

# political affairs

APRIL 1958 • 35 CENTS

- |                              |       |   |
|------------------------------|-------|---|
| <b>CLAUDIA JONES</b>         | [ 9 ] | <b>American Imperialism and<br/>the British West Indies</b> |
| <b>JAMES E. JACKSON</b>      | [29]  | <b>A Reply to Comrade Healey</b>                            |
| <b>12 AMERICAN YOUTH</b>     | [34]  | <b>A Call to Youth</b>                                      |
| <b>AN AMERICAN PROFESSOR</b> | [42]  | <b>On the CP's Political<br/>Resolution</b>                 |
| <b>JOHN PITTMAN</b>          | [46]  | <b>Foreign Policy and World<br/>War II</b>                  |
| <b>FRED HALLETT</b>          | [55]  | <b>Antonio Gramsci</b>                                      |
| <b>A. KRCHMAREK</b>          | [59]  | <b>A Pioneer Communist</b>                                  |
| <b>HYMAN LUMER</b>           | [63]  | <b>An Introduction to Marxism</b>                           |

**PAUL ROBESON: THE MAN AND  
HIS MEANING**

by Benjamin J. Davis

[ 1-8 ]

**THE EDITOR** [19] **"Ideas in Our Time"**

Ready in April—

## NO MEN ARE STRANGERS

BY JOSEPH NORTH

A book of affirmation in these troubled days is like a fountain of clear waters in a parched time—it is good for the health! Joe North's *No Men Are Strangers* (International Publishers, price \$3.25) is such a book, a kind of modern Pilgrims' Progress except that, instead of dealing in allegory, the author writes of living facts, observed at first hand, reportage from all the fighting fronts of man's struggle for a better world, the human documentation of the most turbulent, swift-moving, epochal half-century of modern history.

Truly a reporter of a special kind, North chronicles his earliest remembrance of his blacksmith father, soon after the turn of the century in Pennsylvania, the shock of his first contacts with bigotry and hardship, his first meeting with Communists. "The beginning of wisdom came when I encountered men who introduced me to a philosophy which scientifically explained Man's existence, and indicated the inevitability of his triumph over hunger, oppression and war."

His on-the-spot observations of America during the Great Depression; his activity in founding the weekly *New Masses* and his lively contacts, as editor of that soon-to-become famous magazine, with the best known writers and artists of that day; his eye-witness narratives of the militant sit-down strikes which helped to usher in the C.I.O.; his stirring coverage of the battlefronts of Spain during the Civil War; his danger-fraught voyages on convoys crossing the Atlantic in World War II; his first grisly entrance into the still-smoking hell of Dachau, all are brilliantly told in this book. Don't fail to order your copy from your nearest bookstore or, by mail, from—

**New Century Publishers • 832 Broadway, New York 3**

Re-entered as second class matter January 4, 1945, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. POLITICAL AFFAIRS is published monthly by New Century Publishers, Inc., at 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y., to whom subscriptions, payments and correspondence should be sent. Subscription rate: \$4.00 a year; \$2.00 for six months; foreign and Canada, \$4.75 a year. Single copies 35 cents.

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

Vol. XXXVI, No. 4

APRIL, 1958

# political affairs

A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: HERBERT APTHEKER

## Paul Robeson: The Man and His Meaning

By Benjamin J. Davis

HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS of peoples in all parts of the world, on April 9, will celebrate the 60th birthday of one of the titans of our day: Paul Robeson. On no continent will this occasion go unheralded.

In the so-called free world—where nations are still struggling under the relatively backward system of capitalism and imperialism—working peoples of every race, creed, color and nationality will find their own independent ways of expressing their warm greetings. But the most striking feature of this event is that today more than half the peoples of the world are in a position to express their felicitations officially through their own governments, which is a measure of the spiralling progress of humanity, although the U.S. State Department is likely to conclude that such official observances only prove the so-called totalitarian character of these govern-

ments. Exhibit No. 1, for the State Department on this score, is the following moving statement of Prime Minister Nehru of India, issued in support of that country's nation-wide celebration of Robeson's birthday.

This is an occasion which deserves celebration not only because Mr. Robeson is one of the greatest artists of our generation, but also because he has represented and suffered for a cause which should be dear to all of us—the cause of human dignity. Celebration of his birthday is something more than a tribute to a great individual. It is also a tribute to that cause for which he has stood and suffered. (*New York Times*, March 21, 1958.)

The global observances of Robeson's birthday will bring a thrill of pride to the Negro people and to millions of white Americans in the labor and democratic movements. To countless more of our honest

countrymen, they will bring a moment of sober reflection: Why such world-wide affection for Paul Robeson, of a supposedly inferior race on the one hand, and such world-wide hostility to John Foster Dulles, supposedly of a superior race, who speaks officially for this country in international circles?

The tribute to Robeson is a tribute to the American people who love peace, freedom and human dignity no less than any other peoples—to the most cherished democratic and revolutionary traditions of our country, and especially to the oppressed, embattled and heroic Negro people. Robeson is a foremost spokesman of this, the true, America; Dulles is, on the other hand, the chief advocate of the war-minded monopolists who are riding herd over more than five million unemployed. In the national idiom: Robeson is Mr. Human Dignity; Dulles is Mr. Brink-of-War. Robeson brings honor to America; Dulles, dishonor. Progressive humanity understands and welcomes the contrast.

The tributes are deservedly to the man as well. Scholar, lawyer, athlete, actor, singer—Robeson has shown a many-sided genius. He is beloved of the people not only because he has placed these brilliant accomplishments at the service of the noblest aspirations of mankind, but because, living in the center of world reaction, he has stood his ground in the face of the meanest and cheapest persecutions that any civilized

government could heap upon an individual. When such pitifully tragic figures as Howard Fast took to their heels in cowardly flight, Robeson refused to take one step backwards from convictions that millions of people are now understanding and grasping as their own. From these times that try men's souls, Robeson has emerged as one of the foremost people's leaders of this era.

Few individuals alive symbolize as much in their person and in their role in life the aspirations of the people of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the West Indies for freedom and human dignity as does Paul Robeson. None have been more eloquent or passionate in fusing the struggle for peace with the struggle against colonialism abroad, and the struggle for Negro liberation at home. (Believe it or not, the State Department had the temerity to argue as a reason for denying Robeson a passport, the fact that he supports the struggle of the people of Africa against colonial slavery!) None can begrudge Robeson the rare satisfaction of seeing come to pass the irresistible struggles of the colonial peoples and of the American Negro—causes to which he has devoted his entire adult life.

With the publication of *Here I Stand*,\* a new dimension is added to the massive array of Robeson's contributions to the goal of human dignity. Beautifully, simply and

\* Paul Robeson, *Here I Stand* (Othello Associates, N. Y.), \$1.50 (paper); \$2.50 (cloth).

movingly written, bold in conception, sound in content, broad in approach, it cuts through the welter of lies, slanders and confusions—which have surrounded the convictions of this man. In the first place, it sets the record straight.

Plainly, it is addressed to the Negro people; but it abounds in solid meat for the labor movement of the country, and for all democratic white Americans. Viewing the Negro people's movement in all its complexity, totality and unity, it brings forward a people's program of action which, if seized upon by the Negro people and their allies, could not fail to have the most profound positive effects upon the present struggles of the Negro for dignity and full citizenship. This, undoubtedly, is why the hierarchy of bourgeois literary authorities, in which the *New York Times* ranks high, did not even find the space to list *Here I Stand* among the new publications, much less review it. This conspiracy of muteness on the part of the monopoly press—at least in New York—is itself a significant tribute to the book.

*Here I Stand* is Robeson's first book; and everyone who reads it will earnestly hope that it will not be his last. Obviously, it is not the definitive catalog of his countless and extraordinary experiences. That would take volumes, and one can only wish that, in the not too distant future, they will be written. But into the 128 living pages of this

book the author manages to compress enough truth and inspiration to leave the reader amply rewarded. In addition, the Appendix carries a moving family portrait of Robeson by his distinguished brother, the Rev. Benjamin C. Robeson, pastor of the Mother Zion Methodist Church in Harlem; a capsule account of the nation-wide organized movement in Britain to secure Robeson's right to travel to England; a Note on the Council of African Affairs, to which Robeson, along with Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois and Dr. Alphaeus Hunton, devoted many years popularizing the cause of African and colonial freedom in this country; and finally, a stimulating discussion by the author on the universality of folk music and culture.

Already on the way to becoming a best-seller, the book has had a really sensational impact in the national Negro community. Most reflective of this fact is the sensitive Negro press. Many of the commentators in the Negro newspapers demonstrate that Robeson's book was written in response to a vital need of the Negro people's movement, and that there's a legitimate—even welcome—place in this movement for his courageously espoused and advanced convictions, if only they're placed openly on the table for all to thoughtfully examine. An editorial in *The Crusader*, Chicago Negro weekly, of March 8, had this to say under the caption "Paul Robeson: A Man":

The other day it was announced that Paul Robeson's long awaited autobiography, *Here I Stand*, had gone on sale. We here at the new *Crusader* were vitally interested because we have thought all along that the great singer, athlete and lawyer as well as freedom fighter, has been cruelly maligned, falsely accused and persecuted because he wouldn't bow down to the white folks.

Paul Robeson has been one of the mightiest of all Negro voices raised against world oppression of people based on race, color, national origin and religion. He is known, wherever there are people, as a champion of the rights of mankind. Yet, in his own country, when his friendship for the Soviets came under fire of the Dies Committee on Un-American Activities in Congress, the persecution went so far that his marvelous achievement in becoming one of Walter Camp's all-time All-America football selections was dropped by most newspapers. The fact that he was a top singer, a Phi Beta Kappa at Rutgers University, a Spingarn medal winner and foremost interpreter of Shakespeare on the dramatic stage was all conveniently forgotten as Negro newspapers with the exception of three—*New York Amsterdam News*, the *Crusader* and the *Afro-American*—joined the chorus of white papers in pillorying this great American. Other Negro editors, scared that Washington might send the FBI to check on them, took to their heels whenever the name of Robeson was mentioned.

. . . We wanted him [Robeson—B.J.D.] at the side of Martin Luther King in Montgomery. We wanted him on the campus of the University of

Alabama when Autherine Lucy was humiliated. We wanted and needed him at Little Rock and at Calumet Party in Chicago where Negro leaders and until it was safe to come out while the little Negroes were out there trading bricks with the cracker whites.

There are times in our struggle for full equality when words won't do the trick. There are times when stalwart men like Robeson, carved in the heroic mould of Cudjo, Fred Douglass, Jack Johnson, Dr. Ossian Sweet of Detroit and Oscar DePriest of Chicago, are needed for the physical example. This is the kind of leadership that Paul Robeson lives and sings about that will get Negroes off their knees where they are being executed daily before the firing squad of racial prejudice, discrimination, Jim Crow and anti-Negro terrorism, onto their own two legs on which they must stand like men and fight this thing out toe to toe. White folks are scared of this type of Negro leadership.

. . . In Paul Robeson, they have met their match again. They charged him with being a Communist but we never heard the Reds saying anything about the Negro problem that Negroes can truthfully disagree with. For in the parades they used to stage the banners shouted: "Lower Rents," "Stop Race Discrimination," "Down With Jim Crow," "Full Citizenship For the Negro People" and the like. We are not Communist sympathizers, but we have never seen an American Legion, Knights of Columbus, White Citizens Council or Ku Klux Klan parade totting signs advocating these slogans of true Americanism.

We welcome Robeson back to the firing line where he belongs. We ad-

wise him, however, to turn his back on those Negro leaders now trying hard to get on his bandwagon. He should know what they really are.

The *Baltimore Afro-American*, with the largest circulation of all Negro weeklies, serialized the first two chapters of Robeson's book. Its book reviewer, Mr. Saunders Redding, widely-known author, teacher and critic, wrote on March 15:

*Here I Stand* is not a complaint, and most certainly not a complaint of a personal kind. Simple and sincere, it is primarily a statement of principles and convictions. Robeson believes in human dignity and that no station in life is so low as to diminish one's right to assert his human dignity.

His principles and convictions should find response in every heart and will find response in many. . . . No American of whatever color can really quarrel with Robeson's principles and program. Undoubtedly though, many Americans will quarrel—and especially those who will hear about and not read this book. *Here I Stand* is not a book for those who are unconverted or only half converted to the American ethic. It is a challenge to the wholly converted to implement that ethic. It is a challenge to "fulfill the American dream."

These enthusiastic testimonials come, not from those who have associated themselves with Robeson's socialist outlook, but from those who have basic disagreements with this outlook. They give the heave-

ho to the lie that Robeson is isolated from or unwanted by the Negro people, by virtue of his advanced convictions. And everyone knows that the ruling class of the United States has done everything possible to build an iron curtain between this man on the one hand, and the Negro, labor-progressive and peace movements on the other.

The essence of the tremendous impact which the Robeson book has had rests not alone upon its value as a fascinating volume; it is an invitation to his leadership. Speaking of the family tradition of leadership which Robeson received from his great-grandfather, Mr. Redding points out in his review:

It is a tradition that embodies all one means when one uses such phrases as "patriotism," "freedom" and "human dignity." And as a logical consequence of this embodiment it is a tradition that, in its purest strain imposes the responsibility of leadership. . . . Robeson has been persecuted for living up to his heritage, to his responsibility.

Robeson makes no bones about his warm friendship for the Soviet Union, first among equals in a world system of socialist states. Further, he writes:

On many occasions I have publicly expressed my belief in the principles of scientific socialism, my deep conviction that for all mankind a socialist society represents an advance to a

higher stage of life—that it is a form of society which is economically, socially, culturally and ethically superior to a system based upon production for private profit. History shows that the processes of social change have nothing in common with silly notions about “plots” and “conspiracies.” Today we see that hundreds of millions of people—a majority of the world’s population—are living in socialist countries or are moving in a socialist direction, and that newly emancipated nations of Asia and Africa are seriously considering the question as to which economic system is the better for them to adopt. Some of their most outstanding leaders argue that the best road to their people’s goals is through a socialist development and they point to the advances made by the Soviet Union, the People’s Republic of China and other socialist countries as proof of their contention.

The stupendous realities of socialism—and not alone the theory and practice of indispensable and indigenuous Communist Parties—affect the thinking of people in the so-called free world. Communists, in particular, should learn from the opinions of others, especially those outside their ranks, who, like Robeson, are participants in, fighters for and students of the struggle for a better life. Robeson does not timidly and opportunistically hide his convictions under a barrel, as if the struggle for freedom was a popularity contest. A strong partisan of socialism, he, nevertheless, recognizes that the attainment of the

Negro’s full citizenship is a massive struggle requiring the unity of people of diverse views and parties on a common program of action. By the same token, Robeson’s book introduces into the market place of ideas the basic question of how one who believes in the principles of scientific socialism can project a program broader and more effective than any yet advocated on the American scene by any people’s leader. Such a discussion now, at a time when a great debate on the perspective for Negro liberation is raging in Negro and liberal circles in general, will be all to the good.

With the impact—and even greater potential—of the Robeson book, what we are witnessing is a new stage in the development of the Negro people’s movement, and in the relationship of Robeson and his ideas to that movement. This new situation is marked, in part, by increasingly favorable conditions for a higher ideological approach to the problems of achieving Negro liberation, and for a re-vitalization of Robeson’s long association with and militant advocacy of an advanced outlook. *Here I Stand*, in the overall sense, is an alternative to the various programs brought forward by different leaders and organizations of the Negro people, while supplementing and not colliding with the constructive features of these programs. It places the struggle of the American Negro within the world context from which this

struggle derives great sustenance, thus rendering the book a highly important and timely political event.

If world capitalism, under the aegis of the Wall Street Croesus, cannot block the future, neither can it silence an individual rooted in the peoples to whom this future belongs. The publication of and popular reception to Robeson’s book is a bitter defeat for American imperialism, abettor of every racist colonial power on earth. Frederick Douglass once said: “He who would be free must strike the first blow.” Through this book, Robeson has said: “I will be heard!” And the even more powerful echo from the people arises: “We shall hear you!”

This writer submits that the one way—the only way—to smash the “house arrest” confinement imposed on Robeson by the State Department (under both Truman and Eisenhower) is to build in our country the communion between Robeson and the American people which he would receive in virtually every other country in the world. (If Robeson’s cause is now more than ever the people’s cause, let the State Department thank its own transparent and contemptible shenanigans.) The mass circulation of Robeson’s book to, at least, a 100,000 copies will be a beginning in establishing that communion.

That still other avenues exist for creating this unity is attested by the brilliantly successful concerts which Robeson has been giving on the

West Coast—concerts based on the Negro churches and communities, with the support of the labor, progressive and Left forces of that area. Music critics of the capitalist press in California speak of “new dimensions” to the artistry of the great singer. Can it be, one must sadly ask, that a possible reason for the absence of such concerts on the East Coast—in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston and Washington, for example—is due to the penetration in progressive and Left ranks of the reactionary slanders and whispering campaigns against Robeson’s artistry?

Prime Minister Nehru’s statement, inaugurating his country’s nationwide celebrations of Robeson’s 60th birthday, will be received with mingled joy and shame by the American people—joy at this deserved tribute to their countryman, and shame that while 400 million people honor Robeson, the government of his native land treats him to the cheapest insults and harassments. The action of Nehru is a rebuke to the racist policies of American imperialism and an exposure of its hypocritical pretensions as leader of the so-called “free world.” Coupled with the national movement in Britain that Robeson should attend the official Shakespearean festival in June, India’s action constitutes a major breakthrough to the conscience of America. It puts the American labor and democratic movements on their

mettle to take the offensive.

As long as Robeson is denied the right to travel—a cardinal guarantee in the universal declaration of Human Rights—this government is without honor in the family of civilized nations. This brazen restriction cannot be permitted to stand against the growing wrath of democratic Americans, backed by the moral power of all progressive humanity.

American Communists have always taken exceptional pride in the cause of human dignity, Negro equality, peace and freedom—symbolized in the person and role of Paul Robeson. They warmly greet him on the occasion of his 60th birthday, and congratulate him on the long and historic list of his contributions to mankind's quest of a higher and better life. In greeting him, they greet the heroic and embattled Negro people of whom he is a true and worthy son. Not without conscientious and justified self-criticism will they review their profound responsibilities in the fight for Robeson's right to travel—the pivotal test of this basic people's right. Within, no less than outside their ranks during the period of Robeson's

birthday celebrations, they will heighten their activities in stressing the deepest significance of colonial freedom, of the role of colored peoples of Asia, Africa, the Near East and Latin America in hastening a new and higher life for all humanity. They will renew their determination in the struggle for the full citizenship of Negro Americans, in the deep South where they are vanguards on the firing line for the expansion of American democracy, as well as in the shops, schools and communities where the ravages of the economic recession penalize the Negro workers first and hardest. Communists must evoke a new dedication to their historic mission in our country.

