completely we have now been able to learn from the actual development of the Negro struggle itself right before our own eyes these last two or three years. What we were not advanced enough in the 1930's to accept as theory, we are now able to apprehend as concrete current event. Because the fact is that the Negroes are already a vanguard. They are already out in front of most white workers. They are more radicalized than the white workers. They are more ready to fight and sacrifice and die in order to change this system.

And so today many of us, I am sure, will be able to grasp and act on the concept of Negroes as leaders of the workers' revolution not just as a possibility but as a probability. I shall not try, because that is a job for the whole movement, to work out or complete everything that flows from this concept, except to say that much does, and that all of it seems to me a cause for optimism. Nor shall I try here to discuss the kind of alliance I think the Negro vanguard of the working-class revolution will have to effect with the advanced section of the white workers if the revolution is to be led to success, except to say that I do not think it can be an alliance that will make concessions in principle to the white allies of the Negroes, any more than the revolutionary vanguard in Russia sacrificed any principles in their alliance with the peasants. Instead, I shall conclude, with much left hanging, by saying that if the ideas in this talk are correct, if the concepts about what a minority can do will be of practical and theoretical benefit in advancing the Negro struggle for freedom, then what they demonstrate is the validity and even the indispensability of Marxism to Negro revolutionists, whether or not they belong to the Socialist Workers party.

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# THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE: REVOLT TO REVOLUTION

By Bernard Mandel

**T**HE TERMS "Negro revolt" and "Negro revolution" are now used widely and loosely by both protagonists and opponents of the liberation struggle to describe the present stage of the movement. Usually they are employed indiscriminately and interchangeably, not only without distinguishing between them, but without differentiating them from previous levels of the movement except in degree of intensity or urgency. It is of more than theoretical interest that this question be clarified, for on one's understanding of this depends his orientation toward the future unfolding of the struggle and the direction to be taken in developing it to its speediest and most complete fulfillment.

The modern freedom movement had its origin in the Niagara Movement, initiated in 1905 by William Monroe Trotter and William E. B. DuBois. This was a crucial point in the history of the Afro-Americans because it marked the beginning of a counter-offensive after a generation of demoralization, despair, and retreat.

In 1876 the Republican party — the corrupt tool of the Northern capitalists — betrayed the freedom to the mercies of the Southern landlords and merchants. Immediately the Negro peasantry was reduced to a status only nominally different from that of chattel slavery — instead of belonging to individual masters, they were the property of the whole planter class. Repressed by a genocidal

policy of lynch law, Ku Klux Klan terror, and the "justice" of the white men's laws and courts, the sport of every policeman and any depraved white man, they were disarmed, disfranchised, and deprived of every right supposedly guaranteed by the War Amendments. Tangled in the meshes of serfdom, debt peonage, and the chain gang; jim crowed, humiliated, denied an education, ravished by sickness and hunger, they became voiceless drudges growing cotton for Yankee and Southern textile mills in which they were not allowed to work.

The symbol of the Negroes' degradation was Booker T. Washington. He was the only recognized "spokesman" of the race, having been elected to this role by the white masters of the nation. Washington preached to the black workers a message of labor, docility, thrift, loyalty to the boss, and restraint from any demands for equal educational opportunity, political and civil rights, or — *dictum horribilis* — social equality. Begging white philanthropists for crumbs to support his vocational school at Tuskegee, Alabama, he promised to train a laboring class that would serve faithfully and would not strike. He got his crumbs; and in addition, the power to determine how all charity for Negro schools would be distributed, what Negroes would get the few federal jobs dispensed by the Republican party, and extensive control over the Negro press of the country. He was a faithful agent of the

capitalist class, helping to keep "his people" in their appointed place.

## Change In Leadership

For a decade, Washington's "leadership" was almost unchallenged. But the depths of oppression had been reached as American imperialism, bloated with stolen riches and lordling it over the colonial peoples of Hawaii, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Cuba, girded the structure of exploitation and oppression with "legal" props which were sanctioned by the United States Supreme Court.

Then a man came forward and raised the cry, "No more!" DuBois, Trotter, and other Negro intellectuals unfurled the banner of protest, rejected Washington's program of accommodation and submission, and launched the campaign for equal rights. The Niagara Movement demanded the suffrage, the abolition of all racial discrimination and the jim crow system; equal opportunity to jobs, and an end of peonage, free and compulsory elementary education and equal access to the high schools and colleges, trade and technical schools; equal treatment in the courts and the abolition of the chain gang, the opportunity to live in decent homes and localities, and "eternal protest and persistent manly agitation" for "every single right that belongs to a freeborn American, political, civil and social."

Four years later a group of white liberals and socialists organized the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and DuBois brought the Niagara Movement into it (Trotter did not go along, distrusting the dominant white leadership). The NAACP won many advances in its first half century: a sharp reduction in lynchings, legal victories in the courts against residential segregation and the restrictive covenant, against the grandfather clause and the white primary,

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against the exclusion of Negroes from juries, and in the past decade against segregation in schools, public carriers, and in the Northern states in other places of public accommodation. Above all, it made the civil rights question a national issue, keeping it constantly in the public view.

### In War and Peace

The Negroes' experience in the First World War advanced their determination to achieve equality: breaking the white supremacist taboos in France, proving their manhood on the battlefields in the war "to make the world safe for democracy," and smarting under the discrimination and insults received in the army and at home, they returned from war determined, as DuBois wrote, to "marshall every ounce of our brain and brawn to fight a sterner, longer, more unbending battle against the forces of hell in our own land." (The F.B.I. declared in 1919 that the Negro leadership was Bolshevik, because of its "more open expression" of demands for equality and its "ill-governed reaction" to race riots — that is, the Negroes fought back.)

In the early '20s the Negro masses were aroused as never before by Marcus Garvey's program for the "return" of all Negroes to Africa where they would establish a politically and economically independent black empire. While this venture was doomed to failure, Garvey's dynamic, militant, and showy propaganda and organizing campaign raised the level of national consciousness, race pride, and self-assertion to new heights.

At the same time, the "Harlem Renaissance" was under way, giving the "New Negro" a multitude of new voices. Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Paul Robeson, James Weldon Johnson, Alain Locke, and Countee Cullen expressed the angers and hopes of the young generation, their growing self-consciousness and pride, and their radicalization. It was, as Locke put it, a movement of "spiritual emancipation."

A few years earlier, Carter G. Woodson had founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, beginning the rectification of the racist writing of Negro history that had dominated American "scholarship" for two centuries. The *Journal of Negro History* became the organ for a generation of young Negro and white humanist (mostly Marxist) scholars who rewrote the

tragic and heroic history of black America, helping to dispel the monstrous distortions which, like the rest of America's white culture, were calculated to brand the Negro people with the stamp of inferiority.

### Important New Changes

Since 1915, two phenomena of immense importance in the development of the freedom struggle had been taking place. Spurred by the industrialization of the South and the war boom of Northern industry, the Negro population began moving from the plantation to the city and from the South to the North. At the beginning of the century the American Negro was a Southern peasantry, 90% of them living in the South and the vast majority of them working in agriculture, mostly as sharecroppers. By 1940 over a fourth of the Negroes were in the North, practically all urban-based; and in 1960 half the Negroes lived in the North and even the Southern Negroes were almost 50% urban.

These developments were of tremendous significance. In the first place, the "Negro question" was transformed from a Southern problem to a national one. Second, the urbanization of the Negroes welded them into compact masses who could be more easily reached and organized by civil rights groups, Negro organizations and institutions, and the Negro press. Third, the proletarianization of the Negroes freed millions of them from the peasant mentality of resignation and from the direct tyranny of the planter and the sheriff which made protest almost impossible. It introduced large numbers of Negroes into the organized labor movement (stimulated by A. Philip Randolph's Negro American Labor Council and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters), giving many their first experiences in organized struggle and their first awareness of social and class consciousness.

These experiences prepared them for the great unionization campaigns of the CIO in the 1930s. Breaking away from the reactionary labor bureaucracy of the AFL which for half a century had ignored, jimmied, and discriminated against the Negro workers, the CIO for the first time brought them into the mainstream of the labor struggle in the mass production industries, and in doing so forced the AFL unions to adopt a somewhat less restrictive policy. As a result, Negroes today

constitute about one tenth of the union membership in the United States, divided about equally between the former AFL and CIO unions.

**T**HE NEW DEAL era was electrifying in other ways as well. The Negroes shared in the sense of social struggle that permeated the decade, entered the struggle against lynch law in the Scottsboro and Angelo Herndon cases, joined with whites in fighting for relief and jobs, joined the sharecroppers' union by the thousands, broke their old allegiance to the Republican party, and took a giant step toward unification of the freedom struggle through the formation of the National Negro Congress.

Then came World War II. The experiences of the first war were multiplied manyfold: a million Negro men and women fought against fascism in Europe, Asia, and North Africa — in the navy and air force as well as in the army, as fighting men as well as laborers and drivers, and increasingly in integrated units. The migration to the cities and to the North was stepped up, and Negroes entered many industrial jobs formerly closed to them, aided by the War Labor Board's order for equal pay and Roosevelt's executive order on fair employment practices which was forced on him by Randolph's threat to mobilize 50,000 Negro workers for a march on Washington.

Following the war, the freedom struggle received a tremendous impetus from the upsurge of the colonial revolutions against imperialism and the broadening of the socialist revolution in China and Cuba. The emergence of Africa and Asia from colonial slavery to the center of the arena of the international struggle for freedom was an inspiration to black America, whose identification with their African brothers had been strengthened by DuBois' thirty-year agitation for Pan-Africanism, Garvey's back-to-Africa campaign, and the fight against Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia. The socialist revolution, sweeping up the colored peoples of the world, was also an inspiration, particularly Cuba's swift abolition of racial segregation and discrimination. It also gave great assistance to the American Negro's struggle for equal rights, as the American ruling class had to calculate the effect of its racist policies on the masses of submerged people who were being increasingly

attracted to socialism as the road to freedom. \* \* \*

The struggles and advances of the first half of the twentieth century only served to underscore the fact that the Negroes were still an oppressed and exploited people, penned in slum ghettos, confined largely to menial jobs and domestic service, victims of police brutality, their children condemned to die at twice the rate of white children, given inferior education, denied the vote in the South, and daily insulted by the jim crow system and a culture permeated with white supremacy. To growing numbers of Negroes it was becoming evident that laws, court decisions, or agreements between white politicians and Negro leaders were resulting in, at best, illusory tokenism and disheartening gradualism and at worst, an actual deterioration in conditions (increase in unemployment, widening of the gap between the income of whites and Negroes, repressive legislation against civil rights activities).

Obviously, new methods of struggle were necessary: direct action by the people themselves. When the Montgomery bus boycott was successfully waged in 1955-56, the Negro revolt was on. This was followed in 1960 by the student sit-ins for desegregation of lunch counters, by the freedom rides of '61 to integrate the bus depots, and a wide range of demonstrations in '63: the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, picketing and lie-ins for jobs at construction sites in Philadelphia and New York, the school boycott and mass demonstrations in Chicago, rent strikes in New York and Cleveland, and protest demonstrations against discrimination and segregation in Birmingham, Alabama; Cambridge, Maryland; Plaquemine, Louisiana; Jackson, Mississippi; and over a thousand other cities in thirty states.

### Some New Ingredients

There are several characteristics of this movement which give it its quality of revolt as distinguished from the earlier protest movement. First, and most important, is that it involves mass action, in contrast to the earlier movements, which consisted largely of legal battles in the courts, lobbying, and conferences with public officials. Until 1955, the civil rights movement was a leadership movement, and the leadership was predominantly middle class and included many whites or was influenced by the views and interests

of white financial contributors. The struggle has to a large extent been transferred from the courts to the streets.

Second, many of the current demonstrations are designed to remove injustices by direct confrontation with the offenders. For example, the NAACP had won a court ruling against segregated bus stations in 1958, but it was largely a dead letter until the freedom riders compelled compliance by direct action; many of the on-site job demonstrations were similarly efforts to force employers and unions to observe municipal ordinances against discrimination on public projects; rent strikes are compelling adherence to unenforced building codes. This represents not only resentment against the slowness and tokenism of legal procedures, but a loss of faith in the accepted "democratic" way of redressing grievances and in the willingness of government to enact or even enforce their own laws.

Third, the Negro revolt is a manifestation of rebellion against the older organizations and their conservative leadership. The sit-ins were started more or less spontaneously, and the students called on the Congress of Racial Equality, not the NAACP, for assistance. The freedom rides were initiated and conducted mainly by CORE, which is seriously challenging the NAACP for national leadership. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which grew out of the sit-ins, has become one of the most militant and effective freedom organizations. Scores of new organizations have sprung up in cities all over the country, putting forward new leaders, new programs, and new methods of struggle.

An associated feature of this revolt against the old leadership is the determination to reject white leadership. Experience has indicated that, while many white allies have proved steadfast and many Negroes untrustworthy, in general the more white leadership there is the more inclined an organization is to be conciliatory and to sell out. The movement has reached a stage where the black freedom fighters insist on developing their own programs and having their own spokesmen. This has proved beneficial in many ways: it has helped to bring forward a cadre of new young Negro leaders, it has strengthened their self-confidence, and it has been more effective in winning demands because the whites

who have had to confront Negro spokesmen have been more ready to recognize them as representatives of their people who mean business.

**T**Hese ARE all characteristics of revolt. Do they constitute a revolutionary process? Not yet, although there are revolutionary implications and tendencies in some of these developments, and undoubtedly the revolt will become a revolutionary movement. But in order for this to happen the revolt will not only have to become more militant and involve larger masses of the people; it will also have to adopt a revolutionary perspective with regard to ultimate objectives. This might be clarified by examining the use of the term "white power structure." In the past few years this expression has become so universally employed in the civil rights movement as to be almost a cliché. The most conservative Negro spokesmen roll it off their tongues glibly. This in itself is an indication of the higher level of understanding at the basis of the revolt, but there are two important things to be noted concerning it.

