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POLITICAL
AFFAIRS

Editorial Comment
DOMINICAN INVASION

Worker-Priests
CHURCH AND
WORKING CLASS

THE GOVERNMENT, MONOPOLY CAPITALISM
AND THE ECONOMY

James S. Allen

Victor Perlo

Erik Bert

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The Dominican Invasion

For the past few months our country has been thrown into a state of crisis by the escalation of U.S. imperialism's aggressive war against the Vietnamese people. Now the crisis has been greatly deepened by a new act of aggression, this time against the people of the Dominican Republic. The nakedness of this invasion surpasses anything in the recent history of imperialist outrages. It is fully as crude as the "gunboat diplomacy" of an earlier day, so aptly exposed by General Smedley D. Butler a good many years ago. His words are worth recalling:

I spent thirty-three years and four months in active service as a member of our country's most agile military force—the Marine Corps. I served in all commissioned ranks from a second lieutenant to major-general. And during that period I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street, and for the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer for capitalism. . . .

Thus I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. . . . I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras "right" for American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested. (*New York Times*, August 21, 1931.)

Today his successors are back at the same stand. The Dominican Republic is occupied, according to the latest figures, by some 30,000 U.S. troops.

The background of this new invasion is simple and clear enough. When the Marines came to "bring light" in 1916, they remained for eight years. And they left behind them as a legacy the brutal, corrupt Trujillo dictatorship. For thirty-one years the Dominican people suffered under this bloody tyrant. When this rule was finally ended with his assassination, and elections were held for the first time in more than three decades, they chose, by a vote of almost two to one, a government headed by the liberal democrat Juan Bosch.

But this constitutional government lasted only some seven months

before it was violently overthrown by a reactionary military junta headed by General Elias Wessin y Wessin. It is worth noting that the U.S. government did not then find it necessary to send troops "to protect Americans." And it found no difficulty, not long afterward, in giving diplomatic recognition to this military dictatorship.

Now, however, the Dominican people have revolted against this junta and are seeking to restore their democratically elected government. And it is to prevent *this* that U.S. Marines were ordered by President Johnson to invade the Dominican Republic. The pretext that these troops were sent to protect American lives and property was quickly abandoned, and it was made clear by Johnson that the real purpose was to dictate to the Dominican people, under the guise of preventing a "Communist take-over," whom they might or might not elect to office. In a statement which has been dubbed the "Johnson Doctrine," he declared that: "The American nations cannot, must not and will not permit the establishment of another Communist government in the western hemisphere." What this means, in simple language, is that the people of the Dominican Republic are to be forcibly deprived of the right to elect any government which U.S. ruling circles consider "Communist." And not only the people of the Dominican Republic but of every Latin American country.

But it is clear to anyone familiar with the political coloration of Bosch and those around him that the issue of Communism has been injected only as a cover for the unilateral intervention of U.S. military forces to support the reactionary junta against the popular democratic forces. And any remaining doubts on this score were quickly dispelled by the open assistance given by the U.S. troops to the junta.

With this new act of unconcealed aggression, U.S. imperialism carries forward its historical policy of supporting every reactionary clique, every bloody dictator, in the interests of perpetuating the exploitation of the Latin American people by Standard Oil, U.S. Steel, United Fruit, Alcoa, the copper trusts and other U.S. monopolies. As *The Nation* of May 17, 1965 expresses it:

The fact is that we prefer strong-arm regimes which can be relied on to act as our agents and protect our strategic, political and financial interests. In Vietnam, we abandoned Ngo Dinh Diem only when he proved to be a worthless tool, while in the Dominican uprising we rushed to the defense of Gen. Elias Wessin y Wessin, who without our timely aid would either be dead or in sanctuary in some friendly embassy. He, and we too, would be as revolted by a left-Socialist, anti-Communist regime as by a Communist one with ties to Havana or Moscow. Neither he nor we had any real objection to Rafael Leonidas Trujillo. The fact that he was an outstanding practitioner of murder, both personal and wholesale, did not render him odious.

So frightened was the Administration of even the prospect of a popularly elected government that it rushed onto the scene without so much as a pretense of consulting its OAS partners. It did so, moreover, in direct violation of Article 17 of the OAS Charter, which reads: "The territory of a state is inviolable; it may not be the object, even temporarily, of military application or of other measures of force taken by another state, directly or indirectly, under any grounds whatsoever."

It was only *after* the invasion of the Dominican Republic that the Johnson Administration succeeded—and only barely—in bludgeoning the OAS into support. The fourteen supporting votes—the bare two-thirds majority required—included that of the Dominican delegate, who actually represented no one. And among the six opposing votes were such key countries as Mexico, Chile, Peru and Venezuela. Moreover, says a *New York Times* editorial (May 7, 1965):

The nations who voted for the peace force were voting to curtail the activities of the United States, not to endorse or extend them. They insisted there be no loopholes in the resolution. There can be no doubt that Latin Americans, unanimously, would not want to see the United States occupying the Dominican Republic, perhaps for years. Nor do they believe the United States should decide what kind of government the country should have and who should head it.

Indeed, among Latin American countries the U.S. action has aroused a storm of indignation. According to *New York Times* correspondent Juan de Onis, it "has caused the most serious crisis in the inter-American system since the ill-fated invasion of Cuba in 1961" (May 3, 1965). In Peru, for example, the president and both houses of the Peruvian Congress condemned it as unilateral intervention in the internal affairs of the Dominican Republic. In Chile, the reaction has been even more pronounced. Writes Donald D. Ranstead from Santiago de Chile ("The Dominican Crisis," *New Republic*, May 29, 1965):

It is fall here and US flags as well as as leaves are being burned. The important thing to note, for those North Americans who care, is that the angry demonstrations are not simply the work of *fidelistas*. Chileans are almost unanimous in their support of President Eduardo Frei's condemnation of U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic. Except for the "Chinese" left and the extreme right, all factions are united behind the ruling Christian Democratic Party's (PDC) position that the crisis is a result of President Johnson's sending in the Marines, not of the civil strife itself. To this legally-minded country the issue is nonintervention, not

whether there are 58 or 58,000 Communists in the Dominican Republic.

To Chileans, the real meaning of the "Communist takeover" build-up is only too clear. Ranstead says:

. . . More than one PDC member has asked me if President Johnson knows that only last March the Communist of Chile received 12 per cent of the vote that the *bête noire* of *Time*, Socialist Salvador Allende, will probably be President of this country's Senate soon. They wonder if OAS forces might not, under certain circumstances, be landed in Valparaiso some day.

It is obvious that the reluctant OAS involvement will be no more than token (it is significant in this connection that the most positive reaction has been that of the reactionary, coup-installed regime in Brazil), and that the Dominican Republic will simply continue to be occupied by U.S. forces bearing the label "OAS." And the occupation, it is being predicted, will last for an indefinite period.

In all this, the prime casualties are the Dominican people. Victims of unbridled imperialist exploitation, they are among the most poverty-stricken in all Latin America. What this means is indicated by the fact that the average per capita income for all Latin American countries, including the richest, is only about one-tenth of that in the United States. It is their efforts to throw off the yoke which condemns them to this misery that are now being beaten down by the U.S. Marines. Small wonder that their presence is greeted with anger and hatred.

In short, the Johnson Administration is proceeding, in the face of all the opposition, to use the OAS as an instrument of its imperialist policy in the Dominican Republic. And at this moment it is engaged in "negotiations" for the selection of a government satisfactory to itself. And this in the name of "defending democracy."

In this country, too, the Dominican invasion has aroused widespread opposition, especially coming as it does on top of the escalation in Vietnam. And even in circles which support Wall Street's cold-war anti-Communist aims, there is growing alarm as the full import of the Johnson Doctrine sinks in. Says the *New York Times* (May 6, 1965): "But if it means anything, the Johnson Doctrine means that the emphasis is now going to be on resisting the advance of Communism anywhere in the world with military force rather than on differentiating between various kinds of Communism or trying to co-exist with any of them. The United States gives the appearance of heading toward the unenviable, self-righteous and self-defeating position of world policeman."

More than this, the crudeness of the Dominican intervention,

coupled with that in Vietnam, has opened the eyes of a significant section of the American people to the reality of U.S. imperialism and the need to oppose it. This comprehension is still largely vague, confused and limited, but it is growing and with each new act of aggression it will grow further.

This latest imperialist outrage immeasurably worsens an already extremely critical world situation. It is a shocking demonstration of the inner logic of the choice of a policy of stepped-up aggression by the Administration—of the fact that in the pursuit of a futile effort to put down the democratic aspirations of other peoples, aggression can lead only to more aggression, escalation to more escalation. As they contemplate the inevitable end toward which this leads, more and more Americans are quite properly becoming deeply disturbed.

It is plain that U.S. policy in the Dominican Republic must be reversed, no less than that in Vietnam, in the interest of world peace, of the rights of other peoples and of the welfare of the American people. U.S. military forces must get out of the Dominican Republic. The people of that country must be left free to restore constitutional government and to elect whatever government they please, Communist or non-Communist. They must be free to exercise fully their right of self-determination, and to throw off the shackles of exploitation by the U.S. monopolies and establish their complete economic as well as political independence. To the securing of these rights the American people must dedicate themselves, in the name of their own lives and futures.

Significantly, the George Washington of both North and South Vietnam is Ho Chi Minh, now leader of North Vietnam. But as the father of independence he is revered in the South as much as in the North.

The fact that the George Washington of Indochina is viewed with love and admiration by the people of the South whose alleged independence we are trying to preserve is a political fact which no bombing of bridges or raids on supply trains or skirmishes in the steaming jungles can eradicate.

Drew Pearson, *N. Y. Post*, June 2, 1965

The Church and the Working Class

Fathers:

The undersigned, fifteen of us of from 40 to 56 years of age, have worked for 10 to 17 years at manual trades, such as milling-machine hands, lathe hands, cutters, electricians, mechanics, bricklayers and laborers. A long time has passed since the day we first entered industry. Here we have made contact with millions of workers of whom Pius XII and his successors have often complained that they were far from the Holy Church. We share their lives, their sufferings, their struggles, their hopes and delusions, and feel ourselves part of them.

We have decided to speak to you about them because we know that today the Church is re-examining its relations with the entire world (during Ecumenical Council). All Christians, all those who believe that the Church's mission is to transmit Christ's message, are interested in the matter. Our own lives, greatly changed by years of labor and struggle, belong to the Church and we want to participate in the effort of the Church to fulfill its mission.

We are not making a sociological or economic study, nor do we raise personal problems here. We want to express certain aspects of our daily experiences which we feel are not understood by the Church.

* * *

In our world money is the principal source of rights and authority. When a man is compelled to "look for work" in order to live, when he must beg for a job from the owners of the means of production who can either give work or refuse it, that man, his life, his conscience, his very personality become victims of the economic system. The same holds true for his family. From the very first moment he is humiliated and dependent.

After the humiliation of being hired, the worker's life begins: he becomes a part of the production belt, victim of the machine, of increased speed. Promises made by his employer are broken, he runs risks to his health and life is quickly worn out; he is insecure on his job; he is prevented from organizing by the atmosphere of terror

* This letter, addressed to the Ecumenical Council last summer, was published in the French Catholic Review, *Lettre*, December, 1964.

which reigns in the factory. Thus, after a few months, the worker begins to realize that the system is *unjust*: unjust because of the obviously low wages and bad conditions; unjust because it subordinates his own life, that of his children, their right to culture and all that is really human—even his right to live and eat—to the profit of others. He feels that he has become an object to be used by those who have money. This is really exploitation of man by man, of one class by another.

On the other hand he sees the employers' organization devote its energies to the maintenance of this situation, with the aid of the State, police, Church, press, radio, television. The directors of these institutions have extra privileges and take part in the persecution of militant workers. The class struggle is not a theory: life itself creates the struggle.

Often his living and working conditions cause the worker to seek escape through personal and family isolation, that is, an individualism which is encouraged by bourgeois society and the Church. For example, he works overtime at the expense of his health and his family ties, to satisfy his normal desires and needs in a modern society. This overtime work reduces his physical and moral resistance, prevents him from reasoning, deprives him of culture and makes him easy prey of the press and literature of "escape."

On the other hand, when he enters political, cultural or trade union organizations, he can raise his eyes to new horizons; his faith is restored, he becomes clearer in his ideas and revolts in the name of human dignity. At that moment, when he discovers the meaning of solidarity with the workers of the world, those oppressed and those already liberated, he takes his position in the common cause. He begins to comprehend that it is the working class which must free itself from all foreign influence. He chooses the trade union organization which has long experience in the struggle, and takes part in the political struggle to the extent that he realizes that economic struggles are limited, while the real solution to his problems will be found at another level of organization and action.

Through his daily experience in organized struggle, the man who until yesterday was isolated and oppressed as a worker, discovers new relations among men, finds his ideal of a new man, the hope of a better future, all of which give new meaning to his life.

For a casual observer, even on the basis of ecclesiastic documents, this struggle seems to be based on hate and contrary to Christian charity, and Christian workers are asked to avoid contact with this movement, or at least to enter it with reserve and with the intention

of "purifying" it. This view shows a complete misconception of the hard facts of life for a worker: the worker has discovered that the capitalist class is interested above all in maintaining and increasing its privileges and profits. This outsider's view ignores the fact that the working class movement has as its purpose the abolition of the class struggle in the only possible way, through the socialization of the means of production, the elimination of wage workers as a class and of the employers as a class. A life spent in serving the interests of the working class is extremely hard. A militant's daily tasks require renunciation, courage and perseverance and often bring little satisfaction. A working class militant suffers intimidation, and if he is fired, he has difficulty in finding another job. Not only he alone but his family too are involved. Police terror seeks him out. This, we feel, is an authentic example of charity—not to give away something one does not need, but to compromise one's own life and that of his dear ones. This gift to others expresses a reality that we have rarely found in the Christian world.

* * *

When we see a worker isolated, individualist, oppressed because he does not understand the reasons for his situation or because he is resigned to it, we can only hope that he will above all develop a class consciousness, that he will revolt and participate in the collective struggle in order to become a man. And when we see a class conscious militant who struggles for his own interests and those of others in the battle for justice and human dignity, we can only hope that he will find in Jesus Christ a more complete revelation of the dignity of man.

But in practice the working class militant is a confirmed atheist. The more militant he is, the more profoundly atheist he is, because his class consciousness and his responsibilities require him to affirm his atheism.

We are often questioned concerning atheism among working class militants. Is it not surprising that these generous men who have dedicated their lives to serving others should refuse to believe in God who represents the supreme example of their own human activity?