Communists above all will understand that a big breakthrough with a massive distribution and sale of Robeson's volume can be a turning point in the whole struggle for Negro freedom in America. This means organizing and mastering all the details and necessities of reaching the people with the book. Here is a practical means to render a major service to the cause of progressive thought and action, to the cause of human dignity and American democracy.

## American Imperialism and the British West Indies

By Claudia Jones

*Claudia Jones, a beloved leader of the Communist Party of the United States, was jailed under the infamous Smith Act, and upon release forced into exile; she is now living in England. The article which follows—one in our series relating the impact of American imperialism in various parts of the world—is especially timely. It was written, as Miss Jones comments, just before the March 25 elections to the Assembly of the West Indian Federation, whose formal appearance as a new member of the community of nations will occur this April—the Editor.*

THE ELECTION on March 25th of the first Federal Assembly in the West Indies marks a new political stage in the history of the Caribbean.

This period will also witness the advancing role of American capital investment in the forthcoming West Indian Federation. Increasing United States economic penetration is not, of course, unrelated to the struggle of the West Indian people for full political and economic independence.

Bearing in mind only highlights: there is the Texaco Oil purchase of Trinidad oil, the growing U.S. investments in Jamaican bauxite, and in British Guiana's aluminum deposits. Clearly the West Indian Federation is already heavily mortgaged to U.S. export capital. Nor does it appear that this indebtedness to Uncle Sam worries John Bull unduly. Seemingly a sort of family arrangement has been worked out

to prevent the burgeoning freedom struggle of the West Indian people from too rapid advancement or "getting out of hand." While the outward political responsibility remains with Britain, increasingly Washington controls the economic basis of the Federation.

This crucial interconnection was clearly shown when a *London Daily Express* staff reporter wrote that in talks he had had last October in Washington, a State Department official had pointed out that while American trade is less than half the West Indian trade with Britain, it is growing at a faster rate. And he added:

The islands' 3,000,000 people offer a reservoir of cheap labor to attract more American capital. A mighty American naval base mushrooming in Trinidad is encouraging the whole dollar flow

to the West Indies. The U.S. Defense Department makes no bones about it—the Trinidad base is now regarded as the Caribbean keystone to the Panama Canal. American forces are going to be there for a long time to come and businessmen look on the Trinidad base as a guarantee of military and political stability for the future.

This rather bald face analysis likewise underscores the scandal of Chaguaramus, the Federation's capital site chosen after examination of other locations by a West Indies Commission. The United States blandly refused to cede Chaguaramus—site of the U.S. Trinidad base—despite questions in Commons as to the original legality of the Churchill-Roosevelt 99-year lease (no legal authority exists for this and the other U.S. military bases in Antigua, St. Lucia and the Bahamas); despite special talks in London last summer between West Indian leaders and British and United States representatives; despite angry criticism of West Indian leaders that not even a by-your-leave request was ever made to the people of Trinidad as to the use of their land; despite an uproarious clamor of protest by important sections of the West Indian and British press criticizing the usual U.S. high-handedness.

The growth of American economic and political influence in the West Indies was facilitated by the establishment in 1942 of an Anglo-American Caribbean Commission, renamed the Caribbean Commission in 1946. Presumably its function

was "to advise and consult" the governments concerned on matters pertaining to "labor, agriculture, health, education, social welfare, finance, economics, etc." But with the help of this Commission, American monopolists have been seizing possession of the natural resources of the West Indies. For example, in 1955, they received the right to exploit the resources of Jamaica. Dominion Oil, a subsidiary of Standard Oil of California, operates in Trinidad. In 1955, Reynolds Metals started mining bauxite in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica. These projects are financed by the United States government which, in 1951, advanced \$1,500,000 for this purpose through the Economic Cooperation Administration. Some idea of the inroads made by American monopolies into the British position may be gleaned from the fact that while British Union Oil spent one million pounds since 1950, prospecting for oil in Barbados, when oil was found, the concession was obtained by Gulf Oil of Pittsburgh.

For Britain, the West Indies is not only a source of cheap food and raw material, it is also a market for her manufactured products. Britain holds a predominant position in West Indian trade. Between 1948-51, she took 43.8 per cent of the total exports of the area and supplied 37.2 per cent of her imports. British trade superiority is facilitated by the imperial preference system. But despite all obstacles, American business has penetrated this market. The

United States, as of 1955, was taking 7.1 per cent of the exports and supplying 17.5 per cent of the imports of the West Indies.

American capital has also penetrated West Indian agriculture. The notorious United Fruit Company owns extensive plantations—in Jamaica alone, 15,000 acres. Through the Royal Bank of Canada and the Canadian Bank of Commerce, which have branches on all the big West Indian islands, American capital exercises its influence on the economic affairs of all the British colonies.

#### ANGLO-AMERICAN RIVALRY

Anglo-American antagonisms have particularly been reflected around the Federation issue—with Washington distinctly pooh-poohing it. Washington opposes any idea of strengthening Britain's position in the Caribbean. The U.S., moreover, has systematically encouraged opposition to the British Federation plan by neighbor states in the Latin and Central American Republics and by encouraging the opposition of certain sections of the West Indian bourgeoisie.

The danger of the new West Indies Federation falling into the pit of U.S. imperialist domination cannot be sounded too often. For, faced with the immense task of solving the economic problems of the West Indies (the problem aptly termed by Labor Minister Bradshaw as the "lame foot" of the Federa-

tion) many of the present national leaders in the West Indies look increasingly to the U.S. for salvation, based on a one-sided estimate of the relative progress of Puerto Rico and on the hope of a growth of tourism from Americans. A third factor explaining why the dangers of U.S. imperialism are not fully grasped is the leaning among the West Indian masses towards the more prosperous United States—masses in revolt against British imperialism which they see as their ever-present and age-old enemy.

Still a fourth factor is the view of many bourgeois-nationalist West Indian leaders that they can thus tactically bargain between the two imperialisms for greater benefits for the West Indies. Thus, as recently reported in the *London Times*, the Chief Minister of Jamaica, Norman Manley, publicly denounced the "parsimonious" handouts of the British Government to the Federation. He also criticized the saddling on the Federation of the military contribution of 325,000 West Indian dollars for the West Indian Regiment. Dr. Eric Williams, of Trinidad, has spoken in similar terms. A 200-million pound loan requested as a minimum for a 5-year period to launch the Federation, has not yet been agreed to or satisfactorily settled by the British Government. Yet a recent issue of *Trumpet*, official organ of the People's National Party, the government party in Jamaica, revealed that Jamaica received from the U.S.A. a loan of \$34 millions—

more than the total granted by the Colonial Development Corporation to all the West Indian islands.

### MASS STRUGGLE

The struggle of the West Indian people for the right to live and work and for national independence has taken on greater intensity in recent years with the spread of the national liberation movement in the colonial world. It is also one of the evidences of the deepening crisis of the British Empire under the growing influence of the liberation movement in the colonies.

Six times since the end of the war the British found it necessary to send punitive expeditions to "restore law and order" in the West Indies. In 1951, when Negro strikers in Grenada (pop. 80,000) demanded that their wages be increased—from 36 to 54 cents a day!—two cruisers, a gunboat, marine and police units went into action. In 1955, following the victory of the Peoples Progressive Party in British Guiana, British Tommies and gunboats invaded British Guiana, deposing its legally elected legislators headed by Dr. Jagan, and revoking its progressive Constitution as a "Communist-inspired coup." But four years later the people of Guiana, in a victorious mandate despite a party split, re-elected Jagan, and the PPP now holds important elected ministerial posts.

Only a few weeks ago, as witnessed in Nassau, Bahamas, the same step was taken when a general strike

exposed the shocking conditions under which the 90 per cent colored population live.

The West Indian people have not taken lightly the extensive exploitation of their resources and human labor. Record profits have been declared by domestic and foreign capitalist interests in the sugar, oil and bauxite industries.

But there have been many instances of working-class resistance: strikes among port workers in Jamaica, the workers of St. Vincent have been heroically struggling to win concessions from arrogant landlords in sugar. Throughout the West Indies, teachers, match workers, waterfront workers were aroused to defend their interests. In Barbados printers and port workers were locked in struggle with the powerful Advocate Printers. In British Guiana the PPP victory forced revocation of reactionary laws which restricted the movement of their leaders. In Trinidad, store clerks, sugar, oil and educational workers have similarly displayed commendable class consciousness in defending their interests in the face of menacing threats from employers and government.

These and other examples make it necessary to be mindful of the astute observation of Mao Tse-tung—namely, that imperialism is not prepared to permit the independent development of any new capitalist state, is out to stultify it, make it impossible for the native capitalist to carry out the bourgeois-democratic

revolution. We know, of course, that as its foundations totter, imperialism seeks more flexible methods of governing the colonies and seeks to devise new means to camouflage its rule. Central then to Britain's desire to revise the status of her West Indian possessions is the spread of the national colonial liberation movement and the deepening crisis she finds herself in.

### THE NEW FEDERATION

Exactly what will the Federation mean to the West Indies? To begin with, except for British Guiana, British Honduras and the Bahamas, the remaining 10 British colonial units, composing approximately 3 million people will be federated into a new national structure. This national structure will be comprised of an appointed or nominated Council of State. A bi-cameral legislature will consist of a nominated Senate of 19 members, and a House of Representatives of 45 members. The House is to be elected based on population with Jamaica, representing one-half of the Federation's population, having 17 members; Trinidad 10; Barbados 6; and 2 each from Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Antigua, St. Kitts, Dominica and one from Montserrat.

A Supreme Court of the Federation is to be established, having original jurisdiction in specified federal or inter-unit matters. It will also have jurisdiction to hear appeals from unit Courts of Appeal and recourse may be had to this court by

British Caribbean territories not members of the Federation.

This new federal structure will in no wise substitute for self-government in each unit, where territorial constitutions, already hobbled and proscribed by colonial administrative restrictions, must constantly be improved by the increasing struggles of the people and their political representatives.

Indicative of the measure of this struggle are the constitutional changes in Barbados where since October 1957, a Cabinet Committee excluding the Governor is the main instrument of Government. Similar changes have taken place in Jamaica, where, since November 1957, the Peoples National Party has been successful in its fight to put power in the hands of its Chief Minister, and to exclude the Governor from the Council of Ministers. But responsibility for criminal affairs will still remain within the control of the appointed Attorney-General. Although the Governor will not normally appear in the Council of Ministers, he will still have the right to summon Special Meetings, to preside at them and he will still retain his wide Reserved Powers.

The impact of these advances on other islands was recently summed up when the Bahamas Federation of Labor in the recent general strike demanded: "We want to be governed like our brothers in Trinidad, Barbados and Jamaica."

Still another example of the fight for broader party representa-



tion was the sweeping election victory of the Peoples National Movement, headed by Dr. Eric Williams in Trinidad, when the PNM was allowed to name two of the nominated members, thus creating a constitutional precedent.

But these examples are the exceptions rather than the rule. At present in most of the units there exists Legislative Councils of both Nominated and Elected Members and Officials. All the Governor-Generals hold wide Reserved Powers, as will Lord Hailes, new Governor-General of the W. I. Federation, who took office January 3, 1958.

It is no accident in face of this undemocratic system that for years the chief demand of the West Indian political movement and particularly its advanced sectors has been for greater internal self-government for each unit based on wholly elected legislatures.

#### CONFLICTING VIEWS

So tenacious has been this key demand that it has now extended to the Federation itself. Some West Indian ideologists however, have counterposed self-government to Federation—as though the two concepts are mutually exclusive. Such, for example, is the view of W. A. Domingo, outstanding student of West Indian affairs. In his pamphlet, *British West Indian Federation—A Critique*, Domingo urges Jamaicans to reject Federation outright—primarily on the grounds that as the largest

and most populous of the West Indian islands, she can easily achieve self-government without being hampered by the underdeveloped economies of the Leeward and Windward islands, dependent as they still are on grants-in-aid which are to be curtailed after the first five years of the Federal Government. He further holds that “to equate federation with self-government obscures the real issue—the right of every colonial people to seek and win control of their political life.”

But no one who advocates a federated progressive West Indies equates these concepts. In fact, those who have consistently fought for a progressive federation structure have always accompanied this demand with one for autonomy of the island units as well. Besides, how can the unity of a people who have similar cultural and historical experiences be held to be violative of “a right” of self-determination if, in seeking to control their political life, they strengthen their ties with others similarly situated? We can assume that Domingo’s arguments, like other pre-Federation critics, had as their aim that of modifying the present federation structure. But to base one’s arguments largely on the pragmatic grounds that Britain considers the West Indian colonies as “financial liabilities” and that they are of “no strategic value to England today,” that Britain will “grant self-government” to the West Indian colonies, because of the “proclaimed official British policy to grant inde-

pendence to the colonies” flies in the face of a fundamental, scientific assessment of imperialism today.

Still other political ideologists, including some progressives and even some adherents of Marxism, have denounced the current Federation proposals as a “fraud” and appear to be resisting its arrival.

Such approaches appear to be utterly unrealistic politically. For while serious limitations hedge the new federal structure, can it be denied that it is a political advance over the previous colonial status of 300 years?

Basically, the struggle for the free West Indian market by both the foreign and local bourgeoisie is what has given the movement for Federation its urgency. John La Rose, leading Marxist of Trinidad’s West Indian Independence Party, in his Report to the Second Congress of that Party, in July, 1956, places it this way:

The basic economic law of West Indian life which gives this movement such urgency is the struggle for the free West Indian market by both the local and foreign bourgeoisie (interlocked and not interlocked) caused by the inability of the markets of the local territories to satisfy the capacity for expansion and exploitation engendered by capital accumulation in their hands.

Both the foreign and native commercial bourgeoisie have expanded their interests beyond the confines of territories. . . .

Both local and foreign banking and

insurance institutions of finance capital (like Bookers Trading concerns, Barbados Mutual, etc.) have expanded their interests beyond the confines of a single territory . . . besides the activities of foreign banking and insurance institutions.

Both the local and foreign industrial bourgeoisie have expanded beyond the confines of a single territory, e.g., shirt manufacturers, biscuit manufacturers, gin and rum manufacturers, edible oil manufacturers, citrus juices, time clocks, cement manufacturers exporting to British Guiana, Barbados, Grenada, etc., and vice versa. Even at the level of small agricultural producers, e.g., Grenada, St. Vincent, this need is felt and exists as a powerful urge to Federation.

While not all political forces in the West Indies are prepared to formulate immediate demands they are nevertheless broadly united on the aim of Dominion Status. Thus it seems that here once again is reflected the inevitable process of development which cannot be halted—the quest for full national independence.

Consequently, the chief programmatic demand to overcome the limitations advanced by progressive and socialist minded forces in the West Indies include:

1. Internal self-government for the Federation entailing a wholly elected Parliament (a nominated Senate is a retrograde step), full cabinet status based on the Party principle with the elected Prime Minister wholly responsible, and re-

striction of the Governor-General's powers to representation of the Sovereign as is the case of Ghana, or a republican form of government, as in India, with the Crown as the head of the Commonwealth.

2. Civil liberties embracing the entire Federation including freedom to travel, freedom to organize and to discuss.

3. Protection of rights of minorities for cultural and other forms of development.

4. For full national independence for the West Indies.

\* \* \*

Despite the serious limitations it would be fundamentally wrong to assess the forthcoming Federation as being simply the brain-child of the Colonial Office. To understand the significance of this development it must be realized that what is taking place in the West Indies is the unfolding of the classical bourgeois-democratic revolution, with, of course, its own special features.

Leadership of the national political movement is today in the hands of middle class intellectuals who either come from the class of the national bourgeoisie, or are representative of their interests.

Because federation of the West Indies occurs at a time when the local capitalist class is developing, every nuance of the federal structure is, naturally, tempered by their influence. Motivated firstly by their own desire for improved status, and a desire to be free of their inferior colonial status, essentially this influ-

ence is anti-imperialist and anti-colonial.

What unites the *all-class* struggle of the West Indian peoples is opposition to foreign imperialism. This stage of political development in general coincides with the historic aim and dream of the West Indian working class, its militant industrial and agricultural workers, who in the 30's hoisted the banner of Federation, with Dominion status and self-government for the units, to their standard. These and other demands have today been incorporated into the political platforms of the present national political parties and movements in the islands.

It is important to stress that leadership of the national political movement has passed relatively recently into the hands of the national bourgeoisie.

Prior to World War II, leadership of the national movement was in the hands of the working class, arising from the upheavals during the mass strikes of 1937-38. The working class spearheaded the mass struggle; their leaders won their confidence through their selfless and courageous actions. This was the period in which trade unionism rapidly developed in the Caribbean and a new sense of power was felt by the workers.

There then emerged the Caribbean Labor Congress, a united West Indian people's anti-colonial movement for Federation with Dominion status and self-government for the units. It comprised an all-class coali-

tion in which the working class shared leadership with other anti-imperialist classes including important sections of the national bourgeoisie.

But this movement was split and declined.

Basic to the answer as to how this decline and split arose was the "divide and rule" tactic of imperialism, which, fearful of this forward development, facilitated the separation of the Right-wing from the Left-wing in accommodation with some of the bourgeois national leaders.

True, imperialism, faced with the mounting pressure of the national liberation movement is seeking to develop the national bourgeoisie as a reliable bulwark to protect its interests for as long as possible even after national independence is won. But India's experience proves that that does not always work.

The working class was also handicapped in that it lacked a scientific approach to the national and class struggle, in many instances pursued sectarian policies, and consequently lost leadership to the developing middle class intellectuals.

It is this background, given briefly, which largely accounts for the hesitations which have marked sections of the working class and socialist-oriented groupings in the West Indies in definitely committing themselves to the present Federation.

Here, a distinction is made between the justified reservations shared by all sections of West In-

dian opinion and the imperative task of the working class and its advanced sector to play its indispensable role in carrying forward the movement for West Indian national independence.