In the first place, the term itself is vague. To some people it means the government and its agencies, the employers, the union bureaucracies that have become part of the corporate economy, the banks, the landlords, the mass media and other spokesmen or ideologists of the Establishment. To others it has a much narrower connotation: those individuals in current command of any agency or organization being confronted in a particular struggle. Some do and some do not attach significance to the word "structure" in the phrase: the latter regard the various components of the system as merely all of a kind (that is, people with prejudices), while the former recognize that the capitalists are the head and fount that controls and directs the whole interlocking complex of special interests which profit from the system of Negro exploitation and oppression. Finally, the word "white" is variously understood: while the power structure is unquestionably dominated by whites, many if not most of those who use the term have not yet achieved a realization of the fact that a large part of the old Negro "leadership," like the reactionary union bureaucrats, are themselves a part of the power structure and are serving its interests by helping to retard the

(Continued on Page 63)

# Mr. X Versus de Gaulle

By Pierre Frank

## The French Left Unveils Their Candidate Mr. X

PARIS, Jan. 15 — Since the arrival of de Gaulle to power, political life in France has been almost nonexistent. The few referendums and elections have left the masses largely indifferent, preoccupied as they are with the daily struggle. (The figure for strike days during 1963 was the highest in ten years.) The workers' parties receive big votes in the elections but mobilize nobody.

However, the so-called opposition of the left; that is, under the circumstances, the clubs of the politicians, top functionaries, etc., feels that a means has been found to revive political life. This is around the election of the President of the Republic.

It is more than 110 years since a President of the Republic was elected by universal suffrage. The experience of the Second Republic with the election of the man who was to become the second Bonaparte (see Karl Marx, *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*), following a coup d'état, created among republicans a tradition hostile to the election of the head of the state by means of universal suffrage. The fear was that a man backed by a plebiscite would go beyond the parliament. The republican tradition was even opposed to political leadership by the President. On de Gaulle's gaining power through the coup d'état of May 13, 1958, the bonapartist tradition replaced the republican tradition, and the President of the Republic is to be elected through universal suffrage.

Legally, the election must take place by 1965, but de Gaulle can precipitate matters at any time. During a recent tour in the provinces, he let it be understood in his usual equivocal way, that he might seek a new mandate. It is likewise not impossible that he will seek reelection not through an electoral campaign but through a referendum.

### Democratic Pond Stirred Up

For all these reasons, the democratic frogs have been stirring for some time in their little clubs, seeking to settle on a candidate for the presidency from here on out in opposition to the candidacy of de Gaulle.

It should be noted that among these frogs are to be found quite a number of neocapitalists who seek a "modern state"; that is, a "strong" bourgeois state, with a vigorous President of the Republic, in which parliament in the final analysis would play a permissive role. In brief, these gentlemen are not too displeased with the present regime. What they want in place of the arbitrary de Gaulle, who is hostile to the elected intermediary bodies, is a personage who acts in a more regular way with the traditional political circles.

Under present conditions, a candidate running in opposition to de Gaulle does not appear to have any chance of coming out ahead. But our frogs are busy with intricate calculations. There will likely be a candidate of the right who could take about five per cent of the votes. If the can-

didate of the left obtained a little more than forty per cent of the votes, then taking into account the abstentions, de Gaulle would risk being elected by only a minority instead of an absolute majority, and he would be quite capable of rejecting these results. Even if he doesn't pull out in a huff, our augurs add, de Gaulle is close to 75; he is not immortal; and it is good to run a candidate to get him known and prepare his triumph over a candidate of the right who will not have much weight once de Gaulle is no longer here.

To all these considerations, there must be added the fact that two big workers' parties exist, the French Communist party (PCF) and the Socialist party (PS), without whose support a candidate cannot hope to win a massive vote.

The astuteness of these strategists is limitless. It is necessary to find in the Socialist party an adequate personality, one who adheres unquestionably to "socialism," but who, at the same time, is able to maintain his "independence" in relation to the party. To have him nominated as a candidate by his own party would, under present conditions, tend to force the hand of the leadership of the Communist party. This party, not wanting to bear responsibility for splitting the votes of the left, must likewise hesitate at presenting a Communist candidate who would not be able, given the character of the electoral rules, to register under his name all the votes won by the Communist candidates in the legislative elections.

### What We Want Is Mr. X

We have not yet come to the end. To have a candidate meeting such qualifications is not sufficient. It is still necessary to find the means of making him acceptable without too much trouble. Looking across the Atlantic, something might be learned, it seems, concerning presidential elections. It is necessary to operate the way advertising campaigns are launched: create the demand, publicize the features of the product in demand, and do this in such a way that the consumers will conclude: the only product I want is the Such and Such brand.

The first part of the operation was launched without a hitch. An opening press campaign raised the disturbing thought: the left runs the greatest risk if it doesn't have a candidate right now for the presidency of the Republic. Came the second round: we're not concerned about the name of the candidate; let's call him "Mr. X" for the time being; but let's reach agreement on the features he needs!

With the appearance of the very first article, there were plenty of explanations as to what was going on behind the scenes, but that didn't stop things from proceeding in their course. Those in on the game began to say during the speechmaking windup at some of the truly republican banquets: "For me, 'X' can't be anyone but Deferre."

On being interviewed, Gaston Deferre, the Mayor of Marseilles, candidly replied, "I don't know if I was made for that. I'll have to think it over."

The timing required a major move, otherwise the campaign could lose momentum and end in something the very opposite of what was wanted. The leadership of the Socialist party was summoned to take a stand. The movement was

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*This report on the pre-election political scene in France is based on a series of analytical articles which appeared in World Outlook, a labor and socialist press service published in Paris under the direction of Pierre Frank.*

strong enough among the party chieftains to bring this about and they decided to call a special congress of the Socialist party on February 1 with only one point on the agenda, the candidacy of Deferre.

### Mr. X Unfurls His Banner

Some fifteen days before the congress, the Marseilles Mayor, during a congress of his federation, announced his views. The press, radio, television, gave him top billing. All his speech was concerned about was to make clear that he stood on a neocapitalist platform. Socialism is not involved, neither now nor later. Deferre stands for the firm application of the Gaullist constitution, against the poor record of de Gaulle in this respect.

In other words, he stands with both feet planted in the present bonapartist regime. For him, his candidacy is thus not a challenge against the regime but a proposal for trimmings. He does not intend to talk about any "program" which he promises to carry out in one way or another; he will attempt to solve problems as they arise.

Finally, while affirming his loyalty to the Socialist party, he wants to be the candidate of the whole "left." There is no question of drawing any line to the right. On the other hand, he took a categorical position against any negotiations over his candidacy with the Communist party. The Communist party, he said, must vote for me or assure the election of de Gaulle.

This is the way things stand on the eve of the special congress of the Socialist party. Guy Mollet and the official Socialist party newspaper *Le Populaire* are silent. It is known that Deferre's candidacy does not exactly enjoy

Mollet's blessing, but it seems that he will not be able to block it at the congress. The congress may see some shrewd maneuvering to deny Deferre the free field he demands; but how this will turn out cannot be predicted.

### An Indignant Cry from the CP

The Communist party reacted strongly to Deferre's speech, particularly his haughty attitude in their direction and insisted on the necessity of agreement on a program — bourgeois democratic, it should be noted in passing — letting it be known that a Communist candidacy is always possible for the first round of balloting in the absence of an agreement.

We have summarized the circumstances surrounding the preparations of the left, a very respectable left, for the presidential election to be held in the still undetermined future. As of now the maneuvers of narrow circles, of small-time Machiavellian hopefuls, seem to be succeeding. But the real problem is not touched by these combinations.

The only force that can bring an end to the Gaullist regime is the working class; and, at the present time, its activity — including its interest in a candidate for President of the Republic — hinges first of all in the relations between the Communist and Socialist parties. Minimum agreement between these two parties would give different meaning to a candidacy. The relations between the Communist and Socialist parties are no longer war to the knife as they were for the past fifteen years; they are undergoing a change, although it cannot yet be discerned where the discussion now underway between these two formations will end.

## Can French Socialists and Communists Get Together?

PARIS, JAN. 22 — France has passed through a series of political and social shocks since 1934 and will not find stability until the working class, led by a revolutionary party, takes power. One of the essential tasks of such a party will be to achieve revolutionary unity in action of the French working class which has been divided on the political level since 1920. One of the greatest failures of the French Communist party in the period when it sought to be a revolutionary party as well as later when it was dominated by Stalinism, was that it could not orient itself correctly on the question of unity of action, of the united front of the working class. In general, it could be said that it has oscillated between a sectarian policy towards the Socialist party and an opportunist policy in the wake of the same rival.

The question of the relations between the PCF and the PS is again on the agenda. The setting for this was de Gaulle's coming to power and the installation of a bonapartist regime that does not bother about playing parliamentary games. But it is likewise placed in a historic development that weighs on these parties and on the workers. To understand current developments and what is projected, it is necessary to bear in mind, at least in broad outline, the history of these relations.

After the split at Tours in 1920 which gave birth to the Communist party, nothing outstanding occurred until 1934, due to the lack of big struggles in the country. Each of the two parties acted without paying much attention to the other. The Communist party at certain times made proposals for a united front with the Socialist party; at other times it sought to undermine it with a policy of "united front from below"; i.e., with the ranks of the PS to the exclusion of their leaders — a bizarre concept of Stalinism not noted for its success.

In 1934, after Hitler's victory in Germany, reaction and fascism rose dangerously in France. On February 6, 1934, a reactionary coup d'etat was attempted. Immediately following this, an almost spontaneous mass movement surged up in France, giving birth everywhere to anti-fascist vigilance committees. The two leaderships were impelled under

this pressure to sign a pact for joint anti-fascist action. The leaderships hastily transformed this agreement, widening it to include the bourgeois radical party, thus creating the Popular Front.

This alliance between the workers' parties and a wing of French capitalism coincided with a rapprochement between France and the USSR on the plane of international relations. In 1936 the Popular Front won a parliamentary majority; then it limited and halted the gigantic movement of occupation of the plants and left capitalist property and the capitalist state intact. Once this was achieved, the capitalists seized the initiative, and in 1937-38 the Popular Front was ruptured, relations between the Communist party and the Socialist party becoming envenomed.

### The Ups and Downs

From the signing of the Hitler-Stalin pact in August 1939 up to the day of Hitler's attack against the Soviet Union, the PC and the PS were virtually at sword's points; the Socialist ministers, during the first months of the war, underwriting the repression of Communist militants forced into the underground.

During the Resistance and Liberation period, Communists and Socialists cooperated again, first of all in the struggle against the German occupation, then . . . in the reestablishment of the capitalist state and economy; the principal differences between the experience of 1944-47 and that of 1936-38 being that this time the MRP (Christian Democrats organized in the *Mouvement Républicain Populaire*) replaced the Radical party as the bourgeois ally, and the Communists had representatives in the government, beginning with Thorez, Vice-President of the government presided over by de Gaulle.

In April-May 1947, partly under the pressure of the workers at Renault who went on strike against the advice of all the trade-union leaders (Stalinists and reformists), and more directly because of the "cold war" that erupted, the break between the PCF and the PS widened again.

Parallel with these developments on the political level, the trade-union movement, split in 1921 by the reformists,

was reunified from 1935 to 1939, then again from 1943 to 1948.

It is to be noted that the relations within the workers' movement have hinged considerably on relations between the leading factions of French capitalism and the Soviet power. At bottom, the interests of the French bourgeoisie have counted much more to the Socialists than the specific interests of the French working class. With the leadership of the PCF the primary interests have been those of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Since the end of the Second World War and, above all, since the "cold war," two factors have not ceased to weigh on the Socialist cadres in their relations with the PCF. Unlike the period before 1939, the PCF has largely held the majority in the working class.\* There is this and the "Prague coup"; that is, the events that assured the transformation of Czechoslovakia into a workers' state in 1948.\*\*

\* \* \*

From 1947 until de Gaulle's coming to power in 1958, the "cold war" raged continually between the PS and the PCF. Even in 1956, during the administration of the PS leader, Guy Mollet, although the Communist deputies voted for this government, and particularly for its infamous "special powers" which were aimed at bolstering the war in Algeria and installing a fascist power there, the Socialists refused to take the Communist votes into consideration.

Even more, in distinction from what had always been the practice in the past, this attitude was widely supported by Socialist voters. In the second round of balloting, a Socialist candidate would continue to oppose a Communist candidate who had made out better in the first round, or would withdraw in favor of a bourgeois candidate. Unlike former times, the Communist candidates did not receive even a small part of the Socialist votes.

It is absolutely true that the important, even decisive, factor of the prewar period had definitively disappeared — there was no perspective whatever for an important wing of French capitalism to seek an alliance with the USSR against American imperialism. The factor of "foreign policy" went directly against a rapprochement between the PCF and the PS.

### Affected by the Workers

But both of them are workers' parties, both of them distant from the revolutionary struggle for socialism, but both with deep roots in the working class, unable not to take into account the interests and the democratic rights of the workers in capitalist society. If this was evident for the PCF, it was likewise true for the PS, no matter how it had been affected by the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie during the years of the Fourth Republic (1945-58) when the Socialist party was in power or never far from it. This was rapidly shown upon the installation of the Gaullist regime.

If the rebellion in Algiers on May 13 permitted de Gaulle to make his bid as a candidate for power, it was Guy Mollet above all who succeeded in having him accepted by the political circles of the Fourth Republic and who, despite strong resistance from the Socialist parliamentary caucus, blocked any united action by the workers against the turn.

\*Whereas in 1936, the relation of votes was around 65 to 35 in favor of the Socialist party, since 1945 the same relationship shifted in favor of the PCF. It is understandable that in view of this important change, many Communist militants, not grasping the conditions as a whole that led to this result, have not been able to see the policy of the Popular Front as injurious since it led to the strengthening of their party. Contrariwise, the Socialists, without condemning the experience of the Popular Front, have felt some bitterness over the results it appeared to bring their party.

\*\*It is pointless to cite the details of the Prague affair, which the Khrushchevists refer to as an example of the peaceful and parliamentary road to socialism, whereas the Socialists point to the way the Communists utilized their posts in the government. Both of them appear to forget the presence of the Soviet Army at the time in Czechoslovakia.

Up to this day, Guy Mollet defends his attitude toward de Gaulle at that time, even declaring that in identical circumstances he would do it again.

But the installation of the Gaullist regime resulted from the beginning in bringing about a profound change in relations in the working class. This did not take any of the spectacular forms of the years 1934-35. On the contrary, the new tendency was not easily perceptible. In the municipal elections of 1959, for the first time an appreciable percentage of Socialist voters were noted to have voted on the second round for Communist candidates despite the slogans of the Socialist party.

But it was on the occasion of the legislative elections of November 1962 that the turn was taken by the Socialist leadership.

In the elections, the Socialist party appeared in a combination called the "cartel of the no's," an assemblage of parliamentary formations extending from the right to the left of the Fourth Republic (PS, Radical party, MRP, independents) who came out against the election of the president of the republic by universal suffrage. This cartel had no common program, the candidates being united solely on a commitment to withdraw on the second round for those who made out best on the first.

