

political affairs

JUNE 1958 • 35 CENTS

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE,
CP OF FRANCE**

[19] **The Crisis in France**

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE, CPUSA**

[22] **On the Peace Manifesto
and the 12-Party
Declaration**

GIORGIO AMENDOLA

[27] **Working Class and Party
in Italy**

**"PEOPLE'S DAILY" (Peking)
and
"PRAVDA" (Moscow)**

[50] **On the Draft Program of
the Communist Party of
Yugoslavia**

ERIK BERT

[59] **American Farm
Cooperatives**

THE 1958 ELECTIONS

By **ARNOLD JOHNSON**

[1-13]

**UNEMPLOYMENT STAGGERS
MICHIGAN**

By **WILLIAM ALLAN**

[14-18]

THE EDITOR

[38] **"Ideas in Our Time"**

Ready in June—

NO MEN ARE STRANGERS

BY JOSEPH NORTH

A book of affirmation in these troubled days is like a fountain of clear waters in a parched time—it is good for the health! Joe North's *No Men Are Strangers* (International Publishers, price \$3.25) is such a book, a kind of modern Pilgrims' Progress except that, instead of dealing in allegory, the author writes of living facts, observed at first hand, reportage from all the fighting fronts of man's struggle for a better world, the human documentation of the most turbulent, swift-moving, epochal half-century of modern history.

Truly a reporter of a special kind, North chronicles his earliest remembrance of his blacksmith father, soon after the turn of the century in Pennsylvania, the shock of his first contacts with bigotry and hardship, his first meeting with Communists. "The beginning of wisdom came when I encountered men who introduced me to a philosophy which scientifically explained Man's existence, and indicated the inevitability of his triumph over hunger, oppression and war."

His on-the-spot observations of America during the Great Depression; his activity in founding the weekly *New Masses* and his lively contacts, as editor of that soon-to-become famous magazine, with the best known writers and artists of that day; his eye-witness narratives of the militant sit-down strikes which helped to usher in the C.I.O.; his stirring coverage of the battlefronts of Spain during the Civil War; his danger-fraught voyages on convoys crossing the Atlantic in World War II; his first grisly entrance into the still-smoking hell of Dachau, all are brilliantly told in this book. Don't fail to order your copy from your nearest bookstore or, by mail, from—

New Century Publishers • 832 Broadway, New York 3

Re-entered as second class matter January 4, 1945, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. POLITICAL AFFAIRS is published monthly by New Century Publishers, Inc., at 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y., to whom subscriptions, payments and correspondence should be sent. Subscription rate: \$4.00 a year; \$2.00 for six months; foreign and Canada, \$4.75 a year. Single copies 35 cents.

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

209

Vol. XXXVII, No. 6

JUNE, 1958

political affairs

A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: HERBERT APTHEKER

The 1958 Elections

By ARNOLD JOHNSON

TWO MAJOR ISSUES now dominate the 1958 elections: the deepening depression with its growing unemployment; the demand to ban A- and H-bomb tests with the further demand for a Summit Meeting for Peace.

Two other key issues which also play a decisive role in all electoral activity are the attacks on labor by proposed "right-to-work" laws, Senatorial investigations, and various other restrictions, and the Congressional deep-freeze on civil rights and civil liberties. Other issues, including schools and housing, the farm crisis and foreign trade, tax cuts and budgets, as well as graft and corruption in public office, also demand attention.

A special issue which is becoming more and more the vital concern of the entire country is the South, and the necessity for a program which will secure to that area the economic, political, social, and cul-

tural standards which exist in the country as a whole. This calls for the right to vote and political participation for all; full enforcement of the United States Constitution for all Southerners, Negro and white; equal pay for equal work without North-South or Negro-white wage differentials; unemployment compensation, social security, welfare benefits, and educational opportunities at least equal to other states.

In advocating a program which advances to a new quality the standards of the people of the South, Negro and white, the struggle will sharpen against the Dixiecrats now in public office, at their command posts in the committees of Congress and Senate, and in the Democratic Party. The new character of this struggle will call for an end to Dixiecrat rule.

As to the economic crisis, the Democrats have made anti-recession legislation their strongest talk-

ing point, with but little action, while the Republicans have urged a do-nothing prosperity-around-the-corner policy. The Eisenhower policy has too often been identical to that of Hoover in 1930. The Republicans have blocked all efforts for a popular tax cut and repeatedly opposed bills for local public works. In the House, the Dixiecrats combined with the Republicans to scuttle the labor-backed Kennedy-McCarthy unemployed insurance bill which would increase the amount, duration, and coverage, and passed the President's grants-in-aid to the states which means nothing for most unemployed.

On banning the A- and H-bomb tests, Truman and Stevenson have come to the aid of Eisenhower, while Acheson has helped Dulles in sabotaging a Summit Conference. This issue has moved forward with the historic unilateral decision of the Soviet Union to halt all nuclear weapons tests and the growing popular demand for such action by the United States. Differences on the issue have been developing within the Democratic Party especially with Senators Anderson, Humphrey and Morse as well as Congressmen Porter, Blatnick and others calling for an end to tests and for new approaches to peaceful co-existence. In New Jersey, the Democratic Party has made banning the tests a part of their platform. Exchange students and delegations, athletic and cultural pro-

grams, scientific achievements and many other events have helped create a new peace climate which the politicians cannot ignore.

In regard to anti-labor legislation, Dixiecrat McClellan has given aid and a platform to Senators Knowland and Goldwater while Senator McNamara has tried to save the day for the unions, and face for the Democrats. Sweeping charges of corruption against certain unions have provided a smokescreen for the robbery of the people by the giant corporations and monopolies and a diversion from the graft and corruption in high places of city, state, and federal government. The failure of some labor leaders to strike back at the McClellan committee, and disunity in the ranks of labor have helped the enemies of labor in this drive.

On civil liberties, Senators Eastland, Jenner, and Butler mobilized a ten-to-five majority of the Judiciary Committee and are now seeking a putsch in the Senate for passage of the Butler-Jenner bill to reverse the pro-civil liberty decisions and bridle the Supreme Court. Here, too, the inner-party differences, under the pressure of popular opinion, came to the fore with Senators of both parties joining to stop or defeat this bill. Among those opposed to this type of legislation were the AFL-CIO, the NAACP, the American Bar Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee,

the Religious Freedom Committee and many others.

In spite of the agreement between the Administration and the Democratic and Republican leadership, that no new civil rights legislation would be considered, a bi-partisan bloc of seven Democrats and five Republican Senators introduced a civil rights bill in February which would give the government new powers to encourage school desegregation and fight infringements of rights. The popular protest against the shameful racist violence at Little Rock and bombings in other parts of the South of Negro churches and homes and Jewish institutions could not be ignored. The bill was buried in committee. The delay in approving and establishing the Civil Rights Commission authorized by Congress last year is another scandal.

Around such measures and issues, the popular movements will largely determine the course and the results of the election struggle. While the forms of popular action are varied and new forms need encouragement, yet there has been too much neglect of standard forms—delegations and petitions, mass meetings and conferences. Too many Congressmen returned from the Easter recess with the report that no delegation called on them when they were at home. There has been only a minimum mail in support of the labor-backed Kennedy-McCarthy bill (S. 3244 - HR 10570). That

should be a warning and a call for action.

Congressmen try to avoid popular pressure. But they cannot ignore the mass conferences and delegations at the state capitals such as in Michigan, Illinois, Massachusetts, Washington, and other states. Public officials have learned to listen to delegations in Washington and then delay action until the heat is off. The issue remains and other forms must keep it alive. There is no need to minimize the importance of the Building Trades mass conference, the AFL-CIO unemployment conference, and other mass delegations. But constant mass expression at the grass-roots level demands much more encouragement and attention. We Communists have a major responsibility in correcting this state of affairs, which is also a reflection of our own apathy on these issues and preoccupation with other problems. We can afford to be much more self-critical and modest, but must not stop at that point. When politicians of both major parties ignore an issue, as President Eisenhower repeatedly does with unemployment, that makes the issue more urgent. Mass struggles around such questions provide the main base of independent political action.

LABOR'S ADVANCING ROLE

At the present time, our country is in the midst of the primary elections and at the beginning of the general election campaign. Every

phase of the electoral struggle is demanding much more attention and analysis. This is a time to determine the next steps, with special attention to the election of labor and Negro candidates within a coalition of liberals and progressives.

The major importance of the California elections is discussed by Comrade Lima in the May issue of *Political Affairs*. In that same issue, Comrade Chancey discusses Ohio developments.

Michigan has long been a point of attention, because of the growing participation of the labor movement in the elections and various independent forms, including election district organizations, PAC, COPE, LLPE. Their activities are in the main related to the Democratic Party. This has resulted in a strong labor bloc in the state legislatures and wide influence in state politics. The announcement of Stellato, Ford local president, as a candidate for Congress in the Michigan Democratic primaries is a further development of labor's initiative and independence. A victory for Stellato would not only add a voice of labor in Congress but would also give new strength to Senator McNamara whose trade-union background is often the point of emphasis.

Labor candidates do not have easy going. On some occasions they must challenge the old, entrenched, well-organized machines. On other occasions labor must challenge the

more recently elected and younger politicians. Thus, in the New Jersey primaries, Governor Meyner, who is generally a liberal, ran his own liberal candidate against a well-known trade union leader who also had strong ties within the Democratic Party machine. In this complicated situation, the liberal governor may have lost more in the long run than he gained at the moment, especially in view of the long history of labor leaders in public office in that state.

In many cases, labor must necessarily challenge its own friends in office. In those districts where labor has its strongest influence, the election of "friends" is no longer enough. Today's role of labor must go beyond Gompers' "support your friends, defeat your enemies" rule of the early century. In asserting this newer role, labor strengthens the progressive character of the total election result. More candidates from the active ranks of labor is obviously an objective of labor in all elections today.

In a number of states, including California and Ohio, labor's independent role has been advanced in the fight against the so-called "right-to-work" bills which are on the November ballots. Around such issues, registration and canvassing campaigns soon involve labor in every phase of the elections. This further participation must also advance the struggle for more labor candidates and a strengthening of the coalition of progressive forces.

In some cases, labor has a particular responsibility to overcome temporary defeats or set-backs suffered by liberal forces within a coalition. In Pennsylvania, liberal Mayor Dilworth was the outstanding candidate for Governor with the present Governor Leader, who is also a liberal, becoming the candidate for the Senate. Mayor Dilworth made a speech in Washington at which he advocated recognition of China by the United States, with normal diplomatic and trade relations between the countries, as being in the interest of peace and economic progress. The top council of the Democratic Party dumped Dilworth and selected the more conservative Mayor Lawrence of Pittsburgh. In Philadelphia, however, labor and the neighborhood organizations are advancing a bloc of labor and Negro candidates for the state legislature and giving united support for a Negro to the U.S. Congress. Such independent action within a coalition can overcome weaknesses which result from politics-as-usual in high circles.

FOR NEGRO REPRESENTATION

A major operation is needed in every state on the question of Negro representation at all levels of public office. There are now three Negro Congressmen out of 435. There is not one Negro among the 96 Senators. There is no Negro in

the Cabinet, or on the Supreme Court. In the judiciary branch, a bare few are Negro. There is no Negro governor, no Mayor of any city. Of the total of state legislators, state senators and city councilmen, there are a growing and galling few who are Negro.

The struggle for Negro representation takes on a country-wide character, involving all the people, Negro and white, and a special national form in the Negro liberation movement for full equality and first-class citizen status. Negro representation is part of the struggle against Jim-Crow, is part of the integration fight, is the concern of all democratic forces and especially of labor and the progressives. In every city, a sharp struggle is in order on this issue. In many cases, that struggle will be with candidates or Congressmen who have a good labor record and are good on civil rights, but it will also be a case of a white liberal standing in the way of Negro representation. The issue cannot be avoided and cannot be left to the Negro people alone, for favorable solution.

It is important that the Liberal Party has seriously put forward the name of Dr. Ralph Bunche, an outstanding Negro, as a proposed candidate for U.S. Senate from New York. It is significant that a Negro seriously and publicly considered entering as a candidate for Lieutenant-Governor of Alabama. There are some important Negro Congress-

sional candidates in New York, Brooklyn, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Los Angeles. The most significant single candidacy is that of Adam Clayton Powell in New York City.

In every case of a Negro Congressional candidate, there is a strong factor of independent political action. The candidacy is usually the result of many years of struggle within the Democratic and Republican parties. The Powell candidacy this time takes on an additionally independent character—not only because of his own independence, but also because the top command in both the two major parties have ganged up in order to dump him, and also are trying to put him in prison on the shabbiest charges which smell to high heaven of political and racial discrimination.

Part of the plot against Powell arises from an apparent deal between the Dixiecrats and the McCarthyite Republicans, with the regular machines of the two parties to get rid of Powell because he has seniority rights to major committee chairmanships, and because he has been making a consistent fight against Jim-Crow—in schools, housing, and the armed forces. His voters are mainly Democrats. His candidacy in the Democratic primaries is virtually essential to his re-election. This is enhanced because Carmine De Sapio and his machine bosses announced their determination to scrap Powell while the Republicans in the Federal

courts announced their intention to jail him. The fact that the initiative and drive to put Powell away and wipe him out of politics come from Dixiecrats and Democratic bigwigs including Carmine De Sapio, all of whom are white, raises seriously the charge of racial discrimination and the fitness of a man like De Sapio to continue in his powerful office. No conference, not even a conversation, no hearing was granted to the Negro Congressman of nation-wide repute. We Communists have many differences with Congressman Powell. However, his record in Congress and in public life is one of many courageous and notable services for his people, for the labor movement, and for democratic America. All of this makes the action of De Sapio and his gang even more despicable.

This makes it necessary that Congressman Powell should not only be the Democratic Party candidate but should also have his name on an independent line for those who want to demonstrate even more effectively their protest against De Sapio's dumping efforts. In this election, every vote for Congressman Powell is in effect an independent vote, a vote in opposition to the machine politicians.

The right-to-vote and registration campaigns of the Negro people in the South are taking on the characteristics of a mass movement through the work of the NAACP, the Southern Christian leaders conference, and

many local organizations and activities. It is part of the desegregation struggle, the logical step from the mass boycott of Jim-Crow. Much remains to be done, especially in the ranks of labor and in the struggle against the Dixiecrats. This calls for full support by the labor movement to the registration drive of Negro voters in all parts of the South, combining this with the labor registration campaign conducted by COPE and the trade unions.

Many campaigns in the South deserve more than a word of observation. On July 29, the Arkansas primaries will see Governor Faubus opposed by three candidates which can result in a run-off election on August 12. And in Texas, State Senator Gonzalez, who is the first Latin-American Senator to serve in the Lone Star state, has entered the race for governor with a clear-cut stand for integration throughout the State "to make every citizen a first-class citizen." He fought against pro-segregation laws in the legislature and won the award of "Man-of-the-Year" from the NAACP in Texas. He will run against Governor Daniel and four other segregationists in the primaries on July 26.

OUR MAJOR OBJECTIVES IN THE ELECTIONS

All the above issues and many more make it imperative that we re-examine our election work in line

with the main objectives of our participation in the elections, which are:

a) *to do everything possible to influence the outcome of the elections in the interests of the people.*

b) *to promote ever greater independence of labor and its allies and a broad people's coalition policy based on the workers, the Negro people, farmers, and all other democratic forces.*

c) *to bring forward the Party and its program, strengthen its influence and build it in the course of the campaign.*

Every phase of the election campaign must therefore be approached in a flexible manner with constant attention to details and specific conditions. Communist responsibility in an election is in relation to the total election campaign. We cannot fit events into a three-point yardstick. We know that elections are not that simple.

We have contributed to clarifying the issues of the 1958 elections by the widespread distribution of *A People's Program for the 85th Congress*, and of *A People's Program for Jobs and Security*, which deals with the current depression. Other leaflets, issued by our state organizations, including an open letter on unemployment to the Governor of Ohio by the Party there, have also been helpful. The *Worker* and the *People's World* are performing a valuable service in clarifying issues and in dealing with specific problems.

