

APRIL, 1967



**POLITICAL
AFFAIRS**

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Stop the Bombing!

The exchange of letters between President Johnson and Ho Chi Minh, recently disclosed by Hanoi, helps to clear the air on certain questions which the Johnson Administration had deliberately befogged. And in doing so, it reveals once again the utter hypocrisy of Johnson's protestations of his willingness to negotiate and his desire for peace.

A year ago, Johnson was loudly proclaiming his readiness to halt the bombing if only Hanoi would indicate its willingness to negotiate. It was their refusal to do so, he insisted, which was the only roadblock to de-escalation of the war. But then the government of North Vietnam proceeded to give distinct indications that no such roadblock existed. These indications came through various channels; most notable was Soviet Premier Kosygin's statement concerning an offer by Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh "that the United States immediately and unconditionally cease the bombings of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and then the way would be cleared to the negotiating table for a discussion of all questions. . . ."

Johnson Raises the Ante

But Johnson's reaction to this and similar initiatives was scarcely one of unbounded enthusiasm. On the contrary, he now proceeded to raise the ante, demanding vaguely-defined "assurances" of good faith on the part of North Vietnam as a precondition for U.S. action. This led to a vigorous condemnation of the Administration by Premier Kosygin, who stated that, "trying to camouflage its aggressive intentions, it hastened to set forth ultimatums that were absolutely unacceptable to the Vietnamese people." (Quoted by James Reston, *New York Times*, March 8, 1967.)

In short, Kosygin charges, Johnson's actions show that he has no intentions of negotiating. Nor is Kosygin by any means alone in drawing such a conclusion. Thus, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. charges the Administration with rejecting negotiation and asks: "Why else, unless it wishes to avoid negotiation now, would the Administration have hardened its terms, demanding today from Hanoi what it did not demand a year ago?" (*New York Times*, March 8, 1967.) And James Reston, commenting on Johnson's speech of March 15 to the Ten-

nessee Legislature, says: "President Johnson looks more and more like a man who has decided to go for a military victory in Vietnam, and thinks he can make it." (*New York Times*, March 16, 1967.)

What Johnson means by "assurances" is now made fully clear in the text of his letter to Ho Chi Minh, a letter whose existence he had sought to keep secret. It says: "I am prepared to order a cessation of bombing against your country and the stopping of further augmentation of United States forces in South Vietnam as soon as I am assured that infiltration into South Vietnam by land and by sea has stopped."

It is important to understand the full significance of these terms. What Johnson is demanding, first of all, is that North Vietnam *demonstrate—in advance and to his satisfaction*—that it has ceased all "infiltration" into South Vietnam. This is in itself not an offer to negotiate but an ultimatum. But the meaning goes further, for it may be asked: Why is the bombing taking place to begin with? And what would it take to "assure" President Johnson?

Johnson Demands Unconditional Surrender

The excuse for the bombing is the allegation that North Vietnam is guilty of armed aggression against South Vietnam, whose government the United States asserts it is aiding in its fight against that aggression. But this has long been exposed as a myth. Indeed, the State Department itself, in its memorandum of March 1966 ("The Legality of the U.S. Participation in the Defense of Vietnam"), offers in support of this allegation only the contention that between 1954 and 1965, a period of a dozen years, "40,000 armed and unarmed guerrillas" have "infiltrated" South Vietnam from the North. Such is the "armed attack" which half a million U.S. troops do not suffice to quell! Obviously, this is nothing more than a smokescreen intended to blur the all-too-evident truth: that the Johnson Administration is itself conducting a brutal war of aggression against the South Vietnamese people. The North Vietnamese are "guilty" only of giving what help they can to their countrymen in their resistance to U.S. aggression.

Clearly they cannot stop doing what they are not doing in the first place. But even if they should succeed in "assuring" Johnson, this would bring no cessation of the butchery in South Vietnam. All that is offered is "the stopping of augmentation of U.S. forces."

Johnson's letter, therefore, can be construed only as a *demand for capitulation to U.S. aggression*. And this is borne out further by his policy of meeting every peace overture with more escalation. The nightmarish character of the Administration's behavior, says an edito-

rial in *The Nation* (March 13, 1967), "was succinctly expressed in a newspaper headline: LBJ STEPPING UP WAR TO PROMOTE PEACE." The editorial continues: "Whenever the possibility of peace appears on the horizon, Johnson, Rusk and McNamara respond with new escalations: in the present instance no less than three—naval shelling of the North Vietnamese seacoast, artillery fire across the demilitarized zone and mining of northern rivers." It concludes: "The Administration is determined to achieve a military and diplomatic victory in Vietnam and will not negotiate until such an outcome is assured."

So much for Johnson's hypocritical cant about "unconditional negotiations."

The Myth of Chinese Aggression Exposed

Meanwhile the props are being knocked out from under the basic fiction on which the aggression in Vietnam is predicated: the myth that the war has been brought on by China's aggressiveness and ambitions to take over all of Southeast Asia. This is the well-known "dominoes" theory which holds that if we do not resist so-called "Communist aggression" in Vietnam we will, in Johnson's words, find ourselves resisting it in Honolulu.

In the recent hearings of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, chaired by Senator J. William Fulbright, more than one prominent witness attacked the idea. Thus, George F. Kennan ridiculed it and urged a change of policy. Especially noteworthy was the testimony of Edwin O. Reischauer, former U.S. Ambassador to Japan, who stated: "The Chinese do not have a philosophy of going out and conquering the world. They believe that world revolution is going to spread by itself, so they are not driven in that direction." And further: "The threat of unitary world Communism sweeping Asia has largely faded, and the menace of Chinese domination—if ever it was a real menace in the military sense—is growing weaker." He concludes that for nearly two decades U.S. policy in Asia has been based on erroneous assumptions and should be overhauled.

This testimony bolsters that given by a number of academic specialists at similar hearings a year ago. And more or less similar views are held by an impressive number of leading figures, not least among them Senator Fulbright himself. To be sure, some of these may be motivated by a desire to make political capital of the Mao Tse-tung group's anti-Sovietism. Nevertheless, the objective effect is to destroy the last shreds

of credibility of the Administration's claim that U.S. troops are in Vietnam to combat "Chinese aggression."

A Genocidal War of Extermination

The Johnson Administration stands more completely exposed than ever as guilty of naked aggression in Vietnam and of barbaric mass butchery of the Vietnamese people. The napalming of women and children, the wholesale destruction of crops and defoliation of large areas, the forcible removal of whole population from their homes, the repeated "accidental" bombings of villages with innumerable civilian casualties—all these are familiar features of U.S. imperialism's war of annihilation in Vietnam.

The character of this war is especially highlighted by one recent incident—the so-called "Operation Cedar Falls" carried out in the Iron Triangle north of Saigon. In this operation, which outdoes the Nazi destruction of Lidice, four villages were evacuated and levelled to the ground. A couple of hundred men were killed—so it is stated—as Vietcong guerrillas, and the rest of the able-bodied men fled. Some 6,000 women, children and old men were moved into what Tom Buckley of the *New York Times* describes as a settlement of "canvas-topped sheds thrown up on a wasteland."

The logic of this operation is noted editorially by *The Nation* (January 30, 1967), which says: "It has been suggested that the way to end the war is to clear the entire countryside of Vietnam and pave it, like a vast parking lot; then we can control the population." That is, we might add, if there is any population.

Yet this, it seems, is the direction in which the Johnson policy is leading, coupled with an apparent intention of destroying North Vietnam from the air in a flood of raids matching in their intensity those conducted against German targets at the peak of World War II. But this policy is meeting with a rising tide of opposition, today centered increasingly in the demand for an unconditional cessation of the bombing. The demand is being voiced by a cross-section of public opinion ranging from key sections of the organized peace movement to such figures as Lieutenant General James M. Gavin and Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

The volume and intensity of this demand must be raised to such a level that Johnson is forced to heed it and to reverse his present line. An unconditional halt to the bombing would represent an important first step in the de-escalation of the war, opening up the path leading toward complete withdrawal of U.S. forces and an end to the shameful war against the Vietnamese people.

Auto Workers Face the 1967 Negotiations

What is the future of the automobile workers in the coming year? Will the so-called prosperity, so limitless for the automakers, continue without a halt, or even a momentary interruption? What about the contract negotiation which will take place in the summer of 1967?

Profits High While Production Lags

The auto industry did have two very good years, and one year that was not record-breaking, but still good. Here we must say that the industry operates on the premise that it must, year after year, beat all previous records in production, productivity and, most important, in profits. If this record-breaking level is not achieved, the auto moguls regard the year as a complete failure.

In this light, 1966 is a failure because auto production for the year is 8 per cent lower than that of the previous year. Toward the end of the year, production was a full 12 per cent lower than in the comparable months of 1965.

During this period, General Motors was still the main producer of American cars. Its share of production was 51.7 per cent. But this was down from 53.1 per cent in 1965. On the other hand, the Ford Motor Company's share of production rose from 27.5 per cent to 28.2 per cent. This was due mainly to the fact that the traveling mode and styling preferences of the American consumer did radically change in the last few years and right now the most popular models of automobiles are the compact, sporty and showy jobs which do not cost too much.

Such a car was produced by the Ford Motor Company in the very popular Mustang series. This car was originally intended as an entry into the European market. The tools, fixtures and dies for it were built in West Germany and production was about to start when the building of the Berlin Wall forced the company to make a quick cancellation of its plans. Ford became panicky, thought that war was imminent and decided on a salvage operation. All tools and dies were taken out of West Germany and brought to Dearborn to be stored there. After

*This article is based on a report given to a group of Communist auto workers. The author is himself a production worker in an auto plant.

the crisis ebbed, Ford tried to take all this back to West Germany but found that it could not do so without paying highly excessive tariffs. This led the company to try production of a small and sporty car in the United States, and thus the Mustang was born. At first it was made on an experimental basis, but unexpectedly it caught on. Now its existence is credited with saving Ford from economic disaster and the Rogue complex of factories from certain extinction.

Chrysler production rose from 15.7 per cent of the total in 1965 to 16.8 per cent in 1966. The wonder child of the auto industry (so-called just a few short years back), the American Motor Company, showed further decline and disintegration. In U.S. financial circles it is assumed that this company will cease automobile production within the next three years. The departure from the company of its president and the board chairman, and the desertion of its so-called saviour—one Mr. Evans—signaled the hopelessness of the company's situation. American Motor's share of the market dropped from nearly 4 per cent in 1965 to 3 per cent last year. The company also reported a loss of nearly \$12 million for the first nine months of last year.

There are many, many reasons for this sales and production decline that has become so visible during the last few months in the auto industry as a whole. Tight money and credit, and overproduction, slowly giving rise to a growing threat of recession, are all very important factors in this decline, but another which is most important is at the same time the most neglected and even unmentionable one. It is the war in Vietnam, where half a million American soldiers are now stationed. These half-million young men represent a very large portion of the auto market because young people are the most willing spenders and the most frequent buyers of new automobiles. The war in Vietnam not only robs the nation of its youth and pushes our young men into this savage slaughter that cannot be won. At the same time, the very withdrawal of this large group of potential car buyers from the auto market contributes to the decline of auto production as a whole. In the coming year the production rate in the auto industry will diminish substantially in comparison to 1966.

Profits, however, continue at fantastic heights. For the year of 1966, net income of the Big Three was as follows:

General Motors	\$1,793,000,000
Ford	621,000,000
Chrysler	189,000,000
	<hr/>
	\$2,603,000,000

In 1965, net profits were \$3,100,000,000, and in 1964 they were \$2,500,000,000. Chrysler made a profit of \$2,689 for every worker in its employ in 1965. Ford made \$3,581 and MG's profit per worker was \$5,570. These staggering profits more than justify more daring demands by the workers for higher wages, shorter hours and other benefits.

New Automation Processes Replace Workers

Productivity of the workers is growing at a steady rate as automation increases and the companies continue to press for higher and higher production standards. The productivity increase during the past year, however, slowed down somewhat to 2.5 per cent, in contrast to increases of over 4 per cent in the previous six years. This is already being used as an argument by the companies against demands for wage increases and improved working conditions.

But what is the real reason for this so-called slowdown? Fantastic and illogical as it may seem, it is the high rate of employment and prosperity. During good years corporations do not bother to slow down production for technological improvements, installation of new machinery, automation of processes. The word is "go" and production is rolling 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The last plant improvements in the plants and productivity increases came in the auto industry during the last recession when plants were empty and the production force laid off. It is such times that are used for the installation of new machinery, making new technological improvements, reducing crew size. For every 1,000 workers who go out of a plant during the layoffs, only 700 are called back, the rest having been "improved out" by new production process or automation. These allow the auto industry to cut down the labor force, lower production costs and reach new production levels undreamed of just a few years earlier.

The latest in the automation and technological improvements is the numerical control (or "nc") system. "Nc" is quite new and its full effects are only to be felt in the future. It applies digital computers to a field where they were not used before: to the skilled trades, to tool, die and gauge making. The digital computer has become in the last few years the most revolutionary tool in the history of mankind. Within its complex structure lies a potential greater than that of any machine yet invented. These complex machines are the symbol of automation and technological progress on the one hand and of the uncertain future and suffering of the workers on the other. Today's computers enter fields undreamed of only a decade ago. Process control of production, power generation and power distribution; monitoring systems and coordination of processing plants; design of

engineering structures; making of payrolls; programming and manufacturing of tools, dies, fixtures and templates so essentially needed in automobile production—all are falling within the tentacles of this enormous octopus.

While the computers are changing the ways and means of production, and reducing costs, the workers' share and the effects of the nc system on the lives of the factory crews is completely ignored. In the last two years use of numerical control systems in template making in the Detroit auto industry resulted in a 74 per cent drop in the labor force. Some union locals, like UAW Local 245 (Dearborn Engineering), are facing even more severe loss of membership because its members' craft, once at the very top of the skills in auto production, is becoming obsolete. In various auto plants, work previously done by two skilled men in about two weeks' time (like gauge or fixture building) is programmed out by an nc computer in a few hours' time and machined nearly to perfection in another few hours. Very often the time in which the job is performed is reduced from 320 hours to a mere 6 or 8. To top it off, the work performed by the computers is being serviced by union-excluded personnel—young college graduates who do not wish to belong to the union and are unfriendly to labor organization.

The use of computers is expanding at an alarming rate. The number of computers in the steel industry increased during the last five years by about 58 per cent and in the aero-space industry by 33 per cent. In the auto industry it is now catching on and the coming recession will speed up this process. It is anticipated that the use of computers in the auto industry will triple in the next five years.

A few days ago the *Detroit News* reported on new and revolutionary line of presses being run by the Chevrolet plant. This line, consisting of seven big presses, was previously serviced by a crew of fifteen people. Now only two people run it, while production has risen from 500 to 900 pieces (in this case automobile grills) per hour. A similar process is being installed in the frame plant of the Ford Rouge complex. It was already in existence in the oil pan jobs at Rouge and in decklid production in Ford's Woodhaven plant.

What will this mad dash toward complete automation bring to the auto workers? What new changes will this bring about in the auto industry?

The answer is simple: It will create a new army of unemployed such as has never been seen before. It will eliminate old trades, old skills and old crafts. In a few years the template maker and the die barber will be as obsolete as the blacksmith. It will render useless the efforts of those who tried to improve themselves by learning new trades, and

the panacea of upgrading may be rendered worthless because the present skilled worker may be without a job.

