

2 7 8 9

A CONVENTION REPORT

ON WAR
AND
PEACE

20¢

SEPTEMBER 1960

2789

C O N T E N T S

PREFACE: Welcoming Address, News & Letters Convention,
September, 1960

CONVENTION ADDRESS ON WAR AND PEACE:

I Self-Activity of the Masses vs. The Administrative
Mentality of Leaders page 1

II Nuclear War is the Only Thing New in the State-
Capitalist Era page 4

1. What Should Not Be Done

III The New Stage of Consciousness and the Struggle
Against War page 10

1. What Can Be Done

2791

Convention Welcoming Address

In the name of the R.E.B. I welcome you.

The life blood, so to speak, of this convention is the building of the organization. From the proposed agenda you will see that in one session we will deal with "From Organizational Consciousness to Organization Building". If anyone has wondered about what is meant by the statement that we are moving from consciousness of organization to the building of the organization, it is only because they have not become conscious of what they have been doing. They have, in fact, been building the organization these past few months, as witnessed in our new members--and the newness in them is their youth.

There are many "new" things for us in this convention. The Youth Session is new--not because we haven't had youth sessions before--we have--but as the draft resolution on organization states: "Today we can write that the Negro college youth sit-ins in the South, and the white and Negro picketing in the North, has brought out of itself new members to our organization.

"This organizational convergence, small as it is, of the mass movement and of our Committees is proof that we have reached this new stage we call Building the Organization."

The other outstanding feature which will spell out this building in the year to come is, of course, the proposed Automation Pamphlet.

Finally and fundamentally, another new for us is that this convention is both open and closed. In the closed session which specifically concerns itself with the draft resolution on organization, we will have the International Report, which signifies how important we are not only nationally but internationally as well, despite the smallness of our numbers, up to now.

I can remember when I was a teenager--I used to feel that the world was yet to open up in front of me--that many aspects of life were yet to bloom, if you will. I haven't thought like that in a very long time. But with this convention and the red thread that runs through it--building of our organization--I feel that way once more. In Marxist Humanism we have the answers to a new society. Now it is up to us.

In the name of the R.E.B. I declare this convention open and turn the chair over to the chairman of the first session.

ON WAR & PEACE

I. The Self-Activity of the Masses vs. the Administrative Mentality of Leaders

Nikita Khrushchev dominated the Democratic and Republican conventions.

We will not allow him to dominate this one.

Because our point of departure, as Marxist Humanists, is the self-activity of the masses, our geographic point of departure differs as well.

To see the world as it really is, we need to see it, on the one hand, with the eyes of Afro-Asians struggling for freedom, and, at the same time, from the point of view of the American proletariat confronted with Automation.

It is true that the whole world, capitalistically speaking, is divided into but two poles: America and Russia. But that's just it — it's a capitalistic, i.e., an inhuman, truth. Those two colossi of world capital aim, before destroying humanity, to become its blinders.

We will not allow that either.

The whole truth, the human truth, would show that this fact of the world's division into two is not as decisive a truth as the class division within each country, into workers and capitalists, which, at critical moments, reduces the different rulers to a set of identical twins that find cohabitation pleasanter than confrontation with their own downfall.

Thus, during World War II, these "Allies" were united in crushing proletarian and national revolutions all the way from Warsaw to Madagascar.

The identity of interests of the two poles of capital reappeared during the Cold War as well. Though by this time, for opposite reasons, nevertheless Western Europe was re-established as a capitalistic stronghold, not alone by America's Marshall Plan, but also by Russia's abandonment of proletarian revolutions where she could not contain and strangle them.

Subsequently, DeGaulle's dream of grandeur, and Adenauer's hallucinations of "a German mission" notwithstanding, the world's division into two, and only two nuclear power blocs, was jolted, not by Western Europe, but by the AFRO-ASIAN REVOLUTIONS.

We have often pointed to the fact that Africa is reshaping the map of the world, by which we meant, essentially, the achievement of freedom from imperialist rule.

This is true, and a great truth it is. But it is not the whole truth.

The whole truth is that Africa has raised the banner of humanism, which, in the conditions of underdeveloped economies, means a different path to industrialization than through capitalism.

In that context we must also view (1) the American workers' struggle against automated capitalism which has raised the question of what kind of labor, or why there should be any division between mental and manual work; and (2) the Latin American revolutions.