There are many reasons for this, as we are above all aware of two: a particular concept of religion and the role of the Church in the workers' world.

The working class militant is convinced that a man must take his destiny into his own hands if he wants to be a man, rather than submit to destiny. Belief in God, on the contrary, seems to him to imply resignation and submission. For him, religion presents the

existence of God as the creator who has determined the social order and a man has only to accept the established order and to obey. This conception does not correspond to the teachings of the great theologians. Do people listen to the theologians? The people see that in fact the Church has always preached submission and condemned rebellion, thus contributing to the continuation of exploitation of one class by another.

In fact the worker judges the Church more on the basis of its actions than its words. Now the Church can no longer appear to him as another world, insensitive to his fundamental aspirations.

—The church appears to be an economic, political and cultural *power* which flourishes well under the capitalist system. In those countries where land is the chief source of wealth, the Church possesses enormous riches. It has an enormous personnel and rich institutions, owns splendid buildings. Its economic future is guaranteed by large bank deposits and stocks and bonds which are wisely administered and derive profit from the exploitation of labor. The Church is on good terms with capitalist governments and even with fascist governments, and its leaders are considered among the important people of this world.

—Does the Church not therefore defend that social system which permits it to live and to flourish? In fact, the Church did not defend the oppressed at the time of industrialization and rationalization of industry which introduced inhuman living and working conditions. Through the history of the class struggle, the Church has been seen to have direct ties with the owners—and this is remembered. When the Church shows interest in the workers, it is in the name of "charity." But when the poor organize and attempt to free themselves without the aid of the Church, the latter becomes disconcerted and frightened and condemns them. The Church then uses all the means at its disposal to install and maintain a Christian Democratic party in power so that it may preserve its own power and privileges.

—The worker sees that domination and authoritarianism are the means used by the Church; like the employers, by the issuance of commands. It seeks to dominate the conscience of the faithful and claims, in the name of God, to determine what is good and what is bad, demanding that men submit to its edicts as a proof of their faith.

—The worker notes that the members of the Church tend to organize outside of the human community (schools, universities, trade unions, Christian political parties, Catholic Aid, Pax Christi). For the worker who seeks unity, the Church is an element of division.

In reality there are two worlds—one Christian and another non-Christian, two distinct social systems, two societies, practically two countries—one of the Faith, the other of atheism. It would seem that in order to be considered Christian one must leave one world to enter the other. For the workers this means leaving that new world which they have built and which is moving, to enter another—an old world where all has been decided, where all human problems have already been solved. If they choose to remain in the world of human solidarity, they thus refuse the Christian world, and with it the Church which seems to be one with it.

Many who have inherited their traditional Christian faith from infancy and have never had to face this situation, often move in the same direction. Their credo, rooted in the past, brings them continually into conflict with their surroundings and they or their children turn in large numbers to atheism.

If, in spite of all difficulties, a man wishes to maintain both his Christian faith and his working class solidarity, he begins to examine his faith more carefully. He has learned new aspects of the struggle against exploitation and injustice, against poverty and ignorance; now those virtues which the Church has taught him, such as Charity, Poverty, Humility—these begin to take on a new meaning for him. He knows he is being called upon to express these virtues quite differently from the Princes of the Church and the manner in which they expound the word of God.

Previously the Church had presented Charity in terms of gentleness, forgiveness for injustice, and love for all. The first rule was not to harm others, and therefore, non-violence. The second was Charity: it was necessary to give alms, visit and help the poor, aid one's neighbor. Above all they had been taught the word of God applied to individual relationships, without questioning the economic and political regime in which men live. And in fact, men whom they consider exploiters may go to church, may be on good terms with their pastor or bishop and pass for exemplary Catholics without being denounced by the Church.

The Christian worker in a factory or shipyard cannot view all things in the same way because the relations among men in production are the real relationships and are more decisive than those on the street, in a neighborhood or in a parish. The worker who has become a "social problem" or who receives assistance from the Church now sees that this so-called "love for one's neighbor" has become a cruel joke, nothing more than a warm cloth applied to a festering sore.

Even worse, it constitutes a hypocritical alibi to justify poverty, maintaining poverty to prevent discussion of injustice. The people know that the big charity organizations live on the basis of profound social inequality and react to revolution. The people have learned long ago that exploiters and benefactors work hand in hand.

But everything changes for him who wants to love according to Christ's teachings and then enters the world of the exploited. His Charity is for him complete dedication and participation in the workers' life, with no other aim than that of Love. He remains with them and becomes a part of them because he loves them.

His love and his respect for these noble and humble people grows, and his charity becomes anger against those who are servile and contemptuous. He begins to encourage the proletariat to reject its situation, to seek out its adversaries, to struggle against fatalism and to accept the battle. If we love man, we must demand much of him; too much indulgence is contempt.

It is in this natural context that these Christians enter the class struggle and invite others to take part, for it seems to them to be the real and tragic form of love for humanity.

—To fight for organization and unity, to make an effort to analyze, with method and initiative, because often the fight is with the mind rather than with the fist. If understood in this way, the struggle can defeat hate, because the struggle is against the system and not against individuals.

—This is a truth test for the bourgeoisie and the powerful of the world who "drink injustice as they drink water," and who end by going to sleep with their conscience clear, but they sin if the exploited remain silent.

In the traditional credo, Poverty was above all an interior attitude of renunciation in preparation of meeting one's God. This fit well with material wealth; it preached economy and called upon the Christian to give charity, since alms to the poor were a donation to God. For believers who live in comfort, the poor man, symbol of Christ, becomes an object of mystical fascination.

The Christian worker knows this poverty intimately and without romanticism. He sees it imposed on his entire class. "Blessed be the poor!" What do these words and the comments which follow, mean to him? Here he must fall back on the long experience of the working class struggle.

He remembers the old militants who have reached the end of their days. From his youth on, the old worker has struggled against poverty

and dreamed of better luck and well-being for his family. He knows that it is hard to make money and appreciates the value of that small amount he has been able to put together. In spite of this, he has been robbed by society. There is no relation whatever between the fruit of his labor and the small part he has received in return for his labor. Why not? Because the good jobs are for the others; his low salary is witness to the fact that he is an outsider in the factory, because the time which others dedicate to increasing their income, he has given in serving his fellow workers. Perhaps the most important fact is that often during his lifetime he has had to choose between his activity as a militant and the sly offers by his employer to buy him off—and the real militant has chosen the way of sacrifice. He would have preferred to be rich and cultured, to own his own home, to travel—and this man comes to the end of his life a poor man—poor because he has chosen to love his neighbor.

A Christian accepts this poverty born in the struggle for charity and justice. The life and death of Christ was not different. The Church is no longer the only one, with its saints and martyrs, to commemorate the great Example.

The same is true for Humility, which was taught him in the form of modesty. This is a virtue for the powerful man who does not want to escape from reality. But it is different for the man who from morning to night and from youth to death is constantly humiliated; for his employer he is but a worker who can be substituted more easily than a machine—and his fate is the fate of the entire working class. For him the supreme need is to restore to men their pride in being men.

But in this struggle he learns another form of humility, for his comrades he is only one of them, he is judged above all by the results of his work in the workers' organizations. It is not he who judges, but the workers together. He is constantly corrected by them. Humility for him means acceptance of this democratic discipline and control over his actions by others.

He is still a Christian. His faith has become stronger. He knows that he has been faithful to the profound truth of the Church. But the Church—does it not appear to be another world from his own?

The working class movement is observing with great interest the evolution taking place in the attitude of the Church toward social problems, but this evolution is late and is taking place under the pressure of the people. Will it go to the heart of the problem?

The leaders of the Church tend to believe that injustice is an

accident, a result of certain aberrations, and that it can be remedied while maintaining the present system. Militant workers cannot realize their ideals and their aim of man's liberation here. For example, the Catholic bishops have recently become aware of two major aspects of social crisis: strikes and firings. They have issued statements which amount to this: they sympathize with the workers, and then appeal for "reconciliation." They cannot see nor do they say that these problems are the outward aspects of an essentially inhuman system.

The Church locally has given support to some strikes and local workers' struggles. The Catholic press and propaganda underline this occasional support, and many Christians feel that thus the workers' movement has come closer to the Faith. Certainly, it is comprehensible that the workers' organizations should try to take advantage of this convergence of aims, since the Church is today an important political and social force. We understand too that the Church, with its enormous influence, feels duty-bound to aid the working class occasionally. But these contacts which give support to the workers' movement from the outside are those of an important Power and often have objectives that are not exactly spiritual.

We feel that it is impossible for the working class to understand Jesus Christ's message as long as the Church, with its wealth, its organizations and its authority over all believers, remains an important temporal power. The working class must either resist this temporal power or use it for its own ends: It cannot receive the Word from such a temporal power.

Can the Church consider itself the voice of God when it uses methods other than His? Is the Holy Gospel really the word of God when it must find means of persuasion outside of its own house?

In addition, this desire to determine men's lives creates doubts. The world needs proof that the Church will refuse to exercise temporal power or possess enormous wealth.

Much is said concerning the need of the Church to be poor, not only to give up its outward aspect of wealth (luxury, the personal standard of life of the bishops, clergymen and organizations)—but really to *desire* poverty.

All that which makes the Church a temporal power is a factor towards atheism.

At the close of this period of 17 years of manual labor and participation in the workers' struggles, we believe that the first duty of the Church toward the working class is to recognize the existence of growing working-class consciousness. This is not at all an artificial

thing, but rather the result of human effort applied to understanding and transforming the situation today. The working class movement has a tradition of over 100 years of struggles, experiences, victories and defeats. Today it has specific aims and means of achieving these ends. It is essentially a humanistic movement capable of inspiring the hearts of millions and galvanizing their spirits. This force is marching ahead and has not yet utilized all its possibilities. This is something new for the Church, which can find nothing in its past to guide it today.

Acceptance of this reality, an effort to understand it, to discover its profound roots, without prejudice: the struggle for justice and humanity. This for the Church implies a readiness to surrender its power, to collaborate and to pay attention. Such humility before men who have taken their destiny into their own hands will permit the Church to recognize in their work the Spirit of Christ!

Acceptance and recognition of the fact that for these men the knowledge of God comes from their consciousness as men and from their struggle for the dignity of man. Christian faith must plant its roots in the heart of the working class.

The working class movement does not need the Church as its guide or ally. But to the extent that the Church agrees to end its temporal power, it can reveal the profound meaning of those ideals. If the seed does not fall to earth and die. . . .

Religion as a set of beliefs and a code of conformity remains basically as Marx described it, though we should perhaps restate it in more modern terms. But we must make a clear distinction between this and the church as an institution, and between our attitude toward religious belief as such and that toward members of the church and clergy. We must do so if we are going to be a vanguard party that leads, by and large, religious people.

The moral, ethical and humanitarian concepts of religion are not evil, and have not played a negative role in history. Indeed, many have joined the Communist Party because in it they saw the practical fulfillment of these same concepts. Many see the Communist movement as a vehicle through which they can work concretely for the realization of the essence of the sermons they hear on the Sabbath.

We cannot accomplish anything with the conception that we lead only those who are not religious. This is a fallacy, of which we must rid ourselves.

Gus Hall, *Catholics and Communists*, pp. 8-9.

THE GOVERNMENT, MONOPOLY CAPITALISM AND THE ECONOMY

VICTOR PERLO

The New U.S. Economic Policy*

In June 1964, then Treasury Secretary Dillon claimed that since 1961 American economic policy had crossed "a significant watershed" in "the emergence of a national determination to use fiscal policy as a dynamic and affirmative agent in fostering economic growth."

I wish to define the objectives of that new economic policy, examine its contents in their historical setting, explore its theoretical significance, and appraise its prospects.

The objectives of the policy are:

1. To minimize the business cycle, and if possible to eliminate totally its downward phases.
2. To increase the economic growth rate.
3. To increase profits, and to reinforce the domestic and international power positions of large corporations.

Summary Description

The principal instruments of that policy are well defined in the 1965 *Economic Report of the President*:

The instruments of fiscal policy—purchases of goods and services, transfer payments, subsidies, grants-in-aid, and taxes—are the government's most powerful tools for expanding or restraining over-all demand... The basic task of Federal fiscal policy is to help provide a total market demand for goods and services that neither exceeds nor falls short of the economy's productive capacity at full employment. Maintaining this continuous balance... normally involves two basic requirements. First, since total

* The content of this paper was also presented to university seminars in April, 1965.

productive capacity grows steadily over time, total demand must grow. Second, since fluctuations in private demand occur independently of Federal policy, these fluctuations must be offset in order to avoid dips or surges that could touch off recession or inflation.*

The *Report* goes on to say that since 1960 a third, catch-up requirement was added: "Thus, in the last four years the main challenge to U.S. policy has been to stimulate a massive growth in total demand, sufficient not merely to *keep up* but to *catch up* with the growth of productive capacity. During the past four years, fiscal policy has been dominated by this purpose." (p. 62)

Monetary policy is given a distinctly secondary place, although not a negligible one, among the policy instruments.

Can we say that this policy represents something really new, and not merely a formulation of long-existing policies? I think so.

Prior to the last several years the general federal fiscal policy was to intervene with deficit spending *after* a recession had begun in order to try to cut it short and turn the economy upwards again while striving to balance the budget or bring about a surplus in good times. Now federal policy is to intervene with larger deficits *before* a recession begins; to try to prevent it altogether, and, in effect, to have budget deficits all the time, or nearly all the time.

Correspondingly, easy money policies are followed more continuously and decisively than formerly. Finally, the formal attempt to stimulate the economic growth rate is quite new. Prior to the last several years, this was a subject of controversy in business and economic circles, and *not* a prime objective of government economic policy.

History and Current Application

The practical origins of this new policy go back to the New Deal period of the 1930s, when the government used budget deficits and an easy money policy as vital parts of its recovery efforts. The budget deficits at that time were as large as now, relative to the gross national product, and government-created emergency employment in the W.P.A. was much larger than present employment through anti-poverty programs, etc. But the scale of action was very small in

* A word of caution—the term "full employment" as used in this quotation means something quite different from actual full employment. This is a significant point to which I shall return.

relation to the massive depression problem. Moreover, what was done encountered violent opposition from the dominant business interests; and these proved sufficiently strong to prevent anything like a consistent application of the policy.

During World War I the policy was carried out to the extreme, but for military purposes. In this situation, the economic policy was strictly subordinate and incidental to military needs. However, the wartime results did bring out the enormous production and growth potential of the U.S. economy, and the very decisive role of government in activating it.