In the first place the automation will eliminate the obsolete small shops building the tools for the big corporations. The small business will be the first to go; its shops will become inefficient and too costly. Jobs from these small jobbing shops will be transferred to more sophisticated captive shops. The monopoly hold on American economic life will become more absolute through the use of the digital computer system, which small factory owners won't be able to afford.

The numerical control system spells progress, it is true. But it must also provide a big share of abundance to the people who are working in the industry and who are being robbed of jobs or job opportunities. In this field, the Party must have a clear and courageous conception of the future and must provide leadership in the fight toward organization of the working class on the common front of job defense.

As automation makes its biggest advances, the composition of the labor force is going through most revolutionary changes. In the last five years, the crews in the factories changed almost completely. Those who were young men during the great struggles in the thirties and forties, who fought on the picket lines and did the union organizing, are now old men, very often going into retirement. Many of them died, many became disillusioned and even blackballed by their own unions. The labor force in the auto industry today is completely different from that of ten or even six years ago. The majority of the UAW members working in the automobile plants are young people. The average age has dropped from some 45 years a decade ago to about 29 years now.

The production worker of today in the automobile industry is young, male and Negro in more than 50 cases out of 100. This of course points up the rampant discrimination. It is fiercest against the women, especially the Negro women. In the last ten years not one woman was hired in either the Ford or GM plants in Detroit and very, very few at Chrysler. The young male Negro, working on production in the automobile plants, is also a classic example of discrimination because there are no Negroes in the apprenticeship programs in the plants, and no opportunity for office or supervisory jobs.

The crew in the plants is young and impatient and it creates many problems for the industry and especially for the union. It also creates tremendous possibilities for the Party, that must and should provide this group of neglected and forgotten workers with leadership.

For the new men working at the ever faster-running lines, the history of the union does not mean much; the heritage of the union traditions does not mean much. The appeals for votes mean even less.

The young worker does not live in the past; his interests and demands are in the present. He treats with contempt and fully detests the empty promises of the union leadership. He demands action and protection for himself and is not getting any.

The Developing Anti-Labor Drive

With this in mind, the auto workers are approaching the 1967 contract negotiations for over one million workers. How are these negotiations shaping up? What are the bosses doing? What is the union doing? Is the union preparing for the battle, which could well be the fiercest and most stubborn in many a year?

Employers are preparing and are using every kind of weapon and force at their disposal. The new contract negotiations are shaping up as a great battle into which the workers, for the first time in years, are going unprepared and without friends in Congress or the White House.

The *Detroit Free Press* reported recently in an article by William J. Eaton that the Johnson Administration is trying to escape from labor's bear hug and to adopt a more neutral stance in the labor-management conflict. In this connection, "neutral" means "hostile."

American organized labor received its first taste of defeat and its first inkling of things to come when the infamous Section 14b of the Taft Hartley Act was not eradicated from the books during the last session of Congress. Eaton reports that in the highest echelons of the Johnson Administration, there is remarkable coolness towards labor unions. It is felt that close ties with labor create more trouble than they are worth. The refusal of the airlines mechanics to accept a recommended settlement by Johnson turned him against labor. It also produced a peculiar phenomenon: A few years back it was said that the Congress must preserve the rights of the workers, and must guard the democracy in the unions, and under this guise the Landrum-Griffin Law was enacted. But now, when the workers more and more frequently reject the negotiated agreements, it is being said that they have *too much* democracy, that the rank and file is being very anarchistic, and that Congress must establish the principle of "negotiating in good faith." A law is now being prepared which would make a contract duly negotiated by the union representatives binding on the union membership. The ratification vote would be eliminated and the right to reject unsatisfactory contracts would be torn out of the workers' hands. Secretary of Labor W. W. Wirtz has attacked the rank and file for contract rejections and demands compulsory arbitration.

Thus we witness the oldest form of anti-labor drive in America going into full swing. Congress is preparing over 40 new laws to fight

labor. Most of those laws are being readied under the guise of the "anti-strike" legislation.

In addition, the following things are taking place on the labor front:

1) The NLRB, old and not as strongly pro-business as it once was, is to be scuttled if Senator Griffin of Michigan has his way. Griffin proposes to replace NLRB with a tribunal-type committee of lawyers.

2) The exclusion of Congressman Adam Clayton Powell must be regarded as a strictly anti-labor move and a definite preparation for a coming anti-labor drive. Powell was always friendly toward unions, if contemptuous toward some union leaders. The powerful committee over which he presided could and did block many an anti-labor bill. It is shameful that so few labor leaders rose to his defense.

3) The "right-to-work" gang of ultra-Rightists is preparing a new round of anti-worker and anti-union laws in 30 states.

4) President Johnson has set up a "study committee" on curbing all strikes in transport. This will be used in case of a Teamster strike, but it can also be used in the auto industry under the slogan of not sabotaging the war in Vietnam because our boys are sacrificing and so must we.

5) The stockpile of unsold cars is the highest ever. New cars in dealers' hands add up to the very hefty sum of some 1.3 million units. This does not include 800,000 used cars, which bring the total to well over 2 million unsold automobiles. This is an enormous club which industry will use against the workers in the negotiations.

6) The auto companies are preparing an additional club by threatening to shut down their plants in the summer of 1967 because of so-called unfair safety proposals of the government. This is a thinly-disguised tactic of locking out the workers during the initial stage of the negotiations, softening the union before the strikes begin.

7) The unfriendliness of the Johnson Administration is underscored by the fact that in his State of the Union Message Johnson talked about labor problems in one sentence but dwelled for quite a spell on the problem of "crime." Johnson's "crime report" is aimed directly against all minority groups—Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and the foreign born. According to the latest Kiplinger report it is also to be directed against some unions.

8) One of the most dangerous clubs the auto industry is preparing to use against the workers is the ISST (International Society of Skilled Trades). This is an organization of reactionaries and Rightists which feeds on the dissatisfaction and militancy of the skilled workers and tries to divert them to fight against the union and not against the company. The skilled trades are demanding more money from the

companies. ISST tries to use this to nullify the traditional workers' solidarity, to destroy and disrupt the union.

The Contract Demands

In view of all these factors, it is very disturbing to report that as yet the union is not preparing for the battle.

The lack of preparation and mobilization of the membership is scandalous. Walter P. Reuther has refused thus far to face this growing offensive of the ruling class against the UAW.

Complacency and status-quoism abound among the top and secondary leadership of the UAW. Cries by Reuther of the need for a return to the spirit of '37 are just talk, because they are not backed up by moves to get the grass roots support of the membership through meetings, rallies, and talks on all levels.

Recently, the UAW Executive Board attacked the AFL-CIO as undemocratic and conservative, and set forth a program aimed at getting labor "off dead-center." While greeting the warranted criticisms of AFL-CIO policies in many areas, particularly that of foreign policy, many auto workers note that within the auto industry itself, Reuther continues to put forth the same tired old proposals for "profit-sharing" and other such gimmicks which have been decisively rejected by the auto workers time and again.

What are some of the contract demands?

Wage increases will be the main demand of 1967, with the fabulous profits of the industry proving that it is more than able to give raises of as much as 25 per cent for all workers. The rising cost of living, steadily increasing taxes, and the growing realization that they are getting a decreasing share of the economic wealth, are the main sources of pressure for a large wage increase this year.

In the last contract, the major emphasis was on pensions, and considerable gains were won. Because of this, a mass exodus of older workers took place in the industry. The retirement of these older workers at a time of expanding production in the industry has resulted in a much younger labor force. These young people do not worry about the pensions due in 30 years. They have homes to buy and maintain, autos and furniture to pay for, families to raise, etc. This takes money and a young worker wants money, not talk. Hoffa was right when he said that this will be an ugly year, and heaven help the labor leader who won't listen to the young workers' demands.

The shorter work week with no cut in take-home pay must be pressed as one of the key demands to deal with increasing automation and nc, and the growing layoffs in the industry. That conditions

for making big gains in cutting the work week exist is indicated by the recent significant victory of the 3,500 New York tugboat workers of the National Maritime Union, who won a 30-hour week at 40 hours' pay after a seventy-day strike. Their victory added 800 new jobs for the harbor men. In the auto industry this would mean hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

Elimination of compulsory overtime is another very vital point. This should be made a part of the health and safety package and, therefore, a strikeable issue.

A very important point is a demand for one-year contracts, which would allow workers to improve contracts more rapidly. In the present situation, three years is a very long time, and the companies are able to create all kinds of diversions to avoid the workers' demands.

Another point which both the union and our organization must concentrate on is the elimination of the company security clause, which allows the company to discriminate against militant leaders and puts the burden of living up to the contract on the workers. The company security clause is tantamount to insuring the cooperation of the union on all anti-worker repressions and regulations in the plant.

Equally important is securing in the new contract a veto power of an equal voice in the establishment of production standards. Without such a voice the fight against speedup is meaningless.

Tasks of the Left Caucuses and the Party

What is the role of our organization during the coming months? During the negotiations and probable strike?

Our role as the conscience of the working class and avant garde among our fellow union members must be underscored and proven in every form and in everyday practice.

During the negotiations we must inform the workers what the real issues are. We need to emphasize and work constantly for the unity of the workers against all disruption and diversion by the auto barons.

Speedup is rampant in the plants. Working conditions are deteriorating. The worker is penalized for getting a drink of water, speaking to his fellow worker, reporting sick. The old saying that in the auto plants it's not the worker who runs the machine, but the machine that runs the worker, is certainly true. Unsafe and outright dangerous conditions prevail and the companies preaching safety are blind to it as far as production is concerned. In one of the Ford Motor Co. plants in Dearborn during the last year, 550 serious injuries occurred (not counting the numerous eye injuries). Of these, 404 were injuries to hands and arms of workers, including nine cases resulting in ampu-

tations of hands. This gives some idea of the extent of speedup and the health and safety problems it creates. Communists must lead the battle for the improvement of working conditions in the shops, for the elimination of speedup and dangerous working hazards. Walter Reuther once offered the slogan of "humanizing the plants." We should take him up on that, and demand that the shops be humanized.

Another demand which we should be pushing for is a return to the steward system. The reduction in union representation in the previous contracts has made it difficult even to file a grievance and almost impossible to win one. Loss of contact with their union leaves the workers at the mercy of the company, makes it easy for the bosses to spread anti-union and anti-worker propaganda.

Our slogan must be: *Unite All Workers to Fight the Companies.* Fighting the battle of factionalism, participating in the small wars so prevalent among the secondary union leadership must be avoided. We are not fighting a war of personalities but a battle for issues and a program for all workers. This is the fight to be fought and won.

The role of the progressive caucuses is a very important one and we must do everything we can to help to strengthen and to build them.

The building of Left-wing caucuses must be the first step in trying to organize the workers for the coming battle with the corporations, to unite them for the battle which will be both fierce and long. A caucus must not be afraid to run full slates of candidates for union offices, and sincerely and diligently try to win as many offices as possible. The Left-wing caucus has an important role to play as a force for uniting all militant workers, as the voice of conscience and independence. As such a force it must not deprive itself of a clear voice on all union levels. The best way to be heard is to have your members elected to some position of prestige and power.

The importance of our Party in this situation is immense. The workers must have the benefit of our organization, knowledge, and long-range foresightedness, of our organization's experience and fearlessness. By winning friends, by making new contacts, we must make our newspaper available to the membership. We must make full use of *The Worker* both before and during negotiations, both through its widest distribution and by finding a network of worker correspondents who would inform the readers of what is going on in the factories and have their say about the conditions and the union. Nothing influences people on the production line more than a few words by some correspondent from their own ranks, describing their life and their struggle.

The Worker must not, however, be just an organ of information and

dissemination of knowledge, but also a tool for organizational work. The Party, to be effective and strong, must have its own apparatus and its own organization on both shop and industry levels. The onus of something abnormal, pinned on the Party by the class enemy, has worn itself very thin and we do not have to be afraid to speak out. We can have our say loudly and clearly. We must not only speak out as the members of some Left-wing caucus but also as the individual Party members we are, and we must try hard to organize those who are with us, who share a sincere fear of war and a sincere spirit of fighting against the corporation, not against their fellow workers. Communists in the auto industry must also participate in COPE and other political action organizations. This is a must for them.

There are many issues on which the progressives can unify with the mainstream of the workers. Abhorrence of war, a desire to live in peace, revulsion against young men going into the war, are among the most common grounds on which we can work with others. The preparations for the coming battle for higher wages, better working conditions, against speed-up and filth in the shops are other grounds.

There is also the fight for the Negro people's right to equal opportunity. Just the other day Ford Motor Company brought 112 tool and die makers from Europe, mostly from West Germany, England and Sweden. We can justly ask: do we not possess 112 qualified Negro workers in Detroit who could be upgraded to such a position?

The problem of taxation, which slowly eats away every gain that the workers make is another example of the issues to be tackled.

Problems of the young people are another area: their money problems, their lack of seniority protection, their mortgage worries are just a few examples of the problems we could discuss. We must find new and common language with the young.

In connection with discrimination against Negro youth, a special effort must be made to put an effective apprenticeship program into life. As of now there are not nearly enough Negro apprentices in the training programs in the factories of the Big Three. To correct this discriminatory practice a crash program must be started and started at once. Most Negro youth are rejected from the existing program because they are not prepared to take the strict entrance examinations. Pre-apprenticeship programs must be set up by the companies and the union and administered by the Joint Apprenticeship Committee to deal with this problem.

The union must go to work among the young people in a really big way by instituting a broad recreational program and establishing

cultural centers in all major locals and centers to improve the general level of education of young workers.

A Bitter Struggle Ahead

The struggle of the auto workers against the auto monopolists and their friends in Washington promises to be a bitter and complicated one. It will be the kind of struggle in which the auto workers can expect to confront the vast resources of Wall Street, employing every dirty trick in the book, every legal, political and economic maneuver to thwart their demands for a decent living standard and better working conditions.

As they take steps to prepare for this approaching battle, auto workers would do well to note the parting remarks of Teamsters Union President Jimmy Hoffa on the day of his imprisonment. Addressing himself to the 1,800,000 members of his union, Hoffa said: "Only you who work for a living with your hands and by the sweat of your brow to bring in a paycheck know what it is to earn a living. None of the courts, none of the legislators understand your problems."

A major task for the auto workers in preparing for their own battle will be to mobilize the active support of all those "who work with their hands," because their fight will be followed closely and will deeply affect all who "work for a living" or who feel the heel of the monopolists on their necks.

This battle of the auto workers is the fight of all who are exploited by monopoly, and in this respect auto workers will have to go a step beyond Hoffa's words and undertake to rally the support and backing of small businessmen, the Negro people, farmers, professionals and all others who have a stake in opposing monopoly.

With this kind of all-out approach, with confidence in their own strength and that of their class, the auto workers can win significant gains in the 1967 negotiations that will act as a spur for all.

End the McCarran Era!

Two recent rulings in the Federal Courts go a long way toward wiping out the evil vestiges of McCarthyism which plagued our country for nearly two decades. These rulings also signify a major turning point in the 17-year-long battle against the pernicious consequences of the McCarran Act.

