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political affairs

A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: HERBERT APTHEKER; Associate Editor: HYMAN LUMER

Notes of The Month

THE ELECTIONS AND AFTER

An Editorial Article

IN ONE OF THE closest and most unique national elections in the modern history of the country, the defeat of Richard M. Nixon was a blow against the reckless U-2 policies of the Eisenhower Administration. So it was regarded in extensive international as well as national circles—as foreseen by the election policy statement of the National Executive Committee of the Communist Party last August 9th. Whatever doubts exist on this score must be dispelled by the final personal entry of President Eisenhower into the last days of the campaign, to bolster up Nixon's sagging fortunes, following the latter's desperate S.O.S. The presidential contest, which developed a changing momentum of its own, became thereby a referendum on the stewardship and adventurous cold war policies of the President—and he lost. The defeat of the Nixon-Lodge ticket was a vote of "no confidence" in Eisenhower policies symbolized in the U-2 and RB-47 provocations, in the repudiation of U.S. imperialism by the people of Japan, South Korea and Turkey—policies

which endangered the peace of the world and which reduced U.S. standing in the eyes of all peace-loving humanity.

Nixon's misfortune was Kennedy's fortune. The margin that elected Kennedy in most of the northern liberal and industrial centers—New York, for example—was not so much "for" Kennedy as it was against Nixon—notwithstanding the fact that Kennedy developed considerable personal appeal as the campaign wore on. There was a deep residual horror of "tricky Dick," his notorious shiftiness of principle, reflected even in the TV debates. As a consequence, the much-talked about mass boycott or sit-it-out, particularly among independent voters in the early stages of the campaign, vanished for fear it would aid the election of Nixon. Notwithstanding their deep and justifiable dissatisfaction with both tickets—the failure of both to measure up to the vital interests of the country in such perilous times—the majority of conscious voters cast their ballot for the Kennedy-Johnson ticket. Secondary factors, many

of them deliberately highlighted by the monopoly press, played no small role among large sections of the electorate. And even now the last word has not been said with reference to the lessons to be drawn from the elections.

For on the overriding issue of peace, the relaxation of international tension and ending the cold war, there was no basic difference between the two tickets. As the NEC statement of August 9th pointed out, both Nixon and Kennedy were cold war candidates; both advocated the arms race and the bankrupt positions-of-strength policies, and both represented the big monopolies. Available to Nixon were the fortunes of the Rockefellers and Du Ponts while Kennedy was linked to powerful Wall Street financial interests by his family's own multi-million dollar fortune which the President-elect didn't fail to use. The monopolists dominated both the Republican and Democratic parties. If the trade-union movement was shocked by the Eisenhower Administration's last-minute invoking of the Landrum-Griffin law against the National Maritime Union, it could be no less disturbed by the fact that this law bears the imprimatur of Jack Kennedy, as well as that of his brother Robert. If the Negro people were disgusted by the failure of Eisenhower and Nixon to give unequivocal public leadership in support of the moral issue of desegregation, they

were dissatisfied with Johnson as the Democratic vice-presidential candidate, the man who, in the Senate, has consistently protected the Dixiecrats. Turning from word to deed, neither party won any bouquets on account of its performance at the special session of Congress following the conventions—whether on civil rights, the minimum wage and old age medical care, to say nothing of peace.

However, a bitter partisan war was waged between the two major Party machines as to which would gain control of the fabulously rich and powerful U.S. governmental apparatus—with its spoils, patronage, corrupt privileges and its dominant position among the imperialist and colonialist powers. But as for the American people, it was a presidential election without a clear principled choice between the candidates in respect to the major issues—and above all, without a clear alternative to the adventurous cold-war policies of the Eisenhower Administration.

More than any other factor, this accounted for the extreme closeness and for the complicated character of the elections. Of the 67 million votes cast, Nixon and Kennedy each tallied 33 million odd with the latter eking out a continually varying plurality (at this writing) of less than 200,000 and with Nixon winning more states though with decisively less electoral votes. The popular electorate was almost split down the

middle. This was due, however, not to the indecisiveness of the overwhelming majority of the people; but rather to the great difficulty among millions of voters in making up their minds as to which of two candidates would advance the cause of peace, democracy and social progress. On the one hand, they weighed the fact that since Korea, the country had not in fact been at war, recalling that since the turn of the century all major wars had been fought under Democratic administrations. It was not seen or understood that during the Eisenhower Administration with its dangerous U-2 provocations, wars had been averted primarily due to the responsible and persistent peace policy of the socialist camp, led by the Soviet Union, by the role of the national liberation movements and the newly freed Asian and African states, and by the overwhelming peace sentiment in the imperialist countries. On the other hand, millions seized upon the mildly critical and realistic attitude of Kennedy and his Stevenson supporters, toward the nuclear ban stalemate and the U-2 provocation which smashed the summit and greatly increased international tension.

The overwhelming majority of the American people desire peace and a relaxation of international tension which takes priority over the fact that sections, in the confused election picture, cast their vote for Nixon, simply because Kennedy offered no

clear peace alternative. These desires of the American people for peace and social progress are decisive even though they found no clear-cut expression in the presidential candidates.

Other factors also contributed to the closeness of the election results, among them: 1) the religious question and religious bigotry; 2) dissatisfaction among many rank and file Democrats over the failure to nominate Stevenson, thus diminishing campaign enthusiasm for Kennedy; 3) the still existing, if diminished, personal popularity of Eisenhower, the war hero; and finally, the narrowing gap between the Republican and Democratic parties. However, considering the popular discontentment and the deep anxieties and fears of the American people, had Kennedy presented a clear alternative to the Eisenhower-Nixon policies, above all on peace, the gap between his vote and Nixon's would have been far larger and would have added a new qualitative element to the campaign. Any tendencies toward indistinguishability between the candidates and the parties worked to the advantage of Nixon and the Republicans. The blame for this must be placed squarely on the Democratic Party, the Kennedy-Johnson ticket and upon their monopolist backers.

The very closeness of the election should teach the Democratic high command a thing or two. It almost

overplayed its hand in ramming Kennedy and Johnson down the throats of the party rank and file, in the teeth of the mass upsurge for Stevenson, and thus fully justifying the resumption of the insurgent movements—as in New York, for example—against such entrenched machines as that of Carmine De Sapio. It remains to be seen whether these insurgencies will be pressed around issues and principle—as on peace, civil and labor's rights and other vital questions—making common cause with other popular forces seeking a political realignment in the country; or whether they will subordinate political independence within the Party to transient and expedient deals which merely enthrone one set of bosses over another, however benevolent the former may be. With the cold war advocacy of Kennedy—his gratuitous “me-too” anti-Soviet speeches and his provocative call for open intervention against Cuba (though he later retreated)—a popular landslide receded further and further into improbability, if not impossibility. The masses create their own ways of criticism when orthodox channels provide none.

In addition to the set-back imposed upon the Eisenhower-Nixon cold war policies, the election of Kennedy was a blow against religious bigotry. 1960 was a far cry from the Al Smith candidacy of 1928, when anti-Catholic intolerance reached the lower

depths. Not only was there a healthy mass revulsion to religious bigotry in this campaign, but Kennedy became the first Roman Catholic to be elected President. In the last 32 years the American people have grown; moreover, in this epoch when successful revolutionary upsurges are taking place among the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America representing the full spectrum of creeds, races and colors, their impact is not lost upon the American people. Above all, the heroic struggle of the Negro people in the deep South for human dignity and equality has strengthened and extended the grass-roots frontiers of democracy in the country, and redounded to the benefit of all victims of discrimination—whether Jew or Catholic, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Mexican-American or other minority groups. But this battle is far from won in the United States, not only from the point of view of religious tolerance, but also from the point of view of the right of a citizen to have no religion at all, without which there can be no freedom of religion as guaranteed in the federal Constitution. Religious bigotry is still one of the principal weapons of capitalism for dividing the working class and popular masses. Bold principled leadership on the religious issue during the campaign was well-nigh absent.

The victory of Kennedy, Johnson and the Democrats over Nixon, Lodge and the GOP was built upon

four main pillars: 1) The overwhelming support of organized labor; 2) The remarkably high percentage of votes from the Negro people, with similar trends among Spanish-speaking citizens; 3) The direct intervention of the masses in motion on issues and, finally, a strong desire for change of administration.

Organized labor and the entire working class has been and is becoming increasingly concerned over the economic issues, sensing the synthetic character of the Eisenhower prosperity, the present so-called mild recession and the growing unemployment, now about four million. Despite the Democratic betrayal of the 1958 pro-labor election mandate, the workers consider the Democratic Party more responsive to their interests in times of economic stress—an attitude born of the FDR-New Deal period. This was far more decisive in determining the choice of the labor movement than enthusiasm for Kennedy, whom many labor leaders and rank and filers supported with reservations, doubt and reluctance. This served as a form of pressure on Kennedy who increasingly donned the mantle of FDR and who repeatedly referred to such depressed areas as West Virginia and Pennsylvania in his speeches. On the question of peace, however, organized labor made little or no contribution, frustrated as it is by the Meanys, Dubinskys, Reuthers and McDonalds who are more cold warriors than labor's

sworn class enemy, the monopolists. Undoubtedly, the living bridge between organized labor and the Negro people's movement—namely, the Negro workers—had a profound effect in achieving the sweep for Kennedy in Negro communities. The vote for the Democrats among the Negroes ranged from 3 to 1 in Harlem to 10 to 1 in other areas, wiping out the gains of Eisenhower in '52 and '56 and in some instances exceeding the lop-sided percentages of Truman, and even of FDR. The Negro people with such an abnormally high percentage of workers receive the heaviest brunt of economic recessions and depressions, in terms of wages, working conditions and lay-offs. The FDR tradition worked here too.

But the full significance of the Negro's overwhelming swing to Kennedy and the Democrats can be gathered only by viewing the all-class movement of the Negroes as a people in the struggle for human dignity and equal rights. This was evidenced in several Southern states where, for the first time in history, the Negro vote was decisive, as small as it was. The dramatic personal intervention of Kennedy to secure the release of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., compared with Nixon's callous “no comment,” coupled with Kennedy's unequivocal statements of support for the student sit-ins—just about clinched and consolidated Negro support, despite the cynical

choice of Johnson as running mate. Kennedy would not have been elected as the 35th President of the United States without the overwhelming support of the Negro people—which denotes a new sense of power not lost upon the Negro. The rebuff to Nixon and Lodge, in the light of their frivolous handling of the Negro-in-the-Cabinet issue, shows that the day is past when one can play with the Negro people, or with the issue of their dignity and equality.

Kennedy's public initiative against the brutal jailing of Rev. King, made in defiance of Dixiecrat pressure, has received the bulk of the orchids, although the test of whether he will pursue a consistent policy of politically outlawing the Dixiecrats and of smashing the Dixiecrat-Republican coalition is still to come.

The real hero of that incident is Reverend King and the Negro people's movement he represents, all victims of pro-fascist Dixiecrat terror. Although Rev. King endorsed neither presidential candidate during the campaign, he neither sat-it-out nor boycotted the elections. He was a member of a national non-partisan committee which helped to raise Negro registration to its highest point in recent years, and he was anything but neutral on issues, pressing the crusade against segregation without relying on either candidate or party, letting the chips fall where

they may. The arrest of King and 75 other young Negroes in Atlanta, the resumption of the student sit-ins in New Orleans and Jacksonville—are classic examples of mass extra-parliamentary intervention in the elections which helped to shape the course of the campaign and to force certain important differentiations between Nixon and Kennedy.

Such mass intervention, which confirmed the very heart of Communist election policy, made itself felt in other spheres, primarily on the issue of peace. The most important breakthrough on the peace question came with the 15th session of the UN General Assembly, where upon the vigorous initiative of Khrushchev and the other socialist statesmen, the neutralist and new African states, this question, together with disarmament and ending colonialism, drove Nixon and Kennedy off the front pages. Up to then, the peace question in the election had been virtually interred under a conspiracy of bi-partisan silence and suppression. The UN lifted the lid and spurred the indignant peace movement of the country, resulting in demonstrations, peace walks, meetings against nuclear weapons and tests, and stirred a general hub-bub for peace and international understanding which forced the issue into the arena of discussion. Contrary to Nixon, Kennedy responded to some, as to the Chicago rally against nuclear tests.

And both Nixon and Kennedy found it necessary to retreat from provocative positions—Nixon on Quemoy and Matsu, and Kennedy on Cuba. The independent initiative of the masses outside the two-party system, although limited, had positive effects in creating conditions for a differentiated approach to the two presidential tickets.

Lastly, the election atmosphere teemed with a desire for change, the Eisenhower Administration having demonstrated its utter bankruptcy in the face of chronic unemployment, mass misery, its abject cowardice and immorality on the revolutionary issue of civil rights, its reckless propensity for brinkmanship and aggravations of international tension. Lacking clear, principled alternatives on the great problems facing the nation, undoubtedly millions cast their ballots for new faces, hoping for new ideas and methods which would open the way toward peace and national progress.

The Republicans, abetted by the Dixiecrats, are determined to prevent any such opening to the Left, attempting to take advantage of the close popular vote even to the point at this writing of officially challenging the defeat of Nixon, with, of course, the latter's blessings. Not only was Kennedy elected but the totality of the elections must be considered in which the people placed the Democrats in control of both houses, even though with reduced majori-

ties, particularly in the House of Representatives. The principal aim of the Republican-Dixiecrat coalition, in threatening legal recounts, is to bring reactionary political pressure to bear on the Kennedy Administration in process of formation, to influence the choice of cabinet, to nullify the mandate of labor, the Negro people and the peace forces. House Minority Leader Charles Halleck of Indiana did a public service with his open and brazen confession on November 20, that he and Howard Smith of Virginia, the most notorious Dixiecrat obstructionist in the House, will work together in blocking all social and progressive legislation. Further examples of this reactionary pressure are to be found in Eisenhower's dispatch of the fleet to protect non-existent democracy in Guatemala and Nicaragua, while unwilling to insure real constitutional democracy for the Negro people in New Orleans; the Dixiecrat delegation to Kennedy to force his support of the barbarous racism and corruption of the Louisiana officials, the relentless pressure against Cuba including the aggressive occupation of Cuban territory—the Guantanamo naval base. In view of the moves by the Republicans and Dixiecrats, the narrowness of the Presidential contest should serve as a stern warning to labor, the Negro people, and to the peace and progressive forces that the promissory notes delivered by Kennedy and the Democrats can

be cashed in only through the bitterest struggle of labor and the popular masses, waged with persistence, unity and independence around an effective program of action. The monopolists are bi-partisan and they rule the roost in Washington. It will be fatal to the just election demands and expectations of organized labor if, hypnotized by the cold war and class collaboration policies of a Meany, Dubinsky or Reuther, it sits back, as following the 1958 Congressional elections, and waits complacently for automatic delivery. The urgent need is to mobilize the broadest coalition of labor and the people during the next 50 days before the Kennedy Administration takes office to claim the first hundred days for peace and progress, and to dash all illusions of easy pickings on the rocks of militant action and hard realities.

The central character of the Negro question in our country cries out for urgent understanding and implementation. The spine-chilling possibility that the unpledged electors of Mississippi and Alabama—chosen on a system of pro-fascist oppression and disfranchisement of Negro citizens—could be decisive in the determination of a President almost came to pass in this election. At this writing, it is still being pressed. The failure to smash the jim-crow system, particularly in the deep South, threatens and victimizes the whole nation. Nothing less than a second

Emancipation Proclamation promulgated by the incoming President instantaneously outlawing all jim-crow and nullifying every law and practice of jim-crow, segregation and discrimination, can meet this danger. The enactment of civil rights bills, clause by clause, over the next hundred years, is just another form of gradualism which keeps the jim-crow system intact. The whole parliamentary system in Congress needs drastic reform beginning with Rule 22, and the Committee system through which the Dixiecrats thwart all progressive social, civil rights and labor legislation.

The overwhelming majority of the workers and Americans generally want, above all, peace, the relaxation of tension, and the avoidance of a horrible nuclear catastrophe. But the question of a fundamental change of foreign policy in this direction still remains to be resolved by the independent struggles of the masses—around such issues as disarmament, Cuba, the Congo, Germany, the Republic of China, and the banning of nuclear tests and weapons.

