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A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: HERBERT APTHEKER; Associate Editor: HYMAN LUMER

Notes of the Month

By Hyman Lumer

I. THE SIT-INS: NEGRO STUDENTS SHOW THE WAY

"WE ARE NOT AFRAID"

ON FEBRUARY 1, in Greensboro, North Carolina, four Negro college students occupied seats at a Woolworth lunch counter and asked to be served. When they were refused, there ensued a sit-down demonstration by a larger body of Negro students.

By the end of the month, the sit-in movement had spread to 37 cities in 7 southern states. Woolworth, Kress and other chain variety stores were being widely picketed, and in a number of areas boycott movements were developing. On March 1, nearly 1,200 students in Montgomery, Alabama, marched to the steps of the state capitol, where they prayed and sang the "Star Spangled Banner." This inspired similar marches and demonstrations involving thousands of students, in other southern cities.

The movement quickly won the support of adult Negro leaders and organizations in the South and elsewhere. By mid-March it had begun to expand into a movement against all forms of segregation. And on March 17, the NAACP issued a call for a national boycott of Woolworth, Kress, Kresge and Grant stores.

In the rest of the country it speedily gave rise to a flood of supporting actions. In scores of colleges and universities, supporting movements emerged. In a growing number of cities, picketing of chain variety stores was organized, by student groups, chapters of the NAACP and the Congress of Racial Equality, and a number of other organizations. In New York, picket lines were organized by locals of the ILGWU, and in New Jersey by IUE and UAW locals. In other places union officials and organizations joined in similar actions. The Episcopal Society for Culture and Racial Unity expressed its support and commendation of the movement, as did

other church groups and ministers.

Such in barest outline, has been the meteoric upsurge of the sit-in movement—a crusade that has taken the country by storm.

"We are not afraid." So do the Negro students respond to those who would torment them. Their calm courage and heroism have evoked the highest admiration everywhere, and throughout the country growing numbers of Americans, white as well as Negro, are rallying to their support in what has become the focal struggle in our country today.

RACIST VIOLENCE

Alarmed and frightened by the scope and momentum of the movement, the white supremacist ruling elements in the South have reacted in the one way they know—to crush it at all costs. They have expelled students in growing numbers from state-supported colleges. They have resorted to "legal" devices and maneuvers, to wholesale arrests, and increasingly to outright violence and terror.

In some states, "anti-trespass" laws were hastily passed, forbidding anyone to remain on any premises after being asked to leave and punishing violations with as much as a year's imprisonment. On this and a host of other legal pretexts—"conspiracy" to violate state trade and commerce laws, "conduct or language calcu-

lated to provoke a breach of the peace," disorderly conduct, and even anti-mask laws originally directed against the Ku Klux Klan—more than 1,000 students have been arrested and many convicted and jailed or fined.

More and more, tear gas and water hoses have been used to break up peaceful demonstrations. In one especially outrageous instance, in Orangeburg, South Carolina, this was followed by arresting 350 students and herding them into a stockade. Increasingly, police forces are being organized in outright storm-trooper fashion. In Montgomery, Alabama, one observer speaks of the "almost military coordination of the police forces." (*New York Herald Tribune*, March 17.) He describes, too, the emergence of vigilantism. "Groups of mounted horsemen," he writes, "are beginning to appear in posse-like formations through the streets in various places outside the city."

Thus encouraged, there has been a steady rise in violence committed by white hoodlums who beat up demonstrators, wield baseball bats on defenseless Negro women and are permitted to break up sit-ins and other demonstrations with impunity. Klan terrorism has likewise been mounting.

The racist officialdom in the South has made it plain that it will stop at nothing—that it intends, if need be, to drown the movement in blood.

But the more the violence and threats have grown, the firmer has become the determination of the Negro students to continue the struggle. And in the North, protests are multiplying and funds are being raised for defense. The NAACP alone has already raised some \$40,000 and has undertaken the legal defense of all arrested students.

NATURE OF THE MOVEMENT

Despite the suddenness with which it sprang up, the sit-in movement is clearly no passing phenomenon. It is a major phase in the advancing struggle for full equality, which has its roots in the impact of the world national liberation movement, in the youth marches for desegregated schools, in the Montgomery bus boycott and other recent developments. But it is no mere continuation of previous struggles; rather it represents the attainment of a *new* phase of the Negro people's movement.

The essence of this new phase is expressed in the words of the Southern Regional Council, that from now on "segregation cannot be maintained in the South, short of continuous coercion and the intolerable social order which would result." It is expressed also in the following words of the Reverend Ralph D. Abernathy of the First Baptist Church of Montgomery: "Our movement will not be crushed. No legisla-

tion or show of force can compel the Negro ever again to accept second-class citizenship. His mind is free. The spirit of freedom has been caught by the young people. Nothing will stop them now."

This is more than an expression of determination; it is a statement of fact. We cannot, of course, foretell the precise outcome of the immediate struggle. It is without precedent in many ways, not only in its scope and the extent of the supporting actions it has generated, but also in its direct assault on the very citadels of Jim Crow. Its basic significance, however, lies in the fact that it has ushered in a process of continuous active mass resistance which will persist until the fight to end all segregation is won. The demand for full democracy in the South has been placed firmly on the order of the day.

The movement did not originate as a nationally planned series of actions; rather, it spread by infection of example. Nevertheless there was a common approach and a common strategy, based on the concept of passive or non-violent resistance as projected principally by the Reverend Martin Luther King and the Congress of Racial Equality.

There has been not a little confusion concerning the attitude of Communists to the concept of passive resistance, centering in a view that it is somehow contrary to the principles and methods of the Communist Party. Thus, NAACP executive

secretary Roy Wilkins states: "For one thing, these protests are passive, and it is not a Communist technique to be passive." Others, more crudely, simply put it that Communists stand for violence, not non-violence.

This, of course, is not so. Communists do not advocate violence, though neither do they run from it when it threatens or occurs. What they stand for is effective mass action. And picketing, sit-downs and boycotts are all time-honored techniques of mass struggle, which Communists have always advocated and supported. At the same time, they do not restrict themselves to one or another form of mass action.

In the present movement, new forms and techniques of mass struggle are being fashioned. We should study these and learn from them. In any case, the Communist Party will at all times give its unstinting support to the mass struggles of the Negro people for their freedom, in whatever forms these may develop.

The current struggles give fresh evidence of the renewed and growing vitality of the student movement, among white as well as among Negro students. Under the deadening impact of McCarthyism and the illusions fostered by the relative prosperity of the postwar years, this movement had for some time been at a low ebb. More recently, however, it has been very much on the upgrade, as shown in the fight against loyalty oaths, in the crusade against

compulsory military training, and particularly in the participation in the youth marches for desegregated schools. In all these activities, the National Student Association—the leading recognized student organization in the country—has been playing a prominent part, and today its role in relation to the sit-in movement is a most outstanding one. So, too, has been that of the National Student Christian Federation. The re-emergence of the student movement as a vigorous force on the American scene is a development whose importance should not be underestimated. Nor should the fact that it comes to the fore especially in relation to the struggle for Negro rights be overlooked.

A NATIONAL ISSUE

A notable feature of the sit-in movement has been its effect on the white population in the South. So preeminently reasonable are the demands, so obvious is the sheer idiocy of permitting people to eat side by side standing up but not sitting down, so exemplary and inspiring of respect has been the conduct of the Negro students, that a greater degree of white support or neutrality has been won than in any previous struggle.

The strength of the Negro people's movement in the South today and the potential economic power it wields through the boycott should

not be minimized. Some small gains have already been registered, such as the desegregation of lunch counters in San Antonio, Texas and the strong stand of Governor Collins of Florida for such desegregation.

Nevertheless, it is plain that decisive victory cannot be won in the South alone or by the Negro people alone. For this is a *national* issue, affecting the democratic rights of *all* the American people, and victory can be secured only by the organization of struggle on a national scale, and particularly in the North—a struggle embracing all democratic elements, Negro and white. Indeed, if ever Negro-white unity was imperative, that time is now.

In this respect, however, there is still a long way to go. The bulk of the labor leadership has yet to stand up and be counted. There has also been a deep silence in the halls of Congress, where a disgraceful scuttling of meaningful civil rights legislation is now going on, and among the aspirants to the Presidency.

Especially shocking has been the attitude displayed by President Eisenhower. Utterly silent on these issues until directly questioned about them, he answered by taking refuge in legalisms. He understood, he said, that constitutional guarantees against discrimination applied only in public institutions. He seemed to place the onus for whatever violence might appear, upon the Negro people. He supported the right to peaceful

demonstrations, but proposed to do nothing to guarantee it, since he believed there was already too much interference by the federal government in private affairs. He could suggest only local bi-racial conferences in southern cities—a procedure which has long proven its futility. In short, the federal government had no legal responsibility in the matter, and he himself had little interest in it.

This shameful outburst brought forth from *New York Times* columnist James Reston the following acid comment (March 18):

There are a lot of people here who . . . think the President, one hundred years after Appomattox, ought to be willing to say at least a word for the Negro trying to eat a hamburger next to a white man in Atlanta, and they insist that the next President, whoever he is, will need to use all his powers to meet the problems of the Sixties.

The key to victory lies in federal intervention. There is plainly no force today in southern government, state or local, which will uphold constitutional rights. Only the imposition of the full weight of the federal government can successfully cope with the ironclad determination of southern racist officials to flout the Constitution and the law of the land. Even the passage of federal civil rights legislation is of little value as long as it is to be administered by these southern courts and officials.

What is demanded is effective enforcement action by the federal government, and this means in the first place by the Administration.

The situation calls for immediate action by the Department of Justice to outlaw the Ku Klux Klan, the White Citizens' Councils and all other such organizations. It calls for the arrest and prosecution of Governor Patterson of Alabama and all others in public office who defy the Constitution and the law. It calls for direct federal enforcement through federal marshals, including the appointment of Negroes as marshals—in a word, for whatever federal action is needed to do the job.

A national crusade to accomplish these aims is on the order of the day, a crusade in which progressives and especially Communists must occupy a place in the front ranks.

II. THE CHANGING ECONOMIC SCENE

DANGER SIGNALS

The year 1960 was ushered in by a wave of predictions of a new upsurge in the economy. The steel strike had, so to speak, wiped the slate clean. Now we were about to enter "the year of the New Boom," the gateway to the "Roaring Sixties."

The gross national product, it was variously estimated, would rise from \$480 billion in 1959 to somewhere between \$510 billion and \$526 billion

in 1960. Forecasts of steel production ranged from 120 to 135 million tons, compared to 93 million tons in 1959. Passenger car sales would jump from 6 million in 1959 to 7 million or more in 1960. And so on.

These optimistic views were soon to be greatly modified, however. In early February a less cheerful note began to be sounded, and by the end of the month a decidedly more pessimistic outlook prevailed. By February 14, the *New York Times* economic commentator Edwin L. Dale, Jr. was writing that "there are mutterings of a possible downturn in the second half of the year and there is talk that the next recession will be worse—not milder—than the last." On the same date, the AFL-CIO executive council issued a statement warning that the boom would start to slacken in July and predicting a recession in 1961. And on February 29, the *New Republic* commented editorially: "Signs that the boom has moderated before it has properly begun are all around us."

Signs of a slowdown have indeed begun to multiply. Chief among them are the following:

1. The Federal Reserve Board index of industrial production slipped from 168 in January to 167 in February.

2. Car sales in February failed to meet expectations, leading to a 10 per cent cut in production from the volume originally scheduled. Four-day weeks and shutdowns began to

make their appearance in some plants.

3. New orders for steel began to level off sooner than expected, in part because of the drop in auto production and in part because inventory building was being halted short of the pre-strike levels. Steel output declined somewhat in February.

4. Stock prices have been falling since the first of the year.

5. Housing construction is leveling off and only 1.2 million housing starts are forecast for 1960 as against 1.3 million in 1959.

6. Farm income, which fell 16 per cent in 1959, is continuing to decline.

These and other developments have led to a considerable scaling down of estimates. New orders for steel, it is now anticipated, will soon start to fall off and steel output, averaging nearly 95 per cent of capacity in the first quarter of 1960, will drop to 84 per cent in the second quarter. Estimates of 1960 auto sales have been cut to between 6 and 6½ million cars. And the view is now widely held that industrial production will reach its peak by midyear and then level off, with some foreseeing a downturn in 1961 and others as early as late 1960.

There are still others who retain their optimism. They contend that what has happened is simply a sobering-up following excessive exuberance, and that the slowdown portends a longer, if less spectacular, period of good business. They point

to the fact that the softening is confined mainly to durable goods, while production of non-durables continues to advance. They point also to the record levels of personal income, presumably indicating prospects for a growing volume of consumer spending.

These grounds seem questionable, however. It is enough to recall that the 1957-58 decline was centered mainly in durable goods, and that personal income continued to rise through the third quarter of 1957, after production had evened off for some months.

At the same time, not all signs point downward. The Department of Commerce estimates that spending for new plant and equipment will rise 14 per cent in 1960—a substantial increase over earlier estimates. Auto sales are still running more than 10 per cent ahead of 1959. Mortgage money is becoming more plentiful, and this may serve to lessen the expected drop in housing construction. There has been some increase in imports recently.

We cannot at this point undertake to venture predictions as to the time or magnitude of a general economic downturn. It is clear, however, that for the present production is leveling off, and that the immediate future will see cutbacks in steel, auto and some other industries. The steel strike, by reducing production for part of 1959, served to shift that production into 1960 and thus to inflate

the figures for the early part of the year. But the inflation has proved to be short-lived.

UNEMPLOYMENT

A particular cause for concern in the present situation is the persistence of a high rate of unemployment throughout the boom. In 1959, according to the official figures, unemployment averaged 5.5 per cent—nearly as high as in the depression years 1949 and 1954. Even if we allow for the effects of the steel strike the rate remains well over 5 per cent, whereas in 1958 it was only 4.3 per cent. By February 1960 the seasonally adjusted rate had fallen only to 4.8 per cent compared to 3.9 per cent in February 1957.

But these figures alone hardly begin to tell the story. The increased seriousness of unemployment is shown also in the rise in long-term joblessness. In January of this year, those out of work 15 weeks or longer totalled 910,000, and in February 965,000, in contrast to 500,000 in January, 1957. There has been no material decline in this number since the spring of 1959. Nor is this merely a recent trend. Columnist Sylvia Porter points out (*New York Post*, February 19, 1960) that in 1948 the average duration of unemployment was 8.6 weeks; now it is 11.3 weeks. In 1948 the proportion of the unemployed who were out of work six months or more was 5.6 per cent;

by the latest count it was 9.1 per cent.

Concealed in the national averages, too, is the shockingly high rate of unemployment among Negro workers. In January, 1960 the official figure for non-whites was 11.7 per cent—more than double that for whites. Thus, even according to such figures, which grossly understate the picture, close to one in every eight Negro workers is out of a job—and this in a period of boom!

Especially alarming is the continued growth of chronic unemployment in the so-called distressed areas. Thanks chiefly to runaway shops and the displacement of workers by machines, these areas—principally textile and coal mining centers—have for a number of years been marked by a growing army of jobless workers. Today many of them have become sites of unrelieved human misery and degradation rivaling the worst years of the depression of the thirties.