On January 23, 1967, the U.S. Supreme Court, by a 5-4 decision, declared a series of New York "loyalty" laws unconstitutional, including the infamous Feinberg Law of 1949 which had deprived hundreds of teachers of the right to employment in the state's educational system. On March 3, 1967, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, in a unanimous decision, reversed the conviction of the Communist Party for its refusal to register under the odious provisions of the McCarran Act and set aside the fine of \$230,000 imposed by the lower court on November 19, 1965.

Thus, the long and arduous struggle to reestablish full citizenship rights of the Communist Party—rights which were sharply curtailed by numerous thought-control laws and persecutions since the end of World War II is now finally achieving important breakthroughs.

The test case before the Supreme Court was the challenge of the Feinberg Law by five University of Buffalo instructors and professors. They refused to sign the loyalty oath certificates in 1962, and determined to wage a fight to nullify this requirement as a condition for employment in the state's public schools and universities.

The Feinberg Law was enacted in March 1949 to implement and enforce two earlier statutes, which had been lying dormant for many years and were now revived as instruments of the cold war to curb academic freedom. The first was a law of 1917 under which "the utterance of any treasonable or seditious word or words or the doing of any treasonable or seditious act" was ground for dismissal from the public school system. The second was a 1939 law which "disqualifies from the Civil Service and from employment in the educational system any person who advocates the overthrow of government by force, violence, or any unlawful means, or publishes material advocating such overthrow, or organizes, or joins any society or group of persons advocating such doctrine."

The revival of these old laws and the application of the Feinberg Law unleashed a virtual reign of terror in New York's public schools.

Surveillance, harassments and informer-inspired inquisitions became the order of the day, resulting in the discharge of teachers who were alleged to be members of a "subversive" organization, so designated by the wave of McCarthyism sweeping the land.

In the midst of this Big-Lie hysteria the Supreme Court, on March 3, 1952, upheld the constitutionality of the Feinberg Law and a pall of conformity permeated the academic community. As the *New York Times* notes, in a recent editorial (January 26, 1967) hailing the scrapping of the loyalty laws by the Supreme Court, ". . . the impact was more far reaching than specific punishment meted out . . . The real and lasting damage lay in the atmosphere of implied guilt, the mandated spying, the straitjacket of uniformity that continued to a greater or lesser degree throughout the period." The battle to wipe out these laws was unabated, finally involving large numbers of students in the struggle for academic freedom. The campaign "to ban the ban" on Communist speakers which the students waged successfully in New York City in 1962 soon extended to other areas in the state and country.

The Supreme Court, in now declaring New York's loyalty laws unconstitutional, revokes its own 1952 action and strongly reaffirms the inviolability of the First Amendment. Justice William J. Brennan, delivering the majority opinion, declares: "Our nation is deeply committed to safeguarding academic freedom which is of transcendent value to all of us and not merely to the teacher concerned. That freedom is therefore a special concern of the First Amendment, which does not tolerate laws that cast a pall of orthodoxy over the classroom." The opinion condemns the New York "provisions requiring an annual review of every teacher to determine whether any utterance or act of his, inside the classroom or out, came within the sanctions of the laws."

Justice Brennan centers considerable attention on the "vagueness" of the New York laws which use "treasonable" and "seditious" and "words and acts" interchangeably. In the course of the opinion, he asks: "Does the teacher who carries a copy of the 'Communist Manifesto' on a public street thereby advocate criminal anarchy?" And he goes on to say, "The crucial consideration is that no teacher can know just where the line is drawn between 'seditious' and 'non-seditious' utterances and acts." Drawing upon the lessons from the Sedition Act of 1798, he shows that these "taught us that dangers fatal to the First Amendment freedoms inhere in the word seditious."

In stressing the "vagueness" of the loyalty laws in New York State, the Supreme Court is now, in effect, saying that if the Adler case had raised the argument of "vagueness" in 1952, it would have been im-

pelled to declare the Feinberg Law unconstitutional at that time. This, in my opinion, is an attempt by the Supreme Court to find a loophole for its original action in upholding the Feinberg Law and becoming thereby, wittingly or not, a collaborator in the McCarthyite suppression of academic freedom in violation of the First Amendment. It appears, however, that the Court now condemns the McCarthy era.

Moving to those sections of the Feinberg Law "which makes Communist membership as such *prima facie* evidence of disqualification," Justice Brennan notes that this provision was included in the law when the Board of Regents in 1958 "listed the Communist Party of the United States and the Communist Party of the State of New York as 'subversive' organizations." In sharp contrast to the 1952 ruling in the Adler case, the Supreme Court changes its position and now holds that "a public employee cannot be fired for membership in an allegedly subversive group without proof that he intended to advance the illegal aims of the organization." As the summary news story in the *New York Times* points out, since the Feinberg Law "condemns mere membership in the Communist Party, it is therefore void, he (Brennan) said." Thus "mere membership" in the Communist Party can no longer be grounds for denial of employment.

This ruling of the Court applies not only to teachers but to civil service employees who, since the Korean War, have also been compelled to answer the question "Are you or have you ever been" a member of what is labeled a "subversive" organization.

The Supreme Court now also condemns the use of "lists of subversive organizations" under the Feinberg Law procedures. In making this ruling, the Supreme Court is virtually telling the world that the lists used by the House Un-American Activities Committee, the Department of Justice, the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security, the Department of State, the Subversive Activities Control Board, and all similar lists used by municipal, state and federal bodies, are unconstitutional. It thus admits that a gross hoax has been perpetrated upon the American people by these devices—a hoax begun during the period of World War I with the passage of the 1917 criminal anarchy law.

This decision invalidating the Feinberg and similar loyalty laws transcends the boundaries of New York State. It places all federal and state loyalty oaths in question and opens wide the door for their nullification everywhere.

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Just as the Supreme Court decision on the loyalty laws restores the First Amendment to its rightful place in the academic world as

well as other areas of public life, so the U.S. Court of Appeals decision on the registration provisions of the McCarran Act upholds the privilege against self-incrimination in the Fifth Amendment as a necessary protection against attacks on the freedom of thought and opinion.

Holding that the Justice Department's case against the Communist Party is "hopelessly at odds with the protections afforded by the Fifth Amendment," Judge Carl McGowan, speaking for the three-judge Court of Appeals (including Judges E. Barrett Prettyman and John A. Danaher), declares: "Because we have concluded that the results of the statutory scheme for the control of appellant, when viewed as a whole in relation to these particular punishments, are hopelessly at odds with the protections afforded by the Fifth Amendment, and that scheme if here applied would particularly run counter to the Fifth Amendment ban on compelled incrimination, we reverse the convictions."

In making this judgment, the Court specifically directs its criticism of Congress when it says that "the purposes of Congress in respect of the Communist Party . . . have sought in effect to compel both disclosure by the Party and, at the same time, the incrimination of its members. The Congressional enactments applicable to the Communist Party have, severally but simultaneously, exposed it in substance to outlawry as to an obligation to disclose its records and affairs." For, as it shows, the Communist Party would have to "supply, in addition to its name and address, the names and addresses of its officers and members (including those who have been such during the preceding 12 months); a statement of the functions and duties of the former; the aliases, if any, of such individuals; all money received and expended, including sources and objects; and a list of all printing presses or machines owned, controlled, or possessed by any of them."

As if to emphasize the inapplicability of the provisions of the McCarran Act, the Court refers to the "various challenges" made over the years which the Supreme Court denied in 1961 in its 5-4 decision upholding the order for the Communist Party to register. It points out that in that decision the Supreme Court did not act upon the Fifth Amendment on the grounds that this "could await the time, when, if ever, enforcement proceedings for failure to register are instituted against the Party or against the officers." The Supreme Court at that time avoided the constitutional issue involved in the enforcement of the McCarran Act, on the false argument that no one had yet been hurt. Now the Appeals Court points out that four of the Supreme Court Justices, in varying ways, wanted to act on the question of the

Fifth Amendment at that time. Of course, the Appeals Court could have added that in its own 1954 decision upholding the order to register, it was equally remiss in failing to deal with the Fifth Amendment. Had it done so, the country would have been spared the whole gamut of McCarran Act persecutions that were launched since then.

In the decision, as well as in a number of footnotes, the Appeals Court refers to various aspects of the McCarran Act and what has happened to them since the Supreme Court decision of 1961. It makes reference to the Supreme Court decision (June 1964) invalidating the section of the McCarran Act which makes it unlawful for a Communist to apply for a passport to travel abroad.

It makes reference to the Supreme Court action in the cases of the American Committee for Protection of the Foreign Born and of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in sending the cases back to the Subversive Activities Control Board because of the "stale evidence," and ordering new hearings to consider more recent statements and activities. The net result here was that new hearings never took place and the Department of Justice finally dropped these two cases.

The Appeals Court makes a strong point, too, of the Supreme Court ruling on November 19, 1965, in the membership registration test case:

In that case, the Court made short shrift of our emulation of its restraint in dealing with the self-incrimination claim in the earlier Communist Party case; and without awaiting a tender of the issue in criminal enforcement proceedings, invalidated under the Fifth Amendment a Board order requiring, in default of registration by the Party and as commanded by the Act, registration by persons found to be members of the Party.

And, it adds significantly, that "both the mode and the manner of the Court's decisive intervention to vindicate the privilege in that case suggest that it is in order for us to come to grips with the issue deferred by it in the Communist Party case."

The opinion also refers to the Archie Brown case in which the Supreme Court "struck down, as a bill of attainder, Section 504 of the Labor-Management and Disclosure Act of 1959 [Landrum-Griffin Act], which made it a crime for a member of the Communist Party to serve as an officer or employee of a labor union."

The footnote then adds that "the government has recently told the Court that it need not even address itself to the legality of the provision in the so-called medicare statute which denies benefits to individuals who are members of organizations required to register under the Subversive Activities Control Act. This provision was, on Novem-

ber 14, 1966, held unconstitutional by a three-judge District Court in the Central District of California."

As if to assert the unconstitutionality of the McCarran Act as a whole, the Appeals Court in its opinion discusses the legislative history which finally resulted in the enactment of the McCarran Act. Thus it speaks of the original bill "which was introduced in the 80th Congress and known as the Mundt-Nixon bill." It makes reference to a letter by Justice Tom Clark, who was then the Attorney General, in which he held that "the measure might be held to deny freedom of speech, of the press, and of assembly, and even to compel self-incrimination." It refers to "the testimony of noted lawyers, such as Charles Evans Hughes, Jr., and of John W. Davis who have doubts as to its constitutionality." The arguments of several Senators against the measure is cited, including that of Senator Herbert Lehman "that to require in the same bill the registration of Communists and their jailing for being Communists was 'a parody on legislation.'" And then attention is called to the veto by President Truman.

It is important to take note of the fact that in one of the footnotes the Court goes out of its way to maintain that in the Supreme Court decision of 1961, "The majority did not intimate that appellant was not a political association within the general purview of the Fifth Amendment." Referring to "the Congressional language" of "a worldwide Communist organization . . . controlled, directed, and subject to the discipline of the Communist dictatorship of a foreign country," it makes the comment that "these words today may have an ironic ring in the ears of the foreign power in question."

Implicitly, if not as yet explicitly, there is a running challenge in the Appeals Court decision to the Hitlerite caricature of the Communist Party contained in the preamble to the McCarran Act. It, in fact, infers that registration as a "Communist Action Organization" is to plead guilty to the built-in verdict of the McCarran Act that the Communist Party is an organization "substantially directed, dominated, or controlled by the foreign government or foreign organization controlling the world Communist movement" and "operates primarily to advance the objectives of such a world Communist movement."

To the ordinary layman the profound significance of the Appeals Court ruling may not readily be apparent because it is couched in the language of jurisprudence. However, at one point, the Court seems to speak in the name of the layman to reassert the rights contained in the First and Fifth Amendments, saying:

To the lay observer equipped with only a sure sense of logic and unconfused by the legal love of the assertedly personal nature of

the privilege, this all might suggest that the Act, like King Canute, vainly commands the impossible; and that the legislative scheme has a flavor of irrationality in a due process sense. But this condition of ineffectiveness to encompass the criminal punishment of appellant for something it lacks the means to accomplish derives in the last analysis from the Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination. The result is surely the same whether it be stated in terms of the availability of the privilege to appellant because of its distinctive nature, or whether it be said that it is a violation of the privilege concededly available to the individuals associated with appellant to condition its exercise upon the sacrifice of their First Amendment rights to associate together as a political party. In either formulation, it is the First Amendment which provides the distinctive background against which the reach of the Fifth must be defined; and in either formulation, the Constitution, on the facts of this record, stands between the appellant and the criminal punishment sought to be laid upon it.

In its totality the decision of the Appeals Court is nothing less than a condemnation of the McCarran Act. It reveals that the real criminality lies in the act itself and that the perpetrators of the crime are in the halls of Congress—the men who enacted this Hitlerite monstrosity.

Above all, the decision is a vindication of the steps taken by the Communist Party to challenge the U.S. Supreme Court ruling of June 5, 1961, upholding the registration provisions of the McCarran Act. The refusal of the leadership and membership to register—in face of the severe penalties this entailed—dramatically exposed the reactionary essence of the act and its threat to the democratic liberties of all Americans. For the Constitution and the Bill of Rights cannot be abrogated for one section of the people and preserved for all others.

While the main burden of the struggle against the McCarran Act was carried by the Communist Party, many other voices were raised in the battle against it. Hundreds of thousands of men and women—in all walks of life—repeatedly bombarded Congress and the White House to halt the McCarran Act prosecutions; civil liberties committees in dozens of cities made the fight against the McCarran Act a focal point of their activities; some trade unions renewed and reaffirmed their opposition; church leaders and student groups found numerous ways in which to show their opposition. The open letter to Congress and the President signed by prominent citizens, calling for repeal of the McCarran Act (published as an advertisement in the *Washington Post*), was one of the many expressions of the rising understanding that the McCarran Act violated the democratic liberties guaranteed

in the Bill of Rights.

Special note must be taken of the persistent and continuous battle waged in the courts by the legal team—Vito Marcantonio (in the early years) and that of John Abt and Joseph Forer from the very first days up to the present—to defeat this judicial anti-Communism.

At this writing it is not yet known whether the Justice Department intends to ask the Supreme Court to review the decision of the Appeals Court. But as of now this decision precludes any indictment of officers or member of the Communist Party for failure to register. But the battle against the McCarran Act is far from over—certainly not as long as it remains on the statute books.

At this moment special attention should be given to the Robel case—now before the Supreme Court—which involves the right of Communists to work in factories designated as defense facilities. The concentration camp provision remains, and needs to be challenged. Since the Appeals Court has ruled that the registration provisions cannot be enforced, every effort should be made to halt the SACB from holding any further hearings by enjoining it from going through with hearings on the Du Bois Clubs. Above all, this is the time to mount a repeal campaign—of the McCarran Act and the state and city laws of a similar type.

The fight to establish the first-class citizenship rights of the Communist Party and its members now needs to be unfolded in many directions. In addition to a drive to remove remaining laws which disqualify members of the Communist Party for public employment, a campaign should be initiated to restore the jobs of all teachers and civil service employees fired or blacklisted during the anti-Communist hysteria. This is also the time for Communists to apply as teachers as a means of testing the new legal decisions.

