

# political affairs

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**THE DEBATE ON SOCIALIST  
PERSPECTIVES IN THE U.S.A.**

by Gil Green

[18-33]

To Our Readers:

A few weeks ago we were gratified to receive the following letter from a supporter in Mexico:

Enclosed please find \$100 to be used for three-month trial subscriptions. What we have in mind is digging up through your contacts 100 names of the *younger* people currently active in the peace and civil liberties struggle, who should be reading *Political Affairs*, but who are not getting it for one reason or another. . . .

These younger elements will find in *P.A.* a staunch supporter of their work and at the same time be provided a broader and deepened understanding of what makes their world tick.

For growth of *P.A.* among the young.

Needless to say we will gladly fulfill this most welcome request. We are now compiling names of active young people from all areas to whom we will send gift subscriptions. We are sure that many, as a result of this generosity, will become consistent readers of our magazine.

Surely there are others who can raise small sums to be used for this necessary project. The possibilities of securing new readers among the young are really unlimited. Everywhere there are young workers—employed and unemployed—active civil rights and peace fighters and campus youth who would welcome an introduction to *Political Affairs*. Will you help us reach them?

Some readers have written that many bookstores who carry numerous Left magazines do not handle *Political Affairs*. That is true. But with our small staff (and inadequate funds for promotion) we are in no position to reach them. We would appreciate volunteer assistants who could undertake this worthwhile job.

Anticipating that some of our readers will want to share the March issue with their friends we have printed several hundred additional copies. After reading Gil Green's article on "The Debate on Socialist Perspectives in the U.S.A.," you will agree with us that it merits a wider distribution than we now get through our regular sales. If you want additional copies, do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

Readers will note that the second article on "Government Intervention in Collective Bargaining" by Hyman Lumer is not in this issue. We promise it for April. As you will see we gave priority to an analysis of President Johnson's economic program.

—The Editors

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# political affairs

Theoretical Organ of the Communist Party, U.S.A.

Editor: HYMAN LUMER • Executive Editor: BETTY GANNETT

## Forty Years of a Crusading Newspaper

By The Editors

On January 13, 1924, the *Daily Worker* made its first appearance. Following by some five years the founding of the Communist Party, the launching of this working-class newspaper presented to the American people a new voice for progress and socialism—a voice which today, after forty years of struggle, continues to make itself heard and felt in our country.

The *Daily Worker* was born during the economic upswing of the twenties, when illusions of eternal prosperity were rife and voices of warning of what was to come were few. Those days have long ago vanished, and much has happened in the intervening years: the Great Depression, the rise of the CIO, the New Deal, the growth of fascism, World War II, and the subsequent era of cold war and McCarthyism.

Throughout all this, the *Daily Worker* and the weekend *Worker*

were destined to play a unique role. They fought unswervingly for the cause of the working class and the Negro people—for economic welfare, peace, democracy and socialism. They stood as bulwarks in defense of the Soviet Union and other lands of socialism against the never-ending attempts of reaction to destroy them and to wipe out the new society which had abolished capitalism and exploitation.

The *Daily Worker* played a leading part in the great battles of the unemployed and in the organization of the unorganized during the thirties. It was in the forefront of the struggles to free Sacco and Vanzetti, Mooney and Billings. It led in the tremendous crusades to prevent the legal lynching of the Scottsboro Boys, Angelo Herndon, and many another intended victim, of Jim-Crow "justice." It made its contributions to winning the war against

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fascism and to combatting cold-war hysteria and McCarthyism. And today it speaks out no less for peace, for civil rights, for jobs—for all the aims pursued by the American people, Negro and white.

As such a newspaper, the *Daily Worker* and *Worker* have suffered the wrath of the forces of reaction in this country to a degree no other newspaper has ever experienced. Its publishers, its staff and its readers, have been repeatedly hounded. Efforts have been made to shut them down on cooked-up charges of tax delinquencies as well as on other grounds.

In the days of turmoil following the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, the *Daily Worker* was subjected to the onslaughts of the Gates revisionist elements who sought to deflect it from its Marxist course and failing this, to wreck it. As a result of the adversities and upheavals of this difficult period, publication of the *Daily Worker* had to be discon-

tinued, and only the weekly *Worker* remained, now supplemented by a midweek edition.

But the paper was not destroyed. It has faithfully appeared over all these years, never missing an issue. Its lifeblood has been the devoted support and loyalty of its readers who have cherished it and who, whatever criticisms they may have had, have raised impressive sums of money to keep it alive and have worked untiringly to build its circulation. In this day, when failures of commercial newspapers occur with growing frequency despite huge advertising incomes, the achievement of the *Worker* is all the more outstanding.

We extend our warmest greetings to *The Worker* on its fortieth anniversary. We hail its accomplishments as a fighting newspaper, and we look forward with confidence to its future growth and success, and to its publication one day in a socialist America.

## The Panama Crisis

### An Editorial Article

The tidal wave of anti-colonialism, of freedom and national sovereignty, that swept Asia and Africa has engulfed Latin America. The explosive outbreak in Panama on January 9th, and the continuing defiance of this tiny nation, with a population of just over a million, against the Colossus of the North, is symbolic of the seething determination to rid the hemisphere of U.S. imperialist domination. "Yankees Go Home," which fired the Cubans only a few years ago, is now the popular clamor of the Panamanians.

A seemingly minor incident has evoked a hurricane of popular resistance to the sixty-year occupation by Yankee imperialism of the 10-mile-wide Canal Zone that divides the Isthmus of Panama in two.

The Zone—a strip of five miles on each side of the Panama Canal—is a United States private domain, a military enclave, fenced in by an eight-foot-high wire border, violating the territorial integrity of the small nation. Wrested "in perpetuity" from Panama in November, 1903, only a few brief days after the "success" of the U.S.-fomented revolution against Colombia of which Panama was then a part, the Canal Zone has been a daily reminder to the people that they are not masters in their own house.

Here life is pursued in typical colonial style. The "Zonians"—many second and third generation—enjoy a privileged position in what is referred to as a middle-class paradise, in comfortable isolation from the rest of the country. They live in U.S.-type dwellings, buy U.S.-manufactured goods, drive the latest U.S.-made cars, have their own U.S.-built schools, and are subject to U.S. laws administered by a U.S. governor. Here, "only a fence or the width of a street separates the tidy, comfortable communities of the Zone from some of the worst shantytowns and slums found anywhere in the world." (*U.S. News & World Report*, Feb. 3, 1964.) The journal could have added that these barrack-like shacks were constructed nearly sixty years ago to house the workers digging the canal.

With chauvinist arrogance the "Zonians" hold the native population in utter contempt. They "regard the Zone as something sacred, a piece of the United States plunked down in Latin America." And they view themselves as "the first line of defense against a Panamanian plot to seize a piece of United States property." (*Time*, Jan. 24, 1964.)

### BACKGROUND OF UPRISING

Twice in the past, the United

States was compelled to review the treaty of 1903 (once in 1936 and again in 1955), agreeing to increase the annual "rental" from the original \$250,000 to \$430,000 and then to the present \$1.9 million. It made other minor concessions as well, relating especially to the discriminatory treatment of Panamanian workers employed by the Panama Canal Company, who received in wages four and five times less than the "Zonians." To this day inequities continue and it has been only since 1960 that facilities formerly marked "gold" (for Americans only) and "silver" (meaning the Panamanians), have been desegregated.

To assuage the rising national sensitivity, after new upheavals in 1959, the United States agreed to fly the flag of Panama besides the American flag as a manifestation of Panama's "titular sovereignty" in the Canal Zone. But even this tokenism was considered an "ill-advised compromise" and Congress passed a bill to prohibit the use of United States funds for raising Panama's flag in the Zone. Evidently, as Alabama Dixiecrat Congressman Armistead I. Selden, Jr. recently pointed out, it "gave Panama claim to a degree of sovereignty that they did not possess prior to that time." (*U.S. News & World Report*, Jan. 27) However, President Kennedy reaffirmed the agreement in 1962.

When, on January 7th, in flagrant violation of this commitment, a

group of U.S. teenagers, egged on by their parents, hoisted the Stars and Stripes at the Balboa high school, the long-smouldering anti-Yankee resentment flared up anew against this further insult to national pride. Two days later, several hundred Panamanian students marched to the high school in an attempt to raise their national flag, but were forcibly ejected by the Canal Zone police, with their flag defiled and tattered. Infuriated by the treatment, they returned, now in the thousands, only to be met by a barrage of gunfire from the armed troops called into action. Twenty-four (among them three North Americans) were killed and nearly 400 injured.

Popular indignation swept every municipality. Buildings housing the U.S. corporations and banks were attacked and many set on fire. Every radio blasted: "The 'gringo' must go! All of Latin America was ablaze with mass actions of solidarity.

#### RELATIONS SEVERED

Under these conditions, the government headed by President Roberto F. Chiari, himself a multi-millionaire representing the ruling twenty-odd-family oligarchy, could do nothing less than sever relations with the United States. Heretofore subservient to the U.S. monopolies, the Chiari government now had to heed the will of the popular uprising or face the wrath of the people. It charged the United States

with "unprovoked armed aggression" before the Council of the Organization of American States and the Security Council of the United Nations and pledged to stand firm until the Johnson Administration made an explicit commitment to discuss revision of the 1903 treaty. Recognition of Panamanian sovereignty over the Canal Zone, a greater share in the revenue from the canal, nationalization or internationalization of the canal, elimination of the special privileges of the "Zonians"—these and other demands Panama insists, must now be placed on the negotiation table.

Miguel J. Moreno, Jr., chief delegate to the Organization of American States, warned that body that unless the treaty was revised the threat of aggression "remains latent along the border that separates the zone of the canal from the rest of the republic. . . . The armed forces of the United States are there in a state of alert to halt the people of Panama in the exercise of its rights." Calling for hemispheric measures to protect the security of Panama, he pleaded:

Can the sister countries of Latin America leave Panama abandoned to her own fate, at the mercy of the will of a power filled with its own strength and that has demonstrated that it is disposed not to recognize the rights of the Panamanian nation and, what is worse, to force it to submit to injustice through force. (*N. Y. Times*, Feb. 1)

Despite weeks of mediation efforts on the part of the OAS, the Panama crisis is at an impasse. The explanation is not far to seek. The Latin American representatives found themselves caught between response to the deep and strong sympathies of their peoples for the cause of Panama, on the one hand, and the pressures and threats (particularly economic) of U.S. imperialism, on the other. No basis, therefore, could exist for firm or adequate meeting of the issue.

#### ANTI-COMMUNIST BOGEY

The U.S. ruling circles adamantly proclaim their "legal rights" to "sovereignty" in the Canal Zone. The White House proclaims that it is ready to "discuss" all matters in dispute but will "not negotiate" revision of the 1903 treaty. The powers-that-be just cannot conceive that "a country with one-third of the population of Chicago" (Senator Dirksen) would even dare challenge the might of the United States and at that a country which, but for the grace of the American dollar, could not maintain itself. The U.S. is presented as the sorely abused benefactor, with Panama biting the hand that feeds it.

Convinced that it can bludgeon or frighten Panama into submission (and other Latin-American countries as well) U.S. imperialism, with varying methods of intimidation, relies particularly on its cold-

war instrument—the bogey of “Communist infiltration.” For this, it mustered its heavy artillery: The uprising was instigated by Castro agents. Latin-American “expert” A. A. Berle (*N. Y. Times*, Jan. 26) rushed to explain that such explosions do not occur spontaneously. “Getting up demonstrations and spreading the news throughout the world as a real revolutionary explosion,” he sought to assure the public, “is the oldest trick in the Communist book.” Surely, he conceded, there is anti-Americanism in Latin America, but it is “sedulously fostered by a well-organized Communist propaganda machine.” Deputy of Defense Cyrus H. Vance, returning from a two-day visit to the scene repeats the charge, as does Secretary of State Dean Rusk. While Hanson Baldwin (*N.Y. Times*, Jan. 16) presents reasons for the “stand-firm” position of the military:

... The careful planning and organization of recent riots, with the demonstrators spurred and aided, according to the United States commander on the scene, Gen. Andrew P. O'Meara, by sound trucks and snipers, is evidence to military men that Panamanian Communists believed the time was ripe to oust the United States. . . .

Any concession to Panama now, the conservative and ultra-Right forces in and out of Congress maintain, will be “appeasement of the

mob” and be “construed as a victory for the Castroites and Communists.” And the Johnson Administration, under strong pressure from the industrial-military combine, with an eye to the November elections, refuses to give an inch.

But this time U. S. imperialism has been unsuccessful in its frantic efforts to arouse anti-Communist hysteria. While it is known that Panamanian Communists are an active component of the popular national movement, even conservative elements reject the chauvinist implications that the Panamanians, any more than the Negroes in the South, would be satisfied with their lot, were it not for the manipulation of “outside agitators.” *Newsweek*, always rabidly anti-Communist, in an article entitled “Panama: Bluffs, Pressures, Impasse,” writes (Jan. 27):

But neither world opinion nor the Panamanians were convinced by the charges of Cuban interference. *Newsweek's* Tony Valbuena reported from Panama: “From all visible evidence, Communists for once have no leading role in the events. In the powerful 50,000-strong Federation of Panamanian Students, which is organizing the Canal fight, Communists are insignificant. Nor does it seem that there is Cuban money or arms. It is true that the students have about 600 guns, but they are mostly side arms or small caliber rifles of no single type and badly kept.”

### A MILITARY OUTPOST

U.S. imperialism is playing for big stakes in Panama. And these stakes are not, as President Johnson's statement of January 14th would have us believe, related only to concern for the “safety” of the Panama Canal. While, of course, the Canal still has great commercial value as a key artery (and source of profit), it has declined in its strategic value, since it is not wide enough for the passage of the new huge Navy ships and aircraft carriers. The Panama Canal Company, as engineering journals have pointed out, has been conducting studies to construct a new sea-level canal by nuclear excavation on another site.

The Canal Zone, however, remains a major military base for U.S. imperialism's control of the Caribbean, with forces kept in readiness and fighting-trim to be used against national-liberation struggles in Central and South America. A dispatch in the *N. Y. Times* (Jan. 11), admits as much, when it states:

The Canal Zone is still a major American military center, however. United States uniformed forces in the Canal Zone number 9,750 men, including a 7,000-man Army combat brigade. These forces are there not only for the protection of the canal but also as a mobile force to cope with any contingency in Latin America. (our emphasis)

The Canal Zone houses a school

for jungle warfare—the Inter-American Police Academy and Tactical Officers School—where thousands of Latin-American soldiers and officers are trained in crushing popular upheavals and as reserves for “military coups” when governments get out of hand.

Furthermore, as Hanson Baldwin explains (article previously cited), the Pentagon is opposed to any concessions to Panama because that could become an opening wedge to force the dismantling of other U.S. bases—the hundreds of military bases the United States has established on foreign soil. He writes:

... They fear that the political and psychological effects of internationalization or transfer to Panamanian control would have disastrous repercussions on the entire structure of United States bases around the world, particularly in the Caribbean and Latin America. Bases such as Guantanamo Bay, in Cuba, and Chaguaramas, in Trinidad, might be lost, imperiling the control of the Caribbean that is considered essential to United States security.

Thus, United States imperialism cannot brook interference with its control of the Canal Zone.

### SOVEREIGN RIGHTS

The world of today is far different than at the turn of the century when gunboat diplomacy could run roughshod over every nation in the hemisphere. Today, when colonialism

has been eliminated in country after country, the aspirations to sovereignty of even the smallest nation can no longer be frustrated. As the *New York Times* has editorialized (Jan. 26), "Americans would do well to face the fact that the treaty of Panama is going to have to be revised." The untrammeled right to national dignity has the powerful backing of a new world—a world in which national independence and socialism are the irreversible reality in vast areas of the globe.

The interests of the people of our country lie on the side of the just cause of the Republic of Panama, and not on that of the U.S. monopolists who plunder Latin America. Each time the C.I.A., employing chicanery and bribery, organizes another "military coup"; each time political and economic pressure are exerted to force Latin-American governments and peoples to submit to the omnipotence of the Almighty Dollar, our country loses face before the whole world. It is the taxes of the working people which pay the

costs of the plunder, and the monopolies which reap the billions in profits from the misery and poverty of the Latin American peoples.

The time is long overdue for restoring Panama's sovereignty over all of its territory. The extra-territorial rights which were ceded to the United States in the days of Teddy Roosevelt's "big stick" reflect an age that history has pushed into oblivion. The Canal Zone must be restored to the Republic of Panama. The onerous provisions of the 1903 treaty, forced upon the newly-born Panama, demands fundamental revision. A workable agreement for the control of the Canal—whether it be nationalization or internationalization—can be settled through peaceful negotiations, involving if necessary all nations concerned—but the negotiations must be conducted on the basis of equality and mutual respect.

The Johnson Administration must be made aware that this path represents the true public opinion in our country.