To sit it out, instead of entering fully as leading partners in the national struggle for independence is to abdicate a contribution they alone can make. The working class and the Left in such a role can encourage the progressive tendencies of the national bourgeoisie. It can steady the middle class intellectuals towards firmer anti-imperialist stands (criticizing where necessary but not from outside this development).

#### TRADE-UNION ACTIVITY

A most imperative conclusion appears to be the need to coordinate and strengthen trade union activity. In recent months support for the idea of a united militant trade-union movement on a federal scale has been underway in the West Indies. Such a trade-union movement would not only help to facilitate independence and national unity but would be the instrument for achieving improved living standards, higher wages and in general defense of the workers' rights against pressure by U.S. and British capital. Such a united trade-union movement would have a decisive effect on the policies of the two main federal parties—the West Indian Federal Labor Party, and the Democratic Labor

Party, who will contest seats for the Federal Assembly.

Together with improved living standards and economic advancement is the need for expanded educational development. Educational standards in the West Indies are today frightfully low—too low to fulfill the needs of a country aiming at nationhood.

A prime necessity is the development from the working class itself of a class-conscious cadre and leadership. This is especially important because of the mistaken conception current among West Indian intellectuals that political parties in the West Indies do not represent social classes. Buttressing this false theory is the fact that all mass parties in the West Indies have to rely on support of the working class.

Political pressure and leadership by the Left has already vitally affected the national political movement in the West Indies. One such contribution has been their pointing up the contrast between Soviet economic aid with no strings attached, and the historic significance of Bandung. Advocacy of such policies can help change the pace with which the national bourgeoisie and middle-class intellectuals press for full national independence in the West Indies.

While at this juncture the bour-

geois national struggle is directed against foreign imperialism, without doubt as the development of the national bourgeoisie takes place the internal class struggle will grow in importance and scope.

All political observers would do well to follow the course of West Indian development; in Britain this course has been forced on all political forces anew with the presence of 80,000 West Indian immigrants now resident in Britain—the largest immigration of colonial people in recent years. Faced with impoverishment and unbearable conditions and barred by the infamous racially biased Walter-McCarran immigration laws which retards West Indian immigration to 100 persons a year from all the West Indies to the U.S.A., they have trekked in thousands to Britain, where they are confronted with an extension of their problems as colonials in a metropolitan country in the form of color prejudice, joblessness, housing shortages, etc.

Progressive and Communist forces in Britain, mindful of their own responsibilities and of the greed of the U.S. imperialist colossus, are advocating economic assistance to the West Indies; solidarity with their trade-union and other struggles and full national independence for the West Indian people.

# IDEAS IN OUR TIME

BY HERBERT APTHEKER

Here is, indeed, as Goldsmith warned, "where wealth accumulates and men decay." Because, notes the *Communist Manifesto*, "The bourgeoisie has resolved personal worth into exchange value."

To use sources native to our land, contemporaneous, and completely respectable, Mrs. Agnes E. Meyer urges an *Education for a New Morality* (Macmillan, N. Y., \$2.50). Her suggestion, however, as to how to achieve this new morality and how to educate for it is far from persuasive.

Our children must imbibe from earliest childhood the sense of dedication that comes over the human being when he achieves this [scientific] objectivity. This require him to break through his powerful, native egotism and accept as a spontaneous expression of human selfhood, the responsibility of association with others. Then the child learns from actual experience that no matter how much he does for himself, he is made happy and becomes ennobled only by what he has done for others.

This is not convincing for it ignores the social order within and through which children and adults imbibe everything; it tends to put the main onus for failure upon a highly dubious reading of "human nature"; and the dominant mores do not equate selfless and collective living with either happiness or nobility.

Yet the earnestness of Mrs. Meyer's plea is real enough and derives from a sensitive appreciation of the widespread decay. She writes of "our unhappy people"; "our desperate human situation"; she finds "disintegration of the community structure, the isolation of the individual, and a steady dehumanization of life." And she spells out her observations: "fine arts are at a low ebb in our country"; "philosophy in our country has sunk so low"; "our outmoded institutions for education, health, and welfare actually encourage crime, delinquency, and emotional disturbance"; "we Americans do not form mature, lasting human relationships, a third of our marriages end in divorce, and sex is perverted in our society"; "despite our present prosperity [already outdated!], we seem to be a restless, unhappy people haunted by neuroses serious enough to fill more than half of our hospital beds with mental cases."

And, particularly related to the problem which inspired the title and main theme of her volume, Mrs. Meyer finds in our schools, "a suffocating atmosphere rather than one that excites curiosity and the creative imagination."

Despite the classlessness of Mrs. Meyer's approach, which leads her to

ignore significant differences in morality among the varying classes and peoples (especially the Negro people) in our country, there remains the essentially truthful nature of her indictment of American bourgeois society.

The decay has reached real crisis proportions; for increasing millions within our country, it is making existence intolerable. The ultimate expression and source of this decay is the amorality of an economic system which—though feeding on the intensified exploitation of hundreds of millions of “underdeveloped” peoples—battens on armaments, gorges on racism, bankrupts unprecedented numbers of small businessmen, disinherits scores of thousands of farm families, and flings six million workers out of their employment, while the few biggest corporations become ever fewer and ever bigger.

Other less direct, but, in some ways, equally distressing manifestations of imperialism’s rot have been observed by respected commentators whose “Americanism” presumably is above J. Edgar Hoover’s suspicion. We noted last month Dean Robert E. Fitch’s lament that current American fiction presents man as “a maniac, or a moron, or a bastard . . . a creature rootless, hopeless, and loveless.” The drama critic for *The Reporter* (March 6) complains that, on the whole, “even plays not directly concerned with psychotics or drunks deal with people who cannot control their passions or lower their voices and who live among ugly things in ugly situations.”

On the other hand, and only apparently in contradiction, Robert Brustein, a teacher in the School of Dramatic Arts at Columbia University, finds “feelings without words” to characterize “America’s New Culture Hero” (*Commentary*, Feb. 1958). “The stage, motion pictures, television, and even popular music,” Dr. Brustein writes, “are now exalting an inarticulate hero, who—for all the dependence of these media on language—cannot talk.” He grunts and squeezes, twists and turns, stares and glares, for he seeks to convey not information but feeling, to reveal “in inner life of unspecified anguish and torment.”

Hence, this author notes a “general uninterest in the classics” on the part of “many of today’s actors and directors”; he states that Elia Kazan, when asked if he would ever produce Shakespeare, replied: “I never have and I never will, I am interested in the life that is around me.” Thus is Shakespeare dismissed; manifest is the error made by all civilized people for the past three hundred years who have found in Shakespeare unparalleled illumination of the meaning of life.

Craftwise, one of the results of this degeneration is increased improvisation by actors; this occurred in the movie, *On the Waterfront*, and in the stage version of *A Hatful of Rain*. Brustein says it is being emphasized in the teaching at the Actors Studio and remarks: “Many lazy and inept playwrights are entirely content to let the actors fill in the outlines of their under-written characters.”

As for popular music, rock-and-roll “has discarded intelligibility, even on the most basic level. Beginning by ignoring language, it is now dispensing with melodic content and offering only animal sounds and repetitive rhythms.”

Dr. Brustein notes that while the contemporary hero views society itself

“as the outside of a prison,” what he is striving to do is to enter the prison, hoping thus to find warmth and security; in this sense, he sees “how much of the acting and the writing of the inarticulate hero is not only neurotic but conformist.”

I would say, rather, that being neurotic it is conformist, for the rulers of an amoral and irrational system have made of neuroticism a kind of conformity, or, at least, a safe mode of rebellion.

Something similar appears in the musical work of John Cage, whose influence is growing in this country and in other areas of the “Free World”—especially West Germany. Roger Maren devotes a long piece in *The Reporter* (March 6) to the latest composition of Mr. Cage. The work is entitled *Music for Piano*; its basic inspiration were “the imperfections that happened to be on a blank sheet of paper.” Which imperfections to use was determined via the coin-tossing procedure recommended in an ancient Chinese book of divination. The rest of the composition came into being by other rather complicated devices of chance; furthermore: “The performer of this piece is free to decide how long or how loud any note should be and what noises to make.” This music (?) we are told by Mr. Maren, “is supposed to have validity because it embodies a denial of will”; it represents, also, of course, the raising of chance to the principle of life and nature, and the negation of the most rational of the arts by the negation of reason.

As a final instance from an embarrassingly abundant store of examples, are the eighty representatives of “advanced tendencies in American painting” selected by the privately-financed International Council of the Museum of Modern Art for showing in a year-long tour of European galleries. Emily Genauer, art editor of the New York *Herald Tribune*, in its issue of March 9, reported on what she saw:

enormous areas of pigment convulsively, automatically, agonizingly, formlessly poured out of tubes and cans onto canvas; the few “restrained” works where a huge surface was bisected by two or three vertical stripes and the rest left plain as a blank wall; a need for inarticulateness that was desperate. . . .

Against shipping this mass of fakery and pigmented neuroses as representative of “advanced” American painting, no cultural ignoramus like Congressman Dondero will shout his “patriotic” anathemas; no, the rich “patrons” and their imbecilic politicians approve the scratchings of the new Court “artists.” How encouraging to the honest and talented artists who refuse to prostitute their talent and their humanity to the golden calf!

The dominators of an unreasonable social order, hate reason itself. And there are more ways to seek to wipe out the classical heritage of the past and to inhibit the production of worthy continuers of that heritage, than the burning of books; one may seek to so corrupt taste and morality, to so obscure reason and eclipse science, as to kill the appreciation of and desire for either the preservation or the extension of that heritage. The effort will fail, just as the

unreasonable order will not last; but the failure and the termination will not come of themselves. Rather, they will come through consciousness and desire and organized expression of both.

\* \* \*

An outstanding reflection of moral failure and social decay is the universally admitted crisis in American education. Addressing the bourgeoisie, eleven decades ago, Marx and Engels wrote: "And your education! Is not that also social, and determined by the social conditions under which you educate . . .?" "The Communists," wrote those two young revolutionists, "seek to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class."

That education in our country needs rescuing is now everywhere affirmed. The crisis in education is total; no area has escaped. The salaries of teachers on all levels are shamefully low, and their real wages have actually declined in the last ten years; schools throughout the country are overcrowded, with hundreds of thousands of young people crammed into rooms and enduring double and triple-session classes; buildings are not only altogether inadequate in number, they are scandalously inadequate in facilities; textbooks are too few, too old, and marked by serious faults in content; curriculum has deteriorated, not only in the absence or near-absence of instruction in physics, chemistry, mathematics, languages—which has been well-publicized; there has also been a steep decline in the proportion of college students majoring in the liberal arts and a drying up of funds for work in the social sciences.\*

There exist the sharpest discriminations in American education, most notorious along sectional, racial, religious and—above all—economic lines. That is, the richest and least rural areas generally have the superior education; white, Christian children have very much better educational opportunities than do other children in the country, with the hardest hit being the Negro, Mexican-American, Puerto Rican and Indian youngsters, and Jewish youth when they reach university level, the children of the poor generally attend the worst schools, have the most overcrowded classes, the worst equipment, and the most inadequate curriculum. The tendency is to confine the children of the poor to a second-rate, so-called vocational education, and to justify this on the basis of various "intelligence" tests that are developed unscientifically, misapplied and misinterpreted.\*\* These tests serve to give an "objective" rationalization for the historic monopolization by the rich of learning, of the highest skills, of the

\* On the last two items, material will be found in Alfred W. Griswold, *The University Tradition* (Yale Univ. Press, \$3), and a seven-page section, "Notes on America's Lost Dimension," in *The Saturday Review*, Jan. 12, 1958; on other aspects of the general crisis, data will be found in: I. L. Kandel *American Education in the 20th Century* (Harvard Univ. Press, \$5); I. Adler, *What We Want of Our Schools* (John Day, N. Y., \$3.75); *52nd Annual Report*, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (N. Y., 1958), and *Parents' Magazine*, Jan. 1958. Invaluable is the *Teachers News*, a weekly paper published by the New York Teachers Union, 206 W. 15th St., New York City.

\*\* On this, chapter 4 of Irving Adler's book, entitled "The I. Q. Hoax," is especially valuable. It would have been enhanced had Mr. Adler made reference to the work in this area of the Soviet Union—where I. Q. testing was abandoned more than twenty years ago—and to earlier critiques of the theory by the present writer in *The Journal of Negro Education*, Fall, 1946; and Brian Simon, *Intelligence Testing and the Comprehensive School* (London, 1953).

mysteries of the preferred occupations, and the exclusion therefrom of the exploited, as a feature of their continued exploitation.

In this connection, a unique volume has just been issued under the auspices of the United Nations, Charles D. Ammoun's *Study of Discrimination in Education* (Columbia Univ. Press, \$1.25). Its author is a delegate from one of the nations of the "Free World"—Lebanon—which is to say, from one of the nations which permits the American ruling class to exploit its resources freely; and the volume shows a distinct bias in accordance with this fact. Nevertheless, it does show the most persistent and deep attack upon the historic sources of discrimination in education to be taking place in the Socialist countries (China, not being in the UN, is excluded from this volume); in most instances, there, because of the nature of discrimination in the past, special provisions are made to ensure fullest opportunity for education to the sons and daughters of peasants and workers.

The major need in attacking the educational crisis in our country, is to understand that responsibility for it lies squarely on the shoulders of Big Business which has dominated education. Having created the crisis out of its deep fear of real education for the masses, out of its contempt for culture and its deification of the Dollar, it is striving to turn the crisis to its own advantage. What Big Business wants is, above everything, to keep the masses of the people from seeing the source of perversion in this domination, to keep the masses from comprehending that it is for them to intercede directly and urgently and to see to it that their own children get the fullest benefits from the educational system, whose every brick and piece of chalk is paid for by the labor of the people themselves.

Those responsible for the crisis seek to turn it to their advantage by attempting to institutionalize, legalize and intensify the elitism that already, in fact, marks the system.\*

This shift back to medievalism—natural to capitalism in decay—has even taken the form of the open advocacy by a university professor in a mass media, of what the editors called "a controversial solution for our overcrowded universities," namely, throw the women out, and forbid them a university education (Professor Philip W. Burton of Syracuse University, in *This Week* magazine Feb. 9, 1958, distributed by the millions as a Sunday newspaper feature). It includes, too, the continued raising of tuition fees, concentration upon "vocational" education for "disadvantaged" children, and the vehement resistance by such groups as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to the appropriation of funds for the erection of desperately needed schools—an opposition one may find documented in the syndicated columns of Doris Fleeason (*N. Y. Post*, Dec. 27, 1957) and Marquis Childs (*N. Y. Post*, Feb. 11, 1958). Not unimportant, too,

\* The elitism, rationalized by a prostitution of science into the false insistence that the well-to-do have the most intelligent children (the language is not put in these class terms, but that is the meaning) is official governmental policy. A booklet issued in 1951 and reissued in 1954 by the U.S. Office of Education—*Vitalizing Secondary Education*—sees 20% of the youth going on to higher education; 20% being prepared for skilled occupations; and 60% to be given "the life adjustment training they need and to which they are entitled as American citizens."

is a marked increase in ecclesiasticalism in education, from the tremendous growth of parochial education, to the addition of God in oaths of allegiance, to an intensified effort to merge Church and State in educational practice and to an effort to secularize the concept of original sin, thus making social inadequacies a hallmark of man's innate inadequacy and even making suspect—from a religious point of view—efforts at social change.

This latter feature appears strongly in the writings of Reinhold Niebuhr and Will Herberg, for example; it is expressed rather starkly by Dr. Gregory Zilboorg, professor of psychiatry at the N. Y. State Medical College, in the recent volume, *The Christian Idea of Education*, edited by Edmund Fuller (Yale Univ. Press, \$4). At one point, for instance, Dr. Zilboorg says:

I would like to restate what I call the megalomaniac approach, that man can do everything, that he can take care of himself, that man has declared his independence, and that all our education is now oriented in the direction of man being able to do everything. I think the exclusion of Christianity or any religion is due primarily to man taking the place of God in the present-day concept of the creation of the universe.

Is it not illuminating to see the philosophical approach of the Declaration of Independence characterized by an American scientist in the mid-twentieth century as megalomaniacal?

The ruling class seeks also to use the educational crisis as an excuse for halting any effort to integrate the school system. They say the struggle against segregation interferes with efforts to resolve the crisis; they say it is rocking the boat in the midst of a storm. They are wrong again. The existence of jim-crowism is a prime feature of and cause for the general educational crisis. Fighting against segregated education is not rocking the boat; it is helping to get some water out of a dangerously swamped ship.

The enemies of really democratic education—which is to say, the present ruling class, responsible for the current educational crisis—are seeking also to capitalize on the crisis by blaming it all on John Dewey and so-called “progressive education.” But their attack—highlighted by the current series in *Life* (begun with the March 24 issue)—is a fraud. Dewey's instrumentalism, and the philosophy of pragmatism as a whole, was conceived in large part as an effort to refute the dialectical materialist approach, or, at least, to offer a reasonable alternative. Its function has been, to a great degree, in accord with the source of its creation, and the spreading of “progressive” education was done with the consent and the approval, basically, of the ruling class; else it could not have been so widely instituted.

But there were features of this view of education which were an advance over the view it challenged; without this it could not have attracted widespread support from liberal people genuinely devoted, as many of them were and are, to decent education. It did, in its early stages, emphasize the concept of education for all children; it did advocate that education be based not upon rote but upon understanding; it did emphasize the importance of activity in

education; and it did seem to favor the right of criticism—including even the right of social criticism, although here the capitalist bias of Dewey and Kilpatrick was manifest.\*

Of course, it is not these qualities which recommended it to the powers that be; rather, it was its tendency to narrow the areas of knowledge and to deprecate “mere” knowledge; to curtail systematic instruction and necessary drill; and to depend very heavily on the whole vicious IQ system—it was these aspects of Deweyism that were attractive to the ruling class. It is upon these that they fastened; they emphasized these and more and more muted and perverted the elements that had positive value.

Now those responsible for the educational debacle in our country will seek to make Deweyism the scapegoat; will seek to preserve its most reactionary qualities; and will attempt to return to the worst features of 19th century education—elitism, rote, brutal discipline, and a general effort to crush the freshness and beauty, the honesty and courage so natural to youth.

