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Editorial Comment

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA: REALITY AND ILLUSION

Tom Foley

60c

TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Editorial Comment*

The 1968 Presidential Elections 1

*Claude Lightfoot*

The Civil War and Black Liberation Today 12

*Herbert Aptheker*

Law and Order: Lies and Hypocrisy 25

*Zoltan Komocsin*

The Class Approach and Internationalism 31

*Tom Foley*

Czechoslovakia: Reality and Illusion 39

DISCUSSION

*Albert J. Lima*

Opportunism in the Trade Unions and  
The Struggle for Peace 48

*Carl Bloice*

On Black Self-Determination 59

BOOK REVIEWS

*Sidney Finkelstein*

A Theoretical Work of Special Merit 61

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# The 1968 Presidential Elections

The outcome of the 1968 Presidential elections reflected the deep frustrations, anxieties and divisions that prevail among vast sections of our people. The turbulent struggles of recent years point up the depth of discontent that has been sweeping the country. Millions were looking for a change in Washington. They sought a government that would heed the rising demand for peace in Vietnam; that would do something to alleviate the poverty in the ghettos; halt the growing decay of the cities; reduce the burdensome taxes and runaway prices; and help to stem the racism that is threatening to polarize the nation.

But this was not to be. Once again the people were offered "politics-as-usual" candidates, handpicked by the political bosses, subservient to the monopoly ruling class that controls the economic and political life of the country. There was no real choice for the majority of the people between the Republican Richard M. Nixon, the Democrat Hubert H. Humphrey and the racist George C. Wallace of the newly formed, neo-fascist American Independent Party.

## *How the Vote Went*

The sharply divided vote for the Presidential candidates confirmed this dissatisfaction. Of the nearly 72,000,000 votes cast, Richard Nixon received 31,134,760 or 43.5 percent, Hubert H. Humphrey 30,818,056 or 43 per cent and George Wallace 9,687,607 or 13.5 per cent. Nixon squeezed through by the slim margin of 316,704 votes, to become President-elect by slightly more than two-fifths of the popular vote.

As many analysts pointed out, Nixon emerged as the President of the white, Protestant, middle-class voter. The very poor, the Negroes, the majority of organized workers and the young intellectuals did not vote for Nixon. The Negro, Puerto Rican, Mexican American and Jewish voters went heavily Democratic, in comparable numbers to the Johnson landslide of 1964. A study of selected precincts in scattered black communities, in both North and South, showed that 85 to 99 per cent of the vote went to Humphrey. This sweeping unity was by no means a vote of confidence in Humphrey; it was an expression of the widespread apprehension that the Nixon-Agnew team would intensify racist oppression. Turning out in especially large numbers in the South—with one million voting for the first time in a Presidential election—the Negro voters were determined to defeat the arch racist, George Wallace.

While Nixon carried the small towns, rural and suburban communities he failed to carry a single major city. At a time when the deterioration of the cities has reached crisis proportions, this opposi-

tion to Nixon expressed the fear that his administration would sharply reduce the existing limited federal funds for the cities and wipe out the far from adequate anti-poverty and slum clearance projects. Humphrey also received the votes of the majority of low-income whites (except in the South) and held the support of 56-60 per cent of organized labor.

The predicted massive swing to Wallace did not materialize due primarily to the vigorous campaign of organized labor which undercut his support among industrial workers. But Wallace carried the Deep South—the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Louisiana and Arkansas—receiving half of his total vote in the eleven states of the Old Confederacy. In the border states his vote averaged 15 per cent, while in the North and West it varied from a low of 1 per cent in Hawaii and Pennsylvania to some 12 per cent in Indiana and Ohio.

By combining the votes of Nixon and Wallace, some commentators concluded that the majority of the electorate expressed preference for conservatism and had moved substantially to the Right. But this is in complete contradiction to the present temper of the people displayed in the massive democratic upsurge that has characterized the American scene.

#### *Peace—The Central Issue of the Campaign*

No one will deny that the overriding issue, that largely shaped the pattern of the electoral struggle, was that of ending the genocidal war in Vietnam. Johnson's callous disregard of the 1964 mandate, when he won the election over Barry Goldwater by the largest plurality in history, enraged and embittered increasing numbers of the people in all walks of life. The depth of the opposition to the Vietnam war was dramatized when the practically unknown Senator from Minnesota, Eugene McCarthy, won in the New Hampshire primaries early in March. His victory became the catalyst for a number of developments that changed the whole spectrum of the election campaign. Only days thereafter Senator Robert F. Kennedy threw his hat into the ring. And on March 31, correctly interpreting the signals, Johnson announced that he had decided to restrict the bombing of North Vietnam to the area below the 20th parallel and somberly informed the country that he was withdrawing from the race.

Even though McCarthy and Kennedy (until the latter's assassination on the night of his victory in the California primaries) polled close to 80 per cent of the Democratic vote in the state primaries, the Johnson Administration, in collusion with the political bosses, were determined to pick their own man. The choice was Johnson's Vice President, Hubert H. Humphrey. His nomination by the Democratic National Convention was a foregone conclusion.

While the political bosses had it sewed up for Humphrey, the Democratic Convention was anything but smooth sailing. It was the

most turbulent convention in history. The Kennedy and McCarthy delegates elected in the primaries, joined by most of the Negro delegates, confronted the machine-picked delegates on every issue and fought a valiant battle. They forced the seating of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party delegation and won 50 per cent of the Georgia vote for the delegation led by the young Negro legislator from that state, Julian Bond. Although they lost in the end, they rolled up a substantial vote for a peace plank calling for an unconditional halt to the bombing of North Vietnam against the plank dictated by Johnson. They refused to give a unanimous vote to Hubert Humphrey when he won the nomination on the first ballot.

The once united Democratic Party was in shambles. The utter disregard of the primary results, the intimidation and tight security within the convention hall, the indiscriminate, brutal violence of the Chicago police against the peace demonstrators on the outside, the manhandling of newspapermen and the arrest of several delegates, angered scores of delegates and large sections of the people.

There appeared to be little chance that Humphrey could be elected. For weeks, the polls showed Nixon leading by 10-15 per cent, and Wallace getting at least 24 per cent of the vote—a good portion from blue collar workers who normally voted Democratic.

A number of factors transformed this apparent runaway election into a tight race. There was the well-organized campaign of the labor movement against Wallace; the speech of Humphrey on September 30 promising a halt to the bombing if Hanoi would recognize the Demilitarized Zone; the declaration of Nixon that he would propose a multi-billion dollar arms program to assure clear-cut military superiority; and, especially, the Johnson announcement on November 1, that all bombing over Vietnam was to be halted. At the last minute, too, many McCarthy and Kennedy supporters reluctantly gave their vote to Humphrey as against Nixon or Wallace.

It has been charged that the Johnny-come-lately halt in the bombing was an election maneuver. This is true, of course. But the very fact that the Johnson Administration felt impelled to take this step is a confirmation that an openly hawkish candidate could not hope to win the elections. This explains why every Presidential candidate, including George Wallace, pledged peace in Vietnam. Nixon, who had often criticized Johnson for his failure to utilize the massive military powers of the country to achieve victory, had to placate the peace aspirations of the people by supporting the peace talks. Under the pretext that he did not want to jeopardize the peace talks, he would not spell out his Vietnam stand. Even George Wallace promised peace. But he was quick to add that should negotiations fail he would turn the war over to the generals to make short shrift of it. There can be no question that Wallace support declined when he selected General Curtis LeMay as his running mate. The general embarrassed

even Wallace when he criticized the "phobia" against the use of nuclear weapons and bluntly told his first audience that he would not hesitate to use them in Vietnam to win the war.

That the election results do not signify a shift to the Right also becomes evident in the votes for Congressmen and Senators. Perhaps in no previous election have American citizens split their vote on such a broad scale. Generally, the voters displayed a high degree of independence and selectivity, especially where there was a clear choice between a reactionary and a pro-peace, pro-labor or pro-civil rights candidate. Thus J. William Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and an outstanding opponent of the war in Vietnam, was reelected while his state went to Wallace and elected the Republican Winthrop Rockefeller as Governor. George McGovern in South Dakota, Frank Church in Idaho and Gaylord Nelson in Wisconsin—states won by Nixon—were reelected handily even though it had been predicted they would go down to defeat should the states go to Nixon. Harold Hughes in Iowa, running for the Senate for the first time, was elected while his state went heavily for Nixon. Of special significance was the election of Alan Cranston in California, who defeated the ultra-reactionary Max Rafferty. The latter two balance off the defeat of Wayne Morse in Oregon—perhaps the most vocal opponent of the war in Vietnam—and that of Joseph Clark in Pennsylvania. It is unfortunate that a man like Paul O'Dwyer, long a defender of the rights of labor and an ardent peace advocate, failed to win his race for the Senate in New York state.

Reaction was considerably bolstered by the return to the Senate of Barry Goldwater, who remains the darling of the ultra-Right. However, despite the fact that the Republicans gained five seats, the general complexion of the Senate remains the same.

The Republican Party scored a net gain of four seats in the House of Representatives, far less than had been expected. All but one of the Congressmen who had taken a peace stand were reelected, several of the new Congressmen elected had been campaigners for McCarthy or Kennedy, and three additional Negro Congressmen were elected, including Mrs. Shirley Chisholm from New York, who will be the first Negro woman to sit in Congress.

It must not be forgotten, however that the Republicans scored a net gain of 47 seats in the House in 1966 and that the 90th Congress had stymied much needed social legislation. It can be expected, therefore, that the coalition of reactionary Republicans and Southern Dixiecrats will be a formidable obstacle to the enactment of legislation sought by the people.

Despite the fact that Wallace carried the Deep South, there was a notable increase in the election of Negroes to state legislatures and other elective offices in several of the Southern states. Florida and North Carolina will have their first Negro legislators since the end of

the 19th century; two legislators will sit in the Tennessee Senate for the first time; three new Negro legislators have been added in Georgia. At least half of the local offices won were in Mississippi and Alabama—where the most blatant violations of the right to vote have taken place. These gains, however, fall far short of equality in representation.

### *The Neo-Fascist Threat of the Wallace Movement*

Although Wallace did not secure the large vote originally predicted there is no ground for complacency in the fact that he secured close to ten million votes. The Wallace strategy was geared to winning the white supremacist strongholds in the South, with the promise of maintaining inviolate these sanctuaries of black oppression, and to extend his base in all states by assiduously exploiting the racist prejudices in white communities and demagogically playing upon the real discontent and anxieties that did exist.

The Wallace campaign was an out-and-out racist campaign. Shrewd politician that he is, he refrained from employing his Southern epithets to express overtly his contempt for the Negro; he did not repeat his rallying cry: "Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." Nor did he want to be reminded that he once stood in the doorway of the University of Alabama to bar the admission of Negro students. On the contrary, he constantly assured his audiences that he was "no racist."

But Wallace's incessant hammering on "law and order," consciously directed to inflame racist prejudices and to identify the struggle for equality with crime and violence in the streets, was grasped by all who heard him. In the name of "law and order" he sought to reverse all civil rights legislation; to reestablish in law the "right" to discriminate against the black people; to restore school segregation; to reinstate all discriminatory bars in restaurants, hotels, on buses and railroads; to wipe out even the insignificant progress toward permitting the Negro to live where he chooses. He exploited the existing fears by attributing the prevalent increase in crime and the absence of safety in the streets to the "violence and crimes" of black people. Here is a sample to show how he manipulated this issue:

If we were President today, you wouldn't get stabbed or raped in the shadow of the White House, even if we had to call out 30,000 troops and equip them with 2-foot long bayonets and station them every few feet apart. . . . That's right, we gonna have a police state for folks who burn the cities down. They aren't gonna burn any more cities. (*Newsweek*, September 16, 1968.)

And he aroused his audience to a frenzy when he declared: "Let the police run this country for a year or two and there wouldn't be any

riots." The big stick and a police state is what Wallace offered to suppress the smoldering rage in the black ghettos in the drive to push the Negro back into "his place."

Let there be no mistake about it, racism is a major problem in the United States, poisoning the minds of millions upon millions of whites who have swallowed hook, line and sinker all the vile myths of white supremacy. Without a relentless struggle against racism, the weapon of "divide and conquer" which worked for Hitler, can become the weapon of the ultra-Right to secure a social base for fascism in the United States.

At the same time Wallace exploited real grievances. He pretended to speak for the "little man" and promised to eliminate the burdensome taxes, ease inflation, get rid of the bureaucrats and make the financiers foot the bill. And many "little people" believed him. They were not aware that as Governor of Alabama, Wallace increased the sales tax on food to six per cent, boosted the tax on beer and tobacco, depriving the "little man" of even such minor pleasures; pushed through a law which declared that corporation income taxes could not be raised without a constitutional amendment; killed all proposals for a minimum wage law and employed every union-busting device to prevent organization of the unorganized.

The ramified web of ultra-Right organizations—from the White Citizens Council to the Ku Klux Klan to the John Birch Society and the vigilante Minute Men—got a new lease on life with the Wallace campaign. In a number of states they have gathered to outline how the American Independent Party will participate in all coming elections. This party plans to hold a convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma, early in February, to outline its future strategy. Thus, with a foothold in all 50 states, the Wallace movement becomes a serious fascist threat that cannot be ignored.

### *No Meaningful Alternative*

Clearly, the main lesson of the Presidential elections is that the people had no meaningful alternative around which to rally. Thwarted by the ruling elite at the Democratic Convention, the progressive forces inside and outside the Democratic Party were by then too fragmented to come forward with an independent coalition ticket and a positive platform that could provide such an alternative.

When the new Politics Convention was held in September, 1967, it was generally expected that it would take the initial steps to unfold a broad movement around an independent Presidential ticket. The several thousand delegates in attendance who came in the main as individuals proved unable to resolve the differences that arose among them on the course to be pursued in 1968, and the convention failed to emerge with any national ticket.

Later, many delegates who had attended the convention helped to establish Peace and Freedom or Freedom and Peace parties in a number of states, including California and New York, putting forward state Presidential tickets headed either by the black militant Eldridge Cleaver or by the freedom fighter Dick Gregory. The appearance of these parties on the American political scene was important in itself. But the fact that they put forward Negro candidates to head their tickets helped to dramatize the urgency of maximum unity of black and white if any progress is to be made in resolving the grave crisis problems within the country.

However, these parties never spread into all of the 50 states and fell short of becoming a nation-wide movement. They appealed in the main to a more militant, radical audience and conducted only limited activity among the general mass of the Negro people and of organized labor. It is not surprising, therefore, that the tickets headed by Gregory or Cleaver received only minimal support in the ghettos and working class areas, although they received a better response among the radicalized youth and lower-middle-class elements who had been active in peace and freedom movements.

### *The Communist Ticket*

The Communist Party, for the first time in 28 years, put forward its own Presidential ticket, headed by the outstanding Negro woman leader Charlene Mitchell and its National Youth Director Michael Zagarell. The onerous requirements to place a minority party on the ballot in most states, made it a foregone conclusion that, except for isolated instances, the candidates would call for a write-in vote, necessarily reducing direct expressions of support. The Party gained ballot status only in the states of Washington and Minnesota.

The Communist candidates toured the country and spoke to large audiences. The warm response they received at various mass gatherings, campus meetings, in appearances on TV and radio clearly showed that in the country today there was an increased interest in what the Communists have to say. The extensive distribution of the election platform and leaflets on diverse issues, helped to inject a voice of clarity and direction in many places where confusion and frustration reigned.

Most of all, the running of Communist candidates was an important step in the fight for the Party's legality, helping to reestablish the principle that the Communist Party is a legitimate working class organization and that everything possible must be done to remove anti-Communist laws from the statute books. As a result of this activity, new opportunities have opened up for rebuilding the Party in cities and towns where it has not existed for some time and to strengthen it wherever it now operates.