Four days before the election, Guy Mollet made a public declaration the gist of which was that he saw no reason for not withdrawing on the second round for a Communist candidate. Such a declaration was equivalent to breaking the electoral cartel of the no's, and the other partners interpreted it as a break. On the second round, the Socialists withdrew in many areas in favor of Communist candidates, and their appeals were met with enthusiasm by more than seventy-five per cent of the voters. A chapter had ended. What would the future hold?

### Miners Judge the Turn

Guy Mollet declared that only an electoral operation against the personal Gaullist power was involved, that there was no political agreement between the two parties, no common program, no reciprocal engagement. This was formally true, but it was no less true that this could not be the end of the matter. The mass of workers, who had something to do with this Socialist decision because of what was developing silently within their ranks, felt stimulated; for them it heralded a new situation. A few weeks later a great strike was staged by the miners, a fraternity where these relations have always been decisive for their struggle.

In 1963 the Socialist party congress decided to hold a public discussion with the PCF on their reciprocal relations, and a delegation of the PS that included Mollet and Deferre went to Moscow where they talked at length with Khrushchev.

The discussion between the PS and the PCF was launched at the beginning of 1964 with a rather odd opening: the two participants began talking about different questions without entering into a dialogue. The leadership of the PCF raised the question of the *program* for joint action, including the presidential campaign. The leadership of the PS raised in its way the *problems of the split of 1920*, the "21 conditions" for adherence to the Communist International, etc. The leadership of the PS has remained silent on the question of the program for current action; the leadership of the PCF has said nothing about the doctrinal questions underscored by the Socialists.

It is evident that the leadership of the PCF is seeking above all to mobilize their party for an action in the direction of the Socialists and towards the outside, whereas the leadership of the PS does not want to become engaged in a possible action without having previously prepared their ranks. For them, joint action is equivalent to supping with the devil, and, as is known, to do that it is necessary to have a long spoon.

Soon the special congress of the Socialist party will be held. Perhaps new factors will enter into its deliberations. We shall see . . .

## Special Congress of French Socialist Party

PARIS — The special congress of the Socialist party, which met at Clichy February 1-2, ended in a unanimous decision to run Gaston Deferre as candidate for the presidency of the republic. But the congress was greatly divided throughout its sessions. "They asked us for an amicable agreement on nominations [to a resolutions committee], Deferre said at one time, "in the name of a friendliness and spirit of conciliation which, I must say, has been rather scarce for several weeks." It took five hours of argument behind closed doors to reach agreement.

However, on the big political problems there were actually no differences. In substance, the quarrel involved mainly the relations between the candidate and *his* party. (Not the party and *its* candidate.)

Guy Mollet is incontestably the man who best understands the importance of the Socialist party in French politics as the hinge between the bourgeoisie and the working class. He understood the role it could play in 1958 in bringing de Gaulle to power; and he seeks to maintain its capacity for the inverse operation, in case of need. Deferre, in contrast, is one of those Socialist politicians, common in France, who utilize the Socialist party to gain election but who have their own electoral following and who feel no need to abide by the decisions of a congress if they find it inconvenient. One of the strongest objections to his candidacy — from Mollet to activists in the most distant provinces — was that he was imposed upon the party by a series of maneuvers. From the way he treated his party in becoming its candidate, it can be guessed how he would act toward it if he were elected president of the republic. If he were elected . . .

### Count Chicks Before Hatched

A comic aspect of the debates at the congress was the care which both Mollet and Deferre displayed through hours of oratorical dueling in refraining from calling things by their right name. Deferre saw himself already elected; Mollet similarly visualized himself — the head of a victorious Socialist party — as prime minister. A lot of wind went into haggling over the relationship between the president of the republic and his prime minister.

But can they be thinking, in case they win, of maintaining the Gaullist constitution of 1958? Certainly. "Elected in accordance with the constitution of 1958, he will carry out the duties pertaining to his office and will uphold the constitution in spirit and letter," declares the unanimously adopted resolution of the Socialist congress.

What they accuse de Gaulle of is not having respected his own constitution, of having made "improper and erroneous interpretations" of it.

Finally, don't think that it's only a short-time business. The resolution also mentions "reefs to be avoided," among them "an upset, innovations so great that there would be a risk that the public would not understand clearly what we want."

Moreover, in undertaking an electoral campaign, "the party maintains its complete freedom for the day, *without doubt very distant*, when the problem will be posed of over-all structural reform." (My emphasis.)

There is not much to be said on the "program." The truth is that the candidate Deferre does not want a program but only "options" (?); the partisans of Mollet don't want a program either, the pretext being that it is up to the head of the government and not the president of the republic to handle this. The net result was a document of less significance than the platforms produced by the major party conventions in the United States. It commits no one.

### Avoid "Force de Frappe" Issue

However, one point should be noted. Not a word is said stopping the "force de frappe" (de Gaulle's nuclear "striking forces.)

Deferre's eel-like capacity to wriggle was well demonstrated when he was asked what his stand was on this at a press conference February 5. "We are for general, controlled disarmament," he said, "thus we are for the suppression of national striking forces. To ask French political figures today, 'Are you ready to stop everything?' is a false problem. The real problem will be posed in two years. If many are taking a stand against the national striking force, a part of the public is in favor of a European striking force. At the moment, it is not possible to undertake a formal engagement. My intention is not to say what I would do if elected. Thus I will refrain from any demagogic promise. What is certain is that it is necessary to provide France with a modern, and if possible European, force."

Still another very significant aspect of the Socialist congress should be noted. At a time when the Socialist party leadership is attempting to "discuss" with the Communists (in a bizarre way, as I noted above), the rare times when the question of the French Communist party came up clearly the intention was revealed to ignore it in this business of the presidential election. No one asked that the Communist party be consulted in regard to the campaign.

The explanation is very simple. So far as the election is concerned, the Socialist delegates (there was not a worker among them) had their eyes turned to the right, toward the Radicals, the Christian Democrats in the *Mouvement Républicain Populaire*, and others who would be repelled by dealings with the Communist party.

To this passing consideration should be added something more profound, related to the fact that sooner or later contact must be established. "At a time when a thaw is beginning in the Communist world," one of the delegates said, "we must keep the CP dangling on our ideological conceptions."

The "left" thus has a candidate now who does not wish to frighten anyone. It would be incorrect to believe that this nomination will not exercise a certain influence on political life in France. This will come much less from the "style" that Deferre is trying to give his candidacy, and the vague themes he is now elaborating on, than from the fact that regardless of what is said about the spirit and letter of the Gaullist constitution, the candidacy, in the eyes of the masses, will appear as an alternative — for or against de Gaulle.

In short, whether Deferre likes it or not, the struggle can force him to take positions on the problems of genuine interest to the masses, and the struggle can have a certain logic which is not necessarily that of a candidate who fears innovation.

## WORLD OUTLOOK

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# IMPERIALIST HYPOCRISY IN SOUTH AFRICA

By Franz J. T. Lee

FROM the publicity, one could conclude that in the West no struggle of an oppressed people receives so much sympathy as the non-white liberation movement in the Republic of South Africa. The West German press, for example, is surprisingly unanimous in its condemnation of the barbaric "apartheid" policy of the Afrikaander nationalists. And yet the sympathy is nowhere so insincere as in this case. The press persistently conceals the consequences that would result from abolishment of the apartheid system.

The racial discrimination policy is intended to secure more than the political predominance of the white "Herrenvolk" — the supporters and members of Verwoerd's Nationalist party. It is the indispensable basis for the slave system of the white farmers and the phenomenal profits of mining and other industries. Only when this is understood does the question of liberating the non-white population in the police states of Malan, Strijdom, and Verwoerd come into proper focus.

The liberation of the Africans in South Africa is impossible without liquidating the present economic system. Those who oppose apartheid without acknowledging the need for a radical transformation of the South African society commit a serious error unless their sympathy is feigned.

Nowhere is it as clear as in the Republic of South Africa that capitalism depends on the exploitation and the oppression of the toiling masses. If we leave aside the white proletariat, which has been bought off by wages second only to those of the United States, the secret of this capitalist system is revealed by a difference in skin color.

## The Labor Reservoir

Of the blacks, forming the overwhelming majority of the South African population, nearly seventy-five per cent live outside the cities, that is, 8,250,000 out of 11,000,000. Of these again, 3,000,000 work practically under slave conditions on the

white farms; while the rest, 5,250,000, must struggle to keep body and soul together in the so-called Reserves — and future "Bantustans" (the present "independent" Transkei being the first) — which comprise only 13.7 per cent of the total land area of South Africa.

According to the 1913 Land Act and its 1945 Amendment "no African is allowed to possess, buy, or sell land anywhere in South Africa" (Art. 25, Sec. 6). The Africans can only stay on — and cultivate — land in the Reserves. Thus 20 per cent of the population — mainly white farmers — own 86.3 per cent of the land. Still more accurately expressed: average white holdings are 177 morgan of land; black, only 2.5 morgan. Even among white farmers the land is not equally distributed, since 63 per cent possess 12 per cent of the total land area; 27 per cent possess 32 per cent; and 10 per cent possess 55 per cent.

As the Africans in the Reserves have no modern agricultural implements, their economic status grows worse year by year. The primitive methods of their forefathers were economically supportable when the Africans still had the whole of Southern Africa to themselves. As a result of the ten "Wars of Dispossession" — so-called Kaffir Wars (in South African and even international history books), ranging from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century — the Africans were forced into the "Native Reserves" of South Africa and the three "British Protectorates" which, climatically and economically, are far from the best areas. Thus pastoral farming and animal-drawn ploughs became uncompetitive. On top of this, heavy taxation was imposed on the Africans; the poll tax, for example, is raised whenever the demand for cheap labor increases. Other taxes are the "Union Tax" and the "Bantu Authorities Tax."

It was not only the ravenous expansionist drive of the whites that led to expulsion of the native peoples from their ancestral lands. A system

was developed to force them to accept low-paid jobs outside their "labor concentration camps" — the Reserves (the Transkei, Zululand, Zeerust and Sekukuniland being the largest). Dispossession transformed independent African farmers into "squatters" — having no legal title to land originally belonging to them — tenants and migratory laborers on white farms; and drove others through hunger, poverty, and heavy taxes to the industrial towns and mines in search of work. The "Border Industries project" of today shifts industries nearer to the Reserves, but the system and its compulsions remain fundamentally unchanged.

## A Brutal System

The social and judicial position of the African farm laborer is inconceivably bad. Working sixty hours and more a week, he often earns scarcely enough to clothe and feed himself in meager fashion. He is legally subjugated to a system that parallels if it does not surpass slavery in brutality.

The 1932 South African Law on Contract Labor, for example, provides that an African, living on the farm of his master, cannot leave unless he can produce an identification document signed by his employer. He cannot take a new job unless he can produce a document, signed by his previous employer, stating that in the coming time he has no duties to perform and is thus discharged from work. The law further provides that a labor service contract applies automatically to the African's children between the ages of 10 and 18, without their approval. They are subject to punishment, including "flogging."

The pass laws are chiefly designed to channel cheap labor to the mines, farms, and industries. The pass, which is compulsory for all African men and women, town and country dwellers, from the age of 15, contains the following:

**Section A.** Name and address of the holder; the address of the office of the Labour Bureau, Efflux and In-

flux Control; and the registration number of the pass-holder. (Every time the pass-holder loses his job he has to go to this office. If he or she does not find a job within twenty-one days then the holder must leave the area.)

**Section B.** Signature and address of the employer and the date of starting work. (The employer must sign the pass once a month. He must also indicate the date of discharge, after which a discharged worker can be arrested, even on his way to the Labour Bureau, and sentenced to a fine of 10 pounds or two months' imprisonment.)

**Section C.** This concerns the Union Tax (every year a married man must pay two pounds five schillings; and unmarried, one pound fifteen shillings).

**Section D.** The Bantu Authorities Tax (the African chiefs charge certain taxes at will and are authorized by the government to punish those who refuse to pay them).

**Section E.** Special permit to be allowed out after 8 p.m. (In general, no African is allowed to be out or on the streets after 8 p.m.)

From the above, it becomes quite clear that the pass system is designed to control and enslave the African. The result is that not only the Africans in the Reserves but also the farm workers, if they succeed in getting away from their masters, swarm into the towns and mines for employment — exactly in accordance with government plans.

### "A Constant and Abundant Supply"

That the mass migration of cheap black labor to the industrial areas was not merely the result of the operation of the laws of the labor market was confirmed at a government conference as early as 1897. To keep the wage level desirably low, an essential for high profits, it was explained that "a constant and abundant supply of native workers is necessary."

Appropriate laws, high taxation of peasants, and an ingenious recruiting system assure a constant flow of cheap African labor to the mines and industries from the labor reservoirs. Since 1936, some 400,000 blacks have been employed alongside 40,000 whites in the gold mines. These Africans are hired as unskilled laborers. Better positions at higher wages are forbidden by law. This is intended to preserve for whites, even as wage workers, their privileged position in society.

The Job Reservation Act (Clause 77 of the Industrial Conciliation Act, 1924, now newly amended in Determination No. 13 of May 9, 1963) reserves specific jobs in various industries exclusively for whites. The worst paid jobs, the hard dirty work, are left for the Africans.

Mr. J. N. le Roux, South African Minister of Agriculture, expressed the official view as follows: "We should not give the Natives an academic education. If we do this, we shall be burdened with a number of academically trained Europeans and non-Europeans, and who is going to do the manual labour in this country? . . . I am in thorough agreement with the view . . . that to a great extent he [the Native] must be the labourer in this country." (*Hansard*, Vol. 11, 1945.)

The African, being a constant migrant worker, contracted as a rule for 9 to 18 months at a stretch, is refused normal status by the whites as "laborer" or "employee." He is thus officially discriminated as a "tribal native" (see Article 36 of the Law of 1937). The African lives virtually with one foot in his place of employment and the other in the Reserve. In this way it is difficult for Africans to organize trade unions or to become experts in a specific field. Moreover their whole family life is destroyed.

### Staggering Difference in Wages

The abyss between the wages of the white and black workers has widened over the years, as the following table\* from the gold mining industry shows:

Year	Employed Africans	Year's income per head (in \$)	Employed Europeans (whites)	Year's income per head (in \$)
1911	184,229	97	25,248	941
1921	171,227	110	19,534	1,529
1931	220,416	92	20,968	1,162
1941	376,327	111	38,402	1,472
1945	313,401	124	39,923	1,803
1950	311,972	147	39,242	2,369
1953	294,598	171	40,708	2,910

\*Annual Report of South African Department of Mines, 1953, Pretoria. Pages 44, 50 and 56.