# President Johnson's Economic Program

By Hyman Lumer

In a recent series of documents—the State of the Union Message, the Economic Report of the President, the Budget Message, and messages on housing and farm problems—the economic program of the new administration has been taking shape. The details of the program will be further spelled out in additional messages, notably that to be delivered soon on the proposed "war on poverty." Its general outlines, however, are already clear.

This program is of special importance, not only because of the indication it gives of the direction which the new administration is taking, but also because it comes at a critical time for organized labor and on the eve of major negotiations, as well as at a time when shifting world relationships are compelling significant changes in government policies.

## STATE OF THE ECONOMY

The central theme of the President's program is the "war on poverty," and its principal weapon is the projected tax cut, which is offered as a virtual economic panacea. These are presented within the framework of a rather lengthy economic upturn, and with the aim of further prolonging it.

Since early 1961, the Economic Report points out, the gross national product has risen 16%, industrial production 23%, after-tax income 16%, and profits no less than 44%. A significant feature of this growth is that of the 16% rise in the GNP, 11% is accounted for by increased government expenditures, mostly increased military outlays.

Accompanying these favorable developments, however, are some seriously disturbing aspects of the economy. The first is the paradox of persistent unemployment in the face of heightened economic growth. Indeed, from 1962 to 1963 the officially estimated rate of unemployment rose from 5.6% to 5.7%. According to the Report, jobs are today being eliminated by technological advance at the rate of some 2,000,000 a year—the highest such estimate to date. A second is the persistence of excess capacity. Currently only 87% of industrial capacity is in use; in the steel industry, no more than 68%. A third is the continued balance of payments deficit.

## OUTLOOK FOR 1964: THE TAX CUT

The outlook projected for the coming year is one of continued growth,

but its extent is made strongly contingent on passage of the tax cut. The Report states:

With the tax cut promptly enacted, our Gross National Product for 1964 should rise from \$585 billion for 1963 to a projected \$623 billion (understood as the midpoint of a \$10 billion range). But, without the tax cut, our sights would have to be set \$10 to \$15 billion lower—and dashed expectations could turn expansion into recession.

To produce this impressive growth rate (roughly 7½%), the President proposes a cut in the withholding tax rate from 18% to 14% immediately, plus a cut in corporate tax rates which would reduce the present 52% maximum to 48% over a two-year period. This would provide a cut of \$11.1 billion by fiscal 1965. However, total receipts are not expected to decline, on the grounds that with increased economic growth, taxable income will rise substantially. In fact, for fiscal 1965 the proposed budget counts on a rise of \$4.6 billion above the receipts for the current fiscal year (ending June 30, 1964). This is based on the expectation that in fiscal 1965, as a result of the stimulus of the tax cut, the economic growth rate will soar to well over 8%.

Significantly, however, this rosy outlook does not extend equally to the reduction of unemployment. The best that is anticipated is a drop to 5% by the end of 1964. Forgotten

altogether, apparently, is the 4% target set by the Kennedy Administration, initially to be achieved by the end of 1962 and subsequently put off to 1964.

The tax reduction, it now appears, will shortly become a reality. Both houses of Congress have passed bills providing for a cut of \$11.6 billion, thus exceeding the Administration's request. As this is written, the bills are in the hands of a joint conference for the ironing out of differences, and the tax cut should soon be law. The question is: what will its actual effects be?

That it will provide a pronounced economic stimulus there can be no doubt. However, there is good reason to consider the Administration's outlook greatly over-optimistic.

To begin with, there are the limitations of the tax cut itself. Not only is it heavily weighted in favor of the high-income brackets, but all of the tax reforms, so vitally necessary to reduce the glaring inequalities which exist, have been eliminated from the legislation. Major emphasis is placed on stimulating capital investment, in the face of the huge rise in profits and the enormous sums of surplus capital with which the coffers of big business are swollen. On this point an illuminating AFL-CIO study ("The Runaway Profits Boom," *American Federationist*, January, 1964) says:

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, at last report General Motors was

holding cash and marketable securities of \$2.3 billion, an amount larger than the assessed property valuation of 18 of the 50 states. And the *Journal* continues: "Among companies with large—sometimes embarrassingly large—accumulations of cash and securities readily convertible into cash are some of the most familiar corporate names. National Steel Corporation, the nation's fifth largest steel producer, is even now pondering the problem of what to do with its large amount of cash. And Howard B. Speyer, vice president and treasurer of the Champion Spark Plug Company, looks up from his corporation balance sheet which shows cash and marketable securities of \$48.8 million, and says: 'The question is, what are we running—a spark plug company or a bank?'"

Recently Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon testified to the upward-surgeing wealth of American corporations when he noted that "at the end of the first quarter of 1963 corporations held \$57.6 billion in cash and United States government securities. . . . Their net working capital of \$144.9 billion reached the highest total on record."

To argue that these corporations do not invest more because they lack funds is patently absurd. In the absence of other stimuli to investment, tax reductions will only add to the accumulation of surplus funds. But at the same time the impending tax cut will appreciably increase mass purchasing power, and will in this way provide a substantial economic stimulus. It will be considerably less, however, than if the cut were

concentrated in the lower income groups.

Because it is of some real benefit to the working people, the tax cut merits at least qualified support. But we should not lose sight of the fact that, like every preceding tax cut since World War II, its effect is also to increase the proportion of the total tax burden borne by the working people. A reversal of this trend remains to be accomplished.

The impact of the cut may be lessened also by a levelling off of some phases of economic growth during the coming year. This applies chiefly to automobile production and housing construction, which have been mainstays of the uptrend. Thus, while auto output is expected to equal the 7.6 million mark attained in 1963, there is considerable opinion that it will not do much better. The same applies to housing. Also noteworthy is the fact that industrial production has virtually levelled off since mid-1963. Last June the Federal Reserve Board index stood at 125.8; in January of this year it was 127.1.

Hence, while the tax cut will undoubtedly have a shot-in-the-arm effect, probably sufficient to carry the upswing safely through the election campaign, it is apt to be substantially less than that predicted by the Administration. Furthermore, the question of what happens afterward, particularly in view of proposed limitation of government spending, is al-

ready beginning to be widely asked.

### THE "WAR ON POVERTY"

The crusade against poverty announced by President Johnson has all the earmarks of the demagoguery of ward politics, which freely promises all things to all men and at no cost to anyone. The \$1 billion allotted, the *New York Times* comments editorially (January 22, 1964) "is scarcely adequate for even an initial skirmish." And of this, it is estimated, perhaps no more than \$300 million in new appropriations is likely to be spent in the first year.

Moreover, the initial plans now being drafted by its newly-appointed director, Sargent Shriver, indicate serious limitations on its scope. The *New York Times* (February 8, 1964) reports:

The program is not being designed to eliminate poverty in a year or even five years. The emphasis, instead, is being put on what have become known as the "pockets of poverty," those urban slums and rural areas where there are large groups of poverty-stricken people.

On this emphasis, Rowland Evans and Robert Novak remark in their column "Inside Report" (*New York Herald-Tribune*, February 7, 1964):

Hand-in-hand with the comprehensive plan goes the idea for "demonstration" projects to show how educa-

tion and health grants might help a handful of poverty-plagued communities. This might make a little money go a long way, but it isn't a general attack on poverty.

It would be all too easy to dismiss such a proposed "war" as sheer demagoguery, but it would be wrong to do so. First of all, the very placing the fact of poverty before the nation as a central problem stands in sharp contrast to the previous practice of glossing over it and hiding it behind rosy pictures of "affluence." Similarly, the idea of making funds available to fight poverty by reducing military expenditures, however small the sums presently involved, represents a welcome break with past emphases. The mere posing of the slogan "war against poverty" in this light, even if demagogically, offers a rallying point for advancing mass struggles for economic well-being and peace to a new plane. But such struggles can be effectively waged *only if the gross inadequacies of the proposed program are not lost sight of, indeed, only if the correction of these is made the basis of the fight.* In other words, President Johnson's declaration of such a war opens the doors to a far-reaching campaign for a truly effective crusade against poverty.

The President's criterion of poverty—an income of less than \$3,000 a year—places 20% of the nation's family units in this category. The

selection of this arbitrary dividing line is, to say the least, open to serious question. In fact, it might appropriately be argued that all family units receiving less than the Heller budget are poor—a proportion closer to 40% than to 20%. Nevertheless, even if we accept the President's standards, certain facts stand out glaringly.

Chief among these is the alarming extent of poverty among the Negro people. Here the proportion of family units receiving less than \$3,000 a year is nearly 50%—the highest of any group in the country. In comparison, the rate among farmers—also disturbingly high—is 40%. And in Appalachia, which has become a name synonymous with human wretchedness and privation, it is only 33%. Negro families are 21.5% of the total number classified as poor, and no less than 47% of this national total is to be found in the South.

In New York City, reports the *Wall Street Journal* (January 8, 1964), some 15% of the Negro population is on relief. The article goes on to say: "The city's Negro infant mortality rate is 40 per 1,000 births, double the rate among white New Yorkers. A New York Negro male's life expectancy is about 61 years, some six years less than his white counterpart." Harlem apartments, living in which is described as being "like trying to inhabit a sore," rent for as much as \$125 a month for two

rooms. Moreover, the article adds, "the average monthly income of a New York Negro family amounts to only 59% of that of a white New York household, down from 61% in 1950." And such statistics are all too typical of many other cities. Here it must be added that the condition of the Puerto Rican population in New York and other cities is no better, and in some respects even worse, and that the property of the Mexican-American population is scarcely less glaring.

From such facts, one conclusion emerges in sharpest relief: *a real war against poverty must have as a main battlefield the Negro ghettos whose appalling poverty and degradation are the fruits of the abominable Jim Crow system.* The fight against poverty is thus inseparably linked with the fight for civil rights, for an end to segregation and discrimination. The economic interests of the American working people as a whole are directly tied to the struggles of the Negro people for their freedom. To launch a "war on poverty" which does not take these things into account would be pure hypocrisy. In this respect the approach presented in the State of the Union Message is seriously lacking.

The program which President Johnson outlines, aside from the tax reduction, consists mainly of measures already introduced in Congress but never enacted and of expansions



of some present programs. It includes extension of the minimum wage law to additional workers, modernization of unemployment compensation, medicare, special aid to Appalachia, housing, aid to education (especially in depressed areas), a broader food stamp program, expanded area redevelopment, youth employment legislation, improvement of the transportation system, and creation of a commission on automation.

This program is, to be sure, not without merit. But much of it is legislation repeatedly pigeonholed in Congress. And much of it is entirely inadequate to fulfill its purpose. A detailed analysis must await the elaborated program to be presented in the forthcoming special message, but one illustration will suffice here. The housing message calls for authorization of 50,000 new units of public housing each year for the next four years—a figure far below the barest minimum needed to fill the increasingly unmet need for low-cost housing.

There are other serious weaknesses. Not least is the outright rejection of the shorter work week as a means of combatting unemployment and the substitution of a proposal to increase overtime penalties on an industry-by-industry basis. Also noteworthy is the fact that the proposed budget fails to provide for extension of the \$900 million accelerated public works program now in effect.

### THE BUDGET

The proposed budget for fiscal 1965 has been described by more than one observer as “doing it with mirrors”—as an attempt to present something on paper which will somehow satisfy all sides. To some extent this observation is justified.

The budget calls for expenditures totalling \$97.9 billion, some \$500 million less than in fiscal 1964. It anticipates a deficit of \$4.9 billion, about half that expected in 1964. The added \$1 billion for the “war on poverty” is counterbalanced by the following:

1. A cut of \$1.3 billion in military appropriations.
2. A cut of \$1.2 billion in farm appropriations.
3. Sale of government assets, chiefly mortgages, totalling \$700 million more than in this year.

This almost certainly underestimates the amount to be paid out in farm price supports. Also, it is doubtful whether much of the cut in military appropriations would actually take effect in 1965. And the estimated income is, as we have seen, based on a highly optimistic prediction of the effects of the tax cut. However, this is not the main point.

The important thing is that the proposed reduction in military outlays must be viewed as a significant development, together with the fact that only \$3.4 billion in foreign aid, \$1.5 billion less than the last

request of the late President Kennedy. This is in distinct contrast to the increases in arms budgets in recent years, averaging \$3 billion annually. True, this is justified on the grounds that our present military strength is so great that we can afford to relax, and it reflects the futility of piling more nuclear weapons on top of an already superabundant supply. But it also reflects the reduced tensions in the world today and the resultant pressure against continued increases in arms spending. Hence it opens the door to a far more effective struggle than hitherto for substantial reductions in such outlays and for a policy of disarmament, with the use for social welfare of the funds thus saved.

### WAGES AND PRICES

Another important aspect of the Johnson Administration's economic policies is its position on wages and prices. This is a continuation, with minor embellishments, of the policy enunciated by the Kennedy Administration of holding wages and prices down in the name of the “public interest.”

Calling attention to recent price increases in a number of industries and calling for the maintenance of price stability, the Economic Report states:

and wage developments, with the aid of an early warning system which is being set up in the appropriate agencies. I shall not hesitate to draw public attention to major actions by either business or labor that flout the public interest in noninflationary price and wage standards.

In keeping with this, the Council of Economic Advisers, in its report, reiterates the “guideposts” first presented in 1962, which seek to hold wages and prices in line with the rise in productivity. There are, however, some addenda, notably the argument that in view of the phenomenal rise in profits there is ample room for price cuts in those industries in which productivity has been rising at an above-average rate. The new “guideposts” also place the average annual rise in productivity at 3.2% instead of the previous figure of 2.5%, thus justifying a somewhat higher rate of wage increase. These addenda are not inconsequential; however, they do not materially alter the picture.

The meaning of the Kennedy wage-price policy has been discussed at some length in a previous article.\* It is sufficient to point out that it is in practice a policy of holding *wages* down, and that notwithstanding Kennedy's attack on the steel companies in April, 1962, the upshot was that the steelworkers

\* Hyman Lumer, “Government Intervention in Collective Bargaining,” *Political Affairs*, February, 1964.

I shall keep a close watch on price

settled for very little while the steel companies in the end got substantially whatever price increases they might have had in any case on the basis of market conditions.

It is generally felt that Johnson is hardly likely to duplicate the Kennedy attack on the steel companies. The application of the policy is apt to arise rather in relation to wage demands in coming contract negotiations. President Walter Reuther of the United Auto Workers has already announced that in view of the enormous increases in profits in the auto industry, the union will not consider itself bound by the Administration's requests for "moderation." President James E. Carey of the International Union of Electrical Workers has made a similar pronouncement.

It is impossible to anticipate at this point what may happen in these and other negotiations. However, if strong pressure for substantial wage increases develops, it may well be met with strong Administration pressure against it. Coupled with the Right-inspired drive for new anti-labor legislation and the dangerous precedent of compulsory arbitration set in the railroad dispute, Administration intervention in the name of the "public interest" may lead to sharp struggles with important ramifications.

#### QUESTIONS OF PROGRAM

In the main, the Johnson eco-

nomics program has received the support of the labor leadership, though with some reservations and additional demands. The AFL-CIO has called, among other things, for action on the shorter work week, a greatly increased public works program, and amendment of the wages-and-hours law to provide double time for overtime in all industries. More rounded labor programs for the fight against poverty will undoubtedly be formulated. Such programs deserve the fullest support.

It is necessary, however, to go beyond this. The Communist Party needs to present its own immediate program of action to the American working people—a more far-reaching program which will make its own special contribution to the generation of a really serious, militant crusade against poverty. The following are presented as some key elements in such a program:

1. Major emphasis must be placed on an all-out fight for the shorter work week. The establishment of double time for overtime should be supported as a means of combatting unemployment, but not as a substitute for the shorter work week.

2. Of central importance, as has already been pointed out, is the linking up of the entire campaign with the civil rights struggle and particularly with the fight for jobs for Negro workers. The necessity of this can scarcely be overemphasized.

3. The fight against poverty must be tied in with the fight for peace. The idea of obtaining the necessary funds by reducing military expenditures should be developed into a demand that the war-chest for the anti-poverty war be increased from \$1 billion to \$15-20 billion and that for the cold war be correspondingly decreased.

4. While giving qualified support to the present tax reduction legislation, it is necessary to wage an unceasing fight to reverse the shifting of the tax burden to the working people. The program must therefore incorporate demands for drastic tax reforms, increased exemptions and abolition of the withholding tax.

5. A renewed campaign is required against the tying of wages to productivity. This erroneous concept is based on the hoary fallacy that prices are determined by wages—a fallacy long ago exposed by Karl Marx who showed that wages and prices are independently determined and that in the end wage increases are obtained at the expense of profits. The acceptance of this

fallacy by the labor leadership has served to condone speedup and to obstruct the fight for higher wages. Today it serves to weaken the workers' fight against imposition of wage controls in the name of the "public interest."

6. It is necessary not only to combat all such efforts to hold wages down but to take the offensive in a struggle embracing all sections of the people gouged by the monopolies to hold *prices* down in the name of the true public interest.