In a statement issued on December 8, the Senate Special Committee on Unemployment Problems said: "The rate of unemployment is over 25 per cent in many counties throughout the nation. The conditions under which hundreds of thousands of Americans are living today is shocking. . . ."

One of the worst areas is West Virginia, with the highest rate of unemployment in the country. The appalling destitution among unem-

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employed workers there was graphically described at hearings of a Senate subcommittee held a year ago. Typical is the testimony of Mrs. T. R. Fulton, a Morgantown social worker:

I have been in these homes, and these are the things I see: People living in houses without heat, houses without roofs, houses without utilities. I see children going to school without shoes and without warm clothing. I see houses and homes where children have nothing to eat except surplus commodities and the canned goods which their parents put up in the summer that they got from the fields and the bushes.

This is as bad as I saw in 1932 and 1934 in Baltimore. This is the first time I have actually seen children without shoes in the snow. It is worse.

Today, conditions in these localities are even more critical, as the recent hearings of the Senate Special Committee on Unemployment Problems clearly show. They are portrayed with special vividness in a series of articles in the *New York Post* (February 22-28) by Fern Marja, who visited homes of unemployed workers in West Virginia and found hunger, suffering and demoralization that beggars description. She pictures in particular the catastrophic effects of such conditions on the children in these families. And her account shows strikingly the shameful inadequacy of existing unemployment compensation and relief provisions to cope with such situations.

Such conditions are by no means confined to West Virginia. What is more, they are now beginning to spread to new areas, among them major steel and auto centers. To be sure, according to the Labor Department the number of major areas of substantial unemployment (more than 6 per cent) dropped from 76 in January, 1959 to 31 in January of this year. But included in these 31 are such cities as Detroit, Pittsburgh and Buffalo in the North and such a southern industrial center as Birmingham. Here, too, chronic mass unemployment is growing. And here, too, unless serious steps to check these developments are taken, the end result may well be conditions as bad as those in West Virginia. Truly, the "distressed areas" have come to constitute a most pressing national problem.

If this is the unemployment picture now, what will it be when the expected cutbacks in steel and auto production and in housing construction take place? And what will it be when an over-all economic downturn sets in? Plainly, if these things materialize we will be in for a considerably higher level of unemployment than any we have experienced so far since the end of the war, and with it a pronounced aggravation of the problem of chronic unemployment. These questions highlight the growing urgency of the fight for jobs, as a fight to be waged not alone in terms of a generalized national

problem, but in terms of the concrete realities in each locality, and with major attention directed to the areas of chronic depression and misery.

ECONOMIC ISSUES IN THE ELECTIONS

Occurring as it does in a presidential election year, the changing economic picture may well become a decisive factor in determining the outcome of the elections. Any serious signs of downturn before November would obviously greatly enhance the chances for a Democratic victory.

Sharp differences between the two parties have already emerged. In the Congressional Joint Economic Committee, the Democratic and Republican members have issued separate reports. The Democrats have vigorously attacked the Eisenhower "tight money" policies and have called for easing of credit and more liberal government spending, in addition to tax reforms, a farm subsidy program and other measures. But their interest, particularly that of the Johnson-Rayburn wing, is evidently centered in using these issues as political capital in the elections, rather than in securing action in Congress.

The AFL-CIO, in its Washington legislative conference in January, adopted a program including a \$1.25 minimum wage, aid to depressed areas, health benefits for the aged, improved unemployment benefits, in-

creased school construction, a greatly expanded housing program, overhauling of the tax system, protection of family farmers and other steps. The recent executive council statement reiterates some of these points. Action to implement such a program, however, remains at a minimum. Moreover, it is weakened by continued demands for increased military spending.

Today all other questions are overshadowed by the momentous civil rights battles. But these economic issues should not on that account be forgotten. And certainly, with the leveling off of production and rising unemployment in the coming months, they will increasingly press to the fore.

III. EISENHOWER'S LATIN AMERICAN TOUR

President Eisenhower's recent trip to Latin America, covering Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, was hailed by the press in glowing superlatives. It was proclaimed an unmatched personal triumph for him. His receptions were the biggest ever accorded a foreign visitor to these countries. It brought the United States and Latin American countries closer together than ever before. And so on.

True, Eisenhower's reception was in striking contrast to that accorded Nixon in 1958, testifying in part to the important changes in the

world picture since then and to the identification of Eisenhower in the minds of many people with the cause of peace. But the accolades all ended on a sobering note: words must now be matched with deeds. Thus, the *New York Herald Tribune* of March 10 warned:

What the Latin Americans want is proof that we are serious in what we say about them. If we do not offer this proof, then all the phrases, all the gestures, all the by-the-yard "good will" will prove a malevolent corrosive on the chains of friendship which we have only begun to forge.

In such warnings lies the key to understanding the purpose and meaning of the tour. Injected into the midst of a busy schedule, with a European tour and a summit conference ahead, it reflects the changed situation in Latin America and the mounting concern in American ruling circles over their position there. Resistance to American domination has grown immensely, and the old methods can no longer stem the tide.

In Argentina, the capitulation of President Frondizi to the degrading terms imposed by the State Department as a condition for loans has aroused a storm bordering on civil war. Brazil has since refused to submit to such terms even at the cost of being denied loans altogether. In Colombia and Venezuela, hated dictators were overthrown. And

the culminating point came in the Cuban revolution, which has become the heart and symbol of rebellion in all Latin America, posing a serious threat to Wall Street's grip there.

Equally disturbing to big business in this country is the growth of Soviet influence in Latin America. When Brazil's request for American credits was rejected, a mission was sent to Moscow to negotiate a three-year \$112 million trade agreement, the first between the two countries. A much ruder shock was the recent trade agreement between the Soviet Union and Cuba, calling for Soviet purchase of 5 million tons of Cuban sugar over a five-year period and advancing a credit of \$100 million to Cuba.

Such are the developments which prompted the trip.

In each of the countries he visited, Eisenhower encountered a universal apprehension concerning United States intervention in Cuba. He was compelled to give repeated assurances that the United States had no intention of intervening in the internal affairs of any Latin American country. Similarly, he met with widespread resentment over the State Department's support of dictators, which he sought to counter with the flat assertion that such charges were false, despite the glaring evidence to the contrary.

The President was confronted also with a series of urgent economic

demands, which these countries have been pressing for some time. Thanks to sharp decreases in the prices of the raw materials on whose export their economies depend, they have been suffering from growing deficits in the balance of trade and from galloping inflation. This has given rise to insistent demands for stabilization of prices and markets for these commodities. In Chile, President Alessandri also urged action to end the debilitating armaments expenditures, which consume more than 25% of the budgets of the Latin American countries and seriously hinder their economic advance.

Most prominent was the demand for United States assistance in economic development through long-term, low interest credits with no strings attached. This was formulated in the most comprehensive terms in the Brazilian-initiated plan, Operation Pan America. A small and reluctant step in this direction had been taken by the United States in the formation of the Inter-American Development Bank with a capital of \$1 billion. But what was now being demanded was outlays over a period of years of ten to twenty times that amount. Much resentment was expressed over the fact that only 4% of United States foreign aid expenditures had gone to Latin America, and it was charged that these expenditures were being used to promote the cold war rather

than to help other countries.

At the same time, Eisenhower was compelled to face the realities of Soviet economic competition. This was placed, politely but clearly, by Brazil's President Kubitschek in these words:

. . . our confidence in the present relaxation of tensions does not lead us to forget that the debate between the two solutions proposed to the world goes on, now clearly on a different level . . .

The so-called cause of the West is invited to substantiate that the free enterprise and the life pattern we adopt in this hemisphere are not inconsistent with the material and spiritual redemption of the populations in the underdeveloped areas totaling two-thirds of mankind.

More bluntly put, the United States was invited to offer something more than it had previously provided, else the Latin American governments would be forced increasingly to the alternative of looking to the Soviet Union.

To these demands, Eisenhower responded chiefly with vague generalities. Stabilization of raw materials prices has generally been brushed aside by the State Department (obviously it is to the advantage of the monopolies to be able to drive these prices down when they can), and on this occasion Eisenhower went no further than to acknowledge that a problem exists. He

expressed agreement with the general idea of disarmament. On the question of economic assistance, he said only that the United States would strive to increase its aid to whatever extent it could and insisted that all foreign aid, wherever dispensed, was at least indirectly of help to Latin America.

To the Soviet economic challenge his reply was: "The production of goods—either capital or consumer goods—is not an end in itself." And further: "Faced with no other choice, we would choose poverty in freedom rather than prosperity in slavery." This false alternative, be it noted, was posed before people with an average per capita income of some \$200 a year, and moreover only too keenly aware of the throttling of democracy which is the hallmark of imperialist domination.

The President's protestations that the United States stood for non-intervention were negated by his declaration that "we would consider it intervention in the affairs of an American state if any power, whether by invasion, coercion or subversion, succeeded in denying freedom of choice to any people of our sister republics." In short, under the cloak of combatting "subversion" the door to American intervention is left open.

Thus, Eisenhower offered no significant alteration of United States policy in Latin America. But this does not mean that nothing is

changed. On the contrary, the tour itself grew out of a recognition that accommodation to a new relationship of forces was necessary—that new methods must be sought and some real concessions made.

What was sought, among other things, was to extract in return for such concessions continued adherence to Wall Street and perpetuation of an anti-Cuban coalition. And if direct intervention in Cuba is rendered more difficult, other methods of undermining the Castro regime can be pursued. This was recently illustrated when most Latin American countries announced they would boycott a world economic conference of under-developed countries called by Cuba for this fall. The *New York Times* account (March 7, 1960) states: "It is an open secret at the United Nations that the United States is discouraging participation in the conference on the ground that the anti-American attitude taken by Premier Fidel Castro would interfere with Washington's plans for increased economic assistance to Latin America."

Since the tour, relations between the United States and Cuba have grown steadily worse. In this, the question of American acts of intervention has been a central factor. In addition, there are repeated threats of reducing Cuba's sugar quota and other economic sanctions. And despite Eisenhower's disclaimers, direct armed intervention in

Cuba is a real and growing danger.

A program of genuine aid to the Latin American countries is vitally needed. But such a program requires assistance to the Cuban people in their heroic efforts, and not campaigns to undermine them. It requires removal of the multitude of important quotas and tariffs which now exist on Latin American goods, as well as stabilization of their prices. It requires adequate long-term development loans, without attached conditions that state-owned enterprises be turned over to United States trusts or that the living standards of the working people be wrecked by "austerity" programs. It requires opening the door to trade with all countries, including the lands of socialism. And it requires an end to the reactionary anti-Communist campaign, which serves as a cloak for fastening the grip of exploitation more firmly on the Latin American people.

Such a program is incompatible with the cold-war policies of big business, and with the continuation of huge arms budgets and preparations

for nuclear war. It is incompatible with the drive of United States imperialism to keep the Latin American countries an enslaved source of superprofits. It is a program which must be fought for by the American people in opposition to the trusts. Today this fight hinges on aid to Cuba and its defense against intervention.

The Eisenhower tour coincided with a tour of Asia by Soviet Premier Khrushchev. The two trips were extensively compared in the American press to the detriment of the latter. But even a cursory examination shows that the very opposite is the case. The Soviet offers of aid were clear-cut and definite, and a \$250 million credit to Indonesia was negotiated during the tour. The trip produced far more in solid achievement in the way of economic assistance than did the Eisenhower tour. And it demonstrated once more that the true welfare of these countries is bound up with the advance of socialism.

—March 19, 1960

By W

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Lenin's 90th Birthday

By William Z. Foster

VLADIMIR ILYITCH ULYANOV (Lenin), the founder of Bolshevism and of the first socialist state in the world, was born 90 years ago, on April 22, 1870, in Simbirsk, now called Ulyanovsk, on the Volga. He came from a middle class family. Lenin graduated from high school with a good knowledge of Latin, Greek, French, and German, and he was especially well up in history, economics, and literature. In high school, Lenin won the highest prize, the gold medal, for scholarship. On August 13, 1887, he entered Kazan University to study law, but was expelled four months later for revolutionary activity. Lenin's elder brother, Alexander, was executed in Schlüsselburg fortress, in St. Petersburg, in the same year, for complicity in the plot against the life of Czar Alexander III. The rest of his life Lenin spent in intense and productive work among the laboring and rebellious masses, in building socialism. He died on January 21, 1924, at the age of 53, to the great grief of the Russian people and the advanced work-

ers, peasants, and other toilers, all over the world.

* * *

Lenin's first major achievement of a general character was his brilliant struggle against the revisionist opportunists of the Second International. It began in the 1890's, and continued from then on. This led to the birth of the Communist movement. The leader of the historic opportunist adventure was the German Eduard Bernstein, who falsely called himself a Marxist. It was the first great attempt to destroy the labor movement under the hypocritical cover of Marxism. Many others have since followed the footsteps of Bernsteinism, which became the policy of the Right wing of the Second International. In the last three or four years, our Party had a bitter struggle with modern revisionism, which is also clearly a descendant of the notorious movement of Bernstein. Lenin, in his time, scored an outstanding victory over the re-

visionists. Whereas they had attempted to bury Marxism under a wet blanket of opportunism, their efforts were exposed and effectively frustrated by Lenin. Socialism had a new birth. Marxism became more powerful than ever. It spread generally throughout the whole labor movement of the world. Leninism has proved, by the hard test of life, to be the only effective labor theory in the many countries of the international labor movement.

Another basic test and justification of Lenin's policy came with World War I. Lenin, for years, had fought against this great imperialist war, which was clearly coming. He was the greatest of all authorities on, and fighters against, imperialism. His line was the historic one of changing the imperialist war into a revolutionary fight for socialism. This tactic was generally so successful that four great capitalist empires—Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Russia—who cold-bloodedly slaughtered millions of workers in the war, were shattered into the dust. The bulk of Europe would undoubtedly have gone socialist had it not been for the cold-blooded betrayal of the revisionists, who peddled away the proletarian revolution, in Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Turkey, etc., for a mess of minor reforms. The great result of World War I, however, under the masterful leadership of Lenin, was to give birth to the

Soviet Socialist Government of Russia.

* * *

The Soviet Revolution, in November, 1917, led by Lenin, was the most important political event in history. It marked a progressive turning point for humanity. For forty years since, the Soviet people have struggled against every imaginable handicap set up by a panicky capitalist class to defeat socialism and to preserve their monstrous graft and exploitation—war, famine, economic blockade, political isolation, etc.; and they triumphed over them all. Without the brilliant foresight of Lenin, however, it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the Soviet people to win through to victory over their many obstacles. In those early years, Stalin was a loyal follower of Lenin. Irresistibly, the Soviet Union has proved its superiority over the obsolete capitalist system. Lenin died in the midst of this heroic period; but his policies lived on invincibly. The Soviet Union is a tremendous monument to the genius of Lenin.