It is noteworthy, is it not, that these crusaders against frills, ignore the “frill” that of all others absorbs more time, certainly in upper levels of education, than any other? I have in mind military training—ROTC. Few people realize that ROTC, which began in 1920, now exists upon 350 campuses—one-third of all colleges enrolling men—and that it generally accounts for a full 20% of the student's curriculum. So significantly does this “frill” bite into educational time, that even the latest report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, declares of it that “serious questions have been raised of overlap and interference with the regular college program.”

It is noteworthy, is it not, that in all the clamor about the shortage of teachers—of fearful proportions, most certainly—no consideration is given to the conclusive evidence that one feature which has discouraged many from becoming teachers and induced many others to leave are the fascist-like requirements relative to “loyalty” and to “100% Americans” defined a la Eastland and J. Edgar Hoover? And in the search for teachers, is it not extraordinary that no consideration is given to the thousands of teachers who were driven from their jobs by degenerate informers, like Howard Rushmore who belatedly ended his own miserable life after adding the crime of murder to his long record?

In New York City alone, at least 350 teachers have been fired in the last few years because of “subversive tendencies”—men and women who were described even by the loyalty committee trial examiner, Colonel Arthur Levitt, as being “teachers of long service, with records of conspicuously fine accomplishment, frequently under adverse conditions.” Are not teachers such as these a prerequisite to any real solution to our educational crisis?

\* The two chapters on progressive education in Adler's book are very useful; once again, their value would have been enhanced if Mr. Adler had referred to the earlier critique of Dewey contained in Harry K. Wells' *Pragmatism: Philosophy of Imperialism* (International, 1954). Such reference might well have noted a certain rigidity and one-sidedness in Dr. Wells' critique, but it was an early and earnest effort and it does get to the heart of the question. Certainly, ignoring the earlier work is unworthy of Mr. Adler's excellent book.

It is necessary to return again and again to the heart of the matter; the need is "to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class." Thorstein Veblen—perhaps the most perceptive social scientist the United States has yet produced, so uncomfortably close to Marxism as to be singularly neglected in our country—in his classical *The Higher Learning in America: A Memorandum on the Conduct of Universities by Business Men* (first published in 1918; recently reissued by Sagamore Press, N. Y., \$1.25) noted: "... the discretionary control in matters of university policy now rests finally in the hands of businessmen . . . their pecuniary surveillance comes in the main to an interference with the academic work, the merits of which these men of affairs on the governing board are in no special degree qualified to judge."

This domination of learning, on all levels, by Big Business, and its inevitably vitiating and distorting impact is at the heart of the educational crisis.\* Therefore, the struggle to overcome that crisis must be a struggle to remove that domination, and to see to it that the education of the public is for the public and is controlled by it. It is necessary, in a word, to democratize the American educational system. That means a struggle, by organized masses of people, waged on all levels from the town to Congress, and in all forms, from petitions and letters and demonstrations to election campaigns, seeking such democratization.

Physically, that means struggle for the appropriation of many billions of dollars, not for purposes of war, but for purposes of education—buildings, books, equipment, higher salaries. Socially, that means an attack all along the line upon anything smacking of elitism, most particularly the two-track set-up where dependence upon so-called IQ tests results in freezing and deepening present class-stratification; it means an attack upon all racist discrimination and segregation; it means a commitment to the best educational content—including the acquisition of knowledge—in areas vital to the development of a rounded, confident, useful, cultured human being—the sciences, the nature of society, man's past, languages, literature, music, the arts, and the philosophical systems created by mankind. It means the full implementation of the Bill of Rights, for student and for teachers. It means resistance to the militarization or the clericalization of the school system.

\* \* \*

I have cast my remarks about education within the framework of our own country alone, and have not done that which is now so common, that is, place the question in contrast to or comparison with the Soviet Union. Largely, this is the result of space considerations; it does not come from a feeling that in this area, as in all areas of life, Americans do not have much they may learn

\* It is encouraging to observe that an appreciation of the corrupting quality of capitalist domination of education is appearing, on varying levels, in recent writing. It is present in Irving Adler's book; it recurs in Ashley Montague, *Education and Human Relations* (Grove Press, N. Y., \$1.45); and in very tentative form in I. B. Berkson, *The Ideal and the Community: A Philosophy of Education* (Harper, N. Y., \$4.50).

from the Socialist world. Of course we do; and it is only the deeply unpatriotic philistine who would deprive his country of advantages or benefits because they may have first been suggested by foreigners.

There has been a generally grudging, partial and distorted admission in the American press of the historic breakthrough in popular education achieved because of socialism in the USSR. Some recognition has been more generous; for example, Dr. Goodwin Watson, professor of social psychology at Columbia University, observes that "a real faith in education pervades the whole Russian society"; that "the Russians assume *everybody* can learn foreign languages, mathematics, science, astronomy, psychology"; that "the point of Russian education is to give everybody the kind of education that makes him stand on his tiptoes and stretch himself to the utmost." (*N. Y. Post*, Jan. 7, 1958.)

Certainly, the United States with capitalism cannot hope to apply under that system the educational theories and practices possible in the higher order of socialism. The basic concepts of that educational system were enunciated in the classical work of A. S. Makarenko—all of it, by the way, available in English. As he wrote in *The Road to Life*, "the most important of pedagogical principles was how to combine with the most exacting demands upon the pupil the utmost respect for his personality." He rejected, twenty-five years ago, various anarchistic, racist, and IQ theories; his "motto was education in the collective, through the collective and for the collective"; he held: "To educate a human being is to furnish him with a perspective leading to the morrow's joy."

But we Americans can gain inspiration—no matter what our politics—from the magnificent and indisputable achievements registered in the USSR in bringing a notoriously uneducated peoples, immersed in illiteracy, out into the light, within one generation—despite catastrophic war—of universal literacy, pre-eminent scientific achievement and the most highly cultured level in the world.

It is in areas such as these that we Americans and the Soviets should compete; from such competition nothing but good can come. It is in this sense that one feels impelled to welcome George F. Kennan's remark:

To my own countrymen who have often asked me where best to apply the hand to counter the Soviet threat, I have accordingly had to reply: to our American failings—to the things we are ashamed of in our own eyes: to the racial problem, to the conditions in our big cities, to the education and environment of our young people, to the growing gap between specialized knowledge and popular understanding. . . . Whether we win against the Russians is primarily a question of whether we win against ourselves.\*

If it is "against ourselves" to win in this context, then I suppose it is "against the Russians" too. May all my "enemies" so threaten me, as to inspire

\* G. F. Kennan, *Russia, the Atom and the West* (Harper, N. Y., \$2.50).

me to improve myself! Yes, indeed, this is a splendid contest, where no one can lose, and all must reap marvelous benefits!

• • •

I was struck, the other day, in reading a review of a new novel (the review was by Coleman Rosenberger, in the Sunday *Herald Tribune*, March 23) to find this description of the volume's theme: it deals, said the reviewer, "with the human predicament, with the plight common to us all, of a sentient being walking a road on which there is to be discerned little rhyme or reason." And I bethought myself of one who had discerned another road; so I went to my much-marked volumes of Sean O'Casey and turning to his *Inishfallen Fare Thee Well*, I came across that passage where Sean protests against the play *Singing Jail Birds*, written by a "sympathizer" with the working class. No, shouts Sean:

The Labor Movement isn't a mourning march to a jail house! We are climbing a high hill, a desperately steep, high hill through fire and venomous opposition. All of those who were highest up have dropped to death; lower down, most of the climbers have dropped to death; lower still, many will drop to death; but just beneath these is the invincible vast crowd that will climb to the top by the ways made out by their dear dead comrades!

On this road, any who join expecting to find a gravy-train, will soon become disappointed and will leave; on this road runs no gravy-train, but there does run the glory-train. On this road there is to be discerned both rhyme and reason, promise and fulfillment, and hard work.

*"Soviet education today combines the rigorous European system with the mass education of the United States—a phenomenal attempt. . . . The accomplishments of the Russian educational system are exceedingly impressive."*

. . . Alvin C. Eurich, president, State University of New York, after an extended visit to the Soviet Union, in *The Atlantic*, April, 1958.

## A Reply to Comrade Healey

By James E. Jackson

ONE MIGHT HAVE expected that a member of the National Committee would have exhibited a greater sense of responsibility and not have insisted upon the publication in *Political Affairs*, the official organ of the National Committee, of an article representative of a line that was rejected by majority vote of that body in its meeting of February, 1958.\* As a member responsible to the National Committee, her clear obligation is to carry out the policies adopted by that Committee. She may disagree with that majority decision, but her *first* obligation as a member of the Committee, is to seek to implement it.

What does Comrade Healey contend for in her article (which, incidentally, has no relevance to its title, "On the Status of the Party")? She contends for a Party of multiple ideologies in which agnosticism is enshrined as a primary virtue. "Our Party must be able to contain within it people with divergent points of view," Comrade Healey declares. "To demand doctrinal unity or pur-

ity would be to guarantee either its disintegration or its vegetation." She invokes the words of great bourgeois libertarians—Milton, Jefferson, Mill—in defense of the equal rights of any system of ideas to be "let loose to play" against Marxism-Leninism within the Party.

No Marxist Party can hope to maintain its essential character if it abjures the struggle to secure and perfect its ideology. No Marxist Party can realize and maintain effective organizational unity save on the foundation of united allegiance to a single, common ideology—Marxism-Leninism. We want the Communist Party to get into the marketplace of ideas in the present bourgeois society; we do not want to convert the Party into an ideological marketplace—in which case it becomes not a Communist Party, but a debating society.

Within this framework there is, of course, the necessity for debate and there may well be divergence of views among Marxists. But this is clearly not what Comrade Healey is talking about. For she waxes particularly indignant at Comrade Eugene Dennis who had the temer-

\* The main political resolution adopted at that meeting was published in our March issue; in the same issue appeared the article by Comrade Healey.—*Editor*.



ity to remind the National Committee that Marxism, being the most advanced social science known to man, like a science must, also has its base of laws and principles which are universally valid concepts. And that no Marxist deserving of the name can deny this fact.

Comrade Dennis enumerated an illustrative number of universally valid principles which constitute the pillars of the social science and philosophical world view of Marxism-Leninism. (See p. 7 of *Party Affairs*, Dec. 1957). It is no more possible to be a Marxist and not subscribe to its general principles than it is possible to be a chemist and not accept the particular general laws and disciplines which are embodied in that branch of science. But Comrade Healey endeavors to mask her agnosticism, her denial that Marxism has a body of scientific general principles and laws for the use of the working class in "changing the world," by resorting to misrepresentation. This she does by asserting that Dennis attributes the existence of universal laws and principles of Marxism to the pronouncements and authority of foreign Marxists and not to the science itself!

But what has the acceptance of the principles of a science (if Marxism had no universal laws and principles it would not be a science!) got to do with the question of a critical attitude toward "specific concepts projected by our comrades in the socialist countries"?

This approach of Comrade Healey would convert the cultivation of a critical attitude toward the theoretical projections and experiences of our comrades abroad into a protective shield for those who want to strike at the vitals of Marxist-Leninist ideology itself.

Indeed, Comrade Healey repeatedly resorts to sophistry and direct misrepresentation in making her case against certain comrades in the leadership to whom she attributes malevolent designs against the decisions of the 16th Convention. For example, she indicts Comrade James Allen for allegedly foisting upon the Party a "distorted, one-sided approach toward the Soviet Union." She assails Allen's report on the international situation (*P.A.*, Dec. 1957) as failing to "equip us to understand the role of the Soviet Union in the Middle East"; her proof is the simple assertion that it is guilty of reflecting an approach and language common to the Marxists "before the 20th Congress and 16th National Convention." For this sweeping characterization, she offers not one bit of documentation.

Comrade Healey doesn't tell us what that approach and language is! Could it be a partisan *class approach*, an international Leninist approach to an exposition of "the role of the S.U. in the Middle East"? Could it be that it was presented in the positive language appropriate to the great role the peace policy of the Soviet Union played in allay-

ing the mounting tensions and frustrating the war machinations of imperialism in that area? What is it really that Comrade Healey finds so objectionable in Comrade Allen's article? In her article she gives us clues to her real complaint through recourse to an elliptical method of posing a number of questions which beg their own inference. The inference is that Comrade Healey wanted Allen to describe the role of the socialist Soviet Union in the Middle East as a gambit in big nation power politics, on the same low level with the imperialist maneuvering of capitalist powers like the U.S., France and England. This is precisely the *new "approach and language"* for our Party to adopt toward the Soviet Union that Comrade Healey calls for. And if this "critical" approach conflicts with the true facts and reality of the role of the Soviet Union in foreign affairs, in the service of world peace and independence, sovereignty and freedom of colonial nations, then what of it; by the grace of the 16th Convention we are obliged to criticize the policies of the Soviet Union! Comrade Healey takes pains not even to plant a small subtle clue for her readers to learn the fact that she (Dorothy Healey) was one of the members present at the Executive Board meeting of the National Committee that *unanimously adopted* the report of Comrade James Allen. Nor does she offer any explanation as to why she then voted for a report which

she now attacks as being basically wrong.

In like fashion she seeks to discredit my report on the South (*P.A.*, Dec. 1957, "The South's New Challenge") which the National Committee adopted without a single vote of opposition. Comrade Healey also voted for this report. Because the report did not endorse her remarkable discovery of "what is new" in the Negro question, she charges that I presented to the Party a reformist document and that I am therefore really peddling opportunism while avowedly on the "Left" in the inner-Party struggle. Comrade Healey asserts that what is new in the Negro people's movement is "the fusion of the traditional cultural expression of the Negro people (traditions and institutions of the Church) with the modified ideology of Thoreau and Gandhi."

But the inoculation of the Negro people's "traditions and institutions of the Church" with generous injections of Gandhi and Thoreau's ideas can hardly describe what is new in either the ideological changes or material developments in the Negro people's movement. The explanation for such changes as have occurred in the programs and tactics and ideology of the leadership of the Negro people's organizations, must be sought first of all in the changes that have taken place in the material status of the Negro people. It must be sought in the fact that the Negro people (both in the coun-

try as a whole and in the South) are today in great majority an urban working people. The necessities of city life demand a speeded-up tempo of struggle against the whole pattern of Jim Crow restrictions and compels a more organized mass struggle. The necessity for a home to live in compels a militant struggle against the color bar in housing. The necessity to earn a living makes urgent an active fight against injustice in the area of jobs, etc., etc. The "new" concentration of the great majority of Negroes in the towns and city facilitates organization and concerted action. "The story of Montgomery," said the Rev. M. L. King, "is the story of 50,000 Negroes tired of injustice and exploitation who have fashioned themselves into an organized conscious power serving the battering rams of historical necessity. . . . We are all in this together: ministers, professional people and the masses." (*The Story of Montgomery*, Baptist Affairs Pamphlet, Nashville, Tenn.)

But, if Comrade Healey means the new thing in the ideology of the Negro people's movement is the passive resistance, "turn the other cheek" notions of a Thoreau or Gandhi, she misses the main thing in the great work of these historic personages, as well as the "new thing" in the modern Negro people's movement. The new thing is *mass resistance* to segregation and discrimination, which is the opposite of passive acquiescence or moderation

or gradualism. The Rev. King expressed this new feature in the present Negro movement's ideology as follows: "We must be willing to stand up courageously against the evils of segregation wherever we find it. Now, I must confess this means suffering and sacrifice. It might mean going to jail, but if such be the case, we must be willing to fill up the jail houses of the South. It might even mean physical death. But if physical death is the price that some must pay to free our children from a permanent life of psychological death, then nothing could be more honorable."

As you see from the above, the key word in the "new" stream of consciousness in the ideology of the Negro people's leaders, including the Rev. King, is that of *resistance*—resistance to the point of great personal sacrifice on the part of leaders and masses.

Whatever additional questions the Report on the South might well have covered, the approach of Comrade Healey on this subject would hardly have added to its merit.

Probably the key to Comrade Healey's disorientation is revealed in her belief that:

The history of working-class parties documents the dialectical contradiction always present: how to participate in daily mass struggles while advancing the struggle for socialism. Communist Parties must always deal with two dangers: *abandoning the mass character of the Party*, or *abandoning its*

*final aim*—either falling into reformism or sectarianism.

But there is no such "dialectical contradiction." On the contrary, the Communist Party represents the unity of the present and the future, the link between the class struggles of today and the socialist goal. It is the posing of such a false dichotomy as Comrade Healey sees that is the source of the confusion which pervades her entire article, and would make struggle against either revisionism or sectarianism ineffective.

Comrade Healey wrongly sees in the efforts of the Party to work in behalf of the immediate needs of the masses, the source of revisionism and

opportunism. And as a corollary, she sees the source of sectarianism in the struggle for the socialist goal. The truth is that both sectarianism and revisionism, opportunism and adventurism, basically have their source in, and are reflections of, the influences and pressures of imperialism upon our class and Party.

The clear implication is that one must choose between the cause of the immediate demands of the masses, or the cause of Socialism. But Marxism denies any such conflict of interests. It holds that the struggle to satisfy immediate needs and the struggle for ultimate goals are not contradictions, but rather are complementary.

#### FOUR YEARS LATE

"Being a hothouse of secrecy, the Central Intelligence Agency breeds a jungle of rumor and speculation about itself. It is universally suspected of being a global mischief-maker. *It has been established, for example, that the agency was behind Guatemala's 1954 revolution against the Americas' first Communist regime.* On this evidence, it is generally assumed that its agents are busy muddying waters in other sensitive areas."

The *New York Times Magazine*, March 16, 1958, p. 96.

## Communications

### A CALL TO YOUTH

By 12 American Youth

*The "Call" published in the following pages is the product of twelve student and working-class youth, who are affiliated with no organization. The authors note "a definite increase in spontaneous youth activity throughout the country"; we think their Call is a notable instance of such increased activity. We are certain that the readers of P.A. will find this of great interest; perhaps some of them will share with us their reactions to this piece of evidence of how some American young people see their country and their times.—The Editor.*

WE STAND ON the threshold of a socialist world. Two Soviet sputniks have dramatized better than anything the main feature of our time: the transition from exploitative capitalism to socialism. This is the first socialist century.