Suits should be inaugurated challenging laws which deny Communists the right to run as candidates or hold public office, while at the same time enlisting broad support to change the laws which make it almost impossible for a minority party to get on the ballot.

It is high time, too, for a massive struggle against the orders for deportation of hundreds who were or alleged to be Communists. And, of no small importance in face of the new problems confronting labor, is the need to convince the trade unions to eliminate the anti-Communist provisions in their own constitutions which have sapped the strength and democratic spirit of the organizations.

It is this continuing battle which will bury the McCarran Act and mark the end of the McCarran era.

Introduction to the Question Of State Monopoly Capitalism*

In presenting a definition of state monopoly capitalism, I have no intention of concluding the discussion at the very beginning of the conference. I wish only to propose an approximate delimitation of the question. More precisely, I should like to *introduce a preliminary discussion* on the *dimensions* of the question of state monopoly capitalism and on the *principles* of its analysis.

The question of state monopoly capitalism can be posed in relation to the history of capitalism, in relation to the evolution of Marxist doctrine, and from the point of view of present-day studies.

I. STATE MONOPOLY CAPITALISM, A PHASE OF CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT

1. *The Stage of Capitalist Development and State Monopoly Capitalism*

Marxist theory distinguishes three basic stages in the development of capitalism: 1) the primitive stage or that of manufacture; 2) the classical stage—that of the factory, or of full competition; 3) the imperialist or monopolist stage in general.

The development within a given stage prepares the succeeding stage, with profound transformations of the capitalist economic structure. We may note, for example, that in the stage of manufacture we pass, within the framework of a national economy, from the dominance of non-capitalist relations to that of capitalist relations over the whole of the economy. Similarly, the stage of factory production witnesses a growing concentration and centralization of capital: we go from the multiplication of capitalists to a tendency toward “decapitalization,” to use Marx’s phrase.

*This is the first part of the introductory lecture delivered to the International Conference on State Monopoly Capitalism, May 26-29, 1966, at the Maurice Thorez School in Choisy-le-Roi. At the invitation of the Communist Party of France, representatives of 20 countries participated. The second section of this lecture will be published next month.

Likewise, the imperialist stage is characterized by transformations which lead from free competition to simple monopoly, and from simple monopoly to state monopoly capitalism. At a certain level of development, it seems, a truly new phase can be distinguished within the imperialist stage: the phase of state monopoly capitalism. The chronological limits, of course, are highly relative and conventional.

2. *The Chronology of State Monopoly Capitalism*

State monopoly capitalism, heralded by significant changes occurring from the full unfolding of the imperialist stage at the end of the 19th century, first appears as placing its imprint on the whole of the national economy during the war of 1914-1918, in the belligerent capitalist countries.

After a period of relative or noticeable regression, it experiences a considerable advance during the "great depression" of the 1930's. In that period the Nazi economy of Hitler Germany and the U.S. economy inaugurated by Roosevelt's New Deal constitute two particularly striking examples of the development of state monopoly capitalism. They are the results of two efforts (one from the Right, the other from the Left) to save capitalism in crisis, its growth blocked at a time when socialist planning is reporting its first successes.

Following its extensive development during World War II, state monopoly capitalism blossoms out in all the advanced capitalist countries in the postwar period.

In these years it seeks, in the context of a sharpened class struggle, to permit the continued development of the productive forces and the material growth of the economy despite the mortal challenge to the capitalist mode of production by the contemporary socialization of the productive forces, by the progress of the working-class and revolutionary struggles, including the national liberation movements, and by the accelerated, crisis-free growth of socialism. In doing so, it deepens the contradictions of capitalism and pushes them toward their limits.

After World War II the working-class and democratic movement bases itself upon the objective processes which give rise to state monopoly capitalism to fight for the realization of the most democratic and most advanced social changes in its struggle against the monopolist oligarchy. But the oligarchy seeks (and with some success in the present period) to circumscribe the movement, to strip the new public forms of their democratic aspect and their anti-monopolist thrust, in order to utilize them to strengthen capitalism and monopoly domination. It strives to "reprivatize" the economy in whatever degree pos-

sible. In reality it develops still more state intervention, but in the most indirect and least openly public forms.

II. MARXIST-LENINIST DEFINITION OF STATE MONOPOLY CAPITALISM

1. *From Engels to Lenin*

As early as the 1880's, Engels, in *Anti-Duhring* (Part III, Chapter 2) underlined the necessary socialization of the means of production, first of all within a capitalist form. He distinguished capitalist socialization effected by monopolist trusts from that effected by the capitalist state.

As propos of the means of production, he explains that the "stronger and stronger command that their social character be recognized, forces the capitalist class itself to treat them more and more as social productive forces, so far as this is possible under capitalist conditions."

He shows that "the form of socialization" by means of the "joint-stock company" becomes insufficient at a certain degree of development. It now passes on to the "trust," he says, and then from the trust to "state property." He states specifically: "In the trusts, freedom of competition changes into its very opposite—into monopoly. . . . In any case, with trusts or without, the official representative of capitalist society—the state—will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production. This necessity of conversion into state property is felt first in the great institutions for intercourse and communication. . . ." He adds: "For only when . . . the taking them over by the state has become *economically* inevitable, only then—even if it is the state of today that effects this—is there an economic advance, the attainment of another step preliminary to the taking over of all productive forces by society itself." And more: "The workers remain wage workers—proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head. But, brought to a head, it topples over. State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution." Finally: "The capitalist mode of production . . . shows itself the way . . . *The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into state property.*" (*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, International Publishers, New York, 1935, pp. 65-69.) *

*The English version of these quotations has been taken from *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific* rather than from *Anti-Duhring* since those given by Boccarda conform most closely to its text. The reference to trusts, for example, is absent in the English edition of *Anti-Duhring*.—Editor

The term state monopoly capitalism was used by Lenin in 1917. A year after he had written his celebrated book *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, and a few months after its publication, Lenin, far from repeating in his analysis of the new stage which appeared about 1880, develops it in the light of the changes of capitalism during the World War. He does this in order to guide the struggles of the Soviet Revolution through knowledge of the objective economic movement of society.

It is in *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It*, published in October 1917, that one finds the Leninist outline on state monopoly capitalism. There Lenin shows the importance of the recent changes for an understanding of the practical roads of the democratic revolutionary struggle. He deals particularly with the nationalization of the banks and big monopolies. He underlines the fact that without being socialist, these democratic revolutionary measures based on the objective capitalist processes, constitute a step toward socialism, just as the "democratic revolutionary state" constitutes a great step toward socialism. Surely, this Leninist analysis cannot be detached from the concrete conditions prevailing in the tsarist empire of 1917, from the economic debacle which provoked the imperialist war, and above all from the peculiarities of the democratic stage of the Russian Revolution of 1917. But this analysis has also a general importance which Lenin specifies in the following terms:

The dialectics of history is precisely such that the war, by extraordinarily expediting the transformation of monopoly capitalism into state-monopolistic capitalism, has *thereby* extraordinarily advanced *mankind* towards socialism . . . not only because the horrors of the war give rise to proletarian revolt—no revolt can bring about socialism if the economic conditions for it have not ripened—but because state-monopolistic capitalism is a complete *material* preparation for socialism, the *prelude* to socialism, a rung in the ladder of history between which and the rung called socialism *there are no intermediate rungs*. (*Selected Works* in two volumes, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1951, Volume II, Part I, p. 158.)

Thus, state monopoly capitalism is for Lenin a real historic phase of capitalism. And again in *State and Revolution*, written at the end of 1917, Lenin, without being dogmatically tied to his definition of imperialism published a few months before, characterizes imperialism as the "era of banking capital, the era of gigantic capitalist monopolies, the era of the transformation of monopoly capitalism into state monopoly-capitalism." (International Publishers, New York, 1932, p. 29.)

2. From 1917 to Our Time

Between the two wars, Lenin's statements on state monopoly capitalism, far from being developed, tend to be neglected. To be sure, a certain number of studies refer, more or less, to the new role of the state, notably in the 1920's. However, with the development of state monopoly capitalism during the depression of the 1930's, one of the best Marxist analyses of the period, *The Great Crisis and Its Political Consequences*, by Eugene Varga, published in 1934, stresses precisely the striking development of the role of the state.

Varga writes:

The principal results of the efforts to overcome the crisis artificially (and of all capitalist economic policy during the crisis) is the intervention of the state in every detail of economic life in favor of the ruling classes in general, and of monopoly capital and the big agrarians in particular. Monopoly makes use of its control of the state machinery to effect a systematic shift of national income in its favor and to rob the state treasury in various ways and under all sorts of pretexts. "State capitalism" tendencies have grown considerably. A transition from monopoly capitalism to a "state war-monopoly capitalism," as Lenin called capitalism in the period of the World War, is taking place to a certain extent. (International Publishers, New York, 1934, pp. 68-69.)

However, this significant text appears in the conclusion of the chapter entitled "Unsuccessful Endeavors to Overcome the Crisis Artificially." But if these endeavors are unsuccessful from the the viewpoint of the general crisis of capitalism as a mode of production, they are not so from the viewpoint of the special kind of depression of the 1930's. If Varga sees the bourgeoisie seeking the way out through war, he does not consider that war can strengthen state monopoly capitalism and allow the endeavor temporarily to succeed in overcoming the crisis. Above all, he does not see the new weapons that the objective processes leading to state monopoly capitalism offer to the struggle of the proletariat, to the democratic revolutionary movement.

The state's intervention is conceived only from the point of view of the bourgeoisie, solely as an attempt to overcome the crisis, and not equally, in a Marxist-Leninist fashion, as an objective preparation for socialism upon which the struggle of the working class rests. Even from the viewpoint of the bourgeoisie, the relative effectiveness of state intervention is largely underestimated, as is the viability of

state monopoly capitalism outside of war conditions or war preparations.

In general, in Marxist literature, there is more and more a tendency to repeat Lenin's first analysis in his book *Imperialism*. And even when this Leninist analysis underlines, dialectically, not only the *parasitism and decay* of capitalism in its highest stage, but also the *transition* which this stage represents toward "a superior economic and social order," there is a tendency to insist in a unilateral fashion on the negative aspects of imperialist decay. An example of this tendency to repeat the analysis of *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, to insist only on the negative aspects of the decay, is given by Eugene Varga and Leo Mendelsohn's *New Data for V. I. Lenin's "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism."* This study, written around 1937-1938, bases itself on the phenomena of the depression years of the 1930's, placing emphasis, in reference to the evolution of imperialism since Lenin, on the decay and parasitism of capitalism. The only aspect wherein the new role of the state appears, consists of a few data on the growth of bureaucracy and of armament expenditures. There is even a tendency toward a conception that the *general crisis* opens up a catastrophic vision of capitalist evolution instead of seeing in the center of the *general crisis* of capitalism the changes in the economic structure that state monopoly capitalism represents.

On the morrow of the Second World War, state monopoly capitalism became a dazzling reality. The Communist parties in Europe which fight for democratic nationalization are daily faced with the problems of state monopoly capitalism.

Yet in 1952, Stalin, in his *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, obstinately keeps silent about it. He only speaks of "modern capitalism" which, he specifies, is "monopoly capitalism." Nevertheless, his so-called "basic law of modern capitalism" is compelled in fact to consider the phenomena of state monopoly capitalism, although it turns its back to its most important new characteristics. His conceptions of the growth of capitalist production in contemporary conditions and his rejection of the Leninist thesis on the rapid development of capitalism in the imperialist stage, turn their back to reality. While in passing he refers to the evident role of the state in modern capitalism, Stalin declares that we must speak of the "subordination of the state apparatus to the monopolies." He rejects the expression "fusion" of monopolies with the state apparatus solely on the grounds that it would be superficial and descriptive, and would not show the economic meaning of the rapprochement of the state and the monopolies, a rapprochement that would involve not only fusion.

Nevertheless, the Leninist outline of state monopoly capitalism has never been forgotten. But it was not at all at the center of the analysis of capitalism. It was mentioned in passing in a narrow fashion or studied in a marginal fashion. Since 1955 though, many workers have attempted to develop it. The tendency has been, and correctly so, to place the concept of state monopoly capitalism at the center of the analysis of contemporary capitalism.

Can we say there is now an accepted Marxist theory of state monopoly capitalism? No. To our knowledge there is not yet a real theory, generally accepted.

If certain formulations are generally accepted, they do not constitute a theory but rather demarcations of the question, first attempts at generalizing known phenomena which do not rigorously explain their *necessity*, which do not supply the necessary *laws* of their appearance, their development and their diverse movements. It would be a serious mistake to misjudge the scope of these formulations, whose great usefulness is unquestionable but provisional and relative. This usefulness should not conceal the urgent need to elaborate a scientific theory of state monopoly capitalism.

Three formulations seem to have been successively accepted on an international scale: that contained in the *Soviet Manual of Political Economy* of 1955, that in the *World Marxist Review* of October 1958, and that of the Conference of Communist and Workers Parties of 1960.

The *Manual of Political Economy* states:

State-monopoly capitalism means the subjection of the State machine to the capitalist monopolies and their using it to interfere in the country's economy (especially in connection with militarization of the economy), in order to secure maximum profits for themselves and consolidate the all-powerful position of finance capital. (Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1957, p. 324.)

The *World Marxist Review* of 1958 states:

State monopoly capitalism is a complex system under which monopoly capital uses the bourgeois state in its own interests. It includes in the main, state property, state consumption, government control and regulation. (Y. Ostrovitianov and V. Cheprakov, "State-Monopoly Capitalism in the Distorting Mirror of Revisionism," *World Marxist Review*, October 1958.)

This second definition is broader than the first. It marks distinct progress by insisting on the different aspects of normal state intervention, constituting a whole organic complex, and on the new forms.

However, in this period of 1955-1958, even while there is more and more reference to Lenin's formula, there is in large measure a tendency to remain with the thinking of the previous period. This is seen, for example, in the two preceding formulations. According to this thinking, modern capitalism is monopoly capitalism. Monopolies subordinate the state and use it more and more to their advantage. State monopoly capitalism tends to be conceived of as a sort of privileged instrument of the monopolies and concerned only with certain aspects of economic life (public intervention at the service of monopolies). It is a little like the time when Kautsky did not wish to discern a "phase" in imperialism and, refusing to identify imperialism with contemporary capitalism, saw in it only a preferred policy of capitalism (see Lenin, *Imperialism*, Chapter IX). But already, according to Lenin in 1917, it is the entire economic structure, capitalism as a whole, which is transformed, which passes from monopoly capitalism to state monopoly capitalism. (It should be understood that just as every capitalist is not a monopolist in the epoch of monopoly capitalism, even though monopoly imprints its mark on the economy as a whole, so also not everything is public intervention in the epoch of state monopoly capitalism.)

The 81-Party Conference of 1960 elaborated a formulation that clearly breaks away from the previous ones on this point. It states:

The world capitalist system is going through an intense process of disintegration and decay. Its contradictions have accelerated the development of monopoly capitalism into state-monopoly capitalism. By tightening the monopolies' grip on the life of the nation, state-monopoly capitalism closely combines the power of the monopolies with that of the state with the aim of saving the capitalist system and increasing the profits of the imperialist bourgeoisie to the utmost by exploiting the working class and plundering large sections of the population. (*Political Affairs*, January 1961.)