However, none of us is satisfied that we are meeting our full responsibility and resolving problems on time. In regard to the campaign of the Republican and Democratic parties, we must determine what demands are being made by labor, by the organizations of the Negro people, by ward or election district organizations, or other organized forces, for the candidacies to urge that the U.S. should call an immediate halt to A- and H-bomb tests.

In a similar way, we should determine the feelings of the people in various organizations in support of a summit meeting, and other steps for peace, and participate in getting those feelings expressed in the election campaign. This procedure needs to be followed on every major issue, including unemployment, civil rights, schools, civil liberties, housing. This is part of the process of developing a new alignment, a new coalition.

INDEPENDENT ROLE OF LABOR AND ITS ALLIES

In discussing how we help *promote* the greater independence of labor and its allies, attention must be given to the content and the form of that independence. We have indicated that the independent role of labor can, and in the 1958 elections will, express itself mainly within the two-party system and particularly in the Democratic Party. We should also add that the form

of Labor-Democratic clubs in precincts or election districts which involves direct participation in discussing election issues and candidates, as well as registration, canvassing and getting out the vote, is apparently one of the more effective forms of organization. The independent work must not, however, be limited to one form. The Democratic Clubs of particular national groups, such as the Italian, or Polish-Democratic clubs, the Committee of Negro Democrats, the various forms which the unions have developed in the shops—COPE, PAC, LLPE—or local union committees, are all part of this growing independence within the two-party system.

The question of perspective constantly arises as a result of experiences within the Democratic and Republican Parties and in the independent clubs associated with the two-party system. To blueprint at this stage the exact form of future independent political action is hardly necessary. It is necessary, however, to have a perspective of greater independence and growth with the objective of a new people's party, based on major sections of labor and with labor fulfilling a leading role in alliance with the farmers and the Negro people. Other sections of the population will undoubtedly participate fully in such a party. The form of such a new coalition and political alignment may be a Farmer-Labor Party or people's party. The program will

necessarily be anti-monopoly, and serving the interests of labor and the mass of people, advancing the demands of the people for economic security, democracy, and peace.

Out of experiences on a mass scale comes the demand for such a new political party. The two-party system has been characterized by a reactionary seniority system in the legislative chambers, the gerrymandering of election districts, the spoils system and backroom deals, and similar practices—all reflecting national control by Wall Street. Financial overlords are now openly taking control with favorite sons of fabulously wealthy families taking public office. For years, the U.S. Senate has been known as a "millionaires' club." The term "Cadillac Cabinet" sticks to the Eisenhower Administration. Nelson Rockefeller from the billionaire family and Averell Harriman with his railroads as well as the oily men of Texas and plantation owners of Mississippi, are part of the picture of the experience which calls for a new political alignment free from the clutches and control of the rich. Wall Street's experts have always managed to keep politics and differences within the two-party system under control. They are the forces who look upon the two-party system as their own.

Large sections of the population—labor, the Negro people, farmers, and other independent voters—are not wedded to the present two-

party system, even though they express themselves within that two-party system, protected as it is by many state laws. Workers and Negro voters who are the victims of the heavy hand of the Dixiecrats can work most effectively inside such a Democratic Party when they have a perspective of independence and a new people's party. That perspective is not achieved by some announcement or premature bolt of an active and well-meaning few. It requires a decisive action by a major section of the labor movement and of the Negro people. That alliance of independent forces must be constantly developed. Our Party must give more attention to promote this independence, to participate in it, to educate and win support for it. All this is part of the perspective for a new coalition and a new party.

INDEPENDENCE AND UNITED SOCIALIST TICKETS

There are many honest workers in election campaigns who hold that independence can only be expressed separately from the two-party system. Some go further and say the independents must condemn the two-party system and denounce all who do not join them in this. Among those who want independence outside of the two parties are those who advocate an independent party with a broad popular program of immediate demands and reforms. There are others who say that this

broad independent party or ticket must advocate socialism in the United States. There are many voices, including that of the Communist Party, for independent political action.

In the recent past, the main expression of the independent position was the American Labor Party in New York and other Progressive Party affiliates in various states. When the ALP was ruled off the ballot and the P.P. closed its doors, a vacuum was created on the ballot. Many Communists as well as others find it difficult to campaign and participate in the elections within the two-party set-up. While the Liberal Party in New York provides part of the answer to the independent voter, its consistent endorsement of Democratic candidates makes it too much a part of the Democratic Party to meet the independent demands of many.

The advocate of independent political action outside the two-party system who is not a member of the Communist Party or any other minority party will normally seek the creation of a new form for his ballot expression. Thus, many serious-minded individuals will try to find a form to fill the vacuum which is created by the absence of the Progressive Party or American Labor Party.

To the extent that our Party had a responsibility in the loss of the ballot status of the ALP, we have a responsibility to provide an an-

swer to the independent who wants to win others to a program of independence. This is all the more imperative in a situation where major party candidates running for a key office such as the United States Senate not only fail to present a peace program but indulge in war propaganda. Of course, the most progressive voter will not cast a vote for such candidates.

The problem is: can an alternative candidate be put on the ballot? In some cases, the answer is yes. In other cases, such as the campaign to defeat Goldwater for U.S. Senate in Arizona, or to defeat Knowland in the California governor's race, a third candidate would serve no good purpose for the independent.

Much consideration must also be given to viewpoints of forces in the labor movement and in the Negro people's movement in making any such decision. Individuals without ties or responsibility in a labor movement surely can recognize that a working-class Marxist Party must maintain and strengthen responsible relations with the labor movement and the most oppressed sections of the population, the Negro people and the Puerto Ricans or the Mexican-Americans. Independence which results in isolation from the working class lacks perspective and is finally futile. However, independence from the two old parties in the form of an independent candidate or even a slate of candidates can also strengthen ties with masses

when bitter experiences and grievances have accumulated in the two parties as is the case with the Negro people today.

Exact conditions must be examined in every election, with the emphasis to develop an independent form which does not isolate us from the labor movement but serves to strengthen the entire election campaign. The campaign of Holland Roberts as a non-partisan independent for Superintendent of Schools in California is a good example of an independent giving strength to the whole campaign and giving the people the opportunity to express themselves on a key issue—education and the schools. The role of the independent candidate of a non-partisan character who can bring forth campaign issues and develop independence from the two-party system needs attention today.

Among the advocates of a "United Socialist Ticket" or "United Independent Socialist Ticket" are the Trotskyites of the James P. Cannon faction, otherwise known as the Socialist Workers Party. They oppose a non-partisan independent candidate or candidates. They place the emphasis on the word "Socialist" and seek to divert the socialist-minded people in this country. In the name of advocating socialism for the United States, they make their key demand the condemnation of socialism in the Soviet Union, China, and other lands.

This Socialist Workers Party

placed an ad in the *National Guardian*, calling for a United Socialist Ticket and listing planks for a platform including "aid to the countries of the Soviet orbit who are fighting for their freedom." Thus, in the name of "socialism" one finds the infamous "Project X" and the Allen Dulles espionage program! Other Trotskyite cliques, such as the Independent Socialist League under Max Schachtman, are not satisfied and hope that the S.W.P. will not "be willing to further dilute or even omit completely the references to the struggle for freedom of the people of half the world from their program." To the great mass of American workers and workers of any land, it is ridiculous that they should be asked to be for socialism and against it at the same time. It boils down to the fact that the entire program of the Trotskyite faction is one which, by condemning socialism where it exists, serves the purpose of driving workers away from serious consideration of it here.

However, *not* all advocates of an independent ticket or even all who advocate or join together on a call for a "united socialist ticket" are Trotskyites or supporters of Trotskyism. Far from it! The great majority of those who are now supporting this development of a United Socialist Ticket, including those associated with the *National Guardian* or some who have been in the Progressive Party, can be convinced that such a ticket in this

election based on the program advocated by Cannon can only serve to isolate the Left and will prove self-defeating for those who seek effective independence. We can help convince them and avoid bitter experiences. It is also necessary for all to see that this development can easily become a diversion from all other election activity. Much more attention must be given to peace tickets and to the non-partisan and independent character of such tickets.

OUR INDEPENDENT COMMUNIST ACTIVITY

We have indicated the three general objectives of our electoral work and the necessity of reviewing every phase of our work. The three points are interrelated and a weakness in any one phase will result in a distorted campaign, as has been the case in many elections.

Because we have been involved in much internal debate and discussion and because there are those who work to destroy our Party by every possible trickery, slander, and attack, we must give additional attention to the independent work of our Party in elections. Those in New York who prematurely were announcing the death of the Party and seeking another organized form, were somewhat routed for the time being by the successful May Day meeting. Many events on a world scale have also routed those

who have tried to destroy confidence in socialism.

Millions of people in the U.S. are discussing the failure of capitalism with its unemployment, racial discrimination, and brazen disregard of people in the testing of nuclear weapons. The failure of capitalism takes hold of popular thinking not by itself but in relation to the achievements of socialism in the Soviet Union, China, and in other lands, where socialism works. The unilateral decision of the Soviet Union to halt the A- and H-bomb tests and the scientific advances demonstrated by the launching of the Sputniks create fresh thinking on socialism. So does the absence of "recessions" in the land of socialism. Such events also involve discussion of basic principles and of co-existence of different social systems.

Just as we need to use much more skill and vigor in helping to promote the independence of labor and its allies, so also we must do a much more effective job in advancing our own Party than we have done in many past elections. We have the job of clarifying issues and participating in movements around those issues. In some campaigns, we may have a known Communist candidate, who may have to use varied forms in order to be on the ballot, such as a People's Rights ticket, which will not subject signers of a petition to unnecessary harassment.

In other cases, our Party may find

itself restricted to organizing other electoral activities around the issues of the campaign, having spokesmen at forums as was recently done by Carl Winter at a Detroit forum, participating and organizing mass meetings, appearing on the radio and television. We want our position to be known among the masses of people. This requires leaflets and broader sale and distribution of the *Worker* and the *People's World*.

Our educational work will contribute to the development of movements around issues, and these movements give life to an election campaign. We must also assume our share of responsibility in the organizational features of an election, issuing material and canvassing to get the greatest registration of voters and the greatest popular voting on election day.

In placing our major emphasis on issues in this campaign, we are particularly concerned that the facts, all the facts, be made known to the people. We are not satisfied with clichés and pet slogans, although an effective slogan with a good picture which is related to life, is worth thousands of words. Our materials should spell out the promises and

records of candidates and parties. We cannot be satisfied with only the recording of the facts as to others. Our own point of view with our partisan objectives must also be clearly presented. It is only when we do this that the voters can make a judgment in their own interest.

Within a coalition inside the two-party system, as well as within labor's independent activity, we cannot afford to underestimate our particular contribution. We can afford to be modest in how we present our views. We cannot allow others to present them for us.

Partisanship is a feature of an election. Our partisanship is not on the same basis as that of other parties. Our responsibility to the working class and mass of people gives a quality to our partisanship which is not the same as that of other parties. Our Party continues to enjoy a good name in the struggles of the unemployed, in the campaigns of labor, in the fight for the rights of the Negro people, for civil liberty, and in the struggle for peace. Activities in these fields in recent months serve to emphasize the necessity of moving our election activity to a new plane in keeping with events.

Unemployment Staggers Michigan

By William Allan

Unemployment stalks our land; nowhere is it so fearful as in Michigan. There, according to official reports, 17 percent of the labor force is without work; these same reports project the likelihood that by September a full 18 percent—530,000 workers—will be without jobs in this single state. In our continuing effort to bring the facts concerning this national catastrophe to our readers*—together with analysis and suggested proposals for action—we publish below a first-hand report from a veteran newspaperman, and Michigan correspondent for *The Worker*. The italicized paragraphs, which follow, were received from our author as last-minute additions to his article.—*The Editor*.

FLINT: Some 30,000 workers are jobless in this town, the heart of the General Motors empire. Over 12,000 are on direct relief, and layoffs continue to mount. Production is less than 50 percent of capacity, and as the "season" ends by mid-summer this town will break all records for unemployment. At the Buick plant, where 2,400 units a day were produced in the recent past, now only 900 units a day are coming off.

A big advertisement appeared in the papers here the other day: "Wanted, garden plots, in or near Flint, to be used by unemployed members. These plots will be kept clear of weeds and debris, and the [UAW] union guarantees to clean up thoroughly at the end of the

season." This is a reflection of the auto union's program to get garden plots so that the unemployed can grow something to eat.

DETROIT: State-wide unemployment is now (mid-May) half a million, with over 325,000 of that in this city. Almost 50,000 Detroiters have run out of their unemployment compensation, with Negro workers—last hired, first fired—making up a large proportion of this total. The first three months of 1958 saw re-possession of cars, furniture and personal property in the Wayne County Common Pleas Court run 1,061—that's 18 percent higher than during the first three months of 1957.

Emil Mazey, UAW Secretary-Treasurer, commenting on this at a recent Ford workers union meeting, said: "Unemployment is a built-in feature of our economic system,

and there is something mighty wrong about an economy that breaks down like that." He said that as long as goods are produced for profit and not for the needs of the people, there will be depressions. Mazey called for a democratically-conducted economy under which production would be planned to meet the needs of the people.

* * *

This past April, 4,000 Michigan unionists, as a lobby, converged on the State Capitol Building in Lansing, and they found the doors of both the Senate and the House locked in their faces. These thousands had come from 32 counties, by car and bus, to demand that unemployment compensation be continued until the worker got a job, and that the amount paid be raised to half the worker's average wage. It was a tremendous piece of news, but the capitalist press had no room for it on their front pages, and they did not find it necessary to comment upon it in their editorials.

At that time, with some 450,000 unemployed, the Michigan AFL-CIO leadership, on the demand of the rank-and-file, organized this lobby of the unemployed. It was the first project undertaken by the just-merged AFL-CIO in Michigan; it received quite a different reception from that which greeted the unemployed in the '30's, or more recently when conservative labor leaders came themselves to ask for crumbs.

In the old days we saw the workers driven away with clubs, off the lawns of the Capitol and into the back alleys. We well remember that then not a single legislator, neither Republican nor Democratic, would so much as talk to the workers. The Governor, then, was not anywhere around—he had gone hunting when we had come back in 1933.

This time, while the majority of the legislators voted for a "recess," it was, nevertheless, different. In Michigan, an electoral coalition has been growing and developing for a decade, and it will put up Governor G. Mennen Williams for his sixth term in 1958, as a prelude to his running for President in 1960 on a liberal platform. This electoral alliance is led by labor, and its potency and mobilizing power have just been enhanced with the merging, in February, of one million workers into the combined AFL-CIO. The State president is Gus Schelle, a militant trade-unionist who stands on no ceremony when dealing with capitalist politicians on issues affecting the workers and their life-long battle against the monopolies.

When the Republicans, who control the Michigan legislature because of an undemocratic method of allocating seats, looked out of the Capitol windows that fine April morning they saw thousands of the people bearing down on them. AFL-CIO numerals were everywhere;

* The attention of readers is called to the articles on the recession and unemployment in upstate New York, by Kay T. Horne (March, 1958), and in Ohio, by Martin Chancey (May, 1958); and the general survey by Hyman Lumer, in the March, and by George Morris in the May 1958 issue.—Ed.

clearly labor as a whole had made the fight of the unemployed their fight, and the thousands streaming along the sidewalks to the legislative halls were being headed by the new leaders of the merged labor federation.

In panic, the reactionaries voted to adjourn; they hung up signs before both Chambers that they were in "recess" and literally fled the building. Later reporters discovered that they had high-tailed it for the Lansing country club, where they were the guests of Hiram Todd, lobbyist for the Chrysler Corporation! When the workers learned this from the reporters, there was a roar of indignation and rage and disgust such as has never before rocked the Capitol of this State. One of the newsmen commented: "Schelle has just got himself 4,000 red-hot organizers for the 1958 election, and they won't have to go to any PAC school to learn how."