### *Working Toward a True People's Party*

The central task facing all democratic and radical forces in our country is to find the path toward coalescing the many independent political groupings that now exist—both within and outside the Democratic Party—with the objective of speeding up the process for the emergence of a truly mass, independent political party that will represent the broad, democratic strivings of millions of American people. The mass disaffection with the two major parties of monopoly capitalism indicates that the basis for such a party exists.

Many of the McCarthy and Kennedy protagonists are not idle. Democratic coalitions are arising in many states with the aim of putting forward candidates in municipal, state and national elections, organizing actions around key issues, and combatting the machine control of the Democratic Party. The formation of the New Democratic Coalition, as a national insurgent body, headed by Paul Schrade, West Coast leader of the United Auto Workers, and Donald Peterson, a prominent leader of the McCarthy movement in Wisconsin, can play a much-needed role in uniting similar groupings that have arisen in many states. At the recent meeting of its National Steering Committee, it decided to concentrate on issues, to work for the democratization of the Democratic Party, to set up state bodies of the coalition where none exist, and to establish relations with independent formations outside the Democratic Party.

Many in this movement still have illusions that they can transform the Democratic Party into a viable instrument of the people and rid it of machine domination. But life is bound to convince a good number of them that this is an impossible task and that they should join with others to form a true people's party representative of the people's needs.

Needless to say, no independent people's party can have viability unless it is based upon the working class—black and white. It is vitally urgent that new independent formations for labor political action be developed, advancing a program of labor's demands and putting forward labor candidates. It is to be hoped that the negative experiences of this election campaign will convince the Alliance for Labor Action—the new association between the United Automobile Workers and the Teamsters—to embark on the path of independent political action, building trade union committees in the neighborhoods to collaborate with other independent groupings around a common program and in support of people's representatives. Above all, it is to be hoped that this Alliance will eventually step forward as one of the initiators in founding an independent political party of the working people.

Of equal importance is the need to expand existing independent political groupings within the Negro communities, such as the

National Committee of Inquiry led by Congressman John Conyers of Michigan, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, the formation around Julian Bond and other Negro office holders in Georgia, the Black Panther Party and numerous others. The fight to extend Negro representation on all levels of government can be considerably enhanced by such independent organizations. Similarly, it is essential that everything possible be done to strengthen existing independent coalitions among Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans and helping to build them where they do not exist.

The various state Peace and Freedom or Freedom and Peace parties can play a meaningful role in helping to lay the foundations for a broad people's party. By adopting a coalition policy and working with other independent formations, by supporting candidates that have the endorsement of such movements, and by putting forward their own candidates against reactionary, anti-labor and racist candidates, they can influence developments and help to contribute to the building of such a party.

### *Build Political Independence in Day-to-Day Struggles*

The most effective way to convince broader strata of working people that such a party is needed is the active engagement in the day-to-day struggle for needed social legislation. Through such activity it is possible to expose the empty promises of elected officials and to show that there can be no reliance on Democrats or Republicans to bring about important internal reforms.

Throughout the campaign Richard Nixon spoke only in generalities about what he will do on the issues, of most concern to the people. But there is sufficient evidence that he will not place at the top of his list those that have given rise to the turbulence of recent years. It is essential, therefore, that all people's organizations get into action at once, pressuring Congress and the White House, for a program of specific demands that spells out the kind of legislation needed to serve the people's interests.

The President-elect has made it known that he is opposed to any "massive transfusion" of federal funds into the cities or for aid to the poor. Throughout his campaign he virtually ignored the real problems in the ghetto. Instead, he has proposed tax incentives to private enterprise to locate in the ghettos, to undertake job-training and housing construction. As an advocate of "black capitalism" he has also agreed to provide assistance to a handful of Negroes to become owners and managers in the "free enterprise system." This can only mean the callous disregard of the explosive issues in the ghettos and of the disastrous decay of the cities. The fight, therefore, must be one not only to maintain existing programs but to expand them. Not funds for the corporations but funds to meet the people's needs.

The National Association of Manufacturers, the Chamber of Com-

merce and some of the big corporations, with huge funds at their disposal, are geared to open an all-out offensive against the labor movement by pressing for a whole gamut of anti-labor legislation to restrict the right to organize and the right to strike, to ban industry-wide and multi-union collective bargaining, to abolish the National Labor Relations Board and to institute firmer government control over the unions. With a Nixon in the White House, the man who co-fathered the infamous Mundt-Nixon Bill that led to the enactment of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, the organized labor movement faces a critical situation. Labor will have to muster its full strength, and enlist the active support of the broad democratic movement, to mount a counter-offensive against this new anti-labor drive.

Official statistics shows that it is the families with the lowest incomes that bear the heaviest tax burden. A revision of the tax structure with the aim of lifting this burden is indispensable. In this connection, the fight to eliminate the numerous tax loopholes, which now enable men of great wealth and the huge corporations to evade paying their full share of taxes, would more than compensate for easing the weight of present taxation on the working people.

Of equal importance is the need to curb the skyrocketing prices which have sharply reduced the buying power of the dollar. In some of his speeches Nixon recommended curtailing federal expenditures for social needs together with a controlled increase in unemployment as a way to combat inflation. Once again the corporations, which have hiked prices to boost their fabulous profits, are to get off without any penalties, while the burden is to be placed on the shoulders of the working people.

While in his acceptance speech Nixon spoke of an end to the "era of confrontation" and the start of an "era of negotiations" with the Soviet Union, he has often reverted to much of the cold-war rhetoric. He has warned the country of a dangerous "security gap" requiring expenditures of new billions to achieve "military superiority" as the only way to negotiate with a "basically expansionist nation" which "threatens world peace." In keeping with this, the Pentagon recently proposed an increase of \$20-30 billion in military spending. A massive movement to defeat this proposed acceleration of nuclear stock-piling and the revival of the demand for disarmament is of key importance.

The focal point of all activities must be, of course, the unremitting struggle to bring the war in Vietnam to an end. If Nixon was compelled to pledge peace in Vietnam, this does not mean that peace will come without a persistent struggle on the part of the broad forces in the country. An "honorable peace" for Nixon means to safeguard the position of the puppet Saigon regime. He has made clear that he will not impose a coalition government on Saigon for that is only a "thinly-disguised surrender," since "for the Communists" it becomes "a sanctuary for subversion." Therefore, continued pressure

for meaningful negotiations, for the immediate withdrawal of American troops, for the right of the Vietnamese to determine their own future must be given top priority at this moment.

The municipal elections are rapidly approaching. In addition to determining how the progressive forces will intervene in these elections, it is not too early to launch a campaign to democratize the electoral process. It is of primary importance to initiate now a campaign for proportional representation, for the elimination of all bars to placing minority parties on the ballot, and for the direct election of the President in 1972.

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These are but a few of the battlefronts that lie ahead. The outlook is for a further sharpening of all conflicts. But struggle is the only path that can force peace in Vietnam and win the necessary internal democratic reforms. And struggle will speed the understanding of the need of a people's party to advance the cause of peace, economic security and equality.

In the total scene, what is coming into ever sharper focus is that the catalyst that sparks all phenomena in the United States—political, economic, cultural, social, financial, or ideological—is the *persistent policy of imperialist aggression and war.*

More than any other factor it now molds and shapes all external as well as internal policies. The policy of war now takes top priority. War measures are now the main factors molding our economy. We are in the midst of a war-induced inflation, of runaway prices and rents. We have wartime taxes, war-disguised attacks on standards of social security, war-camouflaged attacks on civil rights and civil liberties, war-hysteria attacks on labor—on the right to strike.

Because a policy of war has become the main factor determining the course that our nation is traveling, it must be the starting point of our examination of the elections and run like a thread through all of our analyses. To do otherwise would be to try to avoid reality. It is this focal point of our reality that gives rise to political trends and moods.

That U.S. capitalism follows a policy of imperialist aggression is not unique or new, however. What is new is that it has so quickly become the dominant factor influencing all other matters. . . .

GUS HALL, *Toward a Peace Ticket in 1968*, page 6

# The Civil War and Black Liberation Today\*

Mr. Chairman, Brothers and Sisters:

I come today to discuss with you some lessons from the history of our country and our people. I am going back into the past, which some may consider irrelevant. I do so, however, to help provide some guidelines for these turbulent and often confusing times. I know that lessons from past history cannot be translated mechanically, but much of it is usable.

We are confronting today, in an unprecedented way, the deadly poison of racism. We witness the emergence of George Wallace of Alabama as a serious political factor. The ten million votes he received pinpoint for us the time of day. Here is a massive pro-fascist force whose main, not-so-secret weapon is racism. Its triumph could result for millions of black people the equivalent of Hitler's concentration camps and gas chambers. Hitler destroyed six million Jews. An American Hitler would seek the destruction of black people as his main target. But make no mistake about it: if the bells toll for black Americans, they also toll for other Americans. The police brutality at the Democratic Party Convention, aimed both at demonstrators, delegates and even bystanders—most of them white—is an omen of what a fascist state will mean also to white America.

The vigor with which racist elements pursue their aims and the inadequate response from most white Americans evoke from some freedom fighters moods of despair and a tendency to write off the possibility of making coalitions with white forces. Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton expressed this view in the book *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, when they wrote:

American pluralism quickly becomes a monolithic structure on race issues when faced with the demands of black people, the multi-faction white unite and present a common front.

One could quarrel with the accuracy of this statement. But for our purposes we can take it that white Americans generally are not yet prepared to make substantial changes in the status of black people.

\* Lecture delivered to a class of black post-graduate students at Harvard University, December 3, 1968. This is presented as a contribution to Negro History Week.

Many are prepared to make some changes, but not fundamental ones. And now many black people question whether white Americans will ever be prepared to make fundamental changes.

There was another period in our history when a similar situation existed, the period preceding the Civil War. Profound lessons can be learned from it by both blacks and whites. It shows things do not remain static, that what was not possible yesterday and today can become reality tomorrow. And so, to seek inspiration to meet our present tasks, let us turn back the pages of American history.

## *The American Revolution and Slavery*

The American Revolution of 1776-1783 was one of those great social upheavals which profoundly affected the affairs of mankind for centuries to follow. It brought to power a new class, the bourgeoisie, and established the world's first bourgeois democracy. The American Revolution was also the first anti-colonial revolution. It inspired the people of Latin America to go and do likewise.

On this foundation, we have erected one of the most powerful nations in the world. Its growth and development transcended, both in scope and in time, the nations that comprised the old Europe. Long after the American Revolution, the European revolutionaries had to cope with the lingering influences of the old feudal order which our country escaped. As a consequence of our country's freedom from such hangovers, and thanks to both our tremendous national resources and the varied talents brought from other countries, our advances in technology and science have no peer in the history of capitalism.

Notwithstanding its generally progressive character, however, the American Revolution from its very inception embodied the seeds of deep-going contradiction. While it propagated progressive ideas, which were emulated in other parts of the world, it also wrote some of the worst pages of human barbarity that the world has ever known. The genocidal treatment of the American Indian was an important instance. But no less barbaric was the slavery of the Negro.

The introduction of slavery in the United States was a throwback of many centuries. The new society established by the Revolution had many class contradictions in it, but none as pressing and decisive as the existence of slavery. The major conflicts on the American scene raged around the issue of slavery, for it soon became apparent that the rising capitalist system could not thrive side by side with a slave society. The way in which this issue was resolved contains many lessons for the struggles of today.

Of this conflict, Anthony Bimba wrote in his book *The History of the American Working Class*:

. . . with the nineteenth century the age of machinery and invention advanced. In the northern states industry developed, capitalism spread its wings ever wider and wider, conquering new territories. About the middle of the nineteenth century the northern and middle states were one powerful social unit, having fully developed organs of bourgeois rule.

On the other hand, the invention of the cotton gin had made cotton growing a very profitable occupation. The southern planters therefore industriously increased their land, pushing farther and farther north, seizing new territories, extending the production of cotton, and also slavery.

Sooner or later these two economic systems had to clash, regardless of the warfare of the Negro slaves of the South or the wage slaves of the North. . . . (International Publishers, New York 1927, pp. 115-116.)

#### *Classes With a Stake in Abolition of Slavery*

The conflicts between the rising industrialists and the slave-owning class were not the only ones that came to the forefront. The interests of the slaveholders were in contradiction to the vital interests of the overwhelming majority of the American people, in the South as well as in the North. The small farmers in the South found it most difficult to eke out a livelihood in competition with the large plantation owners. Consequently, they were driven from the most fertile lands and forced to settle in the mountainous regions where slavery was not profitable.

The working class, too, had its grievances against the slave power. The slave-owners trained slaves to be mechanics, and these constituted a depressant on the wage levels of the South. Thus, the North-South wage differential was well established before the Civil War.

One of the demands of the American workers was for free land in the West. True, for the great majority, the ownership of a farm in the West was an unrealizable dream. Yet the availability of such land was an important outlet. A free West could be developed into a region of relatively high living standards and a market for Eastern manufactured goods. However, the pressure of the slave-owners for the extension of slavery to all new territories was a direct obstacle to these hopes.

The independent farmers of the North and the West were almost unanimously opposed to the slavocracy. They needed a free West. They knew that the spread to the West of the plantation system based on slavery would result in the same situation that prevailed in the South where the poor whites had been driven into the moun-

tains. They also needed the federal assistance that would build railroads, canals and turnpikes, bringing them easy access to the markets of the East.

In summary, almost all classes had a stake in the abolition of slavery. Yet it took them over forty years to accomplish what their interests dictated and what history required.

#### *The Years of Compromise With Slavery*

From 1820 to 1863, with the sole exception of the abolitionists, northern forces engaged in a policy of appeasement, of compromise with the South. During this period, the slaveholders were on the offensive and northern forces on the defensive. In an effort to placate the South, the following compromises and retreats were made: the Missouri Compromise of 1820, the Compromise of 1850, retreats before the southern offensive on the tariff issue, the Dred Scott decision, the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 and the Fugitive Slave Law. These actions taken in their totality characterize this as the period of the great retreat.

Even though this period was marked by those compromises and retreats, the struggle between the North and the South became sharper and sharper. Initially, the most acute form of this antagonism was the struggle to control politically the many new states which were coming into the Union. This was part of a broader contest for the control of both houses of Congress, the Presidency, the Supreme Court and the nation as a whole. It was a life-and-death struggle for power. But in this struggle the North was constantly making compromises.

An early showdown took place over the admission of Missouri as a state. The key elements which emerged in this debate were to plague the nation for the next forty years. In particular, the debate centered on the issue of states' rights and the role of slavery itself. The slaveholders' position on states' rights was direct and simple, namely, that slavery was a state matter and Congress had no right to interfere. The anti-slavery forces challenged the whole states' rights conception. They opposed the Southern contention that the Union was merely a loose alliance of fully sovereign states, each of which could do as it pleased. Behind this northern argument was a sound realization that capitalism, in order to develop, required a relatively centralized state. Out of this struggle the Missouri Compromise was born.

This Compromise was based on three major proposals: the admission of Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state, and the drawing the demarcation line for slavery at 36° 30' North latitude.

That is, while the state of Missouri was to be slave, all the rest of the Territory of Louisiana above 36° 30' (the Southern border of Missouri) should be free. The Missouri Enabling Act of March 6, 1820, stated that in this area "slavery and involuntary servitude otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, whereof the parties shall have been duly convicted, shall be and is hereby forever prohibited." One exception was that fugitive slaves had to be returned to their owners in the slave states. The entire southern delegation in both houses of Congress voted for the 36° 30' limit to slavery.

The Missouri Compromise was like taking patent medicine when an operation is required. The immediate effect was soothing, but the groundwork was laid for even greater explosions later on.

The next great compromise was effected in 1850. Between these two compromises there was a series of minor but important battles, whose background was the continued expansion of northern industry, as well as southern economy. During this period, conditions were being created for a vast expansion into the West.