This last formulation, which speaks of the unique mechanism uniting the power of monopolies with that of the state, places the accent on the existence in the whole of capitalist society of new forms and new processes, new in relation to the forms and processes of simple monopoly capitalism. Moreover, the public forms are not only used by monopolies, they can offer new weapons to the revolutionary movement.

3. *State Monopoly Capitalism, the Final Phase of Imperialism*

Yet in our time, certain Marxist specialists hesitate to conceive of state monopoly capitalism as a new phase within the imperialist stage,

to say clearly that modern capitalism is no longer simple monopoly capitalism but state monopoly capitalism. Among these, one finds two contradictory tendencies.

There are those who prefer the term *present-day* or *contemporary* capitalism and nothing more, unless it is "modern" capitalism. They do not want, even provisionally, to define the economic structure of the advanced capitalist countries by the term state monopoly capitalism. The use of the term present-day capitalism, without any other specification, is to a certain extent going back to the concept of monopoly capitalism, while to speak of state monopoly capitalism is to indicate a phase of monopoly capitalist development in general. Sometimes, there is even refusal, despite evident facts, to grant a central role to the state in present-day capitalism.

There are others who, on the contrary, are afraid they would cause people to think that present-day capitalism is no longer monopoly capitalism (or even not capitalism at all). They do not want to hear state monopoly capitalism spoken of as a new historic phase of the imperialist stage. Thus they remain, to a certain extent, with the 1955-1958 attitude. Sometimes they even refuse to speak of modification of the relations of production.

One should not confuse the fact that capitalism always remain capitalism (or monopolies always remain monopolies) with the non-modification of production relations, the non-transformation of the economic structure. According to Marxist theory, the relations of production are the object of an unceasing process of change, as is clearly shown in Marx's *Capital*. With the passage of one stage into another, for example, the organic whole of economic relations, the economic structure of society, undergoes a considerable change. This does not prevent the maintenance and deepening of their capitalist essence, with the persistence of the fundamental relations of exploitation between capitalists and proletarians.

One finds in our ranks even opinions which, while recognizing the existence of new forms, refuse to speak of changes in production relations (thereby confusing the form with the essence), or which, while speaking of the declining phase of capitalism, refuse to speak of a new phase of development.

Starting from the correct expression in the 1960 formulation, which points out the strengthening of monopoly power over the life of the nation, some say: there is solely a strengthening of monopoly hegemony over society. But is there only a strengthening of monopoly hegemony, or is not this strengthening also forced to develop new processes that deepen the contradictions of capitalism and bring it nearer, dialectically,

tically, to socialism? These processes give capitalism economic weapons of a new type, but they give them also to the democratic and revolutionary movement. And the latter can turn them against the monopolies in a decisive manner if it takes control of the state. It can utilize them for the service of the people as well as in the building of a new society, for the revolutionary passage to socialism by peaceful means.

State monopoly capitalism is the final phase of imperialism. If the working-class and democratic movement succeeds in wresting control of the state, political domination, from the monopolist oligarchy, it will use it profoundly to democratize economic life. Through democratic nationalization and planning, the new public forms can be considerably developed in an anti-monopolist sense and at the service of the nation. In these conditions, the revolutionary democratic movement will strive to isolate and progressively destroy the monopolies. State monopoly capitalism and imperialism will then face a crisis of decay and they can be destroyed. But if, in this hypothesis, capitalism still remains, it can be characterized, given the decisive economic role of the new democratic state, as democratic state capitalism that ushers in a revolutionary period of direct peaceful transition to socialism.

If state monopoly capitalism constitutes a new phase, different from simple monopoly capitalism, there is a need for a new, original explanation (although based on the theory of capitalism in general).

From the delineation of the question in terms of the history of capitalism and the Marxist doctrine, we pass on to its delineation from the viewpoint of present-day studies.

IDEAS IN OUR TIME

HERBERT APTHEKER

The United States Today: An Overall View*

The General Chairman for this notable event submitted to panelists a series of questions to which he hoped they would address themselves. He kindly added, "they are not intended to be restrictive, nor is it necessary that all the questions be answered."

I found the questions excellent and see no reason why I should not base my remarks upon them; on the contrary, since they have occurred to my hosts it is only proper that I turn to them. Two cautions are in order: we panelists quite properly have been limited to thirty minutes each; and whether I am *able* actually to answer all the questions of course the audience must decide.

I: Briefly, What in Your View is Capitalism? Socialism? Communism?

Capitalism is a socio-economic system of commodity production, wherein the means of production are privately owned, the fundamental motivation for production is profit and to be successful means, essentially, to be wealthy.

Socialism is a socio-economic system of production of goods, wherein the means of production are not privately owned but are rather owned by the society as a collective, the motive for production is social need and well-being and to be successful means to be creative and useful.

Communism is a social order wherein the needs, drives and obscurities of acquisitive societies have been overcome and rendered obsolete because the socialized ownership of production, the planning of such production and the application and enhancing of people's usefulness have resulted in abundance, absence of coercion and habitual human conduct.

* This paper was delivered February 17, 1967, at "Dialogue '67," a three-day event held under the auspices of the University of Western Ontario in London, Canada. Presenting a contrary view was Professor G. Warren Nutter, formerly a section chief for the C.I.A., and now Chairman, Department of Economics, University of Virginia. Participating in this Dialogue were Ontario's Prime Minister, Canada's Minister of External Affairs and the leaders of all Canada's parties, including Tim Buck of the Communist Party.

Associated with capitalism are: fascism, exploitative relationships, both internal and external; eliteism—not only of a racist kind, but also of a class, sexual and nationalistic character; general contempt for Man, reflecting itself especially in the tendency towards violence, institutionalized in war and in fascism.

Associated with socialism are: the conscious effort to overcome these pre-human characteristics of society, with greater or lesser success and greater or lesser lapses but with positive overall direction and intention.

Associated with communism should be the successful overcoming of these pre-human monstrosities and a social order marked by equality, freedom, universal cultural literacy of high quality, sharp inquisitiveness and adventure, high spirits, and one where violence offered by one human upon another would be uncommonly rare and accepted as a sure sign of serious illness.

II: *Would You Describe the United States as a Capitalist Country?*

Yes, indeed.

III: *How Would You Describe the United States?*

Structurally, the United States is intensely monopoly-capitalist; therefore, dominant political priorities within the country are anti-human and outside the country are regressive, aggressive and violent, with each reinforcing the other. The style, for sufficient historic reasons, is sanctimonious and hypocritical but the content, also for sufficient historic reasons, is especially brutal and to use Senator Fulbright's apt word, arrogant.

Within the severe limits imposed by time, we offer some buttressing data and quotations for these assertions:

Intensely-monopolist: In 1960, Mr. A. A. Berle, Jr., Professor of Corporation Law at Columbia University, formerly Under-Secretary of State, and a keen student of corporate habits, wrote:

In terms of power, without regard to asset positions, not only do 500 corporations control two-thirds of the non-farm economy, but within each of that 500, a still smaller group has the ultimate decision-making power. This is, I think, *the highest concentration of economic power in recorded history*. (Berle, *Economic Power and the Free Society*, New York, n.d., Fund for the Republic.)

Somewhat earlier, the late Herbert H. Lehman, himself a leading banker and, of course, formerly a Governor of New York and a U.S.

Senator, noting the increasing tendency towards mergers among banks and financial institutions, warned:

The end result is not only a decreased number of banks and less competition, but a more highly centralized control of the nation's financial system, with mounting danger to the entire national economy if a relatively few individuals should decide, for whatever reason, to misuse *their control over the life-blood of our economy*. (*New York Times*, April 3, 1957. Italics added.)

Since Mr. Lehman's warning, banking mergers have, in fact, intensified. Thus, to mention only some of the more important such mergers since 1957, there were those of J. P. Morgan and the Guaranty Trust Company, of the First American Corporation of California (assets over one billion) and the California Bank of Los Angeles (assets over one billion); of two of the largest banks in New Jersey, the National State and the Federal Trust; of two of the largest banks in Pennsylvania, the Fidelity Trust and the Potter Bank & Trust; etc.

Similarly, among industrial corporations, the mergers—and especially the mergers of very large complexes—have increased in the years since Mr. Berle pronounced what then existed to have been the highest concentration of economic power in history.

In mid-1966 the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly completed yet another study of the U.S. economy; its findings went generally unreported in the commercial press. One of its experts, Mr. Richard J. Barber, summarized them in *The New Republic* (August 13, 1966) under the title, "The New Partnership: Big Government and Big Business." He reports that the recent past has witnessed "the greatest merger wave in the country's history." The result, in his words, is that in the United States "the era of the huge, diversified, international company is here."

The merger wave wiped out 1,000 corporations in 1965 and 1,300 in 1966. Not only are the numbers of mergers three or four times what they were a decade ago; in addition, the size of the companies involved in the mergers is much greater than ten years ago.

Today, in the United States, out of a total of 200,000 corporations, 200 control about 60 per cent of the nation's manufacturing wealth; and since the end of the 1950's, U.S. corporations have more than doubled their foreign investments—now totalling over fifty billion dollars (a matter perhaps not needing emphasis before a Canadian audience). The policies and actions of the federal government, at home and abroad, support and sustain concentration. There is, wrote Mr. Barber, "a growing intimacy between government and business";

the fact is, he concludes, that especially under President Johnson, the U.S. Government "has become less a partner than a captive of big business."

Details substantiating Mr. Barber's analysis were issued in September, 1966 by the U.S. Census Bureau in a study called *Concentration Ratios in Manufacturing Industry, 1963*. According to this official source, the 200 largest manufacturing corporations accounted for 30 per cent of all output in 1947, 38 per cent in 1958 and 41 per cent in 1963. The rate is rising at about 0.7 per cent a year; i.e., the 200 largest corporations today account for about 44 per cent of all output and by 1976 will account for over 50 per cent! And within this story of concentration, there is a deeper story of super-concentration. Thus, if one examines not the top 200 corporations but the top 50, he finds that their share of the total is growing at an even steeper rate; that is, in 1947 the top 50 corporations accounted for 17 per cent of overall output, in 1963 they accounted for 25 per cent, and at this moment they account for very nearly 30 per cent.

In the October 1966 issue of *The American Federationist*, organ of the AFL-CIO, its chief economist, Mr. Irving Beller, also reported at length upon the unprecedented merger activities of the last few years. He noted that one-fourth of one per cent of industrial firms gathered in 72 per cent of all industrial profits! The *net reported* profits of one such firm—General Motors—in 1965 exceeded the total revenues of all States in the Union, except California and New York, and actually equalled the *combined tax revenues of eighteen States!*

The hundred largest manufacturing corporations now own, Mr. Beller stated, over half the land, buildings and equipment used in all U.S. production; given the present rate of concentration, he warned, by 1977 the 100 largest manufacturing corporations will control over 65 per cent of all manufacturing assets in the United States. The AFL-CIO economist concluded: "More than ever before, America has become a nation of giant enterprises with enormous power to fix prices, drive small competitors to the wall and deeply influence the behavior and social values of others."

Mr. Beller mentioned social values. It is exactly there—in the area of ethics and morality—that the crisis now afflicting the United States manifests itself most dramatically. The well-known philosopher, Mr. Richard M. Elman, writing not long ago in the leading Catholic lay journal, *Commonweal* (June 26, 1964), cried out:

Must it always be so—never quite coherent, perceived hermetically, a rushing about the ears, without obvious sequences, a

garble of sounds, confusing us, leaving us directionless, without any moral center, quite mortal, solitary, quite without any point of reference aside from our dissociated selves?

The increasingly critical impact of the foul character of the social organization manifests itself in well-known data. Thus, to be brief about it, Publication Number 6, 1964, of the U.S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare, entitled *Converging Social Trends; Emerging Social Problems*, states:

Juvenile court cases per 1,000 children in the 10- to 17-year age group have almost tripled in the past two decades. . . .

There are believed to be more than five million alcoholics in the Nation today. . . .

About 153 people out of every 100,000 in the population entered a mental hospital in 1963 as compared to 92 out of 100,000 in 1940.

These are, of course, stark forms of withdrawal—often appearing exactly among the most sensitive members of the society. Observe, however, that with figures such as these, the capacity to function—the actual viability—of the social order is in jeopardy because even an order which acts as though human beings were commodities still does require human beings to be human.

In this sense, the late British socialist and historian, R. H. Tawney, was most perceptive in insisting that, "The revolt against capitalism has its source, not merely in material miseries, but in resentment against an economic system which dehumanizes existence. . . ."

Such decay and inhumanity will be resisted particularly by those classes and groups in society whose interests and character are especially affronted by it. This will include the working classes whose productive and collective nature tends to repel decadence; it will include youth who naturally seek fulfillment and who are characterized by aspiration and the sense of growth; it will include many women whose subordination is more and more irksome and whose basic relation to life makes the estranged and anti-human quality of social decay especially repugnant; it will include the Negro people whose particularly oppressed condition encourages solidarity, selflessness and rebellion; it will include the best among the intelligentsia, the teachers, the scholars whose commitments make monstrous a way that smells of death and is filled with deception. And artists—those who create—must be appalled and must increasingly resist a social order which more and more reminds one of the lines Wilfred Owen used to describe World War I companions—lines today with a literal quality about them:

*Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.*

* * *

Not to be ignored, of course, in any description of the United States today are what Tawney called the "material miseries." While about ten years ago—as part of the temporary triumph of neo-Conservatism, McCarthyism's ideological "cover"—there was heralded the discovery of "People's Capitalism" wherein, as even people like Robert Hutchins and Professor Martin Lipset announced, all social problems had been resolved in the United States and in particular, poverty was a thing of the past, this glaring fraud could not long be maintained in the face of an opposing reality.

Now all admit—even President Johnson—that impoverishment is a major feature of the "American Way of Life" and that it afflicts anywhere from about 32 million to about 65 million people, the total depending upon statistical criteria. What this means in terms of human tragedy may be indicated, briefly, by noting that the number of welfare recipients in New York City doubled in the past decade; i.e., in 1956 the number was 280,873 and in 1966 the total was 562,108. This was a relative doubling as well as an absolute one for in the earlier year, welfare recipients came to 3.6 per cent of the whole population and in 1966 they came to 7 per cent; and the ratio of relief to employment rose from 8.9 per cent in 1956 to 17.9 per cent in 1966 (*New York Times*, February 12, 1967, Sec. I, p. 60).

The contrast between private accumulation and public decay in the United States is as glaring as is the contrast between fantastically luxurious living and abysmal conditions of existence. To the point is this comment by the late Adlai Stevenson, presumably a non-Communist source:

While our cars have grown longer, our TV screens broader, our washing machines grander, our kitchens brighter, at the same time our schools have grown more dilapidated, our roads more crowded, our cities more messy, our air more fetid, our water more scarce, and the whole public framework on which private living depends, more shabby and worn out.

Quite remarkable was the concluding paragraph of a long survey of the quality of life today in the United States by the dean of American economic popularizers, Mr. Stuart Chase, published in *The Saturday Review*, February 11, 1967:

If one looks beyond the dollars and sees how people are really

living, one must, I fear, come to the same conclusion as in 1929. Prosperity is more myth than fact. Mountains of stuff are run through, then cast away to become mountains of refuse: the accelerating wastes of affluence. In dollars, we are rich beyond the dreams of avarice, but in things that make life worth living we are poor, and growing poorer—not only the low income families, but all of us.