The overriding lesson from the elections is the urgent need of a new, independent Labor Party—based upon the working class, the Negro people, the farmers and middle sections of the population and directed against the monopolies. The complicated and frustrating character of the elections were due principally to the fact that the two-party system

as it stands is obsolete and does not permit the people to express their will on the burning issues of their lives. Labor alone can rise to the occasion, giving leadership to the nation for peace and progress, and becoming the dominant political force in the governmental apparatus, instead of relying on the bankrupt and ancient Gompers policy of “reward your friends and punish your enemies.”

Not only does the political monopoly of the two major parties—rigidly enforced by anti-democratic election laws—deny free elections; and not only does the terrorist disfranchisement of millions of Southern Negroes expose the hollow boast of the U.S. government of free elections. The failure of millions of citizens to cast a ballot can be attributed directly to the demoralizing fact that there is no real choice between the two parties. Thirty-two percent—or one out of every three citizens who register—doesn't bother to vote; and forty percent of the eligible voting population doesn't even bother to register. Undoubtedly, a high percentage of the citizens who don't exercise the vote are workers whose cynical experiences with both major plunderbunds have diminished their interest in the electoral process. A labor-people's party offering a genuine choice to the workers and people generally would quicken interest in the elections, and bring out millions to

the polls who do not now vote.

The perspective of a labor-people's party, based upon a radical political realignment, long the advocacy of our Party in this and previous electoral struggles, has today exploded into the consciousness of millions of workers and independent forces. It is now an idea which is being seized by the masses, forced upon them by experience, and capable of becoming a material force for regenerating the country. The lack of principled differences between the two major parties makes a choice between them less and less meaningful, each time with increasingly diminishing returns—and in such perilous times, with the very existence of hundreds of millions of people at stake. This could be the last “election without choice,” but only if labor and its allies explore building new realistic forms of independent political action on a grass roots basis around issues for the elections in '61 and '62—forms rooted in militant and united struggle.

The election developments, in the main, confirmed the sound general line of our Party, which correctly analyzed the monopoly domination of both major parties and tickets, foresaw the difficulties and called upon the people to intervene independently on issues—particularly on peace and civil rights. It wisely combatted moods of defeatism and boycott—which the people rejected—avoided isolation from the decisive

sections of the workers and people which the anti-Communist centers of reaction tried to impose, and maintained united front relations with workers with illusions without adopting them as their own. Handicapped by the lack of candidates, except for Millie McAdory and Arnold Johnson in New York, our Party and *The Worker* nevertheless made many vital contributions under the most severe difficulties. From the very beginning, our Party viewed the campaign dialectically, not statically, confident that the popular masses could affect its course. Meanwhile, our Party should review its election work and examine it self-critically, from the point of view of the great opportunities of the future, and of how to make the decade of the '60's the people's decade.

The three principal trends which accomplished the defeat of the Nixon-G.O.P. ticket were the labor movement, the Negro people and the most advanced popular peace forces. The vanguard responsibility of our Party is to do everything possible to weld these trends together in ever greater unity and consciousness in militant struggle, not only on immediate issues confronting the incoming Congress, but as key pillars of the new political realignment against the monopolies. It must bring to life its perspective of an anti-monopoly coalition by basing itself upon the most oppressed sections of the working class and popular masses, finding the way to mili-

tantly and effectively fight for their burning elementary needs. This, and no other, is the road to the building and renewal of the Left and of our Party and press, to the establishment of its destined status and influence in this new epoch, to the true achievement of its vanguard role in life.

Our Party enters the post-election period with a consciousness of the deepening crisis of capitalism and the intensification of the class struggle which will highlight the economic issues in the coming months. It must become more and more identified as the Party of peace and peaceful co-existence, of liberation of the Negro people—doggedly resisting all pressures to underestimate the power of the workers and masses in the epoch of rising socialism and declining imperialism. It must openly proclaim that while fighting for unity to win all reforms which advance the interests of the masses, it sees these as opening the way to final liberation in a socialist society.

More than ever must the everyday work and line of our Party become the property of the clubs, at the point of production in the shops, communities, farms, neighborhoods, with free rein to club initiative and creativeness. Only in this way can our Party engage in true mass work and build the press, and turn the inevitable sharp struggles of this period into victories of labor and the people for peace, democracy and social progress.

Africa in Revolution

By Editorial Board, "The African Communist"*

AFRICA in 1960 is a continent in revolution. With dizzy speed, the era of direct domination over the peoples and countries of this continent is coming to an end. In one territory after another the old orders are being dismantled and replaced by new governments composed of African leaders who, for the most part, enjoy a wide measure of popular support. Even in some areas where colonial rule and white privilege seemed most strongly entrenched the old colonial administrations are being modified and adapted, and hurried preparations made to transfer formal political power to African hands. The map of Africa is changing before our eyes and the area of self-government extended to cover the whole continent.

A mighty, continent-wide tide of African liberation is surging from north to south, from east to west. The freedom struggles of individual African countries cannot be contained within their "national" boundaries, drawn by the imperialists. A common history of oppression going back over centuries of foreign rule, whether French or Belgian, British

or Portuguese, unites the African people, regardless of their language and their past, or of which European power colonized them. The new independent States need to stand together to safeguard their new-won freedom and to help their African brothers still under the colonial yoke. There is a powerful urge towards co-operation of African liberation movements and union of the young African republics. All-African unity is an invaluable weapon against the forces of colonialism.

DANGEROUS ILLUSIONS

But the very speed of the striking transformation of Africa can and does give rise to certain widespread illusions which could be very dangerous. Some people seem to think that the struggle for African freedom has already been won, that it remains only to complete the process with a few "mopping up" operations, and that the future progress by the peoples of Africa to full equality with the nations of the world will be an easy process, unaccompanied by storms, struggles and upheavals. There is an illusion that imperialism has surrendered, that the colonialists mean to give up without a struggle their vast sources of power and profit on this Continent.

There is the illusion that the win-

* *The African Communist* is the organ of the (illegal) Communist Party of South Africa; the present article is taken from its volume I, number 3, dated September, 1960. Those interested in subscribing to this magazine should write to: Mr. Ellis Bowles, 52 Palmerston Road, East Sheen, London, S.W. 13, England.—*The Editor.*

ning of political independence, which is only the first phase of the African Revolution—though a vital and important one—is the end of the freedom road, and not only the first miles along it, necessarily to be followed by far-reaching economic and social changes which will bring true emancipation to Africa and end its heritage of poverty, backwardness and dependence.

Again, airy and ill-defined talk of “Africanism” gives rise to vague and mystical notions that the problems of our Continent are peculiarly and exclusively African, unrelated to those of other Continents and peoples, that our way forward will be unique and that the experiences of other peoples and countries are without meaning and value to us in Africa.

Of course, there *are* certain notably distinct features of the African Revolution, which we hope to deal with in future articles in this magazine. But, like the Asian states which embarked upon the road of independence after the second world war, and like recently independent Cuba, the emergent African republics have many problems common to all who seek to win their rightful place among the older and more developed countries. More: there are vital issues which face every country and people in the modern world. There is the key question of world peace, in an era where a new world war threatens the very survival of the whole of humanity. There is the crucial issue

of our times—capitalism versus socialism—and which of these offers African states the better chance to overcoming the crippling heritage of imperialism. There are vital issues of foreign policy facing every new African state. These are some of the challenges facing African leaderships and statesmanship today.

WAR OR PEACE?

African freedom and the battle for world peace are as closely linked as Siamese twins. Few Africans can be blind to the fact that those imperialist forces which have held Africa in bondage for centuries are those that today engage in vast preparations for war and are responsible for the state of international tension in the world.

In 1956 Egypt, newly independent, asserted her sovereign right to nationalize her major asset, the Suez Canal. Britain and France, using Israel as a catspaw, and with the connivance of the United States, launched a war against Egypt and the world tottered on the brink of nuclear war.

Trying to hold on to her last outpost of empire, France has for six years fought a bloody and brutal war against the Algerian people.

Earlier this year, in a show of strength on the stage of world power politics and in Africa, France exploded an atom bomb on African soil, though the test blast was condemned by the United Nations and the unanimous voice of the African people.

When Belgium rushed paratroopers into the Congo to try to wreck the newly proclaimed Congo Republic the first powers to rush to her aid were the United States (most powerful imperialist power and leader of the war bloc), and Welensky's Central African Federation (one of the police forces of white supremacy on the continent).

The massive military machines prepared by the western states for the alleged reason of defense against “communism” can be and are repeatedly used to suppress the revolts of the African peoples against domination by European powers or white settlers, or to threaten the independence of those countries which have succeeded in gaining a measure of self-government.

As imperialism and colonialism and war are linked, so are the forces of socialism and peace and freedom tied together. The Socialist system of planned economies does not need to resort to munitions industries and war to solve its economic crises, and the Soviet Union has consistently been at the head of those forces trying to outlaw war and keep the peace. The Soviet Union took the unilateral decision to reduce arms and troops, to stop nuclear tests. She put forward disarmament proposals to the Big Powers and pressed for top level negotiations on disarmament.

The remarkable technical achievements of the Soviet Union, strikingly demonstrated by the “sputniks” and

“luniks” and other feats of science destroyed the myth of Western technical superiority upon which the policy of “cold” war was based. Logically the only alternative to the “cold” war was a policy of peaceful co-existence and the acceptance of the Soviet proposals for stage-by-stage total disarmament. The imperialist powers, led by the United States, ignored this logic and continued with the ruinous and dangerous amassing of weapons. And as the Summit Conference drew near and the prospects for peace were brighter than for years past, the United States took last desperate steps to wreck the peace talks and sent military planes on provocative spy flights over Soviet territory.

Imperialist military machines ranged against the Socialist countries are the same forces used to police the African continent and put down the freedom forces of the African Revolution. So at one and the same time the growing strength of the Socialist world weakens the world force of imperialism and helps the spurt forward of the peoples of Africa. Africa needs peace to enjoy her newly-won independence and she cannot stand aside from the battle for peace. Conversely, a blow to the war plans of the imperialist countries helps immeasurably to loosen their grip on their colonial possessions.

THE CONCEPT OF “NEUTRALISM”

Such concepts as “neutralism,”

"positive neutrality" and non-participation in power blocs are popular at all-African conferences and in Asian countries. These concepts have a positive side. They reflect a moving away of the former colonies from the position of being imperialist dependencies or "spheres of influence." Following this concept the Afro-Asian "bloc" has played a progressive role at the United Nations and many of its member countries have entered into closer relationships with the socialist countries on the diplomatic, economic, cultural and other levels.

At the same time "neutrality" has harmful and negative aspects. It suggests the identification of the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and other socialist countries with the imperialists, all as "alien powers seeking to dominate and exploit Africa and the African people." It suggests that African countries, anxious to safeguard their independence, must stand aside from not only the countries of imperialism but also those of the socialist world, that both forces are ranged against the African Revolution. Under cover of talk of "opposing foreign ideologies," imperialist agencies like the Moral Rearmament Movement, and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions smuggle poisonous anti-Communist talk and policies into the African nationalist and trade union movements. These "neutrals" are not neutral. They have invariably turned out to be committed to

the forces of imperialism trying to hold on to their spheres of influence on the continent, though in new shapes and forms.

Africa cannot be "neutral" towards the imperialist powers which have conquered and degraded its peoples and are still striving in various ways, ranging from open warfare to subtle economic infiltration, to keep their stranglehold over the continent. Africans cannot regard these powers in the same light as the socialist countries which have consistently upheld the rights of the colonial peoples to self-determination, and which have given generous economic assistance—without strings attached—to all African and Asian states which have asked for it.

While "neutrality" has played, and may still play for a short period, an objectively progressive and necessary part as a slogan of the *transition period* from colonialism, it must in the future increasingly become a reactionary slogan, under cover of which an anti-socialist and pro-imperialist policy is peddled.

Progressive movements in Africa recognize the genuine feeling in Africa for "positive neutrality," but must guard against these who would use this slogan to cause harmful dissension and splits in the African liberation front. The main thing is to unite all African freedom forces in the sharpest possible struggle against imperialism and colonialism in Africa and throughout the world. The Bandung spirit of Afro-Asian

solidarity against imperialism must be carried to higher levels, and the closest possible friendship built, based on equality, between the countries of Socialism and the free states and the peoples of Africa.

NEW FOREIGN POLICIES FOR AFRICA

Despite the talk of "neutrality" and "non-alignment," African states even under conservative national leaderships, have not failed in the acid tests put before them. Moving like one man, the states of free Africa have taken sides against every act of imperialist aggression in Africa, from the declaration of states of emergency in Nyasaland and the Rhodesias and South Africa to the armed Belgian intervention in the Congo, from the French atomic blast in the Sahara to the continuance of the war in Algeria.

For the nature of the anti-imperialist fight is that all liberation forces in Africa have to make a firm stand against the Western Powers. They cannot shelter behind formulae of "neutrality." When Africans and Arabs are being shot down in Leopoldville and Algiers, and Congress leaders being detained in Blantyre, Livingstone and Cape Town, African states and movements unite in immediate support, moral and practical, of the victims of imperialism.

This is the great common interest—the fight to break the grip of imperialism on the continent—which

cements together the foreign policies of the states and liberation movements of our Continent.

This struggle against imperialism, open or concealed, is the basis of the agreement reached at the All-Africa conferences at Accra and Conakry, at the conference of African states held at Addis Ababa and the foundation stone of the foreign policies of the new African states. Significantly the two most crucial issues on the agenda of the Addis Ababa conference were the Algerian war and the mounting campaign against the Nationalist Government of South Africa.

The Algerian war and the boycott movement against South Africa are the two touchstones by which international attitudes on African liberation are judged these days. States which stand aloof from support of the FLN freedom forces in Algeria or condemnation of the South African Nationalist Government are suspect in the eyes of Africa.

As the struggle against imperialism deepens in many parts of the continent, more and more of the newly emerged African states have to produce a foreign policy that does not merely react to sharp imperialist prods and attacks here and there, but which takes on a more consistent pattern. And a consistent policy of opposition to all imperialist plans and intrigues hastens the time when African countries enjoying merely formal self-government must break the last connections with their impe-

rialist masters and strike out for real independence.

The imperialist countries realize, too, the great changes coming over the continent have forced them to retreat from the position of naked domination they held in Africa. But they are not running away in blind panic. They are retreating to carefully prepared positions. They wish to retain the thousand invisible strings of dependence which tie Africa economically to Western Europe and North America and, under cover provided by nominally independent African governments, to exercise innumerable subtle forms of continued control and exploitation.

The United States, the most powerful imperialist country, tries to use the anti-imperialist sentiments of the African people to replace western European influence in Africa with that of the influence of United States monopoly capitalists and financiers. With its long years of practice in treating the nominally independent countries of South America as its economic colonies, the United States sees itself as well equipped to change the new Africa into an American dependency too.

While Africa is weak, while her countries are backward economically and militarily, there is the constant threat of disguised or even open attempts to reconquer and recolonize Africa. These attempts find their chief expression, their main hope and source of potential strength in the white settler commu-

nities which live in Africa, in Algeria, Kenya, and Southern Rhodesia and of course South Africa. For the countries of new Africa, measures to assist the emancipation of the people of South Africa and Central Africa and the victory of the Algerian people in their war are therefore more than acts of support and African brotherhood. They are vital measures to ensure the safety of Africa, and to remove a poison-bed of reaction which could infect the whole continent, and a storm center of counter-revolution.

SOCIALISM IS THE ROAD

The winning of political independence is therefore only the first phase—although an essential and important phase—of the African Revolution. That revolution, if its gains are to be preserved and its benefits realized for the great mass of the people, cannot stop short at this phase. It must continue, to wipe out all remnants of colonialism. It must bring about large scale industrialization. It must spread the African revolution into the countryside to transform the life of the African subsistence farmer; it must move on to the elimination of backwardness, illiteracy, tribalism and feudalism.

African independence cannot survive in the present age until and unless its economic basis rapidly catches up with that of the advanced industrial countries of the world.

Sooner or later emergent Africa must see that the only way in which

she can carry out this gigantic task of defeating backwardness and advancing into full freedom is through Socialism: the planned development of commonly-owned means of production.

The Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, in widely differing conditions and two different epochs showed that only under socialist planning can breath-taking economic scientific and industrial advance transform two of the poorest countries of the world into two of the world's greatest powers.

It is this unprecedented industrial and technical development which has made it possible not only to bring new life to the Russian and Chinese worker and farmer, but also for the socialist countries to give invaluable help to the underdeveloped countries and former colonies, Africa included.

Economic and technical aid from the socialist countries differs fundamentally from the "aid" offered by imperialist countries to underdeveloped Africa and Asia. Socialist aid is given on very generous terms—there are long periods of repayment and low rates of interest—(terms which capitalist business, concerned primarily with the export of capital at high rates of profit, will not offer). Even more important is the purpose of aid from the socialist world and the conditions under which it is given. The imperialists offer aid in

the shape of surplus consumer products and are anxious to keep the underdeveloped countries in a state of backwardness and dependency.

The socialist world is able and willing to help in the rapid industrialization of the former colonies to enable them as quickly as possible to stand on their own feet and attain complete economic independence. The imperialists make all sorts of political and military conditions for their handouts to ensure that their "beneficiaries" will remain within the western "sphere of interest." Socialist assistance is given without strings or conditions. Thus not only countries headed by militant people's leaders like Sékou Touré, moving in the direction of socialist planning and democracy, but even those ruled by feudal kings like Haile Selassie and anti-Communists like President Nasser benefit from Soviet aid. Socialist aid to underdeveloped countries springs from genuine concern in the welfare and social advancement of the peoples of the country concerned.

Thus the advance of socialism and anti-imperialist forces all over the world spurs forward and assists the advance of the peoples of Africa to freedom and independence. And the African Revolution saps still further the greatly weakened force of world imperialism and opens the way to full freedom for the peoples of this continent and the world at large.

The Social Security System in U. S.

By Ralph Izard

IN 1960 our social security program marked its twenty-fifth year since being signed into law by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Nearly 14 million American seniors are now receiving federal checks each month under the old age, survivors and disability program.

Another 6 million Americans outside the protection of this insurance program benefit from assistance programs conducted jointly by federal and state governments. Nearly 2.5 million Americans past 65 are paid old age assistance each month; these are seniors either unable to qualify for OAS&DI payments, or whose OAS&DI payments are less than their states of residence pay in the form of assistance.

Others assisted with federal-state grants include nearly 3 million dependent children under 18, more than 100,000 unsighted persons, and more than 350,000 of the permanently and totally disabled who (a) live in states without workmen's compensation laws, or (b) whose compensation is either inadequate or has run out. In 1958 another 400,000 individuals qualified in their states of residence for general assistance.

So vast a social program, offering some form of financial aid to

about 20 million Americans, represents one of the enduring advances made by the people during the New Deal years. But none of the articles celebrating the program mentioned the fact that the quarter century of its consolidation happened to coincide with what some economists have defined as "a unique concatenation of economic events." Indeed, most of the editorial celebration tended to present the social security program as merely one more example of Republican devotion to the general welfare.

Unmentioned were the tremendous struggles of the 'Thirties waged by millions of the unemployed and the aged for security—security on the job, security against a penniless old age, security against "fear itself." Yet these struggles, and the wave of organization that gave them direction were the basic forces that brought social security into being. For all these reasons, social security deserves closer inspection.

Next to old age, survivors and disability insurance, perhaps the best known aspect of the entire program is unemployment compensation, "employment insurance," as it is officially known. This part of the program now faces an extremely strident situation. In the first place, as the 1960 Democratic platform writers

noted, "... 5.6 per cent of our total work force—more than 3.7 million Americans—were seeking work as of November 1959."

Since these Democratic case makers were interested only in the last eight GOP years, they could pass over in silence the fact that in only one of the last 25 years has full employment ever been even approached. That year was 1944, when 12 million potential young job seekers were in uniform and factories were roaring 24 cost-plus hours a day.

Neither did they deem it necessary, apparently, to recall the warning on unemployment as a permanent problem voiced by relief administrator Harry Hopkins 25 years ago, long before the conception of automated processes became installed realities. Long study of the jobs problem had convinced Hopkins that under the present relations of production the permanent standing army of the unemployed would number somewhere around 8 million.

In the autumn of 1960 the national jobless total was swelling towards 5 million. Another 2.5 million potential young job holders had only military employment.

Employment insurance authorizes a 3 percent payroll tax. But only three-tenths of 1 percent of this is invariable and collected by the federal government. With this fractional percentage the federal government defrays the cost of employment

administrations in the 50 states.

The remaining 2.7 percent may or may not be collected by the states, but it is supposed to provide their funds for payment of unemployment compensation. In 1959 only five states—Alaska, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and West Virginia—collected employment insurance taxes at the full 2.7 per cent of payroll rate that is authorized. And over the ten years 1950-59, only Rhode Island continuously collected such taxes at the full 2.7 rate.

The other 45 states levied their employment insurance taxes at rates ranging from slightly more than 2 percent to less than 1 percent in 1959. And such lowered rates mirror only part of the eagerness of state legislatures to extend favors to large corporations. Other devices known as "efficiency ratings" or "merit ratings" permit companies with stable employment records to escape completely from such taxation; such deceptive employment stability was often maintained with ease during the first ten post-war years.

Since the employment insurance tax is a payroll tax, like the employers' "matching and equal" tax for old age, survivors and disability insurance, in reality it costs the employer nothing. Because it is not assessed against the final money product, but enters the costs of production, or of service, its burden can be passed along to the final consumer. Thus, when this tax is for-

given or reduced, it becomes so much plus profit.

That this is the true nature of all payroll taxes was admitted in 1935 by James A. Emory, spokesman for the National Association of Manufacturers, when testifying on the present social security program. Speaking on the possible taxation of workers for their own employment insurance, Emory said: ". . . Obviously then the worker would be taxed twice. He would be taxed by his own tax, and (taxed) the second time in the price of the product which carries forward the employers' (payroll) tax."

How close present employment insurance taxation procedures have brought the whole system to a crisis is at least indicated in the Social Security Bulletin for August, 1960. In this issue, certain of the more obvious shortcomings of the social security system are touched upon; employment insurance is discussed by R. Gordon Wagenet, formerly assistant director of the bureau of employment security.

Of state reserves for payment of unemployment compensation, Wagenet says: "For the period 1950-59, only 15 states had collected (tax) contributions equal to or higher than their unemployment benefit costs; the other (35) states had used past reserve accumulations and interest payments on reserve funds to finance their benefits."

Against a background of appar-

ently developing economic crisis, this presents a grim perspective for the unemployed. It becomes even grimmer on inspection of some of the Department of Labor's "selected unemployment financial data, calendar year 1959." This tabulation shows Alaska to have had reserves of \$2.6 million as of Dec. 31, 1959, a black ink balance made possible only through federal loans of more than \$8 million.

Reserves in Michigan and Pennsylvania were more nearly ample, but again only because these states had also drawn federal loans. Michigan ended the year with a \$205 million balance; of this, \$113 was a federal loan. Pennsylvania borrowed more than \$96 million to end 1959 with a \$182 million balance.

The agricultural and ranching states and the District of Columbia have the highest reserves in ratio to their "highest annual cost rate since 1950." This is easily understood: the district has a fairly steady level of service employment maintained by the wages of the biggest federal bureaucracy in history. And since farm labor is still ineligible for unemployment compensation, applications for jobless payment are small in the ranching and agricultural states.

REALITIES OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Only in Hawaii are farm hands

eligible for jobless payments. Others excluded nationally, Wagenet notes, are ". . . domestic servants, state and local government employees and employees of non-profit institutions, as well as those working for employers with fewer than four employees." In all, 13 million workers are still barred from unemployment compensation. This figure does not include workers in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, federally-ruled dependencies of the United States where no unemployment compensation is paid to anyone.

In high-priced Hawaii as well as all other states, even those who are covered for jobless payments receive less than enough to maintain a family. California is alone in setting a theoretical maximum of more than \$50 per week. Another five states publish top rates of \$45 or slightly more. In the other 44 and the District of Columbia the range is downward: ten states authorize top payments of \$44-\$40; 12 set maximums of \$39-\$35, 19 will pay \$34-\$30 at most, and four say they will pay \$29-\$25.

But these are all "book rates." Usually much less is paid. Pressure from Washington, whence come the wages of state administrative staffs, plus local and state pressures, plus restrictive state regulations, all combine to force jobless payments down to a bare subsistence minimum.

In April 1960, according to the August Social Security Bulletin, 11

states averaged payments of less than \$25 per week. North Carolina tailed all 50 states with average payments of \$19.99 per week. Alabama, Arkansas, Maine, South Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia all held their payment rates down to less than \$23. Georgia, Mississippi and Virginia paid a few cents more than that. Texas payments averaged \$23.98 per week.

California, with a \$55 book rate, paid out only \$39.32 on the average. All these levels of payment enforce malnutrition on jobless workers and their families. And in a constantly tightening labor market, with each crisis leaving a larger pool of unemployed in its wake, even the highest rate of jobless pay provides but a slight extension of security. Desperation born of an inexorably approaching cut-off date early becomes the specter that stalks the jobless worker's heels.

THE ORIGINAL LEGISLATION

When enacted in 1935, the social security program offered no help at all to those millions already jobless. That was the principal objection to this section of the bill from those who were fighting for a complete jobless aid program. Another objection was to taxation of payrolls.

They contended, as NAM spokesman Emory had already admitted, that payroll taxes would simply be

passed along by employers. The end result would be that the jobless, the retired and those still working would carry the full burden of these payroll taxes in the form of higher prices.

Another objection was to the two systems of financial reserves ordained by the Administration bill for employment insurance and for old age and survivors insurance. Such reserves were not only unnecessary, but would automatically generate further inflationary pressures, these members contended.

When the final version of the Administration bill was submitted to the House in 1935 it was still unknown to the public at large, and so without wide popular support. Two factors assured its passage: the first was the magic of the Roosevelt name. The second was an overwhelming Democratic majority in the House—even though that majority was largely ignorant of what it was they were expected to support. Although the social security bill as then submitted lacked some of the bulk that successive amendments have given the act, it was even then as purposefully replete with fugitive meanings and as murky of language as it is today.

Indeed, one member of the House Ways & Means Committee that had conducted 19 days of hearings on the Administration bill warned his fellow members of the House that they “. . . should not ask too many embarrassing questions, because there is

not one man on the (Ways & Means) committee that really understands the bill.”

For this reason, and despite the huge House majority they commanded, Democratic leaders deemed it wise that the House should pass on the Administration social security bill sitting as the Committee of the Whole. This tactic apparently had four aims:

First, it assured easy passage of the Administration bill by voice vote.

Second, it would prevent votes of record on two other social security bills with wide and informed popular support.

Third, it would foreclose debate on the comparative merit of all three bills.

And finally, sitting as the Committee of the Whole, the House would have before it only the Administration social security bill; any other proposed legislation could only come up as an amendment to the official measure.

THE TOWNSEND PLAN

One of the other two social security bills that had been laid before the House embodied the Townsend Plan. This was the proposal made on behalf of stimulating consumer purchasing power by the late Dr. Francis E. Townsend, of Long Beach, Calif. The plan envisaged payment of \$200 each month to every person aged 60 or more, with the

simple proviso that every cent of this be spent before the month ended. First broached in the form of a letter from Dr. Townsend printed in the Long Beach *Press-Telegram*, and widely reprinted, the doctor's proposal won almost immediate national backing from those aged and penniless who were without hope of ever again securing paid employment. They saw in the plan pensions sufficient to maintain life, health and self-respect. Furthermore, they were convinced that \$200 per month per pensioner was well within the wealth-producing potential of the country.

But the Townsend Plan was basically flawed by its financing method, a proposed 2 percent “transactions tax” at every level of business activity. Progressive House members pointed out that this transactions tax was in reality a disguised sales tax; inevitably it too would be passed along to the final consumer. Beyond that, one member pointed out that even if this tax could be successfully collected at every level, it would yield only enough funds to pay each person over 60 around \$50 per month, not \$200.

THE LUNDEEN BILL

The second bill blocked from comparative debate was far broader in purpose, scope and coverage. Based on an obviously sound financing plan, it was backed by literally

hundreds of state and local federations of labor, by the two existing national organizations of the unemployed, and by 70 municipal councils. Among these 70 were the councils of such cities as St. Louis, Minneapolis, Buffalo, Milwaukee and Youngstown. Petitions supporting it signed by more than 1 million Americans had been submitted to the Seventy-fourth Congress before social security became a voting issue.

Originally drafted by the Communist Party, this social security measure came to be known as “the Lundeen bill” because the legislative struggle for it was led by Ernest J. Lundeen, then a Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party member of the House, and later of the Senate. The first and most urgent intent of the Lundeen bill was to provide immediate cash payments for the tens of millions then jobless—those millions for whom the Administration bill held out not even hope.

Such payments were to be the equivalent of the union wage paid in the trade of the unemployed worker in his or her locality. They were to terminate only when full-time paid employment had been secured, and to be diminished by wages collected for part-time work. Others to be counted as eligible for such payments were the disabled, those aged 60 or more, and mothers during the eight weeks preceding and eight weeks following childbirth.

Senator Paul H. Douglas (D., Ill.)

said of the Lundeen bill: "The main driving force behind the Lundeen bill was originally furnished by the Communists. But many non-Communists came to support it because they believed it to be the most thorough-going and adequate proposal which had been put forward." (*Social Security in the United States*, by Paul H. Douglas, N. Y., 1936, p. 76).

Financing plans for the Lundeen bill were simple and sound. All financing was to be on a pay-as-you-go basis. No inflationary reserves were to be created. The Congress was simply to appropriate "the sums necessary" from the United States Treasury. Any resulting deficits were to be made up through taxation of inheritances, gifts, salaries and corporate profits of more than \$5,000 a year. Beyond this, the military budget was to be the source of further funds as needed.

Such taxation has a sound legal foundation in the XVIth Amendment, the income tax amendment. As to the legality of the Lundeen bill's "benefits"—to use the terminology of the present social security bureaucracy, these were solidly based on the general welfare clause of the Constitution. When endorsing the present Social Security Act in 1936, the United States Supreme Court said of this clause: "The concept of 'general welfare' is not static but adapts itself to the crises and necessities of the times."

The time sequence of social security legislation is politically enlightening. The Lundeen bill was laid before the House on Feb. 2, 1934. Three days later an official Democratic social security bill was submitted to the Congress. This first Administration draft was so chaotically organized and confusingly written as to be all but incoherent. However, its introduction did have the practical effect of forestalling congressional consideration of any social security bill for one year.

Then on June 8, 1934, President Roosevelt took to the radio to reassure those millions whose hopes lay in the Townsend Plan or the Lundeen bill that he too placed ". . . the security of the men, women and children of our nation first . . ." That some form of social security program would be forthcoming from the next session of the Congress was now all but certain.

Only the details remained unclear: what kind of a program would it be? Who would benefit from it? How extensive would be its benefits? And most importantly, who would carry its financial burden?

In only three states—Alabama, Alaska, New Jersey—are workers taxed for employment insurance. In all 50 states employers pay employment insurance taxes on their payrolls. It is widely and commonly agreed that payroll taxes are slipped

into prices through various book-keeping devices.

Thus, in Alabama, Alaska and New Jersey workers pay four times over for what social security they now enjoy: First, in the direct employment insurance tax that they must pay in those three states; second, in the social security (OAS&DI) tax that is likewise deducted from their wages; third, in the employers' employment insurance payroll tax that is slipped into prices, and fourth, in the employers' "matching and equal" social security (OAS&DI) payroll tax that is also paid by workers in higher final prices.

In the other 47 states workers carry the full burden of only the last three taxes. So if both unemployment compensation and payments to the retired are now inadequate—and they are widely admitted to be inadequate to the point of daily desperation by recipients and non-recipients alike—this is because:

Such low "benefits" are all that working people can afford to pay themselves out of past and present wages. Huge and growing hoards of privately appropriated wealth that was socially-produced remain untouched for social security, or for any other basic social purpose, for that matter.