In particular, the United States Senate became the scene of a sharp clash between the North and the South over the tariff question. It was in the interests of the northern industrial class to freeze out manufactured goods of foreign competitors. Hence, the North was in favor of a high tariff on such goods. The South, which exported cotton and tobacco and sought cheap manufactured goods, was in favor of a low tariff. In 1828, when proposals were made for a boost in the tariff, the cotton planters went into battle against it. The southern states denounced it as "the tariff of abominations." For the first time, the South began to talk in terms of secession. At one of its conventions, the state of South Carolina called for action to "nullify certain acts of the Congress of the United States, purporting to be laws, laying duties and imposts on the importation of foreign commodities." Under the impact of this pressure, northern forces once again retreated before the southern offensive and modified the tariff law of 1832.

#### *Drive of Slaveholders to Annex New Territories*

The period between 1820 and 1850 also witnessed a drive by the slaveholders to annex territories of other countries. These expansionist ambitions of slavocracy evoked controversies all over the country. Notwithstanding the opposition to these desires for conquest, the plan to seize Texas from Mexico was consummated.

In addition, the United States declared war on Mexico in 1846. This war, too, was an outgrowth of the imperialist schemes of the

Southern slaveholders, but it was only a part of a broader plan to seize the West Indies and territory as far south as Brazil. These people conceived of building a slave empire as the Romans and Greeks had done thousands of years before. The war with Mexico was one of the most unjust wars in the history of the United States. Abraham Lincoln characterized it as such, and led a vigorous opposition to it.

Opposition notwithstanding, once again the North bowed to the Bourbon South. Nonetheless, the Mexican War produced one of the big debates in American history. Now the issue of slavery was placed squarely before Congress, beginning in December, 1849. When the war with Mexico ended, the United States took away over half of the territory of that country; the struggle, therefore, began over the nature of the new states to be carved out of it.

Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky, author of the famous compromises of 1820 and 1833, came forward with a new set of compromise proposals. These were adopted in a series of separate laws, which collectively became known as the Compromise of 1850. The first law, the Texas and New Mexico Act, established more definitely the borders of Texas; as for New Mexico, it provided that when this territory came into the Union, the state itself would decide whether it would be free or slave. Another law, the Utah Act, provided for the right of that state to decide whether or not slavery would be legal within its borders. Another important section, the District of Columbia Act, prohibited slave trade in that area.

The slaveholders won their most cherished victory with the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act. This act, which was far more stringent than the earlier law of 1793, sought to stop the big drain upon the plantation system caused by the wholesale flight of slaves to the North via the underground railroad system.

In order to enforce this Act, the government sought to transform the people and the legal authorities of the North into a vast police network, placing responsibility upon the people to apprehend slaves and return them to their masters. Heavy fines and jail sentences were provided for all who in any way opposed or hindered application of this slave-hunting legislation.

The Compromise of 1850 provided even less respite than those which preceded it. In 1854 the whole struggle again broke out and took on new dimensions. It was the prelude to the outbreak of the Civil War itself.

The struggle began in 1853 with the introduction into Congress of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, whose purpose was to organize into definite

territories the vast stretch of country lying between Missouri and Utah, and extending north to Minnesota. Chiefly the work of Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, it provided that the question of slavery be left to the people of the territory to decide. This led to making these areas the scene of a blood bath between slaveholders, who rushed in to gain control of the territory, and those who wanted to maintain them as free states.

These developments brought to a head the whole question of slavery and faced the nation with a choice of ending the long retreat and confronting the slave power with people's power. At long last, the era of compromises was coming to an end.

### *The Struggle to Halt the Extension of Slavery*

During this whole period of constant retreats and compromises, there was a force that clearly understood what history demanded of the American people. This was the group known as the Abolitionists. It was composed of white and black men and women who were dedicated to the ending of slavery in the United States.

Long before the formation of the Republican Party, many of the Abolitionists understood the necessity for forming a party based on a program of ending slavery. As early as 1840, the Abolitionists formed the Liberty Party. This was the first among all the political parties in the United States which specifically invited the participation of the Negro people and brought them into its leadership. John W. Langston was the first Negro nominated by any political party and elected into office by popular vote. He ran for the clerk township and was elected, although he was the only Negro resident in the area.

The Liberty Party was followed by the Free Soil Party. Concerning the reasons for the change, Howard R. Bruce wrote: "The [Liberty] Party with its concentration upon an abolition program had too narrow and radical a base for wider popular appeal, however, and so was easily superseded by the more liberal Free Soil Party in 1848." The combination of the Liberty Party and the Free Soilers began the process of bringing about a political realignment within the country. However, this was several years in the making. The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1853, coupled with the bloody battles fought out in the state of Kansas, were the sparks which ignited the drive for a new political alignment. Thus, in the period between 1854 and 1860, northern forces found the resolve to halt slavery's advance within the United States.

The northern consensus was formed on the non-extension of slavery, not on its abolition. While it would still require some years of civil

war to do what was dictated as early as 1820, the new consensus was the broad plateau on which the struggle could be waged free of compromises.

Out of the great national debate which emerged over the issue of bringing a halt to the expansion of slavery, a new political party was formed—the Republican Party. It was composed of large segments of the old Whig Party which, together with the northern Democrats, had been largely responsible for the era of compromises. It brought together all segments of the North—all classes (of the North) which had a stake in ending the system of slavery. The temper and the mood of the new party was expressed by Abraham Lincoln who, in the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates, repeatedly declared his opposition to the extension of slavery and urged no further compromises on this matter. At the convention which nominated him for the Presidency, he wrote a letter to his managers in which he said: "Entertain no proposition for a compromise in regard to the extension of slavery. The instant you do, they have us under again; all our labor is lost."

The election of Lincoln on this firm platform convinced the slaveholders of the South that the game was up and that they would have to take other steps to maintain their oppressive system. The production of cotton, by the means used with the institution of slavery, exhausted the soil very rapidly and therefore required constant expansion into new territories, without which the system would wither and die. Perhaps in this regard the slaveholders understood the issues far better than did their northern opponents. So the nation was precipitated into the bloody Civil War.

### *From a War to "Save the Union" to a War to Abolish Slavery*

Nonetheless, the forces which led an uncompromising struggle against the extension of slavery still did not understand what history demanded of them. The war was conducted under the slogans of "Save the Union" and for the "non-extension of slavery." The war was fought for two years before Lincoln recognized that it was impossible, not only to advance the nation but even to save the nation, without freeing the slaves.

The evolution of Lincoln's position on this issue has deep meaning for the freedom struggle of today. Those who say that racism is so deeply ingrained in whites that they will never support the fight for civil rights should give heed to it. Listen to these words from the lips of one who was later to become the "Great Emancipator." On August 24, 1855, he said:

I will say here . . . that I have no purpose directly or indirectly

to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so and I have no inclination to do so. I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and black races. There is a physical difference between the two which in my judgment will probably forever forbid their living together on the footing of perfect equality. And inasmuch as it becomes a necessity that there must be a difference, I as well as Judge Douglas, am in favor of the race to which I belong having the superior position. (*Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, published by Lincoln Memorial University, 1894.)

Taken out of context, these could very well be the words of a Wallace or Strom Thurmond. However, let no one get the impression that I believe anything would ever change these racist pigs today. But let us listen to Lincoln again. In his letter of August 22, 1862 to Horace Greeley, who criticized him for catering to the slaveholders, he said:

. . . My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union . . . If I could save the Union without freeing the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it, and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 8, p. 16.)

Eventually there came a moment when it was impossible to evade the issue any longer. The issue of death to slavery finally assumed its proper place alongside that of preserving the Union, and Lincoln, to explain his change in attitude, wrote to F. B. Carpenter on February 6, 1864, as follows:

It had got to be . . . things had gone on from bad to worse, until I felt that we had reached the end of the rope on the plan of operations we had been pursuing; that we had about played our last card, and must change our tactics, or lose the game. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 10, p. 1.)

Finally, in summing up what had been done after issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, in a letter to A. G. Hodges, dated April 4, 1864, Lincoln said:

. . . When in March and May and July, 1862, I made earnest and successive appeals to the border states to favor compensated emancipation. I believe the indispensable necessity for military emancipation and arming the black would come unless averted by that measure. They declined the proposition, and I was, in my best judgment, driven to the alternative of either surrendering the Union, and with it the Constitution, or of laying strong hand upon

the colored element. I chose the latter . . . (*Ibid.*, Vol. 10, p. 67.)

He wrote further: "*I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me.*"

These quotations show, above all, that the decisive factor in historical and social change is the role of social forces. Individuals play a role, but in the circumstances of the times. Lincoln achieved immortality because he eventually was able to muster the courage to do what history required him to do.

White Americans must draw the inescapable conclusion that two years of unnecessary bloodshed were caused by the failure to understand the interrelationship of the issue of slavery to the progress of the nation.

Black Americans must learn that powerful historical forces are on our side and that there is no need for frustration or despair, for such social forces are so powerful that they are capable, sometimes overnight, of changing attitudes and positions which have existed for centuries. And a case in point is the evolution of a Lincoln and the forces he led.

In this respect, let us gain inspiration from the words of Stephen Vincent Benet in his poetic work *John Brown's Body* (Rhinehart and Co., 1957). He wrote:

Sometimes there comes a crack in Time itself.  
 Sometimes the earth is torn by something blind.  
 Sometimes an image that has stood so long  
 It seems implanted as the polar star  
 Is moved against by an unfathomed force  
 That suddenly will not have it any more.  
 Call it the *mores*, call it God or Fate,  
 Call it Mansoul or economic law  
 That force exists and moves.  
 And when it moves  
 It will employ a hard and actual stone  
 To batter into bits an actual wall  
 And change the actual scheme of things.

#### *Lessons for Today*

The lessons of the Civil War graphically point up the common destiny of black and white Americans. The American Negro's development is intertwined in many ways with that of all white Americans who have cause to be dissatisfied with the *status quo*.

There were many slave revolts before the Civil War. But they did not succeed. There can be no doubt that these rebellions helped

crystallize conditions which eventually led to the emancipation of the slaves. But by themselves they could not abolish the system of slavery. The facts show that the ending of slavery required social upheavals in the country as a whole. This lesson has meaning for those of us who would help plan strategy and tactics for today's struggle. These lessons from history, as well as our experiences within the last ten years, dictate that the Negro cannot fundamentally solve the problem of Negro inequality by going it alone.

Another lesson, for both black and white Americans, is the necessity to give serious attention to minority groups who preach against social injustice. The Civil War also has meaning for the Left-wing forces of today, who must realize that they must work in line with the social processes, if they are to succeed in their endeavors.

In 1840, the Abolitionists formed the Liberty Party, based on a program of ending slavery. But this was not enough. Subsequently, they found that they also had to find common cause with forces who were not yet ready to abolish slavery, and so they went from the Liberty Party to the Free Soil Party, and eventually to the Republican Party, before they could find the consensus required to put an end to the institution of slavery. These are important lessons for the young freedom fighters of our times who for one or another reason become impatient with the social processes. However, these observations should not be construed to mean that progressive forces be patient with things as they are; for social processes can be speeded up, provided there are spark plugs in the engine which function properly. What is implied, therefore, is that struggles to hasten change must be accompanied with a clear understanding of what has to be done.

The overall lesson is the necessity for recognition of the need for a coalition policy by all classes oppressed in common today by monopoly capitalism. For white workers, it is written today as it was written yesterday by Karl Marx: "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded." The overall lesson to be learned by Negro freedom fighters is that real and meaningful "black power" is possible only in the context of forming alliances with other white forces who, because of contradictions such as existed in the Civil War period, can be won for the fight. The fight for black power is thus a fight for people's power.

However, the building of a coalition of black and white today requires an entirely different format than yesterday. In this respect Carmichael and Hamilton are correct.

Those white forces who should, out of necessity, unite with blacks must come to understand that such unity must be between equal

partners. Where inter-racial contact exists it will not be meaningful if black minorities continue to have an unequal status. Thus, the problem is posed of finding forms and organizational arrangements to promote such equality. The slowness with which whites are grasping these fundamentals is contributing to separatist moods of black nationalism.

Finally, there is much hard feeling among some civil rights forces who have watched the labor movement fail to shoulder its responsibilities. The labor movement of today, like some of the Northern forces of the Civil War period, has not yet comprehended that its own class interests will not be fulfilled until the special persecution of its black brothers is overcome. The Civil War period shows that notwithstanding vacillations, there comes a time when a class will be compelled to do what it was not prepared to do yesterday. And so, as we appraise the inadequacies of today's labor movement, let us bear in mind that objective conditions are moving in our direction, and that the time is not far distant when many a labor leader may be compelled to say: "I confess not to control events, but to be controlled by events."

### *The Gravity of Today's Crisis*

But this raises the question: Do we face today a crisis comparable to the Civil War?

It is my contention that we face problems far greater than that period. The very existence of civilization is at stake. Once again social systems are clashing. Yesterday a growing capitalism could not exist side by side with a system based on slavery; today, a capitalism which is obsolete, outworn and useless, cannot be replaced by a system based on the needs of all oppressed humanity without destroying the system of national oppression which binds black America to an inhuman existence.

It is my hope that it will not take white America as long today to discover this basic truth as it did in the Civil War period.

Even short of a socialist reorganization of American life, there are problems of a more immediate nature that are insoluble without some basic changes in the position of black people. Today black oppression merges with a growing political crisis. It is a crisis that affects every aspect of our life. Persecution of black people merges with a crisis in foreign policy and the rise of a pro-fascist danger within a parasitic economy and a sick society.

The foregoing has been based on an optimistic view of the future.

However, I am painfully aware that history does not always repeat itself. It could go the other way.

Nonetheless. I see a nation in turmoil. I see another Lincoln, who under the impact of social forces and developments, not the least of which are the actions of black people themselves, will be compelled to pick up his pen and write *finis* to the oppressive system of black oppression, and this time for keeps. I see all these things, not because someone will learn to love black people, but because of my firm belief that people love themselves.

Militancy, the indispensable ingredient for all effective struggles, has to meet the test. The courage of brave individuals has played, and can play, a significant role in today's freedom struggle. But the militancy of individuals lies in the ability to inspire *mass* militancy. It can never be a substitute for it. Individual courage, therefore, must be synchronized with those forms of struggle to which the mass of black people are ready to respond at any given stage of the struggle.

There is an urgent need, too, for consideration of forms of organization which will unite the people in the black communities and coordinate the communities themselves on a city, state and national level. The aim should be effectively to bring to bear on the power structure the collective will of the black people, to organize and direct mass actions on every front and at every level.

The objective should be to unite the black communities politically, and to make full use of their strategic position in our cities. From such positions of strength they can, in alliance with other oppressed minorities and progressive sections of the white population, struggle effectively for unprecedented new levels of Negro representation and, thereby, drastically alter political relationships in the country.

Through united action, an effective fight can be waged for black control of black communities, for federal, state and city responsibility to provide billions for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the black communities, placing them on a par with the rest of the nation. Jobs, at all skills, in such reconstruction, should go to the people of the black communities, especially to the youth, and at union wages.

HENRY WINSTON, *Political Affairs*, February, 1968

## IDEAS IN OUR TIME

HERBERT APTHEKER

### Law and Order: Lies and Hypocrisy

This month the "Law-and-Order" candidate becomes President of the United States; let his sceptre be a crook and his globe a pumpkin. And chief of those guarding him is a superannuated cop, Edgar the Anti-Red, whose most recent expression of morality was to label the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. this nation's "most notorious liar!" Hoover calling King a liar is exactly like Judas fingering Christ.

Just prior to the commencement of our Civil War, there was hoisted atop the dome of the Capitol in Washington a huge female figure, in bronze, symbolizing the nation's Goddess of Liberty. She was cast, in the very year John Brown was hanged, by slaves!