Capitalism exists today as a sick and dying system. Imperialism has lost its world domination, and everywhere the sun is setting on the "great" empires. With the technological progress of once-backward nations, markets for exploitation are growing fewer. Nationalist movements gain and take power throughout the formerly colonized continents of Asia and Africa. The peace camp, for the first time in history more powerful than the war camp, includes not only the socialist nations but the anti-imperialist, neutralist states. When one adds to this picture the existence of two-fifths of the world under socialism; the economic, scientific, and cultural competition with which these areas threaten and overtake capitalist supremacy; and the military

power of the Soviet Union—a constant check on imperialist wars—it is not difficult to understand why capitalism is sick. However, the fundamental reason for the death-bed status of world capitalism rests in the contradictions inherent in the system itself; the inability of a system based on exploitation and private profit to maintain itself. Imperialist exploitation, wars, and brink-of-wars may be able to stave off temporarily an immediate crisis, but the price of profit must be paid. And even today, we feel the cold, hard fingers of economic depression—when the leading, most prosperous capitalist nation has six million unemployed, it is not a sign of health.

The only medicine which capitalism prescribes for itself is increased military production and war. The inherently aggressive nature of imperialism makes war an omnipresent danger. With every new military conflict, the imperialist crisis deepens, yet the system clings to its would-be cure with the tenacity of a drowning man grasp-

ing a straw. But this drowning man clutches a potent straw. A desperate, dying imperialism with the power to destroy the world is a threat unparalleled by the most destructive periods in world history. The same technological advances which in socialist hands will create economic abundance for all, and will bring man to explore the exciting, untapped universe, in imperialist hands might decimate humanity.

Peace, then, is the most important, most immediate, most universal goal which we seek. In this struggle, we recognize the Soviet Union, because of its position as the leader of the socialist camp, as the foremost force of peace.

The capitalist class of the United States is the chief of international monopoly capital and the arsenal of world imperialism. This class is, in reality, the only independent capitalist class in the world, extending its territory from Formosa, through the Western hemisphere, to the dollar-curtain artificially splitting Europe. Without United States capital, the rest of the imperialist world would be as helpless as a legless man deprived of his crutches. The recent NATO conference is the most obvious example of this bourgeois internationalism. This does not deny conflicts among capitalists of different nations or even within the same nation—conflicts inherent in the greed-groomed "system" of world imperialism. Nonetheless, the economic, political and military interdependence of capitalist states is a reality.

The United States is the most prosperous nation in the world today—it has the highest standard of living. This country has avoided the ravages

of two world wars, and has been living high off the stooped shoulders of the "free" world (free for U.S. exploitation). Whatever the objective reasons, however, there is no denying the present supremacy of the American standard of living. As Aptheker has pointed out:

We do not here consider such matters as insecurity, speed-up, corruption, inadequate educational and medical facilities, crime, immorality, mental illness, alcoholism, drug addiction—not to mention such an abomination as racism—all of which, of course, directly affect standard of living in any rounded, human sense. . . . But in the sense of physical provisions, and only in that sense, the standard of living in our country is the highest in the world.

Most serious of the consequences of this "prosperity" is the ideological corruption of the American working class (in the case of some "labor leaders" the corruption does not stop at ideology), living relatively high off the super-profits of imperialism—the only working class in the world without a clearly class-conscious position. We live, so it goes, in a "middle-class society" where the highest aspiration of organized labor is to share the profits of its exploiters!

It is important to note that even in the richest capitalist nation in the history of the world, and even at the peak of that nation's most prosperous periods, there exist vast layers of the population in shocking poverty—the unemployed, the homeless, the poor Southern whites, the migrant farmers, 350,000 American Indians whose average life expectancy is under 20 years, 17 million American Negroes suffering the double burden of economic deprivation and discriminatory persecution, Mexican and Puerto Rican Americans living, in our most prosperous cities,

in hell. At all times, the disparity of wealth distribution, in this most prosperous country in the world, is the proof of the capitalist pudding. In 1955, for example, the top 10 per cent of American families owned 65 per cent of all family-held liquid assets; the bottom 40 per cent owned less than 1 per cent. The rule of the Power Elite, even in "prosperous" America is not difficult to see—especially today as internal economic conditions become more severe.

Yet the relative contentment of the American people has in many areas overwhelmed insecurity. We must recognize the fact that the class struggle in the United States has temporarily grown less intense. The anti-labor drive of the ruling class has been at least partially successful, and the anti-Communist drive has been more successful than anywhere else in the world in instilling the average man with a fear of the unknown "Red menace."

An important factor in the relative success of the bourgeoisie has been the unparalleled internal crisis in the Left-wing movement and especially in the Communist Party of the United States. Prosperity illusions have paved the way for bourgeois ideology, and Right opportunist forces have had a field day. This has been due, only in part, to the fact that the anti-Party drive of the late forties and early fifties succeeded in isolating the Party—an isolation which encouraged revisionist forces to speak of sectarianism as the main danger and to begin to abandon popular principles (dictatorship of the proletariat, vanguard role of the party, etc.). The point is that these forces were already entrenched within the Party when the drive began. They

had never been clearly repudiated (even at the time of Browder's expulsion). Fundamentally, the Party's weakness may be ascribed to the low level of theoretical understanding of the membership and leadership, as well as to the devious influences which the world's greatest imperialist class may exert. To understand just how serious the present Party crisis is, we must recognize that this is the only Party in the world (except in Puerto Rico) where the revisionists were the majority of the national leadership. What better demonstration of this than the fact that the *Daily Worker* took an anti-Soviet position, opposing the Soviet Army's suppression of the attempted fascist coup in Hungary in November, 1956. And the Party's National Committee refused to criticize the paper or to defend the Soviet Union! These positions have not, to this day, been repudiated by the Party. The Party's national convention, while successfully maintaining the Party's existence, took no stand on Hungary, and completely ignored critical letters of greeting from the Parties of Argentina, El Salvador and Venezuela.

At the same time, there has been an absence of representative leadership—the Party leadership has been overwhelmingly middle-class. This, among other things, caused the leadership to be isolated from the Party members, an isolation reflected in bureaucratic directives and over-centralized structure. This bureaucracy has helped to weaken the Party's ties with the American people and especially the working class.

Perhaps the most serious result of the Party's low theoretical level is the complete absence of any program for youth. We search in vain for evidence

of serious thought devoted to the question of youth activity (this criticism applies to both sides in the current debate). The CPUSA is the only Communist Party in the world with no youth program.

As young people in today's world, we share common needs with youth of all countries. Fundamentally, these needs are peace, economic security, and real educational opportunities. In the socialist countries, these needs are somewhat satisfied, but the final achievement of youth's goals, even under socialism, cannot be reached until world imperialism is driven out of existence.

In the United States, where reactionary forces are strongest, the problems of youth are probably the greatest. Lenin once said that bourgeois education in Russia was 90 per cent lies and 10 per cent distortion. We might be willing, taking into account particular American conditions and traditions, to modify this statement as it applies to America today. Bourgeois education in the United States today is 80 per cent lies, 19 per cent distortion, and perhaps a percent of truth filtering through here and there. Cultural corruption of youth in America is incredible. Anti-culturalism is the theme of American culture. Where shall the young person go: to the movies, television, comic books, newspapers, contemporary fiction? Wherever he goes, he finds the same thing: absence of serious thought. The only theme common to all American "culture" is brutality. And this theme fits in perfectly with the program of militarism which is presented with scant alternative to American young people. This takes the forms, among others, of the compulsory draft, the brutali-

zation within the armed forces, and the functioning of the military and police forces as loyal arms of state brutality.

Of special significance to American youth is the existence of an organized system of racism. In no other "democratic state" can one find such blatant barbarism.

Above all, American youth are insecure. For the majority of young people, finding and holding a decent job is a much more real problem than getting a decent education. Youth are always the hardest hit by any economic crisis, by virtue of their relative inexperience and lack of seniority. But in addition to economic problems, all American youth are personally insecure; how else could they be, brought up amid fear and hysteria over the omnipresent "menace"? How else could they be, trained that the world is upside down with Hell-bombs as Saviours, and brotherhood as sin?

With all this, the direction of American youth has been towards nowhere. Apathy and cynicism reign, and discontent is disloyalty. It is true that the McCarthyite drive failed to achieve any serious fascist movement, although it did succeed in frightening and neutralizing much progressive youth activity. However, it is equally true that the Left has failed in every attempt in the past decade to organize youth. This failure cannot be separated from the ideological corruption within the most advanced Left forces during that period.

The singular characteristic of American youth today is their apolitical nature, born out of the unholy union of "prosperity" and cold-war fear. The major American youth organizations accurately reflect this characteristic.

How many American youth have ever heard of the Young Adult Council—the officially recognized voice of American youth? And how many students know of the work of the National Student Association? Yet why should they know? These organizations are, unfortunately, virtually meaningless as far as their effect on youth problems in the U.S. are concerned. It is regrettable that as yet there is no organization that accurately represents American youth—especially in international affairs where the activity of YAC and NSA reflects the State Department line.

Yet in the past two years, there has been a definite increase in spontaneous youth activity throughout the country. This activity, independent, sometimes unorganized, has taken many forms—protest actions, petition drives, newspaper publications, cultural programs, among others. Church youth groups, especially the Negro churches, and still more especially in the South, and such civil rights-conscious groups as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the American Civil Liberties Union (youth divisions) have been among the leading forces. On the campuses, many serious study groups have formed recently, progressive and liberal student parties are growing, and isolated struggles for academic freedom are increasing.

The growing activity is probably the result of a slightly freer atmosphere in the country today, improved international relations between youth organizations, the tremendous effect of the recent World Youth Festival in Moscow, the growing anti-segregation drive in the South, and the circling socialist sputniks. Whatever the cause,

American youth are beginning to move—the issues are peace, civil rights for minority groups, academic freedom, and economic security.

Despite the recent failures of the Left, youth activity among progressive forces has shown a recent revival of interest. Thus far this has taken the form of isolated pockets of activity, but there seems to be emerging slowly a demand for some kind of coordinated, representative, broad American youth movement. Even the disillusionment which was brought to many faith-filled progressive youth by the Khrushchev revelations brought with it a healthy searching and questioning attitude which is bound to bear fruit. The main lack in this recent resurgence of progressive youth activity has been leadership, that is, a directing force. The ship has begun to move at last, but the captain is not at the wheel!

If the main immediate goal is peace, if peace can only be achieved through co-existence with the socialist countries, if the major obstacle to peace is imperialism and its big, anti-Soviet lie, and if the major straight-jacket on American youth is the confusion of bourgeois ideology combined with the pressures of capitalist conformity, then the nature of the necessary directing force becomes obvious. We want a broad, liberal, representative, youth movement in this country, yes, but we must have a vanguard force based on Marxist-Leninist principles to present the socialist position, to dispel the bourgeois illusions, and to correctly influence the American youth movement.

We agree with Lenin's statement that "there is no revolutionary practice without revolutionary theory." We

have based our evaluation of the current scene on certain Marxist-Leninist principles, principles without which it is impossible to correctly evaluate all the complexities of our times. We feel it is imperative to enumerate the fundamental principles upon which such a youth group as discussed above must be based.

\* \* \*

The science of Marxism-Leninism derives from three fundamental sources:

A. *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*: the origin of all thought is in the objective conditions of nature, and the origin of all social thought is in the objective economic conditions—specifically production relations. Because of the contradictions inherent in every system of exploitative production relations, each system of social life based on these relations eventually becomes outdated and reactionary; the system's growth gives way to the system's decay, and a new, higher system challenges, struggles with, and finally replaces the old. This process continues until a system based on socialist, instead of exploitative, production relations is established. Then, for the first time it becomes possible for the *whole* society to progress peacefully towards the common goal.

B. *The Labor Theory of Value and the Theory of Surplus Value*: the value of every product is determined by the socially necessary labor time spent on its production. Surplus value is that value created by the worker but expropriated by the capitalist. Thus capitalism can never support its producers, and small-scale production is squeezed out. Economic crises are the inevitable result.

C. *The Class Struggle*: the capitalist

system creates the working class and, in so doing, plants the seeds of its own destruction. The struggle between the ruling class and the ruled class is the driving force of all historical development. Class interests and control ultimately determine all forms of moral, religious, political and social activity. The relationship between classes is the key to all superstructural questions such as democracy. The working class must inevitably gain control of the means of production in order to change the system of society.

These points, Lenin extended to the recognition of imperialism as the last and dying stage of capitalism; the role of the Communist Party as the essential vanguard of the working class; organizational principles for that party; and he reaffirmed the absolute necessity for proletarian internationalism and the dictatorship of the proletariat, both logical extensions of the class struggle.

From this regrettably sketchy base, are enumerated the following principles as absolutely essential to any Marxist-Leninist youth organization today:

1. *Socialist Perspective and Communist Goal*: only in a communist society, of which socialism is the first stage of development, can the individual achieve full economic, cultural, intellectual and social independence.

2. *The Class Struggle*: this must be seen as the agent of historical progress, and inevitable until the elimination of capitalism.

a. The working class is *the* revolutionary class, it is unconquerable, it is our class, without which we are nothing.

b. Revolutionary perspective—it is necessary to change the control of the means of production, not simply to reform the superstructure (i.e., educa-

tional system, political system or parliamentary control). This does not negate the need to work at the same time for immediate goals within the superstructure.

c. Dictatorship of the proletariat—this will be necessary to consolidate the victory over the bourgeoisie. The need for the dictatorship of the proletariat is clearly explained in the recent Declaration of Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries:

It should be pointed out that the conquest of power by the proletariat is only the beginning of the revolution, not its conclusion. After the conquest of power, the working class is faced with the serious tasks of effecting the Socialist reconstruction of the national economy and laying the economic and technical foundation of socialism. At the same time the overthrown bourgeoisie always endeavors to make a comeback, the influence exerted on society by the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and their intelligentsia, is still great.

d. We desire a peaceful transition to socialism, but we recognize that this will be conditional upon the peaceful yielding of the ruling class to the will of the majority (we also recognize that the day of transition has often been relatively peaceful—but the day after has been another story). Violence has never been introduced by the working class, it has always been perpetrated by the bourgeoisie in a desperate effort to block the will of the majority of the people.

3. *Proletarian Internationalism*—the class struggle is not fundamentally different because of a national borderline.

a. Support for the Soviet Union and all socialist states is essential.

b. We realize the need for solidarity with the nationalist and independence

movements in Asia, Africa and especially Latin America.

c. It is necessary that fraternal relations exist between the working classes of *all* countries, and between the Communist Parties of these nations.

d. Constructive criticism with the above mentioned allies is an important part of proletarian internationalism.

e. We recognize distinct national characteristics which must create programmatic differences among the various socialist movements.

f. We reject as opportunist any national exceptionalism—the class struggle is fundamentally the same, the imperialist war-nature is fundamentally the same, the need for a vanguard force is fundamentally the same and the socialist objective is fundamentally the same in all countries.

4. *The Vanguard Role of the Communist Party*—the working class cannot carry on a successful class-conscious struggle without the leadership of the Communist Party. One of the key applications of this role must be through the Leninist tactic of the united front whereby Communist forces unite with progressive and labor-conscious forces on specific programs and issues. The party also has the responsibility through its vanguard role of constantly presenting the working class with an alternative to its present exploited status.

5. *Democratic Centralism*—There must be the fullest democracy in discussion of all questions, and the subsequent decision of the majority is followed by all. This, of course, applies only within the socialist consensus. That is, we do not recognize the majority position as binding if its effect

is to destroy socialism or to destroy the communist movement. Gomulka explains it succinctly:

We shall not deviate from this road [of democratization], and we shall defend ourselves with all our might not to be pushed off this road. But we shall not allow anyone to use the process of democratization to undermine socialism.

#### 6. *Criticism and Self-Criticism*—

There is a need for constructive assistance from our co-workers in view of the inherent fallibility of every one of us. In working for a common goal and within the framework of common principles, we must be willing to work honestly with each other. For the achievement of that goal, each of us must be willing to improve himself and to help to improve others.

a. Criticism and self-criticism are not for special occasions or holidays. We must be able to integrate self-improvement with our daily work.

b. Criticism must be constructive—each criticism should be creative and help to overcome the problem at hand, rather than to aggravate it.

c. *Humanism*—We recognize the existence of complex psychological problems in every one of us, which are not always best handled by cold, hard criticism. We must respect each other as human beings, and not simply as fellow tools in the socialist machine, occasionally in need of oil or sharpening.

d. We reject bureaucracy as anti-communist and violative of the principles of both criticism and self-criticism and democratic centralism. No one has the right to smugness or to complacency, nor has anyone a mo-

nopoly on correct answers. Each person's view must be considered with equal respect. We are wary of hierarchical authoritarianism.

7. *Study*—Lenin said: "The task of the youth . . . may be summed up in one word: Learn." We note with agreement the distinction between learning and studying. Learning must be the end-product of studying. Studying without learning is meaningless. For young people, study is especially important today in view of the ideological crisis in the Left (due in great part to absence of any studying in the past).

a. There must be study of the current world situation; we must be aware of all currents in our complex society.

b. Students must master their science—both social and physical as the foundation of all materialist theory, and the wellsprings of progress.

c. We must seriously study Marxism-Leninism in order to achieve a more complete understanding of its meaning and application in today's world.

d. Through studying, dogmatism may be avoided. Marxism-Leninism is a creative science of society, recognizing the need to extend its laws to the developing world conditions. Principles mean nothing without an understanding of objective conditions from which they arise. Dogmatism is anti-materialist: but it can never be cured by abandonment of theory.

We recognize the need for practical work as a complement to theoretical understanding. We agree with Lenin's formulation that we must link every step of our "teaching, training, and education with participation in the general struggle of toilers against exploiters."

## ON THE CP'S POLITICAL RESOLUTION

## By An American Professor

*Early in March, the Editor received an extended analysis of the Main Political Resolution adopted by the 16th National Convention of the CPUSA, from a professor at an American university. In a covering letter, the author stated: "Here is the brief written statement of my reaction to the political report. . . . It certainly does not represent my total reactions; I tried to keep to the most important points. In particular, I did not address myself to the statement on Social-Democracy for that would have been just about as long as the rest put together." Believing that the readers of P.A. would find this analysis of interest, it is published below in full.—Editor.*

THE FACT THAT I am not a Communist defines the limits of the evaluation that I can make of the Main Political Resolution of the CPUSA of February, 1957, in the sense that questions of internal party structure are beyond my competence. I can only say that the sections of the report which criticize the doctrinaire and dogmatic Marxism of the past and which set forth a program for the democratization of the Party will strike many observers as among the most significant of the entire document. At any rate, as a non-Communist, interested in the goals of peace and socialism, I may make my best contribution by concentrating on the relationship between the Party and the nation, the role of the C.P. in the context of today's political realities.