Besides mining, the manufacturing industry also absorbs more and more cheap African labor.

**A**CCOMMODATIONS for the black masses, streaming into the towns and industrial areas, are unspeakable. The recruited Africans are separated according to tribe and race. They live far from the white "suburbs" in jail like barracks and locations. From these areas they are transported daily to their jobs by means of busses — at fares they can scarcely pay. Their

living standards, in any case low enough, have worsened lately. A commission established in 1954 "to raise the living standard of the African," proved that in the machine industry around Johannesburg the weekly wages of the African worker from 1950 to 1954 remained unchanged and that cost-of-living increments rose from \$1.68 to only \$2.16 a month. In the building and commercial industries it was not much better. At the same time, between 1950 and 1954, however, the price of mealie-meal — the staple food of the African — went up 63 per cent and meat 58 per cent. It should also be noted that in 1950 the average family income of the African wage earner equalled 72 per cent of the "minimum level necessary for existence" as calculated by social scientists in South Africa. By 1954 this figure had sunk to 63 per cent.

Mrs. Joy de Gruchy, a social scientist of the South African Institute of Racial Relations, said the following: "The income of each African family of five persons in Johannesburg is on the average 20 per cent under the minimum level for a normal and moderate existence. Fifty to 75 per cent of all the African families in Johannesburg earn less than the amount which the 'existence-minimum' demands. Millions of Africans suffer from hunger, while they are forced to save for schooling of their children, for medical and burial services, and even for insurance. Even when the wife works, an African family in Johannesburg has an average monthly income of 19 pounds sterling and 10 shillings." (*Weser Kurier*, German newspaper, April 6, 1960.)

Another German newspaper *Die Welt* published the following on January 5, 1960: "Every third non-white child in South Africa dies because of undernourishment before it is one year old. Many of the remaining ones perish before they are four years old."

Nobel Prize winner Albert Luthuli, in his book *Let My People Go*, states: "Whites in South Africa rank fourth in the world's standard of living when sixty per cent of the Africans live below the bread line. Most of the rest are just above it." (Page 182, Fontana paperback edition.)

### Profit Bonanza

In spite of the relatively progressive industrialization of the country, there are no trade unions worthy of the name among the African work-

ers. A law passed in 1937 defined trade unions as "unions of employees." Since African workers are denied the status of "employees" no legal basis exists for the formation of recognized trade unions. Only un-registered African workers' unions are allowed. The African worker is forbidden by law to strike (see Law of 1953, No. 48, Article 18), hence these unions are useless in practice. The enormous profits made at the expense of the exploited Africans are indicated by the following examples:

(1) From 1870 to 1934, the South African diamond mining industry on an invested capital of 20,000,000 pounds sterling paid out more than 80,000,000 pounds sterling in net dividends.

(2) The gold mining industry from 1886 to 1945 on a deposit capital of 200,000,000 pounds sterling paid out 479,000,000 pounds sterling in net dividends.

Clearly, such gross and brutal exploitation can be maintained, in the long run, only if the oppressed population accepts prevailing conditions as unchangeable or due to "God's Will" and if they are blocked from political recourse. The ruling classes believe that they have found this magic formula in apartheid.

**U**NDER this policy, a "white" parliament, representing 3,067,638 whites (1960 census) projects dividend and ruling 10,807,809 Africans (blacks), 1,488,267 Coloreds and 477,414 Asians, mainly Indians. With the socio-economic conditions suffered by the Africans as an example of Herrenvolk's strategy, the Coloreds and Asians can presage their own future situation. The latest oppressive laws — the Sabotage Act (1962), the General Law Amendment Act known as the "90 Day No Trial Law," and the Bantu General Law Amendment Act (of 1963) — have worsened the situation by introducing a "reign of terror." At the same time the revolutionary, democratic and socialistic movements have gained ground, in spite of the setbacks due to mass arrests. One of the most important ones is the National Liberation Front (NLF), a broad anti-South Africa "United Front," aimed at uniting all the progressive organizations in South Africa and South West Africa and preparing for a militant national struggle to liquidate the present Herrenvolk state.

Foreign capital constitutes a large part of the investments in South

Africa. These investments affect the attitude of the West toward the apartheid policy of the South African white nationalists.

Up to 1946 over 750,000,000 pounds sterling had been invested in mining and government loans. By 1953 this figure passed 1,250,000,000 pounds sterling. In other words, after World War II over 500,000,000 pounds sterling were invested in South Africa by capitalists of various countries, chiefly England, America, and France. In 1956, total foreign investments in South Africa were estimated at 1,396,000,000 pounds sterling — the British share was 865,600,000; U.S.A., 171,100,000; other sterling countries 69,800,000. Of Britain's share, 556,100,000 pounds sterling were in direct investment, and 309,500,000 in portfolio investment. Mining accounted for 164,000,000 of the direct investment and 121,900,000 of the portfolio investment. Hence Britain invested 285,900,000 pounds sterling in mining alone. In 1961 British investors in the mining industries altogether got 18,900,000 pounds sterling in net dividends from South Africa. Today, over 1,000,000,000 pounds sterling of British money is invested in South Africa. Thus Britain's stake in apartheid is quite clear.

In the United States in 1955 the Department of Commerce encouraged American businessmen to invest in South African concerns. This encouragement was in reality superfluous. By 1955 the \$50,000,000 direct private investment of 1943 had increased five times. Also the United States government supported the "Herrenvolk" state with dollars and arms (see below). By the end of 1955 the Exim Bank and the World Bank had invested not less than \$330,000,000 in South African concerns, much more than in any other African country.

In the last five years U.S. investments have increased. No wonder that U.S. officials have considered South Africa "a reliable friend," as Senator Hickel remarked after a trip to South Africa in 1953. Lately in United Nations resolutions, especially concerning diplomatic and trade relations and the banning of arms, one can clearly see how England, the United States, and France, together with a few other countries, show their true colors more and more.

#### **Military Power Increasing**

The South African military budget increased by 24,000,000 pounds sterling in 1962, reaching 60,000,000 pounds sterling. Another 20,000,000 pounds sterling were added in 1963. In the current three-year period Britain is supplying South Africa with 90,000,000 pounds sterling of military equipment. In 1962, Imperial Chemical Industries contributed a capital investment of 10,000,000 pounds sterling, plus its considerable technical assistance and knowledge, to build armament factories in South Africa. The United States supplied aircraft and other important weapons. France furnished Mirage jet fighters and air-to-ground missiles. La Carbone, a French armament concern, is setting up a firm in South Africa. Belgium granted South Africa license rights to manufacture the F.N. automatic rifle, which is standard equipment for NATO troops. West Germany supplied 63 troop carriers. Switzerland authorized the delivery of anti-aircraft guns, pistols, and ammunition to South Africa. The U.S. Ford Motor Company has announced its intention to manufacture automobile engines in South Africa. However, an engine is an engine be it for a car or for a tank. Thus most of the suppliers of arms and ammunition have already secured their business rights inside South Africa and do not need to send arms to South Africa any more. South Africa's current military spending is greater than the combined military budgets of the politically independent African States.

Foreign investments (from the various countries of the "free world") contribute not only objectively but subjectively to maintaining and strengthening the regime of terror in the Republic of South Africa. On the one hand they stabilize South African industry, and on the other, new businesses are drawn into practicing the same racial policies even if reluctantly, since they have to obey the South African racial laws.

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# Debate On Peace: C. P. And Its Critics

By William F. Warde

**W**HEN THE Chinese Communists presented a documented indictment of the American C.P. positions in the March 8, 1963 Peking *People's Daily*, its spokesman promised a reply to the attack. Up to now they have offered no comprehensive refutation of the Chinese charges that "for a considerable period, certain leaders of the CPUSA, in their reports and statements, have been doing their utmost to prettify U.S. imperialism, to prettify Kennedy, the U.S. imperialist chieftain, and to affirm their loyalty to the U.S. ruling class."

But the American C.P. leaders have plunged into the controversies generated by the Sino-Soviet rift through a pamphlet: "The Ideological Struggle in the American Left." This reprint of an editorial from the August 1963 *Political Affairs* attempts to answer the arguments advanced against their views by radical critics in this country.

"This article," write the *Political Affairs* editors, "presents a basic analysis of the current resurgence of petty-bourgeois radicalism in the U. S. A., which often presents itself under the banner of Marxism and even in defense of Marxism, but which, masking itself behind leftist slogans and demands, actually weakens, confuses and disrupts the struggle for peace, national liberation, economic security and socialism." Three such groups and individuals are singled out for attack: Huberman and Sweezy, the *Monthly Review* editors, Eugene Genovese of *Science and Society*, and the Trotskyists. All of these from their specific standpoints see merit in many of Peking's arguments against Moscow's opportunism and revisionism.

## The Upside-Down Technique

For those acquainted with the policies and practices of the American C.P. as they really are, and not as they are depicted by J. Edgar Hoover, John Birchers, and the right-wing press, the followers of Khrushchev present themselves in masquerade costume. They come forward as advocates of Marxist doctrines of the class struggle, as con-

tinuators of Lenin (no longer of Stalin), and as revolutionary fighters for the establishment of socialism in this country. Their left-wing opponents, on the other hand, are collectively labelled radical middle-class intellectuals, petty-bourgeois socialists, super-leftists, dogmatists, sectarians, phrase-mongers and pessimists who are capitulating to imperialism.

These harsh epithets indicate that the criticisms from Peking and its supporters are evoking sympathy in their own ranks, as in other Communist parties from India to England. This is confirmed in the conclusion to the article where the editors admit: "We need to combat tendencies to yield to the pressures of Leftist attacks."

They do not (yet!) dare utter such sharp denunciations of the Chinese leaders who are, after all, the principal proponents of the arguments. This shamefaced mode of indirect polemic recalls the preliminary phases of the Sino-Soviet debate when Moscow used Albania and Peking used Yugoslavia as surrogates for their actual targets.

The pamphlet does not express anything essentially different from the views directed against the Chinese by the Russian ideologists and their echoers elsewhere. The American C.P. leaders have never been noted for independence or originality of political thought. However, they do try to grapple with some of the major issues in the Great Debate. Foremost among them is the struggle for world peace against the nuclear war danger.

## Two Disparate Views

The international working-class vanguard is reorienting itself around two fundamentally opposing lines on this life-and-death question. One proceeds from the premises that war cannot be abolished, the arms race ended, armaments scrapped and permanent peace achieved, without the overthrow of imperialism and that the mobilization of the masses for power is the indispensable means for promoting and winning that victory.

These ideas are not new. They were held by all the revolutionary Marxists of the twentieth century from Rosa Luxemburg to the Bolsheviks. They are maintained by the Chinese Communists and those ranged with them on that issue in this country.

The contrary view proclaims that world peace and disarmament do not necessarily depend upon the struggle against capitalism leading to the elimination of imperialism. These desirable goals can be attained in other ways than the class struggle and with other forces than the revolutionary masses. This line, originally propounded by the Social-Democratic reformists, was taken over by Stalin when he abandoned Lenin's foreign policy. It is being implemented today under Khrushchev.

In support of this position the *Political Affairs* editors argue that the war plans of the imperialists can be defeated, "even with capitalism still existing in parts of the world." This can be done, not because imperialism has cast off its predatory or bellicose characteristics, but because of the "profound change that has taken place in the relationship of world forces" between the capitalist and anti-capitalist camps. A qualitative transformation in the war-making capacities of the imperialists has been brought about, not by revolutionary developments within their heartlands, but through external changes. "Imperialism," they write, "no longer possesses the power that it had in years past."

Challenged by anti-imperialist forces on all continents and confronted by the military and economic might of the Soviet Union, the system of imperialism incontestably has less freedom of action and is much weaker than it used to be. But the essential differences in the ideological struggle do not revolve around recognizing this shift in the balance of world power.

## Some Key Questions

Do the defeats and retreats of imperialism since the end of World War II warrant the categorical con-

clusion that atomic war can be stopped without abolishing capitalism in its strongholds? Can peace be guaranteed by relying primarily upon negotiations and agreements between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., thanks to the accumulated power of the workers' states and the advances of the colonial liberation movements? Still further, should the struggles of the colonial peoples and the workers in the advanced countries be regulated and restricted by this strategy which means in practice that their aims are subordinated to diplomatic deals between the Big Two and the quest for alliances with peacefully-disposed sections of the capitalist ruling class? These are the key questions in dispute.

Different lines in national and world politics are tested in the fire of events. The *Political Affairs* editors themselves take the Cuban crisis of October 1962 as a touchstone for the correctness of Soviet policy and as "an especially striking example of indulgence in irresponsible Leftist romanticism" by Huberman, Sweezy, Genovese and the Trotskyists who shared certain of the Chinese criticisms of the Kremlin's conduct in this affair.

The C.P. writers make two general judgments about the Cuban confrontation. First, it was "a setback of U.S. imperialism" and "a victory for the policy of peaceful coexistence." Second, its outcome proved that the Washington decision-makers were realistic enough to refrain from warmaking. "Yes," they reply to their critics, "some circles in the Kennedy administration were sober enough to recognize the realities of the situation and so were persuaded to yield to the pressures and to make concessions." Since nuclear war was averted and Cuba was not invaded for a second time, the *Political Affairs* editors declare that the "doves" prevailed over the "hawks."

**T**HIS optimistic assessment of the eyeball-to-eyeball encounter in the Caribbean directly controverts that of the Washington authorities. In their opinion the "hawks" pushed aside the "doves" and the Soviet compliance with the ultimatum to remove the rockets proved that a tough stand paid off.

In any event, enough pressures were exerted upon the Soviet government to force its withdrawal of the missiles. Neither the Chinese nor

the Cuban leaders — or the Trotskyists — blamed the Kremlin for retreating under the threat of atomic retaliation. Their criticisms were focussed upon the way this was done. "The position of the Chinese Communist party and the Chinese people on the Caribbean crisis was very clear," Peking retorted in its editorial entitled "A Comment on the Statement of the CPUSA." "We supported the five just demands of the Cuban Revolutionary Government, we were against putting any faith in Kennedy's sham 'guarantee,' and we were against imposing 'international inspection' on Cuba. From the outset we directed the spearhead of our struggle against U.S. imperialism, which was committing aggression against Cuba. We neither advocated the sending of missiles to Cuba, nor obstructed the withdrawal of so-called offensive weapons. We opposed adventurism and we also opposed capitulationism. We would like to ask: What was wrong with these correct positions of ours?"