This hypocrisy almost murdered the United States a century ago; as it is, it cost the lives of 500,000 men, black and white. Through that blood, muck and rot this country managed to stagger into the twentieth century; but it is not going to make it into the twenty-first—not in any form recognizable to its Fathers—uncleansed of this racist cancer. God help it if, for the little left of this century, its Chief Executive and his Cabinet members are the likes of what we have now; the group resembles nothing so much as a typical Board of Trustees of a typical U. S. university—all white, all male, all "Christian," all old, all rich; yes, all, all honorable men as it was said long ago, complete to a leading Rotarian from—who would believe it—Montgomery, Alabama!

Of course a gang the likes of this one will be hollering law and order, as will the typing pimps that serve their newspapers and write their speeches. For the continued subjection of the Negro people in the United States, what better slogan than law and order? Was not the first slave-trading ship from England that fell upon West Africa named *Jesus*?

Law and order, indeed! Rapine and torment—selling children, burning women, lynching men, blowing up churches, befouling pulpits, imposing hunger, demeaning an entire people for three and a half centuries—and reaping gold from the racket; and all the time screaming "law and order," "law and order," with arms outstretched and eyes raised to heaven.

Perhaps the only experience comparable to it is the record of

British rule in India, there also encased in nauseating rationalization. In 1857, when a major insurrection rocked that sub-continent, Marx commented:

There is something like retribution in human history; and it is a rule of historical retribution that its instrument be forged not by the offended but by the offender himself.

In this, as in so much else, the ruling class of this nation is doing very well in vindicating Marx.

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The immediate source of the above somewhat sombre thoughts was the reading of a recent Special Report, *Lawlessness and Disorder*, issued by the Southern Regional Council (5 Forsyth St., N. W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303); its subject is the public school system in the South, as existing fourteen years after the Supreme Court of the United States had unanimously declared segregation in that system to be illegal.

Pat Watters, the Director of Information for the Council—and perhaps it is necessary to remark that this Council is an eminently “respectable” organization of liberal vintage that has never earned the distinction of being on any “subversive” list, not even that kept by HUAC—in introducing this Report, states that it is one of several efforts made by the Council “to tell the nation of the deplorable degree of failure in the South [and not only in the South!—H.A.] to comply with the law of the land against racial discrimination in education, and to suggest the terrible implications of this failure.”

Miss Watters finds little reason for any hope since the failures have been repeated and surely deliberate. She denounces the “men of public trust” who have failed to enforce the law and thus have been guilty of “savage damage done to children of both races.”

Bravely, Miss Watters writes: “The real story told in this report is that of where the real breakdown in law and order, all along, has been. It is a terrifying story of the object lesson in dishonesty and hypocrisy our government and our society have provided for a whole generation of young Americans.”

The research director, Glenda Bartley, reports that in the Deep Southern states even the official figures show that complete segregation characterized over 90 per cent of the schools at the end of 1967. In fact, Miss Bartley reports, violence by the racists “was allowed to work its will”; and while the “respectable” racists of the 1950’s had suffered certain “legal” setbacks, the forces of so-called law and order had, in the 1960’s, “permitted white terrorists a victory.”

I offer in full the concluding three paragraphs in this remarkable study—from, remember, a predominantly Southern white, traditionally moderate and liberal organization:

The results of fourteen long years of methodizing, legalizing, computerizing, analyzing, and finally, mortifying what is, after all, the basic right of every American child—the right to a good education—will long be felt in this nation.

We teach children, all children, that the United States of America is dedicated to law and order. We lie. We have shown a generation of American children, in the public institution closest to their lives, the schools, that this nation’s fundamental law need not be obeyed; we have clearly demonstrated to them that what we expect is their conformity to lip service to the shibboleth. What will be the awful effects of this lie upon children, black and white alike? What depths of disillusionment when they hear us say “law” and observe only “order?”

After a generation has beheld successful evasion, rationalized vacillation, outright flaunting of the law, only a country absolutely wedded to the totalitarian concept of order without law could turn on the victims of lawlessness and accuse them of destroying the fabric of society.

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The law of any land always has been and everywhere is a basic reflection of the class relationships and property relationships characterizing the social order. Those dominating such relationships dominate the law. This does not signify, however, that questions of law are meaningless—or unimportant—for those dominated. On the contrary, to struggle for release from such domination means to struggle in areas of the law as in all other areas. Those who rule, rule in every area; they own the factories but one battles to organize those factories; they own the means of communication but one battles to influence ideas, too; they control the State but one fights against their policies, foreign and domestic; they wield the effective power in fact, but one battles them at every stage and in every area, without letup, and at stake is that very power itself. Meanwhile, those who rule parasitic orders, themselves forge the instrument of retribution. In the battle we train ourselves to grasp the instrument and to be able to wield it effectively in due time.

I remember reading somewhere a story whose point was that a tyrant’s cruelty forced the shedding of many tears; each tear, entering the soil, nourished a tree from which, in time—given enough nourishment—the tyrant was hanged.

As to the law, in particular, its vintage is old. Much of it, especially

in a country with the militant and revolutionary traditions we possess, expresses progressive reality of the past and therefore retains the potential of progressive stimulant in the present. This is notably true in the United State, home as it is of the first successful anti-colonial and bourgeois-democratic revolutions in history, immersed as it has been in the traditions of Christianity which contain essential equalitarian and levelling aspects, and rocked by a Second American Revolution institutionalized not only in statute but in Constitutional enactments.

That the traditions and statutes and enactments have been more violated than observed is true; but this does not make them impotent or meaningless. On the contrary, they remain impelling to masses and distressing and embarrassing to those who rule. From levers for progress in different periods they have become now bones in the throat of an obsolescent, parasitic handful. So much the more important, then, that they not be permitted to lie dormant but that they be grasped by present-day forces of progress and that in this way they be infused, again, with life.

In the earlier decisive crisis in U.S. history—that surrounding slavery and culminating in the Civil War—the approach to law and especially to the Constitution was also a basic matter. The tendency existed among sectarian elements—as represented by Garrison, especially after 1840—to adopt an anarchistic (as well as pacifistic) stance to denounce any political activity as a “betrayal” of the slaves (since slaveowners dominated the State) and to insist that the Constitution was as Garrison said—a covenant with the devil—wherefore he publicly burned it.

But others—and most notably Frederick Douglass, the most consistent, effective and brilliant of the Abolitionists—insisted that the Constitution did not in fact mention slavery, that while some of its provisions were accommodations to the institution, the whole spirit of the document and certainly of the nation’s birth-certificate, the Declaration of Independence, were anti-slavery. (Similar arguments revolved around questions of an approach to Christianity and to various churches, but to develop this would require excessive space.) Further, people like Douglass insisted that tactics were basic to successful struggle and that burning the U.S. Constitution was not the best way to make an American audience amenable to your arguments! The point was not to burn the document but to improve it; and by making it explicitly anti-slavery one was doing exactly that. To make it explicitly anti-slavery meant to change the nature of the U.S. social order from one which battered upon and upheld chattel

slavery to one which denounced and illegalized it. And to do *that* required political *activity*, not abstention.

All this is missed, both in historical analysis and in contemporary urgings by some, especially among the so-called New Left; in missing this they are repeating costly errors, having similar philosophical rationalizations offered eleven and twelve decades ago.

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This brings me to a remarkable illustration of the realities of “law and order” and the necessities of political struggle and activity; this story is one of the great and decisive stories of our time—and therefore has not appeared in the big-time newspapers and magazines nor via prime time on radio and television. I have in mind the realities illustrated by the Negro dentist of Charlotte, North Carolina, Dr. Reginald Hawkins, who at this moment is appealing a ruling by the State’s Board of Dental Examiners finding him “guilty” of malpractice and thus threatening to destroy not only his reputation but his livelihood.

One must go back some in order to begin to understand the case of Dr. Hawkins. In 1960 he led a challenge against the State’s Board of Dental Examiners demanding that it admit Negro dentists; the case was finally won in 1966 but the Board through delaying and harrassing tactics has sought to nullify the victory. In 1964, Dr. Hawkins was a leader of a voter-registration drive that added 15,000 black voters to the rolls in his part of the State. Dr. Hawkins was charged with several felonies and a misdemeanor as a result of this un-American activity—he was charged with adding the names of illiterates to the voting rolls. But—after local newspaper publicity—the charges were dropped.

Early in 1965, Dr. Hawkins filed a school desegregation suit. In August, 1965, “persons unknown” fired thirteen bullets into his home. In November, 1965, “persons unknown” bombed his home. After winning his suit against the Dental Board in 1966, Dr. Hawkins filed as a candidate for Governor in the primary in 1967. Old charges against him were revived, but failed in court. He ran and even the machine counted 130,000 votes for Dr. Hawkins in the primary; it was openly reported at the time that some 80,000 additional votes were stolen. But Dr. Hawkins had received enough counted votes to represent—that is, for the black people to represent—a decisive political force.

Through 1968 Dr. Hawkins, in addition to taking care of the dental needs of folks, has been stumping his State, seeking to help build a coalition of black people, students, professionals, and laboring men and women. Here is what he says:

We can take over the Democratic Party in this state and they know it. They can't touch me by firing me—so they try to make it appear that I'm a bad dentist and a bad man. That's how the regulatory power of the state is used—to intimidate people.

*What they have never learned is that this sort of thing makes us stronger. It's a coalescing force, not a destructive force, in the black community.* You see, they're dealing with unconventional warriors—we're not afraid. We're sort of like the Viet Cong in Vietnam—people who understand power and know how to use it. . . . It's really a battle to decide whether the people are going to participate in this democracy—or whether there's going to be democracy at all.\*

There is not an American who would *say* he does not understand that, or, indeed, does not agree with that. Of course, class realities and racist indoctrination being what they are, what people say and what they do—or even deeply believe—may be miles apart. Still, in an argument—or, in a dialogue—to be able to say and be able to mean that which is—at least on the verbal level—universally comprehended, is no small advantage.

The fact is that even law and order—viable law and viable order—are no longer within the grasp of the present ruling class. Both, in any form recognizable by most Americans, today are challenges to that ruling class. So putrid is the dominant social order in the United States today that those seeking significant change here are simultaneously those who, therefore, seek to make life sufferable, not to speak of making it gracious or creative or loving.

December 17, 1968

\* The data about and quotations from Dr. Hawkins are taken from *The Southern Patriot*, December, 1968 (issued by the Southern Conference Educational Fund, 3210 W. Broadway, Louisville, Kentucky 40211).

## The Class Approach and Internationalism\*

### I.

Of late, in the light of current developments in the international class struggle, Communists often ask themselves what were the lessons drawn from the 1956 counter-revolution in Hungary?

Obviously, it would be wrong to apply the Hungarian experience to the situation of today or to tomorrow. History does not repeat itself, at least not completely, not in every detail. No two revolutions are totally identical, nor are any two counter-revolutions. For Marxist-Leninists, mechanistic parallels are unacceptable. However, we think that the 1956 events (not recounting all the arguments and counter-arguments, I should like to state here the fundamental position of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party on this score), which filled our Party, our people and our socialist country with dramatic tensions and explosions, could be a lesson for tomorrow, as well as today.

For a long time, the counter-revolutionary flare-up in Hungary, its causes and premises, and all that followed, were not easily comprehensible to many at home and abroad. Only gradually could we clarify to the Hungarian Communists, to our people and our friends abroad, their class content and the purpose and sense of our struggle. Whereas it was clear to many West European Communists, by virtue of their own experience, that a counter-revolution had broken out in Hungary, a section of Hungarian Communists, ideologically and politically confused, was still partly in the dark as to the fact of counter-revolution. Judging by our case, an outside observer may in some situations obtain a clearer grasp of the content and substance of a complicated condition than those directly involved.

Hungarian Communists still appreciate the international solidarity of the fraternal parties in 1956. Our comrades in the capitalist countries, targets of reactionary attacks for their solidarity with the Soviet Union and the Hungarian revolutionaries, did not flinch under the pressure. As we see it, their firmness, far from injuring, honorably represented and upheld the interests of their working class.

Marxist-Leninist principles, notably the class approach and internationalism, helped the Hungarian Communists grasp the content and causes of the 1956 counter-revolution, and draw the proper conclu-

\* Reprinted from *World Marxist Review*, October-November, 1968.

sions. A class approach and internationalism, we hold, is essential to understand the facts and processes of socio-political life, finding the right solutions, for then these facts and processes are related to the international class struggle. The assessment of the class struggle is not based on concepts of abstract "democracy," abstract "sovereignty" and abstract "humanism," with the concrete class content of these abstract slogans denuded in the social collisions.

In his article on the experience of class struggle in Hungary, which appeared in this journal (No. 2, 1959), Comrade Kadar wrote:

The counter-revolutionaries knew that they could not count on success if they openly called for the restoration of capitalism. That is why they cloaked their real aims. In the initial stages at least they proclaimed "democratic socialism," not capitalism, as their aim. "Socialism without dictatorship"—this was their first tactical slogan . . . Their second tactical step was the proclamation of "pure democracy," void of class content.

Between October 23 and November 4, 1956, it was brought home to us—though we had known it from Lenin's teaching—that, in effect, "socialism without dictatorship," the slogan of the Hungarian counter-revolution, amounts to overthrowing proletarian dictatorship and establishing counter-revolutionary dictatorship; that "pure democracy" amounts to freedom for those who oppose the working class outside as well as inside the Party; that it amounts to intimidation, political and physical terror against those Communist internationalists loyal to socialism. In a country where the working class is in power it can, exercising this power, develop socialist democracy and guarantee socialist freedoms. Once this power is lost, no socialist democracy and no socialist freedoms are conceivable.

After November 4, 1956, we weighed the ideas of abstract "democracy" and abstract "sovereignty" against the Marxist class principle and proletarian internationalism, and thus determined in what way each interprets democracy and national independence, freedom and humanism, what he wishes to achieve, what aims, interests and powers he serves, what external and internal social forces he represents, and where he is going. In the question of national unity we determined: with whom and for what purpose? In the question of democracy and freedom: for what and against what, for whom and against whom? And in the question of independence: from whom and against whom; who championed sovereignty and who imperilled it? And all this in the aggregate: in the interests of what power and whose power? We answered these questions from the standpoint of the class principle and proletarian internationalism. As a result, our ranks thinned

somewhat, but we became stronger. Subsequently, in the process of differentiation and polarization, we won the decisive majority of the people and a new national unity with a socialist content emerged.

## II.

Our Party defined the main causes of the counter-revolution: a) the mistakes of the previous sectarian and dogmatic leadership; b) revisionists in the Party; c) hostile elements in the country; d) the insidious efforts of world imperialism. It was these four mutually conditioned and interweaving causes that led up to the counter-revolutionary uprising. If one of them had been missing, matters would not have come to the point of counter-revolution. These four factors existed and operated long before October 23, 1956; they figured in the counter-revolutionary events and in the social struggles that followed.

The Hungarian Communists determined that the counter-revolution would not have imperilled the existence of the socialist system if the Party leadership had not made grave political mistakes prior to 1956. The gross violations of socialist legality, disregard for the Leninist principles of Party life, dogmatism and lack of principle, authoritarian, often subjective and arbitrary, decisions, the mistakes in economic policy and the depreciation of the role of activists, the Party rank and file and of the role of the masses—all this, cumulatively, brought on a crisis, undermined the trust of Party members in the leadership and impaired the bonds between the Party and the working class. Yet the Party leadership would not acknowledge its mistakes. Not only was it incapable of making amends and rectifying the consequences of the crimes, it also lacked the courage of honest self-criticism. Those were the reasons why it was impotent in face of the revisionist opposition and the counter-revolutionary danger. The alternation of groundless, superficial measures and opportunist conciliation, the half-measures and false solutions, and the delays in rehabilitation—this demoralized and disarmed the Communists and enabled the Rightist "universal democracy" slogan, the slogan of supra-class abstract humanism and "national Communism" to take root among Party members and among the people.