After World War II, government fiscal policy was used as a limited economic stimulator, especially to counter recessions. It was applied partially, inconsistently, and often without announcement. But its content remained mainly military. Ballooning cold war military outlays were primarily to establish foreign bases and dominate foreign areas, and to prepare for a possible nuclear war with the Soviet Union and China. However, fluctuations in arms spending were influenced by economic considerations. There is plenty of practical evidence to confirm the fact that official policy was guided by thinking such as that described in *U.S. News and World Report* (May 26, 1950):

Government planners figure they have found the magic formula for almost endless good times. They now are beginning to wonder if there may not be something to perpetual motion after all. Cold war is the catalyst. Cold war is an automatic pump primer. Turn a spigot, and the public clamors for more arms spending. Turn another, the clamor ceases. Truman confidence, cockiness, is based on this "Truman formula." Truman era of good times, President is told, can run much beyond 1952. Cold war demands, if fully exploited, are almost limitless.

Success, however, was not so marked. There were three more or less serious slumps—in 1949, 1954, and 1958. The U.S. lost ground in economic competition with other countries. Talk of economic stagnation became widespread.

Meanwhile in Western Europe a more vigorous and consistent application of these policies had developed; and with a different content. Government spending included a much larger percentage of civilian sector and welfare projects.

The more consistent application resulted from the attempt to overcome the economic lag behind the United States resulting from World War II. The different content reflected the much greater

strength of organized labor and Communist Parties in Western Europe, and the consequent need to grant concessions to these forces in order to forestall possible socialist revolutions.

As the U.S. lost ground in world-wide economic competition—at first most notably with the USSR, and especially after the first Sputnik—demands for consistent application of contra-cyclical and active growth policy became significant, as in the Rockefeller Brothers reports, and in the more labor-oriented Keyserling studies. But both of these had a large military component, which was dominant in the Rockefeller version. However, this was still not generally accepted in business circles. Nelson Rockefeller wryly observed that some thought him a “cloud nine” dreamer.

Under Eisenhower, and at first even under Kennedy, changes in the military budget continued to be bigger and more significant economically than changes in the civilian budget.

The Cuban missile crisis resulted in the realization among Americans generally, including American businessmen, that thermonuclear war would mean destruction of much of the U.S. and its people as well as of the USSR. Academically, this was known to informed Americans for a long time. But it wasn't really felt, especially by men of great power and influence. This new realization led decisive sections of the Power Elite to look for an alternative to a mainly military settlement of rivalry with the existing Communist countries. As a corollary, much more attention had to be paid to economic and scientific competition with them. Simultaneously, competition with the Common Market areas and with Japan was becoming more serious.

This not only increased the intensity of application of fiscal policy, but led to a change of emphasis in its content. If thermonuclear war was to be avoided, one had to be less reckless in giving free reign to the Pentagon budgetwise or in any other way. Meanwhile, other pressures required more attention to the civilian sector. The growing struggle of the Negro people; increasing publicity on the social backwardness of the United States in relation to poverty, medical care and public services of various kinds; the competition with the USSR in education—all these brought realization of the need to devote more of the fiscal effort to the civilian sector, and more of that to welfare and public sector activities, rather than to tax and subsidy concessions to big business.

A particularly sharp expression of this new attitude was made by Chairman Charles M. Bliss of the ultra-conservative Bank of New York (*War/Peace Report*, May-June, 1964):

What would happen if we could have a magic wand and do away with . . . defense expenditures: Without planning, the disruption would probably be serious. . . . Mr. Khrushchev might accomplish quite a lot toward the downfall of the capitalistic system if he were able to obtain our signature on an immediate and simultaneous elimination of all defense expenditure by the U.S. and Russia.

But planning, in order to utilize the released resources, can save the system, he went on. There were these alternatives: government debt could be reduced, taxes cut, or federal civilian spending increased. He continued:

I oppose debt reduction under these conditions because . . . that would have a dampening effect on the economy. . . . I would favor a combination of tax reduction and government spending . . . the importance of the government sector . . . could not and probably should not be materially altered by a cutback in defense spending. This is certainly not the conservative point of view.

More spending is better than tax cuts economically, he said, and it would start to take care of the “other pressing areas of need in our society” that private funds will not take care of.

President Johnson has expressed this new approach in politician's language. He has advanced the twin concepts of a Great Society and full employment. He has formulated full employment in the terms of Roosevelt—the right of every person to a job. And the Great Society is put in similarly reminiscent terms—the right of every individual to all the education he can absorb, decent housing, beautiful cities and countryside, health protection for all, unconditional war against poverty, etc.

But the practical program of the Administration falls short of even aiming for a Great Society. The detail, as spelled out in the Report of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, explicitly repudiates full employment and substitutes the hackneyed rationalization of 4 per cent unemployment defined as “full employment” in Madison Avenue publicity style—despite the well known fact that 4 per cent official unemployment means that 12 million individuals suffer from unemployment during the year, and many millions more are never even acknowledged as being in the labor force.

Public housing is not even increased over previous trivial levels. The education and medical care additions are noticeable—but certainly do not signify decisive advances. The steps against poverty are peripheral. The practical steps to guarantee economic equality for Negroes are also marginal.

The expansion of federal cash spending, \$6 billion, is just enough to calculatedly offset the otherwise strong danger of a decline in activity beginning late this year, but not enough to provide a real margin of safety. Simultaneously, the thrust of tax measures, federally and locally, has been rapidly to increase the regressive character of the entire tax burden, to favor the rich over the poor.

Finally, the slight decline in the military budget has stopped. By virtue of the intensification of the war in Vietnam, there is imminent danger of a switchback to the Truman method—with announcement of a 5-10 billion dollar emergency rise in the arms budget possible almost any day.

The gap between words and deeds is particularly striking, because of Johnson's all-out eloquence and promises. Moreover, in the business community there remain plenty of skepticism and potentially active opposition to consistent anti-cyclical and growth policy; and much stronger actual opposition to giving it a civilian welfare content.

Theoretical Basis and Critique

The new economic policy is rooted in the concepts of Keynes, and in their further development by American economists. Keynes, in the environment of postwar British economic stagnation and the crisis of the 1930s, saw the inapplicability of the marginal market analysis which characterized Western economic science for a long period. He turned to the examination of global (macro-) economic categories such as the flow of savings and investment and consumption funds, the level of production and employment and notably the role of government in influencing the scale of these categories.

Keynes's theories were applied with a sharp policy edge to U.S. conditions by seven Harvard and Tufts economists in *An Economic Program for American Democracy* (Vanguard, 1938). That program then represented the Left Wing of the New Deal. Its advocates in government in the late 1930s vainly pressed for consistent application of these ideas. In other works, the relationships were quantified, as in some of the work of R. V. Gilbert and myself, and in that of V. L. Bassie, and others.

One characteristic of the work of American economists was to reveal, much more fully than Keynes himself had done, the scale of the so-called full employment gap in the United States, as well as the corresponding scale of government intervention required to fill it and the amount of advance possible. Keynes himself regarded this analysis as extreme, in discussions held with him in 1941. But today,

the analyses contained in the reports of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, and the scales of suggested programs put forward by such organizations as the National Planning Association and by Mr. Bliss, are in many ways similar to the analyses of the Harvard and Tufts economists.

In a theoretical sense, Keynes was the sophisticated capitalist's answer to Marx who, starting with the labor theory of value, the value of labor power and surplus value, developed a theory of crises of overproduction which has had enormous influence for the past century.

In Marx's view there were two coincident contradictions undermining each capitalist boom. The first was the tendency of production capacity to expand without limit other than the potential size and productivity of the labor force; while the consuming power of the masses—required for the ultimate realization of a significant part of the social product—was held within relatively narrow limits. The second was the tendency at advanced stages of a boom for the rate of profit to be undermined by increased capital-output ratios and by an increased price of labor power resulting from labor's improved bargaining position.

Invariably, at intervals that tended to cluster around the period of renewal of fixed capital, these contradictions were temporarily resolved in crises which caused a liquidation of part of the capital and by a reduction in wages. Then production revived on the basis of a restored rate of profit and increased economic concentration. Monopoly, in Marx' view, would ultimately tend to throttle these adjustments and long-run economic growth, and economically prepare for socialism, as labor organization would prepare for it politically.

Marx never fully developed his theory of crises, and Marxists haven't developed it well under changing conditions since then. However, note should be taken of a school of young Soviet economists who have made interesting contributions in this area.

The Keynesians modernized economic science by describing and in some cases forecasting the increased role of the state. But they took the class content out of Marx' economics, and the class struggle out of their description of economic policy.

Keynesians for most purposes describe savings as if they were an undifferentiated mass applicable to all society. These savings, in Marxian terms, are that portion of surplus value which the capitalists set aside for accumulation (that is—reinvestment). Keynesian consumption funds, in Marxian terms, are a mixture of workers' wages

and that portion of profits used by the capitalists for consumption—to a considerable extent of luxuries.

The Marxists, and non-Marxist labor people, advocate a certain class approach to policy—that is, raising consumption of the working class by reducing the rate of exploitation of labor and raising real and relative wages. They also recommend increased social consumption funds and increased government investments in the public sector, out of money taken from the capitalists, for purposes useful to the workers.

The Keynesian purists who abstract savings and consumption from its class components tend to remove all social color from the components of government policy. Several years ago I participated in a forum-debate with a Chicago professor who claimed that a government policy of economic stimulation could be just as effective if it consisted merely of dropping the necessary number of dollar bills at random from airplanes, as with any other method.

The Marxists, for example, consider it desirable to finance government spending by increasing taxes on the rich, and lowering them on the poor, rather than by deficit spending; because the former method improves the relative economic position of labor, while the latter improves that of capital. Of course, the Marxists go much further in calling for an ultimate fundamental solution in socialism. But that is not involved in our immediate discussion.

In actual fact, in the U.S., Keynesian measures have been applied usually in specific ways to confer maximum benefit on the capitalist class. They attempt to regulate the cycle and promote growth in ways which strengthen the position and profits of the capitalists in general, and of special groups of capitalists in particular.

The attack on the New Deal during Roosevelt's time was ostensibly on the issue of government interference with business—and on reform at the expense of recovery. But the real target was the class content of measures unfavorable to capitalists as a class. Business has never been opposed to government interference, and has always used it massively in its own behalf. This is still the case. What has changed is that while formerly business was only interested in specific profit-raising measures, regardless of other impacts, it is now interested in combining these with measures designed to have a more general economic effect: to offset cyclical tendencies and to stimulate economic growth. Business is willing to moderate or subordinate certain specific interests to these broader ends when necessary, including the making of minimal social concessions for internal political stability. This implies that such concessions—even now—will

not be made simply because of economic calculations, but only when there are sufficient public pressures for them.

Appraisal

Will the policies of government economic regulation and stimulation, as presently applied, succeed in stopping significant recessions and in accomplishing a major, lasting rise in the economic growth rate? Serious contradictions arising out of the existing social system, and out of its interactions with policy, tend to make for a negative answer.

First, there is the contradiction between the aim of profits and that of full employment. That is, really full employment would tend to increase labor's bargaining power so much as to reduce the rate of profit. Aware of this dilemma, the *Economic Report* speaks of the "preferred rate" of capacity—that is the rate with the highest profit return; and of 4 per cent unemployment as leaving an adequate reserve of labor to "exert a restraining influence on wage settlements" (p. 90)—that is, to maintain a bargaining advantage for employers. The guideline policy aims in essence to assure a gradually declining share for labor in the national income. The fragmentary and reluctant pace of concessions to Negroes shows a desire to protect and expand the extra profits derived from special exploitation of Negroes and other minorities in the United States.

Second, there is the set of financial contradictions associated with the debt structure and potential for rising prices. The overall debt-to-income ratio has risen to approximately the 1929 ratio, with a particularly rapid increase in the past eight years. The consumer debt-to-spending ratio has increased most dramatically, reaching a record height. And logically so, for in essence this is an attempt to postpone the impact of the contradiction between expanding capacity and more slowly expanding mass consuming power which I mentioned.

Monopoly strength holds up prices and permits their rapid rise in certain fields, and especially under certain conditions which are facilitated by rapid credit expansion. West European and Japanese experience shows that policies similar to those of the U.S. government ultimately result in a rapid rise in prices, and not necessarily at full employment (Italy is a case in point). There is little doubt that price increases will also accelerate here if the U.S. is successful in stimulating growth, and avoiding a downturn on the basis of present methods, long enough. The tightrope analogy used, perhaps prematurely, by Arthur Burns when he was president of the Council

of Economic Advisers, is more likely to be apropos in the future.*

Third, there is the foreign payments balance situation. Because of the internationalization of economic life, it is much more important in its impact than it was a generation ago. Payments deficits have interrupted the application of growth and anti-cyclical policy in Italy, France, and now in the United Kingdom—to the extent of causing a rather severe recession in Italy, and threatening one now in the U.K., accompanied by austerity programs and attacks on living standards. The mechanics of this are clear enough. Any country that gets ahead of the average growth rate—all other things being equal—has a bigger increase in imports than in exports. Owing to speedup here and slowdown abroad, the U.S. is coming into such a situation right now. The U.S. has the additional special chronic problem of the foreign currency cost of military bases and interventions.

The administration is aiming to solve this problem by creating a parasite state, in which the income from foreign investments, not matched by export of fresh capital, is used to pay for the military domination of overseas areas. The real content of the overseas aspect of U.S. economic policy is illustrated by the Congo, Vietnam, and last year's coup in Brazil. It aims to maintain foreign investment domination of vast areas, by means of the brutal rule of local puppets supported from U.S. military bases, and by direct U.S. military intervention when necessary.

This takes all the glitter out of the positive aspects of the domestic policy. It embitters the reaction of conscientious sections of the public to Johnson's Great Society promises. It has its own logic, which heads for either war or serious defeats abroad which in turn will have far-reaching and adverse economic repercussions.

Right now, this foreign balance of payments problem is forcing the United States in the direction of a tight money policy. International pressures are mounting on the U.S. to follow the British and the Italians with deflationary fiscal policies.

In the light of these contradictions, I do not anticipate lasting success for the new policies in achieving their goals. Neither do I anticipate a breakout of a crisis of overproduction on the scale or in the pattern of 1929-33, or certain other of the sharper crises.