The two central manifestations of the parasitic nature of the present U.S. social order have been alluded to but must be more specifically mentioned. I have in mind the unspeakable war being conducted by the Government of the United States against the Vietnamese people and the atrocious and institutionalized racism directed mainly against the twenty million Negro people within the United States. Each reflects profound crisis—in terms of international and internal policy; both are interrelated and both threaten the very existence of my nation and therefore of the world.

IV: What, in Your View, Is Social Change?

Social change is alteration, more or less significant, in the functioning of society. This change may be progressive—i.e., enhancing productivity and human well-being; or it may be regressive—i.e., inhibiting productivity and reducing human well-being. The change may be relatively minor, in the sense that structure is not changed or threatened—as reducing the voting age; it may be more significant with the clear potential of enhancing the possibility of structural change—as legalizing trade-union organizing and activity; and it may be most significant in that structural change is accomplished—as abolishing slavery or the private ownership of the means of production. And the change may be regressive, sometimes massively so—as the overthrow of the Spanish Republic by fascist and nazi counter-revolutionists.

V: What Do You Think of Capitalism, Socialism, Communism for the United States?

The result of capitalism in the United States I have indicated in reply to question III; it is not yet the end-result and what that will be I do not know. The potential of fascism and world war certainly cannot be ruled out; tendencies in this direction are organic given monopoly capitalism and reflections of such tendencies are portentous in the United States today, but their victory certainly is not inevitable.

Technically and in terms of human need, though not yet comprehension, socialism is long overdue for the United States. It is most significant that a growing awareness of this marks the current U.S. scene. Expressions of this kind are common among youth leaders and organizations, increasingly appear among Negro leaders and organizations and now are not unknown in thoroughly respectable sources. A few instances of the latter will be in order.

Professor H. L. Nieburg of the University of Wisconsin, in his book, *In the Name of Science* (Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1966), emphasizes the obsolescence of the present social order in the United States, insists that the rights of "private profits and property" are more and more anachronistic, and locates the "persistent ailment afflicting American society" as arising "from the basic fact of the concentration of economic power in the private hands of a few who are unaccountable to democratic controls."

Professor Richard Lichtman of the University of California, concludes that, "The principles of equality and social value that characterize a community are inimical to every form of capitalism," and that, "The traditional Marxian critique of capitalism has taken on new vitality, for our contemporary situation is surely as pertinent an instance of the contradiction between productive forces and the social relations of production as one could imagine." (*Toward Community: A Critique of Contemporary Capitalism* (Fund for the Republic, Santa Barbara, 1966.)

Professor Robert Engler of Sarah Lawrence and Queens Colleges, insists that "Major areas of life [in the United States], from the mass media and leisure to housing and resource development, are corroded by the primacy of the profit motive. . . . A relevant theory for a society which produces so much and allocates so poorly will have to challenge the sacredness of the right of private property," and this was printed in the *New York Times Magazine*, December 25, 1966.

In the trade union movement, too, structural challenges now appear. Thus, the late Michael Quill, leader of the Transport Workers Union, AFL-CIO, entitled an article in the organ of that union, the *TWU Express*, April 1963, "Government Ownership of All Industry—America's Survival Kit." He makes clear that, "I mean government ownership of all big industry, including the natural resources of the United States." He adds that in his proposal "the Wall Street man [is] eliminated" and then asks, with italics, "*Is this Socialism?*" He replies, "Well, we can call it that," and that is what he wants.

Perhaps it is even more significant that in the most recent writings of John Kenneth Galbraith a new note of challenge to the economic

foundations is being struck. Mr. Galbraith is, of course, one of the most distinguished of the liberal public figures in the United States—formerly President Kennedy's Ambassador to India, author of the influential volume, *The Affluent Society*, and now Professor of Economics at Harvard. At a recent conference on urban problems in Washington, Mr. Galbraith strongly emphasized the mounting social crisis in the United States; he has done this before, but this time he added: "We must explicitly assert the claims of the community against those of economics." He urged that the public service sectors of the economy "must grow if there is not to be an appalling contrast between the two—between private affluence and public squalor." And in a quite remarkable paragraph, worthy of quoting in full, Mr. Galbraith said:

We should not imagine that our traditional arrangements for guiding or directing land use will be sufficient for the purposes I have mentioned. Private land ownership is a natural way of according economic priority. That, generally speaking, accords the largest private return. It was also right for the stage in social development that accorded economic priority. It is not so certain that it can be accommodated to social and esthetic goals. The record of planners and zoning authorities when they come in conflict with the profit motive is not encouraging. I incline to the belief that for good urban, suburban, and adjacent land use we will need to resort increasingly to public ownership of the strategic land areas. Nor does it take a political genius to see the prospect here for some bloodletting. (*The Progressive*, December 1966.)

The question as posed to me encompassed also communism for the United States. I reply only that socialism is much in order for the United States and that with its colossal technical development, the transition from socialism to communism there should not take long.

I must add, however, in all candor, that given the ethical requirements of a communist society, the achievement of such a society from that point of view may well require several generations after all the material bases have been established.

VI: *What Is Your View on the Role of the Communist Party in U.S. History?*

It is a view quite the opposite of that which generally prevails in the United States. I see that role as, generally speaking, one of a goad and spearhead for enterprises and ideas very much needed. In areas of trade-union organization, of the struggle against racism, in the

effort to expand civil liberties and civil rights, in the efforts to assure some minimum of social security, in the movements against fascism and imperialist interventions and wars, no political party in the United States has played a more worthy role than has the Communist Party.

That party has evidenced its share of faults, errors and failings. There have been dogmatism and sectarianism; there has been opportunism; there has been rigidity and even arrogance. There also has been fierce persecution. Withal and everything considered, the party has been heroic, steadfast, enduring, and indeed "the salt of the earth." It is the party which gained and held the support of Dreiser and Du Bois, of Mother Bloor and Foster, of Benjamin J. Davis and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, of Robert Thompson and now of Henry Winston and Gus Hall; such a party needs apologize to no one for its existence. I am delighted to be able to say that in spite of everything in the United States, it is a party that is growing rather rapidly and especially among youth.

*VII: What Has Been, Is and What Do You Think Will Be
the Role of the Negro in Social Change in the United States?*

The United States has been from its founding and is now a racist society; this racism is not peripheral but is rather organic. It has infected every sphere of U.S. life—economic, political, diplomatic, ideological, ethical. The struggle against this oppression has been basic in its own terms and fundamental in terms of any kind of positive advance in the United States. No meaningful social advance has been possible in the United States without its reflecting the centrality of this so-called Negro question; no social advance can even be begun today in the United States which does not base itself on Negro-white unity and does not comprehend that the single most urgent domestic question in the United States today is the termination of the crucifixion of twenty million black Americans. That crucifixion tells more of U.S. reality than all the speeches of President Johnson and Vice-President Humphrey put together; the effort to terminate it is a basic component in the effort to quite literally save the Republic of the United States.

The Negro people's role has been that of social pioneers because they have been the most oppressed; this role continues and will continue until that oppression is terminated and the United States stands transformed from a racist society to an egalitarian one.

*VIII: What Methods Do You Favor, If Any, For Social
Change in the United States?*

The methods now being used are the methods traditional in American history and are those to be persisted in and expanded. These include political activity within and independent of the major parties; existence of independent radical political and social organizations, and demonstration, articulation, efforts at persuasion by them. Dramatic and continual challenges to the status quo in every sphere and on every issue are needed; and concentration upon those areas most vital and meaningful—today on foreign policy, on racism, on urban blight, on the high cost of living, on inadequacies of provisions for social well-being. Accompanying all this, the projection of the relevancy of Marxism and the basic answers offered by Socialism.

IX: What Future Do You Envisage for the United States?

With the weaponry now in possession of the United States—and more terrible instruments of death now on the drafting boards—if there is to be a future for the United States it will have to be one that sheds the class rule which has brought my nation to its present nadir. I think this will take the form of a break-away from the present two-party system through the emergence of an effective, mass anti-monopoly coalition based upon the organized labor movement, the millions not yet organized, the Negro people's movement, with support from vast millions of youth, professionals, intellectuals and others—especially women—opposed to an aggressive foreign policy. With that as a base, there will begin the transformation of the quality of U.S. life and the transformation of its structure. This will eventuate in a socialist society. A socialist society in the United States, building upon its own finest traditions and the best in the traditions and experiences of other peoples and having the colossal productivity of the American plant, will mean a community worthy of Benjamin Franklin's dream, uttered in the midst of our great Revolution, in 1777—"our cause," he said then, "is the cause of all Mankind."

What I Learned in the Struggles of the Northwest

Gus Hall, the general secretary of the Communist Party, often speaks of the power of the working class—when it is united. He has seen labor's power from the inside. He took part with other Communists in the battles that built the big unions, won social security and defeated the fascists on our own soil. He is confident that his class will play the decisive role in the great struggles for peace, racial equality—and eventually for Socialism—that loom ahead. And his confidence, like the confidence of thousands of other Communists, comes from life.

Solidarity in the Arctic Night

My own confidence was firmly established in the class struggles of the Pacific Northwest, during and after the First World War. Seattle was labor's vanguard city at that time. I came to Seattle from Nome, Alaska, where I served in the Eskimo school service. Nome was an isolated gold-mining camp on the frozen shores of the Bering Sea. It was a little world in itself, where the two major classes in society faced each other on the camp's only street. A strike began there for the eight-hour day. It went on for months during the war. There was no room for neutrals. One took sides with the miners or with the little group of mine operators, managers, company lawyers, merchants and U.S. territorial officials, who called themselves the "best people," and wore evening jackets at their Arctic Brotherhood parties.

I did my first labor writing for the Nome *Industrial Worker*, the daily organ of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers local union. This was the first trade union daily in the USA. It rejoiced in the Bolshevik revolution, as did most of the Alaska miners. And its editor gave me a letter to friends in Seattle when I left.

I had been eagerly following the dramatic labor news from Seattle and the rest of the Pacific Northwest all year. The high point was the victory of the IWW loggers. Fifty thousand men walked out of the lumber camps while the Chamber of Commerce shouted "Revolution!" and the government made hundreds of arrests. The lumberjacks stayed out two months, while we passed the hat at Alaska meetings. Then they outwitted their enemies by "transferring the strike to

the job"—a favorite IWW tactic. One of the Nome miners showed me a letter from his brother, a logger in the woods near Seattle, telling how the strike on the job was carried on. And I could almost hear the writer's chuckle when he wrote that he was getting a "good rest" on the job while the boss was going crazy.

The government had to yield. The loggers got the eight-hour day. And my Nome friends got encouragement for their own eight-hour fight, which was soon to begin.

Then we got the story of the first Soviet visitors to the USA. It came in the Seattle *Industrial Worker*, the Northwest IWW paper, and reached us by dogteam in the Arctic night. An Irish miner read it to us at a union meeting. And we learned how the crew of the S.S. Shilka, a small Russian merchant ship, made a peaceful revolution in mid-ocean in the name of the Soviet regime. The captain was allowed to stay on the bridge, but power was vested in a committee of seamen. And the crew was enjoying the six-hour workday when the Shilka entered Seattle harbor for supplies on Christmas Day, 1917.

There was hysteria in Seattle's upper-class circles. The "Bolsheviks" are bringing arms for an "American revolution," the press cried. And captain and crew were rushed to prison. AFL and IWW unions vigorously protested. And the visitors were released when a searching party found nothing but licorice root, peas and beans in the hold. Then Soviet and American workers clasped hands in friendship. The Russians marched to the IWW hall. And the mate told the workers, who clustered about him, that "All of us are Bolsheviks."

Hundreds of workers crowded the dock in a goodbye demonstration a week later. The ship's band played the Marseillaise. And the Shilka sailed with a message from the AFL Central Labor Council conveying the "fraternal greetings of organized labor in Seattle for the organized workers of Russia" in their struggle for industrial and political democracy. And we felt, as we listened to the reading, that the workers of the world would soon live in friendship together.

"There is Pow'r, there is Pow'r"

I arrived in Seattle on a ship filled with fishermen and cannery workers, whom we picked up in Bristol May. Many were IWW's. They sang Joe Hill's songs. And I felt the power of labor as these lines echoed through the social hall:

There is pow'r, there is pow'r
In a band of workingmen,
When they stand hand in hand,
That's a pow'r, that's a pow'r
That must rule in every land. . . .

Seattle was booming with the war when I came in. A quarter of the ships built for the Emergency Fleet Corporation came off the ways of the Puget Sound city. This Northwest metropolis was a hundred times bigger than Nome. But class contrasts were as sharp as in the northern mining camp. On one side were the shipyard and lumber magnates. On the other side the most militant workers in the USA.

I learned much from these workers. They told me about their struggles with the copper bosses, the lumber barons, the construction camp foremen and the big wheat farmers before they entered the shipyards. Many did much serious reading and I listened to earnest discussions of theory and tactics. Many, however, were dogmatic syndicalists and rejected all parliamentary action. They thought the strike weapon was all-sufficient. But there were good Marxists among the workers and I was not surprised to read in Harvey O'Connor's *Revolution in Seattle* (Monthly Review Press) that Washington State led the USA in per capita sales of Marxist literature before the war.

I went to work in the shipyards. The metal trades unions had a closed shop deal with the government, which feared the IWW more than the AFL. I was in a machine shop so I joined Hope Lodge 79, of the AFL Machinists. This was a fighting local of 4,000 members. But it had one shameful blot. No Negroes were admitted. The color bar was in the international union's constitution. Some members protested, but there was no organized opposition, and one Socialist offered the excuse that Seattle had rather few Negroes. He forgot that there was a principle at stake.

The government's wartime wage freeze was under heavy attack at our meetings. Our wages were fixed from above by a government board that had the blessing of our international officials. Our right to strike was also denied. Our leaders would tell us that prices had risen three times faster than wages. Then old Vincent Brown, a respected IWW, would take the floor. And I can still see him gripping the back of his chair and rocking it back and forth with emotion as he asked us this question: "Why don't you use your economic power?" That meant *strike* in IWW language.

In the "Good and Welfare" hour our meetings became exciting political forums. I heard much praise of Soviet Russia. And there was so much talk of the "emancipation of the working class" that my foreman once rose to protest. "This union," he cried, "was not established for the emancipation of the working class, but for the emancipation of the machinists."

This narrow craft unionist hated the big capitalists, however. He told me that he was organizing machinists in the steel mill in Bethle-

hem, Pennsylvania in 1910 when the men struck against the 12-hour day. I was a student there at the time. I remembered that five strikers were shot down by the state police. And my foreman reminded me that the killers were called in by President Charles Schwab of Bethlehem Steel. "That's the same Charley Schwab who keeps shipyard wages down," he said bitterly.

Schwab was one of the tycoons behind the government ship program.

Draftees Against Intervention

My draft number came up that summer and I spent the next months in Camp Lewis near Tacoma. My buddies were lumberjacks, shipyard workers, miners and farm boys. We got on well together, and I found only three or four men, out of 200 in my company, who had their hearts in the war. That wasn't a "war for democracy." We were cannon fodder in a war for markets, colonies and spheres of influence. And before Kaiser Wilhelm was defeated Wilson turned his guns against revolutionary Russia. Conscript armies sailed for Vladivostok and Archangel without a declaration of war. I was suddenly given a special physical examination with a group of men. The grapevine said we were bound for Siberia. And we were waiting in line for the doctor when the young man beside me whispered: "The Russians are not our enemies, Art." "That's right," I whispered back. "We won't shoot them," he whispered again. "That's right," I replied. And I often thought of that conversation when American boys in Archangel decided to quit fighting.