Inside the Capitol, the thirty-five members of the House and Senate who carry union cards were all there, mingling with their brothers and sisters of the mass lobby. Nine Negro legislators—more than any other State government—were there, too, also participating in the lobby discussions. And the Governor, himself, was among those looking with anger at the barred doors of the Chambers. Schelle, standing alongside a replica of the Liberty Bell in the corridor, commented: "There is a new cry here in the State Legisla-

tive halls. Its 'lock the doors, here come the people'."

A new note appeared in the speeches of labor leaders following this arrogant action by the GM-Ford-Chrysler-controlled reactionaries of the Michigan legislature. Roy Reuther, and Schelle, asked the assembled press, in the presence of hundreds of workers: "What do we do now to help these jobless? Do we tell them to lay down and die? Do we tell them to rob a bank or shoot somebody to get money for food? They can lock the doors on us—but this isn't the end. We will be back in a dozen different ways." Only the labor press ran these quotes.

Next in preparation, we understand, is a giant demonstration in Cadillac Square, Detroit. This is the historic spot that saw, March 6, 1930, over 100,000 jobless mass in protest, at the call of the Communist Party, and the Unemployed Councils, then to be ridden down by hundreds of cops, and to be tear-gassed and clubbed. You can be sure that will not happen this time. Now, on the platform will be the Governor, U.S. Senator McNamara, several Congressmen, including Michigan's only Negro Congressman, Charles Diggs, Jr., and many city councilmen, Negro and white, along with members of the legislature. Just as the cops were nowhere in sight in the April Lansing demonstration, so they will be doing no more than quietly directing traffic on Cadillac Square.

That the question of unemployment will be the central issue in the 1958 elections here is clear to all. As part of the electoral coalition, Governor Williams has put forward some useful proposals, but he has not overcome a general Acheson approach to foreign affairs—shared, of course, by many Democrats, and so he still speaks of the needs for "defense" and couples this with battling unemployment. Some labor leaders, and others—plus a generally growing anti-war sentiment—have been steering him away from some of his worst war-mongering and Soviet-baiting, though he still refuses to endorse, for example, world-wide trade, or a summit meeting, or the banning of further nuclear-weapons testing. This is in contrast with Walter Reuther, UAW president, who, while a Williams backer, has come out for the cessation of such testing.

Speaking to the lobby of unemployed in Lansing this April, Governor Williams lashed out against the giant monopolies and the subservience of the Eisenhower Administration to them. He denounced the domination of the State legislature by the auto-moguls and the electric trusts. Williams called for greater independent action by groups such as those lobbyists, and said that only such pressure could develop useful legislative action.

The militancy of the Governor's speech was explained, at least in part, no doubt, by the fact that when

he looked over his audience he saw over 500 Ford workers among them, including their President Carl Stellato, who is a candidate for Congress in the Dearborn district. Stellato will be backed by the coalition, and the workers racked up 20,000 signatures for him to file, which was ten times more than he needed. Stellato makes it clear that he favors greater numbers of trade-unionists running for public office; he wants labor to get over the habit of supporting professional politicians for public office, and ending up with bankers and their lawyers supposedly "representing" them.

It is expected that the coalition in Michigan—led by labor, and with important support from the Negro people, farmers, professional and middle-class elements and national groupings—will put forward over 100 candidates in 1958, and that most of them will be down-to-earth farmers, and actual trade unionists and Negro men and women. Very recently, two Negro men, Clarence Sabbath in River Rouge and Dr. Frank Howell in Muskegon, have been elected to the City Councils; both topped the polls, both were backed by the AFL-CIO and its allies. In many other cases recently, trade unionists and farmers have been victors in township elections.

Now the newly-merged AFL-CIO, a million strong, prepares, with its allies, to plunge into the 1958 elections with its own measuring rod for candidates and programs.

Lansing and the locked doors of the legislature drew clear lines for this election. Everywhere in the State, united rallies are taking place; more than for the past seven or eight years there are debates, forums, symposia, and mass meetings on questions of unemployment, wages, war or peace, atomic weapons testing, etc.

Continued political leadership by the unions in building this anti-monopoly front against the Big Three auto companies, and with the rank and file alert and increasingly active as they are, should chalk up impressive gains in the coming elections.

Some ingredients are lacking. Not enough is being said about the fight for peace, for extending democracy by eliminating gerrymandering and by greater representation for the Negro masses. There are thirty-four national groups in significant numbers in this State and they are very concerned about the rights of foreign-born Americans, but not nearly enough is being done on this question up to now.

* * *

The Communist Party in Michigan is making its contribution where-

ever and whenever it can. Quite recently, two splendid pieces of material were issued—the legislative program of the Party for 1958 and the leaflet, “Why We Need More Jobs.” Both were widely distributed and very well received.

The Party, through other leaflets, and through meetings and other forms of activity—including the sale of *The Worker*, of which 600 are now distributed here—especially concentrates on the battle against war, for peaceful co-existence, for a summit meeting, and for the cessation of atomic-weapons testing. It emphasizes, too, the importance of normalizing East-West trade as a factor making for peace and making for jobs. At the same time, the Party brings forward the truth that unemployment and depression are attributes of capitalism; that just as neither exists now where socialism exists, so neither would exist in our country if the anarchy and jungle-like quality of capitalism were replaced by the planning and collective living characteristic of Socialism, where human welfare takes the place of individual profits.

The Crisis in France

By Central Committee, CP of France

Before going to press, the latest word we have been able to receive from the Communist Party of France evaluating the acute crisis through which that country is passing, appears in a resolution adopted by its Central Committee on an extended political report made by Marcel Servin. This Resolution is published in L'Humanité (May 5); it begins with certain specific references to the Servin report and then goes on to predict that apparent agreement among leaders of the bourgeois parties would not be sufficient to overcome the ministerial impasse confronting France. Then, continues the Resolution:

SURFACE ACCORD cannot mask, however, let alone resolve, the contradictions which contributed to the fall of the governments of Mollet, Bourges-Manoury and Gaillard; these are caused by divergence of opinion regarding methods of fighting the war in Algeria to a finish through the extermination of Algerian resistance. Four years of relentless war have shown that this is impossible. Algerian independence will be won. The question is: Will it be won with France or against her?

As the Political Bureau of the Party emphasized on April 16, the choice to be made is not between different methods of continuing the war in Algeria, but between continuing the war and seeking a peaceful settlement.

The fact is that none of the essential problems our country faces—either on the economic, financial and

social plane, or on the military level—can be solved without ending the war in Algeria.

The Algerian war has already caused much blood to flow; it forces hundreds of thousands of families to live in anguish and fear; it is tarnishing the honor of France; it is sowing hatred between the Algerian people and the French people and compromising all future relations between them.

Intensifying this war—from which the capitalists are reaping enormous profits—will bring a new decline in living conditions for the working classes and the toiling masses, and a sharpening of government and employer resistance to any increases in wages, salaries and pensions for the general working population.

The war in Algeria is spurring the aggressive activities of treasonous groupings, and feeding the cam-

paign for the capture of personal power. Additionally, continuing this war cannot fail to spur intervention of American imperialism against the interests of the Algerian people and the people of France.

Under these conditions, the problem of the struggle for economic and social demands becomes directly linked to the struggle for ending the Algerian war. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of France reaffirms its position that the possibilities for arriving at a true and just solution of the Algerian problem lie in negotiation on the basis of the recognition of the Algerian people's right to independence, on the basis of equal rights, free consent and reciprocal benefits.

Maintenance of colonial privileges is incompatible with safeguarding French interests in Algeria and in all Africa. Continuing the war will cause all to be lost to France, as has already happened in South Viet-Nam.

The most urgent obligation of the French people is to understand that defense of the national interest demands that the conditions of our epoch must be reckoned with—conditions characterized above all by the entrance of the colonial peoples into national consciousness and by the manifestation of their will to independence.

Anxious to neglect no measure that might hasten the hour of peaceful solution of the Algerian prob-

lem, the Communist Party of France proposes to the parties of the Left that a compromise be sought permitting progress in this direction. Only the union of the forces of the Left in opposition to the demands of the ultra-colonialists can hold reaction in check. Intervention of the masses through intensification of this union can aid in solving the ministerial crisis in a manner other than that envisaged by the advocates of war in Algeria.

The Communist Party, always ready to support any step that is in the popular interest—and thus, any government which takes such steps—is convinced that the best thing will be to give France a government similar to the majority of January 2, 1946, in which the Communist Party shall assume its share of responsibility.

On the occasion of the cantonal elections, the Socialist leaders recently demonstrated their persistent hostility to the unity of the working class, to the rallying of the forces of the Left, as well as their desire to maintain the alliance they have formed with the parties of reaction for continuing the Algerian war. Herein lie the essential causes of the difficulties which the People of France are experiencing.

It is for this reason that the Central Committee calls on all Communists to work perseveringly to achieve the united front, without ever losing sight of the fact that the united front is, above all, the independent and

united action of the masses for their most urgent economic, social, and political demands.

By arousing in the country a movement for unity in the struggle, powerful enough to end the re-

sistance of the Socialist leaders, the union of all workers and all democratic forces will become inevitable. It will be achieved as the interests of the people, of France, and of peace demand.

In our next issue will appear a full-length analysis of the situation in France by Jacques Duclos, as well as other material on the momentous events unfolding in that country—The Editor.

On the Peace Manifesto and the 12-Party Declaration

By National Executive Committee, CPUSA

In accord with the resolution adopted by the National Committee at its February meeting, the following statement was unanimously adopted by the National Executive Committee. Since then, a number of significant developments have occurred, particularly in relation to negotiations for a summit conference and to the position taken by the Seventh Congress of the Yugoslav League of Communists, which give added meaning to both the Peace Manifesto and the Twelve-Party Declaration, and renewed emphasis to the importance of their study and circulation.—The Editor.

I

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE Soviet Union of unilateral suspension of nuclear weapons tests has raised the hopes of all mankind and has greatly increased the universal determination to ban nuclear war. It reinforces the world-wide demand for East-West talks and encourages the prospects for a big-power meeting "at the summit," despite the opposition of Dulles, Strauss and other spokesmen for monopoly.

The lifting of the threatening cloud of atomic war and the ending of the cold war will remove a great burden from the shoulders of the American people. Prevailing policies of big business and its political spokesmen, which have been geared to war and increasing world ten-

sions, are also responsible for excessive taxation, inflation and loss of jobs through trade restrictions, as well as curbs on civil liberties and the lag of science and education in our country.

We American Communists have always sought understanding and cooperation between the United States and the USSR, in the best interests of our people. We are mindful of the fact that President Roosevelt's recognition of the Soviet Union in 1933 contributed to the revival of trade and manufacture in the U.S. after the most devastating economic crisis in our history, helping to reopen factories and providing jobs. We cannot forget that, as allies in the anti-Hitler war, we fought together to end fascist tyranny and military conquest, thus opening

the way to the liberation of oppressed peoples in many lands. Today, the development of friendly relations, cooperation and trade between our country and the USSR is decisive for achieving a durable world peace.

When, on the occasion of the observance of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the first socialist republic, representatives of 64 Communist parties met in Moscow and issued a joint Manifesto for Peace, they not only voiced the ideals and humane purposes of those dedicated to socialism everywhere, but they echoed the hope of all mankind. The CPUSA was unable to take part in these deliberations due to anti-democratic and restrictive laws in the U.S. which still bar freedom of travel and political association. But we hail the call for peace adopted by the Communists from 64 countries and shall seek to make it known to the American people as part of our contribution to ending misunderstanding and toward cementing friendship and cooperation between the peoples of the East and West.

The Manifesto declares, as our 16th National Convention has also noted: "War is not inevitable. War can be prevented, peace can be preserved and made secure." A new balance of forces exists which makes this possible. Heading the camp of peace are the socialist lands—the Soviet Union, People's China, the people's democracies of Europe and Asia. By their side are the Ban-

dung nations, a powerful new world force. And in the capitalist countries, the masses of working people are a mighty force for peace.

But at the same time, it is clear that the danger of war has not passed. Its source is ". . . the capitalist monopolies who have a vested interest in war and have amassed unprecedented riches from two world wars and an arms drive. . . . The ruling circles of some capitalist countries, under pressure of the monopolies and especially those of the U.S., have rejected proposals for disarmament, prohibition of nuclear weapons and other measures aimed at preventing a new war."

This is evidenced anew by the refusal of the Administration to suspend the current series of nuclear tests in the Pacific, by the steps being taken to establish missile and rocket bases in the NATO countries and to arm West Germany with atomic weapons, and by American imperialist interference in Indonesia and the Middle East.

However, the Manifesto declares, this danger can be overcome. The forces of peace can prevail. We hail the call of the 64 parties to all people of good will throughout the world to demand an end to the cold war, prohibition of nuclear weapons and tests, abolition of military blocs and foreign bases, an end to imperialist plotting and military provocations. We add our voice to the concluding plea of the Manifesto for Peace in which 64 Com-

munist parties from all five continents ask:

From now on let the countries with different social systems compete with one another in developing science and technology for peace. Let them demonstrate their superiority not on the field of battle but in competition for progress and for raising living standards.

We extend a hand to all people of good will. By a common effort let us get rid of the burden of armaments which oppresses the peoples. Let us rid the world of the danger of war, death and annihilation. Before us is a bright and happy future of mankind marching forward to progress.

We also reiterate the sound observations of the Manifesto that:

The socialist countries do not intend to enforce their social or political system on any other nation. They are firmly convinced that socialism is bound to win, but they know that socialism cannot be implanted from without, that it will come above all as a result of struggle by the working class and all other progressive forces within each country.

II

We welcome equally the Declaration of the Twelve Communist and Workers' Parties which are the governing parties of socialist states, as renewed evidence of the great contribution to world peace and social progress which is inherent in the socialist system.

Today, the Soviet Union, pioneering a new way of life free from class exploitation, no longer stands alone as a socialist country. Now, one-third of the world's people have rid themselves of the rule of capital and are building their future on socialist foundations. We greet this growth and consolidation of socialist society in many lands, creating for the first time a world system of a higher order than capitalism—one which is a reliable bulwark of peace and freedom.

These countries, inspired by and learning from the historic lessons of the Great October Revolution and the victory of socialist construction in the USSR, have each come to socialism by their own paths, overcoming great obstacles and uniting their people and national resources for mutual aid and support of world peace. This historic Declaration demonstrates the high degree of unity and solidarity achieved by the leading parties of these countries.

The unity demonstrated by these twelve parties, which are successfully leading their countries in the building of socialism, serves to emphasize anew that the internationally valid, basic lessons of working-class history and experience which constitute the teachings of Marxism-Leninism are not negated by the respective national features and course of development of each nation. On the contrary, the enhanced unity of world-wide socialist forces—following upon fraternal mutual aid, equal-

ity and self-examination and correction of errors—rests on the recognition of the general principles of communism, coupled with their creative application in accord with the specific conditions of each country.

The Declaration of the twelve parties notes that the XXth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union signaled a great advance in Marxist-Leninist theory and practice, corresponding to the new conditions of our present epoch—the epoch of world transition from capitalism to socialism. In this respect, the Congress projected new possibilities for achieving peaceful coexistence and peaceful paths to socialism. This advance the Declaration carries forward and develops further, thus making a major new contribution to the advance of Marxist-Leninist theory. And, in confirming what is new, it re-emphasized at the same time the imperative need, for all who seek to end class exploitation and build socialism, to adhere to the scientific method and principles of Marxism-Leninism, derived from the objective laws of social development which continue to be verified by world experience. In this connection, in dealing with the key issues of the world labor movement and international cooperation for peace, democracy and freedom, the Declaration stressed the vital importance of unfolding a resolute struggle against revisionism, as well as dogmatism.