The present old age, survivors and disability insurance tax rate of 3 percent against wages and payrolls is to rise to 4.5 per cent by 1969. This increase represents further con-

gressional obedience to the behests of the United States Chamber of Commerce. After years of sneering at social security as "merely another federal undertaking after all," the chamber solemnly endorsed the OAS&DI system in 1956. And the chamber urged:

"Periodic readjustment of the equal taxes on employer and employee . . . to support benefit disbursements on a current basis."

Search as one will, another such Chamber endorsement of higher taxes on employers is not to be found. Again the key to this may be found in a source of high standing among Chamber members. In his column in the *New York Commercial and Financial Chronicle* of Feb. 23, 1950, Emerson P. Schmidt had said: ". . . Payroll levies do not come out of profits, but rather find their way into the wage-cost-price structure."

Fourteen years earlier Senator Douglas devoted several paragraphs to this fact of economic life under the present relations of production on p. 63 of his book. He was doubly compelled to such candor at that time, both as a university professor of economics and as a recorder of the 1935 House debate on social security. Members Lundeen and Vito Marcantonio and other progressives warned repeatedly that this would be the case if the Administration social security taxes were voted into effect.

In summary, the present social security program was originally devised and is now so operated that its main burden is borne by those still working. They pay their direct wage deduction to old age, survivors and disability insurance—plus carrying the major burden of income taxes, of course.

And indirectly they pay another 6 percent—the 3 percent payroll tax for employment insurance and the 3 percent OAS&DI payroll tax—that employers pass on in the form of high prices. And those retired are also made to continue their contributions by paying the higher prices that include these passed-on payroll taxes.

MEDICAL CARE

Some expansion in medical care is the latest improvement in the social security program to be compelled by popular pressure. This pressure was born of constantly rising medical and hospitalization costs; the 1960 Democratic platform notes:

“While the over-all cost of living has increased 10.6 percent since 1952, the cost of medical care has gone up 30 per cent in the same period.”

There are strong indications that the limited medical care concessions so far won will be far from adequate to the scope of the medical care crisis. This crisis is mirrored in the vital statistics of the nations of the

world. Once pre-eminent in nearly all these columns, the United States no longer has the world's lowest infant mortality rate; it now stands only tenth best. In the death rate of mothers in childbirth—the maternal mortality rate—we now stand third best. And in life expectancy, fifth best.

That this shortstopping medical care program will improve or even maintain the health of senior citizens is doubtful. In the first place, it applies only to some 2.5 million “aged persons on the public assistance rolls.” To most of the 14 million seniors receiving old age, survivors and disability checks it will mean nothing—except to those whose OAS&DI checks are so small that they must also apply for assistance.

Basically, this new medical aid program is merely an amplification of the “vendor payments for medical care” program in which 40 states have been participating jointly with the federal government. Under this vendor payments program, the federal government would contribute \$6, times the number of old age assistance pensioners in the state, if the state would match such payments. Originally such vendor payments were considered monies over and above the level at which old age assistance was paid.

But in recent years these vendor payments have come to be included in the dollar total of assistance paid.

Thus in Massachusetts the total paid to OAA pensioners in April 1960 is given as an average of a few cents more than \$103 per month.

But of this \$103 total, only about \$60 ever passed into the OAA pensioner's hands in cash form. This meant that he or she was permitted less than \$2 per day for food, shelter and clothing. The other \$43 went to the medical profession.

Such rates of cash payment as old age assistance for the maintenance of life and health practically ensure a steady supply of ailing elders to the Massachusetts medical profession.

Little exact information is yet available on the medical assistance plan. Summarizing national findings, the *New York Times* weekly review of Sept. 25 headlined an article: “*States Confused by Medical Care Bill.*”

Five days earlier Governor Nelson Rockefeller had expressed his opposition to the plan. The *Times* reported that the governor had two objections to it:

His first was to the “means test” that the plan imposes as a pre-condition for receiving medical care without charge. Such solicitude for the dignity of age is commendable. But according to the 1953 House probe of social security, the *New York Times* “. . . public assistance worker seeking to determine the need and eligibility for public assistance . . . must obtain answers to a minimum of 200 questions up to a maximum

of 460 questions.”

The governor's exemplary solicitude is perhaps more directly explained by the fact that the program approved by the Congress bars prior liens on the estates of the aged as deferred payment for any medical care received. New York already attaches such prior liens to its grants of old age assistance.

In fact there are only ten states that do not attach such prior liens. And nationally considered, such prior liens constitute no small item: between 1937 and 1953 they accounted for nearly \$74 million that was squeezed out of the tiny estates of those who had been forced to consent to them in order to receive old age assistance.

Another Rockefeller objection was to the method to be used to pay for the medical care program. The governor contended that “. . . the money required should be raised by increasing social security taxes. . . .” In the light of what has already been said about social security taxes, Governor Rockefeller's point of view is completely understandable.

Two federally-controlled areas apparently will not benefit at all from the amplified medical care program. In neither Puerto Rico nor Guam were old age assistance pensioners allowed “vendor payments for medical care” in the past, necessary as such vendor payments would seem to have been. OAA pensioners in Puerto Rico averaged \$8.22 each in

cash payments in April 1960; Guamanian pensioners got exactly three times as much.

In the same month Connecticut was paying old age assistance at an average rate of almost \$117, the highest in the nation. And of this amount, nearly \$92 was in cash to the pensioner; the remainder went for medical services.

New York ranked a deceptive second nationally in the average total of old age assistance paid—better than \$107. But medical care claimed a large share of this, so that the state only ranked fourth in cash payments to pensioners of a bit more than \$76.

In old age assistance cash payments, Colorado ranked second nationally, paying an average of almost \$83. California third with slightly more than \$81, and Louisiana fifth with nearly \$70. Louisiana's high ranking in this respect is the more surprising in that the state was under strong congressional attack in 1953 because it imposed neither means test, prior lien nor relative responsibility clause on applicants for old age assistance. Mere application and proof of attainment of age 65 was held to be sufficient proof of need.

Parenthetically, this generous policy was instituted by Huey Long. Although fought continuously by the big oil and chemical monopolies, it converted OAA recipients—there were nearly 125,000 of them

in Louisiana in April 1960—into a solid part of the political base that sustained the Long machine for so many years.

By contrast, the lowest rate paid in any state in April 1960 was in neighboring Mississippi, where OAA pensioners averaged \$29.77 each. And this was the total paid, since Mississippi was another of the ten states not participating in the "vendor payments for medical care" program. Beyond that, of the nearly \$30 that Mississippi so generously made available to each pensioner, \$24 came from federal funds.

But there were 21 states in all that were making cash payments for old age assistance of more than \$60 in April 1960. Of such amounts, the federal government will contribute the major share up to a total of \$65 per month, and most states utilize sales taxes to make up the remainder.

These OAA cash payments may be compared with more than 1 million "old age benefit awards" made in 1958 under the old age, survivors and disability insurance program. As shown in Table 26 of the Social Security Bulletin's latest annual statistical supplement, about one-third of these awards—339,000—amounted to less than \$60 per month, and 10 percent of them were for \$30 or less. Such "benefit awards" are the permanent rate at which these individuals will receive their social security payments.

Of course none of these "benefits" or assistance payments provides enough to eke out anything better than a miserable existence. Not even the top OAS&DI award of \$108.50 that went to more than 187,000 individuals in 1958 will permit financial serenity.

Beyond this, all such rates may be subject to reduction by the Congress. The threat of such action was repeatedly raised by Senator Carl T. Curtis during the social security investigation he conducted while still a member of the House. Senator Curtis said he was worried because maintenance of even the present rates of payment would "... unload the program upon the general taxpayer." That is, upon those best able to pay.

But Congressional cunning had sought to forestall any necessity for such unpopular action as far back as 1939. Before then, the base from which pensions were to be figured was simply each individual's total lifetime earnings.

In 1939 the base figure was changed to "the average monthly wage" that an individual earned over a working lifetime. This average wage includes unpaid layoff time, periods of unemployment and illness, also unpaid, as well as months of work and wages. Total earnings spread over an entire working lifetime could usually be relied on to produce a deceptively low "average monthly wage" as a base figure.

How this would work out in a crisis was explained in 1953 by Robert M. Ball, then acting director of the old age and survivors insurance bureau:

The benefit rate for new awards would probably continue at about the same level for a . . . time, but then it might drop somewhat. It would drop for two reasons:

More people would have a period of unemployment in their wage record and that would pull down the average (monthly wage). If the recession lasted long enough, I suppose . . . there might be a decrease in wage levels, and . . . then you would have a depressing effect on the average monthly wage by averaging in the lower wages of recent times with the higher wages of earlier times.

But modern economic crisis entails consequences beyond those foreseen in 1939, or in 1953. To repeat, each new crisis leaves behind it a larger backwash of the permanently unemployed.

Before the crisis of 1957-58 had taken its full toll of jobs, the total assets of the old age, survivors and disability insurance system were more than \$22 billion (as of April 1958). By April 1959 these assets had shrunk by more than \$1 billion.

And even after some measure of recovery, even after the OAS&DI tax rate had been raised from 2.5 to 3 percent of wages and payrolls, these social security assets were still shrinking. They showed another de-

cline of more than \$1 billion by April 1960.

In the past, the "soundness" of the whole social security program was its assumed capacity to continue payments to those retired entirely out of current collections of taxes from those still at work. Apparently there are no longer enough workers employed to guarantee continuation of this system, and its reserves—now a little less than \$20 billion—will continue to be drained away. And what will happen as the number of those retired rises to 16 million, to 18 million?

Ultimately American working people in their overwhelming majority will move to compel the use of all socially-produced wealth for social purposes. Such purposes will include the real right to work and wages, and the right to adequate pensions. Pending achievement of that level of development, however, an interim program is needed for improvement of the present social security program.

Such a program begins of necessity with the question, "Where will we get the money?" To answer it, and to halt the fiscal recklessness of present procedures, it is necessary to revive and apply the sound financial methods of the Lundeen bill. Use of these methods will not only make possible more nearly adequate social security payments, but will also financially stabilize the entire social security program.

TAXATION PROPOSALS

1. Abolish all payroll taxes as ineffective in method and inflationary in effect.

2. Levy employment insurance taxes against profits, undistributed corporate surpluses, declared dividends, money gifts, inheritances and salaries of more than \$10,000 per year.

3. Make the full 3 per cent employment insurance rate payable directly and invariably to the federal treasury.

4. Maintain the employment insurance rate at 3 per cent only so long as there are fewer than 1 million unemployed individuals.

5. Raise employment insurance tax rates to 5 percent in every year following any calendar year in which more than 1 million were jobless.

6. Apply immediately the 4.5 percent social security tax on wages now scheduled for 1969; tax wages up to \$500 per month at this rate.

7. Apply the employers' "matching and equal" social security tax rate of 4.5 percent against profits, undistributed corporate surpluses, declared dividends, money gifts, inheritances and salaries of more than \$10,000 a year.

8. Make up any annual social security deficits from the funds now budgeted to armaments and the military.

Such taxation will make possible for the first time translation into

reality of the catchphrase, "the American standard of living." Benefits that such a program would make possible would be these:

PAYMENT PROPOSALS

1. Cover for employment insurance the 13 million individuals now barred from it.

2. Pay 80 percent of their trade union wages, or of their last wage, to each of the unemployed for so long as they cannot find work at union wage rates in their community.

3. Pay 80 percent of their trade union wages, or of their last wage, and a minimum of \$200 per month, to those disabled. Begin such payments immediately upon certification of disability.

4. Reduce the time required to become a "fully-insured individual" under the old age, survivors and disability insurance program to 20 calendar quarters, as in the tax-guaranteed congressional retirement system.

5. Pay "foundation incomes" of \$200 per month to all women who reach 55, men 60, without recorded

earnings of at least \$250 per month in any five years of their working lives.

6. Base all old age and survivors insurance payments on a flat 80 percent of the average monthly wage for those who can show earnings of more than \$250 per month in any selected 60 months, up to a ceiling wage of \$500 per month.

7. Institute a national program of insured medical, dental and hospital care, and control of drug prices.

8. Distribute edible surplus foods in the amounts necessary to make up 20 percent of the value of each foundation income of \$200 per month.

Such a taxation and payments program is a challenge to members of the Congress. Because it lies entirely within the realm of the possible, it challenges them to do at least as much for the general welfare of their constituents as they have already done for their own by (a) repeatedly voting themselves increases in their tax-paid salaries, and (b) by enacting for themselves alone one of the most generous retirement programs in the nation.

During most of November, the Editor was abroad, lecturing at universities and institutes in Poland and the German Democratic Republic. For this reason, his "Ideas In Our Time" does not appear in this issue; that department will resume in the January number.

The New Rumania

By Elizabeth Gurley Flynn

THE THIRD CONGRESS of the Rumanian Workers Party was held from June 20 to 25, in Bucharest, capital of the Rumanian People's Republic. I was privileged to be one of fifty fraternal delegations, representing Communist and Workers parties from as many countries, including all socialist countries plus North and South America, Asia, Europe, Cuba, Iceland, and New Zealand. Driving in from the airport, I was impressed with the extraordinary beauty of the city, its wide avenues with great shade trees, sidewalks bordered with roses in full bloom, and grassy borders lined with wax begonias and petunias. There are parks, lakes, and fountains; the buildings are predominantly white, and every one of them was decked with colorful banners greeting the Congress. A tall, well-proportioned building towers over the city and can be seen at night for miles around. This is the Party's printing plant, where its daily paper, "Scinteia," and all its books and magazines are published on giant presses.

Welcoming the delegations were committees who escorted us to a spacious hotel, reserved for foreign Party visitors, which was surrounded by trees and flowers. The charm of the city is not only its physical beauty, but the social prog-

ress it has made in a few years. Buildings of bygone splendor are now dedicated to the use of the people. A palace of royalty, occupying acres of wooded land in the heart of the city, secluded by a high wall, is now a recreation camp for children. The building that was the dreaded Gestapo headquarters during the Nazi occupation, is now a museum of the history of the Rumanian Workers Party. Quaint old churches, examples of varied architectures, are preserved, some as museums, some as places of worship—"for old people," they explain tolerantly. Side by side with fine old houses, are modern buildings of the last few years. The Congress was held in a great new auditorium, attached to a one-time royal palace. The people were not allowed to walk on that side of the street in bygone days. Around a wide square, new large public buildings face the palace. The one directly opposite is the headquarters of the Central Committee of the Party.

Around the corner, facing the auditorium, are a group of modern apartment houses, white with colored balconies, and five shops on the street level. This type of "flats," as they call them, appears everywhere. Some of the most attractive are in the area where the railroad

workers live. I saw many in other cities—Ploesti, Constantza, Orasul-Stalin—and especially in towns arising around new factories. I was puzzled on my first night in Bucharest to see a large group of men and women working feverishly on a building. When we passed the next day it was completed, even to the flowers planted along the sidewalk. A sign proudly proclaimed: "In honor of the III Congress." In once poor dilapidated slum areas, where a tree was unknown, the streets dusty, dirty, and unpaved and people lived in one-room huts with thatched roofs, are now shaded streets, paved and clean, with rows of beautiful apartments. The streets are sprinkled daily, even with disinfectants. No song or poem can exaggerate the charm of Bucharest and the love and pride its people feel. It is a gem of a socialist city.

THE PARTY CONGRESS

To fully appreciate this Congress, one must know something of the Rumanian revolutionary movement in the past few decades. When Chivu Stoica, chairman of the Council of Ministers, introduced Gheorghie Gheorghiu-Dej, to deliver the report of the Central Committee of the Party, we saw before us not only its first secretary, but the leading Rumanian Communist for over a quarter of a century. These two vigorous smiling men were in prison together from 1933 to 1944. They

were arrested by the army during a general strike of railroad men and oil workers, which Gheorghiu-Dej organized. It was not only a revolt against intolerable exploitation but also an anti-fascist demonstration. The "Dej" part of his name comes from a city where he worked as a young railroad worker. He personifies the Party and the people—their past struggles, their present efforts, their glorious plans for the future of their homeland.