It is precisely because the long-range goals of the Communist Party represent the highest aspirations of mankind that every effort must be made to eliminate ambiguities either in the statement of those goals or in the program of political action which is meant to implement them. The fight for political liberties, for emancipation of the

Negro people, for improved living standards and political organization of the working class, and against big business, is part of the American tradition. Peaceful coexistence, the end of the terrifying arms race, the development of international trade, and the support of the colonial peoples in their efforts to achieve nationhood, industrialization and democracy, represent the true interest of the majority of men and women in America and throughout the world. But agreement on goals is empty until it is made concrete. I shall therefore direct my comments to four problems raised by the report, which remain unresolved for me:

1. The nature of the self-criticism.
2. The formulation of present tasks.
3. The attitude towards the USSR and the socialist bloc.
4. The question of Marxist education.

(1) I am not convinced that all points in the Party's self-criticism are stated in a form which would necessarily lead to rectification of past mistakes. For example, the report criti-

cizes the C.P. as follows: "Our repeated estimates of impending economic crisis had many harmful effects . . . encouragement of all tendencies to overestimate the imminence of war and fascism" (p. 8). If this was indeed an error, then the report repeats it three pages later: "The pall of McCarthyism grew until it threatened to blot out American liberties" (p. 11). "To blot out American liberties" really means fascism, and therefore increasing danger of war. Now it is the second of these statements that seems to me the more exact. I do not think the Party should criticize itself for having stood almost alone in analyzing the ultimate consequences of the operation of the McCarthyite congressional committees. The analysis of McCarthyism was correct. But, as the report indicates, the reaction of the Communist Party to its own analysis was not; i.e., the political decision to go underground and to reduce Party membership.

(2) But these are relatively minor points. The theme that dominates the report is the problem of the formation of an anti-monopoly people's party in which American labor would eventually assume a role of leadership. The program of such a party is described in some detail. What stands out is the struggle for the maintenance and extension of the economic and social gains scored by the labor movement and its allies since 1932. Although this program provides for the reduction of war spending and the channeling of funds into creative projects of public health, culture and social security, its essential meaning is a concentration of political activity on domestic issues rather than on those of foreign policy.

Naturally these two spheres are related. But since the American Left is limited both as to funds and as to manpower, this program constitutes a commitment to a particular approach to the global problems of peace abroad and democracy at home. The report does not, however, raise the issue of a distinction between the movement for the formation of a third party and a political movement specifically devoted to the furtherance of the cause of peaceful coexistence.

An all-out commitment to the building of a third party implies a program largely devoted to immediate social and economic gains: a program of open class struggle. Concentration on the development of an organized peace movement means, on the other hand, the political activation of people of all classes of society, whose common interest demands an end to the cold war, and as a first step, an immediate ban on the testing of weapons of mass destruction: a program of class alliances. The report recognizes the necessity for developing both modes of action, but it puts great emphasis on the former, while expressing confidence that Soviet initiative, world public opinion, neutralists, and various existing groups at home will continue to carry the main brunt of the peace movement. The report fails to explain why the leadership of the C.P. considers the third-party approach to be the more effective in realizing its goals. This is all the more puzzling since, in the section on Social Democracy, it is specifically stated that "The new approach (to Social Democracy and reformism generally) is first a recognition of a new situation, new relations of forces, new tasks, first and foremost being

that of preventing a third world war" (p. 79). Certainly then, one would expect the Party to strive to attain a vanguard role in the peace movement.

Many people deeply interested in participating in a renewal of the American Left are thinking in these terms. I found nothing in the report directly addressed to this outlook; and so it may be helpful to outline the grounds on which it is based.

a. Since the war, American capitalism has preserved an artificial and precarious prosperity by basing its economy on cold war arms spending.

b. One may assume that American capitalism will continue to resolve its internal contradictions by war spending until it is compelled to do otherwise.

c. The advances made by reaction at home, the anti-Communist hysteria, the isolation of the Left, all arise from the dependence of American capital on the continuation and deepening of international tensions.

d. Up to now, the strongest pressures opposing the drive for war have come from the socialist bloc and the neutralist nations. These pressures have scored notable successes, i.e., the Geneva and Bandung Conferences.

e. Important sections of the American ruling class, seeing themselves faced with the imminent relaxation of international tensions and the accompanying danger to the war boom, are pressing in panic for an increasingly militarized national policy against the Soviet Union, i.e., the Gaither and Rockefeller reports.

f. There is in America today a vast but unorganized desire for peace. The political resolution gave several ex-

amples of how it has operated effectively in the past.

g. In the light of recent military and industrial developments, this feeling for peace is greater than ever. It might be organized into an effective political force which would put pressure on the government to ban testing of atom and hydrogen bombs, to consent to a top level meeting with the leaders of the Soviet Union and China, to work out a system of disarmament, peaceful coexistence, and the renewal of trade with the Socialist countries.

h. Is it not conceivable that the American Left may find the organization of a vast peace movement the opportunity for united action, for overcoming sectarianism, for breaking out of its isolation from the masses of the people? Is it not possible that the most effective way to formulate a program of struggle for a people's party may be discovered within the context of such a movement?

I am aware that certain implications of this outline leave it open to serious discussion. It defines the most pressing immediate task as the formation of a national front rather than a popular front; it de-emphasizes class struggle. However, it neither ignores nor excludes class struggle as a necessary means for the attainment of socialism. What it implies is that a successfully waged peace campaign may oblige the American ruling class to solve its economic problems through a rechanneling of investments into products of social welfare, and thereby create the conditions for a rapid resurgence of the American Left.

(3) Another aspect of the political resolution which I found seriously lacking was its vague statements con-

cerning the Soviet intervention in Hungary. By its deliberate avoidance of a clear stand on this issue, it lends weight to the violent Western propaganda which availed itself of an excellent opportunity to undermine Soviet prestige all over the world. The report should have come out squarely in support of the Soviet intervention, for as tragic as it was, that action prevented the transformation of the Hungarian revolt into a restoration of reactionary institutions and the eventual absorption of the country into the system of Western military bases. By now, it is clear to many people, even in capitalist countries, that the Soviet Union is seriously pursuing a policy of peaceful coexistence. The war danger comes from the Western alliance of capitalist states. The Soviet intervention was necessary in the interest of peace.

Millions of people living outside of the socialist world have an attitude of critical support of the Soviet Union. They have supported the Soviet Union in the first place because they have recognized that its policies are consistently aiming at the achievement of world peace and security. We may add that these policies derive from its national interest. At the same time, they are critical of the Soviet Union because certain features of its social and political structure seem undemocratic and foreign to their outlook and way of life. To these people, an event like the Soviet intervention in Hungary seems to justify Western charges of imperialism and military rule. It is essential for the strengthening of the forces of peace in the world to explain, without glorifying, the Soviet intervention, in terms of its real political

context: the capitalist encirclement of the Soviet Union with air and military bases. On the other hand, open and frank discussion and criticism of the cultural regimentation, restrictions on civil liberties, the harshness of the penal code, etc., to the degree that they are still realities of Soviet life, should not be automatically identified as reactionary. The political report does not make it clear whether or not the opinion stated above corresponds to its formula of "critical support."

(4) The basic importance that the report attributes to the task of Marxist education in America was to me one of its outstanding features. The necessity for solving this problem is sharpened in a period like ours when the struggle for a popular front with Social Democrats and other reformist groups may once more create a tendency for Marxists to lose their theoretical identity. I would like to have found in the resolution some statement indicating what steps are contemplated to fulfill this need. Those interested in the development of Marxist thought and Marxist culture in America would look forward to a program of considerable scope, including reading and discussion groups, publication of significant works, and the broad encouragement of fruitful debate with non-Marxists who wish to deepen their understanding of the Marxist tradition. They would also like to see the eventual establishment of one or several centers of Marxist study and research, which could face in a systematic manner the many unsolved problems and challenging creative tasks which Marxism presents, especially in America.



## Books in Review

### THE DIPLOMACY OF WORLD WAR II

*Churchill-Roosevelt-Stalin, The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought*, by Herbert Feis (Princeton University Press, Princeton, N. J.), 692 pages, \$6.95.

IN THIS RECENT best-selling book, Herbert Feis, a former State Department official and adviser to three Secretaries of War, reviews the negotiations and relations between President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, and Premier Stalin during the period of the Grand Alliance against the fascist powers in World War II. Throughout his book, the author develops the idea that the Soviet government's greed for territory, and determination to dominate other peoples, subjected the alliance to continuous strain, finally, in the closing months of the war and thereafter, causing its dissolution. The book's theme is stated succinctly in its concluding paragraph:

Roosevelt and his colleagues were right: the nations needed moral law and freedom. Churchill was right: the nations needed magnanimity and balance of power. Stalin was sullyng a right: the Russian people were entitled to the fullest equality and protection against another assault upon them. But under Stalin they were trying not only to extend their boundaries and their control over neighboring states but beginning to revert to their revolutionary effort throughout the world. Within the next few years this was to break the coalition and, along with the spread of nationalist passion in hitherto passive parts of the world, create the turbulence in which we are all now living.

Although this argument permeates his work, the events and factual data recorded by Feis fail to establish it to the exclusion of other interpretations. In addition, this data support several other propositions which Feis accords little or no significance. Three such propositions are:

First, the British government never completely accepted the American and Soviet view of the urgent necessity speedily to crush Nazi Germany. It participated in this effort reluctantly, and only after a delay of some three years. The Churchill government's main concerns were to prolong the war in the hope of avoiding altogether a showdown with Hitler in the West, and to attain positions from which to confront the Soviet Union after Germany's capitulation.

Second, the coalition's maximum unity and agreement was achieved primarily through U.S.-Soviet collaboration in prosecuting the war. This, in turn, was rendered possible by mutual confidence and mutual respect, which was

largely attributable to President Roosevelt's concern to speed the defeat of Germany, both by an invasion from the West and by supplying war material and other aid to the Soviet Union; to his willingness to recognize Soviet security requirements during and after the war, and to treat with the Soviet Union on terms of equality; and to his conviction that U.S.-Soviet friendship after the war would be indispensable for a stable peace.

Third, a number of highly-placed aides of Roosevelt did not share his attitudes. Their behavior, together with the machinations of the Churchill government which sought to exacerbate U.S.-Soviet relations for its own ends, provoked the Soviet government into unilateral decisions and actions in the interest of its own security. These Soviet moves in turn provided the ground for more provocations from the Anglo-American side, which were answered by more suspicion and unilateral measures from the Kremlin, and so on. This process was held in check by Roosevelt, but gained momentum after his death, and resulted in the eventual dissolution of the coalition and the launching of the Cold War.

To repeat, although Feis makes little or nothing of these generalizations, they flow logically from the data he has amassed. Moreover, they provide an interpretation of the diplomacy of the Grand Alliance which subsequent events tend to validate. On the other hand, Feis' own interpretation of his data is open to challenge on two counts: (a) it is not the only conclusion flowing from his premises; and (b) his premises are based on partial data, other important events and facts having been minimized or ignored.

What are these premises from which Feis draws a conclusion so unfavorable to the Soviet government's war aims?

As related by Feis, Stalin and his aides raised the question of the Soviet Union's western frontiers to a position in the coalition's negotiations second in importance to that of the second front against Nazi Germany. In his first discussion with the British concerning war aims, December 16-28, 1941, Stalin had proposed a written understanding concerning the western frontiers of the Soviet Union after the war. Again and again the Soviet government pressed for Anglo-American acceptance of the frontiers which had been established during the Soviet-German non-aggression pact—according to a State Department publication entitled *Nazi-Soviet Relations 1939-1941*, under a secret protocol partitioning control of much of eastern and central Europe. And when the Anglo-American governments refused, this brought explosive reactions from Stalin, who commented that the Soviet government considered its western frontiers as settled. These, in brief, are the facts from which Feis deduced that the Soviet government was intent throughout the war on extending its boundaries.

But the question of the Soviet Union's frontiers ought not to be separated from the problem of a lone Socialist state's security in a capitalist world. Might not the Soviet government's seeming obsession with the question of its frontiers have derived from this concern for its security? Did Moscow have cause, during the period of the coalition, for such concern? These questions occurred to

Feis, and his narrative refers again and again to the Soviet leaders' expression of their concern. But Feis seems to have rejected the possibility of a threat to the USSR during the period of the coalition from any source other than the Hitler armies. And he attributes the anxiety expressed by the Soviet government to unfounded suspicion or to guile, designed to mask its "greed for territory."

However, in order to sustain his rejection of this possible alternative explanation of the Soviet leaders' preoccupation with the question of frontiers, Feis employs a method which, from the standpoint of scholarship, can hardly be considered a credit to a member of the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study. He departs from the arbitrary time-limits of his narrative—from Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, to the defeat of Germany and the preparations for the Potsdam Conference in May, 1945—and gives the reader a glimpse of what happened before the Hitler attack. But what a glimpse! Of all that transpired between the two world wars to explain World War II (and to show why the Soviet government was concerned with the question of frontiers), Feis selects only the alleged "deal" between the Soviet Union and Germany in the non-aggression pact of August 1939!

"The Soviet government had hustled to claim the premiums" from the "secret protocol" of this pact, Feis writes. "Soon Eastern Poland had been incorporated in the Soviet Union; the Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had been gradually brought under Russian military control; the independence of the only other Baltic State, Finland, had been threatened; the Province of Bessarabia had been taken back from Romania, and Bucovina and the islands of the Danube, and international control of the Delta of the Danube had been ended."

Feis records the fact that "in after years Stalin was wont to say . . . the main purpose of his patience was to get the protection of buffer areas to the West, and time to build up Soviet forces." But he tries to discount this explanation of Soviet motives with the *non sequitur* that the Soviet "wish to avoid war with Germany, or at least defer it, had been strong to the last. . . ." And the impression is left unchallenged that the newly acquired territories were "premiums" of the non-aggression pact's "secret protocol partitioning control of much of eastern and central Europe. . . ."

This impression, however, is a false one. Far from receiving the benediction of Hitler, each Soviet occupation of the countries named by Feis incurred Nazi protests and recriminations. Feis evidently chose to believe the Nazis' statements about the "secret protocol," which helps to substantiate his theme and which were published by the State Department in 1948 as a weapon of the Cold War (*Nazi-Soviet Relations 1939-1941*); he chooses not to believe, however, Hitler's proclamation of war against the Soviet Union and Ribbentrop's memorandum which characterized the Soviet moves as hostile acts against Germany, of which his book contains no mention. It is a curious yardstick of reliability Feis applies to Nazi sources.

Nor does Feis ever tell the reader certain pertinent facts about the territories he calls "premiums" of the Nazi-Soviet "deal." The book never says that the part of Eastern Poland which had been "incorporated in the Soviet Union" was ethnographically and economically part of the Soviet Republics of Ukraine and Byelorussia when it was seized by Poland in 1920. Or that Bessarabia had been seized from Russia in 1918 by Rumanian troops, and that the northern part only of Bucovina which was occupied by the Soviet islands of the Danube to possible use by the Nazis against Soviet Black Sea ports the Delta of the Danube had actually become German control, subjecting the islands of the Danube to possible use by the Nazis against Soviet Black Sea ports and bases. Or that Finland and the Baltic states of Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania, all former parts of Czarist Russia granted independence by the Bolsheviks, and ever since vassals of Britain and then of Germany as part of the *cordon sanitaire* against Communism, had actually become springboards for the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union, their governments in the hands of Fascists and their armed forces coordinated with those of Hitler. Certainly such facts are pertinent to any discussion of the Soviet moves beyond its frontiers during the non-aggression pact with Germany. Why did Feis withhold this information from his readers?

Apparently Feis adopted the same method as the State Department employed in publishing its book on German-Soviet relations. A Soviet critique of that work issued by the Soviet Information Bureau in February, 1948, *Falsificators of History*, observed that "the published collection (of unverified and arbitrarily chosen records made by Hitlerite officials) contains only material relating to the period of 1939-1941, while material relating to the preceding years, and in particular to the Munich period, has not been included in the collection and thus has been concealed from world opinion. This action is certainly not accidental, but pursues aims which have nothing to do with an objective and honest treatment of historical truth."

Perhaps Feis was not acquainted with the Soviet critique. (He seems to have made no use whatsoever of any Soviet source material, except Stalin's speeches during the war.) But there was no dearth of historical material on the period between the two wars. Yet, although telling the reader that "our glance back along the bank of history must comprehend what led to" the signing of the Declaration of the United Nations on January 1, 1942, he confines this "glance" mainly to the events after the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union. What went before he limits to three paragraphs! Of the years of armed intervention against the young Soviet state, the decade and more of economic blockade and an earlier "cold war," he says nothing. The years of Soviet efforts to promote collective security against aggression are compressed into the single sentence, "Soviet diplomacy had at some previous intervals *professed the wish* to share in collective action for the restraint of Germany and Italy." (My emphasis—J.P.) The years of appeasement of fascism by the capitalist democracies are stated with equal brevity: "This diplomacy *had been streaked at times* with the further thought that even if Hitler's aggression went further it would be directed against

the East, and that the Soviet Union, not themselves, would be the first to be beset." (My emphasis—J.P.) To this is added a quotation from Neville Chamberlain confessing "to the most profound distrust of Russia," an admission that the western European governments "were also afraid of the consequences if the Communist forces should thereby be admitted to the West," and the matter-of-fact statement that "the Munich agreement had allowed Hitler to tear Czechoslovakia apart, leaving Poland and the Soviet Union exposed to German assault."

But Feis does not even tell certain pertinent facts that occurred during the Soviet-German non-aggression pact. There is nothing in the entire book to acquaint the reader with the fact that there was a period called the "phony war," when the British and French governments, while nominally "at war" with Germany, failed to lift a finger while Hitler prepared his positions in Eastern Europe for the assault on the Soviet Union. Nor is there any hint of the fact that during the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939-40, the French, British and American governments, though confronted by the Fascist Axis with its avowed aim to establish world mastery, actually prepared to intervene against the Soviet Union, and raised funds and forces for the project and supplied money and weapons to Finland. Yet, certainly these acts of hostility against the Soviet Union are pertinent to any serious attempt to understand the Soviet leaders' "suspicions" and concern over the British and American attitude toward the USSR's frontiers.