A word about the impact of the new policies on competition between the two social systems. The slowdown in the European so-

cialist countries, and the speedup in the U.S. and Western Europe, gave illusions that the terms of this competition would change decisively in favor of capitalism. But now in 1965 there is a clear slowdown in Western Europe. The socialist countries have overcome their worst difficulties and their growth is accelerating. Even at the worst, in 1963-64, they gained on balance on the capitalist countries, the CIA to the contrary notwithstanding. In my opinion the gains of socialism over capitalism will be more pronounced over the next several years, although not so dramatic as during the last half of the 1950s.

The United States, under present policies, is moving into a period of slower growth, probably initiated by a recession.

Recommendations

For the present I favor a vigorous pro-labor application of Keynesian methods, based on taxes rather than debt, and based on real application of full employment policy—that is, on the responsibility of the government to provide jobs for all that private industry doesn't, as in the Murray Full Employment Bill of 1945. It should be based on a massive expansion in the public sector and a cutback in the military sector. It should include radical measures to eliminate poverty through higher minimum wages and incomes, and to reduce the exploitation of labor through a reduction in the workweek without reduction in pay. It should include positive, special measures to integrate Negroes fully in all aspects of the country's life, on a completely equal plane.

It should have as a prime component the abandonment of the U.S. government commitment to the foreign interests of U.S. corporations, the abandonment of U.S. bases overseas and of interference in other countries' politics. This should be combined with a consistent policy of peaceful coexistence with *all* socialist countries, and with mutually agreed-upon reductions in armaments and destruction of nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

Obviously, this requires a major political reorientation of liberal and progressive forces in this country. Most necessary is a changed orientation of labor. The pro-peace, pro-civil rights vocal majority of the academic world can play a major part in this development by acquiring and disseminating a clearer view of the economic and social content of the issues they find so vital.

*The tightrope analogy means that the economy is very tenuously poised between the danger of inflation on the one side and depression on the other.

The Government and Agriculture

The federal budget, made public in January, signalled a new departure in the attitude of the federal government toward the family-farm enterprise. The budget declared: ". . . farming alone cannot be expected to provide a decent living in the future for more than about one million families, even with Government assistance."

The doctrine is not new; what is new is that the elimination of 2.5 million, of the 3.5 million, farm enterprises in the U.S. was proclaimed state policy. President Johnson, in his farm message, of February 4, 1965, cited the "commercial," "efficient," "successful" farmers as those who should be given the "opportunity . . . to earn parity of income from farming operations." He excluded from this goal the 2.5 million farmers who, according to the budget, should be banished from agriculture.

The eradication of a large part of the nation's farm enterprises had been demanded some years ago by the United States Chamber of Commerce, and an operational proposal to this end was advanced by the Committee for Economic Development in the summer of 1962. The CED declared that ". . . agriculture's chief need is a reduction of the number of people in agriculture. . . . Although the exodus from agriculture in the past decade or longer has been large by almost any standards, it has not been large enough."

The CED said further that action was required to "induce a large, rapid movement of resources, notably labor, out of agriculture." It insisted that this course must be pursued "in a large scale, vigorous, thoroughgoing way." To this end, and in this spirit, the CED proposed the elimination, within five years, of two million of the then estimated farm labor force of 5.5 million. (A large part of the annual youth crop of potential farm workers would also have to be disposed of outside agriculture, the CED maintained.)

The significance of the CED proposal lay, not in its ruthlessness, or even in its forthrightness, but in that the program represented the outlook of the largest aggregations of monopoly capital in the nation. With its inclusion in the budget of the Johnson administration, that program has been declared state policy.

The enormous number of "independent" enterprises in U.S. agricul-

ture—more than six million farms between 1910 and 1942—was widely held, some years ago, to evince the beneficence of American capitalism for the small producer. For believers, then, the destruction of 2.5 million farms during the past generation should be attributed to the malignity of capitalism in respect to the small producer. The Budget Bureau's perspective of the elimination of an additional 2.5 million farms should be attributed, similarly, to the fact that capitalism is poison for the petty enterpriser.

More than a century ago the Communist Manifesto declared, in this vein, that the "development of industry" is "destroying" the "hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property" of the "small peasant."

* * *

The state has intervened in U.S. agriculture for more than a century and a half. During that time intervention has changed vastly in goal, in method, and in impact, as our agriculture has changed, and as the role of the state has changed.

The intervention of the state has occurred in six main channels: the distribution of the landed domain, support of farm prices, extension of credit, "anti-trust" action, curtailment of production, and withdrawal of surpluses. (Other areas of intervention have been: research and experiment, vocational training, rural electrification, rural resettlement.)

1. The major state intervention during the nineteenth century was the distribution of the public domain to the farmers and to the railroad enterprisers. The terms under which the pioneers could obtain access to the land were fought over bitterly; that is, whether the land should be free or purchased, the price, the size of the units that could be appropriated, and the terms of payment. These struggles were climaxed by the passage of the Homestead Act in May 1862. Under the Act, 270 million acres were opened to settlers (1.5 million entries) as free land.

In the South, the state also sustained the system of agricultural slave labor up to the Civil War, and of semi-slave cropper status after Appomattox.

2. The period in which the great aggregations of capital coalesced and swelled was anticipated in the looting of the nation's landed domain for the benefit of the railroad speculators. In addition, railroad construction was subsidized through the extension of federal credit to the contractors. By the turn of the century, in consequence of their appropriation of public domain, and their despoliation of the working population through the connivance of the state, the railroads constituted the largest aggregation of industrial capital.

The farmers and others sought to curb the extortions of the railroad magnates through Granger legislation in the states, and through the federal Interstate Commerce Act (1887). Rate legislation became, however, the means of legalizing the extortions of the railroads, while curbing their most flagrant excesses, which were perpetrated against not only the population at large, but against other capitalists. The farmers constituted a large sector of that popular chorus that cried out against the power represented by the enormous aggregation and augmentation of capital at the turn of the century.

The anti-trust legislation which impinged directly on the agricultural arena was that which created the Federal Trade Commission (1914). The FTC operated as an inquiry agency and sought relief from monopoly repression through the Department of Justice. The Justice Department, however, with the assistance of corporation attorneys, devised the "consent decree" strategem under which the penitent corporate culprit swore to sin no more, and the Justice Department desisted from prosecution.

3. During the 1920s a large number of bills were offered in Congress from farm areas in an attempt to provide relief from depressive conditions. The major planks in these farmer-supported bills were: a) Government price fixing for major farm commodities. b) The price of farm products to be sustained by government purchase of the surplus. c) The "surplus" above domestic consumption to be dumped abroad at the world market price.

4. Formally, the intervention of the federal government in fixing farm prices had its origin in World War I in legislation which authorized the President to guarantee a "fair" price for wheat until June, 1920. The purpose of the price guarantee was to stimulate production during the war and, to that end, to assure the farmers that prices would not crash after the war.

Farm prices broke, however, in September 1920 and continued their downward course into 1921. This debacle aroused insistent calls by farmers for government fixing of farm prices. The demands for price fixing have persisted, as the dominant importunity, for more than a generation, to the present day.

5. What might be called the McNary-Haugen decade in farm legislative advocacy was cut off by the enactment under President Hoover of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1929. The Act created the Federal Farm Board and provided a fund of \$500 million which, through loans to cooperatives or government stabilization corporations, was to stabilize the market. At the instigation of the Farm Board, marketing corporations were established late in 1929, and in

the first month of 1930, for wheat, wool, cotton, livestock, and a variety of lesser products.

Thus, with the establishment of the Farm Board, and contrary to the intention of the initiators, the federal government took the first steps in market intervention that has persisted, with interruptions for war, for over a generation.

Federal removal of surplus products from the market through purchase was institutionalized with the establishment of the Commodity Credit Corporation under the New Deal in the fall of 1933. The CCC extended loans to producers who had signed AAA contracts to restrict production. The CCC loan level established a price floor for the "free" market.

In World War II, assurances against a slump in post-war prices were enacted in the Steagall and similar legislation which provided price guarantees through 1948. These forward-price guarantees were to be effected through CCC loans. Since 1948 price supports have been maintained at various levels for a substantial proportion of the total value production of farm products.

6. With the New Deal, restriction of production became integral to federal farm policy. Such restriction has been effected through rental of the land to the federal government; shifting from "soil depleting" cash crops to grasses, legumes and other "soil conserving" crops; "acreage reserve" and "conservative reserve," and through allotments. For participating in these restrictive practices the farmers have been compensated by the federal government.

7. Curtailment of production has been bulwarked, beginning with the New Deal, by legislative and administrative restraint on the amount of product that can be marketed. The Secretary of Agriculture has been empowered to fix the amount of certain products that can be marketed, and each producer has been authorized to sell a specific quota. Heavy taxes were to be imposed by the Secretary on all sales in excess of the authorized amount.

Approval of two-thirds of the producers of a commodity who voted, was required. (If two-thirds did not approve, price-support loans on the commodity could not be paid until the beginning of the second marketing year after the vote.) Marketing agreements were instituted for tobacco, dairy products, sugar beets, sugar cane, rice, and 26 lesser crops, at various times.

8. Federal participation in the system of farm credit was initiated in 1916 with the passage of the Federal Farm Loan Act providing for the establishment of a system of 12 district federal land banks, and a system of privately owned joint stock land banks. These were

to provide long- and short-term credit, but not intermediate credit, for agriculture. Both systems were placed under the supervision of the Federal Farm Loan Board.

The federal government entered the field of intermediate production credit with the enactment of the Intermediate Credit Act of 1923. The Act established a system of 12 intermediate credit banks, under the supervision of the Federal Farm Board. The banks were capitalized directly by the federal government, were authorized to sell debentures to capitalist investors, to provide funds to be loaned to cooperative marketing associations, finance corporations, livestock loan companies, or banks, but not, directly to farmers.

A decade later, under the New Deal, a more comprehensive federal farm credit system was established, embracing land banks (farm mortgage loans); intermediate credit banks (production and marketing loans); banks for cooperatives; production credit associations; and the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation. The massive extension of Federal credit to refinance defaulted farm mortgages was the most important action undertaken by the Roosevelt administration to placate the masses of angry farmers.

In the three years following May 1933, when the first New Deal farm legislation became effective, more than \$2.8 billion was loaned by federal institutions on more than 760,000 farms. At the beginning of 1938 about 40 per cent of the total farm mortgage debt was held by the federal agricultural lending institutions. However, from 1931 to 1935 more than 1.25 million farmers lost their holdings through forced sales or related defaults. Despite the intervention of the federal government the number of eliminations was larger in 1934 and 1935 than prior to the New Deal, in 1931 and 1932.

The intervention of the state in agriculture under the New Deal embraced these main features:

The federal government became the dominant mortgage holder for a time and, in so doing, rescued many mortgage holders, and brought relief to many farmers (though a million and a quarter were sacrificed).

The federal government became the instrumentality for reestablishing and extending, both in mortgage loans and production credit, the farm debt structure which had been threatened with disintegration.

The federal government initiated the massive restriction of agricultural production, through acreage curtailment or marketing impediment. These were accompanied by large-scale federal purchases

(via CCC "loans," and otherwise); and the distribution of benefit payments of one kind or another to the farmers.

The New Deal did not abolish or seriously amend the contradictions in U.S. agriculture. The technological transformation of farm production, and the elimination of masses of farmers, accelerated. Apart from slight dispensations to some of the most poverty stricken, the benefits of the New Deal were distributed largely in accord with the marketing position of the producers. Benefits varied directly with the volume of market production; those whose contribution to the market were small received pitiful benefits.

The contradiction between agriculture and industry became more aggravated, as the masses of capital congealed in monopoly industry became larger. The New Deal came to a close as the flames of World War II relieved agriculture of the pressures inherent in capitalist society. Accumulations of wheat, cotton and corn under the New Deal had become far greater than those amassed under the Farm Board a decade earlier.

* * *

The main characteristics of the intervention of the state in U.S. agriculture have been:

1. The state, which expropriated the Indians of their lands, transformed the public domain into private property and distributed it to a multitude of farmers, to speculators, to slave owners, and to the fabricators of railroad securities. This made possible: self-employed enterprise as the foundation of U.S. agriculture, massive aggrandizement by the railroad magnates and the bankers; and, in the South, slave-plantation and sharecropper-plantation production.

2. The two dominant pressures in the development of U.S. agriculture during recent decades have been (a) heightened monopolization in the surrounding economy and (b) the accelerated transformation of the methods of production, the expansion in the amount of capital employed, the resulting growth of productivity, and the widening of the gap between the most productive and the least productive farms.

In the three-fourths of a century, from the passage of the Interstate Commerce Act to the present, the tide of monopolization has rolled on. The gap between monopoly industry and banking, on the one hand, and the bulk of our agricultural enterprises, on the other hand, has widened at a rapid pace. The corporations producing the farmers' means of production (implements, construction materials, chemicals, fuel and oil); and those which constitute the market for

farm products (processors, chain stores, etc.), have become vastly larger.

In industry, transportation and banking, monopoly capital is dominant; in agriculture the majority of enterprises are small scale, even the biggest enterprises are not of the same magnitude as the biggest non-farm enterprises, nor is the degree of concentration as great as in non-agricultural production. (The biggest single enterprise impinging on agriculture is, however, the Commodity Credit Corporation, a state institution.)

These developments have exacerbated the "normal" contradictions, under commodity production, between town and country. The result has been widespread support among farmers for state intervention in sustaining prices, including government purchases, curtailment of production, and dumping, and in relieving the burden of existing debt or in providing additional credit sources.

The intervention of the state in U.S. agriculture in recent decades has resulted primarily from demands arising among farmers as the result of the unrelenting pressures to which they have been subjected. The consequences of state intervention, however, are not determined by the needs of the widely disparate sections of the farmers but, primarily, by their widely disparate participation in total production. These consequences are, as expected, widely disparate in their per farm impact. This is the case, notoriously, in respect to federal support of market prices, but is also largely true in respect to federal credit innovation.

3. Federal intervention in respect to agricultural wage labor has ranged from worthwhile, but limited, intervention in behalf of migratory farm wage workers and their families, beginning in the days of the New Deal, to intervention in securing foreign and domestic wage labor in behalf of farm capitalists especially during and since World War II. The intervention of the federal government was totally inadequate to redress the special repression visited on the sharecroppers by the plantation landlords during the New Deal, and little has been done subsequently. Nature, and the plantation landlords, have been permitted to take their course, and the rate of extermination among croppers during the past generation has surpassed that among any other section of the farming population.

The United States Commission on Civil Rights has recently confirmed the existence of pervasive discrimination against Negro tillers of the soil by the Department of Agriculture in the administration of government aid programs.