There were 1158 delegates to the Congress and as many more invited Rumanian guests. The delegates were workers, engineers, and technicians from industries; men and women from collective farms, some in native costumes; men of science, art, literature, diplomats, army officers, party workers and decorated veterans, sitting proudly in the front rows. The majority of the delegates were under fifty years of age. Only 148 were over 50. Each delegate represented 750 Party members, who number, with candidates, 834,600. Rumania is a relatively small country, with a population of about 18 millions. It occupies 91,738 square miles. It has rich natural resources in abundance—oil, coal, natural gas, metalliferous ores, salt reserves, marble, great forests, water power and fertile fields. All of these vast riches formerly belonged to the royal family, foreign capitalists, and rich landowners. Under the old regime it was a poor agrarian coun-

try. The people were illiterate. The industries were underdeveloped. The forests were neglected and devastated. In agriculture the tools were primitive and methods so backward, the land deteriorated. Much was imported from abroad that could be produced there, for example chemicals. Now 600 substances are produced in Rumania and the socialized chemical industry was eight times as great in 1959 as in 1938. Today with 81 per cent collectivization, modern methods, schools, even new crops such as rice and cotton—a new world has opened up for the peasants.

A peasant woman spoke during the discussion. She told how in the past, beset with work, worries, and debts, the women "swallowed their tears" in bitterness. A few families started their collective with one cow, one sow, and fourteen chickens. Now they have 929 families, with 2,000 sheep, 450 cows and 2,000 fowls. "Today we are millionaires," she said, "with a fund of five million lei." (A lei is about 17 cents.—EGF) She told of their new houses, electricity, radios, TV's, new furniture, gas cokers, bicycles, motorcycles, a choir, a dramatic group, a brass band, movies, a kindergarten for 200 children, a maternity house with doctors and nurses available. She said: "We have given up the methods of our grandparents," and spoke with scientific precision of their plans to increase their productivity by

1965. She finished simply: "Thanks to the Party, today we are happy people."

PARTY HISTORY

The socialist movement has a lengthy background in Rumania. The first socialist paper was published in 1877. Some of the works of Marx and Engels were published in 1893, when the Social-Democratic Party of Workers was founded. There were first of May demonstrations in 1890, for the eight-hour day and universal suffrage. The Russian revolution of 1905 affected the Rumanian workers and peasants. A peasants' revolt spread throughout the country, in which 11,000 were killed. There were 6,000 rich landlords and 300,000 peasants had no land. Fifty years later, in 1957, the People's Government issued medals to the survivors. In the museum is a picture of about 25 of these sturdy old men. The 1917 October Revolution in Russia also had profound repercussions in Rumania. Not far from where the II Congress was held, in a small room on May 8, 1921, the majority of the delegates to a Socialist Congress voted to form the Communist Party of Rumania and to affiliate with the Third International. Many delegates were arrested and sentenced to ten years in prison. The Party was outlawed and functioned underground until 1944. Also in 1921 in a small house, "Scinteia" was first

published. The Party led a precarious existence for ten years.

In 1931, the Communist Party of Rumania secretly held its Fifth Congress. This was shortly before Hitler came to power in Germany. A new program of a united front against fascism was adopted. As a result many legal organizations were set up from 1931 to 1937, such as an Anti-War Committee, a National Anti-Fascist Committee, etc. The Party made a close alliance with the peasant's organization, the Ploughmen's Front, and with the Hungarian minority in the country. At this time Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej was the Secretary of the Central Committee of railroad workers. Party shop papers were distributed to railroad and textile workers, to the peasants, the army, and a literary one was called "The Blue Blouse." There are samples of thirteen such papers in the museum. On the wall of the Gritiva railroad shops in Bucharest is a plaque, commemorating those who were shot down there on February 16, 1933, when the workers occupied the yards and shops. A young worker, Vasilia Roaita, blew the siren to call all other workers to the wards. He was killed instantly but it blew for twenty-four hours. Ten thousand workers came with food, smokes, etc., for the strikers. Seventeen other cities, where Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej had also visited, also struck. He was arrested on February 4, 1933. But these

heroic struggles delayed bringing fascism to Rumania. There were echoes of international solidarity around the world.

A remarkable feature of those days was the close ties established by the imprisoned Communist leaders and their comrades outside. In the Vacaresti prison, in Bucharest, where many were held in 1933 and 1934, they met regularly. Under the most terrible conditions in Dof-tana prison and in the large Nazi concentration camp at Turji-Jui, they maintained their inner organization and outside contacts. A great oil painting on the wall of Dof-tana, now a museum, portrays a meeting in the place of work, with Gheorghiu-Dej after he was brought there in 1937. In 1940 an open fascist dictatorship was set up, under General Antonescu. It lasted four years. Terror reigned. All rights were destroyed. People were tortured and killed. In 1941, Rumania joined Hitler Germany in the war against the Soviet Union. Only the Communist Party openly opposed this action, and encouraged the workers to resistance of all sorts. The Communist Party called for a Patriotic Anti-Fascist Front, which was realized by 1943. Printing presses were set up in peasants' huts. An illegal radio, Free Rumania, operated. Leaders gave directions from the prisons. In 1941, Gheorghiu-Dej wrote from Caronsobes Prison, where he had been trans-

ferred after an earthquake partially destroyed Doftana: "I am convinced that the day is not far when this monstrous force will be destroyed definitely and forever."

In five months the Rumanian army lost 300,000 men, the majority in the defeat at Stalingrad. Feelings of wrath and revolt ran high in the country. The partisan movement grew strong, and many were killed. Gheorghiu-Dej wrote from his prison cell: "In homage to our dead comrades we must fight all the harder." By 1943 a government crisis developed. Only the Communist Party, which had new forces and growing support, had a program to show the way out of the desperate situation. This program was drawn up by Gheorghiu-Dej to unite workers, peasants and the army, to realize an armed insurrection against fascist control. It had three main purposes—to destroy the military-fascist dictatorship and form a government of national unity of all anti-Hitler forces; to take Rumania out of the criminal war against the Soviet Union; and to unite the Rumanian army with the Soviet army, to defeat the fascist army. Within a year all this was accomplished. The prisons and concentration camps became revolutionary centers. The police records, later exposed, said: "It was a whole people fighting for liberation." On August 4, 1944, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, following a party plan, escaped from the con-

centration camp and arrived safely in Bucharest. The Soviet army entered Rumania on August 19, from the Ukrainian front. The days of the fascists were now numbered. In June 1944 the highest military cadres of generals and officers had met with the leaders of the Communist Party. A military committee to liberate the country was set up. Units of workers and partisans were given arms by the army. On May 1 a joint appeal was issued by the Social-Democratic Party and the Communist Party. On August 23, 1944 the army and workers patriotic units arrested General Antonescu and all his government officials. They occupied all important centers and disarmed the Hitler forces. On August 30, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej appeared publicly and addressed an enormous popular mass meeting. The people's revolution had begun.

The Soviet and Rumanian armies fought side by side through 1944 and 1945, helping to liberate Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Austria. In September, 1944 the first legal number of "Scinteia" appeared. The first trade union Congress was held in January, 1945. In March, 1945, the first democratic Rumanian government was set up, with Dr. Oeter Groza as president. Gheorghiu-Dej was minister of railroads and he started to reconstruct the system destroyed by warfare. Fascist laws were abolished, agrarian reforms were instituted, war criminals were

punished. In October, 1945 the Communist Party held a conference, in which the great perspectives of the future were outlined by Gheorghiu-Dej, Secretary of the Party since 1944. He spoke of electrification, the development of the iron and steel industry, of agriculture, of the liquidation of illiteracy, but especially how to change from a war economy to a peace economy. In 1946, the first democratic elections were held to elect a parliament, called the Grand National Assembly. All political parties participated and there was universal suffrage. A bloc of all democratic parties was formed; its symbol was the sun. The reactionary Manui was snowed under, receiving only 156,000 votes to 4,766,630 for the bloc. Gheorghiu-Dej became Minister of the Economic Department of the new government and introduced many reforms, including nationalization of the banks and currency reforms to end inflation.

The economic rehabilitation of the country as well as the removal of all reactionaries from the government, helped to complete the democratic revolution. The king abdicated in December, 1947, and the Rumanian People's Republic was proclaimed. In February 1948, the Communist Party united with the Left elements which predominated in the Social-Democratic Party, to reform the Rumanian Workers Party on the basis of Marxist-Leninist prin-

ciples. In March a new constitution was adopted. Dr. P. Parhon, now 85 years old and one of the founders of the Social-Democratic Party in 1893, was elected the first president of the Republic, followed by Dr. Groza until his death in 1958. Thus ended the tyrannical role of the Hohenzollerns that began with Carol I in 1866. Now began the period of peaceful socialist construction. What has been accomplished in the short period of twelve years seems truly miraculous. By the summer of 1948, the banks, factories, mines, and railroads were nationalized. By 1950, 92.5 per cent of all means of production and distribution were nationalized.

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

The political structure is democratic far beyond our concepts of democracy. Elections are held every four years for the Grand National Assembly. There are 437 deputies, 366 men and 71 women. 324 are workers and peasants and 113 are intellectuals. People's Councils are the local governing bodies. They are elected every two years. There are 17,000 deputies from national minorities, and there are 102,344 men and 34,074 women. Workers and peasants are 101,510; intellectuals are 16,349 and government workers (local) are 18,559.

An autonomous Hungarian region was set up in 1952, where the language in schools and government

is Hungarian and they control all their local affairs. Rumania took her seat in the United Nations in 1955. The first Congress of the Rumanian Workers Party was held in 1938; the second in 1955. And now here we were assembled at the third in 1960, only twelve years since the building of socialism began.

Their first five-year plan spanned 1951 to 1955. It emphasized the building of heavy industry and the socialization of agriculture. In 1955 were added to these two necessities intense concentration on raising the standard of living and lowering prices. A ten-year plan presented by Gheorghiu-Dej in 1950 for electrification was largely fulfilled by 1955. By 1955 over two million families were in the socialist sector of agriculture, 100 new industrial plants had been installed and 249 reorganized and modernized. The report of Gheorghiu-Dej took practically all of the first session. We were provided with earphones and all the speeches were translated as they were made, into our own language. Enthusiasm, optimism, a love of their beautiful country, now really *theirs* at last, pervaded all sessions. The Congress was an example of their willingness to work and genius for organization. It started at 8:30 and continued to 1:30, recessed until 4, and adjourned at 8 p.m. Every delegate and visitor were in their seats in the vast hall when the foreign visitors were escorted to the presidium. We came in from the

palace side and recessed in the gorgeous throne room, where we had refreshments. Imagine the irony of history. I met another fraternal delegate—Nikita Khrushchev—in a palace throne room!

REPORT TO THE CONGRESS

The report at the third congress of the Rumanian Workers' Party, by Gheorghiu-Dej, their first secretary, dealt with the magnificent progress made in this socialist country since their last congress, the plans for the completion of socialism and the perspective for building communism. It was a collective report in the fullest sense, infused with the creative powers of a people freed from exploitation, delivered with passionate eloquence by a great leader of this people. Two years ago the party began preparation of the Draft Directives for the 1960-65 economic plan for a fifteen-year long-range program. This was based on the development, possibilities and requirements of their national economy. Gheorghiu-Dej said of this preliminary work: "In addition to the State Planning Committee and the ministries, the regional, district and town party committees and the peoples' councils, more than 20,000 specialists, engineers, scientists and front rank workers in industry and agriculture took part in the preparatory work carried on under the direct guidance of the Party and state leadership."

When the Draft Directives were

completed and adopted by the Party's central committee, they were then submitted to the people, for approval. This method of wide democratic discussion is customary in all the socialist countries where, in the words of the report: "The working people are the sole masters of the country's wealth and they are working for their own well-being." It is unheard of and would be impossible in a capitalist country, where the national economy is controlled by a small owning class, for the private profit and workers have no say about its affairs.

In Rumania, nearly 4,850,000 people attended the enlarged meetings of Party committees—in industrial establishments, factories, shops, mills and mines, in transport, on state and collective farms, in scientific and educational institutions and citizens meetings in towns and villages. More than 65,000 proposals were made. Over 31,500 referred to industry, 15,000 to agriculture and over 8,000 dealt with socio-cultural proposals. A large number were incorporated in the draft and all others were to be studied further.

Gheorghiu-Dej submitted the Six-Year Economic Plan, which comprised the following basic tasks:

1. To continue the country's industrialization at a steady rate, giving priority to heavy industry and its pivot, the machine-building industry.

2. To conclude the collectivization of agriculture, develop collective

farms in a many-sided way and consolidate them to considerably increase vegetable and animal output, in order to obtain a plentiful amount of agricultural and food products, in the shortest possible time.

3. To extend the mechanization and automation of production, retool existing enterprises and supply new enterprises with equipment at the highest level of the latest technical achievements, to introduce on an ever larger scale modern technological processes.

4. To continue the improvement of the territorial distribution of productive forces, raising the economic potential of less developed regions, districts and towns.

5. To raise the living standards and cultural level of the working people by a growth in real wages and cash incomes, the constant improvement of housing conditions, the development of education and culture, as well as health protection and social measures, the increased consumption of food stuffs and industrial products so that for the main products they should approach the per capita consumption in the economically advanced countries.

Gheorghiu-Dej then listed the output targets of the principal industrial products for 1965, which will be approximately 2.1 times higher than in 1959. The delegates listened in absorbed attention making notes of kilowatts, tons, cubic meters, hectoliters and other units of measurement, of percentages and amounts.

They were intimately concerned, both as producers and consumers. I will list the items he spoke of, to illustrate the variety of products in this rich little country—electric power, coal, gas, coke, iron ore, oil, steel, aluminum, tractors, trucks, buses, diesel engines, freight cars, machine tools, drilling rigs, electric motors, excavators, soda ash, fertilizers, synthetic rubber, plastics, tires, paper, cement, fiber boards, furniture, radio and television sets, bicycles, refrigerators, fabrics, knitwear, footwear, meat, milk and dairy products, edible oil and sugar. The rate of increase of production will be 13 percent annually as against 10 percent previously.

Gheorghiu-Dej cited many factors which will guarantee success in these plans, first and foremost the enthusiasm of the working people which was amply demonstrated by the discussion of the assembled delegates. Added to this, are the favorable natural conditions, which furnish a variegated raw material basis. The economic cooperation between the socialist countries, with an international division of labor and the expansion of trade with other countries, also contribute to a rapid industrialization. Due to extensive geological research, new reserves of bauxite, iron ore, oil and natural gas, are increasingly available. The delegates discussed how to increase labor productivity, improve techniques, extend automation, save on materials, decrease costs, eliminate

waste, improve quality. The multiplicity of such subjects projected by a political report in a socialist country sounded strange indeed to a veteran of the class struggle in a capitalist country, accustomed to the constant clash of interest between workers and owners of industry, in which none of the above subjects would be of favorable interest to the workers.

ANOTHER WORLD

I felt as if I had gone through one of the huge mirrors of the palace into another world! Imagine workers speaking with pride of their factory's prestige and that "our trade mark must be a good name for the highest quality." One spoke of how to "hasten the rhythm of industry" and another said, "Work is like a song." Another said, "We must stem the tumultuous waters of the river by completing our power stations." An indignant worker demanded, "Why are not the blueprints on time?" From the plant named for Ernst Thaelmann, the German Communist leader murdered by the Nazis in prison, was a report on the increased production of their electric starting tractors which "are as fine as any in the world!" A delegate from Pitesti, once a most backward area, told of how "the oil wells rise proudly there today!" They produce 25 per cent of the crude oil of the country. A peasant told of how one million holes were dug by volunteer labor to plant sapling fruit

trees. A collective farmer told of their patient unhurried work to convince the remaining few individual peasant families to join, inviting them to visit and see for themselves the superiority of machinery on farms.

There were many references to automation, which causes tragic consequences such as mass unemployment in capitalist countries, but is a blessing in a socialist country. "It reduced our labor day and we have more leisure," said a textile worker from a mill in Jassy, where 80 per cent employed are women. These women made 195 proposals on how to increase production. A school was set up to train the less skilled "to become masters of the machines." There are now forty engineers among the women. By 1965 Rumania will have completely mechanized all heavy and arduous operations in mining, timbering, building and transport. Automation will prevail in steel and iron production, in thermo and hydro power stations, in oil refining, cement and building materials production, and in the chemical, food and textile industries. Gheorghiu-Dej reported on an enterprise which has been set up called "Automatica," specializing in research work, in designing automated equipment and installations, in assembling the latter and in training personnel.