World War II and its aftermath were a stupendous living proof of the power of Marxism-Leninism. Not only did the peoples of the world smash Hitler's fascist monster and save world democracy, principally due to the decisive fight made by the Soviet Union and People's

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China, but they also created a dozen or more new revolutionary countries, setting up a great world socialist system with over a billion people. Since then, this socialism has grown very rapidly, faster in fact, than any countries ever grew before. At the present time the socialist system is speedily overtaking the capitalist countries individually and en bloc. The United States of America, the boasted head of world capitalism, is being rapidly overhauled by the Soviet Union. The industrial production of the Soviet Union is increasing more than twice as fast as that of the United States. Besides this, the USSR is running away with the competition regarding exploration of outer space, the development of sputniks and rocket missiles, the peaceful use of atomic energy, the development of science, industrial techniques, education, sports, culture, etc. The greatest development now taking place in the world is the proving of the superiority of socialism over capitalism, on all fronts. Meanwhile, the socialist system has grown so powerful that it has practically served notice on capitalism not to declare war, and to disarm itself. A whole new group of socialist world statesmen have come to the fore—headed by Khrushchev and Mao Tse-tung, all ardent Marxist-Leninists, applying the principles and tactics of Marxism-Leninism according to the particular conditions in their respective countries. The

entire situation is a tremendous triumph of Lenin's magnificent work as a proletarian thinker, organizer, and fighter.

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The future holds a splendid perspective for socialism. Marxism-Leninism is becoming dominant throughout the world of labor and the socialist movement. Lenin has truly become a world figure. The monopolists are making a determined effort to destroy the great theoretical system which he, along with Marx and many other proletarian fighters, built up. The Titos, Stracheys, Browders, and other tools of the capitalists, are crawling out of their holes and patching together such makeshift arguments as they can to try to undermine and destroy Leninism. They are particularly the voices of Right revisionism, which has plagued a number of communist parties in recent years, especially our own. Nor have the sectarian dogmatists been lacking in their anti-Leninist work. But they are all shouting in the wilderness. Marxism-Leninism is invincible, and our Party despite its difficulties, is giving a demonstration of this. In the Party we should see to it without delay that Lenin's books, whose circulation was seriously hampered by the revisionists, are fully restored, and that our membership resumes their study of the wisdom of the brilliant Lenin.

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* * *

It was to my great honor and joy that I met with Lenin in person. I also heard him speak several times at the Third Congress of the Communist International, early in 1921. He was a magnetic speaker, as well as a very modest one; and he held the audience of delegates spellbound as he talked. I met him on the street one day as he was going to the Congress Hall. But, as I was just join-

ing the Party in those days, I didn't feel authorized to try to engage him in extended conversation, very busy as he was, and in not too good health. He died only some three years afterward. In my experiences, I have met with many leaders of labor, but never before or since with one who thrilled me so deeply as the great Lenin, who grows in political stature with the years, until now he and Marx are the two greatest political figures in the world.

"NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH . . ."

"As usual, the American press has given some incorrect impressions regarding the Geneva test ban negotiations. . . . Of the various incorrect impressions given by the press, perhaps the most serious is the assertion that the negotiations are now deadlocked due to stalling by the Russians. In my opinion a major dragging of feet has come from our side."

Jay Orear, professor of physics, Cornell, chairman, Disarmament Committee, Federation of American Scientists, writing in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, February, 1960.

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Our Country's Stake in Negro Freedom*

By Gus Hall

IN HONORING Negro History Week and the 36th Anniversary of *The Worker* we are hailing a heroic fighting people and a heroic fighting paper. We are honoring 36 years of close alliance—mutual respect and joint effort.

The continuation of this fighting alliance in the future is symbolized by the new editor of *The Worker*—one of our finest, outstanding Communist leaders and fighters, Comrade James E. Jackson.

The stalwart character of the Negro people and the close ties their struggles have with the Communist Party are dramatically expressed in the number and high caliber of leaders this movement has given to our Party—Benjamin J. Davis, James E. Jackson, Henry Winston, Claude Lightfoot, William L. Patterson, Claudia Jones, James Ford, Edward Strong, and many, many other fine leaders of our Party.

We Communists are not satisfied, but we are proud of our part and

our relations in this momentous and heroic struggle for full and total equal rights in all fields of endeavor.

* * *

There has been injected into our national life a Madison Avenue phyness, a fakery which permeates every facet of our existence. Yet, the most brazen, the oldest, and in some ways the root demagogy and fakery, that part of our nation's life where the word—the declarations, the manifestos, the speeches and the lectures—is in the most disgraceful fashion separated from the deed is the 300 years of slavery of the Negro Americans. Mountains of paper in the form of declarations and proclamations, and court decisions about equality for all, have piled up. It is true there has been some advancement. But basically this remains a national disgrace. Mountains of paper declarations, but Charles Mack Parker is lynched in Mississippi in broad daylight. The lynchers are known but no one is arrested. There is not one indictment. No-

* Based upon a speech delivered at a meeting celebrating the 36th anniversary of *The Worker*, held in Carnegie Hall, New York City, Feb. 19, 1960.

body is tried or convicted. The *New York Times* says editorially, "There isn't much we can do about this."

The time has come for us as a nation, as a people, in the most earnest and serious manner to ask ourselves: How can anything in our life, whether social, political or economic, develop in a spirit of honor and decency as long as this blight remains a part of our nation?

How can anything flourish in truth when this deceit remains a part of our everyday life?

How can anything develop in human relations, human feelings, when in fact we tolerate the inhuman treatment of 18 million of our fellow citizens?

The ideology of white supremacy is not only vicious and total nonsense; it corrupts and corrodes all relations. It stands as a roadblock to the full flowering of our culture, our ethics and sound morals. An end to all forms of discrimination is an absolute must before we as a people can march on to the new horizons that science and life now present to civilization.

This *is* a new day—Life is presenting to our nation a new set of problems to be solved in a new set of circumstances, and a new set of circumstances in which to settle old sets of problems. In the very center of these problems, and presented in the new surroundings in a new way, is the old question—the final fulfillment of the hope and demand of our Civil

War, the democratic demand of ending all forms of discriminatory practices against the 18 million Negro Americans. This is one of the questions that is not going to wait for endless study, endless speeches of demagogic promises. This is up for an answer, this is up for solution *now*.

* * *

The history of the Negro people is a history of heroic struggle. It is a history of bravery, of fighting and pushing for such a solution, and a growing section of Americans hail and support this struggle. But this does not meet the new stage, the new circumstances of the struggle. These new times cry for and demand new understanding, new approaches. No more can this be placed as a struggle and a question for Negro Americans only. In the fullest sense of the word, this is a question for our whole nation, for all of our people—for our working class, for our farmers, and for our Party. This is a challenge to the United States of America. All sense of human decency, honesty, justice cries out that we have this new understanding of the struggle. But more, in the very self-interest of our people and in the self-interest of white Americans, this question now is placed for solution in the center of our life.

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policy for additional profits to go into the coffers of big business. In the first place these extra profits come from the lives of the Negro people in the form of lower living standards. They come from a lifetime of humiliation, from lower standards of housing, education, health facilities, from the torment and agony of the victims of the lynch mob, and from a shorter life expectancy. But the white worker also pays for this crime in many ways. It is a matter of simple trade-union experience that the standards of wages and working conditions are measured by the unity of labor's own ranks. Any divisions in the ranks of the working class result in lowered standards for all.

The issue of discrimination is immediately involved in dealing with the effects of automation. How can the working class fight against these effects unitedly when we learn from government statistics that in January of this year the rate of unemployment among the white workers was five per cent, while among the Negro workers it was almost 12 per cent! Seniority based on the color of one's skin is on very shaky grounds.

A trade-union leadership that tolerates such discrimination cannot have a united organization. So, as a result, not only the Negro worker in the first place, but also sections of the white workers become victims of this vicious circle.

As long as there is segregation in our schools, the fight for better and more school facilities is not going to hit full stride and be fully successful. All taxpayers are the victims of segregated schools.

The struggle against the big business ideology of fascism and anti-Semitism—because of its same root source—cannot reach its full force unless the struggle against white supremacy becomes a movement of all Americans. The other minority groups cannot hope to gain complete equality except by joining to put an end to practices of discrimination against the Negro Americans in the first place.

* * *

Yes, some new laws are needed. But the basic need is to carry out the laws already on the statute books. The Government has the power *now* to end discrimination in education, employment, housing, health and civil rights. In the fullest sense, the oppression is illegal and unconstitutional. Because of the slowness and the attempt of one Administration after another to circumvent and ignore these laws, it is necessary for us Americans to give more serious consideration to the election of a Congress and a President that will live up to the Constitution and the laws of our land. One Administration after another complies with the dictates of big business, and big business dictates the policies of discrim-

ination and division. The new times call for a Congress and an Administration that will listen to the dictates of the victims of big business—the workers, the farmers, the youth, as well as the Negro people.

To achieve such success, it is necessary to develop an alliance of the heroic Negro people and labor whose interests coincide and run parallel to each other. For this reason, the struggle to guarantee the right to vote takes on new significance and new meaning—a struggle that can be won *now*. The trade-union movement must face the stark reality that it cannot defeat the enemies of labor unless it joins hands with the Negro masses in a joint struggle against oppression. The Dixiecrats are the southern axis of the Republican-Dixiecrat conspiracy, the southern wing of the anti-labor, anti-Negro, undemocratic big business alliance that dominate Congress and dictates to one Administration after another.

In view of this irrefutable fact, how is one to understand the racist type of attack of George Meany against Congressman Powell, against A. Phillip Randolph and others? For labor to follow such a course would be to accept the blind and suicidal policy that prevailed on the battlefield immortalized by the poet who wrote, "Into the valley of death rode the six hundred." The racist policy of Meany is not only anti-Negro, it is anti-labor. American

trade unions must reject this pro-big business policy.

In a world that is fast moving toward free and independent nations and an end of colonial bondage, and towards socialism and communism that knows no national suppression of any kind—in this new world the United States will not and cannot fully find a place for itself as long as we permit this vicious, most undemocratic practice to be a part of our national fiber. As the world moves in a progressive direction, this will more and more mark us as a backward people who still permit practices of barbarism in our midst. More and more this will become a hindrance to full exchange in trade, science, culture and other fields.

These new times demand not only that we white Americans understand, not only that we hail and cheer the heroic struggles of the Negro people, but also that we make these struggles our very own. And we must do so not only because this is right, because it is honest and humane, but because this is a must for our very self-interest as a people, as a nation. We must find specific and concrete ways to join in battle in support of all movements and actions no matter how limited or small. America, as a nation united without regard for race or color, built on the foundation of labor-Negro unity, can and will march forward, crushing the policies and resistance of big business, setting up

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a government that is influenced by the victims of big business, and from there moving with all nations of the world to a new stage in human society—to socialism.

According to H. G. Wells, forty years ago Lenin, speaking about generally accepted views, pointed out that all human concepts were adapted to the scale of our planet, that they were based on the supposition that technological potential as it developed would never go beyond the bounds of the earth. Were we to establish inter-planetary communications, Lenin stated, we would have

to revise our philosophical, social and moral concepts.

We are now entering such a new stage in the history of civilization. For us to think of entering this leap in progress while retaining the medieval practice of holding a section of our people in bondage because of color or race is to enter a jet air race with a plane powered by rubber bands. This is the new setting for all problems. It is in this setting that we must make our surveys and give life and reality to the hopeful but fighting slogan of the Negro people: "Free by '63."

Mrs. Janet Jagan, General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party of British Guiana, the leading Party in that country, has written the Editor of a pressing need for books on economics, politics, history, art, literature, philosophy, and especially those "dealing with the social and economic problems facing underdeveloped countries, like ours." Readers may send such literature to: The Guardian Library, 41 Robb Street, Lacytown, Georgetown, British Guiana.

IDEAS IN OUR TIME

BY HERBERT APTHEKER

THE MYTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN RACISM (Part I)

TO MAINTAIN INJUSTICE requires that it be rationalized. The greater the injustice and the more prolonged its life, the more fantastic becomes its rationale. In our society, the deepest, most significant and most atrocious injustice has been the oppression of the Negro people; hence, apologizing for and bulwarking this oppression there has been developed by the ruling classes in three hundred years of American history, an elaborate mythology. This mythology, in whole or in part, has infested the brains of most American white people for most of those three centuries.

Within the limits of a magazine, it is possible only to indicate the nature of the major components of this mythology and to analyze them briefly. It is important that this be done, as often as possible and at every opportunity, however, for the system of Negro oppression has been within our country, the greatest single stain upon its honor; the greatest single source of human suffering; the greatest single bulwark of political reaction; the greatest single root of spreading moral decay; and the greatest single force producing division and organizational and ideological weakness in the working class.

Since the system of Negro oppression has played this particular role in the development of our country, therefore the struggle against that system has been at the center of all democratic and progressive effort in American history; therefore, too, the struggle against that system represents the most sensitive area of the ruling class, and affords the greatest opportunities for substantive political, economic, and moral advance. For all Americans, today, this is the essential link for decisive struggle against the ruling class. This is the question of questions, as John Brown said before the slaveowners hanged him; this is the particular question for Americans in the twentieth century, as the genius of W. E. B. Du Bois saw when that century had but dawned; now, we are in the second half of that century. This century—our own, in which we must live and work

and fight—is the century of the decline and fall of imperialism, of the rise and triumph of socialism; it must surely be the century of the burial of Jim Crow in our own land and the triumph here upon our soil of the brotherhood of man.

"THE CURSE OF HAM"

Let us consider the main constituents in the mythology enveloping the system of Negro oppression. Among the earliest and most persistent is "The Curse of Ham" myth; this is a facet of the argument holding Negro subordination and the system of segregation to be in accordance with divine will as recorded in biblical revelation. It is not likely that this troubles many readers of *Political Affairs*, but it will influence some of their friends, and it weighs very heavily with the majority of American white people who are religious. Actually, it is not the first of the religious rationales for Negro oppression; since this oppression started with slave-catching and enslavement, and since this made of the Negro a piece of property, the earliest rationale of the lucrative business was one which denied the humanity of the Negro. If the Negro was to be held in ownership like a horse or a cow, it would be delightful if he were, or if it could be believed that he were, in no substantive regard different from such animals.

This idea of bestiality has persisted in the remoter recesses of the bigot's mind; as late as 1910 a minister published a book in St. Louis entitled, *The Mystery Solved: The Negro a Beast*; the Mormons barred Negroes from membership on the grounds that they had no soul, or, at any rate, not a first-class soul; the vermin dominating the Citizens' Councils, will choose language evoking this concept; vestiges of it appear quite widely in "jokes" and superstitions.

Though myths persist despite their divergence from reality, this particular one was so manifestly insane that it had to be replaced by a more durable one—after all, it was not necessary to pass laws forbidding *horses* to learn how to read, and the issue from cohabitation that white masters forced upon Negro women seemed to be *children*! Moreover, if the Negro were human, he would be possessed of a soul, and saving his soul would give the Christian a good reason for enslaving him, so that he might convert him!