7. Finally, it is essential to deal not only with the fact of poverty but with its causes. The false propaganda that poverty is due to incompetence or to personal misfortune, that the poor and chronically jobless constitute some sort of abnormal, unemployable "subclass," must be exposed. It must be made clear that poverty is a menace which threatens all workers, that it has its roots in their exploitation and robbery at the hands of the big capitalists—a process which will come to an end only with the end of capitalism and its replacement by a socialist society.

# The Debate on Socialist Perspectives in the U.S.A.

By Gil Green

What explains the weakness of the movement for socialism in the United States? Why was there more anti-capitalist, pro-socialist sentiment in this country in the early years of this century than there is today?

These are questions that have been the center of considerable controversy this past year, especially in certain Left intellectual circles. The theme of the debate is not entirely new. Millions of words have been written over the years to prove that the weakness of the movement for socialism in this country stems from the irrelevance of socialist ideas and a socialist solution for America.

What gives the current discussion its significance is that its participants start from the opposite point of view. They are deeply convinced that only socialism can offer a lasting and fundamental alternative to the crisis of our times. It is this which impels them in their search for "what went wrong."

There is good reason to be perplexed. In 1912, the Socialist Party polled over 900,000 votes, six per cent of the total vote cast. Since then the Soviet Union was born and became a world power only second to that of the United States. After World War II some ten other socialist states emerged. In this same span of years the United States has been the scene of many changes: the great upsurge of the thirties, the more than four-fold increase in

the size of the labor movement, the birth of the great Negro freedom movement, and the appearance of many other mass organizations and movements. Why then is the conscious movement for socialism weaker today than in the days of Eugene V. Debs? That is the question.

The debate began with an article in the February, 1963, issue of *Monthly Review* entitled, "American Radicalism: Liberal or Socialist?" Written by Ronald Radosh, a doctoral candidate in American history at the University of Wisconsin, it touched off a lively controversy which detonated in five issues of the magazine. Approximately at the same time the quarterly *Studies on the Left* opened a debate of its own, with an editorial discussing in essence the same question. This too, evoked considerable response. An echo of the dispute was also heard in another Left student quarterly, *New University Thought*.

Essentially the debate found its sharpest expression in the view of Mr. Radosh, which can be summed up as follows:

1. The decline in socialist consciousness and organization dates from the New Deal period. It was then that the Communists and Socialists supported "humanitarian effort at reform," while "refraining from any fundamental criticism of the capitalist system."

2. This, says Radosh, arose from

a false estimate of the ultra-Right and fascist menace in the United States, both during the New Deal and since. Hence the Left erroneously sought to forge united fronts against a fictitious ultra-Right threat while holding off the raising of socialism "for a distant time when it will clearly be relevant for discussion."

3. The Left has also failed to see the relationship between reforms at home and imperialist expansion abroad and thus, "forfeited its responsibility of presenting an alternative to a system which defined welfare as dependent upon foreign expansion."

4. All this has helped strengthen capitalism and has dissipated the socialist movement. However, "In the Socialist Party's period of greatest growth, a policy deemed 'sectarian' today gained more support and created more socialist consciousness than supposedly more realistic policies did at a later period."

5. From all this he concludes: "Instead of devoting their time to support of those reform measures which the corporations *do* advance as part of the welfare of corporate capitalism, radicals could and should dispense with liberalism, presenting socialism as an alternative to stagnation and war. The going will be rough and the development of a strong and radical socialist movement will not occur overnight, but it certainly will not develop at all if the ideological orientation of the Left is 'anti-fascist unity' against the

mythically conceived threat of a powerful Right. Leaving liberalism to the liberals, America might yet gain an independent and growing socialist Left."

Such are the reasons and the remedy advanced for the decline in socialist strength in the United States.

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First, it is important to set historic facts straight. The very split in socialist ranks that gave birth to the Socialist Party in 1901 arose in great measure as a reaction to the hopeless sectarianism of DeLeonism in the Socialist Labor Party. It is true that there was an "impossibilist" wing of the Socialist Party, that is, a group opposed to the struggle for reforms, but to conclude that the Party as such did not fight for these is historically inaccurate. The truth is, there can be no vital socialist movement that does not concern itself with improving the daily lot of the masses while, of course, not limiting itself to this.

Likewise it is mistaken to view the thirties as a period of tailspin for socialist thought and movement. The facts are that there was a sharp decline in the organized movement for socialism all through the decade of the twenties. This was due to the sharp divisions over policy, to the effects of the Palmer Raids and red-scare, and to the prosperity illusions in the years preceding the October 1929 crash. It was in the course of the great struggles of the thirties that the Communist Party emerged from

its isolation and developed considerable mass influence and a growing ideological and organizational strength. It was in this same period that the Socialist Party, incapable of grasping the essence of the crisis, or of giving daily leadership to the struggle, dwindled to near nothing. Thus the lesson to be drawn from the thirties is the opposite of that seen by Radosh.

This is not to say that serious errors were not made. These were by no means in just one direction. True, there were tendencies to oversimplify class relations and to view the New Deal uncritically. But there were also strong carry-overs of rigid, dogmatic and sectarian views. For example, the book *Toward a Soviet America* appeared as late as the middle-thirties. Also, while there may have been oversimplified views of the struggle against fascism, it was as the "premature" anti-fascists that the Communists won high moral authority, which became somewhat tarnished during the period of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact. Thus, to see as the main errors of the period the fight for the needs of the people, for reforms, and the fight against fascism, is to misread the history of that era.

There is singular proof that the errors cited by Radosh—even if these had been the errors made—were not the main reasons for the decline in socialist strength. Why? Because there were socialist groups that did not make these "errors." How did they fare? Why did not they de-

velop mass influence and become mass organizations?

In the course of the discussion in *Monthly Review* the question was asked why the Socialist Labor Party had not emerged as anything more than an insignificant sect, despite the fact that it corresponded with near exactitude to what had seemingly been prescribed. But in the final rejoinder, Radosh did not think it important enough to answer. Yet it deserves answer, for if the secret has now been found for the successful building of a strong socialist movement, it must be explained why the Socialist Labor Party and other purist sects, such as the Proletarian Party, which apparently had this "secret" all along, have failed so miserably.

It may be unfair to stick Radosh with the shrunken, shrivelled mummy of the Socialist Labor Party. But it is not unfair to ask: Why, if the solution was so simple, did no counter current arise in this long period of time and prove its validity by its deeds?

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What strikes one is how a comparison can be made between periods as widely separated in time and as different in quality as the pre-World War I and the post-World War II epochs without in any way analyzing the objective changes that took place in that long interval. Yet it is impossible to compare men, policies and movements without taking as a starting point the change in objective conditions.

What was the character of the period just prior to World War I in which the Socialist Party made its greatest headway? It was the tail-end of an epoch of feverish economic growth interlaced with spasmodic and violent financial panics and industrial crises. The unrelenting process of capitalist concentration, culminating in the dominance of trustified industry over the national economy, was by no means one of peaceful growth and development. It more closely resembled a war in which the rising monopolies rode roughshod over the rest of the nation.

This was a period of intense warfare between financial groupings for control. It was a period when smaller industrial firms were being exterminated, when the farmers were in the vise of a tightening price squeeze and when the South had already been reconquered by a white aristocracy with the means of Jim Crow and lynch terror. For the workers, this was a period of the most intense exploitation. It was they who were made to pay for the vast accumulations of capital required for large scale industry and for the drive to undersell foreign competitors.

It can be said that this was a period in which the struggles for immediate needs, for reforms, came into very sharpest collision with the industrial political power. Many of the strikes resembled semi-civil wars. In one such strike of 5,000 teamsters

in Chicago in 1905, 20 men were killed, 400 injured and 500 arrested. It was no accident therefore that this whole period was characterized also by great political unrest and repeated efforts to topple the capitalist two-party political structure.

In 1892 the Populists (People's Party) polled a million votes and two years later a million-and-a-half votes. And in 1912, in addition to the six per cent of the vote which went to Debs, Theodore Roosevelt polled over four million votes on the Progressive ticket for a combined total of 33 per cent of the vote cast. Thus the large vote of that time was part of an even more extensive movement of political protest directed at the power of the trusts and carrying within it strong anti-capitalist overtones.

What has changed since then? Many things, but first of all a change in America's world position. America entered World War I as a debtor nation. It came out of it as the single creditor nation to which all capitalist countries owed tribute, and as the first financial and industrial power in the world. But this was nothing compared with what was still to come. Unscathed by the universal destruction of World War II, with an industrial capacity twice as large as before the war, the U.S. emerged from the slaughter in a position of dominance in the capitalist world and with a near monopoly over capitalist world markets.

The U.S. took its first great

splurge in foreign investments in the period of the twenties. By the end of that decade corporate investments abroad amounted to \$16 billion. Today, as a consequence of what *Fortune* magazine calls "the great migration of U.S. capital," corporate investments abroad are around \$75 billion and expected to top the \$90 billion mark before the decade is over. It is an acknowledged fact that the rate of growth of U.S. private investments abroad is several times faster than that of investments in the domestic economy. Faced in recent years with a sluggish economy and unused plant capacity at home, the corporations have seen foreign investments as the means by which to employ idle capital, to counteract the tendency toward a declining rate of profit, and to meet the ever-vexing problem of markets.

Of course, this has by no means been the only factor propping up the economy. Immediately after the war there was a crisis of underproduction in the devastated areas of the world and a great pent-up demand for goods in this country. Then with the Korean War came the skyrocketing of armament production. Likewise the concessions won by the trade union movement, including fringe benefits such as pensions and layoff allotments, have helped cushion the immediate blows of unemployment and the vicissitudes of old age and infirmity. Consumer credit, too, swollen enormously in post war years, has been an important prop.

The government has also manipulated credit and, to a limited extent, used deficit spending to pull the economy out of the slough in periods of depression. Furthermore, there has taken place a series of dramatic and far-reaching break-throughs in science and technology which have revolutionized some industries, established new ones and affected, in one way or another, all industry.

Yet all these important additional factors would not have been enough without the "great migration" of capital abroad and the vast increase in America's share of foreign markets as compared with pre-war. The importance of foreign fields for the investment of idle capital and of foreign markets was repeatedly stressed by President Kennedy. Its significance is stated by the economist Peter F. Drucker:

Our ability to increase exports determines whether (and by how much) America's national income can grow; it can only grow less—and quite a bit less—than U.S. exports. The international economy, not the domestic economy, sets the limitations on U.S. growth and prosperity, and is the determining area of economic performance. (*Harvard Business Review*, March-April, 1961.)

The change in the world position of American capitalism has provided some of the material basis for the widespread illusions and for the opportunism and corruption in the labor movement and elsewhere. The truth is that much of American

prosperity is based upon the exploitation of other peoples, a fact liberals prefer to hide from themselves and the American people, but which cannot be hidden from the rest of the world.

This does not mean that the Left, because it fights for immediate social reforms, bears a responsibility for this foreign exploitation. Had there been no struggle for such reforms in this country that would not have lessened foreign oppression or made it any less onerous. It does mean, of course, that the Left is duty-bound to unmask U.S. imperialist policy abroad and to unite with its victims in common struggle against it.

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Granted that as a result of these factors and as a result of the reforms wrested from capital by the struggles of the people, illusions in capitalism—in a "peoples' capitalism"—are widespread. No one can deny that the big capitalists relegated to the "dog house" in the thirties, are now lapping it up and basking in the sunshine of the front veranda. But from this one should not draw the conclusion that it would have been better had the people not fought and not won victories, and that the worse things are for the people the better it is for the cause of socialism. Any such view of socialism would doom it to sterility.

The struggle for the immediate needs of the people, for reforms, is not the opposite of the struggle for

socialism, but an integral part of it. If the workers failed to fight for an immediate improvement in their lot under capitalism, said Karl Marx in *Value, Price and Profit*, they would "be degraded to one level mass of broken-down wretches, past salvation," and they "would certainly disqualify themselves for the initiating of any larger movements." And Marx was no liberal.

Of course there is a question of *how* Marxists should view the struggle for reforms and fight for them. To view reforms as an end in themselves or as the means by which to reconcile contradictions that cannot be reconciled under capitalism is to deceive oneself and the people. The struggle for reforms should have as its objective the improvement of the lot of the masses and the strengthening of their understanding that everything depends upon them, upon their organization, their unity, their determination and their militant struggle. And it should constantly teach them the limitations of what they can achieve under present social conditions and the need to press for more basic and radical solutions and for the final abolition of the capitalist system.

When we study the struggle for reforms from this standpoint we must admit that errors were made and had Radosh limited himself to criticizing these, instead of rejecting the struggle for reforms in toto, we could have agreed with him. It is true that many people were led to

believe that the reforms they were winning were being handed them from above. There did develop something of a Roosevelt cult, a belief that the New Deal had initiated and led the mass struggles of the period instead of being a reflection of, and response to them. It was a response, of course, which left its mark on the subsequent development of the struggle and, in turn, was once again influenced by this.

Take today. Neither the Kennedy nor the Johnson Administration deserve the major credit for the civil rights measure being voted on by Congress as this article is being written. The main credit belongs to the militant mass actions of the Negro freedom movement. The credit that Kennedy and Johnson deserve is that of bowing to this mounting mass pressure. Their doing so is a fact of great importance. Without it the measure would have no chance of winning, for Administration support has greatly affected the specific conditions under which the struggle ensues. But if, while recognizing this positive development, the masses began to rely upon the good will of the Administration and not upon their own determined and united efforts, it would only lead to a setback in the struggle for full equality. It would implant illusions instead of more advanced thinking.

Likewise it is important to press hardest for the kind of reforms that strengthen the power of the people

to influence the course of events and to impose curbs and limitations and, wherever possible, outright fetters, on the power of monopoly capital. Those who say "this is capitalism and that's that," or "nothing can be done until there is a change in social systems," may sound extremely revolutionary to themselves. But before others become impressed by this militant stance, these heroes should be asked where they are in the fight that is, today, as against the fight that is to be, tomorrow. This writer knows not a few individuals for whom no one is Left enough when it comes to discussions in the warmth of their living room, but who are singularly silent and passive—or way out in Right field—when it comes to action in the somewhat cooler atmosphere of their own union.

Speaking of more basic reforms, of reforms that can strengthen the democratic forces as against those of capital, let us give as an example the right to vote issue in the South. If this is won there would be a real possibility to alter the political power structure in that region, with important democratic meaning for the whole nation. The vote for the Negro people in the South could mean a new political regrouping in that area which could bring with it an entirely different kind of representation in Congress, opening the door to a new political situation nationally. Without the Dixiecrats the Democratic Party would take on a somewhat different appearance. All

these are possibilities inherent in the winning of this important electoral reform.

Of course, every reform carries within it the danger of new illusions. But every such victory, if it results in strengthening the ranks and unity of the people, if it weakens to some extent the power of capital by extending the areas of democratic control, will also ease the process of revolutionary change when the time for that change comes.

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In speaking of the illusions that have developed in recent years it is also necessary to say something about the current level of mass social consciousness. This, while backward in comparison with nearly all other capitalist countries, is by no means a blackboard upon which capitalism can write as it pleases. The masses have learned something of great importance. They no longer believe in a *laissez faire* capitalism, that is, in a self-regulating competitive capitalism that is to be left on its own and never interfered with. The masses today understand that without direct government intervention the economy would tend to break down.

Big Business favors governmental intervention so long as it is in the interests of Big Business. It realizes that with the federal government spending \$100 billion a year that every aspect of government policy directly affects the economy and its various branches. What has actually

developed over the years is an intertwining of government and monopoly. But while this is true, it is likewise a fact that Administrations and Congresses still have to be elected, that politicians have to keep their ears to the ground, and that frequently there is a contradiction between what it takes to win elections and what it takes to satisfy Big Business. That is why corporate wealth yells bloody murder whenever governmental policy is directed at improving social legislation.

The stake in the control of the governmental machinery is therefore exceedingly great and explains why the monopolies no longer believe that politics can safely be left to the politicians. In feudal society every wealthy family gave at least one of its sons to the priesthood, as the church was the main pillar of wealth and power. Today they are being given to politics and government; a lesson, by the way, which should not be lost on the labor movement.

In the view of the monopolists the idea that the government and the system are responsible for public welfare, for jobs, security and equality, is one pregnant with dire consequences. And in an historic sense they are perfectly right. The masses will never again accept large scale unemployment and other social ills without holding the government and the system responsible for these.

In this connection something should be said about the relationship of socialism to all this. While

those who believe in socialism are a small minority, the issue of socialism is a great majority issue. It stands in the background of every question under discussion. The very fact that there is a world socialist system makes socialism a household topic. Even the leaders of the country must constantly tell the people that "our system is on trial," "our system is being challenged."