Workers discussed figures and technical details like professional statisticians and engineers, while

specialists spoke here as workers. The managerial abilities of workers, which one delegate remarked "are scorned and doubted by the bourgeoisie" flower under socialism. Likewise they discussed the finances of industry, agriculture, communities and the state, with equal ability. In a capitalist country millions flow into the coffers of the few, while in a socialist society the profits flow into the public funds. Therefore, everything that can increase productivity and decrease costs, redounds to the improvement of life for all the people. Increasing "profits" here results in a growth of the State Budget revenue. Wages for workers and income for peasants are thereby increased, which in turn means a higher purchasing power and an increase in consumption of food stuffs and consumer goods.

In addition to real wages, the output of state funds for housing, public health, education, rest and recreation also increases the standard of better living of the people. Gheorghiu-Dej outlined the actual amounts of public funds that are to be allotted in all of these fields and the increase to be made in facilities. By 1965, if not before, these plans, including complete electrification, will be a reality. A large percentage of the state funds are administered by the local people's councils and the trade unions. The latter supervise wages, working conditions, housing, pensions, social insurance, medical care and health resorts for

workers. Many of these are on the shores of the Black Sea or in the Carpathian mountains, where only royalty and the rich formerly enjoyed the beauties and benefits of nature. Now thousands of families go there annually. Former gambling casinos are houses of culture today.

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Economic aid and cooperation between the socialist countries is an important factor in their industrial progress. For the new large Galatz Iron and Steel Center the Soviet Union is assisting Rumania with designs and technical blueprints, consultation in planning the combine, Soviet specialists to help assemble the equipment, personnel from corresponding Soviet enterprises for technical training in production, and in geological research work to develop new iron ore deposits, planning of mining enterprises, etc. An interesting example of international division of labor is in the construction of a cellulose plant in Rumania to process the huge supply of reeds growing in the Danube delta. It is being built jointly by four countries. The Polish People's Republic is responsible for the technical problems of production such as the transportation of goods required by the plant and the construction of port facilities. The German Democratic Republic will

manufacture the technological equipment and machines. Czechoslovakia is working on the problem of industrial processing of lye waste to obtain sodium salts, manufacturing equipment for this purpose and for power generation. Rumania is carrying out the industrial construction. So these age-old marshlands of the Danube will finally yield to the control of man, for his benefit.

Throughout this historic congress there were expressions of justifiable pride but no boasting. All spoke in terms of "We"—never "I." In fact the word "I" did not appear once in Gheorghiu-Dej's report. No matter how exciting or inspiring a delegate's words, they invariably ended in, "There are still serious shortcomings!" or "We have not done enough!" They are well aware that everything is far from complete or perfect in Rumania.

But their progress should be judged by where they were fifteen years ago. Devastated by war, with primitive agriculture and backward industry, and a poverty-stricken illiterate population, they have accomplished miracles, and they are not at their pinnacle. They will surpass capitalism in a few short years, in every phase of life. They closed their congress singing "The International." Never have I heard the words "*We have been nought—we shall be all!*" sung with such meaning and fervor as in beautiful socialist Rumania.

On the Expulsion of Bittelman

By National Secretariat, CPUSA

I

The views of Alexander Bittelman have been under discussion since he made them public in a series of 12 articles in the *Daily Worker* in October 1957. He presented them again in *Political Affairs* (April 1958), and articles analyzing and contesting his position were published in the same magazine (December 1957, January 1958, and March 1958). His theory of the "Welfare State" road to socialism was under frequent discussion in the Draft Program Committee, of which he was a member. His views were rejected by this committee "as a basic departure from Marxism-Leninism and as an expression of modern revisionism in the United States." The Committee statement setting forth the grounds for this judgment was published in *Political Affairs*, December 1958.

In the spring of 1959, Bittelman informed the Party leadership that he had written a book, and agreed to submit the manuscript for review. However, he proceeded instead, in August 1959, to announce in the non-Party press that he sought financial aid to publish a book in which he would present views which had been condemned by the Communist Party as anti-Marxist. At the same time, he continued to advocate his theories at meetings in various cities, organized by revisionists and

liquidationists, who had left the Party and were attacking it. At those meetings, moreover, funds were solicited for the publication of his book.

Nevertheless, the National Executive invited Bittelman to discuss the matter, and requested that he submit the manuscript of the book to it. A meeting was held with him at which he stated that no matter what the National Executive Committee might think about his book, he intended to publish it in any case. However, he reluctantly submitted the manuscript for examination. On the basis of a report by a subcommittee assigned to read it, the NEC on October 14, 1959 in a letter signed by Eugene Dennis, then National Secretary, informed Bittelman:

"It is our unanimous position that in a number of basic aspects the thesis of the book conflicts with fundamental Marxist theoretical principles and with American realities. Further, it is in certain important respects couched as a platform of struggle against the principles and policies of the Party.

"Should you proceed in any case to publish it on your own, as you have indicated intentions of doing, you should be fully aware from our August discussion with you what the consequences of such an act would be."

In his reply (October 18, 1959) Bittelman denied the right of the

NEC to pass judgment on his book and declared his intention to publish it, whatever the consequences. The book appeared in September 1960, multigraphed. By this action Bittelman has brazenly violated the Party principles of democratic centralism and taken the path of anti-Party struggle, together with the revisionists who left the Party previously, and has thereby forfeited his right to membership. The National Secretariat therefore recommends his immediate expulsion from the Communist Party.*

Bittelman has been a Party member and leader of long standing, and in such a case expulsion is a particularly serious action. However, during the past few years, while actively engaged in pursuing the course described above, he has completely withdrawn from all constructive Party activity. More, in an unprincipled manner, while continuing to present himself as a Party member, he has associated himself with anti-Party revisionist elements in attacking the Party. In addition, he took it upon himself to advocate publicly a position on the presidential election in opposition to that of the Party, expressed for example, in

a letter to the *National Guardian* calling for outright endorsement and support to Kennedy.

Persistent conduct of such a character could not be condoned in the case of any Party member; much less can it be tolerated in a Party leader of many years' standing. By his insistent defiance of Party discipline and his continued advocacy of a line in direct conflict with the Party's Marxist-Leninist theoretical principles, he has closed the door on any other alternative and has compelled the National Secretariat, in the best interests of the Party, to ask his expulsion.

Like any other Party member, Bittelman has the right to express his views, either orally or in writing. But such views must be in accord with Party principles. A member of the Party cannot use his membership to advocate views in direct opposition to the very principles of the organization which he joined to uphold. Differences and criticism on tactical questions are entirely permissible—indeed, indispensable. But no one can write books directed against the Party and retain his membership.

As Lenin wrote: "Everyone is free to write and say whatever he likes without restrictions. But every free union (including a party) is also free to expel members who use the Party's platform to advocate anti-Party views. . . . The Party is a voluntary union which would be

* On November 14, 1960 the Westchester Club of the Communist Party, of which Bittelman had been a member, voted unanimously in accordance with the recommendation of the National Secretariat to expel him from the Party. The club reported that he had neither attended meetings nor paid dues for the preceding two years, and had refused to attend that particular meeting.

bound to break up, first ideologically and then materially if it did not purge itself of people advocating anti-Party views." (*Party Organization and Party Literature*, Moscow, p. 24.)

II: BITTELMAN'S REVISIONISM

In his book, Bittelman goes much further along the anti-Marxist road than in his previously published articles. Here he attempts to provide a textbook for the revisionists who left the Party together with Gates, and also a liquidationist program for a new "united Socialist Party" to take the place of the Communist Party.

His own brand of revisionism follows the traditional lines of "American exceptionalism" as developed earlier by Lovestone and Browder, according to which the Marxist laws do not apply to the United States. In Bittelman's view, the "national peculiarities" of the United States now assume prime and decisive importance. According to him, these peculiarities have become so decisive and overwhelming as to make possible the modification of the basic economic laws of capitalism to the extent of producing a new and higher stage of capitalism in the United States.

Revising the Leninist view, confirmed by all recent history, that monopoly and imperialism constitute the last or highest stage of capitalism, Bittelman sees a uniquely American,

a new progressive stage of capitalism, in between monopoly capitalism and socialism. This is to be the "Welfare State"—which he defines as "a system of reforms which extends American democracy to a higher form, an anti-monopoly form of democracy," and which will constitute "an historic stage of social progress . . . of considerable duration" within the present system of capitalism and the bourgeois state system—in short, "a new stage of capitalism." In time, after a long time, this will "grow over" into socialism.

According to him, the "Welfare State" has become the indispensable condition for permanent peaceful coexistence, for capitalist prosperity, and for a democratic and peaceful way to socialism. In his view, a new U.S. capitalism is also to reform the world, bringing its benefits to Asia, Africa and Latin America. In the competition of the two world systems, the refurbished capitalism of the United States will make such social progress as "only the first phases of socialism could hope to attain in other capitalist countries." Even now, before the new capitalist idyll arises, the United States, according to Bittelman, is so fully and inevitably embarked on the road to the "Welfare State" that it stands "in front, not in the rear of mankind's procession to a higher social form of living."

Such are the fantasies, spun out of a complete distortion of Marxist-Leninist principles, that the new pro-

phet wants the Communist Party to sponsor.

His Utopia is not only a caricature of the Marxist-Leninist theory of social development and the socialist revolution. It is a complete distortion of the perspective of democratic anti-monopoly struggles and coalition for the present period, as developed by the Communist Party. With his idyll of the "Welfare State," he confuses hopelessly the strategic objective for the present period of struggle—the curbing and undermining of the power of monopoly in the fight for democracy and peace. His dreams are of the kind that would cripple labor and all anti-monopoly forces in the major struggles against the anti-labor, anti-democratic, cold-war monopoly camp. Without such a struggle it is impossible to gather the forces for peace and social progress.

His theories, if not decisively repudiated, would do grievous damage to the principles and outlook of the Communist Party for the present and future. Bittelman distorts at the core the strategic orientation of the American road to socialism. He makes it appear that the anti-monopoly coalition, working toward the objective of a people's government directed against monopoly, must lead to a new stage of capitalist society. In reality, it can only lead to a new stage of the struggle, in which a new relation of forces can open the way to an advance to socialism.

With this basic distortion of the Marxist perspective, it is not surprising that Bittelman should discover in the trade-union movement everything necessary for his "Welfare State" road to socialism. It is of course true that new approaches have to be developed by Communists and progressives to the labor and other mass movements under the new conditions of today. *But what Bittelman proposes is the complete liquidation of the independent role of the Communist and progressive forces in the trade-union movement.* He would have the Communist Party relinquish entirely its working class responsibilities and role to the trade union leadership.

In his view, the present trade-union movement possesses all the requirements for leading the working class and the nation along the path of progress, indeed to socialism itself. It is true that the labor movement has grown greatly in recent decades and has a leading role to play. But, according to Bittelman, the labor movement already represents "a major shift in class relations in the United States," with revolutionary implications. According to him, it is "destined to bring forth a leading mass Socialist Party;" in truth, he says, it is already playing "an extraordinary role in the advance of the toiling masses to a socialist consciousness and socialism." And this, moreover, in a labor movement whose top officialdom ardently supports the capitalist system and often

outdoes the capitalists themselves in enmity toward the socialist countries.

In short, while paying lip-service to the Marxist-Leninist proposition that socialist consciousness does not arise spontaneously but must be actively aroused in the working class by its party, he assures us that even now "the American workers are socialist-minded in a special American way." Due to this unique American trait, the class-collaborationist policies now prevalent in the labor leadership play only a superficial role, and need bother no one, even if the policy of class partnership with monopoly sustains the cold war. The philosophy and line of action developed by labor leaders like Reuther are sufficient, according to Bittelman, to enable the workers to realize "their fondest dreams of having the benefits of socialism without doing away with capitalism." Such a paean of praise to the American capitalist system is unworthy of any class-consciousness person, let alone of a Communist. It is, of course, in conflict with the realities of American working conditions, which increasingly reveal a far different situation.

In reality, his concept is nothing more than the old theory of spontaneity, common to revisionism, according to which objective conditions will automatically lead to progress and socialism, without the active leadership of a working-class vanguard party. *This is liquidation not only of the role of the Communist Party, but of the class struggle*

itself, and of the role of Communists, labor progressives and the Left in the trade unions. The united front (chiefly from below and also with leaders) is here completely set aside in favor of surrender to the notorious policy of class collaboration.

Bittelman often engages in outright distortion of the position of the Communist Party. He claims, for example, that the only alternative to his line is to call on the working class to engage directly in socialist revolution, and thus seeks to make it appear that the Communist position amounts to doing exactly that. He likewise slanders the Party by making it appear that it holds nothing can be done to win Negro rights and democracy in the South short of a socialist revolution. In this and other respects, Bittelman places the issues and "alternatives" facing the Party in a manner which, considering the political atmosphere in the country, can be characterized only as provocation.

Considering himself on the side of the angels, he thinks that any other course than his own fantasy of the "Welfare State" amounts to disruption of peaceful coexistence and taking the road of civil war. Thus, he says, "failure or refusal to fight for the establishment of a 'Welfare State' would, in fact, amount to failure or refusal to fight for a peaceful and constitutional transition to socialism in the United States." This is nothing but plain political blackmail, since it is well known that the Com-

munist Party advocates a democratic, peaceful and constitutional road to socialism. But its road is by means of class struggle to *socialism*—and not into the camp of opportunism and revisionism where Bittelman has pitched his tent.

* * *

Bittelman engages in a revision of the philosophical foundations of Marxism-Leninism. This is apparent in his departure from the materialist interpretation of history. It is implicit in his entire thesis of new “stages” of society, including the “discovery” of the “Welfare State.”

Thus, he must admit that the term “Welfare State” is unscientific from the Marxist point of view, but he tries to justify not only the use of the term but also the content he imparts to it by references to subjective phenomena. He seeks its validity not basically in actual historical experience, as Marxist materialism teaches, but in current popular concepts, even if, as he admits, they may be illusory. He refers constantly to “what people *believe* is a Welfare State,” to its hold on “the *minds* of the masses,” to its alleged resemblance to the “American dream,” etc. (*Emphasis added.*)

Certainly, such concepts, if popularly held, need to be taken into account in carrying on propaganda for the line of the Party and in working out tactical approaches and methods. But how can popular con-

cepts or ideas in themselves constitute “an historic stage” of society?

This is absurd. Marx taught that “it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but on the contrary their social being determines their consciousness.” That means that Marxists, if they are not to be idle dreamers, must base their policies on reality, not on illusory beliefs which people may hold.

Experience teaches us that the so-called “Welfare State” is not a stage in history. It is a misnomer for certain aspects of state-monopoly capitalism, as it actually exists in all leading capitalist countries—and not in the imagination of Bittelman or anyone else. State-monopoly capitalism is the subordination of the state apparatus of the monopolies in order to assure maximum profits and to consolidate and prolong the domination of the financial oligarchy over the economic and political life of the country. It is neither a “higher stage” or capitalist democracy, nor a “growing over” of capitalism into socialism. In the words of the new Soviet textbook, *Foundations of Marxism-Leninism* (*World Marxist Review*, December, 1959):

To the reformist and revisionist program of a state monopoly capitalism “evolving” into socialism the Marxist-Leninist parties counterpose a clear-cut program of decisive struggle against the capitalist monopolies, against their domination, for the overthrow of the dictatorship of a handful of monopolist aristocracy.

Bittelman sees state monopoly capitalism only as a tendency among other trends within highly developed capitalism, and not as the main trend of development during the past four decades, brought on by the general crisis of capitalism.

The welfare aspects of the modern monopoly state—unemployment insurance, old-age pensions and other reforms—are a direct product of the constant struggle of labor and other anti-monopoly forces for concessions from monopoly, concessions which monopoly also attempts to use (so far, successfully) to preserve the social system and its power over the state.

Bittelman separates out of this complex and interrelated process *only* the element of welfare and other social legislation won by popular pressure, covering up the main feature—monopoly domination of the state. From this he comes up with a completely distorted view of the state as it functions in reality, fashioning from this abstracted, one-sided picture a thoroughly schematic and doctrinaire theory of the Welfare State as a new stage of society.