Especially noteworthy is the con-

tribution which the Declaration makes to advancing the struggle for peace. Assessing the international situation, including the continued "cold war" policies of the aggressive imperialist forces, particularly of the U.S. monopolists, the Declaration stresses that the struggle for peace is now the key task confronting all progressive humanity, in the first place the Communists and other advanced workers. In this connection, and on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the profound changes in the alignment of world forces—especially the historic significance of the emergence of socialism as a world system, the disintegration of the old colonial empires, the sharpening contradictions in the imperialist camp and the strengthening of world labor, Communist and national liberation movements—the Declaration emphasizes that the peace forces have grown to a point where there is a real possibility of averting war. Towards this end the Communist and Workers' parties of the socialist states reaffirmed their adherence to the principles of proletarian internationalism and of the peaceful coexistence of the socialist and capitalist systems and urged joint action in behalf of peace on the widest possible scale and with all who favor peace and oppose war.

III

Over a year ago, at the 16th National Convention of our own Par-

ty, we American Communists took steps—following extended self-critical examination of our work and views—to break with sectarian errors and dogmatic habits which hindered our keeping pace with the changing world and prevented our giving the most effective leadership to the strivings of the American people for peace and greater social progress. In so doing, we also found it necessary to wage a determined struggle against revisionism—against any abandonment of our ideological moorings which are rooted in the struggles and experience of the working class of our country and all lands, and which bind us with the cause of toiling humanity everywhere.

The broad outlines of our future work, established by our 16th Convention and further developed on the basis of our experiences since then, still need to be vigorously fought for in theory and practice. Toward this end, our Party must strengthen itself politically and organizationally, expand its mass ties and multiply its vanguard contribution to the great struggles for peace, jobs, civil rights and democratic liberties in our country. Toward this end, we must conduct a systematic struggle against Left sectarianism and Right opportunism, against doctrinairism and revisionism, in defense of the Party and its cardinal Marxist principles. And toward this

end, too, we must successfully accomplish the task we have set ourselves of making substantial progress in preparing a draft of a basic Party program before our next national convention.

While unfolding deeper study and broader discussion of the American scene as the basis for our conclusions, our Party will find vitally important the lessons summarized from the experience of the international Communist and working class movement.

The National Executive Committee of the CPUSA calls for a thorough study and systematic discussion of the theoretical propositions contained in the Twelve-Party Declaration by every section of our Party organization and the popularization of the historic achievements of the socialist sector of the world reflected therein, together with the contributions it holds out for world peace.

Likewise the National Executive Committee calls for the widest distribution of the Peace Manifesto of the 64 Communist and Workers' parties and the organization of discussions around the Manifesto in the ranks of the Party and among other advocates of peace. This will be an important contribution serving the best national interests of the American people and the cause of world peace.

Working Class and Party in Italy*

By Giorgio Amendola

This issue goes to press prior to the holding of general elections in Italy. Clearly, however, these elections are among the crucial events in the swiftly-moving panorama of the contemporary world. As valuable background information and analysis, we print the article that follows; its author is a member of the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party.—The Editor.

IN RECENT MONTHS the problem of the decline in the specific gravity of the working class in Italy's political struggle has been faced squarely as the central one in the struggle for a democratic revival in our country. Not only the quantitative and numerical, organizational and electoral aspects of the decline have been discussed but also its political meaning.

What caused it; what have been its results? These are questions demanding clear and unequivocal answers, since unless the causes for the setback that has been suffered are understood it is impossible to find how to remedy the situation. The *Milan Assembly of Communists from Large Scale Industrial Enterprises* was an important step in this urgent investigation, but the Assembly cannot be said to have achieved conclusive results even within the economic-trade union limits to which debate was largely confined.

No one can deny the importance

* Translated by Amy Schechter from the December, 1957 issue of *Rinascita*, theoretical organ of the Communist Party of Italy.

of the economic factors involved. The years following the 1951-1952 period have been characterized by developments favoring Italian capitalism. The rise in national income, in industrial production and productivity of labor, have enabled the dominant monopoly groupings—already vastly strengthened through obtaining American credits and through the general policy pursued by the Demochristian government—to consolidate and expand their ruling status in Italian society; to control 90 percent of all private investment in Italian industry and thus proceed to the modernization and expansion of their plants and the introduction of new techniques, while at the same time cutting down the number of workers they employ and labor's share in the national income.

The absolute reduction in the number of workers employed in Italian industry as well as their percentage-wise decrease in the total population in itself involves a reduction in the quantitative weight of the working class. It is true that the political weight of the working class is not

necessarily determined by its quantitative weight in the population, but it is also true that the persistence of mass unemployment in spite of increased production has intensified the subjugation of the worker living under constant threat of employer reprisal and the loss of his job.

The strengthening of monopoly groups has brought a sharpening of all the contradictions existing in Italian society as well as of the imbalance between North and South, between city and country, between monopolistic big industry and medium and small industry. The huge increase in monopoly profits has not only enabled monopoly groups to control credit manipulation through internal financing but also yielded them broad profit margins which allow them as employers to withhold a growing part of wages from collective bargaining and dispose of it at will. They are using it as an instrument of oppression through schemes aimed at causing ideological corruption and division in the ranks of the working class.

This sort of employer maneuvering must, of course, and does take cognizance of the potential of the trade union and democratic and socialist movement as a whole. And it is precisely to counter this that Big Business is now using the practice of handing out "bonuses" granted without bargaining or with a pretense of individual bargaining, a practice actually quite typical of the traditional avarice of the self-centered and short-sighted Italian bourgeoisie.

Many other factors, however, have operated to weaken the close knit solidarity of the Italian workers in the

face of employer scheming: the ever present millions of totally or partially unemployed, the growing influx of immigrants into the cities from the mountain regions, from the countryside and the South; disparities on the job affecting the individual worker, oftentimes based on purely casual and capricious causes involving less the quality of labor performed than branch of industry or size of enterprise or a number of other circumstances (housing, size of family, etc.)

Trade union self-criticism has highlighted major errors in this field, which were not those—as some insisted during a first phase of obvious bewilderment and confusion—of "going in for too many struggles" or of "being too political," as though trade-union activity were possible which was not at the same time, and allowing for full trade-union autonomy, also political activity. Primarily the mistakes made lay in failure to see in time the necessity of adapting the struggle and union organizational activity to the new situation which has been developing in Italy as a result of the process commonly labelled capitalist (postwar) restoration but which has, in fact, been the rapid increase of the controlling positions that monopoly has achieved.

SOME MAJOR ERRORS

Major mistakes that stand out in connection with this lag in making the necessary adjustments in trade-union activity are as follows: 1) Failure to stress sufficiently problems of unemployment and the right to work as central problems of Italian democracy, and, in this connection, to carry

on appropriate struggle against all forms of job discrimination in hiring, bargaining, firing etc.; 2) Failure to conduct consistently the over-all struggle for freedom in the plants and factories as a major national struggle touching the whole Italian people, along the lines of the correct start made at the Naples Congress of the General Confederation of Italian Labor for recognition of a labor statute, for dismissal only for "just cause," using the fighting spirit of the masses which defeated the Demochristians on the Seventh of June; 3) Failure to understand how to link the development of collective bargaining, at the right moment, on an enterprise level to national collective bargaining and the struggle for compliance with national agreements in many sections of the country, and not alone in the South where these agreements are not yet honored. This would bring all elements in setting wages under discussion so that the workers will benefit from increases in productivity and technical advances, and will control and limit the economic and political power of the monopolies in the factory itself; and, with struggles on an enterprise level as point of departure, go on from there to broader categories of national and political struggle.

In the course of the critical examination that was conducted, it became clear that, in aiming at a change in the existing situation, the primary *trade-union* task of the working class is the struggle to restore and strengthen the collective bargaining power of the unions. . . .

IMMEDIATE DEMANDS

The working class must win back its right to bargain on all issues involved in labor relations, reasserting its class autonomy and taking concrete steps in the defense of its freedom. The entire problem of the workers' democratic rights in the factories—the right to organize, the right to strike, freedom of assembly, opinion and press—is intimately bound up with the problem of the reconquest of bargaining rights. The demand for the right to bargain collectively on all questions relating to the job, moreover, implies a demand to know the facts on all elements affecting the job, that is, it postulates the necessity of *workers' control* in the factories and over the entire productive process. In this way the struggle for immediate demands is linked to the anti-monopoly struggle for reforms in structure, in the very course of the productive process where worker faces boss. This unites the working class objectively with all the forces which are today moving against monopoly because of their conviction that Italian society must be liberated from the crippling harness monopoly has fastened on it.

But all this is still not enough. There are also factors of a political nature related to the system under which the working class now lives, to the level of development of its class consciousness which must be taken into consideration in all their decisive importance.

This does not mean opposing political to trade-union factors but fusing them into one general, integrated conception of the working-class struggle and the role it must play in a land

where the people are coming to demand a profound democratic renaissance in all areas of existence and in relation to all problems. The people are coming to see the necessity for coordinating and united action and for leadership, for a hegemony which can only be the role of the working class, the vanguard force, if they are not willing to see the renaissance democratic movement blocked, degraded and fragmented into particularist demands and mere agitation.

But in order to move forward successfully in the direction of socialism, a simple connection of the struggle for immediate demands with the struggle for a new economic policy and a new political direction for Italy is not enough: essential also are a consciousness of the need for a socialist transformation and the revolutionary will to bring it about—to carry out a “revolution.” And those who are conducting the struggle aimed at the socialist transformation of Italy, at the elimination of capitalist exploitation and the conquest of political power by the working class must have their feet planted firmly on the ground, they must use as point of departure today’s concrete problems and immediate demands, but, at the same time, keep their eyes fixed on our great historic objective.

THE ROLE OF IDEOLOGY

Into the class struggle there enters a subjective factor, the factor of revolutionary will, of socialist consciousness. The struggle is not economic and political alone: it is an ideological struggle and because of this it utilizes the great fund of experience accumulated by the international work-

ing-class movement, which today means utilizing the great victorious experiences of socialism which have already freed a third of humanity from capitalist exploitation. Without the revolutionary will of the vanguard of the working class, the struggle of the working class cannot advance beyond the limits of trade-union action or of democratic action, neither of which of itself becomes action for socialism. But the working class, inasmuch as it is the leading class of the nation, is working for the future, for the successful solution of Italy’s national problems, even while it grapples with the concrete issues of the moment; and in this way it gives practical guidance to the country on the road to socialism.

The function of the working class, as the national class directing the movement for a democratic revival, cannot be regarded as a fixed principle affirmed a priori for all time: this function requires the active presence of a vanguard party with the knowledge of how to give leadership to the working class in fulfilling its historic task. The role of the working class should not be viewed as that of an idol to be accorded homage, but a reality historically defined under a specific set of conditions—that is, the presence of a revolutionary party, the loyalty of the working class to socialist ideals, the unity of the working class and the ties it maintains, on a conscious and organized basis with the international workers’ movement.

A working class deprived of a revolutionary party, divided, disillusioned and internationally isolated, and as a result in a weak position in relation to its own bourgeoisie, cannot perform

its proper functions. Under these circumstances, together with the working class the country as a whole is arrested in its political and social development.

Here it is impossible to deny that during the decade following the great advances chalked up by the Italian working class in 1943-1948 both as regards political consciousness and from the organizational angle—a decade marked by the frequent and often confusing turns of the Italian political struggle—considerable success was achieved by the skillful and brutal offensive of Big Business, not alone in lessening labor’s collective bargaining power, but also in weakening its class consciousness, creating political division in its ranks and driving some important political groups into passive acceptance of the existing social order. It must be recognized that the Italian bourgeoisie has, in fact, obtained certain results along these lines; and also that in some sectors of the labor movement, especially among workers employed in some of the large monopolistic enterprises, there was a loss of faith in the creative and revitalizing capacity of the working-class movement and of socialism throughout the world. In its stead came a rapid spread of reformist influence of various kinds—social democratic reformism, Catholic reformism, and even of “qualunquismo” or the cult of indifference which is one of the forms in which the renunciation of the revolutionary struggle finds expression.

The Milan Assembly pointed out certain of the causes which had weakened the erstwhile firm resistance of the working class to the ideological, political and trade-union employer of-

fensive. The bourgeoisie is not satisfied with exploiting the worker’s labor but seeks as well to weaken and obscure his class consciousness, using for this purpose the formidable weapon of ideological corruption which it has at its disposal in the factory and outside of the factory. The existence of this situation makes it imperative that the working class fight to block the employer campaign to condition and control the worker in every aspect of his life both in and outside the factory, and fight now, and on every battlefield, ideological, political, cultural, trade union and recreational. But this resistance requires the presence and activity of a revolutionary party of the working class which shall give the workers a revolutionary perspective and guide the struggle for socialism, connecting the struggle for day-to-day demands with the general struggle for a revolutionary transformation of society.

In contrast was the definite picture which emerged—in the course of preparatory conferences for the Milan Assembly and during the Assembly itself—of the situation that had developed in a number of our factory organizations, as a result of the absence or inactivity of the Party. The confusion between trade union and Party, the frequent reduction of the Party role to that of a “party current” in the union, minimized Party work in many instances, hedging it in between the limited confines of a puny economism and narrowly organizational activities, making it impossible for the Party to take the fight for peace, freedom and socialism into the plants and factories and link it up with local union issues.

A superficial juxtaposition of political issues and immediate demands was a frequent result, without the interpenetration which would have enabled labor, while defending its legitimate day-to-day interests, to campaign at the same time for the general interests of the nation, in this way winning over the majority of the population to an acceptance of the need for a socialist transformation of Italy.

THE PARTY IS VITAL

Without the action of a revolutionary party it is impossible for a socialist consciousness to come to maturity in the working class. Socialism is not born of itself in the consciousness of the working class; someone must bring it "from outside," some organized force—today, the Communist Party. It is fifty years since Lenin observed that socialism is not born spontaneously out of class antagonisms. From these antagonisms can be born spontaneously a syndicalist or trade-union consciousness: but socialism, a socialist consciousness, the will to transform society along certain lines, to abolish capitalist exploitation for all time—these require a general conception of reality, a broad vision of the relationships obtaining among all classes, a knowledge of how the political struggle is developing in the world and in Italy, a knowledge of the problem of the State, of the problem of political power, of who possesses political power and who ought to possess it, the exploiting classes or the laboring classes.

And these things can arise today only from a party which is armed with the weapon of revolutionary theory, a Marxist-Leninist Party, an internation-

alist party, which means a party in touch with the great experiences of socialism that has triumphed in so large a part of the world. A bond with the international Communist movement, and in the first place, with the first socialist State, with the Soviet Union is an essential part of the life and consciousness of the working class and a necessary condition of its ability to perform its role. This is why the Milan Assembly raised urgently the issue of distinguishing between union and party tasks and making the necessary differentiation between their functions; and emphasized the truth that without the activities of a revolutionary party the work of even the class trade unions is in danger of degenerating, of declining to the level of those unions which operate as an instrument of employer pressure on the working class instead of pursuing the struggle as independent organs of the working class in its role as liberator.

It is only a revolutionary party of the working class which—starting with immediate demands—can squarely face up to every phase of the fundamental issues connected with the general direction of Italian economic policy and raise questions of a most advanced character regarding changes in structure as a part of the broad perspective of our national development. And only the Communist Party—starting from problems of freedom in the plants and factories, and affirming the right of collective bargaining on all wage elements—is capable of setting forth the central problem of freedom, the problem of implementing the Constitution, the problem of the formation of a democratic govern-

ment of the toiling classes—in short, the problem of the State. In other words, to raise the question of the necessity—through abolition of capitalist exploitation and the building of socialism—of the revolutionary advance (under certain internal and external conditions, possibly peaceful) to a State in which the dictatorship of the proletariat shall assure the freedom of the people as a whole from oppression at the hands of monopoly capital.