The Cuban Revolution was a high stage in the development of freedom in the whole of Latin America. It did more than overthrow the cruel and despotic Batista dictatorship, which was both puppet of American imperialism and tyrant over its own nation. It achieved a revolution in agricultural relations.

Although the State, and not the agricultural worker, is the owner of these expropriated vast tracts of land, the feeling of liberation is exhilarating, and true, when you compare the previous state of servitude to the United Fruit Co.

While no comparable revolution in industrial relations was achieved, the fact that there is little industry in Cuba, and the people have had to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, when they didn't even have boots, made the workers too willingly, though not uncritically, identify themselves with Fidel Castro and his July 26th Movement.

Russia is now trying to make it appear that it ended America's domination of Cuba. It isn't true. To the extent that the revolution is due to any other source than the Cuban people themselves, it is due to the African Revolutions which preceded it.

By fighting for independence from imperialism and embarking on a new path of development, the African revolutions also put an end to the isolation of Latin America in the Western Hemisphere as well as to the loneliness, the feeling of helplessness of any underdeveloped country anywhere in the world.

The only thing Russia can rightly claim credit for is hardening Castro's natural petty bourgeois tendency to solve administratively what can only be solved through the self-activity of the masses. This hardening of the administrative mentality has meant that revolutionary changes notwithstanding, the single element of not creating a form for the release of the creative energies of the masses, of not allowing any reorganization from below, of doing everything from above, that single element of the administrative mentality, which is the hallmark of our age of state capitalism, was sufficient to begin the rapid descent of Cuba into the quagmire of Russian-Chinese totalitarianism.

At this point the tragedy is assuming tragically comic aspects. Fidel Castro thinks he is "The Leader." In truth, he is being led. He does not even have any comprehension of where in the world's capitalistic complex he is being led to.

That great German philosopher, Hegel, speaks with profundity about just such blabbermouths seeking "self-expression." He said they reflected "an unreflective, incoherent stage of consciousness" characteristic of societies that are no more than a "community of animals."

Hegel's was one ivory tower that was more crowded than Rome's Olympic arena. Think of it. It was as far back as 1807. Napoleon had just overrun his native Prussia when he completed this life-study of the human mind over the span of some 2,500 years of Western Civilization, which he called THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF MIND, and within which confines man's struggle for freedom since before Christ founded a new religion pounded away so loudly that we hear him today.

"An unreflective incoherent stage of consciousness" -- what could better describe a Castro? -- characteristic of "a society as a community of animals." This is the best contemporary description I have yet seen anywhere of state capitalist societies like Mao's China. Sekou Toure is so enamored of the single party state that he actually used the expression "forced labor" in a complimentary sense!

Russia has certainly hit the jackpot in Cuba, and America is eaten up with jealousy. Nowhere, from Alaska to Adenauer's West Germany, does America have such a monolithic, anxious, enthusiastic, undivided and blithely unsuspecting a collaborator-victim, 90 miles from the shore of its main protagonist, as Russia has in Cuba.

As if sucked into the jet-propelled Ilyushin, the Cuban Revolution has been unable to resist the totalitarian pull of Russian state capitalism, with the administrative mentality running roughshod over the self-activity of the masses. Suddenly we are face to face with the negative element of a world crisis that will not let go of the newly-freed countries.

Castro fancies that his loud pronouncements against the stupidities of the American State Department "make up" for his "incoherent stage of consciousness."

In truth, they only too clearly show that this "haughty vassal" -- to use yet another expression of Hegel's -- is so bitten by the state capitalistic bug -- that is, "a passion for bossing" -- that he does not even stop to reflect that he is trying to foist on the Cuban people hands made bloody by their crushing of the Hungarian people's revolt. Nothing can wash those hands clean. NOTHING.

This new arrogant administrator may feel sufficiently like a king, now that he has a nuclear power at his side, as to issue invitations to all underdeveloped countries to come to a command performance in Havana. The African countries gave him his first rebuff when they refused to be taken in by this late-comer on the revolutionary scene and his pretensions of "world leadership."

In declining the invitations for a conference in this hemisphere,

when they have carried on the struggles for freedom decades ahead of him in Africa, they have given him his first lesson in freedom that is not dependent on Russia and China who are only using the Cuban revolution to further their own ends of world conquest.