Of course, this also has two sides to it. On the one hand it compels the ruling class to make concessions that it would not otherwise make. This was publicly acknowledged when the Supreme Court made its historic ruling on school desegregation. For how can the United States sell its way of life to the colored peoples of the world in face of the barbaric treatment of them at home? In turn, however, these concessions made in fear of socialism tend to give the capitalist system the appearance of greater elasticity and viability.

This is one of the contradictions of the present period. But as people learn the limitations of the reforms won, and as they become pressed by the contradictions within the system, new movements and struggles are engendered which lead to a new questioning of the system. If today, for example, there is a new radical thinking in sections of the civil rights movement, particularly in the South, it is because the struggle itself has enabled thinking people to see how long and tortuous is still the road

ahead and the need for more radical and fundamental social change if complete freedom is to be won. Likewise the sudden awareness that some 35 million Americans are living in conditions of dire poverty, has also brought to the fore the evils of the system and the need for more radical remedies.

There has also been a negative side to the most positive of all developments of our time—the existence of a great and growing world of socialism. This is due to a number of factors: First, socialism has come thus far only to countries unprepared industrially for a transition to a higher social order. This has led many people to believe that while socialism may be necessary to help countries achieve rapid industrialization, it is not suited for developed industrial lands. Second, the methods of rule used in overcoming the heritage of backwardness and in combatting the imperialist attempts at subverting and overthrowing socialist governments, and the now disclosed crimes of the Stalin period, have tainted the image of socialism in the eyes of many. This, together with the fact that the American standard of living is still the highest in the world, has pushed socialism into the background as a practical or worthwhile American goal.

The negative side of the picture will in time become positive. As the Soviet Union catches up with the United States in economic develop-

ment and living standards, and as it proves in practice that it can build a society with the greatest personal freedom for its people, it will become an even greater influence for change. But—and we wish to stress this thought—it would be a great mistake to simplify or idealize the situation in the socialist countries or try to make them appear as models for socialism in the U.S. One thing is certain; the path ahead in the U.S. will not be the same as that of the Soviet Union or any other country. The socialism we build here, while it will learn from experiences of other lands, cannot use any other party's or country's experiences as either a model or guide. American socialism will arise from American conditions and be as different in form as is America's history, background, and economic, cultural and democratic development. Had the American Communists understood this clearly enough, many mistakes that were made could have been avoided.

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Let us return to the main thread of our discussion. It is the opinion of this writer that Radosh has given insufficient attention to the concrete conditions in which the struggle for socialism develops. He failed to deal with the objective conditions that led to the decline in socialist consciousness. He also failed to point to the new objective factors that are leading to a rebirth of socialism in America, on a wider scale, with

deeper, firmer and more native roots, than ever before.

A factor of near decisive importance in changes to come, the most revolutionary force at work in America today, is the technological upheaval now taking place—automation. These technological changes have already uprooted people, industries and regions. They are going to uproot a great deal more. This is what has caused dismay among young people who fear that whatever they train for today may be obsolete a few years hence. Yet there is another side to this development. It will help uproot old ideas. It will force people to think along new lines. It will compel people to struggle. It will help expose the folly of a system in which the very ability to produce plenty is producing increasing poverty. No, we are not entering a dark age of hopelessness, but one of awe-inspiring change in which, in the words of Wordsworth, to be alive is Bliss, to be young, Heaven.

Nor can we accept the pessimism of those who see a straight line development in which fewer and fewer will be working and more and more will be unemployed until the majority lives on a dole and the working minority waxes fat. This computer brain's estimate of things to come is sheer nonsense, despite its current popularity in certain intellectual circles. It sees things statically, not dynamically. It ignores the element of human will and struggle. It also

ignores the contradictions within the system. It takes for granted that those without jobs will just sit idly by. It mistakingly believes that unemployment can grow endlessly without adversely affecting conditions at work and without bringing on a major economic crash.

Furthermore, the near monopoly which the U.S. has held in world capitalist production and markets in the immediate post-war period has now been lost. It is being pressed in every area of the world by rival capitalist competitors—West Germany, Japan, France, Britain, Italy, etc. Nor is it likely that this trend can be arrested.

The very U.S. investments in industrial plants in Canada, Western Europe, Japan and elsewhere, so important up to now as outlets for idle capital and as a means of penetrating the European Common Market, are now chickens coming home to roost. These foreign plants are causing growing unemployment at home by competing with domestic production, often of the same firms.

This growing rivalry and competition in the capitalist world should be viewed on the background of the great upheaval of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples and the existence of a world of socialism which has no reason to fear automation. When all these are taken together, one can see how powerful are the objective factors leading to great changes in the thinking of

the American people.

To see this even more clearly one need merely ask: How did the ruling class extricate itself from the difficulties it faced in the pre-World War I period and in the thirties? In the last analysis by war. But that is no longer a feasible solution. To choose world war under today's conditions is to choose national disaster. That is why the struggle for peace has such special meaning for America. It means national survival. It means compelling the nation to face up to problems that can no longer be solved by war and can only be solved in a radically new way.

This is the dilemma confronting American capitalism and explains much of the hysteria of the ultra-Right. It must be remembered that U.S. capital never before found itself so completely blocked from what it considers its rightful place as world master. A few years ago, Henry J. Kissinger, writing as an authority on the cold war, had something to say about American psychology worth pondering:

From the moment in our national history when we focused our attention primarily on domestic development, we met very few obstacles that were really insuperable. We were almost uniquely blessed with the kind of environment in which the problems that were presented—those at least that we really wanted to solve—were difficult but manageable if enough effort was applied to them. Almost from our co-

lonial infancy we have been trained to measure a man, a government, or an era by the degree of energy with which they attacked their contemporary problems—and hence by their success in finding a final, definite solution. If problems were not solved, this was because not enough energy or enough resolution had been applied. The leadership or the government was clearly at fault. A better government or a better man would have mastered the situation. Better men and a better government, when we provide them, *will* solve all issues *in our time*. Or so we instinctively believe.

As a result we are not comfortable with seemingly insoluble problems. Many of the erratic tendencies in American policy . . . are traceable to our discomfort when faced with protracted deadlock. (*Harper's Magazine*, Dec., 1960.)

There is a great deal of truth in these observations. What Kissinger is saying is essentially this: Never before has American capitalism felt itself boxed-in, faced with "seemingly insoluble problems." Now it does. In the past, when they felt themselves up against it, there was always war as a last resort. But today that, too, is no answer; it only invites ruin. No wonder pragmatism faces a crisis. No wonder there is so much frustration in ruling circles and a "lunatic fringe."

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Objective changes of great magnitude compel changes in thinking of great magnitude. But in what direction the nation goes cannot be im-

mediately determined by the objective changes alone. This depends on struggle. It depends on leadership, on foresight, on a conscious force armed with an advanced and scientific outlook (Marxism), and on the ability of this movement for socialism to maintain close ties with the people and to help it learn on the basis of its own experiences.

There is no guarantee that under the impact of great change the nation will swing toward the Left; it could swing to the Right—and to the extreme-Right. For Radosh and those who think like him the ultra-Right threat is purely fictitious. This cavalier treatment of the danger of extreme reaction arises from a failure to give deep enough thought to the general tendency toward reaction inherent in the monopoly stage of capitalist development, so thoroughly analyzed by Lenin, and to its concrete manifestations in a world of general capitalist decline and great revolutionary change.

What was McCarthyism but a concrete expression of the extreme reactionary recoil to the revolutionary world changes following World War II and to the popular upsurge of the New Deal period. It based itself on the belief that a showdown with the Soviet Union in the form of war was inevitable. It also aimed to put labor and the popular forces back "in their place." Of course, it could never have become the threat it was, or so intimidated American life, had the labor leaders and liberals



not accepted the basic thesis of anti-communism. All the fabulous wealth of the Texas oil billionaire Hunt, could not have made McCarthy the menace he became, had the Truman Administration not launched the cold war and thereby provided him with the very club with which to browbeat the nation and the Truman Administration itself.

This does not mean that McCarthy and Truman were the same, no more than are Goldwater and President Johnson today. Yet Johnson, too, by his policy toward Cuba, by his attitude toward China, by his continuation of the dirty war against South Vietnam, by his opposition to higher wages and a shorter work week, and by his continued anti-communism, even if played in lower key, frequently gives grist to the mill of the extremists. That is why a policy of struggling against the ultra-Right requires unrelenting vigilance in combatting every policy and action of the moderates and liberals that coincides with that of the extreme Right or which wavers in face of its pressure. For one of the major immediate objectives of the powerful industrial magnates who pour millions into the coffers of organizations such as the John Birch Society, is to use them as battering-rams against every even mildly liberal or progressive measure. How successful they are can be seen by mentioning Medicare.

In the editorial in *Studies on the Left* (Vol. 3, No. 1) in which the

question of the ultra-Right is discussed it is even inferred that certain advantages could accrue if those on the extreme Right held governmental power. Under such circumstances, it is surmised, there would be less illusions among the people, less dependence upon the good intentions of the administration, and therefore a better chance of projecting a more radical alternative. There may be an element of truth in this, particularly about people being more wary. But would not people also be more intimidated, and have we not had enough repression and intimidation in the post-war period? There is one other little thing overlooked in this "the worse the better" theory. If, say, Richard Nixon and the Republicans had won in 1960, would that have helped people realize the need to go to the Left of the liberals, or would it only have made them even more intent on a return of the liberals? Experience has shown that the latter is the more likely development.

Least supportable of all is the notion that it makes little difference which side wins, for even if a Goldwater won, once confronted with the practical responsibilities of office—or so the argument runs—his policies would be little different from those of the more moderate elements. This premise bases itself on the oversimplified assumption that there are no differences of importance to the people within the ranks of the ruling class; that what passes for differences

in public is nothing more than demagoguery. It is demagoguery, but it is also more than that.

Granted that a Goldwater victory under present conditions would still not mean fascism. But would it be devoid of meaning for the issue of war and peace, for the issue of civil rights, labor rights and democratic liberties? One would indeed be rash to assert this. At a time when the world has all too frequently looked over the brink, even a little difference could prove to be a terribly big difference.

The trend away from McCarthyism should not mislead us into believing that the ultra-reactionary threat is over. Given new revolutionary changes in the world, particularly in Latin America, and given a great increase in the struggle within this country, present-day extremist groups can overnight receive backing from financial circles which today prefer a more moderate course. Likewise would it be foolish to underestimate the extent to which sections of the young and the old among the poverty-stricken in the "other America," or sections of the middle class, can be misled by extreme nationalist, racist, anti-communist, anti-labor, and anti-liberal demagoguery. The increased violence, including the assassination of John F. Kennedy, plus the great multiplication of hate groups, all point to this danger. Nor should one ignore the new power of the military in American life and what

a dangerous combination the reactionary military brass and the extreme Right can make.

Some pertinent conclusions were drawn for our discussion by John Weiss, assistant professor of history at Wayne State University, in an article "Fascism Politics and War." (*New University Thought*, Vol. 3, No. 1.) He wrote:

It is not necessary to insult the right wing in our country by calling it fascist; it is, however, necessary to say that an intense social crisis, or a series of "defeats" in American foreign policy, might very well put them in a mood to accept militaristic totalitarianism as a possible way out. Those who brought Hitler to power, as we have seen, were not fascists, but thought that they could control his movement for their own ends. Before we consider the history of fascism a closed book, we ought to ask ourselves whether fascism was ever really uniquely German or Italian, and whether we can safely assume that similar social conditions cannot be expected to recur.

These are sober reflections. They become doubly significant when we relate them to the observations of Kissinger previously quoted.

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In conclusion it should be noted that Radosh's opinions reflect certain objective conditions, but are a one-sided and distorted image of these. Like all Leftist tendencies, they constitute a reaction to the dominant current of our day—the all too rife betrayal of principles and

the revived Bernsteinism which believes that the immediate movement is all, the goal, nothing. But the way to reject this view is not to counter it with the equally wrong notion that the goal is everything, the movement, nothing. For if Radosh's position reflects a reaction to the opportunism in the labor movement and elsewhere, it also reflects a certain intellectual despair in the face of these tendencies and a loss as to how to cope with them.

Radosh's main error, in my opinion, is to view the thoughts and actions of men, the policies and programs of parties, separated from life, from concrete objective reality. This tendency toward idealism expresses itself at moments when what is possible from a practical point of view lags far behind what is necessary from an historic point of view. It is then that radical intellectuals, having attained the theoretical insight to transcend social systems in thought, but divorced from the masses and their daily struggles, become impatient with the slowness of things and either resign themselves to complete passivity or seek somehow to telescope events. In recent years this has become a pronounced tendency in certain intellectual circles, finding concrete expression in a complete negation of the working class and labor movements and a nearly complete dependence on the intellectual who, David-like, is to slay the corporate Goliath.

In one issue of *Studies on the Left* (Vol. 3, No. 3), the philosophical import of the dispute in international communist ranks is summed up as a difference over the role of consciousness, that is, "the need to activate the masses with revolutionary will." It is claimed that this is the central issue dividing the "New Left from the Old."

We, too, wish to stress the decisive role of consciousness. Every struggle needs it, no victory is possible without it. Nor can anyone deny that in recent years there have been many socialist-minded people who accepted the view—at least in practice—that there is no need for an advanced party basing itself on the principles of scientific socialism. These people actually believe that advanced leadership is unnecessary for the daily struggle and that socialist understanding will arise among the people spontaneously. It is to counteract such false views that recent efforts of Communist leadership have been directed and is the meaning of the campaign for "party renewal" initiated by Gus Hall.

What is in question is not the role of consciousness, but the relationship of subject to object, of human subjective will to material objective reality. One reason for a certain intoxication with the notion that "anything is possible" given the will, is a complete misreading of the lessons of the Cuban Revolution. What alone is seen is the small

handful who went into the mountains and seemingly came out with a miracle. What is forgotten is a simple fact. This handful would have perished and their heroism gone to naught had it not been in accord with what was both historically necessary and practically possible. Castro and his courageous band could not have survived for a day without the active assistance of the peasants and the tacit assent of the nation. And for the final struggle, they needed and received the active support of the working class in the form of a general strike.

Castro's greatness lay in his ability to accurately fathom the depth of the crisis gripping Cuba and to find that form of struggle which, when combined with others, could arouse and mobilize the nation and lead it to victory over the Batista-Wall Street dictatorship. But any mechanical lessons drawn from this Cuban experience could lead to opposite results—to adventurism and unnecessary defeats.

As we have tried to show, the objective conditions are rapidly changing in favor of a new rebirth of radical and socialist thought in this country. What is missing is a strong and united Left force that can take advantage of the opportunities and leave its imprint on the course ahead. A united and growing Left is needed not only for presenting a socialist alternative. It is needed to help bring into being a new rank and file upsurge, a great

progressive thrust forward that can counter the pressure of the ultra-Right, inject a fresh breath of air into the musty halls of labor, and make more difficult the betrayal of principles or the rubbery vacillation so characteristic of labor and liberal statesmanship today.

The Left is divided and fragmented. Many former fighters for the cause of socialism are on the side lines, "disenchanted" and disoriented. The time has come to pull the Left together. This requires an atmosphere of give and take. It requires a discussion over differences, not in order to further fragmentize, but to find the basis for working together. For what the Left has in common far transcends what divides it.

It is in this sense that we greet the debate that has taken place over socialist perspectives. There is much more to be said and we hope will be said, both by Communists and non-Communists, by those who agree with us as well as those who disagree. To attain clarity is of decisive importance. Without it there can be no clear perspective, and without perspective there can be no real growth and development.

In respect to our differences with the Radosh tendency our last thought is this: It would be a shame if at just this time even a small number of socialist-minded people began to curl inward toward themselves. This is no time to "go to the hills." It is a time to go to the people.

# The Peaceful Way—A Form of Revolution

By Luis Corvalan

The Latin American democratic movement is following political developments in Chile with keen interest. There are two main reasons for this: the maturing of conditions for a revolutionary change and the fact that there is a real possibility of these changes being effected by peaceful means.

With the presidential elections scheduled for September 1964, the Popular Action Front, which consists of the Communist, Socialist and National Democratic parties and other organizations, is bending every effort to secure victory at the polls as the first step towards winning political power.

The election campaign is already under way. There are four candidates in the field: Salvador Allende, the candidate of the Popular Action Front; Julio Duran, the nominee of the Conservative, Liberal and Radical parties which constitute the ruling coalition; Eduardo Frei, of the Christian Democratic Party, and Jorge Prat, the nominee of the Right-wing Independents. If we were to judge by the results of the municipal elections held in April, the first three candidates might be expected to get 30, 47 and 23 per cent of the vote respectively. The appearance of the fourth candidate, who has no party backing, will, however, alter the picture somewhat. He is likely to poll anything from 5 to

10 per cent of the vote, mostly in all probability at the expense of Duran.

Needless to say these are only approximate figures. It should be borne in mind that the situation is still far from stable, that the distribution of the vote varies substantially from election to election, and that in presidential elections the tendency is for the demarcation line between the supporters and opponents of progress to be more sharply drawn.