4. Since the establishment of the federal land banks, through the

enactment of the Farm Loan Act of 1916, the federal government has served as a purveyor of money capital to agriculture through farm mortgages and, later, through production loans. Its role has swelled and waned; it has moved into the credit arena in times of distress for mortgage holders and times of violence by farmers; and has withdrawn when economic conditions have induced increases in direct investment by life insurance companies, banks and other private capitalist enterprises. Its role has been two-fold, to establish federal guarantees for capitalist investments in agricultural loans, and to prevent untoward events by responding to the needs for capital of those farmers who are not doomed.

The basic attitude of monopoly capital on the role of the state in U.S. agriculture today is "no support" and "no control." In public discussion, of course, this attitude is usually expressed in more equivocal and more polite terms. The First National City Bank of New York, for example, advanced these planks (*Monthly Economic Letter*, May 1962, p. 57): 1) "Reduction in price supports." 2) "Relaxation in controls." Implied are "reduction" in supports, and "relaxation" in controls to the point of abandonment of both. Thus, the bank proposed that U.S. farm prices "adjust to the world structure."

A subsidiary plank in monopoly capital's basic program is that the Public Law 480 "Food for Peace" program, under which U.S. farm products are dumped abroad for inconvertible foreign currencies, should be abolished or, at least, sharply curtailed.

Two distinct factors have been operative in the federal food export program: 1) The program was initiated to relieve the heavy pressure of mounting agricultural surpluses and agrarian discontent. 2) Food exports have been used by successive federal administrations as weapons in the cold war and of neo-colonialist manipulation.

The abandonment of the government-subsidized export program is sought by monopoly capital on the grounds: 1) the program is a drain on the federal treasury (for enterprises that are generally, not a part of monopoly capital; 2) farm exports should be effected completely through private capitalist channels, and 3) the dumping program postpones "redirection of domestic farm policies toward production for free commercial markets" (*First National City Bank, Monthly Letter, October 1964*, p. 119). The overall intent is to eliminate agricultural aid from the federal budget.

The absence of price support and acreage diversion programs during the three years, 1961-1963, would have slashed net farm income by more than one half, it has been estimated by Walter W. Wilcox,

from an average of \$12.6 billion per year, for the three years, to about \$6 billion.*

If marketing orders, Public Law 480 exports, and agricultural conservation payments had also been discontinued, farmers' net income would have been substantially less than \$6 billion, Wilcox says (p. 3). Of great significance are Wilcox' estimates of the impact of such abandonment on the different size-sectors of farms. He contends that in the absence of price support programs:

1. Many of the 100,000 farms with sales of more than \$40,000 per farm, *the largest farms*, "would have experienced substantial losses. Because of the high ratio of cash expenses to income on these farms, for the group as a whole expenses would exceed income."

2. "A large number" of the 1.5 million farms with sales of \$5,000 to \$39,999, which had net incomes averaging about \$5,700 in the three years, 1961-1963, "would have experienced losses, and the average net income for the group would have been reduced 40 to 50 per cent."

3. There would have been losses of "several billion dollars a year," in farm real estate values, for the years 1961-1963, instead of the increases averaging \$5 billion a year which occurred, in addition to the annual losses of farm income of some \$6 billion.

As the existence of price supports has helped to sustain an inflated debt structure, so the abolition of these supports would sap the foundations of the structure.

Most startling is Wilcox' conclusion that the net profit of the 100,000 *largest farms* as a group is due wholly to the existence of price support programs; that, without such supports, the 100,000 *largest farms*, as a whole, would show a net loss. In the absence of convincing counter evidence, Wilcox' verdict argues a profoundly deep gap between the profitability of farm and nonfarm production, between farm and nonfarm prices.

* * *

Reverberation from monopoly capital's program is evident, not only in the federal budget, mentioned earlier, but in the 1965 farm message of President Johnson. In his message on February 4, 1965, the President insinuated cautiously that the activity of the Commodity Credit Corporation be terminated. "We must encourage the

* Walter Wilcox, *Farm Program Benefits and Costs in Recent Years*. Prepared by the Legislative Reference Services of the Library of Congress, U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, Washington, 1964, p. 2.

private segment of our economy to carry its own inventories, bought from farmers, rather than depending on the Government as a source of supply," he said. "We must urge the private sector to perform as many services as possible now performed by Government agencies." This is a transparent proposal to abolish CCC supports of farm prices and end the 35-years of federal intervention in the market.

The President proposed, however, that the program now in effect for the major commodities be continued for the next two years. This caused Eric Sevareid to say: ". . . the President is tackling slowly and obliquely" the issue of "crop support subsidies" (*Washington Evening Star*, February 16, 1965.)

Further encouragement of the massive elimination of the smaller farms was given in the President's proposal that acreage allotments and bases be made transferable by lease or sale within the same state. Now they are transferable only within the same county. Transferability throughout a state would greatly facilitate the enlargement of the biggest farms and the extinction of the smallest.

* * *

The federal government has responded to the demands of farmers when the pressure has been great. But even here, it has responded belatedly and inadequately. Further, the alleviation provided to agriculture has discriminated in favor of the largest farms, and against most of the farmers, against the small and middle farmers.

Monopoly capital has no liking, at this stage, for aid to agriculture. The pressure for abandonment of government support programs has mounted, and the perspective has become clear: to clean two and one half million farmers out of agriculture. For these farmers both of the various alternatives are cruel: either federal benefits that go primarily to the largest farms, or no supports. Those are the alternatives under which three million farms have been extinguished during the past generation.

A fundamentally different alternative is demanded. Such an alternative is a federal program that assures a minimum adequate income to every farm family, regardless of the volume of production or the amount of capital employed. Such a program requires a struggle against the monopolies, against the corporate farm enterprises, and in unity with the working class.

The Welfare State and Socialism

We need not devote too much time to the view that the Welfare State is a new stage of society, a kind of mixed capitalist-socialist society in which the evils of the past are eliminated, or at least minimized, and an approximation of socialism is being achieved. We have had modern welfare statism since the New Deal. But in the past decade inequality, as indicated by the portion of wealth held by the top one per cent, has grown faster than in the previous three decades, even twice as fast. Moreover, it has been found expedient at the highest level of government to declare a "War on Poverty."

We have also seen how welfare can serve different masters and different ends. Together with the so-called "War on Poverty" there is the real war on Vietnam. And at the non-governmental level, the benefits won by strikes and hard bargaining have left untouched the critical problem of permanent unemployment, especially among the Negro people and the youth, and have contributed to political lethargy in the labor movement. Fantasies arising from wishful thinking about the welfare state have led some to proclaim the "end of ideology," hoping to convince young people in particular that no basic changes are required, that ideas based on classes and class struggle are old-fashioned, and that their hopes and goals can be attained within the present framework of society.

This does not mean that everything remains as before. Present-day capitalism is different in significant ways than the earlier capitalism analyzed by Karl Marx, although he did foresee some of these changes. While it is dogmatic to maintain that there have been no changes in capitalism since Marx, at the other extreme it is mistaken to hold that changes have been so profound as to create a new stage of society. Important changes have modified the working of capitalism, without altering it at the base. These changes need to be studied and discussed more than we have done.

Structural Changes

It might be well to summarize what we mean by changes, since what is considered a change is subject to a wide range of interpretation. The kind of change we are discussing is structural—that is, it

must affect some significant aspect of the form and operation of capitalism. A structural change is not necessarily in the realm of social reform, which signifies a progressive advance, though a structural change may include or imply a basic reform if social movements are strong enough to turn it to their advantage. On the other hand, a basic or radical reform may bring about structural changes of great importance, sometimes with revolutionary impact. Or put in another way, structural changes usually originate in what might be called the self-working of the system, in response to many complex processes. Basic reform is imposed upon the system by people in mass, social action. I don't want to appear schematic about this, since the two are interrelated and more often than not are reactions to the same underlying forces. Nevertheless, the distinction is meaningful, and will become clearer as we discuss specific changes.

Without doubt, the most significant structural changes arising from external forces have resulted from the emergence and growth of the socialist world and the dismantling of colonial empire. These revolutionary global changes have not altered the nature of highly developed capitalism and imperialism, but they certainly have limited drastically their operations on a world scale, thereby affecting the inner workings of the economy. A new competitive factor has also been brought into play, as political as it is economic, largely at the level of government. To illustrate the point, one need mention only the central role of military spending in the American economy.

Here I wish to center attention upon internal changes of a structural nature. The underlying change, by now well established, is the extraordinary concentration of production and ownership in private hands, leading to domination of the economy by monopoly. However, I am not satisfied that this is the best way of putting it. "Dominant" might mean that under and alongside monopoly, the older form of free competitive capitalism continues on its course, according to its own laws. When Lenin wrote his analysis of imperialism this was still true in a country of highly developed capitalism, although he foresaw the transformation to a more complete monopoly economy in his brilliant diagnosis of monopoly capitalism as the highest or last form of capitalism, after which there could be only socialism. But in the half century since World War I, monopoly has taken over all key sectors in the United States, thereby also modifying the operations of old-type competitive capitalism in the interstices of the economy. The latter now exists only as a remnant, no longer an independent base for the creation of monopoly.

The change is dramatically expressed in the precipitous decline of

the family-size farm—one of the old reliable seedbeds of “free” capitalism; and in the transformation of the United States during the past 50 years into a nation of wage-earners—now comprising 85 per cent of all gainfully employed. The polarization of classes envisioned by Marx has taken place with a vengeance, despite all who claimed that the United States was exempt from the Marxist analysis—but it has taken place in a manner and in forms not foreseen in Marx’s general law of capitalist accumulation.

We live in a system of full-fledged monopoly capitalism, operating under its own peculiar type of competition, within an administered high-price structure, a form of private taxation. Big capital is largely self-governing, making economic decisions which affect the entire nation—labor and consumer—even determining the fate of entire regions. Among other things, these changes have contributed to modification of the economic cycle in the postwar period, which is the subject of another report.

The Monopoly State

The monopoly economy has produced state monopoly capitalism, which, for short, I refer to as the monopoly state. Lenin already noted the elements of this critical structural change. Various state interventions in the economy are in themselves not new, but World War II did mark a leap forward in the close interweaving of the corporate and state networks, and in enormous state expenditures, which continued to rise after the war and which provide the state with the opportunity to influence the operations of the economy in many important ways.

Heavy military outlays by the monopoly state reflect another important structural change—the marked shift in investment to non-productive and often wasteful purposes, including the service industries as well as the military. Of lesser importance, the increasing dependence of the corporations upon their internal resources for new investment, taking over the functions previously performed largely by the banks and the stock market has produced a new form of the merger of industrial and banking capital, not characteristic of the earlier monopoly phase analyzed by Lenin. It might also be mentioned that inflation, which was usually associated with the upswing of the economic cycle, has become a permanent feature of contemporary capitalism.

These changes have a direct bearing upon the scientific and technological revolution, and also upon the kind of measures that need to be considered to protect the people from the negative effects of

automation and the like. The upsurge of innovations in technique is one of those elemental forces with an unlimited potential for generating structural changes over a broad range. Whether they will have a destructive impact or be turned to beneficial purposes is the central question posed by 20th century capitalism.

As noted previously, mass movements for basic social reform can produce positive structural changes. The best current example is the Negro freedom struggle. Super-exploitation and oppression of the Negro people have been characteristic of the entire history of American capitalism. The Civil War resulted in the first major structural change—the slave plantation system was replaced by the sharecropping-plantation system, which for years to come kept the Negro out of the mainstream of American life. But by a process of capitalist attrition, helped by new demands for labor arising from world war, Southern agrarian feudalism was gradually undermined. By and large, the Negro has become a super-exploited wage-worker, whose underprivileged status is sustained by segregation and other social practices. The present civil rights struggle is moving toward the second major structural change—elimination of the wage-differential and other differentials which operate against the Negro. The impact of such a change upon the economy and the political system—not only in the South—can be far-reaching indeed. Its potential for democratic advance would be even greater should the civil rights movement finally bring labor fully into action as an ally of the Negro people.

The Anti-Monopoly Struggle and Socialism

As we have seen, the monopoly state has developed great powers—to redistribute surplus through taxes and other means, to invest, to regulate, to control, and so on. It has even assumed responsibility for full employment (rather vaguely, it is true) in the Employment Act of 1946. Thus, a new question has arisen which is the subject of much controversy: Can labor and democratic forces, including all anti-monopoly elements, use these gigantic state powers to achieve their aims?

The traditional answer has been that this is impossible unless power is transferred to the working class. In fact, in the relatively underdeveloped countries where socialism has been won this proved to be the case. It may well be the only way in the future for countries where capitalism is little developed and monopoly appears as an exterior imperialist force. But now the question is raised in another context, as it applies to highly developed capitalist countries, with long established democratic institutions.

The Italian Communists in particular say flatly that direct transfer of power to the working class, under the complex conditions of the modern monopoly state, is no longer applicable. They hold forth the perspective of working-class and democratic forces, in coalition, taking over commanding sectors of government, as a consequence of parliamentary and mass-struggle victories, thus opening the way to the elimination of monopoly from its position of power in the economy and the state, and going to socialism by peaceful transition. Experience has still to supply the confirmation of this theoretical position. Developments in Italy, where the situation begins to approximate this kind of a test, may soon supply the answer.

The failure of the British Labor Party to bring about any basic changes is sometimes cited in refutation of the above position. Such a comparison is superficial, not only because of differences over a wide range of historical and contemporary factors between the two countries, but primarily because of the fundamental difference in the perspectives of the two parties. British Labor governments have not so much taken over the monopoly state as become absorbed by it, and the state remained the central institution for perpetuating British capitalism. Thus, when John Strachey, British Labor Party theoretician, points to the opposition of the big capitalists to extension of state economic powers to show they no longer consider the state their own, he proves exactly nothing. Of course there are big capitalists who will oppose this or that state measure as against their particular interests, while there are others who find even nationalization acceptable when used to bail out sick industries and guarantee the stockholders profit into the bargain. However, there is a common denominator—that British capitalism remain British capitalism, Labor governments and unavoidable concessions notwithstanding. I am not suggesting that the Labor Party will forever remain the same. If it moves in a revolutionary direction, a Labor government may open the way to socialism in Britain.

Although we face a similar problem of defining the socialist perspective in this country, the level of the problem is different. By this I mean that the most important questions for us at this time are those pertaining to basic reform and structural change, with the aim of drawing together all the elements of an anti-monopoly combination. The fight for peace, for Negro freedom, for the preservation and extension of democracy indicate the broad programmatic aspects of this effort. The problems raised by the technological revolution, which impinge upon all aspects of contemporary life, demand central consideration.