Hence, it was granted, by the eighteenth century, that he was human—but in a damaged and much inferior sort of way, that was of his nature, was inherited and was immutable. That this was so, was "proven" by torturing appropriate passages from the bible to suit the ends of slaveowners

intent upon justifying their institution. The passage especially hit upon was the so-called "curse of Ham" (in Genesis), but even the biblical scholarship here is at fault, for the curse was not of Ham, but of Canaan, one of the four sons of Ham, and Old Testament experts are agreed that he was white.

Dr. T. B. Maston, for almost forty years professor of ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, in a book recently published by Macmillan (*Segregation and Desegregation: A Christian Approach*, \$3.50) writes on this point:

The only reason to give any space to "the curse of Ham" is the fact that so many people are using it today to justify the present racial pattern, just as their forefathers used it to defend slavery. The use of the curse stems, to a considerable degree, from the rather common tendency for men, and particularly for Christian men, to want divine approval for what they do, what they want to do, or what they think it is necessary for them to do. . . . All of us, at times, are entirely too prone to clothe our sins in the garments of sanctity by an appeal to the Bible. (p. 99)

James McBride Dabbs, of South Carolina (he is president of the Southern Regional Council), remarks* rather gently, that if the slaveowners were in error to use this "curse of Ham" argument to justify slavery—and he assumes, perhaps too readily, that this will be granted—then those who use it today to justify Jim Crow might also be in error. While such reasoning may help, it nevertheless is important—particularly for those swayed in terms of faith by a literal examination of the Bible's text—to note that the leading ministerial authorities on the Old and New Testament, like the aforementioned Professor Maston, and Liston Pope, Everett Tilson, and Albertus Pieters, agree that no justification of any sort is offered in the Bible for segregation, and that, on the contrary, that book and Christian teaching in general stand opposed to segregation as sinful. This is, in fact, one of the most potent forces undercutting adherence to segregation, and when one remembers how powerful were most of the Churches before the Civil War in combatting Abolitionism by insisting upon divine sanction for slavery, he will realize how significant is the contrary verdict from almost all churches today on Jim Crow.**

* In his very important book, *The Southern Heritage* (Knopf, N. Y., \$4).

** The fullest collection of such statements, from Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish religious bodies, will be found in the work by two Southern white professors, E. Q. Campbell and T. F. Pettigrew, *Christians in Racial Crisis* (Public Affairs Press, Washington, \$3.50), pp. 137-170.

"THE CURSE OF NATURE"

In our more secular era, "scientific" myths have greater influence in bulwarking the whole moonlight and magnolia fabrication than do the theological. These myths fall into historical, anatomical, anthropological, and psychological categories; all of them were strongly reinforced in our country by a mis-reading of Darwinism to justify political backwardness, moral ferocity, avid acquisitiveness, and social injustice, and, especially, because of the biological base of Darwinism, the subordination of the Negro, exactly on the grounds of natural—*i.e.*, *biological*—inferiority.

Just as the religious apologia was related to the rise of capitalism and the basic significance of the rape of Africa and the use of forced labor for the exploitation of the New World to further that rise, so the "scientific" apologia was related to the Asian and African colonialism of monopoly capitalism, and, in particular in our country, to maturing capitalism's taking possession of the wealth of the Southland, with its millions of especially oppressed Negro workers.

Every aspect of the "scientific" argument has been utterly demolished by scientific investigators, quite as thoroughly as the "curse of Ham" has been refuted by principled theologians. The denial of a significant, noble, creative and militant culture and history on the part of the African peoples, and of their descendants in the New World, has been smashed, and no one but an ignoramus—or the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee of the U.S. Senate—is able to persist, publicly, in the contrary view. The ascribing of arrested anatomical—and especially cranial—development to the African and the American Negro, has been proven beyond the possibility of any doubt to be completely false. The ascribing of inferior "intelligence" to the Negro is in error, and here, though one gets hedging by people like Gunnar Myrdal and James M. Dabbs, to the effect that inferiority has neither been proven nor disproven, the fact is that the weight of the considerable evidence that has been collected is overwhelmingly in the direction of opposing the concept of inferior intelligence.*

It is worth noting that this condition, in the area of science, also is relatively new—as is the overwhelmingly anti-racist position taken officially by all leading religious organizations—and has played a considerable part

* Of course, *proving* the negative in any ultimate sense, in areas outside the natural sciences, presents extreme logical difficulties, as the success of witch-hunts from ancient times to the present demonstrates. For evidence, and an examination of the relevant literature, see the present writer's "Literacy, the Negro and World War II," first published in *The Journal of Negro Education*, in 1946, and reprinted with some additions in *Toward Negro Freedom* (N. Y., 1956, pp. 123-33).

in assisting the Negro liberation movement, as the advance of that movement has been decisive in inspiring scientific progress.**

"IT'S INSTINCTUAL AND NATURAL"

Repeatedly the advocate of desegregation is met with the reply that segregation is the result of a natural or instinctual drive of like for like and of like discriminating against and despising the unlike. It is possible that there may be a common response of suspicion, within exploitative and oppressive societies, to the coming of the stranger; but this would appear to be socially induced, for where the order is more nearly communal, the original reaction to newcomers is one of curiosity and friendship and hospitality, as was true, for example, when the Indians first met the white man coming to the New World.

Moreover the response of suspicion and even of hostility, when it was offered in the remote past, seems not to have been mixed with any sense of contempt, and certainly had no quality to it of the modern racism, with its insistence upon innate and immutable inferiority justifying perpetual subordination. That feeling which we now know as racism is a distinctly modern phenomenon and comes into being as capitalism develops and moves towards the subjugation and colonization of the darker peoples of the world.

None of the historical evidence, therefore, tends to show that there is an instinctual or natural source for the racism which smears our country. On the contrary, all the evidence shows the absence of this ideology in the ancient and medieval world, and the gradual development of it and insistence upon its observance by the ruling classes of the early capitalist period, starting in the late 15th and early 16th century.

Moreover, were racism natural or instinctual, it would appear of itself and would maintain itself. It is a fact that many people suffer from the illusion that this is the circumstance in connection with Jim Crow; that, somehow, as one moves south of the Mason-Dixon line (called the Smith and Wesson line by many Negroes) segregation just sprouts up from the ground, like the flora native to the region, or that just as it gets warmer as one goes south, so Jim Crow appears in the same area. On the basis of this idea, it is insisted repeatedly—even by the President of the United States—that one cannot legislate a particular morality or code of conduct

** Among Americans, outstanding pioneers in this scientific work were Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois and Dr. Carter G. Woodson, in the areas of history; Dr. Franklin P. Mall in anatomy; Professor Franz Boas in anthropology; and Professor Otto Klineberg in psychology.

and that any effort to alter the Jim Crow pattern, assuming it should be made, would have to be one of extreme gradualism and confined to the most gentle forms of moral suasion and education.

All such views are grievously wrong. It is not true that Jim Crow patterns appear wherever colored and white peoples come together; in all of Latin America, for example, this pattern is either more or less absent, or, where it is present, appears in much more muted forms than in the United States and often appears even in these forms because of the directly-traceable influence of U.S. pressure. It is not even true that the Jim Crow pattern appeared in our own colonies so soon as the presence of both African and European (or Indian and European) became a fact. On the contrary, the first response of the people—especially the common people—was one of friendship and comradeship; the separation had to be instituted through economic, social, and legal pressures by the ruling classes over a period of about two or three generations.

The inferior status of the Negro in the South prior to the Civil War was a matter of law, of course, and this law was enforced with the greatest severity. The law was complex and ingenious and covered every conceivable contingency: the outlawry of inter-marriage; prohibiting free Negroes from voting and from certain pursuits and professions; forbidding Negroes—free and slave—to testify under oath in a court; forbidding the education of slaves and inhibiting severely the education of free Negroes; forbidding the unfettered movement of the Negro—altogether forbidden with the slave and sharply circumscribed with the free Negro. One could go on for many pages* simply enumerating the whole legal framework of Negro subordination present prior to the Civil War; and of course basic to everything was the economic relationship, upon which was reared not only the law, but the whole state apparatus, including the armed forces, and the entire dominant ideological apparatus, especially of religion.

During Reconstruction and for about fifteen years after the overthrow of Reconstruction, all segregatory laws were repealed, and many Southern States passed civil rights laws forbidding and punishing any public manifestation of discrimination (South Carolina, in particular, had a strong civil rights law until 1889). The institution of the modern system of hundreds of racist laws throughout the South (and not a few in the north and west, too) began in the last years of the 1880's and continued intensively until the adoption, in 1910, of the Oklahoma constitution. It is, then,

* The reader who is particularly interested will find this treated at length in my *American Negro Slave Revolts* (N. Y., 1943, Columbia Univ. Press), pp. 53-78.

a fact that the modern Jim Crow legal system is not more than seventy years old, and comes into being at the same time as the transformation of U.S. industrial capitalism into monopoly capitalism; it is a facet of the taking over the South by newly-developed American imperialism.**

Hence, the man-made and ruling-class made structure of the American system of Jim Crow is indubitable; segregation, far from being the result of any instinctual or natural tendency, clearly is the product of an economic system of special oppression bulwarked with a complex legal, social, ideological system justifying such terrible oppression.

Those who insist that one cannot legislate morality, should bear in mind that immorality has been legislated. Those who insist that one cannot, by law, fight against social customs, should bear in mind that social customs, and most certainly, the present Jim Crow set-up in the South is dependent upon the existence of particular laws. In fact, those who say that laws are irrelevant, at best, and harmful and provocative at worst, when it comes to dealing with matters of morals, mores and customs, may well be challenged: All right, if laws cannot or should not be used against Jim Crow, then repeal all laws supporting Jim Crow. *If law is irrelevant, then let us have no laws of any kind—pro or con—dealing with racism!*

"THE OUTSIDE AGITATOR"

Ruling classes invariably believe that their systems are immortal; the fact that they have been proven wrong time after time does not keep new rulers from repeating the error. The idea stems from their conviction that their system is splendid, reasonable, and in accordance with divine or natural will; it is not likely to be shaken, too, by the fact that they derive great pleasure and satisfaction from ruling.

Hence, the masters of all exploitative and oppressive systems always have insisted that internal threats to their stability must derive from sources outside the systems. Such a decision offers no invidious verdict upon their dearly treasured system, nor their own stewardship; it has the added virtue of making the foe alien as well as somewhat nebulous, so that his existence may serve many ends, not the least of which may be justification for aggression, or as a lightning rod for real domestic turmoil.

** This thesis was presented by the present writer in *Jewish Life*, July, 1950, where documentation will be found. It was reprinted, with some additions, in *Toward Negro Freedom* (pp. 88-95). Additional factual substantiation—though not the analysis showing the connection with imperialism—will be found in later writings by C. Vann Woodward, George B. Tindall, and Rayford W. Logan.

The tendency to blame "outside agitators" will be intensified where the oppressed suffer very severely; it will be intensified to the highest degree if, in addition, those who suffer are alleged to be barely human, and if the rulers insist that a proof of their lower humanity is that they love slavery and hug their chains. Therefore, the rulers of the South, both before the Civil War and since the restoration of the Bourbons, down to our own day, have especially insisted, at every sign of popular unrest, that its source was from the "outside"—the damn North or the damn British or the damn French or the god-damn Bolsheviks, the particular target differing at different periods, and sometimes several targets being fired at simultaneously.

The fact is that the basic source of the unrest among the oppressed, lies in the oppression. Northern Abolitionists, when charged with provoking slave plots and uprisings, prior to the Civil War, had a decisive reply. They told the slaveowners they knew a method which, if adopted, would guarantee absolutely that no more slave revolts would occur; they warned, however, that they also knew that if this method were not adopted then slave revolts and plots would occur, no matter what else the masters might do or not do. The magical act was: if you would end slave rebellions, end slavery.

This does not mean that the slaves were not conscious of and inspired by—at least some among them, and to some degree—such stirring events as our own American Revolution, or the French Revolution, or the Haitian Revolution, or Mexico's abolition of slavery, or the British act emancipating the slaves in the West Indies, or the rise of a mass emancipationist movement in Great Britain, or the growth of a significant Abolitionist movement in the northern United States. They did know of these events, and they did inspire them and give them strength and fresh sources of hope. But it does mean that in almost no cases were there actual "outside agitators" who made their appearance, and that, in any event, the central source of the struggles of the slaves, in the dozens of ways they did struggle, came from their own hearts and nerves, from their own inextinguishable passion for an end to slavery.

Today, too, the Negro people in the United States, and in the South certainly, know of the heroic struggles of their African and Cuban brothers; they know of the titanic struggles of the Arab peoples; they know of the world-shaking events in Asia, and especially of the great leap forward of the multi-millions in China. They know, too, of the Bolshevik revolution, of how the Soviet Union, above all others, saved humanity from the racist monstrosity of Hitlerism, and how that multi-national and multi-

colored enormous land has leaped forward into the front ranks of powers and into the front ranks of rational and just social orders, after less than fifty years.

All humanity is one—despite the insistence of the segregationists—and of course the liberation struggles for one component of that whole, inspire other components. Americans should be the last people in the world to be surprised at this, since the English, Irish, Dutch, and, above all, French, assistance and inspiration were decisive to the success of our own Revolution. But is the Declaration of Independence any less an American document because its creator drew many of his thoughts from the noblest ideas enunciated by earlier geniuses laboring in other lands? Is Yorktown not an American victory, decisive for the achievement of our nation's independence, because without the participation of French men and ships, it could never have happened?

The Negro people, like all other people, will be satisfied with nothing less than achieving full and complete freedom, and they, like all other peoples, will draw strength and fervor for this fearfully difficult undertaking from whatever source seems to them to be most helpful. This has nothing to do with Eastland's idiot-ranting about "outside agitators"; it has to do with a law of human progress, that has operated throughout history and operates today.

* * *

For reasons of space, it is necessary to terminate this essay at this point; in next month's issue we shall deal with other myths, including "The New Negro," "The Solid South," and the "Implacable Southern White."

Women in American Socialist Struggles

By Elizabeth Gurley Flynn

IN 1910, when International Women's Day was born, many devoted and courageous women were active in the Socialist Party. On the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary, it is appropriate to recall some of their names and deeds. While they were all staunch fighters for "Votes for Women," they did not confine themselves to this single issue. In this respect, they followed in the path of the two giant pioneers for women's rights—Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who had passed away at the turn of the century. For approximately half a century, these names had been linked as the intrepid and militant leaders of the women's movement. They actively associated themselves with all the freedom movements of their day—the abolition of slavery, the early building of unions among women, and for legal, social and human rights for women, as well as the vote.

They came in conflict with the more conservative suffragists, who wanted to disassociate suffrage from all other popular causes. These wom-

en preferred to work quietly to gain the vote state by state, and did not favor the nationwide campaign for a federal amendment to the U.S. Constitution, as advocated by Miss Anthony and Mrs. Stanton. They disapproved of women who refused to pay taxes or who attempted to vote, as Miss Anthony did in 1872. (She was fined \$100 which she never paid.) The first federal amendment was proposed in 1868, as a sixteenth amendment to repair the damage of the word "male" inserted in the fourteenth amendment. The women said that the word sex should have been in the fifteenth amendment along with other reasons why the right to vote should not be abridged. It was a sore disappointment to these women, who had so long identified their struggle with the abolitionist movement that Negro and white women were left behind without the vote. Southern Negro men then, and Negro women later, were actually enfranchised but only theoretically, as we well know today—ninety-two years afterwards. The federal amendment, granting the vote to American

women, was proposed in 1878 and passed as the nineteenth amendment in 1920.