That the aim set by the Popular Action Front is a realistic one can be seen from the following: a) Chile is experiencing a deepening economic crisis which can be solved only by radical measures; b) all the political concepts and economic panaceas of the ruling classes have done nothing to alleviate the situation, revealing the bankruptcy of these classes and their system; c) the consequence is that the social contradictions, and primarily the contradictions between imperialism and the Chilean nation, are becoming sharper; d) the overwhelming majority of the population wants a change; e) the working class and other sections are fairly well organized and united; f) the international situation, thanks primarily to the growing strength and prestige of the socialist system, favors a revolutionary change.

The possibility of carrying out of a revolution and winning political power peacefully is determined by the following basic factors: a) the Popular Action Front is a closely united coalition of parties with an anti-imperialist and

anti-feudal program in keeping with the objective requirements of social development and the interests and aspirations of the majority of the population and is in a position to unite, through militant mass actions, the forces needed for victory; b) in the conditions of growing mass struggle and polarization of forces, Chile's electoral system, its limitation notwithstanding, affords an opportunity to use the presidential elections to set up a people's government; c) the desire evinced by the majority of the nation for a change is associated with the conviction that the change, beginning with the establishment of a people's government, can be effected by peaceful means; d) the bourgeois-democratic traditions and the popular struggle to defend and extend civil rights are an obstacle to the ultra-reactionaries for they facilitate resistance to attempts at engineering putsches and involving the armed forces in adventures.

The direction in which the popular movement is developing and its scale may make it possible to use the coming presidential election to establish a national-liberation government by peaceful means. This, of course, is still only a possibility, for it is impossible to predict what will be the outcome of the struggle. Nor is there any absolute certainty that the elections will take place. Be that as it may this is the direction in which things are developing.

The dogmatists, with the unenviable support of the Trotskyites, are doing their utmost to discredit the Marxist-Leninist thesis concerning the peaceful way, shamelessly identifying

it with revisionism and reformism and claiming that it is tantamount to renouncing revolution. Invective is hurled against those Communist parties which believe that it may be possible to effect revolutionary changes in their countries by peaceful means. It is nothing to them that these parties are leading the struggle waged by the masses for their demands, that by making this mass struggle the cornerstone of their policy the parties have made substantial headway, achieving success in building unity and in organizing and advancing the revolutionary movement; that these parties are the main force confronting the enemy and often the target of the enemy's heaviest blows. The dogmatists speculate on one thing only, that these parties are not waging an armed struggle on the barricades; they completely ignore the fact that the parties they criticize have always fought and are resolved to continue fighting by whatever means the situation demands—with or without recourse to arms—but always together with the masses.

The Communist Party of Chile, like all the fraternal parties, stands for revolution. In the present situation it is working towards this goal by peaceful means. Our Party holds that elaboration and implementation of the thesis concerning the peaceful way are only in the initial phase, that there is much more to be said and done on this score. We hold that a study of the experience of the parties is useful for all Communists, and that our own experience, too, may be a contribution to an examination of some of the questions involved.

\* This article was originally published in *World Marxist Review*, December, 1963.

### THE PEACEFUL PATH OF STRUGGLE AND THE ELECTIONS

In our time situations may arise in some countries when election campaigns can be a means of winning political power.

In many cases the reactionary classes are unable to maintain their rule within the framework of bourgeois democracy. Because of this we see despotic regimes in many capitalist countries, an orientation on "strongman" government, curtailment of democratic freedoms, the Communist Party and other progressive parties banned, reactionary changes made in electoral laws, and elections either postponed, turned into a farce, or declared null and void whenever the results go against the reactionaries.

The underlying reason for all this is the rapid growth of popular democratic sentiment and the powerful influence exerted by the ideas of socialism, thanks to which the masses are slipping away from the grip of the reactionary classes and are likely to voice their desire for change through a general elections.

Consequently, wherever the working class is able to build a broad popular front and preserve civil liberties and a more or less democratic electoral system, it is in a position to isolate the ultra-reactionary bourgeoisie.

The Communists use all elections to rally the masses. In the course of the election campaign and as a result of the vote a favorable situation may

be created for the decisive victory of the working class and of the people generally in their struggle to win political power. In Chile, the Communist Party and its allies in the Popular Action Front, although they may be able to strengthen their position in Parliament (they now have 26 per cent of the seats), above all associate (but do not identify) their chances of victory with the presidential elections inasmuch as the executive branch, owing to its prerogatives, is the nerve center of political power in the country. Hence the presidential election activates the political forces as no other election does, and compels them to define their stand. In the event of no candidate receiving an absolute majority, the National Congress elects to the presidency one of the two candidates with the largest number of votes; if the choice falls on a democrat, a democratic government can be formed. Thus there is the possibility that the victory will be awarded to the peoples' candidate even if he only has a plurality, provided, of course, that the masses are behind him.

In all circumstances, however, elections are only a component of the overall class struggle waged by big sections of the population against the reactionaries. Were they regarded as something apart from the struggle of the masses, were the campaign reduced merely to boosting a candidate and a program, and if the immediate issues were allowed to overshadow the ultimate goal, then the danger of going off on a reformist tangent would be a very real one. The basic thing is and will always be the mobilization

of the masses to fight for their vital rights, for economic and political aims in keeping with the requirements of the day. Elections can yield good results if the various aspects of the mass political struggle are combined in a single whole and if the ensuing conditions enable the popular discontent to find expression in the voting.

Needless to say, the peaceful way is not necessarily bound up with elections. After the February revolution in Russia Lenin envisaged the possibility of peaceful transition to the socialist revolution by advancing the slogan "All Power to the Soviets," and by winning the majority in the Soviets. But the way in which this majority for socialism was visualized was not the election of delegates in the manner prescribed by bourgeois law, but the naming of their spokesmen by the workers, peasants, soldiers and sailors in a revolutionary situation.

In a situation marked by deep political crisis the revolution may, then, take a peaceful course without the agency of elections. When the Communist Party of Spain posed the question of a peaceful nationwide strike with a view to overthrowing Franco, it did not have elections in mind, at least not at the initial stage, but the possibility of effecting revolutionary changes without recourse to armed uprising and civil war.

The Communist parties are opposed as a matter of principle to military coups, of which there have been so many in Latin America. They hold that seizure of power without the backing of the masses is adventurism. But they also regard this question in

the light of the concrete situation. In the case of a *fait accompli* they approach it as such. If the coup serves reactionary ends, they oppose it. If it is carried out by the progressive capitalists or the small bourgeoisie and offers the slightest opportunity to make things better for the population at large, the Communists work to rally the masses to channel the regime along democratic lines. As a result the people, in given conditions, can by active political struggle bring about certain social changes without resorting to armed uprising or civil war.

All revolutions whether democratic or socialist, have certain common features on which their chances of victory depend. As regards forms, life has evolved a multitude of these and is bound to produce still more. Lenin said: "Marx did not tie his own hands, or the hands of coming leaders of the socialist revolution, as regards the forms, methods and ways of carrying out the revolution, for he knew full well what a multitude of new problems would then arise, how the entire situation would change in the course of revolution, how *often* and how *radically* the situation would change in the course of the revolution."

The same social processes assume different features in different countries. The differences stem from the particular situations. Apart from there being the peaceful and the non peaceful way, each of these, too, takes diverse forms. Revolutionaries cannot choose at will which way to follow, or the form of coming to power; the choice is determined by the specific conditions in which they work.

## THE NON-VIOLENT WAY IS THE WAY OF MASS STRUGGLE

Maximum effort to rally the masses to fight for their economic and social demands, to safeguard and extend civil liberties and for other political aims, utilizing every opportunity for militant action and the rallying of ever bigger sections of the people around the working class—these are the general prerequisites of successful advance along the peaceful path to power.

As we have said, the presidential election campaign has already begun. But our people are not passively waiting for the results of the polling or are engrossed in electioneering alone. Between March and September this year the workers in seven branches of industry downed tools in strikes totalling 1,372,000 man-days. Squatters seized plots of land on which to build homes for themselves. Many demonstrations and strikes were held in protest against the government-sponsored bill aimed at curtailing freedom of the press (the "gag law").

The mass struggle ranges from strikes, sit-down strikes included, marches to the principal cities, street demonstrations and public meetings, to seizure of parks and other Government-owned land and a variety of other methods of struggle. The peasants, too, use strikes and marches to the towns as a means of struggle, and sometimes they seize land. For students the usual thing is street demonstrations combined with sit-downs in educational establishments. In the provinces where the working people are particularly hard hit by the crisis there have been

many general work stoppages and the national flag has been flown at half-mast as a token of protest. Members of the state-sponsored housing cooperative of whom there are about 86,000 have declared rent strikes. Small shopkeepers replied to the exorbitant taxation by closing their shops. In a word all sections affected by the crisis are taking mass action; many of these actions are sporadic and uncoordinated, but there is also a good measure of unity. As a rule, methods of struggle typical of the working class are employed.

Needless to say, the mass movement has its ups and downs and suffers from a number of weaknesses. At times the diffusion of forces and enemy intrigue make it rather difficult to organize and co-ordinate the struggle. Still, it has gathered momentum and is continuing to grow. The mass actions are steadily acquiring a wider scale and a greater degree of militancy.

Irrespective of the immediate aims of these actions, they all are part of the general political and social movement for the reconstruction of society by peaceful means. In this struggle the masses are learning to distinguish friends from enemies, and are coming to realize that their problems can be solved only through radical change, through far-reaching reforms and the establishment of a people's government.

Proceeding from the Leninist definition of what is meant by the "masses" in a prerevolutionary situation, Comrade Orlando Millas in his report to the June 1963 meeting of our Central Committee stressed the need to rally the majority of the people

to fight for their demands and the formation of a government of a new type. The election campaign, too, is a matter of rallying the masses. We have enlisted in this work far more people than the total membership of the parties affiliated to the Popular Action Front; in the election committees alone, tens of thousands of non-party people are working side by side with members of the various parties.

The plight in which our country finds itself stems from the structural crisis caused by the grip of the latifundists and the foreign monopolies on our economy. The situation is aggravated by the policy imposed on us by the International Monetary Fund. Consequently, the struggle is essentially of an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-monopoly nature. From time to time there have been direct clashes with imperialism. This has happened each time the U.S. monopolies tried to lay hands on our soil or to evade taxes, and also when the International Monetary Fund wanted to devalue our currency. On these issues resistance to the imperialists acquires a scale extending to the non-monopoly bourgeoisie. So far the repeated attempts made by the imperialists to gain control over Chilean oil have been frustrated.

In most cases the mass struggle proceeds within the legal framework which the working people have won in their struggle against capitalism, but very often it transcends these bounds. According to data given in a presidential message to the National Congress in 1962, more than three times as many factory and office work-

ers took part in so-called unofficial strikes as in "legitimate" stoppages. As for the seizure of lots for home building, this of course does not enjoy the blessings of bourgeois law, the basic principle of which is protection of private property. The same applies to seizure of land by the Indians and the peasants generally. It should be mentioned that in recent years more than 100,000 families have obtained lots for home-building and nearly 240,000 hectares of land has been acquired by the peasants and Indians through struggle, including direct seizure of land.

In the course of this many-sided struggle the masses are consolidating their positions and laying the groundwork for further advance toward winning power by peaceful means. Besides gains there have, of course, been failures, and victory has alternated with compromise. But all these facts taken together show that the Chinese leaders have no grounds whatsoever for associating the peaceful way with reformism, or for qualifying it as lulling the masses and conciliation with imperialism and the home reactionaries.

The peaceful way, we repeat, is the way of mass revolutionary struggle. Seen in this light, it has nothing whatever in common with reformism; moreover, far from precluding compulsion it presupposes the use of some forms of coercion. The fact is that even calling on the masses to take action and any pressure exerted by the masses can be described as coercion; what is decisive is not the rights and wrongs of a situation, but who is the stronger. In upholding the peaceful way our Party aims at solving

the tasks of the revolution without civil war or armed uprising. On the other hand, whether a struggle is revolutionary or not is not determined exclusively (and often not even mainly) by the number of violent actions, by the predominance or absence of armed struggle. Regardless of whether it proceeds along peaceful lines or not, it is revolutionary if it takes the form of mass action and if the aim is the winning of political power by the people and the revolutionary reconstruction of all spheres of life — in a word, if the object is revolution, not mere reforms.

#### THE CHOICE OF WAYS

The manner in which the question of the peaceful way is posed today is finding more and more substantiation. This way clearly differs from the non-peaceful way only insofar as armed action is not the basic means of struggle. In each of these ways elements of the other may be employed, but in both cases (and this is most important) the same general principles as regards the role of the masses, the working class and the worker-peasant alliance are valid.

It is equally clear that as the revolutionary process develops it may become expedient and imperative to go over from one path to the other. Hence the need to be prepared for all possible changes in the situation and to master all forms of struggle.

In some cases the dogmatists concur, if only formally, with the thesis concerning the peaceful way, but in doing so they insist, distorting the letter and spirit of the Declaration and Statement of the Moscow meetings of 1957 and 1960, that the choice

depends solely on the actions of the enemy. "The path to socialism depends not on the proletariat but on the bourgeoisie," the leaders of the Communist Party of China declared in a recent letter to the Central Committee of our Party. This is a distortion of the same order as that contained in the collection of articles *Long Live Leninism!* concerning the problem of war and peace; the decision here, the symposium holds in effect, rests with the imperialist general staffs.

The 81-Party statement points out, firstly, that the working class and its vanguard, the Marxist-Leninist Party, seek to carry out the socialist revolution by peaceful means and, secondly, that in situations marked by fierce resistance on the part of the reactionary classes, the sharpness and forms of the class struggle depend not so much on the proletariat as on the resistance offered by the reactionary elements to the overwhelming majority of the people and on the use of violence by these elements at one or another stage of the struggle for socialism.

But the choice of the way is not regarded as depending only on the volition of the enemy or his resistance. For the working class and the people generally, seeking to carry out the revolution by peaceful means, at the same time exert every effort to tie the hands of the reactionaries, to foil their designs and make it impossible for them to resort to violence; at any rate, they work to channel the struggle in the direction most advantageous for themselves.

The ruling classes in Chile are not at all certain that they will come out on top in the coming election. Hence,

relying on their parliamentary majority, they are trying to push through the "gag law" and other undemocratic constitutional reforms. Moreover, in an exigency, they may lend support to the Christian Democrat candidate in the hope that even if he does not completely satisfy them this might prevent the revolutionary forces from coming to power.

The extreme reactionaries are staking on a coup, which they may well essay before the elections.

In the event of these maneuvers failing—and the people, naturally, are working to foil them—and in the event of the Popular Action Front winning the election, the reactionaries will no doubt resort to other machinations to prevent the formation of a people's government. And even if these obstacles are overcome, if the people win the election and set up their government, there will be other crucial tests ahead — counter-revolutionary attempt to regain power. Needless to say, the U.S. imperialists will have a hand in such maneuvers.

The road ahead is by no means free of obstacles. Hence, while constantly bearing in mind the possibility of developments taking a peaceful course, we are on guard against deluding ourselves into overestimating the chances.

Consequently, we must be prepared for every possible turn in the march of events. The Communists, Socialists and the other parties of the Popular Action Front and their presidential candidate emphasize this point, urging the people to be vigilant and ready to counter, using whatever means the situation may demand, every move the enemy may make to prevent or

nullify, the people's victory, or to overthrow the people's government once it has been formed. There are, of course, many other aspects which the forces leading the mass movement must take into account.

But it is not only a matter of the popular movement being prepared for difficult battles and sacrifice. Things are not as simple as that. For the tactics applicable to future situations cannot be fully defined today. Possible changes in the enemy's positions may necessitate shifts from one type of struggle to another, depending on the situation, which also determines the immediate aims.

In 1939 the Rights enlisted a group of high-ranking army officers in a gamble aimed at overthrowing the government of Pedro Aguirre Cerda. This move was countered by a powerful upsurge of the mass movement, with the working class downing tools, coming out onto the streets and taking over key positions, and, putting an end to the gamble.

In 1947 a situation of quite another kind arose. The U.S. imperialists took the offensive and secured the expulsion of the Communists from the government which the Communist Party had helped to elect the year before. The Party and the working class was subjected to brutal repression. The balance of forces temporarily shifted against the proletariat. Its trade union center was split and the Socialists and Communists could not get together. In those circumstances it would have been absurd to resort to large-scale armed action. The Party and the working class carried on a stiff fight, employing what might be called the tactics of rear-guard ac-

tion to cover a retreat. These tactics, dictated by the conditions enabled the Party largely to maintain its contact with the masses so as to be able to return with them to the offensive.

This is added proof that any tactics are correct and any form of struggle acceptable if they accord with the situation and serve to enlist the masses in the struggle.