I think it is still true to say that what can be won here at this stage of the struggle is in the realm of concessions—that is, many partial concessions from big capital will have to be gained before far-reaching structural changes of a beneficial nature are possible. But the process by which concessions are to be won has been changed by the emergence of the monopoly state. In the past, concessions to protect workers from the evil effects of new techniques have been won largely in direct confrontation between the unions and the employers, with the help of some remedial legislation. Of course, this still remains important; in fact, the unions have to broaden their demands. But now the concessions that can be won from the employers through the monopoly state is a much more important component of the struggle. The effects of the scientific and technological revolution go much beyond the confines of this or that industry, to encompass a wider range of social problems.

Indeed, the only way in which the negative effects of automation and new technology can be met effectively is by direct interference of labor and democratic forces in the operations of monopoly, in both the state and the economy. This necessarily implies encroachments upon the property rights and privileges of monopoly. The kind of interference we are talking about goes beyond the usual trade union concern with working norms, wages, hours and fringe benefits. These, naturally, remain basic. But the nature and scope of the new technology require labor and democratic controls over the investment and production policies of monopoly, particularly as they affect the installation of new techniques. Such controls need also to be exercised over the administration of monopoly prices. The flow and location of investment in new plant and equipment have become an urgent public matter, affecting the lives of millions, entire industries and entire regions—the old Appalachias as well as the new ones constantly being created.

A two-fold approach is called for—through broadening the area of collective bargaining with the big corporations to include the entire area of investment and production, and at the same time to press upon government for a wide range of legislation. The rise of the monopoly state signifies the merger at a very high level of economics and politics. It requires a similar merger among all forces seeking to curb, control and, in the end, eliminate monopoly. The struggle is for ever more basic concessions, leading to structural reform in the economy and the state that will weaken the positions of monopoly, economic and political. This is at the heart of the fight for peace, democracy and economic security.

HERBERT APTHEKER

Further on Vietnam

I wish this month to consider several of the questions most often asked in the course of lectures delivered in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, the South, the mid-west and California; these lectures were devoted to attacking U.S. policy in Vietnam and urging action to force its reversal. The points hereafter developed are to be considered as supplementing what I wrote on Vietnam in the April issue of this magazine.

The "Domino" Theory

How does one reply to the Administration's insistence that it is necessary to "save" Vietnam, else all of Asia will be "lost"? The basic reply is that this question assumes a condition in Asia which is opposite to reality. It is posited on the idea that the enormous upheavals that have marked Asian history during the past fifty years are the result of a "Red conspiracy" rather than being the result of indigenous and passionate opposition to exploitive social orders and racist colonial systems. Were this not the assumption, the absurdity of presenting the notoriously racist United States government as the "savior" of Asians—hundreds of millions of colored peoples living thousands of miles away from the United States, with civilizations that were ancient centuries before there was a United States—would be manifest at once.

But quite apart from this fundamental consideration, the incontrovertible fact is that since the United States commenced its bombardment of North Vietnam in February, 1965 it has been the victim of a real domino effect. What has indeed happened since that fateful February decision? Cambodia has severed all relations with the United States. Relations with Indonesia have deteriorated to the

point where they are purely formal; as the *New York Times* noted editorially (April 29): "The United States has completely lost Indonesia."

Opposition in Japan has reached the point where it is manifested in official circles; the two leading Tokyo daily newspapers both recently dared, in editorials, to question the wisdom of U.S. actions in Southeast Asia. Anti-American feeling—not only among the masses—in the Philippines has reached a high point. The South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) is splintered beyond recognition; thus, in recent naval maneuvers held by that Organization, the two major non-American partners, Pakistan and France, refused to participate. Both powers have publicly affirmed their opposition to U.S. policy in Vietnam; as a result President Johnson abruptly informed Pakistan's Chief of State that his projected visit to this country was now not possible. Since the Indian government similarly confessed itself perturbed by U.S. actions in Asia, President Johnson felt it proper to tell Prime Minister Shastri also that he was not now welcome; but the heads of those two Asian nations have accepted warm welcomes in the Soviet Union.

At the same time—and again largely because of the U.S. actions in Vietnam, aggravated by that Government's intervention in the Caribbean—the cornerstone of American post-war diplomacy, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), lies in shambles. At its May meeting, despite Rusk's pleadings, France for the first time refused to participate at all in an official capacity. For the first time, also, Norway, Denmark and Iceland publicly attacked U.S. policy in Asia and in Latin America. Furthermore the official communique issued from this meeting did not approve U.S. policy; if anything its somewhat ambiguously worded paragraphs criticized that policy. At the same time, rebellion within the ranks of the Labor Party in Great Britain, including among Members of Parliament, is reaching crisis proportions.

We have summarized above publicly affirmed facts; there can be no effective denial of their truth. They constitute the record of what Johnson's February whirlwind has reaped so far; is not that record one of disastrous "domino" effect and do not all the dominoes lie scattered about the floor? To pick up the pieces requires that the policy bringing them down be reversed.

The "Appeasement" Argument

From President Johnson to President Meany, Americans are being told that the lesson of World War II must be learned; they are told

that that lesson was that appeasing aggressors does not satisfy or restrain them but rather strengthens and encourages them. Hence, now in Vietnam (and in the Dominican Republic!) they must be stopped and this must be done no matter what the cost or the force required.

Again, a fundamental misconception is at the root of this argument. The native quality of the revolutionary movements in Asia is decisive; those are genuine revolutionary movements and reactionary efforts to suppress them bring about civil wars. In these wars, colonial Powers—like Japan, France, Britain, the Netherlands—regularly have intervened; and so has and so is the United States. When the Dutch sought to suppress the Indonesian struggle for independence, the only foreigners fighting in Indonesia were—the Dutch. When the French sought to suppress the Vietnam struggle for independence, the only foreigners fighting in Vietnam were—the French. Now that the Americans are seeking to suppress the Vietnam struggle for independence, the only foreigners fighting in Vietnam are—the Americans. To equate such events with the steady violent advances of the fascist Powers—Italy, Japan and Germany—during the 1930's is to equate George Washington with Count Metternich.*

Furthermore, the whole point of Munich—and it is to avoid “another Munich” that American youths are urged to fight ten thousand miles from home—was not appeasement. This word carries with it the connotation that what was given to Hitler was yielded grudgingly. Nothing can be further from the truth. Hitler was created, financed, and built up by German monopoly capital and simultaneously by the ruling circles of France, Great Britain and the United States. They did not *yield* to Hitler—they *lavished* upon Hitler. They not only gave him what he wanted; they gave him—as his correspondence and recorded conversations have since revealed—actually more than he expected and sometimes more than he had requested. They gave him naval equality; the legal right to rearm; a remilitarized Rhineland; the Saar; Danzig; Memel; Austria. They gave him (and Mussolini) victory in Spain. We now know that they were seriously offering him the former Kaiser's colonies in Africa. And in Munich—against the protests of the U.S.S.R. and the Left throughout the world—they gave him all Czechoslovakia, with its

* For detailed exposition of the realities of “Munich” and their contrast with present U.S. policy in Vietnam, see the letter from Jiri Hajek, professor of international relations at Charles University in Prague and Permanent Representative of Czechoslovakia to the U.N. in the *N. Y. Times*, May 22, 1965.

first-rate industry, its superb munitions works, its magnificent fortifications, and its eastern finger pointing like a dagger at the Soviet Union.

This was not appeasement; this was a policy of emboldening and encouraging. Hitler was *made* into a giant as a *policy* of international monopoly with the purpose of using that giant to spearhead the military destruction of the Soviet Union, and thus, once and for all, to “finish” with socialism.

The so-called appeasers of yesterday are the aggressors of today. The Munichers of yesterday are the bombardiers of today. The Hearst press that today leads the cry for war in the name of resisting appeasement was the same press that opened its pages to the writings of Mussolini and Goering regularly throughout the thirties. It was to the *N. Y. Daily News* that President Roosevelt figuratively gave Hitler's Iron Cross and he did that in recognition of its real Munich spirit; it is the *Daily News* which again leads the rapacious hounds of war.

Yesterday's “appeasers” are today's aggressors because yesterday and today they hated and hate socialism; because yesterday and today they preferred and prefer reaction; because yesterday and today they did and they do opt for fascism rather than live in peace with socialism and permit the masses in the world to work out for themselves a destiny of creative living, real abundance and full sovereignty.

China's “Aggressiveness”

Especially, argue these new-found opponents of “appeasement,” it is necessary to be alert to the “aggressiveness” of China; it is that that lies at the kernel of the problem in Southeast Asia and it is that—reiterates the President of the United States—that causes our unselfish intercession in that area.

The fact is that insofar as relations between the United States and China are concerned, the Chinese People's Republic has manifested extraordinary restraint. Americans must bear in mind certain facts: 1) China's civil war has not yet been concluded. Chiang retains possession of several portions of the territory of China, notably Taiwan, Matsu and Quemoy. He retains this possession because of the weapons, money and diplomatic support of the United States, whose forces simultaneously occupy Taiwan. The United States officially takes the position not only of refusing to recognize the Chinese People's Republic; it also officially has announced its hostility to the continuance in power of that Republic. The U.S. navy

patrols and intermittently blockades the Chinese coast; it regularly interdicts trade at Chinese ports, especially Amoy and Foochow. The U.S. admittedly keeps the Chinese mainland under constant aerial reconnaissance. Taiwan is to China what Sicily is to Italy; Quemoy and Matsu are to China what Staten Island and Nantucket are to the United States. Furthermore, Vietnam and Korea—in which the United States now has about twenty-five divisions—is to China what Canada and Mexico are to the United States.

China did not intervene in the Korean fighting until the United States moved massively north of South Korea and MacArthur boldly announced the Yalu to be his objective; even then it did not intervene until it had warned the United States—through the Indian Ambassador—that if the approach northward to its own border did not halt it would have to so act. And once the U.S. forces were back on the territory of South Korea, China withdrew.

So far as actions are concerned in the relationship between China and the United States, those are the facts. They add up to a record of remarkable restraint. There is, however, nothing that justifies any belief that Chinese restraint is endless; and presumably after the MacArthur fiasco no one seriously believes that the “Oriental mind” would never dare accept the challenge of Occidental force!

What aggressiveness there has been in Vietnam is American, not Chinese. For the aggressor to justify its behavior on the grounds of another’s “aggressiveness” is a classical instance of thief crying “thief.”

The Employment of Torture

On May 13, according to the *N. Y. Times* of the following day, Vice President Humphrey, in the course of defending Administration policy on Vietnam, was asked by a student to comment on the use of torture by U.S.-backed forces there. The *Times* reported that Mr. Humphrey became terribly angered, berated the young man, and denied the existence of such a practice on the part of those forces. Presumably this report by the *Times* of the Vice President’s statements was accurate; if so, the Vice President is not being truthful.

In the April issue of this magazine I presented the indubitable evidence of the systematic and widespread use of torture by the police and army authorities of South Vietnam. Those authorities in fact have never denied or repudiated this practice and photographs of its implementation have been shown on television and in newspapers throughout the country. Furthermore, as we stated in that issue, an American physician in South Vietnam published a letter

in the March 1965 issue of *The Progressive*—to which the Vice President subscribes—detailing the results of the torture upon patients that he—the American physician—had treated.

One can forgive the Vice President his anger when charged with defending and financing and fighting for a regime which systematically practices widespread torture; but one cannot forgive him his lying about this and berating a young student for raising the question. We will now cite two additional clear affirmations of the practice of torture on a mass scale by the puppet Saigon regime of the United States.

In *The Nation*, April 26, 1965, Russell J. Long, Professor Government at Howard University, writes of “the torture administered in the field of counterinsurgency by the South Vietnamese (but, according to reliable reports, in the presence of, if not with the cooperation of, American soldiers and officers) . . . It surely is a sign of the growing sophistication of American public opinion (or of its acceptance of brutality and violence) that no one *really* makes a great fuss over the drastic pictures of torture that are being regularly displayed in the press.”

And in the same issue of the *N.Y. Times* that reported Mr. Humphrey’s righteous indignation in Pittsburgh, there appeared a two-inch item dated Tokyo, May 13. It read:

A Japanese television network promised today to tone down a documentary film series on South Vietnam after viewers complained of an episode broadcast Sunday that showed atrocities committed by Government forces.

The film, “The Battle of the Vietnamese Marines,” included a Government attack on a Vietcong stronghold after the troops had been delivered by United States helicopters, and other engagements.

South Vietnamese soldiers were shown holding severed heads. Other scenes showed the cutting off of a suspect’s finger and an aged farmer begging soldiers to spare his life.

Perhaps the Vice President will be able to explain this to some “naive” academician; if so, I suggest he change his middle name from Horatio to Medea.*

* When this article was in galleys the author was able to examine the just-published book *The New Face of War*, by Malcom W. Browne (Bobbs-Merrill, N. Y., \$5). This volume carries a preface by Henry Cabot Lodge, so that its “establishment” character is clear. Even here however, appear photographs of prisoners of war being keelhailed to an awful death behind the U.S. armored cars.

A Rising Tide

I think Professor Long is in error in tending to minimize the mounting revulsion among the American people against the barbarous practices of the U.S. Government in Vietnam and now in the Caribbean. His own article is an example of this rising tide. Certainly, *never in American history has public opposition to dominant U.S. foreign policy been so profound and so widespread as now*. It is present in all groups and reaches deeply into the smallest hamlet; those who ignore it will pay heavily. Significant in its intensity is the campaign of the fall of 1964: the issues of that campaign; the character of the vote and the overwhelming rejection that that vote represented of war and warlike policies. Indeed, the tremendous scope of the present protest against the Johnson course in foreign affairs is a continuation and heightening of that 1964 campaign. Let "practical politicians," who must face the prospect of 1966 elections, keep that clearly in mind.

In going about the country and seeing and hearing this reaction from the grass-roots one develops a sense of pride and renews his feeling of confidence. Noteworthy is the fact that even intense anti-Communists—professionals, one might say—like Theodore Draper and Professor Robert J. Alexander have denounced U.S. actions in the Dominican Republic. (See the letters in the *N.Y. Times*, May 2 and May 9.)