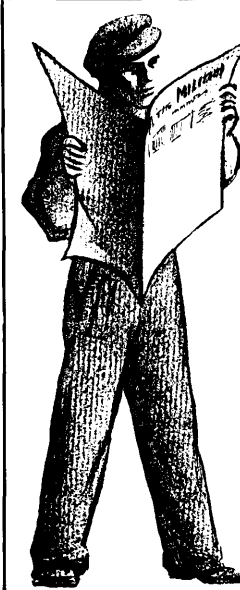
#### The Missile Crisis

The *Political Affairs* editors deny the Chinese charge, brought forward by Huberman and Sweezy, that the Soviet negotiators were "making a deal with imperialism at the expense of another nation's sovereignty." What were the impermissible concessions to the U.S. and the U.N.? They agreed to remove the missiles without consulting the Cubans, and they were for unilateral inspection. The editors conveniently neglect to mention Castro's five points around which the disagreements revolved.

Much more serious than the article's effort to justify the conduct of the Kremlin from start to finish is its whitewash of the Kennedy administration. The main lesson of the missile crisis, according to the C.P. apologists, is that in the showdown the dominant forces in charge of U.S. foreign affairs opted for peace and not for war. Washington clamped a blockade around the area in defiance of international law, issued an ultimatum to the Soviet Union, prepared a massive assault upon Cuba, and stood ready by its own admission to escalate the conflict and use atomic weapons if necessary. But all this gives no cause for alarm. The White House was a dovecote; the head of the peace-faction resided there; sobriety prevailed along the Potomac.

The Chinese Communists rightly protested against this idealization of "the U.S. imperialist chieftain." They objected to depicting him to the Soviet public before and after his assassination as "a great man of peace" while the American C.P. does its bit in building up this myth.

Such misrepresentation is the logical consequence of pinning hopes for permanent peace on those anti-war elements among the capitalist rulers with whom it is possible to arrive at a mutual understanding. Parleys and pacts between governments with different social structures are necessary and desirable provided they strengthen the struggle for peace and socialism. But no diplomatic considerations can justify embellishing the role of the Democratic administration in the Cuban crisis. It gambled with the lives of the American people and



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world peace. Isn't a Marxist above all obliged to expose and combat those responsible for this perilous course?

**Argument By Epithet**

The *Political Affairs* editors stamp Genovese as a Leftist for saying that Kennedy's readiness "to escalate the crisis if he didn't get his way" removed all doubt of the general direction of his policy. Not so, they argue, because Kennedy didn't get his way. They confuse the deterring or deflection of Washington's course by opposing forces and tactical considerations with its strategic aims. The long-range global policy remains the same even though it was not carried through to its logical end at that particular juncture. If, for various reasons, the atomaniacs did not resort to nuclear war or invade Cuba in October 1962, should they therefore be certified as safe and sane, especially since they have not given up plans to destroy the Cuban Revolution and control nuclear explosives enough to make the earth uninhabitable?

The C.P. spokesmen accuse Genovese of sectarianism for insisting against Herbert Aptheker that a successful peace movement cannot be built without an understanding of the nature of imperialism and the sources of the war danger. They deliberately misconstrue this elementary truth as though Genovese was making such understanding a precondition for any peace movement. However, the point at issue is, not how an anti-war mass movement is to be brought into existence, but along what lines is it to be ideologically influenced and guided by socialist participants in order to realize its goal?

The experience of October 1962 threw light on this question too. The response of the existing national peace movement to this crisis was feeble and confused, among other reasons, because its leadership and ranks lacked a "sound critical estimate of the nature of imperialism." The illusion that the White House could be counted on not to be adventurous or aggressive contributed to this demoralization. The American C.P. has become so spellbound by this illusion that it condemns socialists who refuse to transform the political executives of monopoly capitalism into prospective protectors of world peace — and impart this mistrust to others — as "Leftist phrasemongers."

The *Political Affairs* editors warn the other critics that their "defeat-

ism leads in the direction of Trotskyism, which carried to its extreme the cloaking of capitulation and even support of reaction in 'revolutionary' phrases." Their evidence of Trotsky's "basic defeatism" is a distorted version of his condemnation of Stalin's theory of building socialism in the Soviet Union alone. Trotsky did not maintain that the construction of socialism "would have to wait until the socialist revolution could be won on a world scale." The Left Opposition was the first to propose an industrialization plan for Soviet economy.

**Lessons of History**

Trotsky never ceased emphasizing that the buildup of internal strength had to go hand in hand with the advancement of the mass struggle for power elsewhere. The Soviet Union, like all other conquests of the

workers, would be in constant jeopardy so long as capitalism dominated the major countries. The Nazi invasion, after the crushing of the German labor movement, proved the correctness of his warning. Now the Cuban confrontation has given an alarm signal that the danger of atomic war remains lodged in the capitalist possession of military, political and economic supremacy. Mankind cannot be liberated from the prospect of incineration until and unless this power is taken from the monopolists and militarists and vested in the working people who have no foreign investments to safeguard and no arms profits to gain.

These socialist objectives require political organization and action independent of the capitalist parties. Yet in their article the C.P. spokesmen continue to defend their refusal to engage in a joint political campaign with other socialist tendencies against the Democrats and Republicans in the 1958 New York election. In 1960 they gave back door support to the Democratic ticket and will most likely do the same in 1964. The struggle for peace can only be injured by backing, on whatever pretexts, the candidates of the party that initiated and sustains the Cold War, intervenes in a few hot ones (Vietnam), and keeps increasing its military budget, regardless of the slight relaxation of tension since the signing of the partial test-ban.

The *Political Affairs* article takes up a number of weaknesses, which the *International Socialist Review* has previously pointed out, in the *Monthly Review* positions on the causes of Soviet revisionism, the relations between the backward colonial and the advanced capitalist countries in the process of world revolution, their detachment from the task of building a working-class party, and, in Genovese's case, the consequences of a nuclear war. But whatever their deficiencies, Huberman, Sweezy, Prof. Baran and Genovese are closer to the ideas of Marx and the line of Lenin than the American followers of Khrushchev.

The C.P. has been the principal target of capitalist reaction throughout the Cold War. But its prestige among radicals has sunk so low for other reasons. Stripped of Marxist terminology, the C.P. policies are essentially indistinguishable from liberalism. This repels those on the Left who are seeking socialist answers to the grave problems posed by the struggle against nuclear war.

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# Maoism And The Neo-Stalin Cult

By Tom Kerry

WITH THE publication of the recent Chinese indictment entitled: "The Leaders of the CPSU are the Greatest Splitters of Our Times," the split between Peking and Moscow becomes definitive. The full text of the statement is published in the Feb. 7 issue of *Peking Review*. The text goes beyond the title by characterizing the Khrushchev leadership as the greatest splitters of all time, by asserting that "the leaders of the CPSU are the greatest of all revisionists as well as the greatest of all sectarians and splitters known to history."

The statement purports to be a historical review of splits and splitters from the time of Marx and Engels up to the present day. Its central thesis had been previously projected in a speech by Chou Yang, vice-director of the Propaganda Department of the CPC Central Committee, delivered on Oct. 26, 1963 to a scientific gathering at the Chinese Academy of Sciences. To wit: That "revisionism" arose to plague Marx and Engels at the very dawn of the socialist movement. So it was at the beginning and so it will continue to the very end.

Chou Yang argues that inasmuch as every thesis must have its antithesis, the promulgation of the Marxist revolutionary doctrine [thesis] inevitably gave rise to its opposite [antithesis] revisionism. Not only were the founders of scientific socialism fated to combat revisionism but Lenin too, in his day, was compelled to enter the lists against the revisionists. And, according to the dialectic of Chou, such was the fate not only of Marx, Engels and Lenin, but "of Stalin too."

"This phenomenon may seem strange," Chou Yang opines. "How can certain people who had previously been supporters of revolutionary scientific socialism degenerate into counter-revolutionary anti-scientific revisionists? Yet it is not at all strange. Everything tends to divide itself in two. Theories are no exception, and they also tend to divide. Wherever there is a revolutionary scientific doctrine, its antithesis, a counter-revolutionary, anti-scientific doctrine, is bound to arise in the course of the development of that doctrine. As modern society is divided into classes and as the difference between progressive and backward groups will continue far into the future, the emergence of antitheses is inevitable."

With all due apologies to Chou, a nagging question still persists in thrusting its way to the fore: What is the criteria for determining who is and who is not a "Marxist-Leninist?" Chou has a ready answer. The Khrushchev leadership has repudiated Stalin. "To repudiate Stalin completely," Chou affirms, "is in fact to negate Marxism-Leninism, which Stalin defended and developed."

According to the Maoist schema of historical development the split was inevitable from the beginning. However, it is still necessary to fix the exact moment in time and the precise issue which signalled the dialectical transformation of Khrushchevite Marxism-Leninism into its opposite, revisionism. The time and issue are pinpointed in comment number two on the "Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU," entitled "On the Question of Stalin" (Sept. 13, 1963). It reads as follows:

"Stalin died in 1953; three years later the leaders of the CPSU violently attacked him at the 20th Congress, and eight years after his death they again did so at the 22nd Congress, removing and burning his remains. In repeating their violent attacks on Stalin, the leaders of the CPSU aimed at erasing the indelible influence of this great proletarian revolutionary among the people of the Soviet Union and throughout the world, and at

paving the way for negating Marxism-Leninism, which Stalin had defended and developed, and for the all-out application of a revisionist line. *Their revisionist line began exactly with the 20th Congress and became fully systematized at the 22nd Congress. The facts have shown ever more clearly that their revision of the Marxist-Leninist theories on imperialism, war and peace, proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, revolution in the colonies and semicolonies, the proletarian party, etc., is inseparably connected with their complete negation of Stalin.*" (My emphasis).

The aspect of the Sino-Soviet dispute about which this article is especially concerned is the attempt to revive, regenerate and reconstitute the "Stalin cult" on a world scale. The working class of all countries — I repeat, *all countries* — have paid a heavy price for the virus of Stalinism that has for so long poisoned the wellspring of Marxist thought and revolutionary socialist action. Millions of worker-militants who flocked to the liberating banner of Leninism in the aftermath of the Bolshevik-led Russian October revolution were corrupted, debauched and cruelly betrayed when the Stalin faction seized the power, strangled the workers' and peasants' soviets, emasculated Lenin's party and extended its malignant sway over the international communist movement.

To begin with, it is a gross exaggeration to assert that the heirs of Stalin now occupying the Kremlin have "completely negated Stalin." For their own reasons and their own interests they have been constrained to lift but one tiny corner of the veil that has for too long shrouded the countless crimes committed by the genial butcher who defiled the name of Lenin and besmirched the proud banner of Bolshevism. Stalin was no Marxist-Leninist. He was a murderer of Marxist-Leninists — including some thousands of devoted Stalinists. The Chinese do a great disservice to their own cause in the struggle against the Khrushchev brand of "revisionism" and to the regeneration of Bolshevik-Leninism by attempting to lead a movement *back to Stalin*. For nothing in the revisionist views today advocated by Khrushchev were not at one time or another in the past promoted and advocated by Stalin.

\* \* \*

THERE IS today a growing mood of discontent and opposition to the flagrantly opportunist policies and practices of the Khrushchev leadership being manifested in Communist party formations throughout the world. A number of splits have already taken place and more are looming on the horizon. The questions raised by the Sino-Soviet dispute have been an important ingredient in this ferment. In their Feb. 7 document, Peking openly calls for an extension of these splits and encourages, promotes and supports the "schismatics."

The back-to-Stalin gambit is designed to channelize the opposition to Kremlin "revisionism" within strictly defined limits governed by the needs and interests of the Maoist bureaucracy; to circumvent untrammelled discussion of the many basic issues raised in the dispute by insisting on establishing and maintaining the hierarchical order of progression — Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin-Mao. If successful it can only serve to substitute a Mao cult of infallibility for the now defunct Stalin cult in which all disputed questions of Marxist-Leninist theory and practice will be subject to the *ipse dixit* of the cult leader.

This tendency is already to be observed in the groups that have split off from the various Communist parties and embraced Maoism. In this country, for example, a small

group which split from the American Communist party several years ago, after coyly flirting with Maoism for a period, has finally plumped for Peking as against Moscow. It modestly calls itself the Progressive Labor Movement. In the recently published winter issue of its magazine, *Marxist-Leninist Quarterly*, there appears a programmatic statement by the National Coordinating Committee of PLM which purports to meet the need of the American working class for a "revolutionary theory."

We are informed in an editorial note that: "During the past year the Progressive Labor Movement has been discussing the [Sino-Soviet] debate concerning correct Marxist-Leninist theory for our movement and for the international movement."

We are availing ourselves of this opportunity to comment on those aspects of the "debate" that concern us here: Stalin and Stalinism. In making their Great Leap from Moscow to Peking the leaders of PLM faithfully parrot the Maoist line on the merits and demerits of Stalin. Along with Peking they flay Khrushchev for downgrading Stalin in his 20th Congress speech because: "It did not place both his enormous contributions and his serious errors in their actual historical context, but offered instead a subjective, crude, total negation of a great Marxist-Leninist and proletarian revolutionist."

In an almost verbatim paraphrase of the Chinese statement "*On the Question of Stalin*," the PLM article draws a balance sheet of Stalin's assets and liabilities and concludes that on balance, Stalin's contributions are "primary" and his errors, "secondary." What precisely were these errors?

"In the matter of Party and government organization, Stalin did not fully apply proletarian democratic centralism. He was in some instances guilty of abrogating it. There was a great development of centralism without the absolutely essential corresponding growth of proletarian democracy. This appears to have fostered an inordinate growth of bureaucracy which often resulted in reliance on administrative 'diktat' rather than the full participation of the party membership and people in making and carrying out policy." (Emphasis added to underscore the method of introducing qualifying phrases intended to minimize Stalin's "errors.") But let's continue — the worst is yet to come!

The PLM statement then plunges into a learned dissertation on "contradictions," lifted bodily from Mao, to explain why Stalin fell into the "error" of presiding over the monstrous frame-up trials and purges which converted the Soviet Union into a veritable chamber of horrors.

"Stalin," we are informed, "erred in confusing two types of contradictions which are different in nature. Thus, he did not differentiate between contradictions involving the Party and the people on the one hand and the enemy on the other, and contradictions within the Party and among the people. Consequently, he did not employ different methods in handling these different types of contradictions. Stalin was right to suppress the counter-revolutionaries. If he had not he would have been derelict in his defense of the Soviet State. Thus, many counter-revolutionaries deserving punishment were duly punished. But, because contradictions within the Party and among the people were not recognized as something totally different, something natural and even essential to the Party's theoretical growth and development, no Communist method of principled inner-Party struggle, proceeding from unity through struggle to a higher unity, was developed. Many innocent people, or people with differences which could have been worked out in the course of principled ideological struggle, were wrongly killed." (My emphasis)

Unfortunately, people who were "wrongly killed" are just as dead as those killed "rightly." When Stalin was alive all were indiscriminately dubbed "counter-revolutionary" and summarily executed. Those who now deplore such "secondary errors" were among the first to applaud Stalin's fright-

ful atrocities as evidence of his not being "derelict in defense of the Soviet State."