These examples must suffice to indicate how the author tries to win credence for his argument that the Soviet leaders were "greedy for territory" during the coalition. Clearly his method of using data which support his position, while discounting or suppressing data that refute it, is questionable, to say the least. If, to the events and facts he has omitted is added the record of Churchill's and Hull's long refusal and eventual reluctant but qualified decision to accept the Soviet frontiers as defined by Stalin—a record his work reports in detail—the narrative's conclusion could only be that the Soviet leaders had ample ground for concern, even during the period of the coalition.

The Soviet leaders' concern over the security of the country's frontiers was not alleviated by the repeated Anglo-American postponements of the second front. Feis is more forthright in reporting these postponements. And he puts the onus where it lies—on Churchill. But he is full of sympathy for Churchill's position. Stalin's insistence on a second front as the speediest way to defeat Hitler Germany and shorten the war draws this comment: "This demand was to be heard again and again; it was a constant dissonance in the theme of coalition." And this one: "Nor did it show recognition that the Soviet Union could bear the loss of millions of men while Britain, still short of young vitality because of the First World War, could not." Obviously, Russia's losses in World War I are of no consequence! Indeed, it was the apparent willingness of Churchill to let Hitler bleed the Soviet Union to death before risking British troops that partly accounted for Stalin's repeated demands for action in the West, and surely influenced his insistence on a clarification of war aims

and Anglo-American—especially British—recognition of Soviet frontiers. After all, at a time when Churchill was hedging on both the second front and the question of Soviet frontiers, German diplomacy was striving to make a separate peace with the British and Americans, while German troops, far inside the Soviet Union, were engaged in destroying 1,700 Soviet cities, 70,000 villages, and 32,000 industrial establishments, and in plundering 100,000 collective farms.

Feis writes of the role of the United States government, moreover, as though it was whole-heartedly committed to the Grand Alliance and the destruction of the Fascist Axis. There are hints at times of a political opposition in this country, and the author records differences in the American high command over strategy. But in this instance, too, Feis withholds from the reader pertinent information concerning the struggle for a coalition policy and the second front. Stalin, however, seemed to know something of this struggle, as is evident from his attitude to Hopkins, the personal emissary of Roosevelt, and Hull, the naive but honest idealist, as contrasted to his attitude to Harriman, in whom he seemed to recognize a kindred spirit of Churchill. It was Harriman with whom he raised the question of Soviet frontiers, not Hopkins. And Molotov seemed to accept Hull's opposition to recognition of the Soviet frontiers as defined by the Soviet government as a position which could be changed in discussion. But the existence in the United States of powerful political forces eager for a negotiated peace with the Nazis, while Hitler was in control of large parts of the Soviet Union, surely did not lessen the concern felt in Moscow for the USSR's security during the coalition. The Kremlin also knew of the "America First" grouping and the "business as usual" attitude of powerful sections of the American bourgeoisie, and that a country's foreign policy is a reflection, in part, of its internal politics.

Passing on to the next part of Feis' over-all theme, that the Soviet government and people during the coalition were trying to extend "their control over neighboring states" and "beginning to revert to their revolutionary effort throughout the world," this conclusion is based on data relating to the Soviet policies toward Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Finland, Austria and Germany. Here Feis' language is ambiguous and misleading. If by "control over neighboring states" he means that the Soviet government acted to ensure the establishment of governments in these states that would be friendly to the Soviet Union, he is correct. If by "beginning to revert to their revolutionary effort," he means the Soviet forces in these countries protected and aided the Communists, as against the Fascists, quislings, and other anti-Communists, he is also correct. But the weight of Feis' argumentation attempts to impute a sinister aim to these actions. The data he presents, however, tend to show their naturalness, while the pertinent data he fails to present would further challenge his theme.

Briefly, Feis has not provided the reader with the background information on Soviet relations with these countries. He has not described the internal situation and political alignments within these countries at the time of their liberation from the Nazis. Yet, this information is indispensable to a correct

understanding of the alternatives before the Soviet authorities. On the other hand, where he does present relatively sufficient information, as in the case of Poland, his argument blandly contradicts the total evidence presented. For in page after page about Poland, he records the overtures made by the USSR to the London Polish regime, and this regime's rejection of every proposal that would offer security to the Soviet Union.

It may be that Feis was not unaware of the criticism of Stalin's leadership made at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, and of the subsequent statement of the Soviet government concerning its errors in relations with other Socialist states. Certainly, some aspects of these self-critical reviews reflect on Soviet policy during the coalition. The June 30, 1956 resolution of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party takes note of "certain serious mistakes in the leadership of various branches of the activity of the Party and Soviet state . . . in its foreign policy" as a result of Stalin's growing personal rule and arbitrariness. The question is appropriate, therefore, whether these features of Stalin's leadership did not influence Soviet policy during the war in respect to relations with neighboring states and the alleged reversion to world revolutionary activity.

But neither Feis nor anyone else engaged in such speculation would find support in the Soviet Communist party's and the Soviet government's self-criticism. Admittedly, neither may have said yet the last word concerning these matters, but what both have said is quite specific as to the errors criticized. The government statement speaks of conditions of inequality between the USSR and other Socialist states which developed after these countries had adopted programs for building socialism. And the Party statement specifies "serious mistakes made by Stalin . . . in organizing the country's preparations to rebuff the fascist invaders, in gross arbitrariness which led to a conflict in relations with Yugoslavia in the postwar period." But in regard to the war period, the party statement declares as follows:

It cannot be said that there was no counter-action against the negative manifestations which were connected with the personality cult and which put a brake on the forward movement of socialism. There were certain periods, *for instance during the war years*, when the unilateral acts of Stalin were sharply restricted, when the negative consequences of lawlessness, arbitrariness and so forth were substantially diminished.

It is known that precisely during the war period members of the Central Committee as well as outstanding Soviet military leaders took over certain sectors of activity in the rear and at the front, made independent decisions, and through their organizational, political, economic, and military work, together with local Party and Soviet organizations, ensured the victory of the Soviet people in the war. *After victory* the negative consequences of the personality cult re-emerged with great force. (My emphasis.—J.P.)

Feis himself, moreover, accurately records the manner in which the Soviet forces conducted themselves in the neighboring countries. This reviewer, who was a newspaper correspondent in Eastern Europe after the war and attended the first post-election sessions of the Bulgarian, Romanian and Polish parliaments, can attest to the accuracy of Feis' statement as an eye-witness observer. Feis writes:

[The Soviet government] saw to it that the governments which came into power in the countries along its borders were well disposed to the Soviet Union and feared it. *But it did not seem to be trying to impose on them in haste Communist economic or social systems.* The Soviet rulers avowed that they did not wish or plan to interfere in the internal affairs of these countries, and at times ostentatiously refrained from doing so. *They accepted "popular front" governments in which local Communists were associated, in minority part, with Socialist, peasant, and other political groups.* But at the same time they encouraged Communist and other parties of the Left to take control and pursue energetic programs demanding speedy arrest and trial of all persons associated with pro-Nazi regimes or known anti-Communist tendencies, and calling for extensive changes, notably land reform.

Indeed, what actually happened during this period was indicated by the comment of the American Embassy in Moscow in its interim report of October 20, 1944, which Feis quotes as follows:

Political ferment and economic upheaval in these countries appear unavoidable . . . and the effective local Communist parties, which appear to be the only groups with a well-defined program and strong backing, may be expected when the moment is propitious to take advantage of the situation in an attempt to gain the controlling voice in government for themselves.

Feis' description and the American Embassy report fail to elaborate on the details of the struggles in these countries and the background of these struggles. Such data are available, however, and more than substantiate their generalizations. The fact is that only the Communists in the neighboring countries had programs to meet the economic and social needs of the stricken people, as well as the necessary popular support for providing stable government dedicated to reconstruction. Certainly this situation cannot be characterized as an attempt by Soviet leaders to dominate neighboring peoples and "revert to their revolutionary effort throughout the world."

To summarize: Feis' thematic conclusions do not logically flow from the data he presents. His data, plus data he has omitted, support diametrically opposite conclusions, namely, that Anglo-American-Soviet collaboration in the period of the Grand Alliance was marred by the repeated postponements of a

Western showdown with Hitler Germany, and by the persistent distrust of the Soviet Union and designs upon its security by the Churchill government and powerful circles within and outside of the Roosevelt government. It was this distrust and these designs which came to dominate Anglo-American policy after Roosevelt's death, thus undermining the coalition and creating an atmosphere that helped nourish the present Cold War.

This does not mean, however, that Feis' work makes no contribution to the record of the coalition's diplomacy. On the contrary, for readers already familiar with the history of the coalition, *Churchill-Roosevelt-Stalin* contains much data heretofore not published. Although conspicuously weak in Soviet source material, it brings together the contents of many erstwhile secret documents and personal papers, such as those of Truman, Harriman, Allen W. Dulles of the Central Intelligence Agency, George Kennan, Dean Acheson and others. In addition, Feis seems to have relied considerably on Churchill's version of what happened, as the former Prime Minister's history of the war supplies a majority of the quotations in the book.

The book throws light on many aspects of the war which this reviewer felt were beyond the scope of this comment. Such are data concerning the discussions over military strategy, the difference that occurred between Churchill and Roosevelt, the behavior of DeGaulle, the estimate of Chiang Kai-shek and the Anglo-American conflict over war aims in Asia, and some intimate details concerning the conferences of Cairo, Teheran and Yalta. Also, thanks to the fact that Harriman "encouraged and aided the effort throughout, sharing, in fact, in its origination," Feis has incorporated in his work much self-revelatory material regarding the truly disruptive contributions to the coalition of the present Governor of New York.

But the most negative feature of *Churchill-Roosevelt-Stalin*, I think, is its probable adverse effect on the future of American-Soviet relations. Feis has done an enormous amount of work, no doubt, at great expense in energy and time. From motives of patriotism, if for no other reason, he might have laid emphasis on those aspects of American policy which safeguarded and promoted the national interest. He would then have explored more deeply and presented in greater detail those qualities and the popular basis of Roosevelt's policy which enabled the late President to deal with the Soviet Union as an equal, and to win the degree of Soviet trust and confidence in America's friendship which carried the Grand Alliance to its highest peak of military and political collaboration. Such an exposition would have the virtue of showing the American people that there is, indeed, an alternative to the present Cold War policy of their government. And this would surely have strengthened the cause of those elements in our country who recognize the catastrophic consequences of a continuation of the Cold War under the present conditions of a nuclear arms race.

But Feis chose the opposite course. He chose to characterize these very qualities of the Rooseveltian policies as errors and "concessions" to Moscow. And he has conversely seen merit and wisdom in the attitudes and policies of Churchill and Harriman. In doing so, he has condemned his own work to

the status of another of the many alibis for the Cold War, parroting the ancient canards of "Soviet imperialism" and "Communist aggression" which the bulk of mankind has learned to revile. And he has done a grave disservice to the security of his country and the cause of peace, both of which lie in the resurrection and implementation of mutual American-Soviet trust and confidence. The task of rendering this service—in the words of one of Feis' closing sentences—"awaits another opportunity, other narrators and other interpreters, and a freer and fuller disclosure of the records."

JOHN PITTMAN

## ANTONIO GRAMSCI

ANTONIO GRAMSCI, leader of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) until his imprisonment under Fascism in 1926, has written that a party leadership must be judged on the basis of two criteria: 1) by what it actually does, and 2) by what it prepares "on the hypothesis of its own destruction." Gramsci did a great deal for Italian Communism on both counts. He led the Party during most of the period of semi-legality (1922-1926) following the victory of Fascism, rid the Party of its extremist elements which had previously controlled its executive organs, established the basis for its clandestine activities which kept the movement alive during the entire Fascist era, and prepared the ground for its post-war resurgence among all the popular classes of Italy. Most of the present leaders of the PCI worked directly under Gramsci and have often stated their profound indebtedness to his teachings.

After his arrest, Gramsci soon realized that his "own destruction," if not that of the entire Party leadership, was more than "hypothetical." He was sentenced to 20 years for "subversion" on the strength of the Public Prosecutor's demand that his brain be prohibited from functioning for at least that long. With the precarious state of his health, an imprisonment of such length was tantamount to a death sentence. This great Italian leader died, at the age of 46, one among the myriad of martyrs in the fight against fascism, on April 27, 1937.

However, Gramsci's enormous strength of character did not fail him. He lived long enough to make one of his most valuable contributions to Italian Communism, this time in the form of 2,848 manuscript pages of essays on Marxist theory and on Italian history and culture. He accomplished this despite the prolonged refusal of prison officials to give him adequate medical attention and nourishment, to say nothing of the almost impossible conditions for adequate research and documentation inherent in prison life. His intense motivation may be explained by words he once wrote in an entirely different context: ". . . the more an individual is constrained to defend his own immediate physical existence, the more he sustains and sees himself from the point of view

of all the complex and the most elevated values of civilization and humanity."

In 1947, just a few months short of the twenty-year silence demanded by his public prosecutor, Gramsci's letters to his family were published in Italy. They conveyed such a rich sense of humanity and brilliance that Gramsci was posthumously given by unanimous vote Italy's highest literary award, the *Premio Viareggio*. From 1949 to 1951, publication of his *Prison Notebooks* was rapidly completed. Their political and cultural importance was soon recognized, although, precisely for this reason, the enthusiasm of critics was not quite unanimous! Indeed, the success of the Italian Communist Party in the post-war years is due in no small measure to this legacy of Gramsci's. Nearly 400,000 copies of his works have been sold in the peninsula, a gigantic figure by Italian standards. Too, a number of his more important essays have recently been translated into English\* which would indicate that it is time the American Left gained a clearer idea of his place in Marxist thought. Such a task is far too ambitious for this article. Here we wish merely to provide a framework for understanding some fundamental ideas which appear in the essays presently available in English.

Gramsci was convinced that the failure of socialism in Italy was in large part the fault of the movement itself, particularly in its inability to form the class alliances necessary to the working class for victory in a country with a social structure like Italy's. In turn, this failure was rendered inevitable by the inability of the Italian Communists to develop adequately the theory of the political party.

As history has shown, there is no working class with a stronger sense of class solidarity than the Italian: consciousness of its "economic-corporative" interests, to use a favorite phrase of Gramsci's, and its opposition to the directing classes of Italy, were high indeed. But its *political* sense was very limited; that is, it was unable to develop a political program and a "conception of the world" complex enough and attractive enough to other classes essential to the Italian revolution so that the necessary alliances could be made to ensure victory.

At the end of his political career, Gramsci had shown (*The Modern Prince*, pp. 28-51) that the Southern peasant masses were the key to a victory of socialism in Italy. But before those masses and the urban proletariat could join forces, the historical unity of the rural petty-bourgeois intellectuals and the great land-owners and capitalists had to be broken. This was so since Gramsci had shown the role of the intellectuals in the Southern social structure to be crucial to the maintenance of the *status quo*.

Why then were the Italian Marxists largely unsuccessful in their bid for the support of the intelligentsia (particularly of the Southerners among them)? Partly because of the verbal extremism of the Maximalist Socialists and the Bordiga (extremist) group in the PCI, both of which made no attempt to present their programs in a "national-popular" spirit. But this is only one aspect of

\* Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince and Other Writings*. Translated by Louis Marks. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 192 pp. 21s. *The Open Marxism of Antonio Gramsci*. Translated and annotated by Carl Marzani. New York: Cameron Associates, 64 pp. \$2.00.

a larger error common to many Marxist leaders—and not only Italian Marxists. The error is variously known as mechanicalism, fatalism, autonomism, economism, etc. For Gramsci, such attitudes—all of them forms of vulgar materialism—seriously crippled the Party in its political work. In order to combat them, Gramsci turned to Lenin for guidance.

Certainly one of the greatest contributions of Lenin to Marxist theory and practice was his success in establishing the basis for an alliance of workers and peasants. All of Lenin's work in the theory of proletarian hegemony (rule by consent) over the other popular classes was deeply assimilated and appreciated by Gramsci. It was his opinion, however, that much work remained to be done in this field. Particularly important was the establishing of a firm hegemony of the working class over the intellectuals. Gramsci often used the term "intellectuals" in its general sense of "organizers of culture," thereby including everything from political organizers to scientists, from functionaries of the State to poets. Outside of the Soviet Union, the working class itself had developed few "intellectuals" at the time of Gramsci's writing. Ultimately this situation would be rectified. In the meantime, however, organization of the working class would have to depend largely upon those intellectuals of middle-class origin who had accepted the proletarian hegemony.

Now there was only one way for Marxism to secure the adherence of large groups of intellectuals: that is, by emancipating itself from all dependence upon the traditional philosophies in order to develop in its own unique way as the basis of a new civilization. In other words, intellectuals were to be attracted to Marxism by its uniquely creative solutions to the problems of modern life. Marxism "contains in itself all the fundamental elements not only for constructing a whole and integral conception of the world, a total philosophy and a theory of the natural sciences, but also for bringing to life an integral practical organization of society; in other words, for becoming a total, integral civilization." (*The Modern Prince*, p. 117). According to Gramsci, Marxism has too often been confused with vulgar materialism. The latter is unnecessary to an "integral conception of the world" like Marxism, and its survival in residual forms has severely hurt Marxism's cause among the intellectuals. Gramsci was acutely aware of this problem because of the widespread influence among Italian intellectuals of neo-Hegelianism, a philosophy particularly adept at combatting vulgar materialism.

Such are the reasons for Gramsci's emphatically negative critique of vulgar materialism and mechanicalism. At the same time, however, he developed in an original and often subtle way those elements in Marxist thought—especially its "historical" and "dialectical" character—which give it uniqueness and strength. Finally, Gramsci showed in his essay on "The Modern Prince" how these Marxist teachings can be applied to the construction of a political party capable of dealing more adequately with the fundamental task of achieving leadership for the working class in the construction of a new society.

Gramsci's thought on these questions is of great importance to American Marxists, especially in view of the frequent assertion here that Marxism is a

"deterministic" philosophy. The absurdity of this charge is apparent in the fact that by far the most "creative" societies of the 20th century are those guided by Marxism-Leninism. Still, the allegations of vulgar materialism and mechanicalism are frequently hurled at Marxism. One reason for Gramsci's great effectiveness in demolishing such objections is his admirable ability to "translate" his Marxist responses into the language of the traditional ideologies. At the same time, Gramsci often succeeds in pointing out the weaknesses of idealism and other philosophies by comparing their ideas with corresponding concepts of Marxism. (Note, for example, his statement that the idealist claim that reality is a creation of the human spirit corresponds to the Marxist idea of structure and superstructure, only that the latter is "concrete" and "historical" whereas the former retains a strong element of the metaphysical).