In aggregate, the mistakes of the old sectarian and dogmatic leadership undermined the vanguard role of the Party, its combat capability, fostering passivity among the champions of socialism and among the revolutionary forces, disorganizing them and thereby increasing the influence of the class enemy.

The Rightist revisionist group in the Party did not begin its political career by asking for aid from the imperialist powers against the

Soviet Union and the revolutionary forces at home. That it did towards the end of its career. Its leaders had no intention of restoring capitalism when they began organizing their faction. But their platform paved the way for counter-revolution by its slogans of "democratic socialism" instead of proletarian dictatorship; reconstitution of the Coalition Government that existed until 1948 instead of the vanguard role of the Party; looser relations with the Soviet Union in the guise of "national independence" instead of friendship and alliance with the Soviet Union. The logic of its actions took that group to the end of its path, which culminated in treason. In the Hungary of 1956 the interval between proclamation of "pure democracy" and the physical assault on Communists was a brief one; the counter-revolution, however did not begin with hanging Communists in the streets.

The Rightists revisionists in the Party thus played a prominent role in the ideological and political spadework, undermining the Party and socialist society. At first they professed to be fighting to rectify errors, to air intra-party problems in public. That was something the class enemy could never have accomplished by itself. Their propaganda maintained that the decade before 1956 was a decade of slavery and want. They cast doubt, denied and derided the historical gains of the workingmen, obliterated the halo of heroism accompanying socialist construction, sowed among the people mistrust of their strength and abilities. At first, they turned the masses against the Party, government, public and economic leaders and activists, then declared political and moral terror against them, boycotting them and calling them "Stalinists" and "Rakosi-ites." Men who had devoted the best years of their life, their energy and knowledge to serving socialism, who had worked with devotion for the people's cause, were placed in an untenable position by this demagoguery. This shows us that in rectifying the errors made in the course of building socialism, we must fight on two fronts—against those who, for whatever reason, evade public admission of mistakes, and against those eager to exploit these mistakes for the purpose of whipping up anti-socialist hysteria.

By political and moral pressure, the revisionists disorganized the security organs and the armed forces. In the summer of 1956, they had gained control over the information media. The instruments of ideological and political influence were securely in their hands. Possession of these media again proved an all-important factor in the class struggle. The working class, its Communist Party, lost control over most of the press in the summer of 1956. This section of the press and the political club known as Petoefi Circle were the main ideological and political instruments of the counter-revolution. Cultivating na-

tionalist, anti-Soviet sentiment, and then fanning it to a point of hysteria, played an important role in the ideological preparations. This propaganda declared that "all Hungarians are brothers," that "ten million Hungarian hearts beat in unison," and tried to build up their leader Imre Nagy as one of the great men in Hungarian history, creating the impression that the entire nation was rallied round him.

The grave mistakes of the sectarian and dogmatic Party and government leadership, coupled with the activity of the Rightist revisionists in the autumn of 1956, produced a situation in which the hostile forces at home were able to come out into the open and opportunities appeared for the interference of world imperialism. Not rectifying old mistakes, not removing the Right danger, was the object of the day. And so the country was plunged into a bloody counter-revolution. It was not until after the uprising had been crushed with Soviet aid, that Hungarian revolutionaries and the people were able to apply in deed, not just in words, the fundamental conclusions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU, to build a socialism cleansed of sectarian, dogmatic, and revisionist mistakes.

### III.

We drew useful lessons from an analysis of the various stages of the 1956 counter-revolution and of the enemy tactics. Failure clearly to differentiate between the menace of counter-revolution and a bloody armed conflict can lead to grave delusions. It is not true that we cannot speak of the menace of counter-revolution with full confidence only on the basis of abstract conjectures. For a principled class and internationalist approach to social problems enables us to establish, with accuracy and confidence, whether or not there is a menace of peaceful or armed counter-revolution. There was a danger of peaceful counter-revolution, gradual liquidation of the socialist system and stage-by-stage restoration of capitalism long before October 23, 1956, when the armed conflict flared up, but only few were aware of it.

The errors of the old pseudo-Left, and at the same time opportunist, leadership, coupled with persistent Right-wing revisionist efforts over several months, had by the autumn of 1956 created ideological and political confusion among the Party membership. There was the danger that the Party might find itself under revisionist leadership with a revisionist program and revisionist organizational principles. The bulk of the workers, peasants and intellectuals were forced into a state of political indifference and passivity. By the time counter-revolution had broken out, the enemy had managed to discredit a large part of the politically active Communists and for a time, was

able to undermine confidence in the Party. The Right-wing revisionists wanted to turn Hungary back to the pre-1948 situation, that is, to a coalition government in which the Communist Party—now subscribing to a revisionist program—would in all probability be in a minority. And so, in the autumn of 1956, there emerged the menace of peaceful counter-revolution.

That there was no peaceful counter-revolution was largely due to the impatience of our enemies at home and abroad. Witness this passage from a Rome radio broadcast of August 13, 1956:

At the very worst, Hungarian national communism could be acceptable only as a brief transitory stage . . . If they manage to get the Russian troops out, Russian exploitation will have come to an end . . . National communism might last one or two months, but it will be swept away by the accumulated resentment. . . . If they really adhere to national principles . . . they will make this sacrifice, too.

The internal and external counter-revolutionary forces wanted quick and full restoration of capitalism. Writing in the American journal *Reporter* (December 27, 1956), its European correspondent Edmond Taylor revealed some details of the contacts between Hungarian Foreign Ministry officials and the U.S. Embassy in Budapest at the time of the counter-revolution. The United States Charge d'Affaires in Budapest, he said, was obliged to call on Imre Nagy and urge him to show at least some signs of distrust in the West, at any rate until the Soviet troops had withdrawn from Hungary. This appeal to Nagy to show less haste, in abolishing Communism, was perfectly correct, Taylor added, but unfortunately, it came too late and, besides, it carried little weight in view of mounting official and unofficial American pressure on Hungary for a clean break with Communism.

The main conclusion drawn by the class enemy from the 1956 defeat was that haste must be avoided in favor of a stage-by-stage operation. In keeping with its "loosening-up" tactic, international imperialism now relies primarily on peaceful counter-revolutionary restoration. Our class enemy has drawn important lessons from 1956, and we would like to see all Communists learning not less than our common enemy from Hungary's experience of counter-revolution.

#### IV.

Mindful of the causes of the 1956 counter-revolution, the principal forces involved, and the necessary conclusions to be drawn therefrom, our Party attaches much importance to the theory and practice of struggle on two fronts. That, in fact, has been a major factor in our

progress over the past 12 years. And today, too, the struggle on two fronts is a cornerstone of our policy and method—a safeguard against repetition both of the old sectarian-dogmatic mistakes and of Right-wing revisionist deviations.

The struggle on two fronts enables us gradually to fortify the Party's ideological, political and organizational unity, its united action and leading role. The two-front struggle stimulates constructive discussion and activity and the continued development of democracy within and beyond Party ranks. It enables us also to anticipate and quickly eliminate the consequences of possible errors. And we believe that this policy, free of pseudo-Left or Right-wing deviations, is one of the most effective guarantees of continued advance towards our goals.

The 1956 counter-revolution and the subsequent work of overcoming its consequences have taught us that a principled policy, one in which the word is matched by the deed, is the best one. In October-November 1956, and also in the subsequent months, many people were still under the influence of nationalist and anti-Soviet sentiments. Every day furnished fresh proof that the Communists can win firm prestige and popularity for their Party only by combating nationalism and anti-Sovietism, not by seeking agreement with them. The Communists cannot compete with the class enemy in nationalism, but if they openly and unambiguously uphold their principles, then, sooner or later, their efforts will meet with success.

After November 4, 1956, the Hungarian Communists were subjected to a veritable torrent of imperialist slander. They assumed responsibility for the resolute measures then introduced, and for the struggle against the passions kindled by nationalist demagoguery. They faced the charge of having demolished "national unity." Indeed we did demolish this nationalistic, anti-Soviet "national unity," which never included the major force of socialist revolution. During the counter-revolution, supporters of socialism were hurled back by a combination of reactionary pressure, betrayal and incessant calumny. But with the favorable conditions created by the aid of the Soviet Union, they became active again, and when the nationalist hysteria began to dispel, people who had been misled turned their backs on this false "national unity." Our progress over the past 12 years has brought into being a new national unity, with a socialist content and aims that accord with the Communist program. The chief method of strengthening this unity is democratic, open, comradely discussion, a free exchange of views on all problems of public interest.

A principled policy is the best policy also in dealing with the problems of socialist construction. The Right-wing revisionists of 1956

relied on unprincipled agreement with opposition-minded intellectual groups, bourgeois politicians and the imperialist enemy. Forthright discussion and clear, principled differentiation—though this was not to everyone's liking at first—soon produced satisfactory results. There never has been, nor is there likely to be for a long time to come, a Communist Party that could on a class basis and over a long period attract to its side every citizen of a country without exception. But the Party and its leadership should always be able to attract—chiefly through conviction—the majority of the working people. And the main method of winning the working people for socialism is action that accords with their interests and aspirations. Of course, we should debate with our political enemies, too. But in a country committed to the building of socialism we cannot, in our view, renounce the use of the instruments of power in relation to those who actively oppose socialism and the socialist system. This, too, is part of the concept of a consistently principled policy and accords with the requirements of socialist law. And socialist law has two aspects—we should never punish people for their political views, provided they do not violate socialist law; but every citizen is obliged to abide by the law and, should he violate it, bear the consequences.

In the past 12 years our Party, Government and State Assembly have adopted and implemented many decisions, laws and decrees which have evoked wide interest abroad. Our Party and Government will continue this work in a situation of unhampered sovereignty. This needs to be emphasized because, as we all know, Soviet troops are temporarily stationed on our territory. Their task is to assure the defense of the Warsaw Pact countries, and they are performing it without in any way restricting Hungary's sovereignty or interfering in her internal affairs. Besides fulfilling the noble task of upholding peace and security, the presence of Soviet troops makes it possible to educate our people in an internationalist spirit and promote closer Soviet-Hungarian friendship.

There is ample evidence to show that the building of socialism on the principles and in the spirit of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU was endangered by the old leadership and its policy, by revisionist activity and the advance of counter-revolution. Once these obstacles were removed, the road to consolidation was opened and we tackled and solved social, economic and cultural problems and steadily extended democracy. What is more, we did this with the active support of the people, and we intend to continue along these lines. The policy we have been pursuing in these 12 years, and intend to pursue with even greater success in the future, rests on class principles and internationalism.

## Czechoslovakia: Reality and Illusion

Czechoslovakia is a real country. The Czech and Slovak peoples who live there have a historical development that is uniquely their own, one that gives them special needs and special problems shared by no other peoples. It is an illusion to believe Czechoslovakia is just like any other country, and that sweeping abstractions can be applied to it without taking into consideration the context of time, place and history in which it is situated.

At least since the time of the great Czech religious martyr, Jan Hus (1369-1415), the key factor influencing the historical development of the Czech and Slovak lands has been their strategic location, which placed them literally at the center of most European conflicts. In the 19th century, Chancellor Bismarck of Germany was referring to this fact when he said: "Whoever controls Bohemia, controls Europe." In fact, many people through the centuries wanted to "control Bohemia." In modern times, Czechoslovakia's strategic importance has actually increased. One need only look at a map to see why.

### *Alliance With Other Nations Needed for Survival*

Given this basic fact of history, one can easily see why the numerically-small and relatively-weak Czech and Slovak peoples found it possible to survive only in association with others, never relying on their own resources alone. This was why, for example, Czech nationalism developed as a pro-Russian and Pan-Slav movement, as well as a purely Czech movement. There was no contradiction in Frantisek Palacky being the founder of the Czech national movement and the foremost advocate of Pan-Slav unity of his day (latter half of the 19th century), once it is understood that the Czech people required the support of other Slavic peoples in order to realize their goal of national independence. In particular, the Czechs counted on the support of Tsarist Russia and, in World War I, deserted en masse to the Russian side where they formed the well-known Czech Legion. After the destruction of Tsarism, and between the two world wars, independent Czechoslovakia was closely allied with France, in order to counter the threat from Germany.

However, the liberal bourgeois government of President Edvard Benes and Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk was betrayed by France and Britain in the Munich Crisis of 1938. The one time in recent history that Czechoslovakia was abandoned by its source of outside support, it was immediately taken over by its more powerful neighbor,

Nazi Germany. In the specific context of Czechoslovak history, then, to be unallied and alone does not equal independence but rather its very opposite. This lesson was taken to heart by Benes and Masaryk. The Czechoslovak government they set up in exile was the only one to include Communists, and was recognized as the legitimate government of the country by the Soviet Union in the Maisky-Masaryk Agreement of 1941. In December, 1943, President Benes went to Moscow, against the strong protests of the British and the Americans, and signed a Czech-Soviet Alliance. He remarked at the time that the alliance would be the cornerstone of Czechoslovakia's foreign policy after the war, because ". . . the Czechs had learned, or better, been taught, not to rely on others."

In the light of Czechoslovak history, it can be seen that this was no simple diplomatic arrangement, but was to perform the function of *guaranteeing* the independence of the country. In 1945, all the anti-fascist forces in Czechoslovakia were aligned in the Kosice Agreement, in which they established a National Front government, excluded fascist and reactionary forces from the political life of the country, expelled the Sudeten-German minority, and nationalized the greater part of Czech industry.

In the growing cold-war crisis of 1948, Jan Masaryk expressed in a remarkably clear and sharp way the realistic basis of this continuing policy when he said: "Czechoslovakia is not between East and West, it is between Russia and Germany, and if we have to choose, we will choose Russia." Masaryk knew that there was no "third alternative" for his country: it was the *only* country in the world having borders with *both* Germany *and* the USSR (actually, the Ukraine, not Russia), and by itself it was too small and weak to prevent Germany from taking it over. There was no Czech or Slovak who did not know from bitter experience what that meant.

What this historical development shows is that the defense of Czechoslovakia's independence and territorial integrity, in order to be at all rationally or intelligently advocated, must state clearly that Czechoslovakia's survival depends on its continued close association with the USSR and the other socialist countries. Any abstract argument that equates Czechoslovak independence with "neutrality" or non-alignment is without any question advocacy of Czechoslovakia's absorption by its most powerful and ruthless neighbor. This is an example of what well-intentioned abstractions can lead to.

The history of Czechoslovakia provides us with several examples of the terrifying damage the misuse of fine-sounding principles can do. For example, the "right of nations to self-determination" was used by Hitler and the Nazis to crush and dismember Czechoslovakia,

first in October, 1938, when Germany annexed the Sudetenland with its Sudeten-German minority, and later in March, 1939, when Slovakia was set up as an "independent" Nazi puppet state under Father Tiso and his native Slovak fascist movement. The right of nations to self-determination is one of the greatest principles of Marxism-Leninism, but it must be applied in a Marxist-Leninist way.

In addition to the basic facts of strategic and power relationships in Czechoslovakia's history, there is also the reality of its economic development. As far back as the 19th century, when the Czechs and Slovaks were part of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Czech-speaking province of Bohemia was the most heavily-industrialized part of Austria-Hungary. When Czechoslovakia became independent, it also became a small country with a large industry built for an empire. Czechoslovakia was left with a small, inadequate internal market for its industry and, at the same time, was cut off from some of its vital sources of raw materials. In order to pay for imported raw materials to keep its industry going, Czechoslovakia had to *export* a high percentage of that production as a matter of economic survival. It had to try to beat out competitors like Japan, for example. This situation meant ruthless exploitation of Czech workers, re-investment of profits in purely "Czech" industry, while whole areas of the country like Slovakia were left backward and undeveloped, as a kind of agricultural hinterland for Czech industry. Thus, there was some substance to Slovak charges of "Czech imperialism" at that time.