### NEITHER A MECHANICAL APPROACH NOR SUBJECTIVISM

The above-mentioned letter of the Communist Party of China to our Central Committee contains this passage: "In Latin America the 'peaceful way' which you advocate stands in sharp contrast to the revolutionary way of Fidel Castro and the other comrades who led the Cuban people to victory."

It should be said first of all that, unlike the dogmatists and the sectarians, the Communist Party of Chile, while supporting the Marxist-Leninist thesis concerning the peaceful way, holds that the choice of either the peaceful or non-peaceful path is the prerogative of the revolutionaries in the given country. In other words, our Party does not seek to impose any line of action outside the bounds of its own country. As the joint Soviet-Cuban statement issued in Moscow on May 23 this year by Comrades Khrushchev and Castro after the latter's visit to the USSR declares: "Elaboration of the practical forms and methods of struggle for socialism in each country is the internal affair of its people."

This position fully accords with the principle set forth in the 81-Party

Statement that "all the Marxist-Leninist parties are independent and have equal rights; they shape their policies according to the specific conditions in their respective countries and in keeping with Marxist-Leninist principles, and support each other."

The strategic and tactical line to be followed, including the way in which to carry out the revolution and the timing of the decisive battles, is, then, a matter for each Communist Party, for the revolutionaries of each country, to decide. Revolutionaries in all countries of course may make mistakes in elaborating this line or in carrying it out. That danger exists. But since no one knows the situation they are working in better than they, they are less liable to err than the revolutionaries of other countries who may take it upon themselves to offer unsolicited advice. Moreover, the masses and their vanguard in each country can correctly determine their line, in the light of the laws governing the revolutionary process, primarily on the basis of their own experience.

The leaders of the Communist Party of China try to make it appear that they alone are the proponents of armed uprising, and that all the other parties advocate the peaceful way. No less dishonest is their attempt to counterpose our revolutionary process to that which took place in Cuba. But this is absurd. No Communist Party which accepts the thesis concerning the peaceful way repudiates the way of armed uprising *a priori*. More, there are parties which advocate armed action in their own countries but oppose the position of the Chinese leaders who deny the theoretical and practical validity of the peaceful way. The

Paraguayan and some Central American parties are cases in point.

The Cuban revolution is of signal importance as a shining example of heroism and tangible proof that all the peoples of our continent can win their freedom if they wage a determined struggle, relying on international solidarity and above all on the support of the socialist camp. Steadfast support for the Cuban revolution is a vital cause of the peoples of our continent. And this cause is not helped forward but, on the contrary, damaged by those who speculate on tactical differences engendered by objective reasons to sow discord of quite another order.

The content of the revolution in all Latin American countries is, generally speaking, identical. All the peoples of the continent are bound to follow Cuba's example as regards liberation from imperialism, abolition of the latifundia and other fetters on the productive forces, implementation of the cultural revolution and paving the way to socialism. But as regards the forms and means of achieving these aims there are, and will continue to be, differences. All Marxist-Leninists agree that each revolutionary process has its own distinctive features.

Any tendency towards a mechanical copying of one or another revolutionary process or regarding it as a universal pattern is, at best, subjectivism. Neither in the sphere of theory nor in their day-to-day activities can revolutionaries be guided by only good intentions without regard for the concrete conditions in which they are working. There can be no revolution unless the masses support it.

For the revolution to succeed both

the objective and the subjective conditions must be ripe. The objective conditions are determined by social development, while the subjective — the ability and resolve of the masses to take action against the ruling classes in order to overthrow them — are shaped by the revolutionary movement itself, above all by its vanguard. Consequently, there is no justification for sitting back and waiting for the subjective conditions to mature of themselves. But neither can their maturing (as regards time and form) be accelerated at will, by ignoring the realities of the situation. These conditions will ripen only as a result of persistent work among the masses. It is equally clear that once headway has been made in this work and the masses realize, in the course of struggles for their demands, that everything hinges on winning political power and are prepared to make this their immediate aim, the maturing of the subjective conditions of the revolution can be speeded up. Mass struggle, it should be stressed, is the basic factor.

### THE PEACEFUL WAY AND THE POLICY OF UNITY

As we know, one of the new factors which make the peaceful way a tangible possibility is the ability of the working class of the various countries to rally the majority of the people around itself on the basis of a broad program of democratic reforms objectively aimed against the rule of imperialism and the monopoly capitalists.

Regardless of whether it opts for the peaceful or non-peaceful path, the working class pursues a policy of alliance with other classes and sections of society, a policy of unity with

other sections of the people and strives to isolate its main enemies and neutralize the wavering strata. Without such a unity policy there can be no revolution.

This policy of mutual understanding, unity and alliance is of great significance and, what is most important, the opportunities for pursuing it are better when the revolution develops along peaceful lines. A wider range of forces can be drawn into the mainstream of peaceful revolution, including strata which tend to waver when faced with the prospect of a revolution through armed uprising and are unlikely to join it except in an extremely acute revolutionary situation.

The Communist movement has accumulated much experience in the struggle for the unity of the working class and all other sections of the peoples, experience which is being steadily augmented by the parties.

Our experience confirms the basic concept that the most important thing is work among the masses, unity of action from below. It highlights the fact that we must continue to work for the fullest understanding at all levels. Among the leading groups in the non proletarian democratic parties and other organizations the influence of socialist ideas and the repeated failure of policies aimed against mutual understanding with the Communists are making themselves felt and trends towards unity without discrimination are coming to the fore.

We Chilean Communists, while concentrating on mass work to achieve unity from below, also pay attention to promoting mutual understanding among the leaders. Such a policy helps to build unity at the rank-and-file level,

cements unity among the parties and promotes the development of a united mass movement.

The unity achieved between the parties affiliated to the Popular Action Front, and above all between the Communists and Socialists, is based not only on a common program but on practical relations founded on equality, mutual respect and mutual aid. This finds supreme expression in the principle of unanimity in adopting basic decisions and in agreeing that the allied parties will enjoy representation proportionate to their strength in the government they are working to establish.

A coalition of different classes and sections of society such as the Popular Action Front contains diverse trends which give rise to certain differences of opinion. These differences are discussed frequently in a frank and comradely atmosphere. Invective has been ruled out and has been replaced by mutual examination of ideas and arguments. Many problems are solved in this way, but not all, for in many cases solution depends on the balance of forces in the Front and on the views of the masses on these issues. Hence the imperative need for independent work by the Communists among the population.

At the heart of the revolutionary leadership of the popular movement is the activity of the Communist Party, which is the main party of the Popular Action Front. Many aspects of this leadership are carried out jointly by the allied parties, primarily by the Socialists and Communists. Often basic issues are solved through general agreement. As this process develops, the conditions may arise for

united actions by the Socialists and Communists, including their joint leadership, resulting at some future date in the establishment of a united Marxist-Leninist Party of the working class.

It is essential further to extend the scale of the popular movement and to prepare it to repel whatever blows the enemy may level at it. Upon assuming power it will have to define the concrete forms in which to carry out its program and determine the order of urgency of the various measures, depending on the situation at the given moment. This in turn requires greater mutual understanding and a united line of action. An unreasonable attitude to these problems would be disastrous. The policy of joint leadership of the movement is a vital imperative which, far from negating the role played by the Communists, enhances it.

Like individuals, parties learn from experience and influence one another. Each of the parties in the Popular Action Front, and especially the Communists and Socialist parties, have learnt much from the social realities. The other parties have learnt much from us, as we have from them.

But until a united party of the working class is established, the existence of a mass Communist Party will remain the basic factor, on the political scene. Our Party is above all a party of the proletariat, the biggest and most experienced and militant party;

it stands vigilantly on guard against bourgeois influence, and its cadres are trained in the spirit of Marxist-Leninist ideology and proletarian internationalism. This makes it the basic force in the popular movement.

Not only the policy of our party but also its high degree of organization and its ideology are winning it allies. The consolidation and development of the people's unity directly depends on its influence. The growth and strengthening of the Party in all respects are not the result of egoistic ambition; it is an objective necessity of the social movement. The Party, fully aware of this, is working to expand its ranks.

Our Party has been, and continues to be, the basic factor paving the way to the victory of the people by peaceful means. Trotskyites and some petty-bourgeois elements with reckless leaning have sharply attacked the thesis concerning the possibility of the peaceful way. These attacks are buttressed by the actions of the Chinese leaders. Our Party was compelled to embark on an intensive ideological struggle, and the campaign has already had its effect; the main thing, however, is practical revolutionary activity, which of course is also part of the ideological struggle. Practice is the concrete manifestation of ideology, it is theory corroborated by facts, the decisive test of the correctness of a line of action.



# IDEAS IN OUR TIME

BY HERBERT APTHEKER

## DRESDEN, DESTRUCTION AND DOOMSDAY

In the Spring of 1963, a book was published in London that created a storm of discussion; a long article, based largely upon this volume, appeared in the United States in *Esquire* later that year; it in turn produced an avalanche of mail, some of which was printed in that magazine for January and February, 1964. Now, in February, the book has been published in this country and its availability makes pertinent as its theme makes urgent, comment upon it.\*

The book's foreword is by Air Marshal Sir Robert Saundby, deputy chief of the wartime Bomber Command and the officer who mounted the raids; they constituted, Sir Robert writes, a "great tragedy." He adds, "I am still not sure that I fully understand why it happened."

By "it" Sir Robert refers to the 14 hours of destruction brought to the east German city of Dresden by thousands of British and U.S. bombers in the evening of February 13 and during the day of February 14, 1945. Explosives and incendiaries combined to produce one of the most fearful firestorms in history; sixteen hundred acres of the city were bombed or burned out—an area about three times the portion of London destroyed during the entire war. In the holocaust, about 135,000 people died at once, which is nearly twice the immediate deaths resulting from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. This lends some support to Crossman's view expressed in *Esquire* that in the destruction of Dresden, "the Western democracies were responsible for the most senseless single act of mass murder committed in the whole course of World War II." If by this Mr. Crossman means the single act to represent an "accomplishment" of less than one day's duration, he may have a point, though, of course, the genocidal policies of the Nazis against the Jews and their deliberate policy of wholesale slaughter pursued in Poland and the Soviet Union in particular make Dresden's destruction seem like a slight indiscretion.

When he uses the word "senseless" Mr. Crossman has several important matters in mind. First, there is the point made by Irving, namely, that Dresden "was both shelterless, defenseless and devoid of military targets." Second,

\* David Irving, *The Destruction of Dresden* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, N. Y., \$4.95). The article in *Esquire* (Nov. 1963) was by R. H. S. Crossman, the British Laborite leader. A long dispatch by Sydney Gruson from London, giving British reactions, appeared in the *N. Y. Times*, May 19, 1963.

Dresden was heavily populated by Allied and Russian prisoners of war, thousands of whom were slaughtered in the general incineration. Third, while a rumor was officially circulated to the effect that the advancing Red Army had "requested" Dresden's demolition, Mr. Irving—who certainly cannot be said to harbor any pro-Soviet views—writes, "no documentary evidence has ever been produced as proof of any Soviet request specifying Dresden as a target for attack."

All this, nevertheless, does not mean that the destruction of Dresden made no sense—at least so far as Churchill was concerned, and it was he who ordered the attack be planned and delivered as soon as possible. Sir Winston's orders went to the Bomber Command on January 25, 1945, just shortly before he left for Yalta, and just hours after he had learned that the Soviet forces had crossed the Oder River at Breslav and so were only 60 miles from Dresden—a city up to that point undamaged. As a matter of fact, Crossman—who, during the war had been Director of Psychological Warfare Against Germany and later attached to SHAEF—tells us that in January, 1945, "when suggestions were made that the Western bombing should be used to help the Red Army advance, the Russian generals were chilly and unresponsive."

Dresden was destroyed, then, I suggest, because it lay, undamaged, within the grasp of the oncoming Soviet army; Churchill, already planning and organizing an anti-Soviet front now that the end of World War II appeared imminent, preferred that army to occupy a smoldering mass of twisted metal rather than a modern city with intact industry and transportation. It was destroyed, also, as Crossman himself indicates, in order "to impress" the Russians, in much the same way that the bombs dropped upon Hiroshima and Nagasaki slaughtered Japanese but were meant, again, to "impress" Russians. In this sense, the fires of Dresden lit up the first act of the Cold War.

Dresden's obliteration produced ugly rumors and questions in Parliament and elsewhere even before the war ended. As a result, Churchill drafted a Minute for his Chiefs of Staff which, Irving reveals, read as follows:

... the moment has come when the question of bombing of German cities simply for the sake of increasing the terror, though under other pretexts, should be reviewed... I feel the need for more precise concentration upon military objectives, such as oil and communication behind the immediate battle zone, rather than on mere acts of terror and wanton destruction however impressive.

This Minute was so brutally candid—and reflected so on the Chiefs

themselves while seeming to lessen the Prime Minister's responsibility—that in an unprecedented step, the Chiefs refused to receive it and forced Sir Winston to submit a redrafted Minute with less brutal language!

Among the embarrassing questions and comments in Parliament were these coming from Richard Stokes in Commons. Mr. Stokes, as Irving writes, "doubted the advantage of what he announced he would call 'strategic bombing,' and commented that it was very noticeable that the Russians did not seem to indulge in 'blanket bombing.'" This disturbing Member also "observed caustically that it was strange that the Russians seemed to be able to take great cities without blasting them to pieces."

The fact is that of all the participants in World War II, it was the Soviet Union alone which did not participate in terror bombing and did not employ its air force against civilian targets. This was more than a matter of Socialist conduct; at the same time it was a matter of decisive military strategy.

The obverse also is true. Where the States were not Socialist all soon succumbed to wholesale slaughter and warfare directed against civilians. Furthermore, in the case of the Allies—and most especially in the case of Churchill—the concentration upon strategic bombing represented a commitment away from the Second Front. In this sense, that concentration undoubtedly prolonged the war considerably and so cost millions of lives not only in direct casualties, but also in terms of stretching out the conflict.

The public discussion of the destruction of Dresden has induced disclosures not in the book by Irving nor the article by Crossman. Among the most important of these appear in a letter published in *Esquire* for February, 1964, from Dr. Freeman J. Dyson of The Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton. Dr. Dyson is not only a scientist of distinction, he was also in the Operational Research Section at R.A.F. Bomber Command headquarters from 1943 until 1945 and so has first-hand and top-level information.

Dr. Dyson begins by noting that because of his position he was "one of the few people who were accurately informed about the failures and stupidities of our bombing offensive." He goes on to correct Mr. Crossman insofar as the latter had presented the fire-storm in Dresden as the product of deliberate planning on the part of the Bomber Command. Dr. Dyson points out that fire-storms have resulted from bombing four times in human history and all during World War II: Hamburg, Dresden, Tokyo and Hiroshima. He adds: "What we did not know in 1945, and still do not know now, is how to predict when and how a fire storm will occur."

Dr. Dyson notes that this means that already in World War II, fighting was being conducted with weapons "whose effects were wildly unpredict-

able." He adds and emphasizes that this unpredictable character of weapons is infinitely enhanced today, with atomic and with thermonuclear instruments of destruction. He concludes, therefore, that "any use of strategic bombing in any future war will involve us in death and destruction not only far greater in scale but even more unpredictable in its consequences" than anything which has ever preceded. Furthermore, Dr. Dyson warns: "*Unforeseen technical accidents may in future destroy a country rather than a city, and the men responsible may have as little control over what they are doing as we at Bomber Command had in 1945*" (italics added).

\* \* \*

All this brings to my mind two incidents which left indelible impressions upon my brain. Both occurred early in 1945, in that part of Duesseldorf which lies on the west bank of the Rhine. We had taken it, and fighting continued for the two-thirds of the city which lay to the east. One day a German woman came to me and sought permission to visit a particular address. "Nothing is there," I told her. "It has all been destroyed." But she insisted she wanted to go there; she knew it was destroyed, yet she wished to go. Why, I asked. She explained: Deep in the basement of the house that had once stood there, she had buried, well-packed, precious dishes. She thought they might have survived. We talked. She said she had nothing left. Her parents were dead. She had never married. Her brother was in the East, "fighting them"—and she'd given up on him.

With talk, she gained boldness. She complained to me of the cruelty of war—the bombing and the terrible shelling.

Of course, we agreed, war is cruel. But did she really know of the cruelty. We had been in France and Holland; we had seen the tortured and the starved—and whole regions in which no babies had survived the violence and the hunger. Here in Duesseldorf, we were even then searching for possible Jewish survivors—only ten years before some 60,000 Jewish people had lived there. Her neighbors—the butcher, the lawyer, the corner druggist and their children. Where were they? And here in Duesseldorf was the Ruhr headquarters of the Gestapo—not four blocks from where we were talking and very near her home. Had she never seen it? Had she never heard the screams that came from it?

Ach, she said. They were animals. They did their work in the basement. I never went there and I never went into the basement. I did not know. My life was the piano; and I played the piano and never hurt even a fly and I did not go into the basements.

And now there was nothing left for her; except maybe some dishes buried deep in the bowels of ruins. And this is what she wanted.