* * *

By 1910 the Conservative wing of the suffrage movement had another headache—the increasing activity of Socialist women in the suffrage organizations and independently. The Socialist Party, conscious of the growing upsurge among women, set up a national committee of women, at their 1910 convention. At that time there was only one woman member of their national committee—Kate Richards O'Hare. The founders of the international Socialist movement, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, had written many times on the exploitation and injustices suffered by women, as for example the famous statement of Karl Marx, in commenting on the presence of women delegates at the American National Labor Union Convention, in 1868, "*Anybody who knows anything of history knows that great social changes are impossible without the feminine ferment.*" But mere lip service had been paid to women by many Socialist parties until conditions forced a change.

The hardships and handicaps suffered by women speakers and organizers of that period are hard to realize today. Leaving home on speaking trips meant arrangements for care of children. Families were antagonistic. Divorces often ensued. Travel was difficult, in trains and

wagons. There were no loudspeakers for open-air meetings. Women speakers met with ridicule, abuse and sometimes violence. These early Socialist women were truly pioneers. *We Are Many*, by Ella Reeve Bloor, gives a graphic account of the difficulties. The first Marxist Socialist American woman in our country was Mrs. Florence Kelley. In the 80's, she corresponded with Frederick Engels, under her married name Wischnewetsky, and made the first English translation of Engels' *The Condition of the Working Class in England*.

She was a resident at Hull House, Chicago, and chief factory inspector of Illinois, 1893-97—the first in the country. She was an active suffragist, member of the Women's Trade Union League, and of the NAACP. She was a founder of the National Consumers' League and active in the National Child Labor Committee. She toiled untiringly—until her death in 1932, at the age of 73—for a child labor amendment to the Constitution. Her granddaughter, Florence Kelley, has recently been appointed a judge in New York City.

The secretary of the New York Women's Socialist Committee in 1911 was Mrs. Margaret Sanger. I recall speaking at a laundry workers' strike meeting, with her and with Sylvia Pankhurst, the British suffragist. The Socialist women were helping the strikers. In 1912, Mrs. Sanger was in charge of a group of Lawrence

strikers' children brought to New York City. She testified, as a nurse, before a Congressional hearing in Washington on the bad physical condition of these children.

Later she organized the Birth Control League to which she devoted herself exclusively. In its early days she was arrested in Brownsville for opening a free clinic for working class mothers. It was a long, hard struggle before her ideas finally attained acceptance as "planned parenthood."

Harriet Stanton Blatch, daughter of Mrs. Stanton, was a Socialist. She had witnessed militant tactics in England and felt the suffrage movement here was stodgy, lacking pep and drama. In 1907 she gathered forty women together, in a small hall on 4th Street near the Bowery, to organize the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women, later the Women's Political Union. This organization held the first open air meetings and parades for suffrage. They mobilized delegations of working women to go to Albany before committees. I recall meeting Mrs. Blatch at early Socialist meetings; she was a dynamic personality. Her organization canvassed union officers, spoke at factory gates and helped create support in labor and Socialist circles for the campaign for "Votes for Women." Her purpose was to reach women in industry and the professions, not just the women of leisure. Her daughter, Mrs. Nora Stanton Barney, is an architect, and although quite elderly

is an active and consistent supporter of all progressive causes today.

* * *

Kate Richards O'Hare was the outstanding woman of the American Socialist Party. She had been a member of the Socialist Labor Party in 1899 and later transferred to the Socialist Party. Born in Kansas, she was a teacher and social worker. It was estimated that she had covered more territory and delivered more Socialist lectures than anyone else in the country. She was active in the suffrage movement, editor of the *National Rip-Saw*, a founder of Commonwealth College, in 1923. She was International Secretary for the Socialist Party in 1912-14—the only woman in any country to have held that position in the 2nd International. Mrs. O'Hare was chairman of the committee at the St. Louis Emergency Convention of the Socialist Party in 1917, which wrote the famous anti-war resolution. Every summer for many years, Mrs. O'Hare organized and spoke, sometimes twice daily, at Socialist Encampments in Oklahoma, Arkansas, and lower Missouri. They went on for several days, people coming from miles around to hear folk-songs, speeches and to socialize. She was one of the first persons convicted under the war-time Espionage Act and served fourteen months of a five-year sentence, in the Missouri State Penitentiary. Her sen-

tence was commuted by President Wilson after the Church Federation of Chicago exposed it as a frame-up based on perjury.

After her release, this gallant woman, mother of four children, organized the Children's Crusade for Amnesty in 1920, which secured the release of a group of tenant farmers of the Southwest. She shifted her activity to prison reform, touring the country, under the auspices of the A. F. of L. union labor leagues, exposing prison conditions and prison labor. As a result of her efforts in enlisting many women's organizations, modern federal prisons, like Alderson, were built for women and prison goods were taken off the open market. Federal Industries, Inc., was set up in 1934 and goods manufactured in the prison shops are now made only for departments and agencies of the U.S. government. So the last years of her life bore fruit in benefits for women, prisoners and workers.

* * *

Ella Reeve Bloor's life work spanned nearly three quarters of a century. She learned to speak as a prohibitionist, decided she was a Socialist in 1896, took courses at the University of Pennsylvania after she had four children, and joined the Socialist Party in 1900. She ran for office in three states, was state organizer in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Con-

necticut and Ohio. She worked in suffrage campaigns, organized unions, led strikes, travelled tirelessly across the continent, spoke at funerals of workers killed by gunmen, visited prisoners and was herself arrested numerous times. She belonged to the Left Wing of the Socialist Party which in 1919 became a part of the newly-formed Communist Party. From then until shortly before her death in 1952, at nearly ninety, she eloquently carried its message everywhere. Full of boundless energy and determination, she scorned old age. At 63 she hitch-hiked from coast to coast for the *Daily Worker*. At the age of 75 she made her last trip to the Soviet Union. At 78 she ran for office in Pennsylvania, and said: "*It has been a privilege and joy to carry the torch for Socialism.*"

* * *

Another pioneer woman Socialist was Lena Merrow Lewis. Her life followed the same pattern as many others—lecturer for temperance, suffrage and for Socialism. She was the first member of the National Committee of the Socialist Party, from 1900 to 1910. She was the first woman to enlist the support of the Chicago labor unions for suffrage, in 1899. From 1916 to 1918 Mrs. Lewis was the Socialist Party organizer in Alaska. She edited the *Alaska Labor News*, and the *Seattle Daily Call* in 1918. She was not as well

known as Mrs. O'Hare and Mother Bloor nor as broad in her views. But in her quiet, unobtrusive way, she served as an organizer and educator for Socialism in many obscure and remote corners of this country.

A Socialist woman I met in Montana in 1909, was Ida Crouch-Hazlitt, editor of the Socialist paper, *Montana News*, published at Helena. She had been a national organizer for the Women Suffrage Association, from 1896 to 1901, when she joined the Socialist Party. She ran for Congress on the Socialist Party ticket in Colorado in 1902, and was reputed then to be the first woman parliamentary candidate in the world. Before, she had been a local candidate on the Prohibition and Populist tickets. Montana was then a rugged place for a woman to edit a Socialist paper. But she did not hesitate to endorse the cause of the hated and feared I.W.W. She issued a special edition on our behalf and helped us to win free speech in Missoula, Montana.

Rose Pastor Stokes was a gifted Polish immigrant girl living on the East Side in New York, a cigar-maker and self-educated. She became a Socialist speaker, writer, poet, playwright and artist. Her marriage to the "millionaire Socialist" J. G. Phelps Stokes in 1907 created a sensation in both Jewish and Gentile circles. When World War I was declared, a group of Socialists, including Robert Hunter, John Spar-

go, William E. Walling and Stokes, left the Socialist Party and endorsed the war aims of Woodrow Wilson. For a short time Mrs. Stokes joined them. But after the Russian Revolution of 1917, true to her working class instincts, she repudiated this stand and returned to join the Left Wing of the Socialist Party. She was sentenced to 10 years in prison in 1918 at Kansas City, Mo., for a speech against the war and indicted twice later for Communist activities. She died in 1933 of cancer, as a result of a blow of a policeman's club during a demonstration.

* * *

Other Socialist women who were candidates for public office in these early days were Anna Maley, who ran for Governor of Minnesota; Emma Henry of Indiana, who ran for state treasurer, state representative and secretary of state; Mrs. Louise Adams Floyd, who ran for secretary in Massachusetts. Frieda Hogan was state secretary of the Socialist Party of Arkansas, 1914-17 and a member of the National Committee. Kate Sadler Greenblagh was the outstanding Socialist woman in the northwest, a truly great orator who was arrested innumerable times, especially in the war period. She had joined with C. E. Ruth Enbey in proposing the anti-war resolution in the St. Louis convention and belonged to the Left Wing of the Socialist Party.

There were many fine writers and editors among the pioneer Socialist women. Mrs. Mary Marcy was a scientific Socialist, a Marxist. She was the editor of the *International Socialist News*, published by the Kerr Company in Chicago. She was the author of a popular pamphlet, "Shop Talks on Economics," which was a model of clarity. There was a women's magazine published in Chicago about 1908-09—*The Socialist Woman*, edited by Josephine Conger-Kaneko, an American woman married to a Japanese Socialist. Also there was a Socialist women's publishing company in Girard, Kansas, where the *Appeal to Reason* was published. When Joseph Medill Patterson, a wealthy Chicago pseudo-Socialist, wrote a book called *Little Brother of the Rich*, they issued a book called *Little Sister of the Poor*.

* * *

Next to Bebel's *Women Under Socialism* a book on my shelf I treasure is *Women and Economics*, published in 1898 by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. She was one of the few women theoreticians in the Socialist movement of long ago. She lectured, and published a magazine called *The Forerunner*. Her views were extremely radical for that day but would readily find acceptance today, especially in the Socialist countries. She argued that women would never be really "emancipated" until

they were no longer economically dependent upon men and until they ceased to be "housewives." She advocated self-support for women, state care of children and mothers, the abolition of the kitchen in individual homes and collective nurseries, kitchens, dining rooms and the like.

Mrs. Gilman built her arguments for Socialism around the inequalities, exploitation, dependency and degradation of women under capitalism. When she discovered she had cancer, she committed suicide, not to be a burden upon her daughter. Too bad she could not live to see the new Socialist women!

Meta Stein Lilienthal was a Socialist woman writer. Her two pamphlets, *From Fireside to Factory* and *A Woman of the Future* were extremely popular in 1916. They were published by the Rand School for Social Science, a school endowed by a rich Socialist woman, Mrs. Carrie Rand. Mrs. Lilienthal was dissatisfied with the De Leon translation of Bebel's *Women Under Socialism* and translated her own version of it.

A militant suffragist, who belonged to no suffrage organization but was a Socialist, was Maud Malone. When I first began to speak she was a stormy petrel, causing the official suffrage organization much embarrassment. In a day when such a thing was unheard of, she went to political meetings and interrupted candidates to ask where they stood on "Votes for Women." Even more

shocking, she paraded up and down Broadway like a sandwich man, wearing "Votes for Women" placards fore and aft. She lost her job as a librarian in consequence. For a number of years before her death, she was in charge of the files at the *Daily Worker* office.

* * *

Anita Whitney, a daughter of pioneers, became a Socialist in 1914. As President of the College Equal Rights League, she led to victory in 1911, when California became the sixth state to grant woman suffrage. She was second Vice-President of the National Equal Suffrage Association, with Dr. Anna Shaw as President. She was on the executive committee of the NAACP. She had been a social worker in Alameda County for fifteen years, and was a relief worker in the San Francisco fire, in 1906. She finally resigned from the profession because she felt a fundamental political change was necessary to abolish poverty.

She became a member of the Communist Party when her branch of the Socialist Party joined in a body in 1919. Subsequently she was arrested under the state criminal syndicalist law, for membership in the

C.P. The case dragged through the courts until 1926 when the conviction was upheld by the Supreme Court. However, due to her tremendous popularity, especially among women and in labor circles, she was pardoned by the Governor of California. In her person she symbolized, as did so many of these wonderful Socialist women of yesterday, all freedom causes—for the Negro people, for labor, for women, for peace, for socialism.

In all my contacts with the Socialist Party and the I.W.W., I met only one Negro woman speaker—Helen Holman. She came from Philadelphia and was extremely eloquent. In 1919-20 she was the Secretary of the Kate Richards O'Hare Defense Committee with an office in the Rand School, and did extremely effective work in this capacity.

* * *

The foregoing are but a few of the women Socialists of yesterday—many more could be mentioned—devoted and indefatigable, struggling under great difficulties but resolute and firm in their faith in a Socialist world of tomorrow. They helped to sow the seed. Others will reap the fruit, but they must not be forgotten.

Peaceful Co-Existence and the Ideological Struggle*

By Editorial Board, "The Communist" (Moscow)

ALL GREAT IDEAS have their history, and the idea of peaceful co-existence of states with different social systems is no exception.

This idea assumed decisive political importance with the coming into being of the first socialist state. The victory of the working class and other working people in a sixth part of the globe naturally raised the question of how and on what principle the relations between the new society and the capitalist world could and should be built. Were they to be relations of war, with the victory of the one or the other system to be decided by an armed conflict, or relations of peaceful co-existence, with each of the two systems afforded the possibility of showing its merits or shortcomings before mankind?

The choice, as most people know, was made immediately after the October Revolution. Capitalism gave its preference to war, trying to stifle the revolution in its cradle, and socialism advanced peaceful co-existence as the cornerstone of its foreign policy. The first decree issued by the

Soviet socialist state, and adopted on Lenin's initiative while the imperialist war was still on, was the Decree on Peace. Ever since then the idea of peaceful co-existence of countries with differing social systems, an idea advanced and substantiated by Lenin, has been the basic principle underlying the foreign policy of the socialist state.

Obviously, the first socialist state had to reckon with the real situation. Peace demands agreement by both sides, and capitalism stubbornly rejected peaceful co-existence. With the young Soviet republic surrounded by enemies and forced to beat back their constant attacks, the Bolsheviks, despite their striving for permanent peace among nations, had to start out to gain at least a breathing space. While war remained inevitable and there were no real forces in the world to bar its way, it was necessary to reckon with the fact that wherever a military conflict would arise the im-

* This article is translated from *The Communist* (Moscow), No. 16, 1959.

perialist powers would try to use it to force a war on the Soviet state. That is why for many years the policy of peaceful co-existence was concretely expressed in the effort to make the breathing space last as long as possible.

After the Second World War the historical conditions changed, and that made it possible for the 20th and 21st Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to draw the conclusion that the peace forces, which had grown in strength, were in a position to prevent the outbreak of new wars and could eliminate wars from the life of the peoples as a way of settling disputes among states. In such conditions there was a real prospect of permanent peaceful co-existence between states throughout the whole historical period in which countries belonging to different social systems exist side by side on our planet.