On the day this is written (May 15) the *Times* prints another of the remarkable letters that have come from the professors and intelligentsia of the United States. This is from Norman K. Gottwald, Professor of Old Testament, Andover Newton Theological School. Professor Gottwald hails the protests that have come from colleges throughout the United States. He insists: "The President's passion for consensus is employed to impose the impression of near-unanimity where it does not in fact exist." Professor Gottwald rejects the argument that protests must be muted because, as James Reston has urged, "Communists make use of it for their purposes."

With similar reasoning, patriotic Germans were silenced against the wrong policies of the Nazi Government and civil rights demonstrations are opposed in this country. *Have we considered that the peaceful settlement of the war in Vietnam might be to the advantage of all parties involved, Communist and non-Communist?* (Italics added.)

Clearly, despite McCarthyism and McCarranism, anti-Communism in this country has not triumphed; an anti-Communist psychosis

has infected parts of the American population but it has certainly not infected it generally.

Heartening and historic was the advertisement in the *Times* of May 9 from about twenty-five New England colleges—including two Roman Catholic schools—signed by over eight hundred professors: "A Reply to Secretary Rusk on Vietnam." And an unequivocal reply it was. It would be difficult to improve upon the demands with which these men and women concluded their appeal:

We must arrange for an immediate cease-fire and offer to negotiate with the principal combatants, including the Viet Cong; we must cease our air raids on North Vietnam; we should use the good offices of the United Nations in bringing about these ends; and we must assure the world that we will not use nuclear weapons in the pursuit of victory or in the "pursuit of peace."

The academic revolution that has been brewing for about eight years and now is blowing through the country—with its full potential yet to be realized—is purifying our land. As it gathers momentum I cannot help feeling deep regret that C. Wright Mills is not living now to help lead it and to experience the joy and gratification that it would have brought him. Of those in universities in the worst years of the Cold War—in the decade of McCarthyism—it was above all Mills who fought back, who publicly dissented, and who tried to lead his colleagues and inspire his students with the sacred, radical, "No!"

One feels again so keenly the awful tragedy of his death at so young an age. Yet, let us see again the truth, that fighting the good fight is the way to live. Let us see again, that though his life was so brief, he lived well and he still lives—in every teach-in, in every think-in, in every protest against sham, in every demonstration for peace. As the campuses now really stir and move and very nearly explode, everywhere I feel Wright Mills shaking his fist at and mocking what he so well called the "crack-pot realists."

May 15, 1965

Moscow Consultative Conference

Introduction

In the calculations of the Johnson Administration concerning the direction of its foreign policy, a factor of no small weight has been the disunity within the world Communist movement. In fact, in his State of the Union message last January, President Johnson made it clear that he counted on the growth of this disunity. Among the conditions favorable to U.S. imperialism today, he included the assertion that "the unity of the Communist empire is beginning to crumble." And there is no doubt that the Administration has been encouraged in its policy of escalated aggression in Vietnam by the continuation of this division.

The ideological rift and the factional splitting activities which have been fostered by certain groups have seriously affected the anti-imperialist struggle. In some countries, the ranks of the Communist and anti-imperialist forces have been sharply divided. And encouragement has been given to all nationalist, go-it-alone tendencies that crop up within various parties, leading some parties increasingly into a "let's tend to our own knitting" attitude. The concept of proletarian internationalism has suffered severe blows indeed.

If left to itself, this state of affairs can only grow progressively worse, and the world Communist movement can only continue to drift toward a split. If this is not to happen, a determined effort is required to reverse these centrifugal processes and to set the world movement on the road to unification and consolidation. This is not a simple matter; it entails a long, involved, arduous process in which the accomplishment of even the first, most elementary steps is fraught with great difficulties.

It is to the credit of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that it took the initiative in setting this process in motion by calling together those parties which had participated in preparing the 1960 Moscow Conference. The result, after much discussion and debate, was the consultative conference held in Moscow at the beginning of March with the participation of 19 of the 26 parties concerned.

The holding of this consultative meeting is, we believe, an im-

portant step forward. It is a significant contribution toward reversing the present trend and laying the groundwork for further steps on the road to unity. The unanimously adopted communique which it issued serves to remove the fears of some that those who supported the holding of this conference were moved by the aim of reading some parties out of the world movement. More, it encourages the coming together of parties and the cementing of closer ties among them.

The prospects for strengthening the unity of the world Communist movement are real. They lie in the conviction of the participants, expressed in the communique, "that what unites the Communist parties greatly outweighs that which at the present time disunites them." And indeed, all are motivated by a common hostility to imperialism, by a common striving for world peace, and by a common goal of socialism. All profess a common adherence to the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism and to the line of the 1957 and 1960 statements. This community of interests, dramatically illustrated at this conference by the unanimous adoption of a resolution against U.S. imperialist aggression in Vietnam, is the basis for united action despite ideological differences, which the communique correctly places as the key to unification.

Also involved in the process is the bringing of parties together in meetings for the discussion of common problems and the formulation of common positions and programs—meetings based on the complete equality and autonomy of the participating parties. And these in turn are viewed as part of the preparation of a new world conference, at which new problems and developments can be dealt with and differences discussed in a comradely atmosphere. Of cardinal importance is the proposal for a consultative conference of all 81 parties which took part in the 1960 meetings, to give further consideration in a democratic manner to such preparations.

Finally, putting an end to public polemics will help to create an atmosphere in which both the development of united action and contacts between parties can go forward to best advantage. This does not mean an end to ideological debate; what it does mean is the conduct of such debate in a fraternal, businesslike way, free of acrimony and invective.

The atmosphere of the conference and the achievement of unity on these points, in the face of the fact that the participants were not fully in agreement prior to the conference, are themselves demonstrations of the correct way to carry on the fight for unity. It remains for all parties to contribute to its further development through their own actions, as the statement of the Communist Party of the United

States, which we present here together with the text of the communique, indicates.

Moscow Communique

On March 1-5, 1965, a Consultative Meeting took place in Moscow of Representatives of the Communist Party of Argentina, the Communist Party of Australia, the Brazilian Communist Party, the Bulgarian Communist Party, the United Party of the Socialist Revolution of Cuba, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Communist Party of Finland, the French Communist Party, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Communist Party of Germany, the Communist Party of Great Britain, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the Communist Party of India, the Italian Communist Party, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the Polish United Workers' Party, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Syrian Communist Party. Representatives of the Communist Party of the United States attended the meeting in the capacity of observers.

The participants held consultations on questions of mutual interest and exchanged opinions on the ways and means of surmounting differences and strengthening the unity of the world Communist movement.

The consultative meeting proceeded in an atmosphere of fraternity and friendship and was imbued with the spirit of active struggle for the cohesion of the Communist movement in the name of its great historic tasks. The participants expressed the firm determination of their parties to do everything in their power to cement the world Communist movement and to strengthen its unity on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, proletarian internationalism and the line defined in the 1957 Declaration and the 1960 Statement.

The representatives of the parties agreed that consolidation of the position of socialism, upsurge of the national-liberation and the international working-class movements, and growth of the forces advocating the maintenance and strengthening of peace, constitute the basic trend in world development under the present conditions. At the same time, it was noted that world reaction, primarily U.S. imperialism, is becoming more active in various regions of the globe, trying to aggravate the situation and undertaking acts of aggression against the socialist countries, the newly-liberated countries and the revolutionary movement of the peoples.

In this situation it is more than ever necessary for all Communist parties to show their sense of internationalist responsibility and to unite for the common struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism and against the rule of monopoly capital, for active support to the liberation movement and defense of the peoples who are objects of imperialist aggression, and for the struggle for world peace based on respect for the sovereignty and integrity of all states.

In a statement, the participants expressed their solidarity with the heroic people of Vietnam and the Party of Labor of Vietnam, and issued a call for international solidarity in the struggle against the aggressive acts of the U.S. militarists.

Cohesion of all the revolutionary forces of our time—the socialist community, the national-liberation movement and the international working class—is of crucial importance for the success of the fight against imperialism. This cohesion calls insistently for the strengthening of world Communist unity.

Divergences in the Communist movement weaken its unity and thereby do damage to the world liberation movement, to the Communist cause.

The participants voiced their conviction that what unites the Communist parties greatly outweighs that which at the present time disunites them. Even though there are differences over the political line and many important problems of theory and tactics, it is quite possible and necessary to work for united action against imperialism, in the matter of all-round support for the liberation movement of the peoples, in the struggle for world peace and the peaceful coexistence of all countries, big and small, with different social systems, and in the fight for the vital interests and historical goals of the working class. Concerted action in the fight for these common goals is the most effective way of surmounting the existing differences.

The participants stressed that the Communist parties must exert collective efforts to improve relations between them and to strengthen the unity of the world Communist movement on the basis of the observance of the democratic principles of the independence and equality of all the fraternal parties.

In the struggle for the solution of tasks common to the whole of the Communist movement, it is desirable to exploit all possibilities and ways, including bilateral and multilateral meetings between representatives of fraternal parties and other forms of party contacts and exchanges of opinion.

The participants are unanimous in the opinion that under present conditions, as is declared in the 1960 Statement, International Meet-

ings of Communist and Workers' Parties are an effective means of exchanging views and experiences, enriching Marxist-Leninist theory by collective effort and working out united positions in the struggle for common aims. Such meetings, held with observance of the principles of complete equality and independence of each party, can render good service to the cause of surmounting differences and cementing the Communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, proletarian internationalism. Therefore, in the opinion of the participants, active and all-sided preparations for a new International Meeting, to be held at a suitable date, fully conform to the interest of the world Communist movement.

To convene the new meeting and to secure its success, it is necessary to prepare it both as to its content and as to organization, actively to create by joint efforts favorable conditions for all fraternal parties to participate in its preparation, and to work tirelessly for an improvement of the atmosphere in the world Communist movement. The meeting should serve the common cause of all Communists. Emphasis and concentration of efforts on the urgent tasks confronting the Communist movement will, more than anything else, bring our positions on the fundamental issues of the time closer together.

The participants expressed the opinion that it is desirable to hold a Preliminary Consultative Conference of representatives of the 81 parties that gathered at the 1960 Meeting in order to discuss the question of a new International Meeting. It is necessary to hold consultations with all these parties to decide the question of convening this Preliminary Conference.

The parties represented at this meeting have declared themselves in favor of discontinuing open polemics, which are in character unfriendly and degrading to the fraternal parties. At the same time, they consider it useful to continue, in a comradely form and without mutual attacks, an exchange of opinion on the important contemporary issues of mutual interest. The participants declare themselves in favor of the rigorous observance of the standards governing relations between parties as defined by the 1957 and 1960 meetings, and against the interference by any Party in the internal affairs of other parties.

In expressing their opinion on the ways of surmounting the difficulties in the world Communist movement and on its further development, the representatives of the parties were guided by the wish to strengthen the Marxist-Leninist unity of the Communist ranks in the fight against imperialism and colonialism, for national liberation, peace, democracy, socialism and communism.

The representatives of the parties trust that all fraternal parties will respond favorably to this consultative meeting.

Statement, CPUSA

We greet the holding of the consultative conference in Moscow on March 1-5, attended by representatives of 18 Communist and Workers parties and by observers from the Communist Party of the United States, and are in full accord with its actions. We welcome its resolution of solidarity with the Vietnamese people in their heroic struggles against the armed attacks of U.S. imperialism, which strengthens our own struggles against this policy of aggression. And we are in complete agreement with its communique on the strengthening of the unity of the world Communist movement.

In its atmosphere of fraternity and friendship and in its unanimous adoption of the communique, the conference represents a significant step forward in the process of solidifying and uniting all parties in their common struggle. It builds upon previous steps in this direction, notably the recent conference of Latin-American parties in Havana. And in turn it is a harbinger of further advances to come.

The growing aggressiveness of world reaction poses the need of the greatest possible unity and cohesion of the world Communist movement. This is made especially clear by the stepping up of U.S. imperialist intervention in Vietnam, the most shameful and dangerous act of aggression of all. There can be no doubt that the Johnson Administration was encouraged in this action by its hopes of disunity among Communist parties and socialist countries. And there can be no doubt that unified opposition, together with the unprecedented mass protest of the American people against this barbarous policy, can force its reversal, and thus achieve a major victory for world freedom and peace.

The communique is correct, therefore, in taking as its point of departure the assertion that the "things that unite the Communist parties are much stronger than those that separate them at present," and that the path to overcoming present differences lies first of all in joint struggles for common goals. It is likewise correct in urging the use of all possible means of solving common problems, including bilateral and multilateral meetings and other forms of communication and exchange of views.

We wholly agree on the value, toward this end, of international meetings conducted on the basis of full equality and independence of each party, and with the statement that "active and all-sided preparations for a new International Meeting, to be held at a suitable date, fully conform to the interest of the world Communist movement." This accords with the position taken by our Party on previous occasions. Further, we support the idea that for the discussion of such a meeting it is desirable, as soon as conditions permit, to hold a preliminary consultative meeting of the 81 parties which participated in the 1960 meeting.

On our part, we shall work to cement our fraternal ties with other parties in all possible ways, to develop exchanges of views and discussions of common problems, and to strengthen international solidarity to the utmost, while we shall continue to debate questions of difference among parties. We shall refrain from public polemics and attacks on other parties.

We consider the consolidation of the world Communist movement to be a task of primary importance. Its unity, on which is based in turn the unity of all anti-imperialist forces, is vital to the achievement of further advances in the struggle against imperialist aggression, for the freedom of oppressed peoples, for peace and peaceful coexistence, for socialism. The construction of the edifice of that unity is a long, arduous task. The consultative conference is a material contribution to its fulfillment.

Division Weakens Us

And the Revolution still has much to do. . . . The Revolution has powerful enemies, and above all, one powerful enemy, Yankee imperialism. This enemy threatens us and will threaten us for some time to come. This enemy will not easily resign itself—although it has no alternative—to the revolutionary successes of our people. This enemy, not here, but thousands of miles from here, is attacking other countries as it is criminally attacking the people of North Vietnam and the revolutionary people of South Vietnam.

This enemy is interfering in the Congo. It sends its ships, its marines and its planes to every corner of the world. It takes advantage of differences among the revolutionaries, of the lamentable differences that exist in the socialist camp. Unfortunately, they calculate, analyze and take advantage of everything that can weaken the revolutionary front.

That is to say that circumstances exist that involve dangers for us all, for us and for other nations in other parts of the world who fight for their independence and freedom. Dangers are not lacking.

* * *

I am not going to speak at length about the problems connected with the differences and divisions in the socialist camp. We don't even know when we may have to speak of this at length, because the problem is not to speak for the sake of speaking; the problem is to speak in order to say something; the problem now is to speak when, by speaking or talking or saying something, there is a positive result and not a result that is positive and useful only to imperialism and the enemies of the people.