The Party alone can give the working class this socialist consciousness, the Communist Party which while supporting trade union demands and asserting its independent initiative in this field as well, nonetheless points out the necessity of advancing beyond this struggle towards socialism, since only a socialist transformation can truly bring about a solution of the grave problems with which Italian society is confronted. This does not mean limiting activity to propagandizing for socialism, and affirming the superiority of socialism over capitalism. It does mean introducing into every economic and political struggle both for immediate and for structural objectives, the consciousness that these struggles should never be an end in themselves; that all of them, while seeking concrete objectives which correspond to urgent and immediate needs, are, at the same time, a part of a more general struggle which embraces all of them and develops them as struggles against capitalism and for the victory of socialism.

THE PARTY'S CONTRIBUTIONS

If this Party action becomes less effective, even for a moment, resist-

ance to the bourgeois pressures weakens. The working class is a reality in motion. It has its own historic form; it changes and transforms itself both in composition and in orientation. The Italian working class was won over to a staunch support of socialist ideals in the first decades of our century. It came out of the crises developing after World War I battered by fascist violence, battered by material hardship but unshaken in its socialist convictions.

Out of the dramatic events of those years, out of the desperate but stubborn battles waged in defense of the People's Houses and against fascist attacks, there emerged a tested vanguard—strong, tempered, militant, able to draw ideological strength from a critical examination of the tragic experiences it had lived through. The majority ranged themselves around our Party, providing the forces which defied the Special Tribunal, providing the militants of the period of illegality, the volunteers for Spain, the political emigrants.

Through the two decades of fascist rule, beneath the heavy pall imposed on the people by the fascist dictatorship, this vanguard kept up its struggle, it nurtured socialist ideals and spread them in the factories among newly recruited workers. And when the majority of the working class rallied to the banner of the Communist Party in 1943, this bore witness to the fact that there had been no break in the continuity of Italy's revolutionary consciousness, that the new labor forces grown to manhood in the climate of fascism had nonetheless not been conquered by fascist ideology.

In the records of the inquiry con-

ducted by *Nuovi Argomenti* in regard to workers dismissed by FIAT of Pisa, the fact stands out that almost all of those discharged were Communists and former Partisans, and that a large percentage had started work in the plant in 1935 or 1936, the years of Italy's aggression against Ethiopia and its bandit attack in Spain. These were the years in which the working-class movement came to life again following the darkest period of stagnation during the 1932-1935 period. Again, during the war of liberation of 1943-1945, the great majority of the Italian working class rallied to the Communist Party, took leadership in the Partisan warfare, guided the national insurrection to victory, reaffirming its national role as the country's guiding class.

But twelve years have elapsed since 1945. No party can live on its past. Every party must continually keep on reconquering the positions it has won, and reaffirm its role under the new conditions that have developed. From 1945 through 1953 the Party led the working class in the great battles of those years. . . . All this cannot be forgotten. The working class was there in the great struggles for peace and freedom. But in the course of the following years a great change took place in the composition of the working class. Through a variety of causes, including demobilization, retirement, persecution and arbitrary dismissal, the earlier working force, politically educated and tempered, which had fought in the great battles of 1945-1946, were reduced in numbers and strength. And new workers entered the factories, young workers, immigrants from the Alpine valleys and from the rural areas and the South. Hired through a

process of discriminatory screening along political lines, these workers—at the beginning overawed, intimidated and afraid—have to find their way to organization and the class struggle. They too will serve their political apprenticeship and become good working-class fighters, but only in the measure that the forces which are already educated and seasoned in struggle understand the way to win these newcomers for Communism's lofty and noble ideals.

THE PARTY'S PRESENT TASKS

This then is the task of the Party: to pass on to the new worker the flame of Communist ideals which was kept burning all through the fascist years, and thus assure the continuity of Party action within the working class. That the Party has at times failed to achieve understanding of the way it should exercise its political, educational and organizational functions is something that must be recognized; and this failure cannot be laid exclusively to the changes that have taken place in the trade-union situation, though it is true that the effects of these changes have been indeed severe. Trade-union changes do not in themselves explain certain retreats, because in other factories and other cities, the resistance of Party and working class was more effective, in spite of experiences in the trade-union field which were not basically different.

This shows that the organizational mistakes which were made, already discussed elsewhere—i.e., the lag in adapting factory organizations to the new conditions created by the employer offensive, through assuring the active presence of the Party in the factory always, under all conditions, and by

every method—must not be considered as the determining factor. Trade union and organizational mistakes have had serious consequences, it is true, being felt acutely by a working class in need of a revolutionary perspective which would conform to the concrete conditions of the Italian political struggle.

Confronted by the difficulties of a struggle for socialism which had to be carried on under the specific conditions prevailing in our country, sectarian maximalism, seeking facile victory for the revolution through the "big chance," ended by giving in to reformist capitulation. Actually, the determining factor in bringing about a lessening of the solidarity and the fighting effectiveness of the working class, and hence of its specific gravity in the Italian political struggle, has been wavering in regard to political orientation and political perspective.

A subtle defeatist propaganda was spread even among those who had taken part and in many cases played a heroic role in the great battles of 1943-1945; and this propaganda was not always countered by the clear answers and political education and development of a steadfast socialist consciousness necessary to defeat both sectarian viewpoints and halt successive concessions to reformism, since, as experience has demonstrated, reformism and sectarianism always make common cause.

DEFECTS IN PARTY WORK

It was through harping on the theme of "lost opportunities" that the élan, the fighting spirit, of important groups in the working class were wasted in empty recriminations, without these views being faced up to through open

polemics which would have clarified the question of the conditions of the political struggle we have been conducting, and the situation and relationship of forces that existed in 1945, in 1948 and 1953. The enemy sought, in part successfully, to create a mood of disillusionment and frustration in a section of the working class, through encouraging the fraud of the easy immediate solution, and through this, skepticism, passivity, and, at last, sliding into a policy of class collaboration.

The lack of comprehension of our political line was also caused by our at times incorrect presentation of the problem of working-class cooperation in reconstruction of the national economy during 1945-1946. Another factor was the Party's inability to maintain a living contact with the partisan tradition and transform this glorious heritage into a vital political force in the present-day struggle to implement the Constitution and for advance of the country along the open road of struggle for liberation. These were defects in the work of our Party which were brought out at the Eighth Party Congress, as was also the fact that revolutionary drive and the active battle of ideas in many instances lost force under the stultifying pressure of routine administrative organizing activity and a widely prevalent syndico-economist conception of how labor organizations should operate.

Contrary to some critics' claims, it must be re-emphasized that the great battles of 1948-1953 for peace and freedom did, in fact, keep the flame of anti-fascist and Communist feeling burning in the working class, and that it was with the waning of these struggles after 1953, that a widening

area of disillusioned passivity began to develop. Only by facing these questions boldly in the course of discussion, as we have recently begun to do, **can we combat this confusion and disillusionment and effect an understanding of how the course of action followed by the Italian Communist Party met the needs of the Italian situation.** If some opportunities really were lost, this happened not because some hypothetical impossible insurrection was not carried out at some point, but because of the delay—caused by the chase after mirages and extravagant expectations—in coming to a realization that work could be started at once, under existing conditions, to consolidate and extend the base of our democratic movement, to strengthen the unity of the working class and curb the insolent power of the monopolies.

The employer offensive was able to catch the workers' movement at a time of uncertainty and political confusion to which events following the XXth Congress, not always and not at once comprehended, definitely contributed as did also the weakening of the unity that had marked the relationship between Socialists and Communists. The unclear developments in connection with the efforts at unification of the socialist parties; the participation in this country in the debate launched at the XXth Congress; the impassioned agitation regarding events in Poland and Hungary—all without any doubt contributed towards the disquietude in a working class which had been educated to regard unity of action of Communists and Socialists as the principle condition for resisting the attacks made on it and for furthering the struggle.

THE REVISIONIST ATTACK

At the precise moment when the XXth Congress was acting as a spur to a general serious self-critical review of thinking and of action, an extensive revisionist offensive began disseminating in the ranks of the working class widespread propaganda which involved exaggerated and defeatist criticism, and which treated as negative the entire long and steadfast struggle successfully conducted since 1946 for keeping the road to political and social progress open for the Italian people. An inevitable result of this offensive was the development of a sectarian rigidity among some of the workers. The persistent agitation on the theme of "lost opportunities" was accompanied, on the one hand, by an effort to break the organizational links of the Italian workers' movement with the great world of socialism and with the forces which had unswervingly carried on the fight for peace (for example, the withdrawal of the Italian Socialist Party from the Partisans for Peace movement). On the other hand, this agitation was accompanied by the attempt to foster the illusion that the situation in Italy could be solved by isolating and "downgrading" the Italian Communist Party and by going way out to meet the Demochristians.

During 1957 the Italian Communist Party carried on a dogged battle to repel the revisionist attack, not by expending its strength in sterile defensive operations but rather through boldly developing the policy which had been decided on at its Eighth Party Congress. The labor revival is now under way, as witness the mounting labor struggle, the broadening of united trade-union action, the improvement

in results of recent Factory Committee elections. *The Milan Assembly of Communists from Large-Scale Industrial Enterprises* demonstrated the strength of the Italian Communist Party base among the proletariat in big industry. Now the first fruits of the work to strengthen the Party's political and organizational position are being garnered, and a program of action elaborated.

The celebration of the November Revolution demonstrated the futility of efforts to weaken the bonds of the Italian working class with the socialist world and the international workers' movement. The key factor, however, in converting the labor revival into a general upsurge which will allow the working class to make the entire decisive force of its influence felt in the developing political struggle in Italy, is the winning over of the working class to the policy of the Eighth Congress and to a true understanding—without twilight zones or reservations—of the path outlined by the Congress for an Italian road to socialism.

Many illusions were swept away by the events of 1956. The struggle for peace appears ever more decisive for the future of the world. Socialism reckons not on war but on peaceful competition in its certainty of victory over capitalism, and it is through the methods of peace that the Italian people want to bring about the necessary political and social transformation along socialist lines, in spite of any self-seeking resistance the privileged classes may oppose to this.

In carrying forward the struggle in defense of day-to-day needs, in linking this struggle with the struggle for a new economic policy and for a

new political direction for the country, the Communist Party must repulse the reformist offensive within the workers' movement and strengthen the socialist and revolutionary consciousness of the working class so that it may gain the knowledge of how to guide the economic and also the political struggle towards socialism, linking it with all the great issues of liberty and peace. Only thus, possessing clear political understanding of its own revolutionary tasks, and not at any time remaining prisoner of a narrow consideration of its own immediate interests, will the working class succeed in once again throwing the whole weight of its influence into the political struggle, in interpreting the general interests of the nation, not as an auxiliary but as an independent force.

The 1958 elections could, with the defeat of the Demochristian Party, give the working class and all the popular forces the possibility of setting the conditions for a democratic alternative which will allow the formation of a democratic government of the working classes capable of implementing the Constitution and, at the same time, guiding the country along the road to socialism. For this to come about it is necessary for the popular will to make itself heard in unmistakable terms, both through the vote and through a new impressive intensification of labor and popular struggles.

It is the primary task of the Communists to so function that the working class shall be able successfully to carry out this function and to make good use of the "opportunity" now presented in order to transform its own situation and the general state of things existing in our land.

IDEAS IN OUR TIME

BY HERBERT APTHEKER

FREEDOM AS AN HISTORICAL PROCESS

Let us begin with two brief sentences taken from quite different authors. One comes from Christopher Caudwell, killed, while yet a youth, fighting fascism in Spain. "Liberty," wrote* this martyred Communist, "does seem to me the most important of all generalized goods." The other comes from a liberal American scholar, Ralph S. Brown, Jr., and appears in the midst of what is generally an extremely valuable study of *Loyalty and Security: Employment Tests in the United States* (Yale University Press, \$6): "Communism denies freedom and attempts to destroy it."

In line with normal American academic standards of scholarship—when one writes of Communism ordinary precepts of documentation may be ignored—Professor Brown does not tell us precisely where "Communism denies freedom," but that is not the point, at the moment. The point is that the contrasting nature of these two statements vividly reflects the heart of contemporary ideological controversy; it indicates with what urgency one must persist in examining and re-examining the meaning of freedom.

* * *

Imperative, I think, is an awareness of freedom as an historical process; as something still in the course of being achieved, and as something, therefore, that must be viewed within its time and place and social context. Freedom presented as an abstraction is a fraud.

We may illustrate this by considering some of the best known and most frequently quoted writings of the three pre-eminent English-speaking libertarians: John Milton, Thomas Jefferson, and John Stuart Mill. Surely, none has been more frequently appealed to in justification of an abstract freedom than these three. An examination of the body of their writings, however—and not the culling of this or that sentence—will show that all three were battlers for the advancement of human freedom in the concrete, in the course of their own passionate participation in specific historic epochs and for specific historic purposes. While these reflect the limitations of themselves and of the writings, they also reflect their greatness, and made possible their greatness, their actual contributions to the forward march of humanity—in real life, not in the abstract.

* In an essay entitled "Liberty," in his *Studies in a Dying Culture*, re-published together with his *Further Studies*, in one volume by the Liberty Book Club, New York City.

The paragraph in Milton most commonly quoted is taken from his *Areopagitica*, and—with spelling modernized—reads as follows:

And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?

One is moved at once to query: *when* did Truth and Falsehood meet each other "in a free and open encounter"? Especially where the matter under debate was significant and the socio-political order was exploitative and class-divided? But let us not pose twentieth century questions for our seventeenth century giant. Let us rather look at him in his century and in his homeland—and in this particular book—and see what it is he means.

The sentences just quoted come from page 51-52 of the edition I have used (Oxford University Press, 1894). The work itself, first printed in 1644, was a contribution to the debates in an England in civil war. Milton was an adherent of the Independents in that conflict, and they, battling for the Truth, as they saw it, persecuted Catholics; prohibited the Episcopalian worship; punished anti-trinitarians; and burned books held to be blasphemous. What, then, is the point of Milton's pamphlet subtitled "For the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing," and why does he appear, in the quoted passage, to be urging freedom for "all the winds of doctrine"? If one knows the occasion of the essay and the party of its author, it is possible to begin to answer this question. Then, one needs but read on in Milton. For two pages after the quoted sentences, appears a paragraph not often quoted, but without which the first can be, as it often has been, utterly misunderstood. Here, again, is Milton:

Yet if all cannot be of one mind, as who looks they should be, this doubtless is more wholesome, more prudent, and more Christian: that many may be tolerated rather than all compelled. I mean not tolerated Popery and open superstition, which as it extirpates all religions and civil supremacies, so itself should be extirpated, provided first that all charitable and compassionate means be used to win and regain the weak and misled; that also which is impious or evil absolutely either against faith or manners no law can possibly permit, that intends not to unlaw itself; but *those neighboring differences, or rather indifferences, are what I speak of*, whether in some point of doctrine or of discipline, which though they may be many, yet need not interrupt the unity of Spirit, if we could but find among us the bond of peace. In the meanwhile, if anyone would write, and *bring his helpful hand to the slow-moving Reformation*, which we labor under, if Truth have spoken to him before others, or but seemed at least to speak, who has so bejesuited us that we should trouble that man with asking license *to do so worthy a deed?* (Italics added.)

The partisanship of Milton is perfectly clear; and the extreme limitations among "the winds of doctrine" that he wishes to "let loose" are also clear. The advance is present; the struggle against feudalism and in favor of the Reformation, on behalf of which Milton writes and brings out argumentation urging the enhancement of freedom—but not freedom in the abstract. Rather, freedom in terms of the seventeenth century Protestant bourgeois revolutionary efforts in England.