There has also been a change in the bourgeois world's attitude to the policy of peaceful co-existence in the course of 40 years. At first they tried to regard the proposed peaceful co-existence merely as a sign of weakness on the part of the Soviets. The Soviets, they said, fight for peace so ardently because they do not expect victory in a war.

After several decades, throughout which the imperialists every now and then tested the strength of socialism—now by war, and now by the weapons of economic blockade and sub-

versive activity—the absurdity of such a version penetrated the minds of even many of the most slow-witted leaders of imperialism. During these decades socialism became such a tremendous force that no one who retained even a jot of common sense could any longer regard the idea of peaceful co-existence as a “formula of weakness.”

The attempts to compromise this idea in other ways too—such as declaring it a communist “propaganda stunt,” calling it “nonsense,” or, finally, simply keeping back the essence of the conception of peaceful co-existence from the public—have suffered inglorious defeat.

True, it cannot be said that such attempts are no longer being made. Today, too, there have not yet disappeared the ideological junk dealers, who every now and then try to drag out into the open these tattered arguments.

Quite recently the not unknown Father Wetter appeared in this role, putting out a special “study” on peaceful co-existence. Notwithstanding his cloth he has long left the clouds of theological disputes to engage on the sinful earth in the more fashionable and lucrative business of anti-communist propaganda. And although in this field Wetter has in many ways schooled even the worldly-wise West German readers, his latest work can be properly regarded as a striking example of jugglery and citations pulled out of their contexts,

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and at times of "doctored," unscrupulous comment and falsification.**

Indeed, how could one otherwise prove what cannot be proved, namely, to picture Lenin, the staunch fighter for peace among nations, the initiator of the policy of peaceful co-existence, as an advocate of wars and aggression?

Wetter, this offspring of the scholastics of the Middle Ages who lays claim to the role of adviser to Adenauer, is not the only one; he is but one of the first singers of the infamous choir of enemies of peaceful co-existence. This choir still goes on singing its sad song. But more and more often it performs in empty auditoriums.

And that gives us the right to state with confidence that the idea of peaceful co-existence can neither be ignored nor pictured as empty propaganda. This has become especially obvious since N. S. Khrushchev's visit to the United States, when the term "co-existence" became one of the terms most current in all languages everywhere, just as the word "sputnik" did two years ago—another word presented to mankind by the Soviet Union.

Today millions of people in the United States of America and other capitalist countries are beginning to look upon the idea of peaceful co-ex-

istence as a realistic program for normalizing international relations and ridding mankind of the oppressive fear of a war of annihilation and the reckless extravagance of military preparations.

We can draw the incontestable conclusion that Lenin's great idea of peaceful co-existence of states with different social systems, an idea profoundly and creatively developed by N. S. Khrushchev in conformity with present-day conditions, is finding its way into the minds of more and more millions of people.

* * *

The success of the idea of peaceful co-existence did not come by itself; it is a logical result of the major historical changes in the world today, and above all of the greatly increased might of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

For the first time in history, tremendous power has become concentrated in the hands of classes and states which by their very nature cannot use it to the detriment of humanity; in socialist society there is no class or social group interested in war, an arms race or expansion. For the first time in history, a situation has developed in which the peace-loving forces have not only the ardent desire but also the practical means for dooming any adventure of the enemies of peace to certain failure. The role of states which have thrown off the colonial yoke and who are pursuing a peaceful foreign

** It is probable that the editors have in mind a work recently published in this country also—Gustavo A. Wetter, *Dialectical Materialism* (N. Y., 1959, Praeger).—*The Editor*.

policy has grown stronger, and all forces fighting against the danger of a new war have lived up, all of which has created an entirely new world situation.

The conditions are developing in which peaceful co-existence ceases to be merely the wish of the communists and is becoming life's insistent demand, which has to be listened to even by those who only yesterday shied away from it as the Devil shies away from incense.

We do not have to go far for illustrations. Who, for instance, could compete with Winston Churchill in bellicosity? It was he who coined the phrase "throttle the revolution in its cradle," which 40 years ago became a catch-phrase in the bourgeois world. With him will stay the dubious honor of what might be called the first shot fired in the cold war—his famous speech in Fulton, which marked a sharp turn in the relations between the western powers and the U.S.S.R., a turn from the alliance of the war years to enmity and tension. However, times have changed and other refrains are sung. Instead of bellicose speeches we have heard from Churchill's lips an admission that all states on our planet have to live in peace.

There are a good many examples of this kind. Even among the bellicose American Senators, who as late as yesterday entertained the idea of an atomic war against the Soviet Union, more and more often sober

voices are to be heard calling for finding ways to normalize the international situation.

There must be no fighting—this is life's conclusion for all who have not lost their reason.

This is an important step towards accepting the idea of peaceful co-existence. But it is only a first step. "Today," N. S. Khrushchev rightly said in his speech at the Third Session of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet, "the question is not whether there should or should not be peaceful co-existence—it is and it will be if we do not want the madness of a nuclear and rocket war. The point is to co-exist on a reasonable basis."

What does this mean?

It means, firstly, to put an end to the cold war, to bring about normal and good-neighborly relations between the socialist and capitalist states; and, secondly, to work out reliable guarantees, against any surprises which might hurl humanity into the abyss of a new calamity, to eliminate from international relations anything that gives rise to the danger of armed conflicts.

Peaceful co-existence in its full and true sense is not merely a "no war" policy; it is also a broad positive program for normalizing international relations. "Besides an undertaking of non-aggression," Khrushchev has pointed out, "it presupposes also an undertaking by all states not to violate the territorial integrity and sovereignty of one another in any

way and under any pretext. The principle of peaceful co-existence means renunciation of interference in the internal affairs of other countries for the purpose of changing their state system or way of life, or for any other reason. The doctrine of peaceful co-existence also implies that political and economic relations between countries should be built on the basis of complete equality of the parties and mutual advantage."

Are the ruling circles of the capitalist countries willing to accept such a program? The events of recent months give grounds for believing that a certain turning point is beginning to be seen in this respect. The view that after renouncing war it is necessary to maintain a war situation in international politics is obviously losing popularity.

The course of events inside the socialist countries has contributed to this in no small way. It has shown how unfounded were the calculations of the short-sighted bourgeois leaders on an internal weakening of socialism, that in those countries processes would develop which, if only they were supported by a cold war from without, would lead to the collapse of the socialist system and bring back the "lost" socialist souls to the bosom of capitalism.

Reality has disproved these calculations. Socialism has grown even stronger economically and politically, and the cold war policy has lost all prospects even from the viewpoint

of capitalists, at least those who look at things soberly.

It would, however, be wrong to believe that this sober view has won completely. The struggle around the idea of peaceful co-existence has by no means come to an end. It is no secret that in the capitalist countries there still are social forces who want at any cost to perpetuate international tension, which promises them fabulous profits and great political influence. These forces by no means intend to capitulate. While trying to accommodate themselves to the new situation, they are hurriedly reforming, changing the battle front and frantically elaborating new tactics.

People who only yesterday could not swallow the phrase "peaceful co-existence" have finally learned to pronounce it. But they do it in an impassive patter and with an expression that would suggest: "What, strictly speaking, is there in it to make us glad? All right, let us grant that peaceful co-existence is better than a 'hot' war, but what new thing has it introduced compared with the situation which has existed since 1945? And has it really gone so far away from the cold war?" One of the first to take up this pose was Vice-President Nixon of the United States, who said: "Co-existence means a world divided into two hostile camps with a wall of hatred and fear between them."

In recent weeks such assertions have literally become the last word

in the propagandist fashion for all opponents of peaceful co-existence, and the arguments of those who hold this view have been clearly revealed.

Highly indicative in this respect is the recent speech by Andrew Berding, United States Assistant Secretary of State, at the conference of the National Radio and Television Association. "Peaceful co-existence," he said, "sounds tempting and many people who have not taken the trouble to ponder over it have accepted it. It is therefore very important for us to know what it means."

And answering this question, Berding expressed regret that the peaceful co-existence proposed by the Soviet Union "could not be put on the same footing with peace as we understand it." Why? Because you see, peaceful co-existence in the Soviet understanding does not mean the end of competition between the two systems and of the ideological struggle between them.

It is on these grounds that Berding tries to picture it as an inferior substitute for genuine peace, and draws the following conclusion: "People have the right to something better than peaceful co-existence."

Similar aims, expressed also by certain other political leaders of the United States, were readily picked up by the reactionary press. The magazine *United States News and World Report*, for instance, commented on the Soviet proposals in

the following way: "The cold war will not end all over the world in the foreseeable future," and the *New York Times* went so far as to try to interpret the conception of peaceful co-existence and competition between the two systems as communism's "claim" to an unhindered right to "new conquests through subversive activity."

What we have here is a very peculiar picture, namely, that those who have long and uncompromisingly taken the stand of the cold war are now criticizing peaceful co-existence because, if you please, it is not "peaceful" enough.

What is important, however, is not the moral aspect of the thing, for this is not the first time we have come across hypocritical reactionary propaganda. The main thing is the essence of the problem, the more so since such arguments are addressed to the broad public, among whom there are not a few people who are uninitiated in questions of theory and politics. The critics of the idea of peaceful co-existence are trying to convince precisely such people that the idea does not introduce anything new in international relations and that it is not an aim which is worth fighting for. The danger of such propaganda, it goes without saying, cannot be overestimated.

The crux of the matter here can be reduced to two questions closely related to one another. The first could be formulated thus: Why does

the Soviet Union, while proclaiming that its aim is normalization of international relations, insist on an ideological struggle, and why does it not extend peaceful co-existence to the sphere of ideology? And the second question is: Does the conception of peaceful co-existence in conditions of an ideological struggle furnish a sufficient basis for establishing lasting peace and normal good-neighboring relations and cooperation between the capitalist and socialist countries?

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As regards the first of the questions posed, the answer, to put it in a nutshell, is as follows: The Soviet Union ties up peaceful co-existence with the ideological struggle for the simple reason that this is the only *realistic approach*. What would a declaration for ceasing competition with the capitalist world and ceasing ideological struggle mean? It would be either hypocrisy, concealing one's real views and intentions, which has never yet helped to reach agreement, or to settle complex social and political problems, or it would mean the communists' betrayal of their principles, their outlook. Apparently this is what many of those who criticize peaceful co-existence from the stand of "genuine peace" are after. But such a "version," if we may call it so, hardly needs even mentioning.

The essence of the conception of peaceful co-existence is that it is a question of co-existence not simply

of different states but of states belonging to opposite social systems, and hence the approach to it must not be a narrow diplomatic one but a social one, including an understanding of historical perspectives contained in a class analysis of the world situation.

Indeed, are relations between states all that there is to peaceful co-existence of the two systems on one planet? Certainly not, however important these relations are in themselves. The existence of the two systems has also another aspect. Each system personifies the rule of a class—in one case the capitalist class, and in the other the working class—between whom there goes on an irreconcilable struggle, which is the basic content of our historical epoch. The struggle between these classes began long before the appearance of the first communist party, and it was not Marx who discovered it.

There can be only one outcome in this struggle—the complete victory of the working class, who are linked with the most advanced and historically progressive mode of production, and the victory of socialism in the countries in which a third of humanity lives is an important stage on the road to this goal. However, this success does not mean and cannot mean the end of the class struggle. The struggle between the workers and the bourgeoisie goes on and will continue to go on, not only in particular countries, but in the inter-

national arena as well, between the two social systems, developing in the economic, political and ideological spheres.

The controversy between the two social systems, which began more than 40 years ago, will not end until complete victory is won by the more progressive system throughout the world. That is the law of history. This unalterable fact cannot be eliminated or changed by any agreement; it exists objectively and does not depend on the will of any government.

But what does depend on the governments, ruling circles and parties, and very much too, is the choice of forms of the historically inevitable struggle. In proposing peaceful co-existence the Soviet Union proceeds from the premise that it is possible to avoid having this struggle develop into an armed conflict between states and to direct it along channels that will not threaten civilization with calamitous wars, channels which would best meet the needs and interests of mankind.

Such, in brief outline, is the socio-historical background of the policy of peaceful co-existence proposed by the Soviet Union. This policy does not set itself impracticable tasks, that is to say, to put an end to the class struggle raging in the international arena. Such an object is beyond the power of even the strongest and most experienced political parties and governments.

However, peaceful co-existence

means renunciation of forms of armed struggle between states, in place of which there is proposed the form of *competition by the social systems for the support of their people*. This form of struggle best meets the interests of mankind. The will of the peoples, and not arms, should decide which system is better, which system can ensure the working people a higher standard of living, true freedom and a flourishing culture.

This form of struggle between the two social systems inevitably implies a continuation of the ideological struggle. Inasmuch as capitalism and socialism will fight for the support of the peoples, the struggle of ideas is unavoidable.

Only notorious falsifiers can pretend that until socialism appeared there had existed the idyll of brotherhood and friendship, a realm of universal embracing, that then came the communists demanding competition between the two systems and an ideological struggle! In reality, the world is faced—and by no means through the fault of the communists—with another alternative: on the one hand, armed conflicts between states and the cold war; and on the other, peaceful competition between the two systems and an ideological struggle. This means that the communists are proposing an ideological struggle, not in place of a universal idyll, which does not and cannot exist, as long as there are class an-

tagonisms, but in place of the cold war and bloody wars. Obviously this is neither a step backward nor marking time but great progress towards a normalization of the international situation.

What drives the enemies of the Soviet conception of peaceful co-existence out of their wits is the fact that in speaking of peaceful co-existence the communists say they are firmly confident of victory in competition with capitalism and of the final triumph of their ideas. What sort of co-existence is this, they ask, if the Soviet Union expresses its conviction that in the end the communists will win throughout the world?

Answering these puzzling questions, Comrade Khrushchev in his article "On Peaceful Co-existence," written for the American magazine *Foreign Affairs*, rightly pointed out that those who ask them are mixing up problems of ideological struggle with the question of relations between states. "We communists," he wrote, "believe that in the final analysis the communist idea will triumph all over the world just as it has done in our country, China and many other states. Many readers of *Foreign Affairs* may disagree with us. Perhaps they believe that in the final analysis the idea of capitalism will triumph. They are entitled to their belief. We may argue and we may disagree with one another. *The main thing is to stick to the position of ideological struggle without re-*

sorting to arms to have our way."

That is exactly the stand taken by the socialist countries. They have no intention of foisting their ideas and views on other peoples by force of arms. The idea of "exporting revolution," of "instigating" it from without, is alien to Marxism-Leninism. Our party, as most people know, has severely criticized such views which were held by the Trotskyites and Bukharinites. In answering them, Lenin wrote: "Such a 'theory' would be a complete break with Marxism, which has always disclaimed 'incitement' to revolution, which develops as the sharpness of class contradictions giving rise to revolutions comes to a head." But what grounds are there for demanding that communists should begin to doubt that sooner or later all mankind will come to communism? Do not the whole historical experience and a sober estimate of the trends of development of modern society favor such a conclusion?

In this light very strange indeed appear the claims of some capitalist leaders that they be given certain "guarantees" against the further growth of the influence of communist ideas throughout the world.