There is method to this madness—the method and approach of metaphysics and idealism. The metaphysical method comes out starkly in his mishandling and distortion of well-known Marxist-Leninist principles, when he singles out one element in a quotation from Marx or Lenin and turns it into a new and predominant principle. Thus, he starts from Marx’s observation that basic econ-

omic laws may be modified by circumstances and ends up by making the modification into the central principle itself. He does the same with Lenin’s observation that national peculiarities are important although secondary. He makes these peculiarities fundamental and decisive, and relegates the basic laws of Marxism-Leninism to a secondary role in American social development.

The same can be seen in his treatment of the role of subjective and objective factors in history, confusing the objective factory with spontaneity, and shoving aside the role of the class struggle and of the Marxist-Leninist party in the making of history. It is this, among other things, that leads him to transform Lenin’s theory of the growing over of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution, into the Bittelman theory of the “growing over” of one social system into another—of capitalism into socialism. Bittelman thus finds himself, despite his constant references to Marx and Lenin, in the company of the opportunists and revisionists who, each in his own way, argue for the proposition that capitalism can be reformed into socialism by the mere working out of objective factors operating automatically.

This is the same bankrupt theory as that of the opportunists in Britain and other countries who, for half a century, have preached about capitalism “growing over” into socialism. But no socialism has ever come of

it, even when its advocates were at the head of government, as was the Labor Party in Britain. On the contrary, they weakened the influence of labor and helped the Tories repeatedly to return to power.

* * *

Using the same method, Bittelman sets himself the task of revising the dialectical materialist approach to morality and ethics. It should be well known to students of Marxism that humanism—concern for the fullest development of the welfare of all mankind—was always a central element in Marxist thought. Scientific socialism with its socialistic humanism—this was the all-embracing answer to the problem of advance toward the humanist goal as it was posed already in the developing capitalism of the early 19th century. And today, socialism as it is established and growing in the countries of the socialist world is in fact enabling mankind to attain ever new and higher levels of human relations and morality.

However, progress toward humanism occurs not in a vacuum but in the course of actual social development through the class struggle. Here the question of morality enters the picture not as an abstract concept but in relation to the actions of the working class in pursuing its interests and in the building of socialism. For morality is not an abstract matter. There is either working-class morality or bourgeois morality.

Working-class morality—Communist

morality—is interrelated with and serves the advance toward the humanist goal. It serves the struggle toward achievement of higher levels of ethics and morality through the victory of socialism. Hence, when a violation of the socialist norms of morality and democracy does occur, as was the case with Stalin in his later years, it occurs as an aberration, and it is therefore possible to overcome the damage and restore both Party and socialist democracy at higher levels than before.

Bittelman, however, “discovers” a contradiction between the concept of humanism on the one hand and the class character of morality on the other. And having “found” this contradiction, he seeks to give priority to humanism as an absolute, abstracted from its relation to society and class struggle. This, in turn, enables him to “discover” other contradictions—between political expediency and Communist morality, between the Communist Party and the working class, between the Party and the socialist state.

In each case the conduct of the Party is judged against some abstract, non-class yardstick of morality. Thus, all these so-called contradictions of political power in the world, in all countries, without differentiation as to class content, social purpose or historical progress. This in turn leads Bittelman to cast grave doubts upon the morality of the Communist Parties of the socialist world, warning that the exercise of concen-

trated political power could “begin to change the content of that leadership—its social and political content . . . in a direction away from socialism and toward something that only God knows what but certainly nothing of a socially progressive nature.” Failing to mention the basic and drastic steps taken by the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party to revitalize and extend the healthy norms of Party and socialist democracy, Bittelman leaves the impression that nothing has been changed and that this is a real and present danger. In this, he takes a position akin to that of both the Yugoslav revisionists and the Trotskyites.

Continuing his pursuit of the “absolute” (he even invokes “the moral imperatives of the Ten Commandments”) Bittelman develops a view which amounts to the rejection of the materialist base of morality in any given society, its class roots, and the role of transition from capitalism to socialism which gives real foundations to the broad ethical and moral progress of man in our times. In effect, he has transferred the entire consideration of morality from its Marxist base on to the non-class, non-historic and aloof plane where the defenders of bourgeois morality like to keep it. It was from this plane that the revisionists of the Gates type launched their attack upon the Soviet Union—always in the name of the “greater” humanity and in the lofty moral tone so beloved of John Foster Dulles.

The book makes it clear that until now Bittelman had been hiding his real views on the Communist Party, views which coincide completely with the liquidationist position of the Gates revisionists. Now Bittelman expresses his view that Communists have a role to play only as “one of many other socialist factors, currents and tendencies,” as a component “in whatever socialist movement or party will eventually emerge.” Without analyzing in any way the nature of other socialist tendencies or groupings, he revives the slogan so dear to the Gates revisionists—a “United Socialist Party,” which he hastens to assure us will *not* be Marxist-Leninist, and in which progressive trade unionists, like Reuther, will play the leading and determining role. This, then, “is the American way,” as blueprinted by Bittelman.

The Communist Party, Bittelman now says, “has very little meaning for the life and struggles of the American people” for “for the cause of socialism in America.” It’s only hope, he says, is to accept the “Welfare State,” otherwise it is certain to degenerate “into a hopeless sect that nobody needs, nobody wants and nobody cares for.” He, in effect, calls upon the younger generation, together with some from the “older” set, to build a new “united party of socialism”—thus far merely a figment of Bittelman’s imagination.

Thus, Bittelman has made the full turn to revisionism, revealing himself as one with Gates and other

deserters from the Party who have taken the anti-Marxist and anti-Party path. Bittelman reflects the influence of the imperialists, who have been seeking to undermine and destroy the Communist Party. Overwhelmed by the power of U.S. monopoly capital, he exhibits a lack of faith in the working class and in the achievement of socialism in our country.

* * *

As is customary with revisionism, Bittelman labels all opponents of his views as "doctrinaires," "dogmatists," and "sectarians." Going to the extent of slandering the Party and many unnamed Communists, Bittelman does his best, as he did throughout the inner Party discussion, to make it appear that the only alternative to his untenable un-Marxist position is "Left" sectarianism.

The recent Party crisis was precipitated by the revisionist friends of Bittelman who took unprincipled advantage of a number of mistakes of a Leftist character during the previous period to create a revisionist panic in the Party, which they hoped would lead to its utter dispersal and disappearance. But they failed. The healthy working-class core of the membership saved the Party, and thereby preserved the base for moving forward. Shaking off Bittelman and the remnants of revisionist ideas within its ranks can only strengthen the vigor and unity of the Party, which knows also how to guard itself against blacklisting into dogmatic positions that prevent it from

meeting successfully the new tasks and problems of our time. Bittelman's fantastic contortions by which he transforms state monopoly capitalism into a "Welfare State" and makes a mockery of the anti-monopoly coalition have been an obstacle to the effective development of the Party's perspective. His factional, disruptive, anti-Party activities, indicated in the expulsion statement above, his bourgeois individualism, his crass violations of discipline, in defiance of the most elementary conditions of membership, his advocacy of a program which can only harm the struggle against monopoly and imperialism and the fight for peace, democracy and socialism—all this means that he has departed from Marxism-Leninism and Party principles and makes him unfit for membership in the Communist Party. Therefore, the expulsion of Bittelman as a revisionist and factionalist, and the exposure of the real nature of his views, should lead to the further clarification of the Party policies and program.

The time is past when established Party policy and principals can be defied with impunity, making a shambles of democratic centralism and harming the unity of the Party. Our Party can make progress only on the basis of solid unity among all Communists around the policies elaborated by the leadership along the line established at the 17th National Convention. And we have every confidence that it will do so.

MR. ROSTOW'S STRANGE WORLD

By Hyman Lumer

For a long time, it was customary for American bourgeois economists to ignore Karl Marx altogether, or at most to dismiss him in a sentence or two as a crackpot. Today, however, in the face of the existence of a flourishing socialist world guided by Marxist theory, and of the rapid growth of its influence elsewhere, they are compelled to give it more serious attention.

In general they do so, of course, only to "refute" Marx; indeed, in these circles rejection of his ideas is commonly considered a criterion of normal intelligence. But at the same time, apologetics for capitalism increasingly are presented explicitly as alternatives to Marxism. The most recent example is W. W. Rostow's book, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, modestly subtitled *A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge University Press, 1960; cloth \$5.00, paper \$1.45).

In this volume, Rostow undertakes to deal with that period in history in which, as he describes it, "regular growth came to be a built-in feature of each society," and in doing so he presents his theory as "an alternative to Karl Marx's theory of modern history." As a system intended to do no less than "to supplant Marxism" in this field, his work has been widely hailed in economic circles in this country and in Britain. Let us see, therefore, what he has to offer.

THE "STAGES-OF-GROWTH"

Rostow's basic idea is stated at the very outset in the following sentence:

"It is possible to identify all societies, in their present economic dimensions, as lying within one of five categories: the traditional society, the preconditions for take-off, the take-off, the drive to maturity, and the age of high mass-consumption."

Under the heading of "traditional society," he lumps together all pre-capitalist societies, as having in common the absence of modern science and its application. Hence they are marked by a "ceiling on productivity of their economic techniques," and are capable of only very limited growth. Within such societies the "preconditions for take-off" developed, first in Western Europe and especially in Britain, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, "as the insights of modern science began to be translated into new production functions . . . in a setting given dynamism by the lateral expansion of world markets and the international competition for them."

The "take-off" is the period in which "old blocks and resistances to steady growth are finally overcome," and in which there takes place a rapid rise in investment and expansion of industrial production. This, in turn, leads into the "drive to maturity," which Rostow describes as a long interval of sustained progress and rising per capita output. It culminates in the mature society, capable of sustained economic growth as a built-in feature by virtue of its modern productive techniques. And this, finally, passes into the "age of high mass-consumption," in which

real per capita income has risen to such a point that production shifts largely to consumer durable goods, notably the automobile, while a growing share of the national resources is devoted to welfare and security.

The United States, says Rostow, has not only entered this stage, but is already beginning to go beyond it. The rest of the capitalist world, however, is only now entering it, and the socialist countries are still farther behind. What are the new stages of which this country is on the threshold? This depends on how our society chooses to use its accumulation of wealth, he states, and he expresses fear that "secular spiritual stagnation will arise" and that mankind may sink into sheer boredom as existence becomes increasingly easier.

Such, in brief, is the alternative which Rostow offers to Marx's theory of historical materialism and on which he seeks to base his analysis of present-day society. It is, we think, a shoddy substitute.

A ONE-SIDED PICTURE

In constructing his superficial scheme, Rostow simply divides social development into two parts: pre-capitalist and capitalist. The appearance of capitalism opens the doors to a highly accelerated process of growth and thus leads to an age of economic plenty and to the realization—within the capitalist framework—of all the fondest aspirations of man. According to him, American capitalism is about to enter this golden age and hence represents the most advanced society on the face of the earth.

This picture of a glorified, eternal

capitalism Rostow achieves by confining himself to the development of the *forces* of production and divorcing this from the development of the *relations* of production and of the social superstructure, which he ascribes primarily to "non-economic" factors. By means of this cleavage, he obliterates a central feature of social development, namely, that the advance of productive techniques necessitates changes in the economic system and social structure, leading to the emergence of new forms of society.

Recognition of a basic distinction between capitalism and earlier stages of society does not originate with Rostow. Marx and Engels, in the *Communist Manifesto*, expressed it in these words:

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered forms was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all previous ones.

Marxism thus sees this distinctive feature of capitalism, arising from the growth of commodity production and competition for the market, as producing a *speeding up* of social change, not an end to it. And it sees the socialized *production* to which this revolutionizing process gives birth in place of individual production as necessitating socialized *ownership*, that is, the replacement of capitalism by socialism. Rostow's theory serves to exclude this and so to provide an apologetic for the end-

less existence of capitalism. Further, the lumping together of all pre-capitalist societies tends to obscure the fact that capitalism itself was preceded by not one but a series of stages in social development.

The American economy can be considered the most advanced only if we measure advance solely in terms of automobiles and gadgets of "high mass-consumption." And its pre-eminence in this respect is actually due to certain historical peculiarities which have produced a relatively high standard of living in this country, but on which space does not permit us to elaborate here. But as a system of production the American economy, no less than those of the other capitalist countries, is becoming more and more outmoded, more and more an obstacle to further progress. This is evident in the mounting unemployment to which automation and other technological advances give rise, in the repeated economic slumps, in the chronic farm crisis, in the persistent poverty of a large section of the people, and in other respects—to all of which the steady advance of the socialist economies offers an ever sharper contrast.

NON-ECONOMIC FACTORS

Rostow rejects the materialist conception of history outright.

Like so many would-be critics of Marx before him, he vulgarizes Marx's theory, reducing it to a crude economic determinism and attributing to Marx the notion that every human action is rigidly dictated by economic interests and motives. And with this straw man he proceeds to do battle.

Of course, Marx never held any such views. To be sure, he regarded the material conditions of existence as the *source* of conscious motivation, of ideas. "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being," he wrote, "but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." That is to say, the ideas that men hold must have a material source; otherwise they can only be regarded as inexplicable accidents. And that source, says Marx, is the mode of production of the given society, which is the basic determinant of relations between men. But having arisen, ideas play an active role in affecting human existence.

What Rostow has in mind, however, is something quite different from this. Though he speaks of "interaction" of economic, political and social factors, in practice he proceeds to explain economic development in terms of "motives," "attitudes," "values"—in short, of human consciousness and ideas.

Thus, the "preconditions for take-off" require the emergence and coming to authority of a "new elite" whose members have psychological attitudes, ethical values and political motives favorable to change. Later on, speaking of the "take-off" itself, he writes: "Under some human motivation or other, a group must come to perceive it to be both possible and good to undertake acts of capital investment. . . ." And so on, throughout the book. In a word, if certain economic processes are set in motion at particular times, this is to be explained by the appearance of groups of individuals imbued with the necessary attitudes and motives. But their appearance is not in turn to be ex-

plained by the material conditions of the society in which it takes place; rather, it is presumably to be elucidated by psychologists.

Rostow therefore confuses completely the conscious motivation of individuals or groups with the underlying sources of that motivation. He tries to do exactly what Marx warns against—to judge a social transformation “by its own consciousness.” In doing so, he offers explanations which in reality explain nothing. Indeed, one is reminded of those biologists who once solemnly “explained” the migrations of birds by saying that they possess a “migratory instinct.” Such an “answer” is simply a pretentious way of saying that one does not (or cannot) know the real answer.

However, this subjective approach is not without point, for it enables Rostow to deny that the rising capitalist class is driven by a need to extract the greatest possible profits and to endow it instead with the loftiest of motives. More, it enables him to escape the unpleasant idea that a given stage of social development must of necessity give way to another specific stage—for example, capitalism to socialism.

Thus Rostow seeks to escape a fatalistic determinism of his own creation, by injecting an element of free will into social development and by picturing its course as indeterminate and subject to “patterns of choice.” And thus does he negate a scientific approach to the study of social development, which can be based only on the material conditions of social existence and not on inexplicable “choices” at every turn.

Regardless of what conscious mo-

tives capitalists may have, or profess to have, the hard fact is that any capitalist who does not strive to secure the highest possible profits from his venture will soon cease to be a capitalist—at least, outside of Rostow’s imagination. And this is not a matter of motives; it is the hard core of necessity which governs the material existence of capitalists, growing out of the very nature of capitalist production.

Nor is the character of the social system an arbitrary matter of choice from among various alternatives. On the contrary, it must conform to the character of the productive forces, and where it does not it must be transformed sooner or later to that system which does conform. True, the process of change involves the clash of conflicting opinions or of antagonistic class interests, but it is not these subjective factors which determine its basic direction.

A STRANGE WORLD

The world which Rostow delineates is one which has little in common with the real world. It is a world devoid of exploitation and the class struggle, of monopolies, imperialism and colonial oppression.

Even at the outset, in dealing with the “preparations for take-off” stage, he defines the prerequisites for the growth of capital investment as “a radical shift in the society’s effective attitude” toward science, innovation and industrial development, and omits completely from his picture the underlying realities of primitive accumulation. This is the process, graphically described by Marx (*Capital*, Vol. I, Part VIII), by which the initial accumula-

tion of capital took place—a process of robbery, looting, expropriation, enslavement and other crimes. Rostow reduces it to “attitudes” and thrift.