#### *The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance*

Since 1949, Czechoslovakia has been a member of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). To a very great extent, the basic structural problems of the Czechoslovak economy noted above were overcome by this arrangement. Exports still accounted for 10 per cent of the G.N.P., 20 per cent of the national income, and 18 per cent of total industrial output. But Czechoslovakia *imported* raw materials (iron ore, petroleum, etc.) from the Soviet Union and *exported* industrial goods to the USSR on rather advantageous terms. World market prices were taken as the basis of exchange and, as is well-known, raw materials are always cheaper on the world market than manufactured goods. A special arrangement existed for Soviet petroleum, which Czechoslovakia bought at a price *below* the world market. As a result, Czechoslovakia had a huge market area for its industry and a near-inexhaustible source of cheap raw materials to feed it. Due to its favorable terms of trade, it had built up a credit of \$2 billion with the USSR, which it was using to further development of its Soviet sources of oil, iron ore, copper, aluminum, lead, zinc,

etc. Its industrial growth had been truly gigantic—a 460 per cent increase over pre-war levels which unlike other CMEA countries, were already high in those days. Slovakia's industrial production increased more than 17 times over the pre-war level and its share in total industrial output went up from 7 per cent (1937) to 22 per cent (1967). To a large extent, Slovakia had more modern plant and equipment than the older Czech industrial areas.

It is hard to imagine how any other kind of economic arrangement could have been better fitted to the basic structural requirements of the Czechoslovak economy, while at the same time giving Czechoslovakia a vital, key role to play in the CMEA system. There were certainly severe economic problems in Czechoslovakia, but they were only indirectly related to its position in CMEA.

#### *Need for Economic Reforms*

George Wheeler, in a recent article ("Czechoslovakia Today," *New World Review*, Summer, 1968, pp. 17-31), has pointed out what some of those problems were: the Czechoslovak economy was rigid, over-centralized, insulated from price and market factors, not directly affected by consumer interests, and was extensively rather than intensively developed. Investment policies were questionable, and some sectors were neglected, such as housing.

By 1963, an economic crisis had developed, in which industrial and agricultural production dropped off sharply and the real wages of workers actually went *down*. In January, 1965, the Central Committee of the Communist Party outlined a projected economic reform which was further developed in the 13th Congress of the Party held in 1966; emphasis in the economy was to be placed on intensive scientific-technological development, on chemistry and electronics, automation and computerization. Enterprises would have to cover wages, investment, and circulating funds by their profits, which would be based on price and market factors affected by consumer demand; export firms would have to meet world market prices.

The 1966 economic reform (similar to reforms in the Soviet Union, the GDR, Hungary, and Bulgaria) had an immediate beneficial effect: the average increase in national income 1961-65 had been a bare 1.3 per cent; in 1967, it jumped to 8 per cent. Farm output increased in 1967 by 3.5 per cent, the fastest increase of all the socialist countries. Average wages went up 5 per cent while the cost of living rose by only 1.5 per cent so most workers gained by 3.5 per cent. But some workers experienced a wage decline even in 1967 and the economic situation was still unhealthy.

Clearly, part of the problem was the reluctance of some managers and political leaders to carry out the reforms in practice, while the overall political direction of society was still markedly conservative. In that respect, the January, 1968 change in Party leadership from Antonin Novotny to Alexander Dubcek was probably a change that was necessary to carry through the economic reform. To some degree, the April 5, 1968 Action Program of the Czechoslovak C. P. reflects a continuation of the earlier 1966 economic program, although with considerable additions in terms of the political direction of society and the Party.

Carrying out the projected political and economic reforms, taking into account all of the problems of the 1963-67 period, presupposed a very high level of ideological understanding on the part of the general population and their awareness of some of the pitfalls to be avoided. It is often automatically assumed that because Czechoslovakia has been for long a highly-industrialized country, with a good educational system, and has been in the process of building socialism for twenty years, that the Czech and Slovak peoples were better prepared for a new, qualitatively higher type of socialism.

#### *The Lag In Ideological Work*

In fact, sociological surveys and other research carried out by the Czechoslovak Party itself do not bear out this idea. In the major industrial regions of Czechoslovakia, a very low level of ideological awareness and Marxist consciousness was found. What is especially shocking about the results of the surveys is that the youth, who had grown up under socialism, and the members of socialist labor brigades in industry were found to be among the very lowest in ideological commitment. Instead of a conscious, scientific and materialistic outlook, they had acquired a kind of "spontaneous" and "vulgar-materialistic" attitude, revealing a lack of any educational training in Marxism. The development of socialism was seen as an automatic, spontaneous, conflict-free process in which the role of the workers was passive, and the goal was a society of individualistic consumers. Capitalism and socialism were compared only in terms of what they offered to a consumer, in respect to his immediate interests. It was found that rapid industrialization had led to the influx into the working class of many petty-bourgeois elements, affecting the general level of class consciousness.\*

\*J. Kozel, "Ideological and Political Unity of the Party," *World Marxist Review*, March, 1967, pp. 43-48; J. Kozel and J. Kovalcikova, "The Scientific Approach to Party Work," *WMR*, September, 1965, pp. 22-28; V.

It would have taken a lot of time and effort to correct this situation even in the best of circumstances. But it was also found that Party organizations had "withdrawn into their shells" and were distrustful of all outsiders. Little or no educational work was being carried on and Party members themselves were ignorant of the fundamentals of Party life and ideology. Candidate (probationary) membership had been abolished and people were being taken directly into the Party with no preparation. A survey of Kladno steel workers taken into the Party under these new rules "revealed a keen understanding of international problems but not, however, a similar understanding of the Party rules, the duties of a Party member, how the Party functions, its organizational structure, and so on."\* If this was true of the major industrial regions of the country, what was the situation like in the more backward rural areas? One feels, even though sweeping generalizations are out of order here, that the conditions revealed in these surveys explain quite a lot about the recent course of events.

Even if one assumes that many Party branches were incapable of carrying on intensive ideological work, it might have been possible to overcome some of these difficulties by the use of the mass media, radio, TV, newspapers, etc. One of the surveys showed that 69 per cent of those polled said that they learned more about politics and ideology from the mass media than from the educational activities of the Party branches. But, in fact, such an ideological mobilization would have required a great deal of Party unity and strict control of the mass information media.

#### *The Party Loses Control*

Party unity did not exist in this period, however. There were sharp disagreements over how to proceed. Factional groups began to form and to call for the "radical purge" of their opponents.\*\* The Party lost control over the mass media. Individual Communists set themselves up as "autonomous makers of progressive Party policy" in the radio, TV, and newspapers. Even the Central Committee of the Party was forced to report to the mass media before informing lower Party bodies of its discussions and decisions, thereby

Augustin, B. Kosina, E. Matys, "Sociological Research in Party Work," WMR, December, 1966, pp. 63-66. The areas surveyed included Prague, Ostrava, Kladno and the North Moravian region containing 85 per cent of the country's coal and iron industry, 75 per cent of its steel industry.

\*M. Lab, "Czechoslovakia: Impact of the Economic Reform on Party Work," *World Marxist Review*, December, 1967, pp. 73-4.

\*\* J. Kozel, "Ideological and Political Unity of the Party," *World Marxist Review*, March, 1967, p. 46.

depriving it of the right actually to direct the Party and make policy. Party meetings were thrown open to the general public for unrestricted discussion of anything. This meant Party bodies lost their role as independent, coherently-organized political forces.

At the same time, some very questionable changes were being projected in Czechoslovak society. In regard to the legal and judicial system, for example, Justice Minister Bohuslav Kucera wanted to revamp it so that it would be run by experts trained in traditional and Roman law, which can only be interpreted as a re-institution of the older bourgeois legality. Kucera himself was a member of the Czech National-Socialist Party, which he said would play the role of an opponent of the Communist Party in the future, and not merely become an "opposition party."\*

No one would deny the need to overcome the mistakes and violations that had been made in the past in Czechoslovakia. But the way to do this was to perfect *socialist* standards and not to reintroduce bourgeois ones, because the latter involves total rejection of socialist legality as such.

#### *Attempt to Shift to the West*

No one can criticize Czechoslovakia for trying to reform or to trade with other countries. As has been pointed out, Czechoslovakia probably had more legitimate reasons for engaging in large-scale international trade than many other countries, due to its unique economic structure. But if this uniqueness is taken into account in this respect, then it must be in other respects as well.

Anatole Shub reported an interview with Evzen Loebl, head of the Slovak State Bank, in the March 18, 1968 *Los Angeles Times*: Loebl advocated a \$500 million World Bank loan, membership in the International Monetary Fund (IMF), creation of 200-300,000 private enterprises to absorb manpower "squeezed out" of nationalized industry eventually to amount to some 20 per cent of the labor force. Shub continued: ". . . should Czech economic and political reforms lead to a deterioration of relations with the USSR, Poland, and East Germany, economists here have thoroughly investigated alternate markets and sources of supply . . . Romania and Yugoslavia, as well as various West European and third world countries would be prepared to help." High-level economic talks were being held between the Czechoslovaks and Italy, Japan and West Germany, among others.

\* Interview with Dr. Kucera, *Der Spiegel*, July 22, 1968. The National-Socialist Party, founded in 1897, was the old party of Benes and was characterized by its bourgeois nationalism. Its newspaper, *Svobodne Slovo*, is often quoted in the press of the United States.

If the unique historical, political, and economic features about Czechoslovakia mentioned earlier are recalled, it must be stated that this kind of development meant far more than pure and simple economic reform or trade *expansion*. The Czechoslovaks had *taken into consideration* the fact that their new economic direction might lead them out of CMEA; they had *already* located alternative sources of supply and markets; they had *signed* an agreement with Italy (in February) for the shipment of Czechoslovak goods through Trieste. This points to an eventual reorientation of the Czechoslovak economy to the West, *no matter what* the effect on the CMEA countries or the political disaster this would involve for Czechoslovakia itself. The first symbol (literally) of what this might have meant was the Coca-Cola signs going up along Europe Route No. 12 from the West to Prague, commented on by a French journalist.\*

The question must be posed also, in view of the findings of the sociological surveys, if the Action Program, with its legitimate concern for greater consumer influence on the economy, might not have been misinterpreted by large numbers of confused people whose attitude toward "socialism" as they understood it reflected a society of "individualistic consumers," or people who compared capitalism with socialism solely on the basis of "consumer satisfaction." Given the state of the Party, the level of ideological awareness, the situation in the mass media, would these people have rallied to the defense of socialism, and if they did, what would they have been defending?

#### *The Growth of Imperialist Aggressiveness*

The question of defense is not unimportant here. The situation within the Czechoslovak armed forces on the state frontiers, the activities of the Sudeten-German refugees, the CIA and the maneuvers of the West German army, the stocks of arms and the radio equipment found inside Czechoslovakia, have all been commented on at great length by now, and so it is unnecessary to relate them again. But it is important that all of these developments in Czechoslovakia be viewed within the context of general European security. Todor Zhivkov, First Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party, at the 1967 Karlovy Vary Conference, said: "We share the general view that due to the growing aggressiveness of imperialism we have entered into a period

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\*Jean Mezerette, "J'ai vu Prague passer de l'optimisme à l'angoisse," *Paris-Match*, August 3, 1968, p. 29. The Coca-Cola was imported into Czechoslovakia from West Germany in pull-top cans, along with American cigarettes and French cognac.

marked by a dangerous aggravation of the international situation."\* It was within a period of sharpening conflict in Europe and the emergence of neo-nazism in West Germany that all of the problems, conflicts and chaotic events were unfolding in Czechoslovakia. This fact has been ignored or brushed aside by some people as being irrelevant to the discussion.

But if we go back to the two points made in the beginning about Czechoslovakia—that it has been placed literally at the center of European conflicts and has never been able to survive alone—then we can see that this increasingly tense situation in Europe is very relevant indeed. If we remember Jan Masaryk's words about Czechoslovakia being between Russia and Germany, then we can see the real meaning of Czechoslovakia pulling out of the CMEA economy of socialist Europe in terms of what a choice "against Russia" inevitably meant. If we go over the real situation in the Party and among the people in Czechoslovakia, then we can ask if they *alone*, even with the greatest possible devotion to the socialist cause, could have defended socialism against internal and external attack. If we ask what has been the surest guarantee of the independence of the Czechoslovak state and the national existence of the Czech and Slovak peoples, the *framework* within which the author is certain they will go on to complete their socialist revolution, we will have no difficulty in understanding why the USSR and the other Warsaw Pact countries braved all the imperialist lies and slanders to carry out their internationalist duty to defend socialism and their special responsibility to defend Czechoslovakia.

A historian cannot help wishing the same thing had happened thirty years earlier, when Czechoslovakia had no one to come to its aid and was left alone to face the Nazi hordes. History, however, does not repeat itself. There was no "Munich" in 1968. That is not an abstract, "principled" question, but a reality.

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\**W.M.R. Information Bulletin*, 97-98 (1967), p. 8.

# DISCUSSION

ALBERT J. LIMA

## Opportunism in the Trade Unions and the Struggle for Peace

From the research of material in preparation of this paper the following conclusions were drawn: That the main trade union leadership, with the general support of the membership provides 1) an essential base of support for the foreign policy of the ruling class; 2) a base of support for capitalism, including the present phase of imperialism—state monopoly capitalism—and all that that implies in vast government expenditures for a war economy to support an aggressive foreign policy; and 3) that it seeks a solution of its political problems through an alliance with the liberal wing of the ruling class in the form of a liberal-labor alliance.

### *Instrument of Imperialist Policy*

Furthermore, the AFL-CIO Executive Council consciously works to make *the AFL-CIO a key instrument in carrying out the foreign policy of the ruling class*. In pursuit of this aim it has organized pro-imperialist and anti-democratic centers in South America, Africa and Asia. In Europe, in support of U.S. foreign policy and the system of capitalism, it has worked to split the labor movement.

For the past number of decades, with two brief exceptions, the majority of the unions have

supported the foreign policy of the ruling class. Whenever the pattern of such support was broken, the ruling class launched a coordinated attack against the unions to force them into line.

Until World War II, with the exception of the excursion into World War I, isolationism expressed the foreign policy of the U.S. ruling circles. This policy was of great benefit since it enabled the United States to sit on the sidelines and pick up the spoils after the European antagonists had exhausted themselves. Within the trade union movement sharp struggles arose which challenged the official isolationist policy, but the policy remained unchanged.

In the periods following both World War I and World War II, strong movements developed in certain sectors of the trade unions against the foreign policy of the ruling class as well as against the strait jacket of the two-party system. On both occasions these oppositionist movements were destroyed by a combined attack on the part of the opportunist leaders inside the labor movement and by the employers and the government from the outside.

In the 1920's the slogan of "Hands off the Soviet Union" re-

## OPPORTUNISM IN UNIONS

49

ceived powerful support. Alongside of this a strong movement for independent political action developed resulting in the support for the Presidential candidacy of Robert LaFollette against the candidates of the two major parties. Again following World War II, the CIO opposed the Marshall Plan for a time. The Independent Progressive Party was formed to participate in the 1948 elections.

In the 1920's and again the late 1940's, the government and the employers launched a powerful drive to destroy the Communist Party and to force the trade unions into line. In the 1920's the open shop "American Plan" was forced on the unions. In the 1940's a coordinated drive was launched inside the CIO to split that organization over the issues of the Marshall Plan and the Independent Progressive Party. At the same time the government and the employers combined in an effort to destroy the Left-led unions. A whole series of anti-labor laws were enacted by Congress.