Rejecting such claims, voiced by the editor of the American magazine *Look*, N. S. Khrushchev said at the dinner given in his honor by the Economic Club in the city of New York: "What do you want? Do you want me to give you a guar-

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antee that the American people will always live in a capitalist society? Do you want to get a prescription to keep capitalism from perishing? I am not a doctor and I can't give you such prescriptions. The question of what system you will have in your country does not depend either on me or on you. It depends on the American workers, the American people, who will decide what system they will choose."

That the Soviet conception of peaceful co-existence is realistic is testified to by this fact too: Critics of this conception who hold that people are entitled to something better have advanced no positive proposals. And that is understandable, for they have nothing to propose.

Indeed, can one advance in opposition to the Soviet conception, say, a plan of peaceful co-existence on the conditions of "ideological unity?" It cannot be done, for in practice it would mean demanding prompt acceptance by all states of either the socialist or the capitalist ideology. Since neither side wishes to "change" its ideology such a plan would not be a program for peace and friendship among nations, but for a crusade for the triumph of the "true faith," in other words, a program of war and of sharpening world tension.

Another version we could imagine is an "ideological truce," in other words, let each keep its system and

its ideology but from now on give up the ideological struggle. This version too, however, is entirely unrealistic, and only people who do not understand the essence of the social processes going on in the world and who believe that history can be halted if only this is agreed upon, can think of it.

With the masses of the people, many millions strong, having begun to move, when they want to decide for themselves what social system ensures them a better life, one worthy of man, the eyes of all people are fixed on what is going on in the socialist and capitalist worlds. Under such conditions it is not words which assume decisive ideological importance but deeds—the standard of welfare of the working people in the particular country, their economic and social gains, their achievements in the sphere of democracy, science and culture, and the rate of their progress.

You cannot kill people's interest in what is going on in the world any more than you can divide our planet into tight compartments by setting up barriers through which no glance will penetrate and no word will get through.

The ideological struggle is therefore nobody's whim or trick but an unalterable fact of reality, reflecting the existence of differing social systems. This fact must be recognized by all who want to keep their feet on the sure ground of reality.

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Today the question is not whether to recognize or not recognize that the ideological struggle is a social law. It goes on and will continue to go on as long as there are different classes and different social systems in the world. The essence of the question is that while the two systems compete with one another and an ideological struggle goes on between them military conflicts should be avoided, the cold war should be ended, and international relations should be reorganized on the basis of co-operation and friendship among the peoples.

Is this task realizable? The communists say yes, and they proceed not from good wishes but from a sober analysis of the present situation in the world. Such an analysis testifies irrefutably to the fact that ideological reasons are by no means at the root of most of the problems giving rise to the danger of war and world tension. However, ideological considerations and the unwillingness of the influential monopolies to part with the profits the armaments race is promising them serve as a stumbling block to disarmament. It is not the struggle of ideas but the policy of colonization that gives rise to the ceaseless and dangerous tension in South-East Asia, the Near East and North Africa.

Historical experience confirms most convincingly the communist

view on this question. It testifies, among other things, to the fact that the biggest wars of recent times did not break out as a result of the ideological struggle or disputes as to the advantage or defects of a particular social system, but as a result of profoundly material considerations—the imperialists' chase after profits, colonies, spheres of influence and sources of raw material and markets.

In the light of these facts the attempts to ascribe all modern conflicts and complications to ideology seem highly unconvincing. This is admitted today by some political leaders of the West too. It was Allen, the head of the United States official propaganda agency, himself who recently said:

Even if we resolved the ideological differences we would still have to organize international relations in the world in such a way as to avoid serious conflicts between sovereign states. Britain and Russia quarrelled for a hundred years up to 1914. The majority of Christian states fought one another as readily as Christians fought against the heathen.

And is it true that before the first communist state appeared on earth, when there was nothing to cloud "ideological unity," the bourgeois world, constantly rent by conflicts and wars, could settle its controversies peacefully?

Yet history furnishes more than enough examples of normal relations between states with differing

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social systems and ideologies. We know, for instance, that the profound differences which existed between the United States, a bourgeois-democratic republic, and Russia, a semi-feudal and absolute monarchy, did not prevent them from not only living in peace for more than a hundred years but also building their relations on a completely friendly basis.

Differences in ideology did not hinder an alliance between the socialist country and such capitalist countries as the United States, Britain and France during the Second World War. And the present epoch furnishes no few examples of normal and genuinely friendly relations between countries divided by serious ideological differences, such as the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and India, Indonesia and Afghanistan, on the other.

The very latest convincing proof that even very sharp disputes on ideological questions cannot prevent mutual understanding between peoples is furnished by N. S. Khrushchev's visit to the United States of America. During his meetings with Americans, the head of the Soviet government did not avoid ideological discussions or hide the profound differences, and set forth in a principled manner and consistently the Marxist-Leninist view on all major problems of our time. Many of these meetings turned into a very sharp ideological struggle.

But is there anyone who will say that as a result of the visit the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, far from improving, have on the contrary become worse, and that the visit was not a great contribution to the elimination of the cold war?

Consequently, both the experience of the past and present-day reality testify equally to the following: if ideological differences are not deliberately sought for the purpose of worsening relations, the differences will not prevent the successful organization of co-operation between states with differing social systems. As sincere and consistent efforts are made to this end, even in the conditions of competition between the two systems and ideological struggle, there is every possibility of putting an end to the cold war and achieving truly good-neighborly and friendly relations, and not a substitute for peace, as is asserted by some bourgeois leaders.

Of course, not everything that people have got used to calling an ideological struggle is compatible with the principle of peaceful co-existence. The struggle of ideas, the dispute about conceptions and estimations of particular processes and phenomena of life and about ways of attaining ideals held by the majority of mankind and the merits and advantages of the one or the other social system is one thing. This struggle or dispute should not and cannot hinder

a decisive improvement in relations between the socialist and capitalist powers.

But slanderous propaganda, provocations, the spreading of rumors, which may bring turmoil and discord in the life of society—this is quite another thing. Even if it does touch upon ideological questions, such propaganda is not an ideological struggle but rather it is subversive activity, interference in the internal affairs of other states.

However, the ideological struggle, as communists understand it, is by no means a cold war. The cold war is a policy envisaging the use of all means, including the means of propaganda, above all for preparing and kindling a real war, a "hot" war, as well as for regularly interfering in the internal affairs of other countries with the object of overthrowing the system existing there. This is what determines the nature and methods of the particular propaganda (so-called "psychological warfare") which had and still has a good many admirers in the United States, but which is vigorously rejected by the Soviet Union.

Peaceful co-existence has the opposite aim, namely, to eliminate war as a way of settling disputes between states and to ensure non-interference by one power in the internal affairs of another. Hence, an ideological struggle, which such a policy assumes, cannot be of the nature of a "psychological war," which poisons

the international atmosphere and puts serious obstacles in the way of strengthening peace and co-operation among nations. Peaceful co-existence does not demand the perpetuation and legalization of cold war methods, including propaganda methods, among them; it demands a resolute renunciation of them.

This is not a question of ideology or social principles, but a question of political means. On this question and on other questions of relations between states, concessions and compromises are possible and necessary, and N. S. Khrushchev dwelt on their importance in his report to the Third Session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. However, a demand that communists shall show their good will by giving up their outlook, make concessions in the realm of ideology and show tolerance towards bourgeois ideas has not a leg to stand on. To those who advance such demands we can say: "Gentlemen, you are waiting in vain."

Mutual concessions in the interests of peaceful co-existence of states," Comrade Khrushchev rightly states, "should not be confused with concessions on principles, on what concerns the very nature of our socialist system, our ideology. In this matter there can be no question of any concessions or accommodation. If there are concessions on principles, on question of ideology, that would mean slipping down to the position of our opponents.

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That would mean qualitative changes in policy; it would be a betrayal of the working-class cause. He who takes this stand will take the road of betrayal of the socialist cause, and, of course, the fire of merciless criticism must be opened against this."

That is why peaceful co-existence, even if its principles completely triumph in the relations between states, does not remove the irreconcilable struggle against bourgeois ideology from the order of the day, and that is why, however international relations may develop in the future, it will always be the sacred duty of every communist to defend his ideas and keep them pure. Therein lies the profound difference between those who stand on the true Leninist position and those who have slid down to the position of opportunism and revisionism.

There are no compromises, and there can be none, between the bour-

geois and proletarian outlooks. Private or public ownership, a bourgeois state or dictatorship of the proletariat, bourgeois or socialist democracy—one can take only one side or the other on these and all other important questions; there is no middle road. In advancing the principle of peaceful co-existence, the communists do not demand that the bourgeoisie should betray itself on any ideological questions whatsoever. But they resolutely reject any attempts to force them to a betrayal of their own ideas and principles.

A consistent, principled and vigorous ideological struggle is one of the important conditions for building socialism and communism in the countries of the socialist camp. And the communists advance the policy of peaceful co-existence not because they want to slow down that construction, but precisely because they want above all to make it even more successful.

The Kerala Elections

By Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary, C. P. of India

ON FEBRUARY 1, Kerala went to the polls. Two days later, the *Statesman*, organ of British big business in India, wrote exuberantly:

The Communists today lost Kerala and the people of this State justified the President's action in dismissing the Communist Ministry six months ago.

The *Statesman* undoubtedly had cause for jubilation. Few hated the Communist-led Government of Kerala more intensely than the millionaire British planters whose cause the *Statesman* had consistently championed. And when, therefore, the strength of Communists and their allies was reduced from sixty-five to twenty-nine in an Assembly of 126 (one member representing the Anglo-Indian community is to be nominated later by the Governor) it could be rightly called a big defeat for the Communist Party.

But was there any reason to think that the election results justified the dismissal of the Kerala Ministry by the President of the Indian Republic?

In order to answer the question, one has to recount a few facts.

KERALA MINISTRY AND ITS DISMISSAL

As is well known, the second general elections in India showed a massive increase in the influence of the Communist Party of India. The Party polled 12 million votes—double the votes it had polled in the first general elections held in 1951-52. This represented 11 per cent of the total votes. The Party won a majority of seats in the predominantly working-class constituencies. It also won, together with its five independents who accepted the Program of the Party and whom it supported, a majority of seats in the State of Kerala* and was able to form the Government there.

It must be noted, however, that the Party and its allies had secured only 40.74 per cent of the votes cast. Despite this, it could win an absolute majority of seats in the State Legislature because of the electoral system that prevails in India fashioned on the British model (the can-

* The State of Kerala has an area of 15,000 square miles and a population of 13.6 millions.

candidate securing the largest number of votes in any constituency gets elected from that constituency irrespective of the percentage of voted polled by him).

The formation of the Kerala Government by Comrade E. M. S. Namboodiripad was hailed all over the country. Functioning within the rigid framework of the Indian Constitution, with forces of landlords and big business constantly assailing it, with the Congress in alliance with the Praja Socialist Party and the Muslim League striving continuously for its overthrow, with the all-India Congress Party and even the Central Government openly hostile towards it, the Kerala Government during its rule of 28 months carried out what no Congress Government in India has been able to do all these years. Its policies in defense of the interest of the working class, peasantry and toiling intelligentsia, as well as its measures for the extension of democratic rights and liberties earned it the love of common people not only in Kerala but all over the country. Its continuation would have endangered the regime of the Congress in every State and given a powerful impetus to the democratic movement.

Therefore, a vile conspiracy was hatched. Working up religious passion and caste and communal hysteria, the leaders of the Catholic Church in Kerala and of the Nair Service Society (a caste society—*Ed.*)

in alliance with the Congress, Praja Socialist Party and Muslim League launched a violent struggle with the avowed aim of overthrowing the Government. Schools were sought to be forcibly closed, State buses were damaged, normal life was attempted to be paralyzed. Mr. Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, who denounces in unequivocal terms every peaceful struggle of workers and peasants for their legitimate demands, hastened to describe this violent campaign against one of the constituent States of the Indian Republic as a "popular upsurge." This was rightly taken to mean open support by the Central Government to the struggle.

Not content with this, the Parliamentary Board of the Congress, of which Mr. Nehru is the undisputed leader, demanded that the Kerala Ministry should resign and hold fresh elections. Never, it may be noted, had such a demand been made about any State where the Congress ruled, despite widespread popular opposition. The demand was justified on the plea that:

. . . It seems obvious that a big changeover has taken place among the people and many of those who supported the majority party (Communists) in the Assembly in the last elections have changed over and are opposing it. (Resolution of the Congress Parliamentary Board, 20th June, 1959.)

In a series of speeches, Nehru

and other leaders of the Congress repeated this argument: "True, the Ministry has got a majority in the State Legislature. But it has lost the backing of many who supported it 28 months ago. Hence it must resign."

And when the Kerala Ministry rightly rejected the demand for resignation, the Central Government threw away all decorum, all pretense of impartiality. Abusing the wide powers it enjoys under the Constitution, it dismissed the Kerala Ministry (July 31, 1959).

UNHOLY ALLIANCE TO FIGHT DEMOCRACY

Leaders of the Congress, when they brought about the dismissal of the Kerala Ministry, had put forward the sanctimonious plea that they had done this in the "interest of democracy." But the real reason soon became apparent. Immediately after the dismissal of the Ministry, an attack was launched on the gains that the people had secured during the previous 28 months. Also, and most significant of all, the President of the Indian Republic withheld assent from the Agrarian Relations Bill which had been passed by the State Legislature—a Bill that struck at the power of big landlords and conferred wide rights on the peasantry.

Simultaneously, large-scale intimidation and assaults began on the poorest sections of the people, espe-

cially in rural areas, with a view to terrorize them into submission and break them away from the Communist Party. On several occasions, representatives of our Party in the Parliament drew attention to such illegal acts, citing concrete and specific instances. All this went unheeded.

Daring not to face the Communist Party single-handed as it had done in 1957, the Congress sought "allies" for the election. The Praja Socialist Party, the mouthpiece of "democratic socialism" in India, a party which long ago broke with socialism and even Leftism, and which has distinguished itself by rabid anti-Communism, violent attacks on the USSR and China and thinly veiled pro-American leanings, hastened to join the alliance. For Mr. Pattom Thanu Pillai, the PSP leader of Kerala, no price was too high if it enabled him to fulfill his one ambition—Chief Ministership of the State. But the Praja Socialist Party alone was a broken reed for the Congress to rely on. Its independent mass influence, except in certain areas, was insignificant. Hence the highly organized Catholic Church and the caste organization, the Nair Service Society led by Mr. Mannath Padmanabhan, the leader of the "liberation struggle," became the spearhead of the "democratic" campaign in the Southern and Central Parts of the State.

But even this could not be counted

upon to ensure victory. The Congress needed more allies. It found them.

As is well known, the All-India Muslim League, ever since its formation, had played an utterly reactionary role in Indian politics, sowing discord between Hindus and Muslims, disrupting the national movement and thereby helping British imperialism to retain its rule in India. And when the British had ultimately to quit the country, they used the separatist sentiments and demands fostered by the Muslim League to partition the country into India and Pakistan.