There is yet time to escape the world holocaust Mao Tse Tung is in such a hurry to unleash today, ~~not tomorrow~~ but today, IF Fidel's Cuba will break loose from both poles of capital and join the opposition to war.

The only genuine opposition to war mongering, rocket-rattling, and actual preparations for war on both sides of the Iron and Bamboo curtains are the people of the world bursting forth into such demonstrations as in Japan against the Security Pact; on Trafalgar Square against nuclear warfare; in South Africa against inhuman passes; in South USA against segregation; in Korea against one-man rule; in Turkey against oppression of the press; in America against the inhuman conditions under automated production; throughout the world, not excluding Russia and China, in resistance against exploitative labor, and the insanity of the rush to nuclear annihilation of mankind. Everywhere the accent is on youth striving against a world they did not make, and trying to re-shape it into one habitable by humans.

II. Nuclear War Is the Only Thing New in the State Capitalist Era

Ever since the U-2 plane incident put an end to the grand illusion that no one ever would embark on anything so suicidal as nuclear warfare, the Russian rocket-rattling has been sounded the world 'round, including neutral ground.

Khrushchev told Austria she could "prove" her neutrality in only one way — demand that Italy give up her American missile bases.

If that novel interpretation of neutrality is out to suit the Russian Communist's totalitarian make-up, the American rulers have decided not to be outdone in this flexing of nuclear muscles. They have shot missiles under water. They have shot them into the skies. They have tested on level ground, and underground, and all to the accompaniment of very loud public-relations type of noises that America is every bit as good, if not better than Russia, in its ability to destroy, destroy, destroy.

Already the void in ideology is so great that scientists have become armchair militarists. Take the proud "father" of the H-bomb, Edward Teller. He has been busy selling America the idea of a so-called limited nuclear war. *

* In Great Britain, the "New Left's" limited opposition to war is not as opposite to Teller's adherence to "limited" war as would appear on the surface. All one had to do to see this was to listen to Bertrand Russell's TV debate with Teller. There is much less excuse for that philosopher's being "taken in" by Russian totalitarianism than either Castro or Toure has.

- 5 -

In providing as empty a shelter for the mind, as the fall-out shelter is for the body, the capitalistic system is showing a fair example of the schleiss Marx long ago predicted it would resolve itself into.

This has never been truer than since World War II ended with but two victors, each more degenerate than the other — as the Stalin-Truman conspiracy to continue the Pacific war, though Japan was ready to sign a peace treaty, proves yet once again.

Trotskyist apologists for Russian Communism, not to speak of the Cuban whitewashers, cannot hide behind the fact that Russia had no A-bomb then. It did the next best thing — it jubilantly greeted the American use of the A-bomb. Just listen:

The Italian Communist paper, L'Unita: "The news that an atomic bomb was dropped by the American Air Force has made an enormous impression throughout the whole world and has been received on all sides with a sense of panic and words of condemnation. This shows, it seems to us, a curious psychological perversion and a doctrinaire obedience to a form of abstract humanitarianism.... We do not share the sense of terror which has been expressed in certain press comments because we bear in mind the concrete use which was made of the fearful engine of destruction." This was written August 10, 1945.

And the Daily Worker in Great Britain, on August 14, 1945, was actually worried that there was a procrastination after Hiroshima and Nagasaki: "There was no official hint of the length of delay that the Japanese are to be allowed before the full force of Allied power — including the atom bomb — is loosed against them in a blow intended to be final."

And something that dared call itself L'Humanita wrote, August 8, 1945: "The atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima seems to have caused considerable destruction. American reports suggest nothing less than the disappearance from the face of the earth of a town of 300,000 inhabitants. The effect of the discovery is considerable. Nevertheless, the Vatican has been pleased to disapprove of it! May we be permitted to express our surprise, because when the Nazis had the privilege of waging total war with a total cruelty the Holy See was not equally indignant."

Parenthetically, it should also be stated that Khrushchev has done more to "de-Stalinize" Russia than all Trotskyists and Fidelists combined — which did not by an iota change the nature of state capitalism, although it changed its propaganda, along with its tactics to assure that the new technology of Automation does not escape the capitalistic context.

When Khrushchev isn't sabre-rattling, he stands for "peaceful co-existence." But, just as the "open sky" policy Eisenhower practices — with other people's lives — is for spying, so Khrushchev's "peaceful co-existence" is for war preparation.