My friend was a mechanic from Tacoma whom we all liked. He could sing, make fun of the brass, and help a buddy in trouble. To my sorrow I never saw him again. I was stricken with influenza the next day. That was a deadly plague. It killed my brother Ted on the front lines in France and my brother Walter in Alaska. Men were dying around me in the long, wooden barracks. No doctor had time to see me. I barely survived with the help of a tireless army nurse, who belonged to a small sect called the Seventh Day Baptists. This young conscientious objector tended us night and day, sang sentimental songs in a soft, lullaby voice, and did not talk religion until we were convalescing. Then he solemnly warned me that the world was coming to an end, and I should read what the Prophet Daniel said about it.

We celebrated peace with a colorful rocket display. But I did not find peace when I returned to Seattle. The capitalists were planning an open shop offensive. The press was redbaiting the unions. And

the workers were getting ready for battle.

Mooney Strike Vote

On my first visit to Hope Lodge I was handed a referendum ballot by Secretary Hook and asked to vote "Yes" or "No" on the question of a general strike to free Tom Mooney and Warren K. Billings, the San Francisco labor martyrs. They had been framed by public utilities detectives on false charges of exploding a bomb during a pro-war parade. Tom was sentenced to hang. His life had been saved by an immense international campaign (led by Robert Minor, a future Communist leader), and both were now serving life terms.

The "Yes" votes were overwhelming in all the metal trades unions, and our leaders began organizing a nationwide Mooney strike movement.

Tom Mooney was admired as a heroic symbol of labor. But my fellow workers were not only thinking of Mooney and Billings. Their bitterness at the government's wage freeze was running over.

I have never felt such *open* resentment against the capitalist system among American workers as in those Seattle days. I was living with a lumber worker's family, where the young men used to say, "The Russians don't need any capitalists. Why do we?" That was common talk in Seattle in the winter of 1918-1919.

Many of my fellow workers were reading John Reed's stories of Soviet Russia. They appeared in the *Liberator*, the successor to the old *Masses*. And the *Liberator* was sold in many union halls. When I strolled down the skid road I enjoyed the sight of "Red" O'Hanrahan's stand. It was piled high with Left-wing papers, booklets and magazines. Lumberjacks and shipyard workers were clustered around it. Here I heard workers discussing the first Lenin pamphlet to reach the USA. This was Lenin's April (1918) report on the "Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government." It emphasized the primary role of the working class in the organization of socialist industry. The report came to America through Alexander Trachtenberg, who was then the research director of the Socialist Rand School in New York City. And it was published in Seattle in an edition of 20,000 by the daily *Union Record*, the organ of the AFL Central Labor Council, under the title, "The Soviets at Work."

I now began writing for *The International Weekly*, a new Socialist paper that reflected the views of the Socialist Left-wing. I was not a member of the Socialist Party, however. I was close to the IWW because it was a basic workers' movement and full of fight. But I had little understanding of the syndicalist philosophy. I was finding

my way.

Our paper was produced by enthusiastic young fellows, who thought world victory was near. All had good labor connections. Our editor, Harvey O'Connor, 21, had taken part in the loggers' struggles and edited two Left-wing Socialist papers before coming of age. His most active colleagues were two victims of the wartime witchhunt, whose defense was supported by organized labor. They were Morris Pass, our artist, and Joseph Pass, a writer. Both were appealing two-year sentences, imposed for the distribution of an anti-draft leaflet. Their co-defendants, Hulet Wells, a former C.L.U. President, and Sam Sadler, a Socialist longshoreman, were influential unionists. And all four were given a banquet in the Labor Temple on the eve of their departure for prison several months later.

I was brought in by Paul Bickel, a Hope Lodge member. Paul taught mathematics in a high school and joined the union while working in the shipyards during vacations. He knew more about Marxism than the rest of us, and I learned much from him in long talks over the coffee that his wife cooked in a big open pot.

Paul was a popular speaker at union meetings. I vividly recall a speech that he made at Hope Lodge in January against American aid to Admiral Kolchak, the Siberian butcher. Kolchak's guns were shipped from Seattle docks and Paul urged labor to stop them. Sam Sadler was pressing this demand at longshore meetings meanwhile, and the dock workers finally acted. An arms ship, the S.S. *Delight*, was tied up in October. Fifty carloads of rifles lay on the docks for weeks when Kolchak needed them most. The White Guard generalissimo was buried soon after.

We elected Paul as our delegate to a national Mooney-Billings conference in Chicago at that January meeting. The gathering was called by the progressive Chicago Federation of Labor. Forty more delegates were coming from Seattle; hundreds more from other cities. We felt sure that they would call a general strike for Mooney and Billings. We also hoped that they would begin steps to reorganize the labor movement along industrial union lines. My hopes were high and I decided to join them. So I shipped out of Seattle as second cook on the Great Northern Railroad for a two-day run to Billings, Montana, where I intended to catch a cattle train to Chicago.

A Great Northern cook's day seemed never to end. I made fires at 4:30 a.m., cleaned up at night and prepared simple dishes in between. But I gave up the Chicago trip when I learned in Billings that our shipyard strike for higher wages would soon begin. I returned in the kitchen to Seattle, and was glad I did. Our delegates were out-

maneuvered in Chicago. The Mooney conference was suddenly adjourned amid cries of protest after calling a strike for the Fourth of July—a distant and meaningless date.

Soldiers and Workers Unite

I did my first outdoor speaking a day or two later. My audience was made up of discharged soldiers with almost empty pockets. (I had just \$18 when I left Camp Lewis.) The bosses were promising them jobs in the shipyards during the coming strike, and some metal trades leaders were worried. So a number of veterans in the unions were recruited to appeal to their buddies at street meetings. My stand was on the skid road. A union leader always made the main speech. Then I would mount the box in uniform, tell some jokes about the mud and brass at Lewis, and end by saying that we veterans stood shoulder to shoulder with our brothers in the yards. That got a good hand and I was off the box in five minutes.

My buddies didn't disappoint us. No scabs were in sight when the yards shut down on January 21, 1919. Solidarity was 100 per cent as 30,000 men came out in Seattle and 15,000 more in Tacoma. A third of the government's shipbuilding program was now tied up by demands for wage increases.

We felt very strong. But the war against a rival empire was over. The capitalists were swollen with war profits and a new war—against labor—was on. The workers saw that more pressure was needed. And demands for a general strike—in support of the shipyard workers—swept through the union halls.

These demands came first from the shipyard unions. They were backed by IWW's and other Left-wingers, who thought the general strike was labor's ultimate weapon. But they were also supported by many workers in non-striking trades, who feared that their wages would sink if the shipyard workers went down.

These non-striking workers would tip the balance in a general strike vote. And I was asked to write a leaflet that the metal trades leaders wanted to circulate among other unions. The request came through Hulet Wells, the former CLU president. I drafted a simple solidarity appeal for united strike action, and it was widely distributed.

The general strike tide was overwhelming. The popular *Union Record*, with a daily circulation of 50,000, was behind it. Conservatives were cried down at the CLU meeting. And I heard only one "No" when the Council referred the decision to a rank-and-file referendum. The strike was quickly endorsed by big majorities in almost all the 110 local unions. A General Strike Committee of three mem-

bers from each local was selected. A 15-man executive was chosen. And the strike was set for 10 a.m., Thursday, February 6.

There were daily mass meetings as the deadline approached. The masses believed that the government must yield, and I heard only one speaker express any fears. That was David Burgess, a leader of the Socialist Labor Party, which was still a current in the workers' movement. He told us that he was opposed to a general strike because "it will spread over the country. If it spreads over the country, capitalism will collapse. If capitalism collapses we will find the workers unorganized and chaos will follow."

Burgess was expressing the SLP's lack of confidence in the working class. But he was also voicing an illusion held by many other radicals, who did not have his fears. The illusion was that other cities were ready to follow Seattle's example.

Some rich people were fleeing in panic meanwhile. And I was reminded of Jack London's general strike story, "The Dream of Debs," by a scene in a bookstore an hour before the strike deadline. An elderly man with a slick periodical in one hand and a cane in the other was rushing out as I came in. The store manager, a Mrs. Engel, was laughing as she told me that the gentleman grabbed a *Saturday Evening Post* and gasped, "I'm going away; they say there'll be a revolution."

The runaway may have been reading the headlines about "Reds" and "Revolution" in the *Seattle Times* and other papers. The *Times* was owned by "Colonel" Blethen, an apopleptic redbaiter, who had incited several vigilante attacks against workers. His presses were running off another anti-labor edition behind plate glass windows at street level just before the deadline. He had boasted that Seattle workers would not answer a general strike call. And my colleague Joe Pass and I enjoyed watching his presses come to a stop at the stroke of ten.

The General Strike Begins

The first general strike in U.S. history had begun. Sixty-five thousand workers—a quarter of the population of this highly unionized city—were going out together. Street cars were rolling to the barn. Horses were being stabled. Painters were coming down from scaffolds. Cooks were taking off their aprons. Newsboys were covering their stands. Workers were leaving factories. And Seattle became extraordinarily quiet.

The entire working class was united, including the Japanese in the hotels and restaurants. There were 10,000 Japanese in Seattle. They

were outrageously barred from the AFL by the international unions. But they joined the general strike. And I'm still thrilled when I reread the letter that the independent Japanese Labor Association sent to the Central Labor Council with a financial contribution. The letter told Secretary James Duncan that "we laborers throughout the world have a similar position against the capitalists" and "there should be no border for the laborer and we should do our duty . . . to help win this fight."

All restaurants were on strike but no one was hungry. The strike committee opened up 21 cafeterias and 35 milk stations. And I enjoyed good beefstew meals for 25 cents. That was a preferential rate to AFL and IWW members. Others paid 35 cents. But no penniless man was turned away.

Nothing moved without labor sanction. But health and public safety were protected. Hospitals were serviced. Pharmacists mixed pills while other drugstore employees were on strike. Perishable garbage was collected by wagons, marked "Exempted by Strike Committee." City lights blazed at night. Hundreds of labor guards patrolled the streets. The IWW closed all bootleg joints on skid road. And it was clear that labor was more efficient than the city hall politicians.

Seattle was never more peaceful. The average number of arrests for drunkenness and other minor offenses dropped from about 100 a day to 30. And the commanding general, whom President Wilson sent in, admitted that he never saw such an orderly city.

Nevertheless no U.S. labor story was ever more distorted. The press gave the impression that blood was about to flow in the streets. The diseased imagination of a *Saturday Evening Post* writer had Lenin and Trotsky meeting in Seattle in 1917 and planning the moves that brought the general strike. Mayor Ole Hanson made a fortune with his Chamber of Commerce lectures on the Seattle "Revolution." And Theodore Draper in his *Roots of American Communism* called our strike "one of a series of big, unusually violent strikes."

Labor Discipline High

These were unprincipled inventions. The general strike was a peaceful demonstration in support of the shipyard workers. There was revolutionary thinking in Seattle, but no attempt at "revolution." The working class showed its ability to run municipal affairs, but left City Hall alone. Labor discipline was high. And this discipline was not upset by the presence of more than 1,000 troops in the city, the sight of machine guns near the Labor Temple, and the strutting of

upper-class university students in ROTC uniforms.

More difficulty came from a provocateur in our own ranks, who threatened to shut the city light plant and plunge Seattle into darkness. His threats gave much help to anti-labor propagandists. This provocateur was Leon Green, the business agent of Electrical Workers Local 77. Green posed as an ultra-Leftist, but behaved like an enemy plant, and disappeared overnight when his policies were rejected. We next heard of him in 1923 when the Chicago Retail Clerks Union expelled its business agent, Leon Green, on charges of taking \$3,000 in bribes from the bosses.

Our biggest difficulties came because no time limit was set for the solidarity demonstration. Our leaders had no general strike experience to guide them. They thought that a time limit would be a sign of weakness. But by Saturday—the third day—it was clear that no early settlement was likely. Submarine sinkings had stopped. The government was in no hurry for ships. International union officials were threatening to lift Seattle charters. A break in our ranks developed. The street carmen, most of the teamsters and several smaller groups went back. The backsliders came out again in response to a solidarity appeal. But on Monday the committee voted to end this historic walkout the next day. The shipyard strike continued, but America's first general strike was over on Tuesday noon, February 11, after five days.

Our immediate aims were not gained. But the workers weren't beaten. And I agree with Harvey O'Connor that . . . "For the majority of Seattle unions there was no sense of defeat. They had demonstrated their solidarity with their brothers in the yards, and the memory of the great days when labor had shown its strength glowed in their minds." (From *Revolution in Seattle*.)

I left soon after to visit my mother, who had lost her two older sons. But I kept in touch with Seattle and learned that the shipyard workers did not win their long strike. The odds were too heavy in an industry that was about to die.

But solidarity remained high all that year. The longshoremen left their mark on international labor history by stopping Kolchak's rifles. And Seattle's AFL supported the IWW loggers in a framed murder trial the next winter. The loggers had asserted the right of self-defense when American Legionnaires attacked their union hall in Centralia, Washington, and four invaders lost their lives. But one logger was lynched and seven others were imprisoned for terms of 25 to 40 years. Nevertheless, organized labor can be proud that it put its internal differences aside and united against the common enemy.

Respect for the Rank and File

The tide of labor militancy ebbed after the shipyards closed down and thousands of advanced workers left Puget Sound. But the inspiration of that solidarity era is with me still.

I learned to respect the strength and common sense of rank-and-file workers most of all. I also discovered that the shopworn idea that the masses are bound to become more conservative during boom times made no sense in Seattle during the war boom. (The companion idea that it was impossible to build mass unions during depressions was refuted in the 1930's.)

Looking back to 1918-1919 I find that we had some favorable conditions as compared to the situation today. But today's fighters also have some advantages as well. In 1918-1919 the radical forces had a strong working class base in Seattle. That was a precious asset. But we were handicapped because our allies in the city itself were few. We had friends among the poor farmers, who were numerous then. But Seattle's middle class kept off the firing line. The student movement that plays a big role in today's struggles for peace and civil rights was then very weak. The teachers had no trade union, and my friend Bickel was fired for his part in the general strike.

The most important ally that we lacked, however, was the Negro people's democratic revolution. The mighty force of the Negro people has put our oppressors on the defensive. The lack of this alliance was a grave weakness in 1918-1919. No major attempt was made to overcome this weakness until the Communists came on the scene. Then the struggles to save the Scottsboro Boys and other victims of racism became international issues. And William L. Patterson and other Communists became pioneers in the Negro people's revolution.

The radical workers of the pre-Communist Party era made many mistakes as the result of syndicalist thinking. This thinking dominated the IWW and influenced the revolutionary wing of the Socialist Party. The syndicalists thought that the working class could take power by defeating the employers in economic struggles, while bypassing the capitalist state. This erroneous thinking was especially damaging when workers were framed by the police and the courts of the government they tried to bypass. And the Communist Party deserves major credit for defeating the syndicalist philosophy in the labor movement.