The Muslim League has disappeared from the rest of the country. In Kerala, it is still a force and retains considerable influence among Muslims in the Malabar area.

In December 1955, in the course of a speech in Malabar in which he condemned the using of religion for political ends, Prime Minister Nehru, referring to the Muslim League, had said:

Remember, we shall fight it tooth and nail all the time. There is going to be no quarter for communalism in this country, whether Hindu or Muslim or any other.

It is an amazing thing [continued Nehru], that this discreditable organization which has brought misery to India, should raise its head in Malabar or elsewhere.

Again, in 1957, during the second

general elections, Nehru called the Muslim League "a fossil which should have been put in the Museum."

It is this "discreditable organization" which had "brought misery to India," this "fossil" to which the Congress now turned in order to save Kerala from the "menace of totalitarianism." That was the new way the Muslim League was to be "fought tooth and nail."

At a meeting organized by the "alliance," the Congress tri-color, sanctified by the blood of countless martyrs who had died in India's struggle for freedom, flew side by side with the banner of the Muslim League which had done its utmost to disrupt that struggle. To this was joined the banner of democratic socialism!

TWO LINES OF CAMPAIGN

But the most significant fact of the election campaign was that whereas the Communist Party and its allies put forward a concrete and comprehensive program and sought the support of the people on the basis of what the Ministry had actually done during its 28 months of rule, the "alliance" dared to refer neither to the record of the Congress when it was in office nor the record of the Communist-led Ministry nor even put forward an election program. Instead of a sober, reasoned appeal to the electorate and attempt to convince them as to why they should

vote for the "alliance," they worked up religious hysteria and caste passion and indulged in wild lies and slanders against the Communist Party.

No method was considered too mean, no tactic too low.

As can be easily imagined, the regrettable dispute between India and China over certain border areas became a handy instrument in the hands of Communist-baiters and a potent weapon in the election campaign.

During his visit to Kerala in the course of the campaign, Mr. Nehru had very little criticism to make about the actual program and deeds of the Ministry. In fact, he kept completely silent over these matters. He elaborated at length the Communist Party's alleged preference for "violent methods" and its "anti-national" character. "If any group in India," said Nehru, "in a moment of national crisis forgets that its basic loyalty is towards India, then that group does not represent India, whatever else it might." (January 18).

For Mr. Sanjiva Reddy, the President of the Congress, even this was too mild. "If the people of Kerala," he thundered, "put a fifth-columnist Government in office at this juncture, they would be endangering the security of India."

Although fully aware that there was no danger of war between India and China, Mr. Reddy had no scruples to say:

If there is war between India and China on the border issue, millions of young men would have to go to the border to defend the country's integrity and honor. In that event are you going to allow the satellites of Chinese Communists to rule your State here? Will they not sabotage the lines of defense and supply? Are you going to send your young men to the border, with saboteurs and fifth-columnists in your own State? (*Times of India*, January 26).

This was not merely an appeal to vote against the Communist Party. It was deliberate working up of hatred and hysteria so as to induce the people to attack the Party cadres and members.

Simultaneously, there was resort to intimidation of another type. Dignitaries of the Church threatened Catholics with dire consequences if they voted for Communists. A letter dated January 21, 1960 sent by Father Bonnaventure to one Panikkasseri Francis, which was published in the press, ran as follows:

Dear Brother:

I have received reliable information that you, a member of the Carmelite Third Order of the Catholic Church, are working for the success of the Communist Party and its candidate in Ernakulam. You know that it is prohibited for any Catholic to work for the Communist Party or its candidates. Therefore, unless you inform me before next Sunday (January 24, 1960) that you have withdrawn from such

activities, you will be excommunicated from the Church and your excommunication will be announced from the pulpit.

Yours faithfully,
Father Bonnaventure

Similar threats were given to the Muslims by Mullahs and Maulvis in the name of Islam.

All this was a gross violation of the election laws in India. Section 123 of the Representation of the People's Act specifically prohibits such practices. The Act lays down that no one is permitted to: "threaten any candidate or any elector, or any person in whom a candidate or an elector is interested, with injury of any kind, including *social ostracism and excommunication or expulsion from community.*"

or "Induce any candidate or voter to believe that he will become an object of *divine displeasure* or spiritual censure."

Yes, it was the ruling party in the country which broke all the laws which it itself had framed when it feared defeat—an eloquent commentary on the morals of the bourgeoisie and landlords and an exposure of the methods they resort to when fighting the working people.

PEOPLE THREATENED WITH STARVATION

But even this did not give the al-

liance the requisite confidence. Therefore, threats of a more material nature were added. The most despicable of these was the threat to starve the people of Kerala if they dared to vote for the Communist Party and its allies.

Kerala, it is necessary to note, is heavily deficit in food. It produces a large quantity of pepper, rubber, tea and coffee, cocoanut and other crops which earn valuable foreign currency but has to import nearly 50 per cent of its requirement of foodgrains from other States in India. A large part of this comes from Andhra.

Ever since the Communist-led Government was formed in Kerala, this has been one of the weapons which the Congress leaders, in power at the Centre and in all other States, had been using against Kerala. The quota of foodgrains for Kerala was drastically cut down—as though to punish the people for having voted for the Communist Party. And now, throwing away all pretense, Mr. Sanjiva Reddy, who had relinquished the Chief Ministership of Andhra to assume the office of the President of the Congress, bluntly declared in a speech:

Andhra can supply the entire rice requirements of Kerala at reasonable prices. But if you want the Andhra people to do so, then Kerala must have a Government of a party of nationalism. If a party of foreign agents who endanger the freedom and nationalism of

India is in office here, how can the patriotic peasants of Andhra increase production and supply rice to Kerala?

This speech was published in the Congress daily of Kerala, the *Mathrubhoomi*.

Further, the people of Kerala who had long been looking forward to the establishment of a second shipyard in the State, were told by Mr. A. M. Thomas, Deputy Minister for Food of the Central Government: "The second shipyard will be established if the soil is of good quality and the quality of the soil will be decided by the verdict of the electorate."

Not to be outdone by the performance of his colleagues, Mr. S. V. Ramaswamy, Deputy Minister for the Central Government for Railways, held out the hope that Kerala could get more railways (from the Central Government) if they voted for the Congress.

Almost all the top Ministers of the Central Government actively participated in the election campaign in Kerala—their utterances creating the impression that the people of Kerala would incur the wrath of the Central Government if they again voted to power the Communist Party and its allies. What this meant can be realized only by those who know how dependent a State Government in India is on the Central Government for finances and for any economic advance.

Together with all this, huge re-

sources were poured into the State by the millionaire patrons of the Congress; many voters were sought to be bought over.

A NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN

Against this formidable combination and these tactics, the Communist Party of Kerala waged a valiant struggle, aided powerfully by Party units all over the country. Never had the toiling people of Kerala displayed such love for our Party, never had the vast number of cadres, sympathizers and friends worked so hard. We certainly could not match the unlimited resources of the Congress; but politically and ideologically, the opportunist alliance was put on the defensive. Every slander was refuted, every lie was nailed down, every question effectively answered. Broad-based election committees were formed in every constituency to explain to the people the real issues and to mobilize their support. Rallies and demonstrations of tens of thousands took place in every part of Kerala, pledged to do utmost for people's victory in the elections.

The Party Press in Kerala played a big role in carrying the message of the Party.

Every house was visited in the course of the campaign, every voter approached. Among those who worked tirelessly for the success of the Communist Party and its allies

were a number of people who had taken part in the "liberation struggle" but had, since, come to see the error of their ways.

The Kerala elections became one of the biggest nationwide campaigns that the Communist Party has conducted in its entire history. Mass rallies of tens of thousands were held in every State. A sum of nearly half a million rupees was collected by us—mostly from workers, peasants and middle-class intelligentsia. Included among the contributors were a number of people who generally support the Congress but who felt that a Communist Ministry in one State would check the Rightward trend of the Congress Party itself.

As the date of the elections approached, tension mounted. At Chowghat in Trichur district, a group of persons proceeding to take part in a Communist demonstration were attacked by ruffians armed with daggers. One was killed, another stabbed through the lungs and six more seriously injured. Assaults took place in other places, too.

As already mentioned, religious sentiments had been utilized to the full during the election campaign. And, on the eve of the polling, backward voters like tribals, were taken to the temples where in the presence of idols and priests, they were made to take the vow that they would vote for the Congress-PSP-League alliance. Similar methods were adopted by Bishops and Mullahs.

"At Sunday sermon in churches," wrote the *Times of India* correspondent on January 31st, "Christian congregations were reminded that they should preserve their faith and freedom against a godless creed. Special prayers have been said throughout the month."

It added: "In many Catholic centers, the mass will be celebrated earlier than usual tomorrow morning so that the members of the parish can go straight from the Church to the polling station. The devout will cast their votes in continuation of an earlier act of worship."

Such was the background of the most keenly contested election in India. It is a background well worth keeping in mind when assessing the results.

ELECTIONS SHOW SHIFT TOWARDS THE COMMUNIST PARTY

It is undeniable that our expectations have not been fulfilled and we have suffered a defeat. As the Executive Committee of the Kerala State Committee of our Party said: "This is not a defeat of the Communist Party alone. . . . It is a defeat which endangers all the achievements of our national movement and as such, it is a defeat for all the ideas which the Congress itself held in the last five decades."

But significantly enough, there is today little jubilation in the ranks of the Congress, the PSP and the Mus-

lim League. The temporary elation which followed their victory has given place to apprehension and anxiety about the future.

This is not accidental. As already mentioned, the Congress and Mr. Nehru had justified the dismissal of the Nambudiripad Ministry on the plea that "a big change-over has taken place among the people and many of those who supported the Communists in the last elections have now changed over and are opposing them." Did the elections prove this contention?

The elections *did* prove that a shift had taken place among the people. But not a shift *away* from the Communist Party. It was a significant shift *towards* the Communist Party. If the Congress and the PSP and the Muslim League had fought the 1960 elections in the same way as in 1957, that is without a "united front," they would have been routed and the Communist Party and its allies would have increased their number of seats.

Several significant features of the Kerala elections should be noted.

Firstly: A remarkably high percentage of voters went to the polls—84.75 per cent. In few capitalist countries, does such a high percentage exercise the franchise—a clear indication of the sharpness and intensity of the struggle.

Secondly: The Communist Party and its allies polled 3.54 million votes, nearly 1.2 million *more* than the votes it polled in 1957 (2.37 million).

Also they polled a higher percentage of the total votes—43.81 per cent against 40.74 in 1957.

Thirdly: Despite the alliance they had forged, despite resort to every tactic, the Congress-PSP-Muslim League alliance had polled 4.33 million votes—only eight hundred thousand votes more than the Communists and their allies. Further, whereas in 1957 the percentage of votes polled by these three parties together had been 54.19, now it was *reduced* to 53.52.

Thus, the toiling people of Kerala nailed down as a blatant lie what the Congress and Mr. Nehru himself had repeatedly asserted—the alleged weakening of the influence of the Communist Party. Practically in every constituency, the votes polled by the Communist Party this time were higher than in 1957.

This was achieved despite the fact that on the polling day itself there were assaults on our members and a Communist worker, Kunhu Kunhu, was stabbed to death. In several places, agricultural workers were forcibly prevented from going to the booth.

Kerala showed in a most striking way the undemocratic nature of our electoral system. The following figures are revealing:

In Trivandrum District, our Party and its allies polled 45.83 per cent of the total votes but won only 2 out of 13 seats.

In Quilon, polling 42.80 per cent of the total votes, we won only 4 out of 14 seats.

In Alleppey, polling 46.17 per cent of the total votes, we won only 6 out of 14 seats.

In Ernakulam, polling 41.59 per cent of the total votes, we won only 1 out of 14 seats.

In Kottayam, polling 43.09 per cent of the total votes, we won only 2 out of 13 seats.

The victory of the Congress-PSP-Muslim League alliance was followed by "celebrations," the main feature of which was stepping up of the terror offensive. A Communist worker, Raghaven, was killed in Kayamkulam; another, Damodaran, was stoned to death in Neelimangalam, the huts of several agricultural workers were razed to the ground. Whole families of agricultural workers and poor peasants have been forced to leave their places of residence. Even women are being subjected to humiliation.

Five Communists or Communist supporters have met violent death since February 1.

In places where the Communist Party is strong and able to defend the people against ruffian gangs, it is the police that has started intimidation and assault.

Mere intoxication with success does not explain the frenzy of this offensive. The cause lay deeper.

Despite the success they had won, they knew that the Communist Par-

ty had become a stronger force in Kerala than ever in its history. In a revealingly candid article, Mr. Ashoka Mehta, Chairman of the Praja Socialist Party, said: ". . . the democratic parties have won but the Communists have, by no means, lost." (*Statesman*, February 8)

He drew attention to the ominous fact that between 1951 and 1960:

Communist vote has increased from 23 per cent to 43 per cent. It seems to have increased at 2 per cent each year. . . . Of every hundred persons in Kerala, 43 have favored the Communists. With such a large and entrenched support, the Communists remain a major political factor in the State.

A MAGNIFICENT BATTLE

Mr. B. G. Verghese, the columnist of the *Times of India*, whose hostility to the Communist Party is well-known, wrote:

. . . the popular support won by them (Communists) has recorded an impressive increase of about 1.2 million votes. This is no defeat for a party that faced a liberation struggle, was dismissed from office and confronted by the united strength of the Congress, the PSP and the Muslim League (February 9).

He called the victory won by the alliance a "pyrrhic victory."

"Despite the call to defend their faith against Communism" (an admission of

the role religion had played in the campaign), he added, "socio-economic forces have exerted a stronger pull than those of religion among all communities except Catholics. *The have-nots in Kerala have voted solidly for the Communist Party.*" (my emphasis).

These are the reasons why the "alliance" feel worried about the future. They know that the "have-nots," the poor, who form the majority of the people in Kerala as of every other State in India, look to the Communist Party as their own party. They know that herein lies the strength of the Communist Party. That is why, also, they have launched a furious terror-offensive against the poorest strata of the people. The aim is to break their morale, to cow them down, to force them to abandon their loyalty to the Communist Party.

There can be no doubt, however, that these efforts, too, like all previous efforts will fail.

While conscious of its growing strength, our Party in Kerala is at the same time, aware of its weaknesses. The fact has to be admitted that the overwhelming majority of the Catholic masses, even those be-

longing to the poorest classes, have not supported our Party. Also, our position among the urban middle-class and intelligentsia remains extremely weak. To some extent, even the rural middle classes, including the middle peasantry, fell victim to the propaganda that our agrarian measures would eventually harm their interests. The task of winning over the majority of the people, and of special efforts to strengthen our position among the middle strata—both urban and rural—remain and have acquired even greater urgency than before.

The State Council of the Kerala Committee of the Communist Party of India will in its forthcoming meeting thoroughly review the election campaign and take measures to consolidate as well as extend the influence of the Party.

The Kerala elections have been a magnificent battle, magnificently fought. We have no doubt that the toiling people all over India will draw correct lessons from this battle and redouble efforts to forge that unity which alone can ensure victory for the forces of democracy in our country.

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By HERBERT APTHEKER

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