* * *

Frequently, Jefferson, too, is presented as the advocate of an abstracted freedom. Thus, the distinguished Justice William O. Douglas, in his recent splendid attack upon reaction, *The Right of the People* (Doubleday, N. Y., \$4.00), quotes Jefferson, "Truth is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error," and he sums up his understanding of "the Jeffersonian faith," by declaring that it held that if mankind were "allowed unfettered liberty to accumulate knowledge and in the process even to wallow in trash, if they like, they will acquire the wisdom and ability to manage all of the perplexing and teasing problems of each generation." Similarly, another quotation very often presented from Jefferson runs this way: "If a book be false in its facts, disprove them; if false in its reasoning, refute it. But for God's sake, let us freely hear both sides."

Queries immediately occur, once again, particularly in terms of experiences gained through living several generations after Jefferson. For example: are there but two sides, and are there no shadings of that which is true and that which is false in many sides of all kinds of disputes? And again, notice Jefferson's confident Age-of-Reason assumption that through "reasoning" and the presentation of "facts" one could arrive at the "truth"—but, what then? That is to say, does not Jefferson assume that, having so arrived, the debate is closed and on the basis of the ascertainment of truth, action in accordance therewith necessarily follows?

It is necessary, again, if one is to grasp Jeffersonianism, and gain what light it may offer to the problem of human freedom, to see it and its creator in their time—eighteenth and early nineteenth century America—in the throes of bringing about and maintaining a great bourgeois-democratic, anti-colonial revolution. In doing this, one can better, more fully, understand the matter. For example, does it not help to know that the hand which wrote the Declaration of Independence also wrote advertisements for fugitive slaves? Does it not help to understand the matter, to know that when the Declaration said all men are created equal, it meant men and not women? And, that it meant some men but not all—for living then in the rebellious colonies were 650,000 slaves and 250,000 indentured servants and 300,000 Indians and of this 40 percent of the total population, all the men, let alone the women, were excluded, from considerations of equality, as they were from any role in the exercise of "popular sovereignty."

This is not said in any spirit of muckraking, or of exposing the clay feet of Jefferson, the idol. No man is to be idolized; but if one were forced to select

an idol among human beings, he could not do very much better than select Thomas Jefferson. These things are said in a spirit of insisting upon that truth, to whose further exposition Jefferson devoted his life; they are said in an effort to get at the reality of the concept of human freedom, for the realization of which Jefferson did so much.

And when we speak this way, in terms of the realities of history, in terms of the realities of the social orders within which all of us live and all in the past have lived, there remain other considerations relevant to Jefferson's life and beliefs to be observed. Thus, Jefferson was, of course, a foremost revolutionary leader, and had momentous political responsibilities in that capacity—he was, for example, a member of the Continental Congress and he was a Governor of revolutionary Virginia.

Among those responsibilities, which Jefferson faced with all the Founding Fathers, was that of carrying the Revolution through successfully and of preserving it after military success. In that regard, one of the critical problems before the revolutionary founders was the handling of counter-revolutionaries—the so-called Tories. There were, during the Revolution, perhaps 600,000 to 700,000 people who were loyal to the King, and of these many thousands were active in asserting that loyalty. From them, the Revolutionists, including Jefferson, took away the right to vote or hold office; they were forbidden to teach or to preach or to practice any profession. Those who were wealthy, found their property confiscated (without trial); many suffered serious physical harm; many were jailed (without trial) and served long years of forced labor; some were executed (including some without trial); the presses of the Tories were confiscated; over 100,000 of them were forced into exile. And most of the disabilities of the Tories persisted until six or seven years after the last shot had been fired; some of them, especially involving property, never were made good.

Here was a living question of all kinds of rights, press, speech, assemblage, suffrage, due process of law, etc.—and they were deliberately denied scores of thousands of people for some twelve or thirteen years; but if there is one word denouncing or deprecating this in the writings of Jefferson or Madison or Monroe or Henry or Washington, or the Adamses, this writer, after prolonged searching, has failed to uncover it. Here was a concrete case where during a bourgeois-democratic revolution, in order to extend the liberties of a large number of people, heretofore oppressed and subjugated, it was necessary to smash institutions upholding such subjugation and to inhibit the liberties of others.

One further instance out of the life and times of Jefferson: All know of the Alien and Sedition Acts passed in 1798 during John Adams' Administration in order to curb the political freedom of the (Jeffersonian) Democratic-Republican Party. It is worth observing, in the first place, that John Adams was a great American Revolutionist, and that he had been one of the committee of three which participated in the drafting of the Declaration of Independence. It is stirring to know that it was in large part the resistance to these restraining acts which helped elect Jefferson President in 1800. But,

while it is true that under Jefferson, the Alien and Sedition Acts were permitted to lapse as the abominations they were, it is also true that Jefferson, himself, was sorely troubled by the insistent and unprincipled attacks upon him emanating from the Federalist press. The nature of these attacks may be indicated when it is stated that they were more vicious and indecent than the assaults of the Hearst press upon the New Deal. But what is not sufficiently known, and what is rarely quoted, is the fact that Jefferson, therefore, seriously urged the use of the principle of government intervention to prevent these kinds of written attacks. Thus, in 1803, Jefferson wrote to his friend, Governor McKean of Pennsylvania, as follows:

The federalists, having failed in destroying the freedom of the press by their gag-law, seem to have attacked it in an opposite direction; that is by pushing its licentiousness and its lying to such a degree of prostitution as to deprive it of all credit. . . . This is a dangerous state of things, and the press ought to be restored to its credibility if possible. The restraints provided by the laws of the States are sufficient for this, if applied. And I have, therefore, long thought that a few prosecutions of the most prominent offenders would have a wholesome effect in restoring the integrity of the presses. Not a general prosecution, for that would look like persecution; but a selected one.

While seeking to indicate the substantial and real nature of the struggle for human freedom, it is pertinent to note that during the Great French Revolution, in 1791, one decree outlawed trade unions as "an attack upon liberty and upon the Declaration of the Rights of Man," while another made advocacy of a monarchy punishable by execution—thus, did the revolutionary bourgeoisie deal a blow at each of its foes—the workers and the nobility.

Much the same considerations apply to the powerful writings of John Stuart Mill, especially his *On Liberty*, *Considerations on Representative Government*, and—his most rigorous work, clearly indicating the advance over Jefferson—*The Subjection of Women*. These are, of course, classical arguments for democratic rights, embodied in the immortal and much quoted line: ". . . truth has no chance but in proportion as every side of it, every opinion which embodies any fraction of the truth, not only find advocates, but is so advocated as to be listened to."

But again, placed in his time and place—mid-nineteenth century England, and his class—upper middle-class, his father an official for the East India Company, one is prepared for the rather severe limitations that Mill, in fact, put around his concepts of liberty and representative government. He wrote in the midst of intensified political agitation, by the industrial bourgeoisie and the working class, for the enlargement of their democratic rights, and so the questions with which he dealt had a particular relationship to specific burning issues. The particular problem of the time, as Gladstone remarked somewhat

later, was to "get the working class within the pale of the constitution," i.e., work them in towards participation in political sovereignty without their transforming the basic *status quo*.

Mill opposed the secret ballot; he opposed paying Members of Parliament (for only the well-to-do and those of independent means are masters of their own minds); he wanted only taxpayers to vote; an educational test for voting; all recipients of public aid barred from the vote; those in "higher" occupations to have a greater number of votes—so that, the employer, for example, would have a more numerous suffrage than the worker, etc. Mill favored the limitation of freedom of speech, in terms of what Holmes later called the "clear and present danger," and the examples Mill himself gave demonstrate that the danger that worried him was the danger to private property. Mill was an elitist, expressing contempt for the "collective mediocrity" of the people generally, and tribute to the decisive influence of the "gifted One or Few."

Mill was a colonialist—a rather backward one, in fact, even for his time—and his Anglo-Saxon chauvinism is painful to read. He detested "the American institution" alleging men's equality, and condemned socialism as contrary to "human nature."

These are some of the fairly severe limitations of John Stuart Mill, but despite them all, he does produce works which, placed in their context, argue forcefully and persuasively for an expansion of existent freedoms—in England, at that time, for certain of its inhabitants—much of the logic of which, as with Milton and Jefferson, have applications transcending their time and their origin.

* * *

This brings us, by a natural progression that parallels the course of human history, and so the development of real freedom, to another and a contemporary statement often used in the name of an abstract "freedom." I mean Mao Tse-tung's famous call: "Let a hundred flowers blossom, and let a hundred schools of thought contend." This line occurs in the midst of a prolonged report* made to a Supreme State Conference held in February, 1957. It is, of course, the speech of a Communist leader of a successful Socialist revolution, in China, and so reflects all the shadings and conditionings of this vast event.

Of course, Mao distinguishes between "fragrant flowers and poisonous weeds," and he very carefully gives six criteria for the distinction. "Words and actions can be judged right," he says, if they 1) unite the various nationalities of China and do not divide them; 2) help, rather than harm, the process of Socialist building; 3) consolidate, rather than undermine, the "people's democratic dictatorship"; 4) consolidate, rather than undermine, democratic centralism; 5) strengthen, rather than weaken, the leadership of the Communist Party; 6) assist, rather than retard, the building of international Socialist soli-

* *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People* (New Century Publishers, New York, 25 cents).

clarity and the sense of unity of all peace-loving peoples.

Disagreements that appear among the people concerning these criteria may be argued and discussed; must be, in fact, for differences and even contradictions among them will appear and persuasion only is permitted or is salutary in such cases, among the people.

Yet the criteria do exist, and they do represent those basic considerations which, in fact, guide the New China. They constitute the reality of the Revolution, the substance of it and from their accomplishment there will be no turning back. In an analogous way, the destruction of the monarchy is of the essence of the French Revolution and it is not a subject for refutation, so far as the accomplishment of that Revolution is concerned; so, too, our Constitution "guarantees" to each state a Republican form of government and this fundamental result of our Revolution likewise is not subject to refutation; so, too, the Thirteenth Amendment to our Constitution, bought with so much blood, is supposed to settle, once for all, the question of the existence of chattel slavery and it settles it by forbidding that institution—the same institution which shortly before the Amendment represented four billion dollars worth of private property, and the ownership of which was the most precious "right" of 350,000 slaveowners, who, on the basis of that "right," had dominated the Government. The question of chattel slavery, then, is settled, so far as this Republic is concerned, at this stage of its development. So, too, at Potsdam, it was agreed that the German people were free to form any parties, any organizations they wished, and to publish and argue for any views they desired, *except fascist*, for fascism, in all forms and guises and organizational institutions, was to be extirpated, and this, too, according to the Treaty, was not to be a matter for future negotiation.

In this connection there is a perceptive passage in Mill's *Liberty* which is quoted very rarely—perhaps because it does not argue for abstracting human freedom. Mill wrote:

As mankind improves, the number of doctrines which are no longer disputed or doubted will be constantly on the increase; and the well-being of mankind may almost be measured by the number and gravity of the truths which have reached the point of being uncontested. The cessation, on one question after another, of serious controversy, is one of the necessary incidents of the consolidation of opinion; a consolidation as salutary in the case of true opinions, as it is dangerous and noxious when the opinions are erroneous. But though this gradual narrowing of the bounds of diversity of opinion is necessary in both senses of the term, being at once inevitable and indispensable, we are not therefore obliged to conclude that all its consequences will be beneficial.

Mao also sharply differentiates between what he calls "the people" and those he designates as antagonists of the people, in terms of the freedoms that are both needed and salutary. He says, in the cited work, that, "The term 'the people' has different meanings in different countries, and in different historical pe-

riods in each country." He then proceeds to elucidate this in terms of the recent experiences in China—as during the period of the Japanese aggression, the war of liberation, against the U.S.-backed Chiang Kai-shek, and in the present period when socialism is being built.

Today, he adds, "all classes, strata and social groups that approve, support and work for the cause of socialist construction belong to the category of the people"; all others do not. And: "Where there is democracy for the bourgeoisie there can be no democracy for the proletariat and other working people." Further:

What should our policy be toward non-Marxist ideas? As far as unmistakable counter-revolutionaries and wreckers of the socialist cause are concerned, the matter is easy; we simply deprive them of their freedom of speech. But it is quite a different matter when we are faced with incorrect ideas among the people. Will it do to ban such ideas and give them no opportunity to express themselves? Certainly not.

The American capitalist press—stalwart guardian of human freedom—had a good time poking sly fun at Mao's selective definition of the "people." How convenient a rationalization this was for fearful tyranny, they said. And what shall we say about this?

When Mao stated that the definition of "the people," in terms of politics, had varied with different eras and places, he was certainly correct. It is a fact that in class-exploitative societies, People—often spelled with an upper-case "P"—were those of property, while the people, or, the inhabitants, the masses, the general population, were all other human beings domiciled in the area but more or less deprived of all rights and certainly of participation in the exercise of political power. Just as today when one writes of the doings of Society—with an upper-case "S"—he has in mind the thin layer of scum riding atop society and battering on it, so has there been heretofore in class societies a similar distinction between people and People.

This is fundamental to Mill's own limitations on liberty. This is why he repeatedly excludes from his category of people fit for freedom, those he calls "rude," or lacking "instruction" or divorced from "rational" capacities—incidentally, in one place, he offers as an example of such incapacitated people the Russian peasant! It is fundamental to the whole conception held by exploiters as to the "poor"—poor both in terms of being without wealth and also without capacities—and therefore without wealth. It is organically related to the racist concept, which, given enough stimulation by capitalism's greed, soon rationalizes the actual sub-humanity of the victims!

This is why Swift, in his *Thoughts on Various Subjects*, held it to be axiomatic that "law in a free country is, or ought to be, the determination of the majority of those who have property in land," and Defoe, writing on *The Original Power of the Collective Body of the People of England*, made clear that the possessors of property were "the proper owners of the country" and

that other inhabitants were "but sojourners, like lodgers in a house." Voltaire, whose very name rings of the French Revolution, and is synonymous with the Age of Reason, wrote in 1768: "As regards the people, they will always be stupid and barbarous. They are oxen which require a yoke, a goad, and some hay." This is Voltaire, not Louis XIV! And obviously, here there are important distinctions between the people—oxen—and People, such as Voltaire.

This usage recurs today, usually in off-guarded moments. Here, for example, is the *New York Herald Tribune* (May 22, 1958), terribly distressed at the greetings Mr. Nixon received from our Latin-American friends, stating editorially: "Our representatives [abroad] see far too much of each other, or a limited circle of the rich, and far too little of the people."

This conception of the brutishness of the masses is important in explaining why a John Stuart Mill rejects socialism as impossible because of "human nature." It is basic to the thinking of Robert Michels in his extremely influential volume, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*, first published in 1915 (available from The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois), where the theme is that "democracy is inconceivable without organization" and organization is impossible without oligarchy—hence, democracy is not realizable. Not sufficiently noticed in this work, is one of its fundamental postulates: "The incompetence of the masses is almost universal throughout the domains of political life, and this constitutes the most solid foundation of the power of the leaders."

This is at the heart of all kinds of elitist thinking, so potent in the current "New Conservatism"—for example, in the books of Walter Lippmann. It has reached the point now where a young American scholar, E. Digby Baltzell, will begin his useful examination of the realities of ruling class power in the United States—selecting one city as a case study, *Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper Class* (The Free Press, \$5.75)—with the sentence: "Granted, all complex societies—aristocratic, democratic, or totalitarian—are oligarchical in that the few rule the many."

Michels' postulate is false. There is not mass incompetence; there is mass deprivation and oppression and exploitation. The deprivation brings with it degrees of incompetence in necessary skills, but the lack is never so decisive as upper-class ideologies think. And this is not a vicious circle, with neither end nor beginning, for the exploitation comes first and reared upon this comes whatever incompetence there may be. Eliminating the exploitation *makes possible* the removal of the last remnants of such incompetence. Then, indeed, will come and does come such a competence on such a mass scale and free to work its way in a socially-favored environment, that for the first time man moves out of the realm of necessity and into that of freedom. This is man socially and collectively, not individually and competitively.