I am the last person to complain of piano-playing, but if this is all we do, we do not live and we forfeit our time on earth. Yes, indeed the monsters are in the basements and in the streets—from Saigon to South Africa, from Madrid to Mississippi; we close our ears and our hearts AT OUR OWN PERIL and this time there may not be anyone left to search for buried dishes.

Still in the same period and in the same city, I had another visitor. He was a printer and he came to me in his work clothes, with his apron. Very tall and thin and gray. He had a leaflet and he sought permission to distribute it. I read it—there in the shattered city of Duesseldorf in that Spring of 1945. It announced the first open meeting of the Communist Party of Germany to be held at such and such an address in the city. It invited the Comrades to come and to discuss taking up the Party's work—for reconstruction, for repair, for building a new life; all was not lost, it said, though the Nazi vermin had brought the German people and nation to dust and to shame. And there was a phrase that will burn in my eyes so long as I live. "Let those who fluttered with the breeze," said this leaflet, "stay away." And by the "breeze" this precious comrade meant the years of Hitlerism. Breeze indeed!

In those days, we were fighting side by side with the USSR against fascism; in those days that worker was our ally. So he got his permission, being cautioned only that the regulations required that an English translation of the leaflet appear on its reverse side. I was an officer—of the "other side"—and so I was "correct" with him and said nothing, other than what was required to let him know that what he wished to do was legal and he could go ahead and do it. He thanked me, said nothing and left. When he was quite gone and I was alone, I wept—tears of joy at the unconquerable spirit of man, the indomitable will of working people and the invincibility of Marxism-Leninism.

February 18, 1964.

## Communists and Socialists

### By Communist Party of France

*The following is a section of the Draft Resolution of the French Communist Party, submitted for discussion by its Central Committee in preparation for the Party's 17th Congress, to be held May 14-17 of this year. We believe that our readers will find of interest the ideas it presents concerning the relations between the Communist and Socialist Parties in the struggle for democracy and socialism in France.—The Editors.*

Today, many of the democratic objectives contained in the program formulated by the Communist Party of France are equally the objectives of the struggle of millions of French people. The programs of the parties, trade unions and other organizations representing those who are victims in varying degrees of the policies of the monopolies, contain a number of identical or concurring clauses on economic, social and foreign policy questions directed against the personal power.

Although important differences exist among these various organizations, extensive common actions are being developed. They show that the common points in the programs of these parties, trade unions and democratic groupings do not represent a fragile unity but are the expression of a popular will voiced with growing force.

The 17th Congress of the Party considers that agreement among the democratic parties on a program to be carried out in common is, at the present stage, the main condition for progress in the struggle for democracy. So long as the democratic forces fail to weld together, in a

clearly stated pact, their common will concerning the democratic and national alternative to the authoritarian regime, the present government will be able to continue to speculate on the fear either of leaping into the unknown or returning to the past.

The Communist Party reaffirms that it is not simply a matter of replacing one man by another, but of opposing the candidate of the personal power with a candidate jointly designated and effectively representing the mass movement and the union of all democratic parties and organizations without exception, with the aim of establishing a new democracy.

With regard to the coming presidential elections, the Communist Party of France cannot from the outset declare itself in support of a non-Communist candidate without a formal agreement on a common program, particularly envisaging truly democratic institutions as well as the means of accomplishing this program.

The placing before the nation by the democratic parties and groups of a clearly defined program, es-

tablished jointly and which they have pledged themselves to apply jointly, would speed united action by all the people. The discussion of this program by millions of French men and women, the united actions for its democratic objectives, are the surest means of marching forward.

\* \* \*

The unity of the working class is decisive for bringing about the reassembling of all the democratic forces.

The working class is the determining force in this process. It has nothing to lose through the disappearance of the personal power. It has everything to gain through the achievement of an authentic democracy, of a true republic. Its interests are not opposed to those of the other social strata, themselves victims of the giant capitalist monopolies and the authoritarian regime. On the contrary, its aspirations toward social progress require the development of industrial and agricultural production, the development of the sciences and the widest blossoming of culture among all the French people.

The will of the working class for democracy and peace conforms to the interests of all the people of France.

United, the working class can and should become the force of attraction of all the non-monopoly social strata interested in progress, democracy and world peace.

It is therefore of the greatest importance that unity of action be de-

veloped between the Communist and Socialist Parties and, that this unity attain a higher level than that achieved in 1934 and 1945, just as it is necessary that believers and non-believers march together, hand in hand, toward progress and peace.

A popular movement of unequalled strength is necessary to bring about an end of the personal power and of the governmental party—the party of the banks, of the beneficiaries of the race for atomic armaments, the party of militarism—which has installed itself in power by means of the blackmail of civil war and maintains itself in power to further its anti-democratic aims by falsehoods elevated to the level of an institution.

The Communist Party regards as an important and positive achievement the initial steps taken for joint support to the workers struggling for their demands, to the actions of the Spanish people against the Franco dictatorship, to the defense of people's liberties, to the actions for democratic reform of education, in behalf of ratification of the Treaty of Moscow concerning the halting of nuclear tests, and for general and controlled disarmament.

The declarations of the Socialist Party delegation on its return from Moscow, recognizing the USSR's desire for peace, the need for merging the efforts of the workers and all the peace-loving forces of the world in the struggle for peace, and the necessity of strengthening the bonds of friendship between France

and the USSR to safeguard peace, contribute to the development of unity of action.

However, the taking of parallel positions or of common positions is not enough. Communists and Socialists have an obligation to develop united action throughout the country for the purpose of expanding the movement of the masses.

It is necessary to surmount all the obstacles which arise in the path of unrestricted unity of action.

The Communist Party reaffirms that it is ready on its part to work toward the lifting of these obstacles. It has already responded to numerous questions at issue between Socialists and Communists. It has asserted that it is ready to support unity tomorrow for joint application of a program elaborated in common.

It has rejected the idea that the existence of a single party is an obligatory condition for the transition to socialism. This idea, upheld by Stalin, constituted an arbitrary generalization from the specific circumstances in which the October Revolution took place. Later experience proves that the common objectives of parties representing the toiling masses of the cities and the fields lead to ever greater unity for the transition to socialism, for the construction of a socialist society. There is no doubt that as new countries march toward socialism, unity of the socialist parties and alliance with the non-socialist parties will assume new and original forms.

\* \* \*

In our country, unity must be pursued to put an end to the capitalist regime and to build a socialist society, the declared goal of the two parties in their constitutions and programs.

The struggle for democracy is an integral part of the fight of the working class for socialism. Communists have made their own the conception of Lenin which he stated as follows:

The socialist revolution is not one single act, not one single battle on a single front, but is a whole epoch of intensified class conflicts, of a long series of battles on all fronts, *i.e.*, battles around all the problems of economics and politics which can culminate only with the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. It would be a fundamental mistake to suppose that the struggle for democracy can divert the proletariat from the socialist revolution, or obscure, or overshadow it, etc. On the contrary, just as socialism cannot be victorious unless it introduces complete democracy, so the proletariat will be unable to prepare for victory over the bourgeoisie unless it wages a many-sided, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy.\*

\* \* \*

The aspiration toward socialism has grown in the working class. It has won other strata, especially the toiling peasants and an important number of intellectuals, of technicians, of specialists who have arrived at the consciousness that our epoch is that of the transition from capi-

\* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 268. International Publishers.

talism to socialism, that socialism alone can resolve in a fundamental manner the economic, social and professional problems which disturb them, guarantee lasting peace and assure prosperity, independence and true national greatness.

The new relationship of forces which has been established in the world in favor of socialism creates new conditions for the transition to socialism.

Whereas fifty years ago peaceful transition was considered by Marxists to be a rare eventuality, today, in working to unite the laboring and democratic forces in the struggle to eliminate the personal power and for ever-expanding democratic reforms, the chances can be considerably increased of passing to socialism tomorrow by a peaceful road, by means of the mobilization of forces capable of compelling the big monopoly bourgeoisie to yield after having isolated it.

Furthermore, the existence of the socialist camp guarantees the peoples struggling for the system of their choice against foreign intervention.

It is precisely with a view to contributing to the march to socialism by a peaceful road that the Communist Party has proposed and proposes an agreement between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, not only for today but also for tomorrow.

This agreement can itself be facilitated by the new relationship of forces and the new possibilities

which are opened for socialism.

A great responsibility rests upon parties which declare themselves parties of the working class and of socialism, to surmount divergencies and division, to work together in the same direction, against the enemies of the working class and the people, of democracy and peace, of socialism.

In their constitutions and programs, Communists and Socialists affirm that only collective appropriation of the natural wealth and the means of production and exchange will abolish social classes and eliminate the exploitation of one class by another.

Communists and Socialists affirm that it is on the working class that this mission rests.

Communists and Socialists affirm they are the "parties of the class that are for conquest of power and socialization of the means of production and exchange," that is, of the transformation of capitalist society into a collectivist or communist society.

The two parties affirm that the choice between peaceful and non-peaceful means for abolishing the dictatorship of capital does not depend solely on the working class.

The two parties stress in their principles and constitutions that they are at the same time both national and international.

Communists and Socialists can succeed in surmounting their differences and marching together toward socialism.

## The King Who Never Was\*

By V. J. Jerome

A stir has been created on the American literary scene by the recent appearance of the book *Henry James and the Jacobites* (Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1963). The eminent critic and literary historian Maxwell Geismar has pointed to the nakedness of the king—Henry James—for two decades enthroned over the realm of fiction in theory and performance. And they who elevated him to kingship, the critic-courtiers the Jacobites\*\*—have taken up arms against Geismar.

What brought about the apotheosis of Henry James, long ago recognized as the laureate of the leisure class by socially penetrant critics, Vernon L. Parrington, Van Wyck Brooks, and others? What indeed accounts for the glorification of James, who fled the vigorous rhythms of the young industrial America after the Civil War, rejecting reality in his native land as too crude for the creative spirit? Who crowned the ex-patriate that sought inspiration in aristocratic Mayfair, leaving the field to such "unrefined" writers as Mark Twain, or Whit-

man, whom he rejected as "an offense against art"?

Geismar levels an indictment. James, he contends, who enjoyed but slight prominence in the twenties, lost this in the following decade of great social unrest and radicalization, but was again "discovered" in the mid-forties, and for two decades thereafter—era of McCarthyism and the cold war—was elevated into guiding spirit as novelist, short-story writer, and literary theorist. Today he is "the source of a whole literary, academic and critical foundation: an industry." And Geismar challenges: "The present extent, the intensity, the proportions of his recognition are not only formidable but fulsome; are exaggerated, absurd, and unreasonable." His book, your correspondent holds, vindicates that challenge, crystallizing the growing progressive mood in the America of the sixties.

Geismar charges further that the vogue of Henry James was ushered in by "a dominant, and powerful, and fearsome literary establishment;" a coterie "entrenched in the sensitive, the powerful, areas of our academic, scholarly and journalistic life today." He identifies this establishment as contemporary critics who have reneged their radicalism of the thirties (or their professions of it) or who shun social concern in any

\* The author was requested by the Prague magazine *Plamen* to contribute periodically a Literary Letter from New York. This article represents the first Letter, which we are pleased to publish.

\*\* By this term Geismar alludes to the partisans of the exiled Stuart king James II (from *Jacobus*, Latin for James), whose sovereign authority they held to be divinely sanctioned, after the compromise revolution of 1688.

sense. In the years of McCarthy and cold war conformism, forced and self-induced, Henry James became the perfect symbol of safety, propriety and gentlemanly behavior."

\* \* \*

Geismar hits hard. His book, which is, so to speak, a year-by-year and work-by-work analytical survey of James's life and writings, brings into dramatic focus, traditionally and for our day, often in fires that leap from the pages, the conflict of two camps. One represents the literary endeavor as a realistic interpretation, in a general sense, of life as an evolving historical process, in which the varying social elements and thought currents contend and interact. It sees the moving force in this process to be the *demos*, the people—The People, Yes—and it is on the side of the people. Implicit in this endeavor is the author's social responsibility; implicit, too, is the call upon him to write courageously, to withstand the lures and coercions to conformism. To this literary tradition belong figures like Walt Whitman and Mark Twain, like Frank Norris and Stephen Crane and Theodore Dreiser, like the early Carl Sandburg and Sinclair Lewis and, most recently, James Baldwin; and among critics, like Parrington and Van Wyck Brooks—and in this day, like Maxwell Geismar himself.

The other camp represents a conception of literature that spells an

evasion of social realities, a trend to historical reversion, and a contempt for the common people. These traits were manifested in Henry James in a style of élitist refinement, in a concern with upper-caste manners and—increasingly in his later works—with characters drawn, in Geismar's words, "from the snobbish little circle of 'superior sensibility.'"

For James, Geismar points out, the United States was England's lost colony, and the American Revolution the "King's War." We see before us the early James—the famous passage in his *Notebook* of the seventies, later to be used in his biography of Hawthorne. He bewailed the United States as "a country without a sovereign, without a court, without a nobility... without a picturesque peasantry, without palaces or castles... without fox-hunting or country gentlemen..." and wanted to know what there was left for the novelist to deal with. (To which William Dean Howells retorted, "We have the whole of human life remaining...") This nostalgia for feudal "grandeur" was a prevailing tendency in James, Geismar proceeds to prove. It is evident in his bias towards the French *ancien regime* and the English aristocracy in *The Ambassadors*, in *The Princess Casamassima* (acclaimed by the Jacobite critics Lionel Trilling and F. W. Dupee as the product of a brilliant social historian), and in *The Ameri-*

*can Scene* (written after the author's first visit to his native land in twenty years).

Geismar examines this travelogue, published in 1907, and its adoration by critics in the James circle for its essence and its high imagery, against the background of the U.S.A. in the early 1900's. He challenges its elevation in the forties "to an absolutely unfounded critical grandeur," showing contradictions in the laudatory estimates and pointing to its purple passages. "Perhaps never have so many words been used for so little content," he states, which evokes Thomas Hardy's comment on James's style—"a ponderously warm manner of saying nothing in infinite sentences." Coming to the essence of the book, which one of the James cultists found "remarkably forward-looking," he brings telling revelations of James's social commentary on the American scene. We find the returned expatriate outraged at the sight of "cynically squalid rustics" wanting to be received at the front door of his brother's New England home. We overhear his reverie upon nearing the Boston harbor by steamship:

The great presence that bristles for him [the author's oblique self-allusion] on the sounding dock... is the monstrous form of Democracy, which is thereafter to project its shifting angular shadow, at one time or another, across every inch of the field of his vision.

We see this Anglo-American, who

abandoned his fatherland in disgust, recoil from the "alien races" that had taken over New York, and we become privy to his thought: "there is no claim to brotherhood with aliens in the first grossness of their alienism." We witness his deepened horror at the sight of "a Jewry that has burst all bounds," until the swarming aliens are for him reptiles that "when cut into pieces, wriggle away contentedly and live in the snippet as completely as in the whole." ("Admirable and poetic imagery indeed," Geismar comments, "from the leisure-class bard of civilizational nuances... What an unbearable and odious social snob he clearly revealed himself as being...") And we see him, as he proceeds south, "discomposed" by contact with "tatterdemalion darkies"; it was "to feel oneself introduced at a bound to the formidable question, which rose suddenly like some beast that had sprung from the jungle." Co-gently and relevantly Geismar demands to know: "Do Messrs. Trilling, Dupee, and Auden (of all people) really want to be identified with this unhappy aspect of the American literary mind? Have they read and understood what their master was saying in this great American document?"

\* \* \*

Henry James, Geismar concludes—indeed demonstrates, upon analyzing the Master's acclaimed novels of "social history"—lacked a true sense of history. He is shown to be

a novelist of manners, manners of the polite society taken in themselves, with no light projected upon their social context. What we find to have been "the real world of the Jamesian yearning," says Geismar in one of his deft pen-strokes, "was the semi-feudal and pictorial amalgam of French and English nobility in the *ancien regime* of Henry James's fictional fantasies." He remained a spirit floating between two shores, never truly accepted in English high society and self-alienated from the people of his own land. His novels, having predominantly European settings, and Americans (of the upper classes) for standard characters, bear little relationship to reality, on either side of the ocean.

The pattern of unreality and illusion is strikingly apparent in James's "good millionaires," men of innocent and sweet disposition (albeit there are occasional bad ones). The book cites the qualities with which James invests the financier Christopher Newman in *The Americans*: "...the superlative American...the general easy magnificence of his manhood...the muscular Christian quite without doctrine..." In like spirit the millionaire-father Mr. Dosson in the tale "The Reverberator" is depicted as a simple-souled person, "as decipherable as the sum of two figures." Behold then the men, comments Geismar sardonically, who were the American Empire builders, kings of coal, oil, and railroads, the "new American Oli-

garchy of hardness...of material power and socio-moral corruption"! And the critic asks: "Where did the Jamesian Mr. Dosson fit into this new American scheme?" Lacking a real perception of history, and interpreting life in terms of the middle and upper classes (as Parrington discerned far back), Mr. Dosson's creator could not really give us the epic of the strength—the strength and the fascination—of the robber barons, because their strength was put to a very evil purpose in the service of capitalism, a historical reality he was not disposed to see. The depiction of the American millionaires, Geismar states, "the true drama of the American financiers, titans and barons would have to await the tougher, more realistic and sardonic mind of a Theodore Dreiser."