Each, in his own way, represents perfectly the true nature of capitalism — its reason for being — to pay the worker a minimum, to extract from him

a maximum, and, as the resulting crises deepen, to embark on war. What these two baldies (for lack of brain as much as for lack of hair) are saying now is: "Don't stop 'just because' by now the whole of mankind is within nuclear orbit."

Nothing — nothing on earth or in heaven (or in the nether world) — nothing so demonstrates the fact that capitalism belongs in the dustbin of history as the fact that every new source of energy and every new instrument — from the atom to automation — only increases the contradictions, crises, and wars of capitalism.

The reason that the capitalistic world, from its division into five power blocs in World War I, came out of World War II with two, and only two, power blocs, nuclearly armed, is that there is just no room for more if this madhouse of "production for production's sake, where the dead labor of machines not the living labor of human beings has the decisive voice, is to continue". In fact, there is no room for two.

If Adenauer and DeGaulle are allowed the illusion that European capital can play a role independent of the two world colossi, it is only because Eisenhower won't move so long as Khrushchev has not made up his mind to do more than brag that he could throw down the gauntlet in the heart of Europe. As for Great Britain, the rapidity with which America chose Russia as bed partner during the Suez adventure, although it was also the time Russia bloodily crushed the Hungarian Revolution, was sufficient to cause the downfall of Eden. Ever since, Macmillan has behaved like he "knows his place" — a junior partner to the real Anglo-Saxon, i.e., American imperialism.

The African Revolutions have also reached the crossroad. On the one hand, the need for industrialization is leading into the vortex of the world economy, which means the pull of the two poles of world capital. On the other hand, the development of these revolutions as social, total revolutions permeated with, and permeating a new stage of consciousness — Marxist Humanism — can realize themselves fully when the proletariat in the technologically advanced countries become their collaborators by making their own revolutions. This, then, is a turning point in history, the world history of all mankind.

The only two poles with sufficient arms, H-bombs, missiles, to hold the whole world in their unholy hands pull at Africa where the Human factor, with the mightiest weapon of all — FREEDOM — has brought the two colossi fighting for world conquest to a momentary halt. The Big Two feel that now that Africa has reached the crossroads of industrialization, its independent role is at an end. Because, however, Russia has usurped the banner of Marxism, it can still give the appearance of being for the revolutions when, in actuality, it is in favor of one thing and one thing only — its domination of the world.

On both sides of the Iron Curtain, the pretense of being against colonialism is just that — a pretense — to foist on a "new" kind of slavery. If Russia cannot fool Hungary, it feels it can fool a land as far away from it — and as near to the other pole of world capital, which is the hated rule in this Hemisphere — as, say, Cuba.

Where Cuba shows the quagmire of Russian power, the Congo shows the quagmire of Western power. Both may yet, wittingly and/or unwittingly, set off World War III.

While Russia is maneuvering to get a foothold there, the other pole of capital is trying it under the guise of the UN. Just as Belgium, for months before it legally consented to independence, conspired with its puppet, Tshombe, to take out the Katanga wealth from under the fledgling Congo Republic, so America and the UN, which "opposed" Belgium, are aiming to keep that country divided.

What is the Congo to do under these circumstances? Where can it turn to escape a dismemberment at birth?

What Should Not Be Done

A review of the basic facts about capitalism will show what the Congo should not do.

Over 100 years ago, Marx saw that the greatest impediment to capitalism is capital itself. He developed this thought to show that, even if capitalism had not created its gravediggers in the proletariat, its very method of production, with its inherent tendency to a decline in rate of profit no matter how lush these are in mass, would bring about its collapse.

That seemed so fantastic that even a great revolutionary like Rosa Luxemburg commented bitterly that in that case "We might as well wait for the extinction of the moon."

But, like so much of Marx's abstract theory, it is now all stark fact. The so-called miracle of West German production is due to the fact that its accumulated capital was so totally destroyed by the Allies that production after World War II started on the basis of new technological revolutions. Or, put another way, the new technological revolutions have so deteriorated the value of accumulated capital that there is not enough capital in the world to reorganize the advanced economies (read: destroy the existing capital so that production can proceed on the most competitive basis), much less seriously industrialize the underdeveloped countries.

That is why capitalism is constantly returning to its beginnings in slavery.