Who now is to decide which were the innocent and which the guilty? Who is to judge? As an aftermath of Khrushchev's 20th Congress speech on the Stalin cult a few of the "wrongly killed" were "rehabilitated" and a few of Stalin's crimes were disclosed. A few more rehabilitations and disclosures at the 22nd Congress. Instead of pressing for a full disclosure of all the facts of Stalin's crimes and the rehabilitation of all of Stalin's victims, the Maoists demand that Khrushchev call a halt to the "attack on Stalin."

\* \* \*

**U**NDER compulsion to settle accounts with their own Stalinist past, the authors of the PLM statement, present us with a bowdlerized condensation of the history of the American Communist party. We are informed that the CPUSA was cursed with "revisionism" from its very inception. We are further enlightened by the assertion that the one golden era of the American CP was the period following the expulsion of the Lovestoneite leadership in 1929 encompassing the early years of the Great Depression. In the entire history of the CP one doughty warrior against "revisionism" is singled out for special commendation: William Z. Foster.

To buttress this contention a companion piece to the PLM statement appears in the winter issue of *Marxist-Leninist Quarterly*, a eulogy of Foster on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of his birth, written by one Fred Carlisle. The PLM message to the American working class urging the need for a "revolutionary theory" is thus simplified: On the international arena: Back to Stalin. On the American scene: Back to Foster!

Before proceeding further we must comment on the outrageous jargon that is the hallmark of Stalinism and which has now been spiced by the turbid Maoism of the Chinese. Words which had previously been endowed with a precise definition in the Marxist vocabulary have been transformed into verbal abstractions capable, as the occasion demands, of being invested with the most diverse meanings. The term "revisionism" is a case in point. To Marxists, revisionism has been associated with the name of its most prominent advocate, Eduard Bernstein, author of a book entitled *Evolutionary Socialism*. Bernstein's attempt to divest Marxism of its revolutionary content was designed to provide theoretical justification for the adaptation to capitalist parliamentarism of the right-wing bureaucracy, especially the trade-union bureaucrats, who became a power in the Second (Socialist) International during the prolonged period of imperialist expansion and "prosperity" in the latter part of the 19th century up to the outbreak of World War I.

The classic manifestation of revisionism was known as Millerandism, after Alexandre Millerand, a French lawyer and socialist deputy in parliament who in 1898 accepted an appointment as Minister of Commerce in the cabinet of the capitalist government. Millerandism became synonymous with parliamentary coalitionism. Millerand was the first Socialist to accept a ministerial portfolio in a capitalist government. His action engendered heated debate in the socialist movement of that time, which was divided into right, left and center. The left wing rejected coalitionism as a betrayal of socialism. The right wing chided Millerand only because he had not consulted the party. The center (Kautsky) introduced a motion at the International Congress held in Paris, in 1900, typical of centrist straddling, "allowing that socialists might, as an exceptional measure of a temporary kind, enter a bourgeois government, but implicitly condemning Millerand by saying that such action must be approved by the party."

This compromise paved the way for the later coalition policy of the Social Democracy during and after the outbreak of the First World War. The lessons of the struggle in the Second International against coalitionism constituted an important ingredient influencing Lenin's views on the nature of the revolutionary socialist party. Later, with



the formation of the Third (Communist) International, a conscious and deliberate barrier was erected against the infiltration of reformist socialist and centrist muddleheads by the imposition at the Second Congress in 1920 of the 21 conditions for affiliation.

### The People's Front Variety

In the hey-day of Stalinism, coalitionism was dignified by the name "people's front" and was consecrated as the official policy of all sections of the Communist International at the Seventh World Congress in 1935.

Lenin considered coalitionism a betrayal of socialism and fought against it the whole of his political life. To him it was the epitome of revisionism and he wrote his polemical work, *State and Revolution*, as a refutation of the parliamentary cretinism of the coalitionists, and in the process elaborated and refined the revolutionary essence of Marxism. Upon his return to Russia in April 1917, Lenin threatened to split with those Bolsheviks, including Stalin, who favored participation with the Mensheviks in the coalition government established after the February revolution.

One question: Do the Marxist-Leninists of PLM consider people's frontism, the most odious form of coalitionism, as revisionist? They don't say! However, they do extol William Z. Foster as the "best" of the fighters against the "revisionism" of the American CP; Foster, who preached and practiced people's front coalition politics to the day of his death. And what of Mao? Can they find anywhere in his voluminous writings a forthright condemnation of people's frontism? I don't think so!

In China, coalitionism was first imposed by Stalin in the revolution of 1926-27. It there took the form of the Stalin-Bukharin formula of "the bloc of four classes," under which the Chinese Communist party was subordinated to the rule of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang. Under this formula, the Chinese workers and peasants were first disarmed and then butchered by the troops of Stalin's erstwhile ally, Chiang Kai-shek. As a result of this experience, Chen Tu-hsiu, then leader of the CPC, broke with Stalinism along with a number of other prominent leaders. All of whom were expelled from the Stalintern as "counter-revolutionists."

It was only after the Seventh World Congress of the CI enthroned the People's Front as the prevailing "universal truth" of Marxism-Leninism that Mao Tse-tung was elevated to the position of party leader.

### The Dialectic of Revisionism

According to the Maoist dialectic in which everything, including theory, divides in two — not three or four but exactly in two — the tendencies in the world socialist movement are neatly separated into two compartments: revisionism and Marxist-Leninism. Revisionism is elevated to the status of an abstract category in which the term assumes a generic character in which is subsumed all that is not accorded the sovereign title of Marxism-Leninism. Reformism, sectarianism, dogmatism, opportunism, ultra-leftism, each or all are included or may be inferred in the general term. What is revisionism today can become Marxist-Leninism tomorrow and vice versa. It has become, par excellence, a cult term. Only the initiates who are privy to the thought of the cult leader can be sure of what it means at any given moment. Instead of a precise word defining a specific tendency it has been transformed into an epithet to smite those bold or foolhardy enough to question or disagree with the latest revelation of the "leader."

From time to time differences of interpretation may arise between even the most devoted disciples that might lead to serious doctrinal disputations. The system cries out for a final arbiter around whom must be draped the aura of infallibility. Just as the Catholic church requires its pope to interpret holy scripture, so does every bureaucratic formation in the labor movement require its "pope" to resolve disputes that arise as a result of the inevitable conflict of interest between individuals and groups within

the bureaucracy. To submit such disputes to the democratic process of discussion and action by the masses would endanger the existence of the bureaucracy as a whole. The bureaucrats fear this course as the devil fears holy water. With the hothouse growth of the Soviet bureaucracy after Lenin's death, Stalin was elevated to the position of supreme arbiter of the parvenu bureaucratic caste and invested with the divine afflatus of infallibility.

In this sense the Chinese are correct in twitting Khrushchev about his indiscretion in seeking to place sole blame on Stalin for the crimes committed during his reign. There is, however, method to Khrushchev's madness. His condemnation of the "cult of the personality" is calculated to absolve the bureaucracy of all responsibility for Stalin's crimes. His task is greatly facilitated by the fact that once the supreme arbiter is firmly esconced upon this lofty perch the illusion is created that the "personality" has achieved complete independence from the bureaucratic machine that created him and that it is the man who manipulates and rules over the machine instead of the other way around. Khrushchev attacks the "cult of the personality" in order to conceal the ugly visage of the "cult" of the bureaucracy which continues to rule as before.

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LET US scrutinize, in the light of this brief historical review, the tendentious analysis of the Marxist-Leninists of PLM of what went wrong with the American CP, when it happened and what to do about it.

"From the earliest days of the communist movement in the United States to the present," we are informed, "revisionism and its political manifestation, class collaboration, has been the chronic weakness."

Not so. While the PLM theoreticians are prone to use the term "revisionism" in the generic sense indicated above, in this instance they define its concrete political manifestation as "class collaboration." In the "earliest days" of the American CP class collaboration was decidedly *not* its "chronic weakness." In the period following the Russian revolution of 1917 the dividing line between the various tendencies in the socialist movement on an international scale was their attitude toward the October revolution.

The revisionists who preached and practiced the doctrine of class collaboration were solidly lined up in hostile antagonism to the Bolshevik revolution. The earliest CP's, both in this country and abroad, were formed almost without exception out of splits over this question in the various parties of the Social Democracy. In this country the several Communist parties were established as a result of a split in the American Socialist party led by the left wing. The left wing splitoff from the SP, together with the foreign language federations, comprised the cadres of communism which then split into contending parties each seeking recognition from the Communist International.

### Disease of Ultra-Leftism

The basic weakness was not class collaboration but ultra-leftism. The tendency toward ultra-leftism was not at all peculiar to this country but was a malady that afflicted a number of the early communist groups in Europe. In fact, it was precisely against this disease that Lenin polemicized in his now famous pamphlet: *Ultra-Leftism: An Infantile Disorder*. Class collaborationists were not welcome in the Communist International of Lenin's and Trotsky's day.

But let's proceed with our perusal of the PLM statement for a clue to this bowdlerized version of history. "After the expulsion [in 1929] of Lovestone," we are told, "the party developed a militant pragmatic approach which appealed to workers during the depression and produced a mass base for the CP." In the article by Carlisle, eulogizing Foster, we are instructed that: "During the 1929-33 years of deepest crisis," the American CP "came closer to being a correct Marxist-Leninist program for the U.S. than anything that had been developed during the past 70 years."

This is incredible! The years singled out for special approbation by PLM encompass what has gone down in history as the "Third Period." The Sixth World Congress of the CI was held in 1928 under the aegis of the Stalin-Bukharin bloc. Bukharin headed the right-wing tendency in the CPSU which included such prominent leaders as Tomsky and Rykov. For the whole period prior to 1928 the Stalin bureaucracy proceeded on the Bukharin formula of a casual romp to socialism in which "socialism" would be established "at a snails pace." The slogan at the time was: Kulak enrich thyself! The Left Opposition, under the leadership of Leon Trotsky, had repeatedly warned that the differentiation among the peasantry in the villages under the Stalin-Bukharin policy was strengthening the grip of the Kulak (rich peasants) on the peasant economy and solidifying their political control over the middle and poor peasantry.

The program of the Left Opposition presented an extensive criticism of the Stalin-Bukharin line and elaborated an alternative program of planned industrialization in the economic sphere and a restoration of workers' democracy in the Soviets and the party. Needless to say, the program of the Left Opposition was suppressed and the adherents of the opposition were slandered, expelled, jailed, and, in Trotsky's case, exiled from the Soviet Union. This did not forestall the development of the crisis predicted by the Left Opposition. It erupted soon after the Sixth Congress when the Kulaks engineered a strike against the Soviet government which threatened to starve the cities into submission and brought the Soviet regime to the very brink of disaster.

Recoiling in panic from the spectre of capitalist restoration spearheaded by the Kulaks, Stalin responded with a sharp turn to the left. In startling contrast to the previous line, Stalin decreed the immediate liquidation of the Kulaks, the "forced march" to collectivization and the first of his series of five-year plans of rapid industrialization. These edicts were carried out in an atmosphere of virtual civil war. The Stalin-Bukharin program adopted at the Sixth Congress was quickly jettisoned.

Stalin broke with Bukharin, who was retired in disgrace, and proceeded to purge the Bukharinists from their positions of leadership in the various sections of the Comintern. In this country Jay Lovestone was tagged as the scapegoat because he was identified with the Bukharin line. Although commanding a majority at the March 1929 convention of the American CP, Lovestone was summoned to Moscow where he was detained while the Stalin machine engineered a switch in leadership. Characteristic of Stalin's machinations, Foster, who was then the most prominent leader of the CP, was sidetracked, and a political nonentity by the name of Earl Browder was tagged as leader of the CP. Being absolutely dependent on Moscow for his authority, Browder was considered a more pliable instrument of Stalinist manipulation and Foster was shunted aside. Foster never forgave Browder for this humiliation.

To buttress his "left turn" in the Soviet Union, Stalin proclaimed the advent of the "Third Period" which was to herald the end of capitalism on a world scale. In the world outside the Soviet Union the tactics of the Third Period rested on the twin pillars of the theory of "social fascism" and the "united front from below."

The theory and practice of "social fascism" was a patent absurdity. Lenin had previously characterized the reformist Social Democrats as social chauvinists, or social patriots, etc. His intention thereby was to pillory the reformists as socialist in words, but national chauvinists in deed; or socialist in word, but bourgeois patriots in deed. But what could the epithet "social fascism" mean? That the Social Democrats were socialist in word and fascist in deed? But the Hitlerite fascists aimed at destroying the Social Democrats by smashing the independent unions upon which they were based, and made no bones about it. Germany was the major arena in which the battle was to be fought

out. According to the theory of "social fascism," the Social Democracy, which commanded the support of the majority of the German working class, was the "main enemy."

The Third Period tactic of the "united front from below" was another of Stalin's unique contributions which wreaked havoc in the world labor movement. The tactic of the united front was worked out and codified at the Third World Congress of the CI which convened in Moscow from June 22 to July 12, 1921. Contrary to the hopes and expectations of the Bolsheviks, the post-war wave of revolutionary actions subsided after a number of serious defeats. The slogan advanced after the October revolution of the "conquest of power," was amended because of the change in the objective situation. The Comintern modification was summed up in the slogan "the conquest of the masses." That is, to win for the Communist parties the allegiance of a decisive section of the working class in preparation for the next revolutionary wave.

The Social Democrats still commanded the support of a considerable section of the European working class. The tactic of the united front was designed to unite the workers in action against capitalist reaction and for the defense of their interests. The tactic was devised to compel the leaders of the Social Democracy to enter united front actions on concrete issues in defense of the interests of the working class as a whole. In the process of such actions it was considered that the non-communist workers would be won over to the Communist parties as they became convinced of the treacherous nature of their reformist leaders. To forestall the expected attempt of the Social Democrats to limit and derail the united front actions, it was insisted that each organization maintain its independence. As Lenin phrased it: We march separately but strike together.