An examination of this phase of the history of the trade union movement leads to the inescapable conclusion that the ruling class considers the continued support of labor for the foreign policy and the two-party system as decisive for capitalism. The struggle to break this pattern will be successful only as a result of a fierce class struggle both within the labor movement and between the unions and the ruling class.

The trade unions followed the isolationist foreign policy in the AFL and, with few exceptions, in the CIO, even during the period

of the militant upsurge in the 1930's.

### *Drive Against Left-Led Unions*

World War II broke this isolationist pattern and the trade unions generally supported the war against Nazism. After the war, and until the split took place in the late 1940's, the CIO supported a policy of unity with the Soviet Union to uproot all vestiges of fascism. After the Left-led unions had been driven out, a turn took place in the foreign policy outlook of the officialdom of the labor movement, including that of the CIO.

Up to then the CIO was in opposition to the Marshall Plan. The main spokesman at the CIO Convention in 1947 was Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas who called on the CIO to assume the role of "a missionary of the American way of life." He then stated:

Labor is peculiarly qualified to bridge the gap that has been growing between the United States and Europe. A new Europe is being born. . . . They are bitterly suspicious of all those who may be undisclosed agents of predatory interests. . . . Out of this arises the importance of the fact that American labor carries good credentials to Western Europe. Doors tightly closed to all others *may open at the first knock. Words from American labor promise to find quick acceptance.* (My emphasis—A.J.L.)

President Philip Murray then addressed the delegates in praise of Douglas' speech saying: "Never in all my life have I heard a more remarkable exposition of the government."

The drive began to oust those unions which had fought against the Marshall Plan and supported an independent third party. The Left-led unions fought fiercely against the combined attacks of the employers, the opportunist labor leadership and the government agencies which directly intervened.

There have been questions raised about the tactics used by the leadership of the Left-led unions in that period. But the main reason for the split was the determined drive by imperialist agents, inside and outside the labor movement, to bring to bear the support of organized labor to the efforts of U.S. imperialism to head off the revolutionary movements throughout the world, to revive the tottering capitalist economies and expand U.S. economic interests in the non-socialist sector of the world.

#### *Overseas Activity*

At the 1948 Convention of the AFL, 40 pages of the officers' report was spent on "overseas activity." The central objective of this activity was to prevent militant unions from developing in Germany and Japan and to smash or split the World Federation of Trade Unions in Europe and the Latin American Confederation of Labor in South America. William Green in his report stated that since 1943—and most of this during the two or three years prior to the 1948 convention—the AFL had spent over \$150 million on such "overseas activity."

Once the unions which opposed

U.S. imperialist foreign policy and the two-party system had been driven out of the CIO, the unification of the AFL and the CIO took place.

For the purpose of serving as a *key instrument of U.S. imperialist policy*, various implementing centers have been formed. One of them is the American Institution for Free Labor Development (AIFLD). According to the proceedings of the 7th Constitutional Convention of the AFL-CIO held at Bal Harbour, Florida, December 7-12, 1967; "The Agency for International Development provides the principal financial support of AIFLD. In addition, the AFL-CIO and several score business firms are contributors to its program." (Vol. 2, p. 98.)

Among its varied activities, the AIFLD organized the Inter-American Confederation of Labor (ORIT as it is known from its Spanish name). This labor center was established to compete with the militant Left and Communist-led unions in South America. The African-American Labor Center and the Asian-American Free Labor Institute were established to function on those continents. According to the same convention proceedings, "By the end of 1967, AALC projects will be under way in more than twenty African countries." (Ibid., p. 100.)

#### *Foreign Policy of AFL-CIO*

The foreign policy of the AFL-CIO was stated as follows:

Yet, the international picture is not all bleak. Apprehensions that regional conflicts might develop in

#### OPPORTUNISM IN UNIONS

World War III have not materialized. This is due, above all, to *the undiminished military power of the United States which is the decisive factor in maintaining world peace.* (Ibid., p. 87. Emphasis mine.)

On the war in Vietnam, the report states:

The AFL-CIO has consistently supported our government's efforts to defeat Communist aggression. . . .

1. The nature of the war: we regard the war as a Communist war of conquest and part of the Communist drive to dominate the world. . . .

2. The danger of the defeat of South Vietnam would open the door to Communist control of Southeast Asia and menace the independence of the remaining free countries of Asia—thus bringing the threat of Communist aggression closer to our shores.

3. The conviction that the triumph of the Vietcong's guerrilla warfare would encourage so-called people's liberation wars everywhere, especially in Latin America. . . .

For these reasons, the AFL-CIO has supported the military measures President Johnson has deemed necessary in order to repel the aggressor—including the bombing of strategic targets in North Vietnam. (Ibid., pp. 87-88.)

#### *State Monopoly Capitalism*

The present foreign policy of the United States flows out of an economy which has developed into state monopoly capitalism. The 81-Party Conference of 1960 described state monopoly capitalism as a phase of imperialism which:

. . . 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.)

The economic theory necessary to determine the laws of motion of this phase of imperialism has not yet been discovered. This is a very serious weakness of the world movement. The lack of such a theory, especially since the end of World War II, has greatly hampered the ability of the movement in the advanced capitalist nations to develop adequate tactics to meet the problems of the working class. This is especially true in the United States. However, there has been much generalization of the known phenomena of this phase of imperialism and in the United States this phase exists as an organic whole. The system of capitalism in the United States now can be said to be that of state monopoly capitalism. This has enabled the capitalists to utilize the state for massive expenditures to bolster and shore up the system. These expenditures now amount to more than 100 billion dollars a year under the guise of defense.

This phase of imperialism and these expenditures have led to the revolutionizing of the productive forces and production relations. Gigantic new industries are financed. Scientists in the universities conduct research which is utilized by the existing monopolies or by new ones created for war production, such as General Dynamics. Through expenditures of gigantic proportions such re-

search has resulted in new techniques, new materials, the perfection and testing of the final products. General Dynamics, headed by France Pace, former Secretary of the Army, was organized solely for military business. *The Wall Street Journal* (November 4, 1964), in describing this new corporation, stated:

Eyebrows were raised again, mainly by competitors, when Pace's friend and legal adviser Roswell Gilpatric, then Deputy Defense Secretary, helped award General Dynamics contracts for the TFX bombers, worth \$6 to \$8 billion.

The vast growth in state expenditures and the rise of the military industrial complex are coupled with a foreign policy designed to prevent the further growth of socialism and national liberation revolutions, in fact, to roll them back. The foreign policy and the huge expenditures are part of an integrated development.

#### *Labor Supports Capitalism and U.S. Foreign Policy*

The labor movement in the United States is firmly based on support of the system of capitalism. There are few exceptions to this in the entire trade union structure. Whatever socialist perspectives may have previously existed have been obliterated by the corrosion of the McCarthy period and the general penetration of bourgeois ideology throughout the labor movement.

To support capitalism means also, of necessity, to support state monopoly capitalism and an imperialist foreign policy. The bulk

of the people in this country do exactly that, and this includes the bulk of the leadership and membership of the labor movement. It is true that imperialism has tremendous sources of propaganda. The most crass imperialist adventures are masked to appear as "bringing freedom and democracy to oppressed and downtrodden people," etc., etc.

Organized labor, therefore has been a consistent supporter of U. S. foreign policy and of the right of the government, business and the military to combine through the mechanism of the state. The vast government expenditures to further the development of capitalism are unchallenged except to the extent of labor demands, for certain concessions in the form of social legislation, union recognition, welfare plans, etc. For example, the 7th Convention of the AFL-CIO states the following:

The number of federal employees represented through exclusive recognition obtained under provisions of President Kennedy's Executive Order 10988 passed the *one million* mark in 1966—a 50 per cent increase in about three years. (Ibid., p. 54.)

This represented the bulk of the organizing achieved during that period.

The trade union leadership accepts the idea that our country can support and provide both guns and butter. The Johnson Administration is hailed as having produced the greatest gains in social security in the history of the country.

The bulk of the trade union leadership is corrupted today by this kind of bourgeois ideology. The slowness of organized labor, with few exceptions, to express opposition to the Vietnam war (where polls show the same general percentage against the war among union members as among other sectors of society) is due to this ideology.

#### *Tying Labor to Capitalism*

The development of state monopoly capitalism has been greatly accelerated since the 1930's by the application of the economic theories of Keynes. His theory is based on the concept that once capitalism developed to the state of monopoly, what he considered to be the former self-regulating features of capitalism no longer operated, and this is what caused the great breakdown in the world economic crisis of the thirties. His theory then outlines how this can be controlled by constantly increasing government expenditures.

Since the 1930's the ruling class generally has accepted the theory of increased government expenditures. In this process there have been pressures for government expenditures leading to an expanding war economy where the funds were directly under the control of the monopolists and where contracts and plants reverted directly to their use and ownership after having been financed by the government. This, by far, provides the greatest level of profits.

With this there have been pressures from labor and other peo-

ple's movements to increase expenditures for the public sectors. While the ruling class agrees with huge public expenditures, a conflict arises over how much and for what sector. When the need arises for cutbacks, it is the public sector which gets put on the chopping block. It is in relation to the issues arising out of these conflicts that the liberal wing of the imperialists and the labor leadership form their electoral and political alliance.

The vast sums thus expended are used by the ruling class to tie the labor movement solidly to the capitalist and imperialist system of this country. Listen to the words of President Johnson spoken to the 4,000 delegates of the National Legislative Conference of the AFL-CIO Building Trades and Construction Trades held a few months ago. Johnson said:

We are going to build that better America and we are going to build it even as we meet our commitments in a world where freedom is under attack. . . . Twelve million Americans have risen from poverty—and that is progress. Sixteen million school children face a better future because of the great educational breakthrough—and that is progress. Twenty million old Americans—your mothers and fathers—no longer bear the crushing burdens of medical bills—and this is progress. Forty-one million Americans are protected by a higher minimum wage—and that is progress. Seventy-five million Americans are working in better jobs at higher wages than ever in our history—and that is progress. And this is only a starting point.

Wirtz, the Secretary of Labor, has this to say in the *AFL-CIO News*:

The half-lie of it is that Vietnam is the reason we haven't done more of what needs doing in this country. It isn't enough but it is important to be clear about the fact that we have done infinitely more to improve the human condition in America during this period of crisis in Vietnam than during any other period of history.

In the statement on the national economy adopted by the AFL-CIO Executive Council at Ball Harbour, Florida, on February 23, 1968, we find the following:

The great productive ability of the American economy can provide the foundation for both continued social progress at home and an honorable settlement of the war in Vietnam.

#### *Support Vietnam War*

The AFL-CIO economic program called for a temporary war surtax to reduce the amount of money the government will have to borrow in the money market.

At no point is the war budget challenged by any spokesman for organized labor. The debate takes place against those who would cut expenditures in the public sectors.

The mass of people, including the members of the trade unions, were so opposed to the Vietnam war that they forced President Johnson out of the race—an unprecedented development. Yet the trade union leadership continues its uninterrupted support of the war.

A few months ago a movie was made at the White House featur-

ing George Meany and President Johnson. This movie has been shown in COPE activities all over the country. The movie concludes with remarks by Meany. After pledging full support to the Vietnam war policy and warning against a bombing pause, he states:

As you have just heard, the President of the United States and we share the same views on the critical issues of the day. We share, as well, with Lyndon Johnson the same hopes and aspirations for a better America.

The nation is beset by crisis; taxes and inflation rob the workers of all wage gains—yet the demagoguery is spread by the spokesmen for the liberal-labor alliance that great gains are being made.

The cities erupt in mass rebellions; the trade union members engage in an unprecedented militant strike movement in the midst of the war; government workers engage in strikes in violation of laws prohibiting them; the evil stench of racism pervades the land—yet the spokesmen for the liberal-labor alliance speak of the great advances for the benefit of the people being made on all fronts.

There can be no question conditions are developing for widespread revolts of the workers against the contradictions and defects of state monopoly capitalism and the misleadership of the trade unions.

#### *Exposing Corrupt Leadership*

At the same time, there can be no question that the ties of the U. S. trade union leadership to

state monopoly capitalism and its foreign and domestic policy is very strong. Only a militant class struggle, growing out of the present militant movement, which already has strong political elements, will dislodge the network of imperialist and capitalist agents who dominate much of the labor leadership all over the country today.

This movement, to be successful in representing the class interests of the U. S. working class, will have to transcend the present burdensome economic issues of speedup, destruction of jobs and job security, and all of the new methods of wage cuts presently at the disposal of the state monopoly system in the form of taxes, inflation, high interest rates, etc.

There are at least three political issues which this movement will have to come to grips with racism, imperialism and the present boss prerogatives of determining job conditions. Trade union leaders who continue to support the war and imperialist policies of the ruling class, who fail to fight against the racism in the country, and who fail to challenge the job prerogatives of the bosses will not be able to represent the fundamental needs of the mass of workers in this country.

#### *The "Labor Aristocracy" and Opportunism*

There has recently been a great deal of debate on whether or not there is a so-called "aristocracy of labor" in the United States which forms the base for oppor-

portunism and to what extent opportunism exists among the workers.

One of the features of this debate is the widespread divergent viewpoints being expressed. A few months ago, George Meyers in an article in the *World Marxist Review*, stated in effect that the aristocracy of labor in the unions of the United States was not a factor.

A recent pamphlet by Victor Perlo, *American Labor Today*, limits the ability of the ruling class to corrupt, stating: "Certainly some labor leaders and workers are 'bribed.'" Perlo then concludes:

But all of this is quite different from mass bribery of the working class. We can show this is necessarily limited to a small fraction. (P. 11.)

Hy Lumer, in an article in *Political Affairs* (November, 1968), quotes Lenin who said:

Opportunism means sacrificing the fundamental interests of the masses to the temporary interests of an insignificant minority of the workers or, in other words, an alliance between a section of the workers and bourgeoisie, directed against the mass of the proletariat.

From this he deduces that opportunism is the betrayal "by a small minority" of the interests of the mass of workers.

Lenin characterized opportunism as a social phenomenon with an economic base and a particular historical development. Gus Hall in *The Path to Revolution* (p. 18) adds a new limitation to opportunism:

Opportunism is a much more conscious current. It contains an element of being bought, of conscious selling out, of betrayal. Therefore it must be seen in a narrower, a more limited framework....

In May, 1961, economists representing research organizations from a number of capitalist nations held a conference in Prague on the "Changing Structure of the Working Class." This conference presented papers which were printed in the *World Marxist Review* for about one and a half years.

This conference concluded that the former base for an aristocracy of labor in the United States has been restricted by the revolution taking place in production relations. Nevertheless, it concluded, that there still was a base among sections of the remaining craft unions which were in privileged positions in the cities and towns throughout the country. These unions had been granted the right to determine the licensing of new shops, the issuing of building permits, handling of inspectors, departments, and generally included in the city, county and state administrations. Along with this category, the conference also included the growing number of full-time, high-paid trade union officials.

The latest to venture into the field of estimating the effects and influence of opportunism, and the existence of an aristocracy of labor in the United States, is Eugene Varga in his latest book *Politico-Economic Problems of Capitalism* (Progress Publishers,

Moscow, 1968). Varga is an internationally known Marxist economist. In his book he states the following.

If we approach the problem of the labor aristocracy on a world scale we must consider most U.S. industrial workers (except Negroes, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, etc.) as forming a labor aristocracy as compared with workers in other capitalist countries. This does not mean that there is no poverty among the U.S. working class. . . . *Nevertheless, the layer of the labor aristocracy is wider in the U.S.A. today than it was in Britain even during the period of its highest prosperity.* (Emphasis mine.)

The articles by Victor Perlo and Hy Lumer have two things in common. First, they both estimate that the profits to the monopolists from overseas investments are not sufficient to bribe any significant number of workers. Secondly, both writers are economists, yet while Perlo dismisses the war economy as providing *only* 4 million jobs, neither of them mention state monopoly capitalism. This is difficult to understand as this phase of the development of imperialism in the United States has reached classical proportions.