In a word, the first and basic feature, temporary as well as perennial — primitive, much more primitive than tribal warfare, despite, or rather because of all the "sophistication" of H-bombs, Automation, and "National Purpose" — the first and basic and perennial factor of the continued existence of capitalism is the startling, though centuries-old, truth that the indirect slavery of the wage worker is based on direct chattel slavery.

It was ever so — just as its "rosy dawn" had begun with the

transformation of Africa into a warring country for the hunting of black skins, so its nature, monopoly stage was signalled by its imperialist dismemberment of that whole continent. If, between its rosy dawn and senile maturity, there appeared -- with the Industrial, American and French Revolutions -- a brief period of freedom, there was America to keep exposing this dependence of capitalist wealth on direct slavery since here both were within the same frontiers. A Civil War had to be fought before ever there was an end to so blatant a relationship.

On the other hand, if American dollar-imperialism seemed milder than the spoliation of Africa by the Europeans, both had one thing in common -- they went to plunder and rob, not to industrialize the countries.

This is capitalist class peace leading ever more inevitably to total war.

The world's memory is not so short that it has forgotten the Nazi identification of State Plan with Auschwitz and Belsen as well as with total war. Yet nothing fundamental has changed -- except this: the extermination of a race can now be extended to the annihilation of humanity as a whole.

This is all that is "new" in post-war capitalism, state or private.

The not-so-crafty Mr. Eisenhower may have fooled himself that his preoccupation with "balancing the budget" is a manifestation of how "different" is private capitalism from its state variety. It only proves how ungrateful Republican capitalists are for the State intervention in Rooseveltian times that saved the capitalist system.

Balancing the budget, indeed! First of all, Eisenhower isn't and can't balance the budget -- but only the interest on the national debt which will keep this generation and countless of future generations enchained. As Marx put it, the only "wealth" that is "collective" is the national debt! And there, the tax structure shows that some are definitely "more equal" than others.

In all its exploitative, conniving life, capitalism has never achieved a balanced budget -- not ever -- neither in its primitive origins when it drove the peasant from the land and into the factory, and forced the newly created proletariat to give it credit, nor in its lush maturity.

Only after expanding a minimum of a week of his labor power, was the worker "paid" -- say for four hours out of the 12-hour day of toil. If the work-day, through a century of struggle -- has been reduced to eight hours, the capitalist knows how to pay for only two, and appropriates free the other six hours.

On top of the repetitive weekly credit, capitalism has, long before the Russian State Plan and Roosevelt's New Deal, piled up a national debt that no generation has been able to pay, so that each bequeathes it to the next one. In a word, long before you are even of age to work, with your very first breath of life in fact, you are already saddled with a debt of billions -- \$272 billion

to be exact.

Again, some are more equal than others in this so-called "people's capitalism." The overbalance of profits and underbalance of workers' wages leads also to the unemployed army. It is only when capitalism was threatened at its vitals that capitalism thought it better to undertake deficit financing -- not only for war financing but also for so-called "Welfare State" deficit financing.

To this day, dull, golf-club-swinging Eisenhower has never reconciled himself to this as his opposition to the Ferrand Bill shows. He goes on preaching "frugality" to the workers and aged, but he and his capitalistic playmates have never practiced it either in their luxurious living, or, what is a great deal more decisive, in the ever-greater accumulation of constant capital. Where has that led to, even in the richest country in the world?

(1) Three recessions during the "continuing boom" -- 1949-50; 1953-4; 1957-8

(2) Stagnation in the rate of growth -- we're hardly keeping up with population growth, much less growing at the rate of Russia or Western Europe or Japan

(3) Economics of world tension -- which affects the underdeveloped economies thus:

Despite the aid, alleged and real, that the advanced countries are giving the underdeveloped areas, the truth is the inequality between rich and poor countries is actually increasing. At the same time the industrial proletariat of the advanced countries has not much to show in gains. It is here, in the relationship of labor to capital, that we have to look for the causes of the world crisis.

There is no escape, however, "East" or "West." In the hope that if only One exploited the whole world there would be room, Russia and America are vying to be "that One."

III. The New Stage of Consciousness and the Struggle Against War

As against the degeneracy of world capitalism in production and in ideology, a new stage of consciousness, unfurling the banner of Marxist Humanism, was reached in the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 which culminated in the Hungarian Workers' Councils. This practical movement -- historic, epochal exertion -- to realize the philosophy of Marxist Humanism symbolized a stage of consciousness that is world-wide.