We'd rather not to have to face such a bitter necessity. As far as talk is concerned, enough and more than enough has been said already. As far as division is concerned, unfortunately, enough and more than is necessary has been said, more than suits the interests of the peoples and, unfortunately, is useful to the interests of the enemies of the peoples.

But we, small countries, that do not base ourselves on the strength of armies of millions of men, or on the strength of atomic power,

* Excerpts from speech delivered at the University of Havana, March 13, 1965.

small countries like Vietnam and Cuba, we have enough instinct to note calmly and to understand that these disagreements and differences that weaken the strength of the socialist camp hurt no one more than us who are in special situations: here, ninety miles from the Yankee empire; there, attacked by Yankee planes.

Here it's not a question of analyzing the problems under dispute theoretically or philosophically, but of recognizing the great truth: that in the face of an enemy that attacks, in the face of an enemy that becomes more and more aggressive, there is no justification for division; division doesn't make sense, there is no reason for division.

And at any time in history, at any period of mankind, from the time the first revolutionary emerged in the world, from the time revolutions occurred as social phenomena in which the masses acted instinctively, until the time revolutions were made consciously, became tasks and phenomena fully understood by the people—which took place when Marxism first appeared—division in the face of the enemy was never a correct strategy, it was never revolutionary strategy, was never intelligent strategy.

And in this revolutionary process we have all from the beginning been educated in the idea that everything that divides weakens, that everything that disunites us is bad, is bad for our people and good for imperialism.

And the mass of our people understood the need for unity from the first moment, and unity became an essential question for the Revolution, unity became the cry of the masses, unity became a slogan of the whole people.

* * *

We ask ourselves if the imperialists are not attacking North Vietnam. We ask ourselves whether in North Vietnam men and women of the people are not dying.

And who can be made to think or to believe that division is proper or useful? Isn't it obvious that the imperialists are advancing in North Vietnam? Perhaps it's not seen that the tactic the imperialists are following there is to smash the revolutionary movement in South Vietnam, attacking North Vietnam first under the pretext of the attacks being in reprisal, later arrogating to themselves the right to attack whenever they want to, and continuing to use masses of planes against the fighters of South Vietnam.

What is the situation at this moment? The imperialists are talking about a naval blockade, landing their marines in South Vietnam, sending aircraft carriers, mobilizing masses of planes to smash the revolutionary movement in South Vietnam, to attack the guerrillas

in South Vietnam with every available means of war, reserving the right to attack North Vietnam whenever it seems best to them; carrying on this kind of aerial war, without any sacrifice on their part, bombing with hundreds of planes and even indulging in the luxury of sending their helicopters to rescue the pilots of the downed planes.

Doubtless the imperialists want a comfortable kind of struggle! Doubtless the imperialists want a kind of war with only industrial losses! That is—"so many planes lost." Doubtless the people of South Vietnam and of North Vietnam have to suffer all this! And suffer it in their own flesh because there are men and women there who die, victims of the U.S. strafing and victims of the U.S. bombing.

And they don't hesitate in the least to declare that they propose to continue all that because even the attacks on North Vietnam have not had the effect of overcoming the divisions within the socialist family. And who doubts that this division encourages the imperialists? Who doubts that to face the enemy with a united front would make them hesitate, make them pause and think before launching their adventurous attacks and their barefaced intervention in that part of the world? Who was to be convinced? With what reason, with what logic? And who benefits from this? The imperialists! And who are the victims? The Vietnamese! And what suffers? The prestige of socialism, the prestige of the international Communist movement, of the international revolutionary movement! And this truly hurts us! Because for us the liberation movement is not a demagogic word but a slogan that we have always felt deeply!

Because we are a small country that does not aspire to become the center of the universe; because we are a small country that does not aspire to become the revolutionary center of the world. And when we speak of these problems, we speak with absolute sincerity, and we speak disinterestedly. We did not win revolutionary power in bourgeois elections but fighting weapons in hand. We speak in the name of a people who for six years irrevocably and unhesitatingly resisted the ambushes and the threats of imperialism. . . .

* * *

And it should be known that it is our Party which directs the propaganda here; that it is our Party which gives guidance here; that this is a question that comes under our jurisdiction! And if we don't want the apple of discord to come here, because we simply don't want it here, then no one can smuggle it in. Our enemies, our only enemies, are the Yankee imperialists! Our only insuperable contradiction is with Yankee imperialism! The only enemy against whom

we are ready to break all our lances, is imperialism!

As far as anything else is concerned, we don't understand any other language, we don't understand the language of division. In the face of the concrete case of a country attacked by imperialism, like Vietnam, we have one position. We don't act, as perhaps some think, as perhaps above all the imperialists think, on the basis of "when you see your neighbor's house on fire, you throw water on your own roof"—in reality, the way we feel is, when we see our neighbor's house on fire, we want to share this difficulty.

We are not people to be frightened by these events; rather we are kindled to action by them. And we have one position: We are in favor of giving Vietnam all the aid that may be necessary! We are in favor of this aid being arms and men. We are in favor of the socialist camp running the risks that may be necessary for Vietnam.

We are quite aware of the fact that in case of any serious international complication, we will be one of the first targets of imperialism, but this does not worry us and has never worried us. And we don't keep quiet or act like simpletons hoping to be overlooked and have our lives spared.

This is, in all frankness and all sincerity, our reasoned, dispassionate stand, emanating from our right to think, to reason, and our legitimate and inviolable right to adopt measures and to act in the way we believe most correct and most revolutionary; and let no one harbor the illusion that he can give us lessons on revolution.

I hope that errors of underestimation will not be made, ignoring the peculiarities of our people; because Yankee imperialism has committed lots of errors of this kind. One of its characteristics was disdain for others, disdain for an underestimation of small nations. And imperialism has committed great colossal errors of underestimation in respect to our revolutionary people. It would be regrettable if others committed similar errors. Our sincere policy has been and is that of uniting! Because we are not and will never be satellites of anyone! And in this whole problem we have taken a very dispassionate, very honest and very sincere position.

This is not the time to go through papers and files. I believe that as long as we have imperialism in front of us, attacking, it would be ridiculous for us here to do as in the fable, argue whether they are greyhounds or hound dogs, whether they are made of paper or of iron.

Let us leave the papers and files and documents to history, let history be the one to say who acted well or badly, to say who was right and who was wrong. Let history show what each thought, what

each did, what each gave—but let it be history. Because it would be humiliating to wash "dirty linen" in front of our enemies, enemies who are attacking, and who are attacking not the most powerful but the smallest and the weakest.

We have many things to do. We have ahead of us many very difficult, very hard tasks. There are millions of tons of sugar to be cut to defeat the imperialist blockade, and they are not cut with papers, but with toil, with sweat, with the machete.

The dangers that lie in wait for us are great, but they are not fought with Byzantine disagreements and academic charlatany. No! They are fought with revolutionary firmness, revolutionary integrity, the readiness to fight. The imperialist enemy is not fought effectively anywhere in the world when revolutionaries are divided, insulting each other, and attacking each other, but only with unity and cohesion in the revolutionary ranks! And to those who may not believe that this is the correct tactic for the international Communist movement, we say that for us here on our small island, on our territory, in the front-line trench ninety miles from the imperialists, it is the correct tactic.

And we will adjust our line and our conduct to this way of thinking.

At a time when imperialist reaction is joining forces to fight communism it is particularly imperative vigorously to consolidate the world Communist movement. Unity and solidarity redouble the strength of our movement and provide a reliable guarantee that the great cause of communism will make victorious progress and all enemy attacks will be effectively repelled.

Statement of 81 Parties, November, 1960

Role of Working Class

Dear Editors:

Gus Hall's article in the February, 1965 issue of *Political Affairs*, "The Negro-Labor Community" was an extremely important and helpful contribution which deserves greater popularization and discussion.

However, within this article there appeared one statement which if left by itself is puzzling. Since it is so important, further clarification would be welcomed. This statement, which appeared on page 6, is as follows:

With all its weaknesses our working class in the United States has fulfilled its historic responsibilities and is continuing to do so. The fact that it has not fully taken on what history demands of it, or that it has not carried the struggle to its final conclusion, does not in any way disqualify it as the most advanced element of our society.

Of course, it is correct that the American working class is *objectively* "the most advanced element of our society," but is it really true that "with all its weaknesses our working class in the United States has fulfilled its historic responsibilities and is continuing to do so"?

What seems to be most depressing to many progressive and Left-wing people, as well as civil rights activists, is the rather obvious fact that the *American working class has, on the contrary, still not lived up to the fulfilling of its historic responsibilities*, that it has not yet thrown its class weight behind the civil rights movement, let alone the peace movement! The jingo attitudes and white chauvinism of many American workers is too well known. Even now there are some sections of the labor movement which engage in vile discriminations against their Negro fellow workers, prevent them from joining the unions or entering the apprenticeship training programs. In the present magnificent struggle around Selma, Alabama, the participation of the labor movement generally is so much less than is required, even where there are worthy, significant exceptions. Are all these not examples of the failure of the American working class today really to fulfill its historic class responsibilities?

The ultra-Leftist, pro-Mao groups take a completely negative attitude to the American working class, particularly the white workers, and they often deny that our

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working class has any potential for progressive or eventual revolutionary action. So contemptuous are they of the role of the American working class that the ultra-Lefts have practically written it off, and they look for "revolutionary salvation" from other sections of the population, or even other countries.

It is to the great credit of the editors of *Political Affairs* and of Gus Hall himself that they have so forcefully continued to assert the correct Marxian position on the role and progressive potential of the American working class and have not succumbed to widespread moods of despair in regard

to it. Yet, we can also fall into a situation of overstating our case, of putting too good a face upon it, of not giving needed recognition to the negative, backward features of the American working class. Would it not be more advisable for us to be much more demanding of the American working class and to be more sharply critical of its limited, and at times almost insignificant participation in the civil rights and peace efforts in our country? Wouldn't such a more balanced and critical approach help speed the day when the American working class will really fulfill its historic responsibilities?

S. R.

The Author Replies

I would not defend the exact wording in the quotation as either the best or the clearest possible statement of the historic role of the U.S. working class. But I do defend the basic thought behind it.

The first point I should like to emphasize is that this is a polemic on a basic concept, and in a polemic there is a tendency to lean to one side, to give it special emphasis. There is an unprecedented, concerted, most widespread campaign in the ranks of the Left-progressive movement to downgrade the role of the working class and even liquidate it as a class. Especially prevalent is the concept that wipes out the working class as a social or political factor of any consequence. Some wipe the

working class out as a factor only in our past, some only in the present, some only in contemplating the future, but many wipe it out for the past, present and future. A so-called "Left" leader of a small trade union joined these liquidators by calling the mainstream of the working class "a sewer." The challenge is to the basic concept of the class nature of capitalism, to the idea of classes and class struggle.

How is one to assess the historic role of our working class? What is the correct point of reference from which to start? For such an assessment one cannot compare the contribution of our working class to the same class in another country. If, for example, we were to compare the role of our work-

ing class to what the working class of the Soviet Union has done, then the U.S. working class has not fulfilled its historic responsibilities. The comparative assessment cannot be with an abstraction, with an ideal.

The point of reference for such an assessment must be the realities of our history as a nation, and the class struggle within it. The comparison must be with other classes and sectors of our people. This is the reality of which our working class is a component part. These are the direct factors that have molded and will continue to mold our working class. In this context and comparison, our working class comes out as fulfilling its responsibilities.

The campaign to downgrade the role and the contribution of the working class is as old as is capitalist ideology. And it is an old weakness of our Left, including the Marxists, to go along with the downgraded version of the contribution of our working class. Our history books have been written by the "downgraders." The truth of history is that the working class has been and is the mainstay of every social advance in our history. This was true in our War of Independence and increasingly throughout our history. This was the case in the Civil War. In writing about the period of the early 1830's an abolitionist wrote: "The anti-slavery movement was not strongest in the more educated classes, but was predominantly a people's movement, based on the simplest hu-

man instincts, and far stronger in the factories and shoe-shops than in the pulpit or colleges."

The working class groups provided the staying power and influence that resulted in the Bill of Rights and the Emancipation Proclamation. In our history books the working class does not get its credits in the pioneering struggles for public school systems, postal systems, the elimination of child labor, old age pensions, workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance, veterans' benefits, farm subsidies, food inspection, etc., etc. There are no instances of social advance where the working class has not served as the mainstay of the struggle. No other class or group can make that claim.

I also want to reject the idea that the working class is only potentially a progressive and a revolutionary force. This is in fact a cover for the liquidators and does not correspond to facts. There are two basic methods used in downgrading the working class. One is to scale down the concept of who makes up this class. The other is to view as working class activity only that which takes place through the trade unions.

For instance, in the civil rights struggle, if you eliminate from your consideration the Negro workers, the youth and students who are workers, the workers who take part in the marches and protest meetings under no organization banners, the workers who participate in the names of their churches, the workers who voted

against the racist ultra-Right candidates, and the overall influence workers have in the communities on this struggle—then the contribution of such a scaled-down working class is very much less. Or if you judge the political activity of the working class on the basis of how strong the party of labor is, then its activity is non-existent.

So it is within the framework of these realities, and as a part of our people, that the working class must be assessed. And within this framework, I think the basic thought behind my assessment is correct. Once this is established, then we can properly examine the weaknesses without coming to hopeless, dead-end conclusions. Because if one emphasizes the weaknesses to prove the non-existence or the hopelessness of the working class, then a dead end is inevitable because there is no other class that can take its place.

On the other hand, if we examine the weaknesses within the

context of a correct understanding of the role of this class, then we can be a positive factor in correcting the weaknesses. Those who do not see the positive role of the working class will not and cannot work to do so. They can only slander and condemn. Within such a correct context there is the need to see, to understand and to fight to eliminate the weaknesses of the working class, or more correctly sections of the working class, in the civil rights struggle. We can fight against the influence of white chauvinism, racism and bigotry in the ranks of the white workers only if we understand the role the working class is compelled to play in capitalist society, only if we understand the nature of the struggle and the role of the Negro people in the struggle for equality, the interrelationship of the two and as a community in the struggle for social progress and for socialism. This understanding is a cardinal necessity for victory.

GUS HALL

In the May issue, as well as the present one, we have published a number of papers prepared for the symposium on *The Government, Monopoly Capitalism and the Economy*. Additional papers will be included in our August issue. We hope that this symposium will stimulate considerable discussion and look forward to receiving questions and comments from our readers.

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