Of course, vulgar materialism and the hegemony of the working class are not the only problems treated in the *Prison Notebooks*; indeed the range of subject matter is extraordinary, varying from a study of Dante's *Inferno* to a collection of notes on modern journalism. However, both the recent translations of Gramsci are limited mainly to essays dealing with the problems discussed above. This limitation is unfortunate only because it might lead to misunderstandings. It has not been difficult in the past for unscrupulous critics to isolate quotations from these essays in order to "prove" that Gramsci was attempting to revise Marxism in an idealist direction. Such unscientific purposes are also facilitated by the fact that many of Gramsci's writings are merely collections of notes, highly suggestive but still unpolished. Hence, it would have been wise to have included a few pages from Gramsci's brilliant essay on "The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce," one of the most perceptive critiques of the idealist position known to this writer.

Both of the translators have chosen to delete large sections from the longer essays included in their anthologies. One can sympathize with their desire to eliminate material of lesser interest to English and American than to Italian readers; however, such deletions tend to hinder complete understanding of the text, already made difficult by the conditions under which Gramsci wrote. Marzani's book is really too short to get much more than the barest indication of Gramsci's thought. On the other hand, his translation is much superior to that of Marks which is often painfully wooden and marred by a number of errors.\*

\* Here are a few of the errors. Some are factual and some are mistakes in translation which confuse or mislead the reader:

p. 56, line 31: Gramsci was transferred from Turi to the Formia clinic in Dec., 1933, not in Jan., 1936.

p. 62, line 2: "perche" translated as "because" the proper translation in this context being "why."

p. 70, line 12: "aspettare" translated as "expecting" rather than "waiting for." In this context Marks' choice is misleading.

p. 104, line 20: "esilara" translated as "is excited," the proper word being something like "amused."

p. 106, line 25: "cio che" translated as "what" rather than "which."

p. 154, line 29: In the phrase "as if these were a necessary . . ." Marks has omitted the word "not" which changes the whole meaning of the sentence.

p. 192: In the "Biographical Notes and Glossary," Marks states that Angelo Tasca returned to Italy in 1945 to become director of the Party's newspaper *L'Unita'*. Alas, the truth is quite the

Gramsci's more important works should be translated as soon as possible. He has succeeded in a task of great importance for the present historical period when each nation must strive to find its own road to socialism. In Gramsci's work, Marxism-Leninism is solidly welded to the best elements of his own national tradition without losing any of its vitality and without any danger of its becoming narrowly nationalistic.

Granted the limited conditions under which he labored, I suspect, however, that here in America the full impact of Gramsci's work will be communicated only when someone succeeds in writing a work based firmly on his theses but enriched in concrete detail, expressed in idioms more familiar to non-Italians (that is, to those who do not share his intimate acquaintance with Italian history and philosophy), and organized in a more systematic way. Gramsci himself would surely have accomplished this task had conditions permitted him to work in an unfettered manner and had he lived to experience the successful building of socialism in one-third of the world.

FRED HALLETT

## A PIONEER COMMUNIST

*The Day Is Coming: The Life of Charles E. Ruthenberg*, by Oakley Johnson (International Publishers, N. Y.), \$1.90 (paper), \$3.00 (cloth).

THE HISTORY OF THE Marxist movement in the United States is like that of no other country. It has its own unique life history—its ups and downs, its fever chart, its special contributions. Given the peculiar American conditions, it could not be otherwise. It came into being, grew and developed, fell back and has been all but annihilated time and again. Yet it surged back each time, more vigorous than ever, grasping the minds of men in an ever widening circle.

This ebb and flow of the American socialist movement continues to the present. Again many have become "disillusioned," basically as a result of capitalist prosperity; others have bent under the tornado of ruling-class persecution. Again some beat their breasts to cover up their defection from the high ideals of socialism, and try to win favor with the masters of capitalist society; still others "spill their guts" as renegades have done throughout history.

It is well at such times of low ebb to take a long look over the events of the past and draw lessons therefrom. For none of this is new. The ruling classes have always met the challenge of new ideas, especially socialist ideas, with hatred and active opposition. They have used subtlety and they have used terror. In our time capitalism has successfully corrupted and bought off

opposite! After holding high positions in both the PCI and the Secretariat of the Communist International, Tasca was expelled from the Party in September, 1929. Thereafter he devoted most of his talents to slandering both the French and Italian Communist Parties. Needless to say, he was never the director of *L'Unita'*.

many. It has brought to bear all the insidious devices of bourgeois ideology to blunt the class consciousness of the masses, to paralyze their sense of class solidarity.

When this did not suffice, they did not hesitate to use the iron fist, to jail and to hang, to hound and to persecute, to deprive of a livelihood the most advanced workers. This was true from the first day that a Communist Club was formed in Cleveland in 1854; it is just as true a hundred years later when a powerful ruling class is feeling the ground slipping away beneath its feet.

Time and gain the rulers have swept aside democratic and constitutional rights, hard won and dearly bought, whenever they have felt the need to crush the rising working-class movement or its advanced sector.

It was so when the Haymarket martyrs were hanged in Chicago; when Tom Mooney was sentenced to the rope in San Francisco; when Joe Hill was lynched legally; when Sacco and Vanzetti burned in the electric chair in Boston; when Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were martyred in New York. And if it suits the rulers of America, they will most surely attempt to do that and more in the future if they feel their wealth and power threatened.

Inevitably, such thoughts stir the mind when reading Oakley Johnson's story of the life and work of Charles E. Ruthenberg, a founder of the Communist Party in the United States and its first general secretary until his untimely death in 1927.

Those lessons become even more poignant for those who in recent years have sat in the courts of this land for weeks and months battling against a fantastic web of "conspiracy" charges. That, too, is in no sense new—neither the legal persecution, the calculated use of the State as a class instrument against advanced workers, nor the particular application of the deadly "conspiracy" laws to frame dissidents.

The pages of this book briefly recall the bitter struggle in defense of socialist ideas by Debs and Ruthenberg in the Cleveland Federal Court some forty years ago. Ruthenberg, Baker and Wagenknecht were convicted on the testimony of one informer who said that he had listened to speeches in the Cleveland Public Square and was "misled" into failing to register under the Conscription Act of World War I. He was the only one of the 5,000 people in that audience who was so "misled." Yet, on this "evidence" the three were convicted and sentenced to Canton workhouse for one year.

This took place in 1917. Now, in 1958, in the same Federal Court in Cleveland, seven trade unionists and Communist leaders were tried and convicted on the uncorroborated testimony of an FBI stoopigeon on charges of Communist "conspiracy" to violate the Taft-Hartley anti-labor law, a law characterized by John L. Lewis as a "damnable, vicious, unwholesome and slave-labor statute."

On being sentenced Ruthenberg said: "I am not conscious of having committed any crime. The thing I am conscious of is having endeavored to inspire higher ideals and nobler lives. If to do that is a crime in the eyes of the Government, I am proud to have committed that crime."

On June 16, 1918, Eugene V. Debs made his famous anti-war speech across the street from the Canton Workhouse where Ruthenberg and his comrades were incarcerated. For this he, too, was tried in the Cleveland Federal Court under the Espionage Act and sentenced to ten years in a Federal penitentiary.

The formation of the Communist Party brought new persecution, new arrests and trials for Ruthenberg and his comrades, and the capitalist courts became the arena of many legal battles—always ending in new convictions. Yet despite all these difficulties the Communist movement developed.

An obvious fact, but one that needs to be brought forward even more strongly today, emerges quite vividly in this book, namely, the native roots of socialist ideas and movements in our country. The rulers of America have gone to great lengths in an effort to brand all socialist ideas as foreign importations. They have pictured the Communist Party as un-American and an alien agent. Laws have been enacted culminating in the attempt to force the Party to register as an "agent of a foreign power."

While the book makes only a very sketchy presentation of the roots, influence and mass activities of the socialist movement in the first two decades of this century, a clear picture nevertheless emerges. Ruthenberg's own life and work mirrored these developments most clearly.

He came to socialism naturally, as a worker and as an active trade unionist. The two were in essence complementary. This was equally true for the bulk of the membership of the Ohio Socialist Party; 41 per cent of the membership were trade unionists, despite the low level of union organization at that time. Of course the capitalist state had not yet asserted its control over the internal affairs of the trade-union movement, to bar by law the most advanced workers from posts of leadership. There were not yet such monstrosities as the Taft-Hartley Act.

Socialist ideas spread and socialist organization grew rapidly. Ruthenberg played a key role in this growth. The results of election campaigns reflected this upsurge. In 1911, for instance, Socialist Mayors were elected in 15 Ohio cities in the main industrial areas. The state of Ohio was second in the country in this respect. In 1912 Ruthenberg received 87,709 votes as Socialist candidate for Governor, and Debs received 90,000 for the presidency.

This tradition continues in and around the Communist Party to this very day. Recognizing this, reaction has imposed most stringent requirements to bar independent or progressive electoral movements in Ohio. The entire question of minority political parties, their rights to participate in elections, must be re-examined. The vistas opened up by this book should be enlarged by the Marxist students of today.

*The Day Will Come* presents a swift, though sketchy, view of the growth, the internal and external struggles of the emerging Socialist and Communist movement in the first decades of this century. It has a special meaning for this period, and a mere recital of these conflicts brings a new appreciation of our present-day difficulties.

At no time was there full ideological unity in the Socialist movement in



which Ruthenberg played such an important role. Various trends waged incessant warfare for dominance during its entire existence. While the Party waged a tremendous agitational effort among the workers, yet its general theoretical activity was on a comparatively low level. This theoretical weakness has characterized the American Marxist movement during its entire existence, and has been very costly.

At all times Ruthenberg was identified with the most dynamic wing of the Party, the so-called "Left" which finally developed into the Communist Party. One incident illuminates strikingly the inner conflicts. In the midst of the 1912 election campaign, when Ruthenberg was waging a strenuous battle as the Socialist candidate for Governor of Ohio, the "Right" wing of the state leadership utilized the occasion for its own factional ends. Ruthenberg and the entire State Executive Committee were removed from office. The State Committee then blocked the publication of the new Socialist paper, which was already in the printer's hands. Consequently the *Ohio Socialist* did not emerge until four years later.

Oakley Johnson's book on Ruthenberg is an important contribution to the history of the Marxist movement in the United States. It touches upon many facets of its development. But the book also leaves much to be desired.

The very nature of the swift narrative precludes a thorough, searching analysis of the many valuable experiences and problems provided by this movement. In a sense, it only opens the door for a more comprehensive and deeper study of individual phases of the panorama it presents.

The book presents almost in an outline fashion the work and life of this man. But having read it, one doesn't feel he knows the man himself. What sort of a human being was Ruthenberg? Brief glimpses are afforded of one or another side of his nature and character, but in the book these appear almost as though by accident.

The working class advances from its midst the individuals who must stand in the forefront. These leaders do not come accidentally. They are molded, hammered out and tested in the course of the innumerable struggles they are called upon to lead. But it is a twofold process, objective and subjective. Not all who aspire will remain steadfast. Many weaken and fall by the wayside. The path is marked not only by those who stand as symbols of courage and devotion. It is also strewn with a countless host of those who weakened, were corrupted or who betrayed.

It is, therefore, of great value to know not only what a man did, but also what he was himself. What were the struggles he went through that steeled him? What joy, what bitterness, tragedy, defeats—as well as victories—entered into his life? How does he meet his defeats, and how does he bear victories? What does prison bring to the molding or the unmaking of his character? What is it that makes a man stand up under persecution, ostracism, often denial of a livelihood? We need to know not only his strong points, but also his weaknesses. This we need to know of such men as Ruthenberg and others like him. New leaders, new fighters of the future, will spring up in increasing

numbers to lead forward the working class and humanity. They, too, will be subjected to rigorous ordeal in the course of their service. The need to draw lessons and inspiration should be evident. This is true not only in a general but even in the most personal sense. It is to be hoped that studies will follow Johnson's pioneering effort which will provide such wider and deeper insights.

Yes, *The Day Will Come* . . . and all mankind will rejoice. In that day the work and contributions of men like Ruthenberg will find understanding and appreciation in a full measure.

A. KRCHMAREK

## INTRODUCTION TO MARXISM

*What Is Marxism?* by Emile Burns (International Publishers, N. Y.), 95c.

IN THIS SMALL VOLUME, a revision of an earlier work, the author, an eminent British Marxist, offers a brief survey of the main aspects of Marxist theory. Within the space of some 90 pages, he covers a wide range of subject matter, which he presents in a remarkably simple, concise and thought-provoking manner. This is a book which can readily be recommended to those seeking an elementary introduction to Marxism. It also lends itself well to use as text material for introductory or survey courses on the subject.

Following a short introduction, a chapter on the laws of social development presents in outline the Marxist approach to history and reviews the origins and development of capitalism. This is followed by a chapter which presents with remarkable simplicity the essence of Marxist economic theory. A third chapter surveys Lenin's theory of imperialism, and a fourth deals with the Marxist concept of the state.

There is a chapter on socialism and another—the concluding one—on the nature and methods of the fight for socialism. The latter is preceded by a chapter on the Marxist view of nature, which introduces the basic concepts of dialectical materialism.

In the revision, the contents of the book have been brought up to date, and take into account the new theoretical propositions projected by the 20th Congress of the CPSU regarding the non-inevitability of world war and the possibility of a peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism in a number of countries.

In some instances, however, these ideas have not been fully integrated into the presentation. Thus, while Burns' initial exposition of the bourgeois state correctly pictures the limited role of elected parliamentary bodies in the state apparatus, it does so in a somewhat rigid way which seems at variance with his graphic description in the final chapter of the role of Parliament in the transi-

tion to socialism in Britain, as projected in the program of the British Communist Party.

There are some additional shortcomings. The treatment of dialectical materialism, for some reason, is deferred to the second-last chapter, and seems to be injected as a side-issue instead of standing out as the very bedrock of Marxist theory. And at some points the subject is developed so sketchily as to be lacking in content. Also, the book does not deal, except in passing in the chapter on imperialism, with the national and colonial question—a serious omission in any rounded survey of Marxism. However, these shortcomings, which arise in part from the brevity of the treatment, do not, on the whole, detract seriously from the general excellence or usefulness of the book.

One final point should be noted. The book, written for the British reader, uses British material and examples almost exclusively to illustrate its points. In a few places, footnotes added by the editor give American examples. These are clearly inadequate, however, and only serve to emphasize the need of a similar introduction to Marxism written for the American reader.

HYMAN LUMER

## REMEMBERING LENIN

*Lenin, revolutionary titan, was born in April, 1870. On this, his birth-month, we think it appropriate to quote from the article, "Heroes With 'Reservations'," written in 1910. That year was a dismal one for the Left in Czarist Russia; Stolypin reaction was in full force and the Party was torn by dissension, defection, renegacy, and "disillusionment."*

*Lenin wrote to his comrades:*

When we had a locomotive, we thoroughly disagreed on the point of whether the power of this locomotive, its stock of fuel, etc., were adequate for a speed of, say, twenty-five or fifty versts an hour. The dispute around this question, as on any other exciting question, was heated and often acrimonious. This dispute—on absolutely every question in connection with which it arose—was conducted in the sight of all, was open to all, was argued out to the end, was not glossed over by any "reservations." And none of us even thought of withdrawing anything, or of whining about "acrimonious disputes."

But now that the locomotive has broken down, is lying in a marsh surrounded by "reservation" intellectuals who are sniggering maliciously about there being "nothing left to liquidate" because we no longer have a locomotive, we who engaged in "acrimonious dispute" yesterday are drawn together by a common cause. Without renouncing anything, without forgetting anything, giving no promise that disagreements will vanish among us, we are jointly serving this common cause. We are concentrating all our attention and efforts on the task of raising the locomotive, of repairing it, of strengthening it, of reinforcing it, of putting it on the rails—as or the speed at which it is to run and the turns at different switches, we will be able to argue about those at the proper time.

The task of the day in these difficult times is to create something that will be capable of rebuffing the "reservation" people and "dejected intellectuals" who, directly or indirectly, are supporting the reigning "slush." The task of the day is to dig one the ore even under the most arduous conditions, melt the iron and cast the steel of the Marxist world outlook and of the superstructures that correspond to this world outlook.

## BOOKS YOU WILL WANT TO OWN

---

### HERE I STAND

by **Paul Robeson**

"Robeson weaves his background with overtones of moving beauty. Pain and struggle, poverty and heartbreak, humiliation and disappointment are there; but there is too so much love, so much devotion, so much of unselfish giving. . . . *Here I Stand* is a blueprint for action. It is a book to read and to pass on and on."

—SHIRLEY GRAHAM in *Mainstream*  
OTHELLO, Cloth \$2.50; Paper \$1.50

### THE DAY IS COMING! THE LIFE OF CHARLES E. RUTHENBERG

by **Oakley Johnson**

The long-awaited biography of one of the chief founders of the American Communist Party vividly describes his socialist background and typical midwest boyhood in Ohio, and the lessons of his life and work for today.

INTERNATIONAL, \$3.00

### TOWARD A SOCIALIST AMERICA

by **15 Contemporary American Socialists**

Edited by Helen Alfred, this volume contains essays by Herbert Aptheker, Homer Ayres, Reuben Borough, Carl Dreher, W.E.B. Du Bois, Philip Foner, Stephen Fritchman, John Howard Lawson, John T. McManus, Broadus Mitchell, Scott Nearing, George Olshausen, Victor Perlo, Bertha Reynolds, and Paul M. Sweezy, setting forth their views on the political and economic shape of socialism in the U.S.A.

PEACE PUBLICATIONS, Cloth \$3.50; Paper \$1.50

### THE GATES OF IVORY, THE GATES OF HORN

by **Thomas McGrath**

"Those who enjoyed *The Space Merchants* and such of Ray Broadbury's books as *Fahrenheit 451* will find *The Gates of Ivory, the Gates of Horn* even more pointed in its satire and even more grisly in its implications."—JONOTHAN FORREST in *People's World*

MAINSTREAM, Cloth \$2.25 Paper \$1.00

---

**New Century Publishers • 832 Broadway, New York 3**