Indicators of that abound not only in the creative moments of revolution but on the day-to-day scene in production, such as the American workers' battle against Automation.

It is here that worker and youth, black and white, national and international, East and West, can find high, common ground.

How far in advance America of the 1960s is over Russia of the 1920s, directly after it succeeded in its proletarian revolution, can be seen from the fact that even as great as Lenin's, one so thoroughly imbued with the self-activity of the masses not only against Tsarism and the bourgeois government of Kerensky, but also against its own workers' state as it was becoming bureaucratically deformed, nevertheless still thought of engineers, and even of Taylorism, as something "progressive" that could be "used" by a workers' state.

That duality in Lenin is proof of the confines of an age that not even a revolutionary genius can transcend.

The average American worker, confronted with Automation, could now tell this genius something he never knew, and could not have known in all its implication, in the technological confines of backward Russia.

Today we see this negative feature in all the underdeveloped economies, not only where a Castro is ready to embrace totalitarian Russia and/or China, but in Senegal where a Leopold Senghor did half-unfurl a Marxist Humanist banner as "one" of the elements of an indigenous African Socialism -- only to bring this African Socialism into the confines of a DeGaulle France!

Clearly, then, the duality in Lenin, which was transformed into its total opposite by the Communists in power, was done so, not out of bad or good intentions, but out of the objective pull of the new stage of world economy which sucks the underdeveloped economies into its exploitative stranglehold.

While I attribute nothing good to a Stalin or Khrushchev, they did not affect but only reflect this degenerate stage of capitalist development. All the more reason for the uncompromising, total stand of Marxist Humanists in advanced and backward technologies alike.

What Can Be Done

It is for this reason that we began the answer to the Congo problem by showing what should not be done. How we can turn to what can be done

First and foremost, do not lose the specific revolutionary moment created in your own country by the spontaneous action of the masses. Without confidence in the masses there can be no new society since they are the only ones who can create it. Whether Lumumba can extricate himself now without falling into Khrushchev's octopus-like embrace remains to be seen. No one can retreat, when necessary, unless he has first made sure not to pass off retreat as victory. Contrast Lenin's retreat to N.E.P., while warning the proletariat that this may mean capitalism if they do not run production to a man, to Stalin's tight embrace of state capitalism while passing it off as socialism.

Secondly, just as capitalism cannot undo its natural dependence on slavery and war, and in its life-and-death struggle with the tidal wave of revolution is prepared to unleash the nuclear holocaust, so must the peoples of the world stay its bloody hand with their anti-war struggle.

So total and incontrovertible is this desire for peace on the part of the peoples of the world, that even the rulers preparing for war speak of "peace."

At the same time, the radicals who oppose war, as is the case with the Trotskyists, actually line up with Russia. That is why it will no longer do to repeat such enticing slogans as "The enemy is in your own country." The slogan is a good one, but it is not good enough. It may have sufficed before the world was divided into two power blocs. Presently it is a trap to suck one into the other nuclear orbit, and thus doom both the advanced economies and the Afro-Asian-Latin American liberation movements.

History proceeds in devious ways, and what appears as tragedy once, reappears as comedy the second time. Consider the farce of Trotskyists, Socialists, Johnsonites, without any of the power of the Stalins, Mao, Khrushchevs, acting like them. Let the psychoanalysts figure out whether these erstwhile Marxists have been bit by the power bug or just simple undiluted cowardice.

We have no time to waste on ex-Marxists or Fidelists who tailend or whitewash Communist tyranny. We have more important things to do. We must, on both sides of the Iron Curtain as well as in the Afro-Asian and Latin American worlds, show that unless you begin with a change in production relations, nothing else changes either.

In a word, it is insufficient to declare what you are against without declaring what you are for.

[Preparation for war against Russia tomorrow is all-out war against the American workers today, tomorrow, and the day after. That is why the point

is not who throws or will throw the first stone, especially when that first stone will be the H-bomb. The point is: are you with the people struggling for a totally new way of life, or with capitalism fighting to perpetuate itself, although it has long since outlived its usefulness. At the same time, so universal is the feeling against the war that even the rulers play the game of peace and disarmament conferences. That cannot therefore be what distinguishes us from them. Private or state capitalism will spare nothing to keep itself on top and the worker at the bottom. Armed with the H-bomb and the missile, they are ready to destroy civilization itself rather than allow the new working class society to emerge.