It would appear that at least the U. S. writers have boxed themselves into a corner to prove that the U. S. working class is not opportunistic. And, to further guarantee this, Gus Hall requires that opportunism must be further restricted by having "an element of being bought, a conscious selling out, of betrayal."

### *Some Guidelines*

One obvious conclusion can be drawn from the above varied estimations: that there is presently no adequate analysis of the U. S. working class from which accurate conclusions can be drawn. At this point, it would seem necessary to set forth some guidelines which emerge from the general knowledge available on the main currents and developments within the working class.

First, the U. S. workers are exploited and that they fiercely resist that exploitation is proven by the growth of strikes during the period of the Vietnam war.

Second, that there is no equal in the history of any country where the trade union leadership has played such an active and effective worldwide role as has the leadership of the U. S. trade unions in being running dogs for the imperialists of their own country.

Third, that a combination of the classical development of state monopoly capitalism, the worldwide capital investments of the imperialists, the great wealth where the General Motors Corporation has a total income larger than the total budget of Great Britain, the superprofits of racism in the United States, the exploitation of the natural resources in the undeveloped continents of Asia, South America and Africa—through all of these, the U. S. ruling class has at its disposal the most colossal means of bribery in every form that has ever existed in any country.

There is a difference between

an opportunist and opportunist influences, as is pointed out by Hy Lumer in his article. A trade union leader who may make a salary of thousands of dollars, plus an expense account, plus political favors from the ruling class, is in a fundamentally different relationship to the system than is a member of his union who has to man the production line even on a high-paid job. The worker may follow at this point all of the opportunist ideas of his local officer, but the possibility of his shedding these ideas, due to the rate of exploitation, may be present at one and the same time.

There is also a difference between opportunism and the penetration of capitalist ideology which prevails among the bulk of the working class.

The content of the strikes which have taken place needs to be examined. These strikes have been for economic demands and for job security. The Left needs to work out a specific economic program for each industry where the forces exist which can popularize such a program. An examination of the strike struggles will no doubt indicate that the pressure has come from down below, in most instances, and that rank-and-file movements can be started in most industries in support of an economic program.

### *Tasks Ahead*

In the 1930's the issue which led to the building of a Left-center coalition was "Organize the Unorganized." The program developed resulted in this coalition

being identified with many other issues. But the key issue was to organize the unorganized.

Today, two key political issues face the labor movement. These are the issues of racism and imperialism. Therefore, the task of a Left-center coalition will be of a qualitatively higher political level than in the 1930's. This will require a qualitatively higher level of political class consciousness than was true of the coalition of the 1930's.

A year ago some important beginnings were made in building trade union committees against the Vietnam war. Nothing seems to be happening with such committees now. In the San Francisco Bay Area, the Social Democrats were able to exert considerable influence on the committee and, as a result, the activities have failed to reach the rank-and-file workers. The real reason why this committee has not grown in the Bay Area is that the Left failed to give it sufficient help. Large numbers of trade union members can be won for supporting such a committee if consistent work is carried on.

The militancy of unions at any particular time must be judged within the framework of the tasks confronting the working class. Today, the yardstick of racism and imperialism must be added to the defense of the economic needs of the workers, as a means of measuring the effectiveness of their struggles.

State monopoly capitalism has been characterized by the 81-Party meeting as a mechanism

designed to increase the profits of the monopolists to the maximum. This phase of imperialism has another element which needs to be explored. In 1917, Lenin already characterized state monopoly capitalism in the following terms:

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.

Considering the persistence of unemployment in the midst of vast productive forces, the destruction of jobs due to automation, the whole question of state monopoly capitalism and its relationship to socialism has to be explored.

Who decreed that government can spend vast sums on the building of new industries, on research, the revolutionizing of the production relations, and then that these industries must be turned over to private ownership?

Where has it been decided that new industries cannot be built and then turned over to the democratic control of the people?

If the trade unions are to become instruments for effective struggle for all of the needs of the workers today, they will have to be won to become the champions of the struggle, not only for economic demands, but also for the major political tasks which confront the working class in the United States today.

## On Black Self-Determination

Comrade Lightfoot is to be warmly congratulated on his excellent presentation on the question of self-determination for black people in the United States. Especially noteworthy is the clarity of his exposition. Its essential value lies in the much-needed re-assertion of the national aspect of black peoples' destiny. There are only a few reservations I would like to express. They are:

1) Today black leaders legitimately seek substantive *guarantees* for the survival of our people. Rightly they see that the history of black people in this country—and indeed oppressed people all over the world and throughout history—clearly chronicles the assertion of various *rights* promised, or legally defined, yet never delivered or insured. One of these rights was the promise of 40 acres and a mule. Even after the promulgation of this *right* and the victory in the struggle that was to make it possible, the destiny of black people yet remained prey to the whim of the oppressor.

One of the principal reasons we must keep the period of Reconstruction uppermost in our minds is that, unlike the land and mules, an attempt was made at substantive structural alterations in the political power relationships in the nation which could grant black people a limited amount of *power* over their destiny. Certainly, Reconstruction was de-

stroyed in the end and clearly it was because the new South remained at the whim of the oppressor. But clearly that power was taken away because—in part—its legitimacy rested in the fact that it was secured in the federal establishment where black people had no power at all—and thus could be unsecured. It must also be noted that because black people were prepared neither materially, politically, nor psychologically, they could not and did not defend the gains of Reconstruction in the manner frequently employed by people to whom the oppressor has reneged, or who have been betrayed in the financial and political capitals of the oppressor resort to armed defense.

Because of these reasons I think the question of *power* must come to play in this discussion. For any assertion of the *right* of self-determination must, like Reconstruction, involve some notion of a structural alteration of the economic and political face of the country in such a way as to establish instruments of *black power*. And these instruments must be forged in the process of both the class and national struggle and not be solely predicated on the future victory of the class forces—that is the advent of socialism. (Here it is worthy of note that while the Czechoslovakian Republic was founded in 1918 under capitalism, and perfected with the

arrival of socialism in 1948, a most significant point was reached in that development on October 27, 1968 when the Slovak nation was assured political equality and thus the assumption of power in the republic.) The logic of this would seem to suggest that in the process of struggle, from this point forward, demands must be put forward of a *structural* nature which act to give black people power—whether or not the ultimate resolution is separate nationhood.

2) It would be a tragic error to see the sole basis of black self-determination alone in either local basis of power and control, or in one of a number of various forms of national identity (nationhood, autonomous region, republic or statehood). The error is to be found in concentrating the struggle solely in these areas and deemphasizing the question of power in the existing national structures or in the national economic and political life. It should be clear by now that such ideas as community control, decentralization and self-policing while valid and crucial things to be fought for, can be political traps; that is, to the extent that they act to blunt the struggle for power

in the higher structures where the basic class decisions are made. Further, it is useful to recall that Lightfoot, in his book *Ghetto Rebellion to Black Power* describes how although black people in Cuba did not seek physical separation, through such means as governmental presence, including in the military, substantive power was acquired.

3) Lastly, we must remind ourselves that black people have a significant and vital role to play in the unfolding of the class struggle in the U.S. The unity of the working class is a prerequisite to its liberation from capitalist exploitation. The posing of self-determination must be done in such a way as not to distract from this fact. In the coming period it may well be clear that the importance attached to the search for national identity may be a class reflection. We must be careful to distinguish between bourgeois and proletarian nationalism. We must be alert to *who* is self-determining *what* for *whom*. Clearly our interest must be with those of black working people who in the process of struggle arrive at both national and class consciousness. The final determination must rest on both.

# BOOK REVIEWS

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

## A Theoretical Work of Special Merit

Ever since Karl Marx showed that human society was, to speak figuratively, not simply a wild assembly of individual trees but a forest, with its contours, pathways and patterns of growth and decay, innumerable commentators have leaped to refute him. They point to every new tree, undergrowth or even thistle, to claim that since Marx didn't predict this, his whole theory of forests is obviously wrong and he didn't even understand trees.

Marxist theory has thrived on these "refutations." For its aim was never simply to draw up a neat and "closed" theory of the forest of capitalism. Rather its aim was to develop a theory that would enable people to chart paths through the social forest they were in, and which seemed to be a wilderness; to understand and so be able to control the forces of growth and decay; to nurture its fruitful development. And so each revelation of a new growth or an uncharted area, even if it posed as a "refutation," was a challenge to develop still further a theory that had already brought so much light among the trees.

For this reason, some of the great classics of Marxist theory, like Engels' *Anti-Duhring*, and Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, were written as answers to attacks and "refutations." An important work of this kind is the present book under review.\* People interested in Marxist philosophy and theory would be wrong to judge the book by its title, saying "What's Dr. Popper to me or me to Dr. Popper that I should be occupied with his refutation of Marxism?" Cornforth's book is what it says it is, and also much more. It is in my opinion one of the finest expositions in English of dialectical and historical materialism, going far beyond a mere introduction, taking up problems rarely discussed in older treatments of the subject, wording old ideas freshly so that they can play a more effective role in modern intellectual controversy, and rich in new ideas.

Dr. Popper is a Viennese

\*Maurice Cornforth, *The Open Philosophy and the Open Society: A Reply to Dr. Karl Popper's Refutation of Marxism*, International Publishers. Cloth, \$8.95, paperback, \$3.25.

thinker who has made a contribution to the logical analysis of the scientific method, and also looks on himself as the St. George who has crushed the dragon of Marxism. His books on the latter subject, notably the two volumes of *The Open Society and its Enemies*, have for many years been used in institutions of higher learning, as substitutes or antidotes for the teaching of Marxism. Popper is a dogmatist who sees dogmas everywhere but in his own mind. Priding himself on his mastery of formal logic, he has no understanding whatsoever of dialectical logic, which deals with the problems of processes, changes, movement and transformations. And, since he regards anything he doesn't understand as manifestly absurd, so it is, as far as he is concerned, with dialectics.

Immersed in the procedures of natural science, with its laboratories, tests and experiments, Popper has no grasp of the different methods and procedures required for the development of a science of society. And so he regards the Marxist science of society as non-science. He regards Marx on the one hand as a rigid economic determinist, who "sees economics everywhere," and who thinks of people as puppets subject to an iron law of history. And on the other hand, he views Marx as a visionary Utopian who wants to legislate happiness for everyone through political disruption. When the sensible thing to do, Popper thinks, is to eliminate misery through gradual "social engineering." Popper approves of history

but objects violently to the idea that anything can be learned from it. He doesn't approve of capitalism, and is aware that sometimes there is exploitation, but he abhors the concept of class struggle. He believes that capitalism was a 19th century phenomenon that has been eliminated by the 20th century economy of trusts and monopolies. This new economy, according to Popper, is made up of "social institutions" manned by "social engineers" who are all too willing to adjust matters to eliminate inequalities and miseries, if only the matter is approached "reasonably." Who owns these "social institutions" and who hires the "social engineers" are questions that Popper, the "scientist," doesn't ask.

As a serious thinker in his own specialty, Popper falls in with the highly popular trend among bourgeois thinkers today to emphasize ignorance over knowledge, and to stress how little people can really know about the world instead of how much there is to know and to do. Cornforth rates him high as a logician of science, and yet when it comes down to concrete details, Cornforth shows very clearly how his tendency is always to be negativistic in relation to knowledge. Popper insists that a theory or law may not be put to use unless it is confirmed as 100 per cent absolute truth. A scientist who thinks he has solved a problem must immediately raise in mind all possible conditions that would falsify his solution, and proceed to test it rigidly against all such possible falsifications.

As Cornforth shows, such a standard of possible falsifications is very important to expose the unscientific nature of theories so general that they can be twisted to fit anything. When there is no happening that can possibly invalidate a theory, the theory itself is useless. But he also shows that there are areas, especially in the social sciences, where without adopting theories that "explain everything," it is necessary to *proceed with what knowledge there is*, always aware of course that it represents relative, not absolute truth. Many well-founded theories can be tested only by putting them to work to see whether they bring about desired changes. And in fact the triumphs of science lie not in being able to assert complete knowledge in some area, but in putting its knowledge to work so successfully that new problems are raised which would not have been known of before. Popper's attitude is, on the contrary, close to the legendary baseball player who prided himself on making "no runs, no hits and no errors."

Popper's "refutations" of Marxism rise from his inability to think in dialectical materialist terms of process, change and interconnections. Thus he translates Marxism into his own metaphysical and static forms of thought, and then refutes what he finds. Point by point, Cornforth takes up these refutations, contrasting what Dr. Popper says Marxism is to what it really is.

The book is in three parts. The first takes up problems of dialectical materialism. The second

takes up historical materialism in such areas as the theory of history, economics and politics. The third takes up problems of the struggle for socialism. And on each topic Cornforth throws new light, making his book a lesson in dialectical-materialist thinking that all readers—even those who think they know Marxism thoroughly—will profit from.

Cornforth's elucidation of dialectical materialism is an important corrective to those in the Marxist area who think of the principles of dialectics as supreme laws of reality, like those of natural science but more sweeping, so that when they fit reality into a dialectical scheme or pattern, dialectics itself appears to be a form of knowledge. Knowledge, he shows, is always concrete. There is no substitute for actual study of things. The importance of dialectics is that it brings thinking closer to actual reality, making thinking less abstract and more concrete, by teaching it what to look for. "The dialectic discovered in the objective world consists of those forms of interconnection within real processes which the concrete analysis of concrete conditions reveals, and which are ignored in more abstract metaphysical ways of thinking."

One of his most interesting and groundbreaking sections deals with the principle of "unity of opposites," which he shows "is not one single universal law which can be expressed in a single formula, but a whole branch of philosophical inquiry which needs careful working out." He makes a

solid contribution to this working out.

Equally interesting and new to this reviewer is his explanation of the kind of statements that the principles of dialectical materialism are. They are not statements directly concerning actual things and processes, and so immediately verifiable. Rather, he says, they are "category statements"; statements dealing with the modes of abstraction with which we inform ourselves about the world, and generalize its experiences. In this sense, they "serve us as the most general guiding principles for understanding the problems of life—for comprehending the facts in their own and not in a fantastic connection," and only in their use as a guide to the solution of concrete problems is their truth verifiable.

Equally illuminating are Cornforth's discussions of problems of economics, history, politics and socialism. Popper claims, for example, that Marxism can't be a science because it makes predictions that don't come true. He cites for example Marx's statement in *Capital* about the "deterioration in workers' conditions" as a "law of capitalist accumulation." Cornforth points out that "statements of laws are not predictions, but tools used in making predictions." They mark out forces and directions. What people do with them is something else again. He cites the law of gravitation for example, which doesn't predict that all bodies will always fall to the earth, but has to be understood and taken into account

when bodies, such as airplanes, are made to rise and fly. So one thing that the law of workers' impoverishment under capitalism means is "that under capitalism the working people would never get any benefits without fighting for them."

Cornforth shows that central to Marxist social science is both the elucidation of laws that operate as they do regardless of what people think of them, and the confidence that people, knowing these laws, will struggle to put them to use for their own and everyone's growth and freedom. "A movement that will be able to unite and organize to achieve a new order of society must be composed of persons and organizations who will never take any imposition lying down, but who know how to better their condition and not let others worsen it. And those whom people will trust as leaders are those who have shown that both heart and mind are involved in protest against every deprivation and every injustice suffered by even the most insignificant or undeserving individual."

The qualities that make Cornforth's book so excellent a presentation of Marxist philosophy also make it an important book for every Marxist regardless of whether he thinks his special field of work is economics, politics, history, art, sociology, journalism or anything else. It is no mere statement of abstract principles plus illustrations but an invaluable set of lessons in how to think as a dialectical materialist on any problem. Thank you, Dr. Popper.

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