Stalin took this concept and gave it his own twist — which converted it into its opposite. If the Social Democracy and fascism were "twins," as he insisted, a united front agreement with the leaders became impossible. To get around this dilemma Stalin concocted the "united front from below." That is, the workers adhering to the parties of the Social Democracy were called upon to break with their leaders and join in actions organized and led by the Communist parties. But if they were prepared to go that far, why bother about applying the circuitous tactic of the united front? It didn't make sense. The result was that there was no united front at all. On the contrary, in the name of the "united front from below" the Stalinists proceeded to split the labor movement down the middle.

### American Version of Third Period

In this country, and others, the Third Period lunacy became a hideous caricature. Worker militants, members of the Communist party together with their supporters, were yanked out of the existing trade unions and herded into pure "revolutionary" paper organizations under the leadership of the CP acting through the front of the Trade Union Unity League. The trade-union bureaucrats were tickled pink. At one fell swoop they had gotten rid of their most militant opposition elements. Needless to say, the paper unions of the TUUL were 100 per cent "revolutionary" — and 100 per cent impotent.

In this country the Third Period idiocy made little difference one way or another. It was in Germany, the key to the whole international situation, that it exacted a heavy toll. By splitting the organized German working class, the "theory" of social fascism and the tactic of the "united front from below," paved the way for Hitler's march to power. So complete was the demoralization of the German workers that Hitler's hordes seized the power *without a struggle*.

The victory of Hitler in Germany marked the end of the so-called Third Period. It led to a sharp rightward swing in which the "united front from below" was transmuted into the "people's front" at the Seventh World Con-

gress of the CI in 1935. If anything, the "people's front" line was an even crasser mutilation of Lenin's united front tactic.

Third Period Stalinism can be aptly characterized as "infantile leftism" gone berserk. And it is this aberration that PLM now advocates as a model for building a "new" Marxist-Leninist revolutionary communist movement in this country. This, they contend, was the "heroic" period of the American CP. This view goes far to explain the pronounced tendency toward irresponsible adventurism which characterizes their activity. You can never give birth to a movement — progressive or otherwise — by propounding and following a course of infantile leftism, but you can spawn a numerous crop of victims, which is just about what the Stalinist Third Period line accomplished.

The PLM statement, cited above, attributes the development by the American CP of its Third Period line to "militant" pragmatism. I must confess that the distinction between "militant" pragmatism and the non-militant variety, as philosophical categories, eludes me. The implication is that under the leadership of Foster, the American CP arrived at their line independent of the Kremlin. Unfortunately for the authors of the statement, Foster says otherwise. In his *History of the Communist Party*, published in 1952, Foster relates that during a discussion in the CI on the "American question," following the March 1929 convention, Stalin criticized both the majority [Lovestone] and the minority [Foster] for their "fundamental error in exaggerating the specific features of American imperialism."

"It would be wrong," the Kremlin sage observed, "to ignore the specific peculiarities of American capitalism. The Communist Party in its work must take them into account. But," he quickly added, "it would be still more wrong to base the activities of the Communist Party on these specific features, since the foundation of the activities of every Communist Party, including the American Communist Party, on which it must base itself, must be the general features of capitalism, which are the same for all countries, and not its specific features in any given country."

Under this formula, Stalin cemented his monolithic control over all sections of the CI. Policy originated in Moscow. And woe betide those who pleaded "specific peculiarities" to warrant an exception being made for their own section. From then on every twist and turn in Kremlin policy was religiously echoed in every section throughout the world, special national "peculiarities" to the contrary notwithstanding. Foster got the message. When it came to twisting in conformity with the latest edict from Stalin he was without a peer. This earned for him in the radical movement the appellation, William "Zig-zag" Foster. This is the peerless fighter against "revisionism" whom the PLM statement commends to: "Young radicals [who] can learn from and emulate the devotion to the working class and socialism of such outstanding communists as William Z. Foster."

#### Page From CP History

In his panegyric on Foster the self-avowed Marxist-Leninist, Fred Carlisle, explains that the main authority upon whom he relies for an evaluation of Foster is Foster himself. He neglects to add that whole sections of his eulogy were lifted bodily from Foster's *History of the Communist Party*, for which the original author is not credited. "Foster's historical analyses of these struggles," Carlisle affirms, "are quite helpful, being more accurate and objective than other available sources." Irony itself stands disarmed before such monumental naivete. At any rate, among the many examples of Carlisle's historical scholarship, we select one which raises an important question — Lenin's concept of democratic centralism as contrasted with that of Stalin-Foster.

"In 1928," we are enlightened, "James P. Cannon was expelled from the C.P. for supporting Trotsky's left-

deviationist doctrine. Upon his return from the sixth world congress of the Comintern, which had turned down an appeal from Trotsky in exile, Cannon began clandestinely distributing Trotskyite materials. Though Cannon had been a member of their group, Foster and Bittelman preferred the charges against him of disseminating Trotskyite propaganda, advocating withdrawal from existing trade unions, abandoning the united front and fomenting disruption. Eventually about 100 of Cannon's followers were also expelled and, under Cannon's leadership, formed an opposition league which later became the Socialist Workers Party, affiliated to the Fourth International."

The charge of "clandestinely" circulating "Trotskyite materials," is supposed to convey the impression that Cannon was engaged in some sneaky, underhanded, criminal activity, warranting the most drastic penalty. Precisely what was the nature of this contraband which the sly Cannon was "clandestinely" distributing to leaders and members of the American CP? The slander that it consisted of "propaganda advocating withdrawal from the existing trade unions," and "abandoning the united front," etc., characteristic of the Stalin-Foster Third Period insanity, is downright ludicrous. The "materials" actually consisted of Trotsky's article, *Criticism of the Draft Program*, which had been presented for the consideration of the delegates to the Sixth World Congress and which they were bureaucratically deprived of reading because it was suppressed by the Stalin-Bukharin machine. The article, which came into Cannon's possession through accident, was later published serially in the first issues of *The Militant*, then the American organ of the Left Opposition.

Does our learned historian even bother to ask himself the question *why* Cannon found it necessary to distribute such materials "clandestinely." Cannon was a member of the top political committee of the CP; he had gone to Moscow as a delegate of the American CP to the sixth congress. Wasn't he entitled to submit whatever materials he possessed pertinent to the decisions of that congress in a discussion presumably called for that express purpose? But, no! By that time the Stalin pogrom against Trotskyism raged throughout the communist movement. Trotsky's views were distorted, mutilated, or suppressed by the Stalin bureaucracy. The most effective theoretical weapon in the arsenal of the bureaucracy was the mailed fist — and they wielded it with abandon. And all of this, of course, in the name of "democratic centralism."

#### A Deadly Affliction

As he did with so many of Lenin's contributions, Stalin twisted the Leninist concept of democratic centralism into its opposite, bureaucratic centralism. Under Lenin's concept of democratic centralism, as practiced in his lifetime, all a minority was obliged to do was to *accept* the decisions of the majority after democratic discussion and debate, leaving to the unfolding events to determine who was right and who wrong. Stalin gave this concept just one little twist and converted it into bureaucratic law that a minority must *agree* with the majority.

It is a psychological impossibility to expunge from one's head views, opinions, and thoughts which might be at variance with the views, opinions, and thoughts of others. The practice of bureaucratic centralism inevitably led to the obscene spectacle of individuals driven to public confession of their "errors" in order to avoid summary expulsion or worse. All of this was embellished and dignified under the heading of "self-criticism" which, as practiced by Stalinism, could be more accurately defined as self-flagellation.

Trotsky once aptly characterized Stalinism as "the syphilis of the labor movement." To urge upon the American workers a return to Stalin-Foster is to counsel a course which could only induce an aggravated case of *locomotor ataxia*. And that is one affliction we would not wish on our worst enemies.

# Adolph Hitler And The German Catholics



By Constance Weisman

**GERMAN CATHOLICS AND HITLER'S WARS**  
by Gordon C. Zahn. New York: Sheed  
and Ward, 1962, 229 pp. \$4.75.

A furor has arisen in Europe and the U.S. over *The Deputy*, a play by Rolf Hochhuth, a German. The play has just opened in New York, and already radio, TV, the press and the Catholic Church are debating its theme — could Pius XII, the war time Pope, have helped the Jews against their horrible fate in Germany by speaking out in moral censure against the Nazis instead of remaining silent.

*German Catholics and Hitler's Wars*, written by a Catholic professor at Loyola University in Chicago, and published by a Catholic publisher, is concerned with another problem than the fate of the Jews. Gordon C. Zahn went to Germany in 1956-57 to find out what happened to the German Catholic peace movement which had been quite strong before the rise of Hitler, and which completely collapsed at the first threat to it.

Zahn is concerned as a Catholic sociologist with the failure of the Church to denounce Hitler's "unjust war." He shows that the Catholic hierarchy in Germany not only did not oppose the war but tried to demonstrate that they were its most enthusiastic supporters. By 1957, virtually all German Catholics interviewed by Zahn agreed that Hitler's war had been an unjust war and that German Catholics and especially their spiritual leaders were aware of its injustice. Yet one of the very few Catholics who expressed opposition to the war, Father Max Joseph Metzger, founder of a religious community, was defended very lamely by Archbishop Grober after his capture by the Gestapo. Grober wrote to the Freiburg officials in a tone of prudent disapproval of Metzger's "idealism," like "an embarrassed parent's apology for damage done by a child." Metzger was executed.

Not only did the Catholic hierarchy profoundly disapprove of conscientious objectors (who faced capital punishment) but even used the pressure of denying them the sacraments until just

before death to make them change their minds. Josef Fleischer, the only German Catholic conscientious objector to live to tell the tale because of confinement in a mental institution, says that while awaiting trial, he was visited by a clergyman who identified himself as the military bishop's chief assistant. "This visitor reportedly advanced every possible argument to induce Fleischer to abandon his refusal to serve in the armed forces. These efforts failing, he burst into a furious display of temper and declared that people like Fleischer must be exterminated, that they should be 'shortened by a head.'"

The Church authorities were actually the greatest recruiters to the army: they exhorted the soldiers to give their lives in battle, promising them eternal salvation if they died in Hitler's war.

The German invasion of Poland thrilled Cardinal Rarkowski so much that he issued an exultant pastoral letter to the soldiers commemorating the Nazi victory over the first victims of the blitzkrieg. "He described the joyous scenes at home with the church bells ringing out a special noonday *Te Deum* and flags waving and fluttering over all the houses." As to the dead soldiers, "this dying was not only beautiful and sublime in a human sense but towers beyond into a higher world. It is a holy death . . . for those who have fallen had consecrated and sanctified all their war services through their oath of allegiance [to Hitler] and have thus entered their sacrifices in the ledgers of God which are preserved in the archives of Eternity."

The author points out that there is a widely accepted assumption that the pattern of Catholic behavior was one of inflexible opposition to the ideology of the Hitler regime. The Church might have supported the German government, goes the argument, but this was differentiated from support of Nazism *per se*. But, Zahn shows, the Church never showed any opposition to Nazism and in many cases enthusiastically supported it.

On the occasion of Hitler's 50th

birthday, Cardinal Rarkowski, who was the spiritual head of the armed forces, wrote: "So let our gift to our *Führer* be the inner readiness for sacrifice and devotion to the *Volk* [the mystique of nationalism] . . . May our thanksgiving and our readiness to repay loyalty with loyalty find expression in the prayer . . . 'Bless, O God, our *Führer* and Supreme Commander in all the tasks placed upon him.'"

The Bavarian Catholic newspapers were also very enthusiastic about Hitler's birthday. One adorned a full-page spread of birthday greetings with a photograph of the *Führer* in uniform. "Thus we have truly sufficient cause to thank Divine Providence that . . . the nation's leadership [was] entrusted to a statesman who understood how to unite a power without historical parallel in his hands."

There is no question that Hitler, in violation of the Concordat signed with the Pope, harassed the Catholic Church, seizing the property of religious orders and schools, dispersing monasteries. The bishops protested vociferously against these violations of Church institutions. They also protested the "mercy killing" of the feeble-minded and physically unfit. But they never protested in any way the slaughter of millions of Jews.

There is certainly a contradiction in the fact that the Church supported Hitler in spite of his aggressive acts against it. Even the Stalin-Hitler pact did not seem to deter the slavish obeisance paid by the hierarchy to the Nazi authorities. During the period when Hitler and Stalin, acting as partners, carved up Poland, there was complete silence about the dangers of "atheistic" bolshevism.

It would seem that class alignment had more power than Catholic considerations. The author attributes the moral weakness of the Church in knuckling under to Hitler to extreme German nationalism. The Church leaders had aristocratic and militaristic forebears, steeped in the dreams of German conquest. Bishop von Galen of Munster, highly praised as the most outspoken

critic of Hitler, was so aristocratic that he looked down on Hitler during his first rabble-rousing days when his principal support came from the *Lumpenproletariat*. Once Hitler came to power, he became the legitimate authority in Galen's eyes. The extent of his protests were against specific Nazi aggressions against the Church. He firmly put the damper on any Catholic underground resistance to Hitler.

Zahn believes that the Church could have had a great deal of influence in Germany, whose population is 40.3 per cent Catholic. For instance, Michael Cardinal Faulhaber, leader of the Bavarian hierarchy, had a great following because of his leadership in the Catholic peace movement. As the leading Church spokesman in Bavaria, the most heavily Catholic state of Germany, his opposition would have been decisive. In addition, such opposition in Munich, the very city where the Nazi movement had its birth, would have been a heavy blow to Hitler. However, Faulhaber joined his fellow bishops in enthusiastic sup-

port of the war and limited his protests to specific Nazi acts against the Church.

To the argument that opposition to the Nazis would have brought reprisals on the Church and its members, Zahn replies that there is another serious consideration to be taken into account — the scriptural injunction to preach the Word "in season and out of season." Prudence in choosing the proper means of attaining an end is not to be confused with abandoning the end because it would entail risks and hardships. He feels that the Church failed completely in its duty to oppose injustice. Its enthusiasm for Hitler's war was indistinguishable from identifying the interests of the Church with the Nazi regime.

He concludes by pointing out that the Church would have acted the same under any totalitarian regime, and doubts that Catholics in any other country would have protested obedience to the secular authority. For example, he says, how many U.S. Catholics protested the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

the books to see how and why the labor movement arrived at the policies and practices which raise widespread doubts as to its capacity.

Bernard Mandel's biography of Samuel Gompers is a valuable source for such study. As the publisher's brochure comments:

"Samuel Gompers so reacted to and acted upon his times and his society that only an historian can adequately tell the story of his life. This Bernard Mandel has done in this definitive biography, based upon extensive research in the documents of the labor movement and presented with the detachment of the scholar who seeks to understand the man in terms of the era and the era in terms of the man who so transformed it."