What does distinguish us from them is not what we are against, but what we are for. To the barbarism of the war we pose the new society. But the old radicals also say they are for a new society. Indeed, they would want it -- IF you would give it to them on a silver platter on which all workers kneeled, asking "to be led." What they all forget is that a new society is THE human endeavor or it is nothing.

To achieve a truly human life, we must not only be with the workers because they and only they oppose the war to the end, because they and only they are the future society, but also because we do not shift to the shoulders of the workers what is our task, the theoretic clearing of the ground for the reconstruction of society on new beginnings.

The unfurling of the Marxist Humanist banner means the kind of organization of one's thinking from which action follows, action that will merge with the spontaneous self-activity of the masses to establish on this earth a society on truly human foundations where the population to a man will run production and the state, and thus hold destiny in its own hands.

Thirdly, with this we can retrieve the positive in Lenin, not only in general, but in the particular which confronts us today in the underdeveloped economies. This great revolutionary was the first to unfurl a new banner not alone for these countries but for mankind. A new era for mankind could be opened, he said, from the East where live the colored people who constitute the overwhelming majority of mankind. For this he was willing to subordinate his successful proletarian revolution IF world capitalism could be overthrown from that direction. This IF can become the reality of the 1960s.

Fourthly, reality, rational reality feeling the pull of the future cannot be contained. It is challenging the status quo.

It is transforming the Biblical saying, "A little child shall lead them," into the fact of today: the youth is leading us -- the youth, uninhibited by traditions of old, and yet representing the link from the limited freedom of the past to the total freedom-to-be, not in the distant future, but in our day. The youth, from their vantage point, see what the workers see on the inhuman production line: That the greatest source of energy is not technical but human.

These then are the roads to be followed: (1) Hold tight to the revolutionary moment created spontaneously by the masses in your own country. (2) Stay the bloody hand that would unleash a nuclear war, and free yourself from the tentacles of the old radicals who would hold on to one or the other pole of capital. (3) Develop the new force for mankind's liberation in the awakening of the colored peoples of the world. (4) Recognize that just as the greatest source of energy is not technical but human, and the greatest weapon in the world is not a bomb but the pull of freedom, so the ever newer and deeper layers of the working people now include the youth. (5) Finally, raise high the banner of the new stage of consciousness of the world's freedom fighters: Marxist Humanism.

The Hungarian 11-year olds who knew how to make Molotov cocktails to knock out the Russian machine guns, knew, despite their silencing by the armed might of Communist totalitarianism, to sound the bell of freedom so loudly that it was heard the world around — and never forgotten.

Soon after, that other totalitarian monster, Verwoerd's South Africa, was also jolted by the black unarmed millions seeking freedom. And DeGaulle is never allowed to forget the North African Freedom Fighters.

From Hungary to South Africa, from North Africa to South Korea, from West Europe to East Europe, from Japan to South U.S.A., the youth have indeed moved the question of historic future into the historic present.

(The youth who want freedom now, and the worker who battles automated capitalism to unite mental and manual work in the human being, are engaged in nothing short of the transformation of philosophy into fact.)

Not accidentally the workers' struggle against Automation resulted in the Automation pamphlet which, as Angela Terrano rightly points out, links up all we have done "directly with their thinking." Indeed, the new world stage of proletarian consciousness will be the central theme of the sequel to MARXISM AND FREEDOM.

(The youth, too, are reaching out for a channel for their energy which would make of them the type of do-ers who are engaged not only in the overthrow of the old, but in the construction of the new, the totally, historically, presently new human relations that total up to a change in society.

If the youth must die, it must not be in vain. It must be for a cause that matches their courage.

To combine daring and thinking is the mold of the Marxist Humanist in particular, and Marxist Humanism in general, not alone as philosophy but as fact.)

This final highway that greets the African Revolutions at the cross roads is the one also that links with the struggles of the American workers, and

the workers in the advanced economies of Western Europe and Russia, and points to high common ground for the reconstruction of society on totally new, truly human foundations.

There is no other way out for the peoples of the world, whether in backward economies or advanced, East or West, North or South.

There is no other way out of the nuclear holocaust.

It is the one and only road to peace.

###

Convention Speech, September 3, 1960