* * *

The bourgeoisie wants politics to be confined to struggles among varied propertied groups, not between the propertied and the propertyless. A mirror

of this desire is the Constitution of the United States, wherein, among other things, is the aim to obscure fundamental class antagonism and to give the appearance of the government as a balance wheel—impartial, accurate, and just. At the same time that the political grants made to the people as a whole serve as important mediums for struggle, they also serve to deflect the target of the struggle into channels picked by the political representatives of the propertied groups.

The bourgeois revolutionaries sense that *real* democracy requires a substantial identity of interest; requires an end to classes. They see that then will come basic unanimity. Madison, for example, writing to Jefferson in 1787, said that if one had a society whose members had common interests then "the decisions could only turn on mere opinion concerning the good of the whole," and where the society was basically homogeneous—without "a distinction of property"—there "a pure republic" or "a simple democracy" would be possible. But he found this then—with good historical reasons—illusory and so he saw the task as one of protecting the inequality while maintaining the republican form, *i.e.*, he saw the solution as bourgeois-democracy.

In the Constitutional Convention, Madison put the matter very clearly:

In framing a system which we wish to last for ages, we should not lose sight of the changes which ages will produce. An increase of population will of necessity increase the proportion of those who will labor under all the hardships of life, and secretly sigh for a more equal distribution of its blessings. These may in time outnumber those who are placed above the feelings of indigence. According to the equal laws of suffrage, the power will slide into the hands of the former. No agrarian attempts have yet been made in this country, but symptoms, of a leveling spirit, as we have understood, have sufficiently appeared in certain quarters to give notice of the future danger.

Madison, returning to this question of questions in 1830, confessed that its solution was beyond him: how to have popular sovereignty and retain an economic system in which a few possessed the means of production. Great alterations in government would be necessary, he was sure, as population mounted—he thought 1930 would be a turning point—and "To the effect of these changes, intellectual, moral, and social, the institutions and laws of the country must be adapted, and it will require for the task all the wisdom of the wisest patriots."

The turning point, 1930, suggested by Madison has come and gone, and with it much of the world has indeed changed; and the rest is in the process of those changes. They have indeed required and will continue to require all the wisdom—and courage—of which mankind is capable. But the new dawn is here, and with its rise a new definition of "the people" is on the agenda. In our era that definition is infinitely wider—very much more democratic—than was true when Milton or Voltaire or Jefferson or Madison or Mill wrote.

And with the success of the agenda of our era—with the death of imperialism and its replacement by socialism—there will no longer be any distinction between “the people” and all of mankind.

* * *

I would like to close this brief inquiry into some facets of the complex question of human freedom with two quotations concerning not socialism in the abstract, but socialism as it is being built in two of the largest nations on earth. Both quotations come from non-Communists—for in the given circumstances, such a source may be more persuasive. One, dealing with the Soviet Union, is from Harold J. Laski, the late leader of the British Labour Party, and appears in one of his last volumes, *Liberty in the Modern State* (N. Y., Viking, 1949 edition):

It has been part of the strategy of the enemies of freedom in part to decry the accomplishment of the Soviet Union's makers, and in part to declare that the price is too heavy for the end. It is vital for those who care for freedom to maintain a proper perspective in this matter. The Soviet Union has been the pioneer of a new civilization. The conditions upon which it began the task of its building were of a magnitude unexampled in our experience. Its leaders came to power in a country accustomed only to bloody tyranny, racked and impoverished by unsuccessful war. Its peoples were overwhelmingly illiterate and untrained in the use of that industrial technology upon which the standards of modern civilization depend. Its task of construction was begun amidst civil war, intervention from without, famine and pestilence. For the first years of the regime's existence the people lived quite literally in a state of siege. . . . No doubt Lenin and his colleagues were responsible, in the first seven years of the Revolution, for blunders, mistakes, even crimes. It is nevertheless true that, in those years, they accomplished a remarkable work of renovation. They accomplished it, moreover, in such a fashion that, within ten years of the overthrow of the Czar, they were able to proceed to the socialization of the productive system.

In the last decade, the achievements have been immense. The war has been won, unemployment has been abolished; illiteracy has been conquered; the growing productivity of the Soviet Union stands in startling contrast to the deliberate organization of scarcity in the capitalist states. In the treatment of criminals, in the scientific handling of backward peoples, in the application of science to industry and agriculture, in the conquest of racial prejudice, and in the provision of opportunity to the individual—in the full sense the career opened to the talents—the Soviet Union stands today in the forefront of civilization. It is, of course, true that, judged by the standards of Great Britain and the United States, its material levels of life are low; it has not rivalled in twenty

years the unimpeded century-long development of the most progressive capitalist states. The true comparison, of course, is with pre-revolutionary Russia; and the gains, both material and spiritual, are immense. In wages, hours of labor, conditions of sanitation and safety, industrial security, and educational opportunity, the comparison is at every point favorable to the new regime.

The second, dealing with the Chinese People's Republic, comes from the just-published *The Long March* (World Publishers, New York, \$7.50), by the distinguished French author, Simone de Beauvoir. So sympathetic, so informed and so powerful is this work, that it has met the special venom of the reviewers for the *New York Times*, et al. Writes Madame de Beauvoir, after intensive first-hand study:

China's effort and achievement strike me as admirable. . . . This time it is a profound and authentic revolution China is undergoing. . . . China is going forward. She has ceased living from day to day, from hand to mouth, dreaming of a mythical Golden Age; she is oriented toward the future and is driving toward it . . . man's well-being is, in China, the ultimate measure of values . . . in treating the people with respect rather than with contempt, the new regime has restored their human dignity to six hundred million people, and what they have thereby gained is other than merely “material”. . . . Above all for the younger generation, this new freedom is a very concrete reality . . . in this morning's early light the prospect ahead is already visible; and it is limitless.

Everywhere in the world, in their own ways and their own good time, the peoples are bringing about a new birth of freedom; they bring, too, peace to the world—now that it is becoming their own.

“There seems to be no parallel in history to the drive for learning in all branches of knowledge, from reading and writing to the abstruse sciences, now in progress in the Soviet Union.”

. . . Walter Duranty, in the *New York Times*, Dec. 1, 1931

On the Draft Program of the Communist League of Yugoslavia

International attention was focussed recently upon the Draft Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the criticism to which that Program was subjected by Communist Parties throughout the world. The Yugoslav Program, published in Belgrade in March, makes up a volume of 176 pages; it is manifestly impossible to publish this or any significant sections from it in this magazine. Interested readers will find the whole of chapter three of this Program, dealing with international relations, reprinted in English in the London magazine, *World News* (May 3). A fully developed critique of the entire Program, written by P. Fedoseyev, I. Pomelov and V. Cheprakov, appeared in the April issue of *The Communist*, theoretical organ of the CPSU, and is given in full English translation in the Canadian magazine, *Marxist Review* (June-July issue). Below are printed the editorials on the question which appeared in the *People's Daily* (Peking), May 5; and in *Pravda* (Moscow), May 9.—*The Editor*.

THE CHINESE EDITORIAL

Today is the 140th anniversary of the birth of Karl Marx, founder of scientific communism. Since 1844, Marxism has been carrying on a persistent struggle against all trends of reactionary bourgeois and petit bourgeois thought and against all kinds of opportunist ideas among the ranks of the international workers movement. Marxism has continually emerged victorious in the struggle, for revolutionary practice has borne out its correctness.

It was in the course of the struggle in the age of imperialism and proletarian revolution that Lenin developed Marxism and carried it forward to a new stage, the stage of Leninism.

Now the international workers' movement has placed before Marxism-Leninism the new sacred task: to carry out irreconcilable struggle against modern revisionism or neo-Bernsteinism. This is a struggle between the two fundamentally different lines of Marxism-Leninism and anti-Marxism-Leninism, a great struggle involving the success or failure of the cause of the working class of the world and the cause of socialism.

The recently closed seventh congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia adopted a "Draft Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia" which is an anti-Marxist-Leninist, out-and-out revisionist program.

To sum it up briefly, in method of thinking, the draft program substitutes

sophistry for revolutionary materialistic dialectics. Politically, it substitutes the reactionary theory of the state standing above classes for the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state, and reactionary bourgeois nationalism for revolutionary proletarian internationalism. In political economy, it takes up the cudgels for monopoly capital and tries to obliterate the fundamental differences between the capitalist and Socialist systems.

The draft program openly forsakes the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, sets itself against the declaration of the meeting of representatives of the Communist and workers' parties of Socialist countries held in Moscow last November, and at the same time repudiates the "Peace Manifesto" adopted by the meeting of representatives of sixty-four Communist and workers' parties, endorsed by the representatives of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia itself. The draft program brands all the basic principles of revolutionary theory established by Marx and Engels and developed by Lenin and other great Marxists as "dogmatism," and the leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia style themselves "irreconcilable enemies of any dogmatism."

What are the most basic things in the "dogmatism" which the leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia have chosen to attack? They are proletarian revolution and proletarian dictatorship. But it is common knowledge that without proletarian revolution and proletarian dictatorship there can be no socialism. The draft program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia concentrates its opposition on proletarian revolution and its attack on proletarian dictatorship, smears the Socialist state and the Socialist camp and beatifies capitalism, the imperialist state and the imperialist camp. This cannot but give rise to doubt about the "socialism" avowed by the leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

Speaking like the reactionaries of all countries and the Chinese bourgeois Rightists, the leading group of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia has viciously slandered proletarian dictatorship, alleging that it "leads to bureaucratism, the ideology of statism, separation of the leading political forces from the working masses, stagnation, the deformation of Socialist development, and the sharpening of internal differences and contradictions." They maliciously slander the Socialist camp alleging that it also has a policy of "positions of strength and struggle for hegemony." They describe the two radically different world politico-economic systems, the Socialist camp and the imperialist camp, as "division of the world into two antagonistic military-political blocs." They represent themselves as standing outside the "two blocs" of socialism and imperialism, or in a position beyond the blocs.

They hold that the U.S.-dominated United Nations can "bring about greater and greater unification of the world," that economic cooperation of all countries of the world, including the imperialist countries, is "an integral part of the Socialist road to the development of world economy." They maintain that "the swelling flow of state-capitalist tendencies in the capitalist world is the most tangible proof that mankind is irrepressibly and by the most diverse roads deeply entering into the epoch of socialism."

These propositions cannot but call to mind the revisionist preaching about "evolutionary socialism," "ultra-imperialism," "organized capitalism" and "the peaceful growing of capitalism into socialism" made by Right-wing Socialists in the late nineteenth century, and early twentieth century, such as Bernstein, Kautsky, Hilferding and their ilk, which were intended to induce the working class in the various capitalist countries to give up revolutionary struggle for socialism and uphold bourgeois rule.

The present preachings of the leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia also harbor a wild attempt, namely, to induce the working class and other working people of various countries to take the road of surrender to capitalism. In his speech delivered at Pula in November, 1956, Tito, leader of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, said: "What is actually involved is whether the new trend will triumph in the Communist parties—the trend which really began in Yugoslavia." He also said: "It is a question now whether this course will be victorious or whether the Stalinist course will prevail again. Yugoslavia must not concentrate on herself, she must work in all directions." These statements fully betray their true ambition.

It is by no means accidental that the draft program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia has appeared at the present time. Since the Great October Socialist Revolution, the international Communist movement has achieved a series of great historic victories, the Socialist system has been successfully set up among a population of 900 million and more, and the general crisis of capitalism has greatly extended with the imperialist countries headed by the United States experiencing a new and profound periodic economic crisis.

Therefore, the imperialists led by the United States are stepping up their sabotage of the international Communist movement. The bourgeoisie has been resorting to two methods to undermine the workers' movement—suppression by brute force and deceit. In the present new international situation, when the revisionist harangues of the Right-wing Socialists are daily losing their paralyzing effect on the working class and the laboring masses, the program put forward by the Yugoslav revisionists fits in exactly with what the imperialists, and particularly the American imperialists need.

In his speech "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People," Comrade Mao Tse-tung said:

Revisionism, or rightist opportunism, is a bourgeois trend of thought which is even more dangerous than doctrinairism. The revisionists, or Right opportunists, pay lip service to Marxism and also attack doctrinairism. But the real targets of their attack are actually the most fundamental elements of Marxism.

Now facts have proven that this thesis of Comrade Mao Tse-tung answers not only to the situation in China, but also to the international situation.

The declaration of the meeting of representatives of the Communist and workers' parties of Socialist countries says:

The main danger at present is revisionism or, in other words, Right-

wing opportunism, which as a manifestation of bourgeois ideology paralyzes the revolutionary energy of the working class and demands the preservation or restoration of capitalism.

It points out with special emphasis:

Modern revisionism seeks to smear the great teaching of Marxism-Leninism, declares that it is outmoded and alleges that it has lost its significance for social progress. The revisionists try to exorcize the revolutionary spirit of Marxism, to undermine faith in socialism among the working class and the working people in general.

They deny the historical necessity for a proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, deny the leading role of the Marxist-Leninist party, reject the principles of proletarian internationalism, and call for rejection of the Leninist principles of party organization and, above all of democratic centralism, and for transforming the Communist Party from a militant revolutionary organization into some kind of debating society.

The declaration clearly portrays the features of the modern revisionists who show themselves in the contents of the draft program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

It is quite obvious that open and uncompromising criticism must be waged against the series of anti-Marxist-Leninist and out-and-out revisionist views assembled in the draft program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

If theoretical criticism of the revisionism of Bernstein and Kautsky and their ilk by the Marxists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was inevitable, then it is even more necessary now for us to criticize neo-Bernsteinism.

This is because modern revisionism is propounded as a comprehensive and systematic program by the leading group of a party that wields state power. It is also because modern revisionism is aimed at splitting the international Communist movement and undermining the solidarity of the Socialist countries, and is directly detrimental to the fundamental interests of the Yugoslav people.

We consider as basically correct the criticism made in June, 1948, by the Information Bureau of Communist Parties in its resolution "Concerning the Situation in the Communist Party of Yugoslavia" in regard to the mistake of the Yugoslav Communist Party in departing from the principles of Marxism-Leninism and sinking into bourgeois nationalism; but there were defects and mistakes in the method adopted at that time by the Information Bureau in dealing with this question. The resolution concerning Yugoslavia adopted by the Information Bureau in November, 1949, was incorrect and it was later withdrawn by the Communist and workers' parties which took part in the Information Bureau meeting.

Since 1954, the Soviet Union and other countries of the Socialist camp have done their utmost and taken various measures to improve their relations with Yugoslavia. This has been fully correct and necessary. The Communist parties of various countries have adopted an attitude of waiting patiently, hoping that the leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia would return to the Marxist-Leninist standpoint in the interest of adherence by the Yugoslav people to the road of socialism.

However, the leading group of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia has spurned the well-intentioned efforts made by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communists of other countries. Around the time of the Hungarian event, they tried to disrupt the unity of countries in the Socialist camp on the pretext of so-called "opposition to Stalinism"; during the Hungarian event, they supported the renegade Nagy clique; and, in their recent congress, they have gone further and put forward a systematic and comprehensive revisionist program.

The leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia should think soberly: Will the League of Communists of Yugoslavia be able to maintain its solidarity with the Communist parties of other countries by abandoning the fundamental viewpoints of Marxism-Leninism and persisting in revisionist viewpoints? Can there be a basis for solidarity without a common Marxist-Leninist viewpoint? Will it be in the interests of the Yugoslav people to reject friendship with the countries in the socialist camp and with the communist parties of other countries?

We deem it absolutely necessary to distinguish between right and wrong on vital questions in the international workers' movement. As Lenin said: "A policy based on principle is the only correct policy." The world is now at a new historic turning point with the East wind prevailing over the West wind. The struggle between the Marxist line and the revisionist line is nothing but a reflection of the sharpening struggle between the rising class forces and the moribund class forces in society, a reflection of the sharpening struggle between the imperialist world and the socialist world.

It is impossible for any Marxist-Leninist to escape this struggle. Historical developments will testify ever more clearly to the great significance of this struggle for the international Communist movement.