I have seen the Communist Party tirelessly working for unity of all the oppressed against their oppressors since its birth in September, 1919. And it has kept its ultimate goal of socialism in sight through the years.

Changes in the Constitution of the Communist Party, U.S.A.

The 18th Convention of the CPUSA unanimously adopted a new Constitution regulating its affairs. There were important differences of opinion on a number of questions in the Constitution Committee which I will discuss, but these were resolved in a principled way. The draft which was submitted by the National Committee to the Convention delegates already contained new sections improving democracy and centralism. The Convention Constitution Committee strengthened the draft still further in these areas. There are still some formulations which are open to misunderstanding as I will point out, but in the main the Constitution marks a considerable advance in shaping a more democratic document.

The Principle of Democratic Centralism

The fundamental features of democratic centralism, which is the guiding principle of organization of the Party are spelled out in the Constitution. The Communist Party was and is the most democratic political organization in the country. The bourgeois concept of democratic centralism as meaning arbitrary decisions from above and passive obedience from below, and the stifling of all free discussion, has nothing in common with reality. The Party seeks to promote a thinking membership who speak their thoughts, give their views on policies and practices, criticize shortcomings, mistakes and weaknesses in work and leadership, and who make proposals for changes in sensible, business-like ways.

Only by means of democracy can the Party draw on the full strength, discipline and enthusiasm of the membership and on the working people it seeks to mobilize. Only by means of centralized leadership can it achieve the unity of will and action essential for a vanguard organization.

Such unity of action is impossible without a degree of authority of centralized leadership. Both democracy and centralism are essential for the achievement of socialism. These are not mutually exclusive but are complementary to each other. That is why Engels wrote that

it is absurd "to speak of the principle of autonomy as being absolutely good."

In the six-year period since the 17th Convention there has been a strengthening of the Party and an improvement in its methods of work. Nonetheless, there has been a continuation of weaknesses in both aspects of democratic-centralism.

Overcentralization and bureaucratic tendencies of leadership, I believe, have been evident in a number of ways: in the initiation by leadership of new basic policies on several occasions without adequate consultation with district leaderships and with the membership; in the continuation of the habit of personal in place of collective work, resulting often in the absence or weakness of committees for important spheres of work; in tendencies to allow one or a few people to do everything; and in the practice of forming committees with people already absorbed in many other tasks.

Further, in my opinion, these weaknesses have been evident in inadequate criticism and self-criticism by leadership. They have been displayed also in poor preparation of meetings of leading bodies and in bad procedures and time-arrangements of such meetings, including the loading of the order of business—practices which make difficult or impossible the effective participation of committee members in the making of policies. There has also been little reporting on what leadership has done and opportunities for members of leading committees to review and control the work of leadership. Finally, I think, there had been too little discussion and exchange of views and debate on pressing new problems, including organized discussion of differences of opinion which are inevitable in a living party.

On the other hand, it seems to me, there have been federalist and anti-centralization tendencies expressed—more in practice than in theory—in opposition to national policies and decisions; in insufficient regard by some districts for plans and targets set for strengthening the press, dues collections, membership drives and other aims mutually agreed upon; also in tendencies to discuss questions of general policy in an unorganized and at times in an undisciplined way without involving national leadership. Such tendencies are expressed as well in leanings among some members to elevate the individual above the collective—to consider it necessary for everyone to agree to a decision before it can be put into effect—which means to develop the "cult of the minority" above the majority.

These shortcomings hamper the full mobilization of the party in action and reflect in part, in my opinion, the semi-anarchist ideas of

so-called "participatory democracy" which are present in some sections of the Left, and which I will discuss in a later article.

The 18th Convention sought not only to correct these weaknesses as far as constitutional procedures make this possible, but also to broaden further the rights and duties of Party membership as required by the new people's upsurge in the country so that the membership can play a more active role in the fight for peace, Negro rights and socialism.

Let us see what changes were made.

Fighting National Oppression and Discrimination

Article VI, Section 2 of the Constitution was strengthened in relation to the fight against racial and national discrimination. This duty was always present in the Party Constitution. It now is underscored that this fight must be intensified regarding the Negro people and all other national minorities.

The section now reads:

It shall be the obligation of all Party members to struggle against all forms of national oppression, national chauvinism, discrimination and segregation, against all ideological influences and practices of "racial" theories, such as white chauvinism and anti-Semitism. It shall be the duty of all Party members to fight for the full social, political and economic equality of the Negro people and promote the unity of the Negro and white people as essential for the advancement of their common interests.

It shall be the obligation of all Party members to fight for social, political and economic equality for the Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, American Indians and other oppressed national minorities in the United States.

On the Election of Officers

The new Constitution provides that state and national officers shall be elected by the State and National *Committees* respectively to which they are responsible. This had always been the practice of the Party. It was changed by the 16th Convention and the change was retained by the 17th Convention, which provided that the Convention elect the officers. Seemingly this was more democratic because the officers were directly elected by the delegates. Actually it weakened democratic centralism in two respects:

First, it placed the officers in a special category. The Constitution stated that the officers were responsible and subordinate to committees, but generally an officer is responsible to the body that elects

him. It is difficult for the National Committee, which "is the highest authority between conventions," to exercise full authority and control over officers when their authority comes from the convention and not the committee. The same is true for the State Committees.

Further, it impaired collective work. In the pressure of work, and because of bad habits, important decisions are often made by the officers without consulting the leading committees or the various committees set up for different areas of work. As a result, these Committees often languish for lack of power. Individual responsibility and initiative are absolutely essential, but they should not replace collective work in the daily conduct of affairs.

Criticism

In the section on the rights of members a new paragraph in Article VI, Section I, was added which states:

Members may criticize the work of all leading committees and individual leaders, irrespective of the positions they hold, for shortcomings, errors or unbecoming conduct provided it is done in appropriate Party meetings, conferences, conventions or other Party bodies. Any officer who interferes with this right of criticism shall be subject to discipline.

Any member may address a question or statement to a leading committee. Leading committees must respond as promptly as possible.

This is important since democratic centralism, as Lenin described it in brief terms, means "freedom of discussion and unity of action." It is also essential because in the past criticism by the membership was often wrongly viewed as being limited to the preconvention discussion period. This provision makes explicit what has been a growing practice, that year-round criticism is permissible and essential, and penalizes any attempt to interfere with this right. Criticism and self-criticism are fundamental methods of correcting weaknesses and mistakes. A party and its leadership which fail systematically to practice self-criticism cannot benefit from that party's work, nor can they learn the masses' views and attitudes toward their policies.

Every organization, and especially a working-class organization, needs a stable body of leaders. The Party is a unity of leaders, leading bodies and members. Leaders necessarily have special tasks, responsibilities and authority in the fulfillment of work. These must be respected. But in terms of basic rights and duties all members, irrespective of their posts, are equal. There are no two disciplines in the Communist Party.

Criticism and self-criticism are a means of aiding the work of the whole Party—of leaders and leading bodies. It is also a weapon against the menace of bureaucracy, arrogance and conceit among leaders which are generated by the strong capitalist environment. As the 18th Convention's Resolution on Party Organization stated, "All too often bureaucracy replaces the democratic procedures which are necessary for a Communist Party. . . . The fight for democratic centralism against bureaucratic tendencies is an integral part of the struggle for the legality and legitimacy of the Party."

The purpose of criticism is to correct, not destroy. Its form should be, as the Italian comrades say, "serene and frank" and it should express the sum total of the picture—positive as well as negative. Mistakes are inevitable for a party of action. The thing is to make little ones and to correct them quickly. Also, in explaining a mistake, not only *what* was wrong should be stated but also *why* it was wrong, and proposals for its correction should be offered.

Also it is important that members and leaders listen to critical views, not only with an attentive ear but with an open mind, trying to discern what is new and correct in the criticism, even if it be a mere fragment of what is said. Suppression of criticism, which is impermissible, may often be indirect. It takes the form of seizing upon some wrong word or phrase or the wrong tone of the criticism to reject and denounce it. Inexperienced members may not always express themselves aptly, theoretically or practically. The thing is to find out what they mean, what they are seeking to correct.

On Making of Policy

The new Constitution retained the provisions which call for the fullest possible participation by the lower bodies and the membership in the making of policy, particularly where new major policies are adopted or old ones changed. These are to be found in various sections of the Constitution, most specifically in Article V, Section 10 and in Article VI, Sections 3 and 4.

To these were added several important new paragraphs as a result of discussions in the Constitution Committee, which are now to be found in Section 10 of Article VI:

The National Committee and the State Committee shall encourage the widest discussion by the membership of all questions of theory and general line of Party policy at all times and shall provide organs for the implementation of such discussions provided that in the opinion of the National Committee such discussions do

not hinder or impede the execution of Party policy and decisions or weaken the unity of the Party in action.

Also the following paragraph was added in the same section:

In the discussion and debate on major changes of policy or in the formulation of new major policies, all members of the National Committee have the free and full right to express their individual opinions in meetings, conferences or other Party bodies or in the organs used for such discussions.

Where a continuing discussion is found necessary, the same conditions of free discussion shall prevail until a decision is arrived at. In such discussion, the National Committee shall inform the membership of the problems and issues involved, shall distribute the pertinent documents and other material in good time. Also whenever at least one-third of the National Committee requests it, the National Committee shall make known to the membership differences or conflicting views on proposed policy in the National Committee.

The purpose of these new paragraphs is to improve the participation of the whole Party—members and leaders—in the solution of new problems in the class struggle, to stimulate independent thinking of the membership and leadership and to help them display greater political initiative in the people's organizations and movements.

Open discussion of political and tactical problems plays a decisive role in the development of independent political initiative and should be encouraged in every way. Also it helps the Party to engage in dialogue with non-Party people, which is indispensable in our ideological work at the present time.

This does not mean that any member, or any state leadership, can start discussions of any Party policy on their own. It must be done within the context of the general political line of the Party. Also, this section does not mean that decisions calling for action can, in the name of discussion, be debated after a discussion has already taken place and a decision has been arrived at. To assure that this shall not be done, the limitation was placed in the above new paragraph that "*in the opinion of the National Committee such discussions do not hinder or impede the execution of Party policy and decisions or weaken the unity of the Party in action.*"

What is intended is not discussion of party policy in action, of definite actions under way, but discussion of theories, of issues not yet resolved, or of new problems in the sphere of politics, economics or

philosophy, such as questions of independent political action, the composition of the working class, problems facing the labor movement, attitudes to leadership of the trade unions (which was only partially discussed at the Convention), the Jewish question (which the Party is currently discussing), new problems facing the Negro freedom movement, and so on.

This will be evident in discussing the formulation of the provisions on the "right of dissent."

Right of Dissent

The right of members to dissent from majority decisions, or from decisions of higher bodies was stated in previous constitutions, and was retained and further clarified in the present document. The right of dissent means the right to state one's disagreement with a decision or, in the course of a discussion, to disagree with a viewpoint put forward by higher bodies, and the right of appeal to change a policy or an action to upper levels of leadership, up to and including the National Convention.

Some members in the Constitution Committee felt this was not adequate and suggested that the section of the old Constitution be restated which granted the right of officers and members to discuss "dissenting views in Party publications" after a decision was made. This section of the old Constitution was never applied and could not be applied without undermining decisions already arrived at.

It is one thing to express one's disagreement with a decision or policy and to have the right to appeal a decision as far as the National Convention. It is another thing to debate and express opposing views after the decision has been made and while it is being carried out. To allow the latter would turn the Party into a debating society, instead of a party of action. No union would allow any opposing action of its members to a strike voted upon by the union while it is taking place. That is rightly viewed as scabbing.

The question was raised in the Constitution Committee, "What harm can public discussion opposing a decision do. Ideas are always good." Not all ideas are good. Some are very harmful. But exchange of views and discussion is good and is provided for. Organization without ideas is absurd. But they must aid action, not nullify it. Consider an election campaign. The Party after a discussion decides, say, to put up an independent candidate. Some oppose it. Would not a polemic in the Party press aimed at proving that the decision was wrong, useless, and harmful and what not, affect the

hard job of signature getting and other activities? What kind of Communist Party would it be where one part of the membership supports a decision while another part opposes it publicly and otherwise. Such discussions of policy can only paralyze the Party organization and hurt the peoples' movement. Experience has repeatedly proven this.

A glaring example of this is the conduct of the Socialist Party during the 1964 election campaign. At the height of the contest, the pages of its bi-weekly newspaper *New America* were devoted to a heated debate over the question of whether or not Johnson should be endorsed. The result was that the Socialist Party played no part, one way or the other, in the campaign.

Marx once said: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it." How can it be changed if the Party is unable to exert its united strength, if it is divided in action, some pulling one way and others in another?

Is a majority always right, ask those who want to continue discussion after a decision is made? No. A minority or even a single individual may be right and the majority may be wrong. That is why democratic discussion takes place. There is ample opportunity for minority views to influence the majority or be influenced by it during the discussion prior to decision. There are also other ways, as indicated, for dissent to be expressed. But it would be wrong for a minority to carry its views outside of its own club or committee or engage in public discussion after a decision is made, for to do so would undermine the unity and effectiveness of the Party. If that were allowed, then the majority would become impotent and could function only at the will of the minority.

Lenin gave his views on the relationship between *freedom to criticize* or *dissent and unity of action* in a discussion of differences regarding election policy. He wrote:

Let us take an example. The Congress [of the Party] decided that the Party should take part in the Duma elections. Taking part in elections is a very definite action. During elections . . . no member of the Party *anywhere* has any right whatever to call upon the people to *abstain from voting*; nor can "criticism" of the decision to take part in the elections be tolerated during this period, for it would in fact jeopardize success in the election campaign. *Before* elections have been announced, however, Party members *everywhere* have the perfect right to *criticize* the decision to take part in elections. Of course, the application of this principle in practice will sometimes give rise to disputes and misunderstandings; but *only*

on the basis of *this* principle can *all* disputes and misunderstandings be settled honorably for the Party. . . .

The principle of democratic centralism and autonomy for local organizations implies universal and full *freedom to criticize* so long as this does not disturb the unity of a *definite action*; it rules out *all* criticism which disrupts or makes difficult the *unity* of an action decided on by the Party. (All emphasis by Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 443.)

For the same reason a Communist Party cannot allow factions. In capitalist parties, factions and groups are inevitable because they contain different and conflicting class strata. This is not the case in a Communist Party, which is a working class party in which, though differing opinions may exist, these can be resolved by democratic ideological discussion and debate. Factions or groups fragmentize a party, prevent real objective debate and paralyze its activities. They injure the very fiber of the organization.

Such, then, are the main changes in the Constitution. It was felt in the Constitutional Committee that it would be good to also have by-laws, standing rules of operation regarding how conventions shall be prepared, how the elections shall take place, etc. But time did not permit recommendations on these matters. Also, there were some other points in the Constitution requiring further consideration, which were left to the new National Committee.

No constitution is better than the persons applying it, and even the best constitution can remain a mere piece of paper. That is true of policies and decisions generally. But this only means that the leadership must zealously enforce the Constitution, must not allow its violation by any member or leader. Moreover, the greater the understanding of the membership of Marxism-Leninism, the closer the ties with the masses, the greater its mass work, the more effective the democracy and centralism of the organization.

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