Geismar concludes that Henry James was not a major writer, but "a manor *entertainer* of a rare and exotic sort." The sphere of James's literary creations, he points out, narrow in range, was also artificial and fanciful, without basis in actuality, British or American. Of his characters at least half were drawn from a glorified English aristocracy, "beneath whom a few proletarian butlers [or others] of the Jamesian 'working-class' protagonists simply yearned to ape this spurious nobility."

Geismar holds, further, that the style of Henry James, novelist *par excellence* of the leisure class, was,

in its later phases, "a style, as it were, for the sake of style...a style whose abundance grew richer, more verbose and orotund, as its material grew thinner" (evocation of Parrington: "he came to deal more and more with less and less").

While his critique is basically cogent, Geismar is prone at times to oversimplify, so that things appear to come pat, as it were, to the critic's purpose. In classing James as a novelist of manners, he points aptly to Victorian plot contrivances and to idealized portrayals of rentier class characters, of heirs and heiresses by birth or by adoption, as was Isabel Archer, his heroine in *The Portrait of a Lady*. However, he tends to slight admirable qualities of technique, of characterization, and of dialogue, and at times a deepening of human truths through pervading poetry.

In fairness, further, it should be said, as regards *The Portrait of a Lady*, that when Geismar sees "James's concept of a royal revolutionist" in the idealized Lord Warburton, he overlooks the fact that James has Mr. Touchett, the book's most realistic character, say: "...their radical views are a kind of amusement...They make them feel moral, yet don't affect their position."

Geismar warns that the James worshippers "assume the maximum" about every work of their master. One may also err by assuming the minimum. Geismar dismisses the diversely construed *nouvelle The Turn*

*of the Screw*—a work of high artistry—as nothing but a ghost-story "written as a purely commercial Christmas item for a popular magazine."

Such secondary weaknesses do not diminish basically the power and significance of Geismar's work. The critique has placed James in perspective, searchingly, in a necessary way, in terms of his relatedness to reality.

As was to be expected, the Jacobites have retaliated with indignant attacks, some *ad hominem*. In the main these have been snipings; no volley has been blasted at Geismar's essential thesis. Where basic negation is attempted it is with "noes" to his "ayes" without weight of refutation. He is charged with writing in anger, subectively, which would induce him to suppress facts and commit injustices. The instances adduced, however, fail to tip the scales substantially in James's favor. His tone has been assailed as rude and his humor as coarse. There is resentment against his analogy that puts the Jacobites under the Circean spell (with all the metamorphic implications of the fate that befell Ulysses' companions.) Nor has the brush with red paint been spared in one "objective" criticism—in ironical, if unconscious, support of Geismar's linking the Jamesian revival with McCarthyism. In large part, the James partisans quote from the book with toplofty disdain for serious discussion, relying, as it were,

on the Jamesian aura to envelop the cult protectively.

Ardent defenders of Geismar have come forward in newspaper reviews throughout the country. Among them are Brooks Atkinson, prominent dramatic critic (*The New York Times*), and Truman Nelson, novelist and authority on Negro history (*National Guardian*).

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The appearance of Geismar's book is itself an expression of the changing political climate in the land since the forties and fifties, which has begun to affect moods and attitudes among students and faculty members in the universities—citadel of the Jacobites. Long numbed by thought-control into silence and conformism, the campus has become the scene of sharpened conflict in resurgent student activity and intellectual inquiry. With the Negro sit-in demonstrations as the sparking action, students have campaigned against the inquisitorial Congressional committee on "un-American" activities, and many student councils as well as faculty bodies have opposed "loyalty" oath signatures. Students have braved terror and bigotry in Negro-and-white Freedom Rides. Increasing numbers have taken an active part in the peace movement, some in Walks Against the Bomb. The growing interest in Marxism is evidenced by the lifting of official bans against Communist speakers at the universities. (That this liberaliza-

tion is extended also to fascists but indicates the simplicist-liberal confusion and growing Rightist pressure). Around a number of universities there have sprung up independent journals of social inquiry, most notably *Studies on the Left* (Wisconsin) and *New University Thought* (Chicago), as media of expression for graduate students and younger faculty members. Symbol of these changing times was the lately deceased Columbia professor and author of *The Power Elite*, C. Wright Mills, who came ever nearer to the positions of Marxism and was deeply affected by the Cuban revolution.

*Henry James and the Jacobites* is a major expression in the literary field of revulsion to conformism and non-participation. It is a formidable critique of smug withdrawal from reality into a self-deceiving esoteric realm of subtle searchings and refined techniques. In the best tradition of American letters, it is an affirmation of the artist's social responsibility, with the focus on real problems and a connection with the people. It is a book which had to be written for our times. Maxwell Geismar has given us a work of high purpose and high achievement, of courageous honesty and compelling power—a work of literary history which, for substance, method, and style, will occupy a chapter in that history.

## A HEROIC EPIC

By Ray Shiffrin

"Who touches this touches a man," Walt Whitman once wrote of his book, *The Leaves of Grass*. In William Pomeroy's tragically beautiful book, *The Forest*,\* the reader has touched a living movement and a heroic struggle of a colonial people for its freedom.

The long and bitter struggle of the Filipino people for complete independence has still not reached its goal, and in *The Forest* we are brought face to face with the severe setback it suffered in the period of 1950-1952. Here we learn more fully and intimately than anywhere else of the lives and the magnificent courage of the vanguard fighters of the Philippine liberation movement, the Huks. It is our great good fortune that in an important phase of this struggle a dedicated and perceptive American, the author of this book, participated in it and shared the life, the hopes and the temporary defeat of these fighters.

There have been prior instances of Americans, with a Marxist outlook, who forsook the relative comfort and safety of their stateside homes to become fully involved in the political and military liberation struggles of other peoples. Young Victor Allen Barron, a YCL member who participated in the 1935 uprising in Brazil and whose death by torture in a Brazilian jail was revealed in March, 1936, was one example. The three

\* William J. Pomeroy, *The Forest*, International Publishers, New York. \$3.95.

## Book Review

thousand young Americans who fought in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade to save the Spanish Democratic Republic in 1936-1938 represent, of course, the most inspiring example of such American involvement and sacrifice. The late Eugene Dennis' long and continuing interest in the Chinese political situation and his residence in China for a time in the late 1920's is still another example.

Such Americans help to uphold the honor of our nation and to prove to other peoples that there is another America which understands and supports their struggles, even if it is still a minority and cannot yet successfully restrain American imperialism. Such Americans are a living proof of the vitality of the spirit of proletarian internationalism which the American Communist movement has emphasized since its inception.

But probably no other American has ever so completely identified himself with and committed himself to the struggles of another people as has William Pomeroy. This native son of our land has become a man of two homelands and a victim of the ruling classes of both.

\* \* \*

No book has ever given us as intimate and detailed an account of the inner life of a people's guerilla army as does this one. As we follow his account of the daily activities, the educational work, the forced marches, the many pleasures and the increasing troubles of this embattled army, we can visualize the forest-enclosed camps



of the guerrillas in Viet Nam, in Malaya, in Algiers, in Laos or in Angola.

The Philippine liberation struggle is a long and heroic epic. It began as soon as the Spaniards conquered the islands and flared intermittently until the Spanish American War in 1898, when it burst forth again, this time against the American conquerors. When American imperialism arrived on the scene, an independent government of the Filipino people headed by Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo and the most eminent patriots in the country had already been established, and it sought American cooperation to oust the Spaniards. Instead, U.S. imperialism quickly came to terms with the Spaniards and set out to do what Spain had proved incapable of doing, namely to destroy the government and army of the independence movement. An enormous toll both in lives and devastation was exacted by the U.S. Army before it was able to crush the *insurrecto* movement and "pacify" the islands four years later.

After the Japanese invaded the Philippines in December, 1941, the liberation struggle reached a new pitch of intensity. The Philippine ruling class which only yesterday cooperated with American imperialism now rushed to serve the Japanese imperialists. The task of resistance to the Japanese invaders fell to the forces of the Left, to the worker's organizations and the peasant unions. The Communist and Socialist Parties had merged into a single party in 1938 and the younger leaders of this party became instrumental in organizing the People's Anti-Japanese Army in March, 1942. The shortening of the name of this army in the Tagalog

language was Hukbalahap and its members were known as Huks.

During the period of the Japanese occupation the Huks emerged as an enormously effective force, primarily on the island of Luzon where they enjoyed massive peasant support. Throughout the occupation the Huks did a magnificent job of harassing the Japanese and rousing the people to fight the foreign oppressor and his Filipino collaborators. They actually liberated many key areas and cities in Luzon before the American troops arrived during 1944 to claim the title of liberators for themselves.

The reactionary leadership of the U.S. Army in the Philippine Islands, headed by General Douglas MacArthur, immediately adopted a hostile attitude towards the Huks and even imprisoned many of their leaders. U.S. imperialism was again banking on the landlord and comprador capitalists to resume ruling the Philippines for it, even though they had openly collaborated with the Japanese occupants and were thus compromised in the eyes of the Filipino masses. These corrupt puppets then tried to trick the Huks into disarming and disbanding as a means of attaining "national peace," only to quickly violate their own offers and launch new campaigns of terror against the Left-wing forces in the cities and the Huks in the countryside. The hopes of maintaining an open, legal anti-imperialist struggle in the Philippines in the post-war period were thus frustrated by the American-supported regimes of presidents Roxas and Quirino who directed the Philippine Constabulary to destroy the people's movements.

After considerable discussion, Pome-

roy tells us, the Communist Party agreed that a revolutionary situation existed in the country. The Huk forces had already reorganized, their name changed to the Army of National Liberation (HMB), though they still continued to be known as Huks.

When Pomeroy and his Filipino wife Celia decided to leave their Manila home in April, 1960 to join the Huks in the Sierra Madre mountains of eastern Luzon, the whole movement was in a buoyant mood and victory seemed not too remote. The Huks had created in their forest hide-outs a complex and practical working organization. Their Marxist leadership developed not only an organization to fight, but also the cadres to reshape and guide the new society they were fighting to achieve. This meant education, the propagation of new values and ethics, long sessions of criticism and self-criticism, as well as the inculcation of pride in Filipino history and culture and the eradication of the servility which centuries of the rule of native landlords and Spanish and American imperialism had fostered among the Filipino masses.

The Huk camps were not isolated posts. They were connected with each other and food was supplied to them at great risk by sympathetic peasants of the nearby Pampanga plain through an intricate system of couriers. Celia and Bill Pomeroy were assigned as instructors in one of these camps. Pomeroy's knowledge of the Tagalog language and his devotion to the liberation struggle quickly won him acceptance even by those who were most suspicious of any American.

Hanging like a pall over the book, as indeed it hung over the forest at that time, was the gathering defeat of the Huks. In 1950 the U.S. military stepped up their aid to the landlord-comprador regime. The U.S.-trained Ranger units broke into the forest areas and with their superior equipment and fire-power inflicted severe losses on the Huks, which compelled them to draw deeper into the forest and cut them off from their sources of food and munitions.

Of this period Pomeroy writes (p. 165):

There was a time when the forest was wholly ours and we lived in it as within a fortress, issuing forth at will to spread panic among our foes. The enemy does not dare to enter, we would say. We will carry the fight to him.

Now the forest is like a breached wall, through which the government troops pour at their will. There is no place in the forest to which they cannot go, armed with their massive fire power, and we are the ones who move, step aside, take cover.

The steadily battered Huk movement now began to experience a phenomenon known also to other people's movements in their times of retreat. In 1951 there begin to occur surrenders and betrayals, often from unexpected quarters. Nevertheless, the great body of the Huks and their leadership remained staunch.

The betrayals, the retreats, the losses inflicted on the Huks accentuated their isolation and their energies now were reduced to the effort of simply maintaining their forces.

... We sit upon this island and see the guns pour in for those whom we fight. Whatever allies we might have, they can reach no hand to us, the sea is there between us. The sea, too, is a vise that squeezes in our isolated lives. (p. 168.)

In order to escape the threatened entrapment of their unit the decision was taken to split up into groups and disperse. Pomeroy and his wife were attached to a group of 90 people and given the objective of joining up with larger Huk forces further north. Since all the known forest trails were blocked by the Rangers, Pomeroy's group had to make the trek northward through an extended mountain area which was unmapped and uninhabited, without the benefit of any reliable guide or food supply. Yet there was no alternative and the march north, the Long March of the Huks across the Sierra Madre mountains in eastern Luzon started. The March began in October, 1951 and ended in mid-January of 1952.

How this March of 90 Filipino liberation fighters became an ordeal going beyond human endurance, how this column of 90 men and women struggled to overcome an unyielding and unknown terrain while becoming more and more exhausted by hunger and exposure, how they were tricked by aboriginal mountain guides and how, after surviving three months of this torment, they stumbled onto their destination expecting to find supplies and food, only to find neither—all this must be left for *The Forest* to tell. This is the most gripping and the saddest part of the book.

The column did not reach an area

of safety and stability where they could reorganize in order to continue their advance. The last Huk camp they finally arrived at was itself threatened and in a matter of days was raided, and in this raid Celia and Bill Pomeroy were captured.

For the Pomeroy's there followed ten years of separation and prison. The charges against them, as against most Huks, was "rebellion complexed with murder, arson, robbery and kidnapping." In these ten years most of the surviving Huk leaders and fighters were also jailed and their jailers applied every pressure to break their spirit. Most of these liberation fighters are still behind bars. Fortunately, protests from every part of the world forced the prison doors for the Pomeroy's in December, 1961, when they received a pardon. However their separation was to continue another two years. Celia was compelled to remain in the Philippines unable to enter the United States, while Pomeroy was deported to the United States and was, of course, unable to return to his other homeland.

Finally, in September, 1963, after a wave of protests, Celia was permitted to leave the Philippines and William Pomeroy joined her in Britain where they now make their home.

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Interspersed through *The Forest* are a number of vivid portraits of Huk leaders, many of whom are among the most remarkable personalities that any liberation movement has brought forth, and we find ourselves wishing for more of these biographical vignettes. Pomeroy's personal knowledge and biographical data of these leaders are almost the only such

writings in the English language and are of immense historical importance.

Luis Taruc, whom Pomeroy knew so well, is again discussed in this book. Taruc's surrender in 1954, more than two years after Pomeroy's own capture, was an act which shocked and harmed the movement. We meet Taruc at a Christmas Party in 1950, and later as a participant with his wife in the harrowing long march north. One imagines that some of Pomeroy's own feelings for the earlier Taruc still lingers, yet, it must have been with Taruc's surrender in mind that Pomeroy writes (p. 102):

It is not he as an individual who is significant, but he as a member of a movement to which he has attached himself. It is his role in a movement that has given him stature and prestige and leadership. Like all of us, he moves with a stream of history, and apart from it he would be as a stranded forest log, carried down from the mountains in a flood and left upon a shore to dry. So, too, with all of us.

Pomeroy speaks of some of the qualities of character and conduct which the Huks strove to attain and whose validity reaches beyond the Filipino forest. He writes:

... a leader, a cadre, must be above reproach. A cadre is not without weaknesses, but he fights them, he overcomes them, or he does not remain a cadre. . . . The criticism in the meetings is almost brutally frank. I have seen it employed in American left-wing groups, but never as it is used here, where no man has a hidden portion of himself, no man deviates from a code

of conduct without being put on the carpet.

He must exhibit complete equality in his relations with all Huks, the highest comradeship, without favoritism, without arrogance, with patience, with fairness. He must be personally unambitious and self-sacrificing.

\* \* \*

One of the nagging questions prompted by this book is the relative absence of urban working-class support for the Huk struggle in this period in contrast to the later Cuban struggle, where auxiliary actions by the city working-class forces were undertaken to assist the decisive military struggle conducted by the Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra mountains. Yet here the Communist Party leadership had fully endorsed and even led the armed struggle. Could it be that their estimate in 1950, "that a revolutionary situation exists. . ." and "that the revolutionary situation is flowing toward a revolutionary crisis which is the eve of the transfer of power" (p. 68), exaggerated existing possibilities?

*The Forest* deserves a high place in the arsenal of the American Left and our gratitude to William Pomeroy is enormous. This book is extremely well written, it presents us with a struggle which we have hitherto not sufficiently appreciated and it has an immediacy and vividness which are compelling. Above all, it urges the Left forces of our country to develop a greater concern and commitment for the unfinished liberation struggle of the Filipino people, a struggle whose ultimate victory will benefit not only the Filipino people but the American people as well.

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