Mandel describes the internal and external struggles of the labor movement, the role of Gompers, of the Knights of Labor, of the Industrial Workers of the World, of the various socialist and communist tendencies, of the business and industrial leaders, of presidents and other government officials and agencies, of reform movements and of international political and labor leaders.

Of particular interest is his objective reporting of the conflicting views which shaped the policies of the American Federation of Labor: craft vs. industrial unionism; independent political action vs. support of capitalist candidates; support of the government war program under Wilson vs. socialist opposition; advocacy of immigration restrictions vs. international working-class solidarity; Negro segregation vs. integration; organizing the unemployed, the unskilled and the unorganized vs. "business unionism."

The scope of Mandel's book is limited as a biography, to the period of Gompers' life which ended Dec. 13, 1924. The serious student of American labor history cannot stop there since it does not include the rise of the CIO, the most powerful demonstration of the capacity of the American working class to create new forms of organization, new tactics and new leaders to meet new conditions. (The forthcoming history of this period by Art Preis will help fill this gap.)

But the biography of Samuel Gompers provides an understanding of the class-collaborationist policies and practices that characterized the AFL and now the AFL-CIO, and should help students inside and outside of the labor movement — including some of the frustrated secondary union leadership — to evaluate those policies and to develop new ones better adapted to serve the needs of the working class today.

## Statesman Or Faker?

By Jean Simon

SAMUEL GOMPERS, a biography by Bernard Mandel. The Antioch Press, Yellow Springs, Ohio, 1963. 566 pp. \$8.00.

"Samuel Gompers: Labor Statesman or Labor Faker?" is the provocative title of the introduction by Dr. Louis Filler of Antioch College to Bernard Mandel's biography of Gompers.

If the book were a Madison Avenue image-creating job — either image would do — it probably could be published simultaneously in paperback and quickly go through several editions, with large advance union orders for the labor statesman image or subsidized mass newsstand distribution for the faker image.

But Bernard Mandel is an historian with standards of objectivity and respect for fact which have produced a biography that is neither a eulogy nor a hatchet job, but an important contribution to the history of the American labor movement. As such, it can be recommended to the growing number of student youth seeking basic solutions to the problems of our society, and to the question of labor's role in social change.

The new generation of radical youth quickly relates the Marxist analysis of the contradictions of capitalism to international and domestic crises of our epoch. They readily recognize the rationality of a socialist reconstruction of society. They can see the realities of our class-divided society and the logic of the theory that it is the historic role of the working class, acting in its own interest,

to reorganize the social structure on a classless basis.

But when they look for the vehicle for social change, the only mass organization of the working class they see is the organized labor movement, the AFL-CIO. They see a union movement that has no perspective for social change, provides no leadership in dealing with the major problems of civil rights, democratic rights, imperialist war, colonial revolutions, or unemployment, and that participates in none of the massive struggles that have begun.

The youth, the peace movement, the Negro masses, and the colonial peoples all ask the same question: When is American labor going to move?

To understand the labor movement it is necessary to recognize its dual role as part of the power structure of the capitalist system and at the same time the organization for the defense of the standard of living of the working class. It is necessary to examine the history of the labor movement to see that it was not always like this, that it has changed and can change.

The 40 to 50-year-old generation can remember the dynamic period of the rise of the CIO. They participated in or witnessed heroic struggles of the working class. They saw the rapid transformations in the consciousness of thousands of workers and know the potential of the class.

But the youth of today have not yet had that experience. They must go to

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# Revolution In Cuba

By Edward Shaw

CUBA: THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION by Andres Bianchi, Richard Jolly and Max Nolf. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N.C., 1963. 432 pp. \$7.50.

From January 1, 1959, when Fulgenzia Batista fled the island in panic, Cuba has probably been the subject of more books than during the entire period beginning with the founding of Havana in A.D. 1515.

Yet the nature of the Cuban Revolution, its aims, methods and accomplishments, as well as the character of its leaders are obscured or completely misrepresented by "popular opinion" and the U.S. State Department. This state of affairs cannot be attributed to lack of available information. It is primarily due to imperialism's hysterical reaction to the revolution, akin to a master's refusal to admit a former slave's claims to freedom, equality, dignity and respect.

A new book, *Cuba: The Economic and Social Revolution*, is a serious effort to analyze and objectively present three major spheres of modern Cuban life: education, agriculture and industry. Because of what the editor, Dudley Seers, calls the "obvious reasons" that "neither Americans nor Cubans were suitable" for the task, his search for experts led him to three well-grounded economists, one Chilean and two Englishmen.

The book contains a mass of statistical data, much of which was compiled by the authors themselves and hitherto unavailable in this form. Unfortunately the time taken for preparation and publication limits us to material gathered no later than September, 1962, just prior to the "missile crisis" of October, 1962. The rapidity of change in a country consolidating a social revolution can make the normal time lag of a year or more in publishing such data seem very long indeed, even out-of-date in some cases.

Nevertheless, the authors' efforts are meritorious. Their careful study tends to confirm the earlier observations of honest but less cautious and therefore more prompt reporters.

Though no attempt is made to justify the revolution, the following conclusions have to be drawn from the analysis:

1. The Cuban economic and social structure is stable and provides the only example to date of a solution to Latin America's striking poverty and economic stagnation.

2. Seemingly insoluble technical and political problems (including armed invasion, economic boycott, political iso-

lation and foreign-directed sabotage) have been met and overcome in spite of some major errors, freely admitted by the Cubans, and now being corrected.

3. Overall economic and social results are favorable and great gains have been made by the formerly impoverished workers and poor farmers.

4. The revolutionary regime is broadly based on the mass of workers and farmers, represents their interests and is firmly supported by the new generation of Cuban youth.

5. The revolutionary leaders are in the main honest, intelligent, humane, hard-working, well-liked and responsive to the needs and desires of the Cuban people.

This book, rather long, dry and pedantic, will not become a best seller, or even generally popular. However, it should prove a valuable addition to the library of the serious student of Latin-American affairs and U.S.-Cuba relations.

## A Unique Figure

By Robert Chester

PEACE AGITATOR — The Story of A. J. Muste, by Nat Hentoff. Macmillan Company, 1963. 269 pp. \$5.95.

Anyone who has contact with the radical or peace movement sooner or later comes across the name of A. J. (Abraham Johannes) Muste. Yet no one ever got around to writing a biography of this anomalous and contradictory figure. Nat Hentoff, a staff writer of the *New Yorker* magazine, has finally done the job.

At the age of 79, after 50 years of continuous activity, A. J. is still going strong. Ordained as a minister in 1909, he turned to pacifism during the First World War. In 1918 Muste found himself propelled, by accident, into leadership of the Lawrence textile strike and turned his interests to the labor movement. After some organization activity he founded and became educational director of Brookwood Labor College, an institution designed to train workers for union leadership. Moving to the left, Muste resigned from Brookwood to head the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, which under the radicalizing impact of the depression converted itself into the American Workers party and then fused with the Trotskyists to found the Workers party of America. Two years later, in 1936, Muste reversed his course, and rejecting Marxism, returned

to the church and pacifism. Since then he has been a radical non-violent Christian pacifist with anarchist tendencies.

Nat Hentoff's biography presents all the major facts but lacks political penetration in explaining them. Everything seems to happen through personal decision without any relation to the background from which these decisions spring. While Muste's role in the peace movement is presented in detail, and they are extensive, no explanation is given for its sudden growth only in the past six years and its recent decline.

Hentoff's bias against the revolutionary movement is apparent in his description of Muste's period in the Workers party. The author quotes extensively from Cannon's *History of American Trotskyism*, but the quotes are juggled and misapplied. Political struggles are converted into intrigues of dubious moral character. When Muste, who was never adept in factional struggle, tried to protect some of his friends who were preparing to split and join the Stalinists, Cannon warned him of the danger of protecting them against those who he agreed had a correct political line. Hentoff's interpretation is that Cannon "placed party discipline over personal friendship."

Muste's theory of action is based on moral concepts of the individual — the polar opposite of Marxist theory. "The Christian position . . ." he states, "provides the one measure by which the capitalist system stands thoroughly and effectively condemned because it makes the relation . . . of brotherhood between human beings impossible. So long, however, as the matter remains on the plane of economics and self-interest," he claims, "no one is in a position to condemn another. When we feel indignation . . . we then enter the realm of standards and values, the realm in which moral judgment is pronounced . . . the realm of morality and religion." Muste's strategy was well expressed by Richard Gregg in his *The Power of Non-violence* "the nonviolence and good will of the victim act in the same way that the lack of physical opposition by the user of physical jujitsu does, causing the attacker to lose his moral balance."

Muste has tried to apply this "moral jujitsu" in his personal action: the attempt to enter the Mead missile base in Nebraska; sponsoring trips by sailing ships into atomic test areas; sitdowns on atomic submarines; disobedience in civil defense alerts; peace walks to Moscow, Cuba, etc. His is the spiritual teacher of figures like Bayard Rustin, James Farmer and Martin Luther King.

Despite his deep-going differences with them Muste remains a prominent and respected figure in radical circles. His personal integrity is unchallenged. He is always ready to support any labor or civil liberties case, and is always available to anyone who wishes to consult him or appeals for aid. A.J. is a unique figure on the American scene.

## The Irrepressible Conflict

By Robert Vernon

RACIAL CRISIS IN AMERICA: LEADERSHIP IN CONFLICT by Lewis Killian and Charles Grigg. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J. 1964. 144 pp. Paper \$1.95. Cloth \$4.50.

The authors, both Southerners on the staff of Florida State University, are indicative of a new and more realistic trend in American academic sociology. Killian and Grigg challenge the naive expectation that the Southern race conflict will succumb to a reaffirmation of the American Creed; that resistance to integration "only delays the inevitable," that "better communication between the races" will work wonders of love and understanding; or that the alleged good will, sense of fair play, justice, and respect for law of most white Americans and the natural big-heartedness of white American society will absorb all shocks of conflict within the framework of orderly democratic processes and continual "progress."

Killian and Grigg sketch instead a

sociologist's alternative of conflict between "two hostile interest groups" as a more natural mode of socio-political interaction, in a "conflict-negotiation-compromise" cycle. This they see as a "dark" and "pessimistic" picture, but one which, ugly as it is, must be faced.

The authors spend the first 100 pages verbalizing the trivial and the obvious in discussing the dilemmas, headaches, and illusions of impotent Southern white liberals, Negro accommodationists, and "responsible leaders," and bi-racial committees for piecemeal integration. The authors draw inferences of real interest only in the last two chapters where they turn to the implications of social struggle in the North.

**“. . . masses of Negroes trapped in these densely populated, continuously deteriorating ghettos are not likely to keep pace with ‘the American way of life.’ Hence there is great danger that . . . faith in America will be drowned in this black sea. Their isolation from white Americans will be**

**magnified and, in their bitterness and isolation, they may be mobilized for violent conflict against people who need only to be recognized as white to be identified as enemies . . . it is in the cities that most Negro Americans now live. In the cities the dynamite is waiting for the spark, and there is the hard core of ‘the Negro problem.’”**

Killian and Grigg have their eyes opened wider than one would expect of academic sociologists. But they aren't aware of half the dangers facing white America's Way of Life. They realize that desegregation and integration, "token" or otherwise, will not make a dent in the white problem in the North. They wave the bogeyman of the Black Muslims as the worst variant of the impending conflict. But the Muslims are at most only a symbol and a symptom of "worse" yet to come.

Where Killian and Grigg see danger in insoluble conflict in an otherwise viable and eternal society, the new generation of black militants and the revolutionary socialists see the hopeful prospect of an unrelenting and uncompromising struggle for a new society.

## The Freedom Struggle: From Revolt To Revolution

(Continued from Page 44)

tempo, style, and direction of the freedom fight.

The second point about the term "white power structure" is that strategy and objectives flow from one's conception of the meaning of the term. The narrower interpretation of it implies that in order to win the equal rights struggle, the immediate and apparent opponents of a particular issue must be confronted with a countervailing power in order to force them to surrender. Or in some cases, it is believed, demands may be won by replacing one set of individuals by a more moderate group (e.g., Mayor Boutwell for Bull Connor in Birmingham). One after another battle will thus be won until final victory is achieved; the power structure will be defeated but still intact. A more sophisticated understanding of the power structure dictates a totally different approach: the whole structure must be uprooted and transformed; a change of personnel in the power structure will not basically remedy the situation, nor will any given number of piecemeal concessions.

The fact is that every demand yet raised by the civil rights movement could be secured within the framework of the present social system—although their achievement would certainly weaken it and the power structure which controls it. And

when those demands are won, the Negro masses will still be subject to massive and chronic unemployment, low wages, inadequate housing and rent robbery, an archaic educational system, inadequate health and medical services, and the constant threat of depression, fascism, and imperialist war, to say nothing of a whole culture that is degraded, commercialized and corrupt. As a militant Cleveland freedom fighter put it, "I'll still be black."

Furthermore, it will likely become apparent to the liberation struggle as it unfolds that the power structure not only resists its demands but is the root, the constant generative source of racial oppression. For the jim crow system is, above all, a means of maintaining the Negroes as a class of cheap laborers and, beyond that, an instrument for keeping the working class divided with the ideology of white supremacy. Therefore, so long as capitalism survives, racism will be perpetuated in our economic, social, political, and cultural institutions, because it is an integral part of American capitalism, as it has been for three centuries.

While the capitalist system remains, it will produce its power structure and all the props that help to sustain it. The Negro revolt will emerge into revolution, then, when the Negro masses adopt the perspective of struggle against the **system**,

and not merely against the power structure which controls it. This will undoubtedly be accompanied by, and effected through, many changes in the structure of the movement itself. For one thing, it will mean not only a repudiation of the conservative leaders in the Negro organizations, but a sharp struggle against them, for at least portions of the Negro bourgeoisie, and the "moderate" spokesmen who represent them, will undoubtedly become openly hostile to the liberation struggle as it becomes revolutionary.

It will mean new types of organizations to broaden the scope and objectives of the struggle, of which the Freedom Now Party or a similar political party may be a leading and crucial element.

It will mean new methods of struggle, such as political action, wholesale sabotage of the economic and political structure, and the general strike.

It will mean closer collaboration with the world colonial, anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist revolution.

It will mean some form of alliance with radical groups or parties, and perhaps eventual merger with them.

Either these developments will take place and liberation will be won; or the Negro revolt will peter out in a sickening acquiescence in tokenism and TVism; or the rebellion will be drowned in blood.

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