At times he parts company with reality altogether. The development of monopolies he brushes aside in passing as something that never happened. But more than that, he even denies that industrial concentration has been a feature of capitalism for some time past. He says: “Here we would merely assert that the evidence in the United States, at least, in no way suggests that the degree of concentration has increased significantly in, say, the last fifty years.” (p. 154.)

This is sheer fantasy. For anyone who cares to look, the evidence of growing industrial and economic concentration is overwhelming. We need only point to the emergence during the past half century of such industrial giants as U.S. Steel or General Motors, or to the fact that the more than two hundred automobile manufacturers of the twenties have been replaced by some half a dozen firms today, producing a far larger total number of cars.

Then there are the numerous studies of concentration by government bodies. From these, it is enough to cite here the conclusion drawn by the Federal Trade Commission in its 1948 study, *The Merger Movement*, that “it would be blindness not to recognize the obvious fact that the effectiveness of competition, as the protector of the public interest, has been seriously weakened during the past several decades. In industry after industry, prices, production, employment and, in fact, all forms of economic activity have come under the domination of the

Big Four, the Big Six, or in some cases the leader.”

Since Rostow arrives at his idyllic picture by dealing with the productive forces in isolation from the relations of production, his “stages-of-growth” scheme is presented as valid without distinction for all societies—capitalist or socialist countries, imperialist powers or colonial possessions. Thus he conjures away the fundamental differences between economic growth in capitalist and socialist societies. For the Soviet Union, he claims that the pattern of growth is basically no different than that of the United States. This conclusion he supports by the statistical jugglery of Professor G. Warren Nutter, recently debunked by Victor Perlo in his *USA and USSR: The Economic Race* (International Publishers, 1960).

COLONIALISM

According to Rostow, colonialism arose a few centuries ago out of the mercantilist competition for overseas trade. The drive for colonies had two sources. The first was that the competition for trade took place in the framework of a drive for power stemming from the feudal past. Second, he writes: “Colonies were often established to fill a vacuum; that is, to organize a traditional society incapable of self-organization (or unwilling to organize itself) for modern import and export activity, including production for export.” (p. 109.)

But once colonial rule was established for such reasons, the motives of national prestige and power took over, with certain definite consequences. “First, certain non-colonial powers

came, as a matter of prestige and style, to desire colonial possessions as a symbol of their coming of age. For example, nothing in the capital markets of the Atlantic world or in their trading patterns justified much ado about colonies on strictly economic grounds, from, say, 1873 to 1914." (p. 110.) Secondly, "withdrawal from a colony became a matter of national prestige, and thus extremely difficult." In short, aside from the initial organization of trade, the imperialist powers really had no reason for holding on to their colonial possessions other than prestige!

The truth of the matter is that modern colonialism has its roots not in the days of mercantilism (which had its own reasons for seeking colonies), but in the period of the growth of monopoly capital. It was roughly between 1870 and 1900 that the world was overrun by the imperialist powers and that every square foot of available territory in Africa, Asia and elsewhere was grabbed up.

Furthermore, the chief economic motivation was not trade but the export of capital as a means of extracting superprofits from the exploitation of colonial labor, plus the drive for monopolistic control of sources of raw materials.

Such economic pressures, which are no less compelling today than when Lenin and others first noted them, render the drive for colonies and domination of other countries essential to the existence of monopoly capital. The idea that the imperialist powers hold on to colonies (and even fight wars to do so) merely because of national prestige is sheer nonsense.

If today they are compelled by forces which they cannot control to

relinquish their political rule over colonial territories, they strive desperately to maintain their *economic* domination. To take but one current illustration, the tenacity with which the Belgian monopolists work to keep a foothold in the Congo is not a matter of prestige but of the fabulous mineral wealth of Katanga and the enormous profits of Union Miniere. This much should be evident to anyone who reads the daily papers.

Rostow's denial of the economic significance of colonialism and his shrouding of it in psychological mystification serve as a cloak to conceal the inhuman oppression and cold-blooded slaughter of colonial peoples in the name of monopoly profits. But he can attempt to do so only by flying completely in the face of reality.

IMPERIALISM AND WAR

If colonialism is "non-economic," so too, according to Rostow, are the aggressive wars of the present. He looks upon war as a heritage from the pre-capitalist world and its concept of national sovereignty. And he explains it, as he does other phenomena, in terms of "choices" and "temptations."

The source of World Wars I and II, he maintains, lies in the late approach to economic maturity in such areas as Eastern Europe and China, and in the temptation this has offered to countries like Germany, Japan and the Soviet Union to choose external aggression rather than the quest for high mass-consumption or a welfare state at home. The cold war, he says, stems from the same source, and here it is Soviet aggressiveness, as developed

by Stalin, which is the cause. At the same time, it is the United States, like a knight in shining armor, which blocks its path, even as it thwarted the aggressive designs of Germany and Japan previously, and protects the "free world" from this dire menace.

Rostow explicitly denies the role of imperialism in breeding war. He declares that to the extent that an economic basis for modern war exists, "that basis does not lie in imperialism, or in compulsions arising from an alleged monopoly stage of capitalism; nor does that basis lie even in an automatic oligopolistic competition over colonies." It lies rather in the "temptations" and "fears" of the above-mentioned countries.

But now the situation is changing. China and Eastern Europe are catching up in their economic development and a diffusion of power is occurring, hence the "power vacuum" of the past is disappearing. The Soviet position is therefore becoming defensive, and it is this which explains Khrushchev's shift from the Stalin policies.

In these circumstances, Rostow argues, a rational policy for the Soviet Union would be to accept the U.S. proposals for international arms control and inspection. This would require it to "abandon the notion of world domination." Furthermore, inspection, by demonstrating to the Soviet people that they are not confronted by a hostile, aggressive United States, would remove the grounds for the Soviet "police state." It would also lead to disarmament and would push the Soviet Union toward the path of high mass-consumption. It is therefore our task, Rostow concludes, to persuade the Russians to

recognize the hopelessness of an aggressive policy and to "go forward with the rest of the human race."

In short, if the Soviet Union would only accept the Eisenhower foreign policy, all would be well. Here again, we see how the "stages-of-growth" scheme serves as the basis of an apologetic for the policies of U.S. imperialism.

Rostow presents his assertions about "Soviet aggressiveness" without proof, as if this and the unblemished virtue of American ruling circles were equally self-evident. But such assertions are fundamentally false. If his "non-economic" explanations of colonialism, aggression and war obliterate the facts that imperialism breeds war for the domination of other countries and that monopoly capital profits from war, they likewise cover up the fact that by the same token a socialist country has nothing to gain from war and no class which profits from it. Rostow is simply unable to conceive of the Soviet Union being motivated by anything other than power politics, as are in fact the imperialist powers. Nor is he able to understand that relations between socialist countries are of necessity based not on fear and hostility but on friendship and mutual assistance, for no one in these countries profits from the oppression of other peoples.

He is silent about a real source of war danger in Europe today—Adenauer Germany. In World War II, the German rulers set out to conquer the world. Now these same ruling circles, with American help, are gaining increasing power in a renazified and re-armed Western Germany. Yet in all his discourse about "temptation," he

shows no concern over this very real menace.

Finally, to speak about persuading the Soviet Union to adopt a policy of peace comes with especially poor grace from a spokesman for a government which has been guilty of atomic blackmail, which has ringed the Soviet Union with military bases, which maintains a hostile, warlike attitude toward People's China and which persists in conducting provocative spy-plane flights over Soviet and Chinese territory. On these actions he is also silent.

ROSTOW VS. MARX

In a concluding chapter, Rostow presents his difference with Marx, Lenin and the Communists. He opens with what he describes as "The Seven Marxist Propositions." But these bear little resemblance to what Marx actually said or what Marxists today hold. In large part, they are the usual hackneyed distortions presented as "Marxism" by its would-be refuters, such as the already-noted attribution to Marx of a theory of economic determinism. They also include some of Rostow's own inventions.

According to him, it is a basic Marxist proposition that conditions for the destruction of capitalism are created by an "innate contradiction" between "relatively stagnant real wages for labor and the buildup of pressure to find markets for expanding capacity." In the first place, this is not the basic contradiction of capitalism, which Marxists hold to be that between socialized production and private ownership and appropriation. There is a contradiction, stemming from this, between the

tendency to restrict markets on one hand and to expand production as if there were no limit on the other.

This, however, is distorted by Rostow, who injects the idea of "stagnant real wages." He then proceeds to state that "the workings of competitive capitalism yielded not stagnant real wages but rising real wages," and in this, he maintains, lies the great failure in Marx's system. This, of course, is the same stale argument with which Marx has been "demolished" for years, and which is a favorite of modern revisionism. Rostow parrots it despite the fact that Marxists have repeatedly shown that Marx never advanced a theory of "stagnant real wages." On the contrary, he rejected the "iron law of wages" and all similar concepts of a rigid ceiling on real wages. And in asserting that the hitsorical tendency of capitalism is to worsen the lot of the workers, he made it clear that this did not rule out rising real wages over extended periods of time.

But Rostow not only repeats the false argument; he carries it further. Since the lot of the workers has actually improved under capitalism, they are inclined to accept it; not to rebel against it as Marx predicted. But the Communists have continued to operate on the basis of Marx's fallacy. Lenin, in *What Is To Be Done?*, asserted "that if the Russian workers were unprepared to fulfill their historic destiny—as they evidently were—the Communist Party would make them fulfill that destiny." It would organize as a "conspiratorial elite" and seek power on that basis. So says Rostow.

But this is simply a gross libel of Lenin. What he fought against in

What Is To Be Done?, as any serious reader can readily discern, was the "theory of spontaneity," the idea that workers, out of their own experience, would spontaneously arrive at an understanding of socialism and the means of achieving it. He argued that socialism is a science and that workers could therefore be brought to such an understanding through the efforts of a vanguard working-class political party imbued with a grasp of the scientific theory of socialism. But he always fought for the need to *convince* workers. The farthest thing from his thinking—and that of all Communists—is that socialism can be *foisted* on the working class by a conspiratorial clique.

But Rostow ignores all this and goes on to fit his invention into his "stages-of-growth." Societies are most vulnerable to such Communist conspiracies in the "preparations for take-off" stage; hence the Communist successes in economically backward areas. It is, he says, a "disease of the transition," one which these societies will later outgrow. It is the task of the West to bring them through the transition without the disease—to bestow on them the "blessings" of modern capitalism which has kept them in a backward state for so many years.

The logical end of all this is the Dulles policy of "containment and rollback," a policy whose bankruptcy has become more and more painfully evident, and not least because the peoples

of these countries have made it quite clear that they are not victims of any conspiracy, but are conscious enemies of imperialism and wholehearted supporters of socialism.

THE ROLE OF ROSTOW

To sum up, Rostow has concocted a theory in the service of U.S. imperialism, a theory designed to paint a dying system as the very threshold of Utopia and to cover up its contradictions and blemishes. To produce this book he received a sabbatical year from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Reflective Year Grant from the Carnegie Corporation. But it may seriously be questioned whether the product was worth the investment.

The *Communist Manifesto* has lived for more than a century, and its influence has grown greatly, because it is based on a truly scientific approach to history. Rostow's "Non-Communist Manifesto," like other efforts of its kind, will soon pass into limbo, because it is based on unreal bourgeois concepts of the world of today—on false assumptions and distortions which conceal reality. It is only on such a basis that a defense of capitalism can be undertaken, and the degree of distortion required increases as time goes on. *The Stages of Economic Growth* is indicative of the low estate to which such apologetics for capitalism have fallen.

By William Z. Foster

David Brody's *Steelworkers in America: The Non-union Era* is a study of the steel industry, down to the end of the Great Steel Strike of 1919. Printed by Harvard University Press (\$5.00), it is a study in class collaboration. It is primarily an attempt to gloss over the destructive role in the strike played by the steel manufacturers, the government, and by the top leaders of the AFL. The author, obviously, takes great care not to offend any of these three elements in portraying the desperate conditions under which the strike was fought.

Mr. Brody, after his fashion, has produced an elaborately documented book, but its value as accurate labor history is more than doubtful. He handles the brutal steel companies with kid gloves. Actually, their seven-day work week, twelve-hour work day, and their generally abominable conditions were hell-like and murderous, but he glosses it all over and makes it look natural and not so shocking. The frightful conditions were due, he says, to the extreme competition prevailing in the industry. This was not true; it was primarily the profit-hunger of the steel bosses. Mr. Brody treats the government officials, of all categories, who were lickspittle agents of the steel barons in 1919, as so many well-meaning individuals. No stress, for example, is put upon their complete suppression of the rights of free speech and assembly, the wholesale clubbings, arrests, and shootings of the steel workers (22 strikers were killed by the vicious police). Brody is much too polite to mention these unpleasant things, much less blame them upon

their instigators, the steel bosses. And the steel-state governors, and even the President of the United States (Wilson), took no active steps to preserve the strike rights of the workers.

Mr. Brody outdoes himself, however, in covering up the shabby records of the AFL leaders in the steel strike. The author paints the top officialdom as just itching to organize the steel workers. The reality was, however, that they had already agreed before our campaign had begun, not to organize the open-shop industries, of which steel was number one. They also had no plan of work, else, how did they give a comparatively unknown rank and filer like myself the task of leading the organizing campaign? They gave the campaign hardly any money to work with.

How, then, did we organize such a huge strike, with so many basic factors against us? The labor shortage caused by the war, upon which Brody hangs everything, was not enough to do it. Mr. Brody himself marvels at our success. He says, "... the ... conservative Iron Age figure indicates the astonishing dimensions of the strike for union" (p. 242). 367,000 workers struck. (U.S. Dept. of Labor statistics.) He must have known that the top trade union leaders were all set to go through the rapidly-ending war without even trying to organize the steel industry. The fact is that in this great campaign, with the leaders never moving on the job, we were able to apply some principles of Lenin, about whom we personally knew almost nothing as yet. It was just as the Communist Party

was being formed under terroristic conditions.

The first Leninist principle we were able to employ in some degree was the indomitable spirit of carrying out the great job of organizing we had begun, in spite of all obstacles. This infused us with a fighting spirit that was quite foreign to the AFL leadership, and which served us in good stead on many occasions.

The second Leninist feature of our campaign was the thorough planning on which we based all our work. We were industrial unionists and we organized on the idea of one union in the whole industry; a simultaneous campaign in all the steel centers; and we fought to win the organization campaign while World War I was still on—all of which tactics were foreign to the trade-union leaders who were mostly interested in craft unionism and in winning the war. In fact, Gompers called a meeting on March 12, 1917 (even before we got into the war) to formulate labor's position on the war.

Our third Leninist principle was that of self-criticism. That is, in the case of failure in our organizing work—and these were very many and baffling—we, believing implicitly in the possibility of organizing the steel workers, turned our criticism in and against ourselves, not blaming the steel workers, and taking full responsibility for any mistakes, which was contrary to AFL practice—especially of the leaders.

Our fourth Leninist principle was that of the united front. The organizing committee was essentially a combination of two groups—the Left wing (mostly Communists, Socialists, etc.) and the progressives (John Fitzpatrick

and his national following). This combination, which was more or less in opposition to the Gompers' leadership, was indispensable. It carried the campaign through in spite of every difficulty. The conservative leadership, although opposing the campaign, was unable to destroy it outright. This combination of Left-wing and progressives carried through the organizing campaign and the great strike. The united front tactic is still valid today.

Altogether, by the application of our organization principles, which are essentially some of those of Lenin—although as of that time we had hardly learned of him—we carried through the steel campaign successfully. Mr. Brody's estimates, particularly of the organization campaign and the strike, which serve only to whitewash the steel companies, the government, and the conservative trade-union leaders, do not in any vital sense explain the forces that led in the organization campaign and the steel strike.

The Great Steel Strike was formally lost. There was no agreement secured and the union was broken in the strike. Great numbers of workers lost their savings and many had no jobs to return to. On the other hand, the strike won many things for the steel workers. The twelve-hour day and seven-day week were smashed and considerable wage increases were secured. The Great Strike had proved that the steel workers could be organized, in spite of all the steel-trust terror. The 1919 steel strike was the direct forerunner of the C.I.O., formed in November, 1935, under the leadership of John L. Lewis and also of the United Steelworkers, formed in June, 1936 under the leadership of Philip Murray.

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