THE SOVIET EDITORIAL

Our times, the epoch of the historic victories of the world Socialist system, are characterized by the growing unity and solidarity of the international Communist movement and the strengthening friendship of the peoples of the Socialist countries.

The Communist and workers' parties regard themselves as a component part of the great international Communist movement and display lively interest in the work and experience of each of the fraternal parties. Hence the seventh congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia in April, which dis-

cussed a question so important as the party's program, also commanded the attention of the Communist and workers' parties.

The draft program of the League of Communists brought forth serious criticisms from the Communist and workers' parties of many countries. Statements by the central committees of the Communist and workers' parties of a number of countries pointed out that many of the theories contained in the draft program of the League of Communists contradicted the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism and actually constituted a revision of Marxism-Leninism.

They applied particularly to the description and appraisal of such vital questions as the present international situation, the two world systems and two camps, the significance of the building of socialism in the USSR and other countries, the principles of proletarian internationalism and the mutual relations between the Socialist countries and between the fraternal Communist parties.

The draft program of the Yugoslav League of Communists had the appearance of a document opposing the declaration of the conference of Communist and workers' parties of the Socialist countries which was approved by all the fraternal Communist parties.

Because of this the draft program proved a document directed toward weakening rather than strengthening the unity of the Communist and workers' parties, toward weakening the unity of the Socialist countries. The fraternal Communist parties hoped that their comradely remarks on the draft program would be accepted by their Yugoslav comrades in the right light. However, at the congress of the Yugoslav League of Communists, Yugoslav leaders spoke about these remarks with irritation and refused to have anything to do with them, without going into a discussion of the essence of the matter.

The materials of the congress of the Yugoslav League of Communists showed that the incorrect theses of the draft program were developed in detail and defended by the congress speakers and certain of the others who took the floor. Such speeches require criticism and a decisive rebuff. It is impossible to ignore the appraisal of the international situation given at the congress, which was wrong in principle, and the distorted estimate of the reasons for the international tension.

The report by Tito, the General Secretary of the Yugoslav League of Communists, propounded the idea that the policy of the great powers after the Second World War was based on the principle of strength and not on the right of all nations to decide their own destinies. According to Tito, an example of this foreign policy was the many years of Stalin's pressure on Yugoslavia. It emerges from that statement that the leaders of the Yugoslav Union of Communists placed the USSR on the same level as the imperialist powers. Crudely distorting the facts of history, they ascribed a policy of strength to the USSR.

The whole world knows that the USSR waged a steadfast and persistent struggle for a democratic path of development—against the resurgence of fascism and for socialism. To declare that Soviet policy in the first post-war years was characterized by a desire to win domination over other nations, as was done

in the speeches at the Congress of the Yugoslav League of Communists, merely means repeating the inventions of imperialist propaganda about a so-called Soviet empire surrounding itself with satellites.

This attempt to whitewash the imperialist powers was most clearly evident in the allegation that the policy of the USSR was the main reason for the establishment of the Atlantic Pact.

The distortion of the real reasons for the formation of the North Atlantic alliance is actually nothing more or less than a justification of U.S. imperialism, which set up this aggressive war bloc as its principal weapon in trying to achieve world domination.

The circumstance must be noted that in their analysis of the international situation the speakers at the congress ignored the indisputable fact that a fierce struggle is now being waged between the imperialist forces of war and the forces of peace in which the Socialist countries are in the vanguard.

The leaders of the Yugoslav League of Communists do not agree with the characterization generally recognized by the Communists of all countries of a world divided today into two opposing camps—socialism and imperialism.

They declare that Yugoslavia is outside these camps. But the division of the world into two camps did not occur at the whim of any persons or parties. The Socialist and imperialist camps are a reflection of the indisputable fact that there are in the world today not one but two social and economic systems. Two economic systems exist and will continue to exist for a long time to come. The goal now is to establish peaceful economic coexistence between the two systems, to normalize the economic relations between the world of socialism and the world of capitalism.

The problem of the mutual relations between the Socialist countries, and the Communist and workers' parties at their head, is of key significance for the development of socialism and communism. This is a new problem. It arose only after the Second World War with the appearance on the international arena alongside the USSR of the other Socialist countries of Europe and Asia. The Socialist countries built their mutual relations on principles of full equality, respect for territorial integrity, state independence and sovereignty and non-interference in one another's internal affairs.

These are important principles. They do not, however, exhaust the entire essence of the relations between the Socialist countries.

Fraternal mutual assistance is an inalienable part of these mutual relations. The Socialist states are united in a single community by their common interests and goals, in their efforts for the victory of socialism and communism. The emergence of socialism beyond the bounds of a single country, its conversion into a world social and economic system, the formation and consolidation of the camp of Socialist countries—this is the main thing which defines the international development characterizing the present epoch.

Under present circumstances, when a new Socialist society already unites more than one-third of humanity, the build-up of practical and theoretical cooperation between the Socialist countries becomes a vital necessity. Yet the line

followed in the speeches at the congress of the League of Communists is to substantiate the separate individuality of the Socialist countries and to set them off in opposition to one another. Now that there are not one but many Socialist countries, it is impossible to build socialism and communism individually, one by one.

Every Socialist country, no matter how big or small it may be, is currently in need of the assistance of the other Socialist countries and the entire international working class movement. The very existence of every country as a Socialist country and its successful advance is possible only thanks to the existence of the Socialist camp and thanks to the fact that it is possible to find support in the economic might and political unity of this camp. The main speakers, and certain others, at the congress spoke with gratitude and appreciation of the United States aid to Yugoslavia.

When reading these speeches kowtowing to the U.S. ruling circles, one is prompted to ask: Why is Yugoslavia in such favor with the U.S. monopolists? Every Communist is justified in wondering why the U.S. imperialists, the worst enemies of socialism, consider it profitable to themselves to help Yugoslavia. For what services? Is it not because the Yugoslav leaders are trying to weaken the unity of the international Communist and working class movement? Everyone knows that U.S. aid to any country is not unselfish.

It entails one or another form of economic and political dependence. Under the guise of this aid the U.S. monopolies ship to the recipient countries goods that find no market elsewhere. Such assistance from the U.S. monopolies does not promote a development of the recipients national economy. As a result of this so-called disinterested aid from the U.S. imperialists Yugoslavia's general state debt abroad has reached the stupendous figure of more than \$800,000,000. As for Soviet-Yugoslav economic ties, they are based on an other foundation.

The report made to the Yugoslav congress listed the major agreements concluded between the two countries in recent years. These were primarily the agreements to build industrial enterprises in Yugoslavia costing \$110,000,000; then the agreement for a commodity credit worth \$54,000,000 from the Soviet Union to Yugoslavia. Mention was also made of the \$30,000,000 loan in gold or foreign currency, the special agreement for the construction of an aluminum plant, fertilizer factory and so on.

Even this brief list shows the basic difference in principle between so-called U.S. aid and the economic relations linking the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. While U.S. aid aims at subjugating the recipient countries, the Soviet Union tries to really help the other Socialist and economically underdeveloped countries to strengthen and develop their economy and to industrialize.

Yet the framers of the draft program of the Yugoslav League of Communists flagrantly distorted the nature of the relations linking the Socialist countries, accused them in an unfriendly and even slanderous way of a desire for hegemony.

They claimed that in the initial phases of the development of socialism in

individual nations or states there exists a possibility of utilizing economic exploitation of other countries in one form or another.

Do certain persons in Yugoslavia feel that this tendency toward exploitation also exists in the economic relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia? If so, it would be possible to free Yugoslavia from such exploitation. We are not imposing anything on anybody—neither our state structure, nor our forms of public life, nor our ideology. The Soviet Union does not impose its friendship or economic assistance on anyone.

The Yugoslav leaders think that existing ideological differences should not cause a worsening of state relations between Yugoslavia and the Socialist countries. But a simple repetition of this platitude is insufficient, as experience shows. It is impossible not to see that ideological differences deepen if they are not eliminated. Naturally this leads to differences on political issues.

The Soviet Union and its Communist Party have energetically advanced along the line of eliminating all injustices and mistakes made in the past with regards to Yugoslavia.

But it must be bluntly stated that Yugoslavia, in 1948 and the following years, made mistakes of a nationalistic nature and departed from the principles of Marxism-Leninism on a number of major issues.

The Yugoslav League of Communists and the draft program clearly show that the Yugoslav leaders continue to adhere to their positions, which contradict the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. The untenability of the positions held by the leadership of the Yugoslav League of Communists and their violation of the principles of interparty relations, as well as the principles of proletarian internationalism, were forcefully manifested in their incorrect attitude toward criticism on questions of principle.

In response to comradely criticism of shortcomings and mistakes in the draft program, there came a shower of ridiculous accusations of interference in Yugoslavia's domestic affairs.

There must be complete clarity on the major issue. How can one accuse other Communist parties of aspiring to interfere in Yugoslavia's internal affairs if the Central Committee of the League of Communists itself sent its draft program to all the fraternal parties? What was that done for? Apparently it was done so that they could give their opinions about the draft.

When these opinions were voiced, however, the most unceremonious attacks began against the fraternal parties.

The most important question for each Communist or workers' party in the present conditions is its attitude to the whole Communist movement on a world scale.

The slightest deviation from the principles of Marxism-Leninism, any manifestation of separateness or sectarianism, inevitably leads to the quagmire of revisionism. The great invincible vital force of the Communist movement throughout the globe, of the Socialist world, consists in their unity and solidarity based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

Book Review

AMERICAN FARM COOPERATIVES

Agricultural Cooperation: Selected Readings, edited by M. A. Abrahamsen and C. L. Scroggs (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis), 576 pages. \$7.50.

THIS VOLUME SHOULD be welcomed by those interested in agrarian development. Its value lies in the breadth of subject matter covered in some 50 articles by 49 authors.

The cooperative movement in the U.S. exists almost exclusively among farmers. Farm cooperative business amounted to \$9.7 billion in 1954-55, including \$7.4 billion for farm products marketed, over \$2 billion for supplies sold to farmers, and almost \$200 million for various cooperatively-organized services.*

This business was carried on through 9,887 marketing, farm supply and service cooperatives. These embraced 7.6 million memberships, roughly 2.5 memberships for each of the 3 million farmers estimated to be members of such associations. Membership expanded from 651,000 in 1915 to 3,100,000 in 1929-30, and to 7,535,000 in 1954-55.**

Slightly less than two-thirds of the associations are marketing cooperatives with 4.2 million memberships; while slightly more than one-third are farm supply co-ops with 3.3 million memberships. The balance are miscellaneous service associations.

Over 76 percent (\$7.4 billion) of the gross volume of cooperative business is accounted for by the sales of farm products for farmers, and almost 21 percent (\$2 billion) by farm supplies purchased by farmers.

The growth of the farmer cooperative movement has apparently only kept pace with the volume of farm business. About one-fifth of the farm products moving into commercial channels are handled (as of 1951) at one or more stages by the cooperatives. This represented only a slight increase over the proportion handled during the preceding decade. The proportion of farm supply purchases handled by cooperatives rose somewhat more than in the case of marketing associations, but only to about 16 to 18 percent of the total.

There have been two main trends in the cooperative movement in the capitalist world. One has reflected elemental opposition to capitalism as a sys-

* The statistical data in this section are taken mainly from *Statistics of Farmer Cooperatives, 1954-55*, by Anne L. Gessner (Farmer Cooperative Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, June 1957). They supersede the 1953-54 data given in Abrahamsen and Scroggs, pp. 45-55.

** Membership growth for the period 1949-50 to 1954-55, the latest period for which data are available, was primarily among the farm supply cooperatives which expanded by 800,000 (33 percent) while marketing associations expanded by 138,000 (3 percent). (Gessner, pp. 10, 70.)

tem. The other represents an attempt to survive under that system. The first trend is generally described as "reformist"; its social outlook, in its most pronounced form, has been the cooperative commonwealth.

This ideology is thoroughly alien to, and plays an insignificant role in, the affairs of the cooperative movement in the United States. The outlook of the leaders of American cooperation has been aptly described as a "business attitude."*

There are persons who, in the face of "cooperation American style" seek to salvage something of the historic social aspirations of the movement. Thus, it has been said, almost despairingly, that the cooperatives "are and must be more than business organizations. They must be social organizations." Similarly, the farm cooperative combines "humanitarianism with business objectives" in the interest of agriculture, a "balanced national economy" and "national welfare."

The dominant conviction in cooperative circles is, however, that the movement is, and must be, capitalistic in nature. In this view the "economic nature of cooperative business activity . . . clearly reveals" that the attribution of social purpose to the cooperatives is "inaccurate or irrelevant."

The cooperatives are viewed as "purely capitalistic instruments," as business organizations which are "part and parcel of our capitalistic system." The cooperatives, it is held, were "not created to reform society or to achieve their ends through revolutionary procedures" but to operate "within the laws of [capitalist] economics instead of trying to subvert them."

America's rural cooperatives are, on the one hand, a combine of producers who are, for the most part, petty entrepreneurs. This is seen most clearly in the local marketing association or cooperative store. On the other hand, cooperatives are big business, or pretty big business. This is evident in the overhead organizations where millions run through the till.

This divergence is widely recognized, albeit in back-handed fashion. Thus, some people insist that the cooperative "is not an end in itself" but the means to "gain or profit to the patron." This theory is refuted by the fact that a normal function of a cooperative is, as we shall see below, to plow back part of its surplus as capital.

It is argued, also, that the cooperative is not a separate entity, but is part of the individual business of its members. By this theory a cooperative of 100 or 1,000 members is an agglomeration of 100, or 1,000, parts—even if its physical reality is a grain elevator, or a retail store, or a cotton gin. The contention that the cooperative is not a separate entity, "does not appear to coincide with reality" in the words of a critic. It does not coincide, specifically, with the existence of widespread competition between cooperatives in all fields, to cite but one instance.

The argument that the cooperative association "does not pursue an economic career of its own, independent of the economic careers" of its farmer

* All quotation, unless stated otherwise, are from the Abrahamsen-Scroggs volume.

members, is advanced to prove that the cooperative differs fundamentally from capital-creating and capital-absorbing business enterprises.

In contrast to those writers and cooperators who contend that the cooperative is more than a business enterprise, with humanitarian or social attributes and objectives, there developed in the U.S. a "cooperative unit . . . which cries down the Rochdale principles and exalts the new 'cooperation American style,' along lines of big business bargaining efficiency and ruthlessness," and which represents a "tendency for infusion of predatory ideas" into the cooperative field.

It would be wrong, I believe, to seek the source of "predatory infusion" or "big business ruthlessness" in the cooperating farmers. Not that these characteristics do not exist—among the big farmers who are often foremost in the marketing cooperatives. The source lies elsewhere—in the environment in which the cooperative must function—a capitalistic, monopolistic environment in which the way of life is "root, hog, or die!"

Through their whole history, the farmers in the United States have funnelled their produce into a narrowly controlled market, and have purchased their supplies in a constricted market. From the beginning there was the elementary contradiction between urban markets and rural production. With the growth of large industry, this elementary contradiction developed into the contradiction between petty, rural production and Big Business which dominates both the markets for farm products and the sources of the commodities the farmers purchase.*

The farmers have attempted to protect themselves against the ever more intense pressure of monopoly by establishing, in the non-production phases of their business, a common front against the enemy.

The battle ground has shifted over the years. At one extreme has been the attempt to establish effective control over individual products. The greatest exponent of this view was Aaron Shapiro, the cooperative evangelist of the early '20's. At the other extreme is the modest role assigned the cooperatives by those who see the associations as only a "yardstick" to measure capitalist performance and to impel capitalist improvements; or as a "balance wheel" to keep capitalist greed within bounds; or as a "competitive pacemaker" or "pilot plant."

The cooperatives are, in the first place, business organizations, operating in a situation which is dominated by monopoly and whose tendency is further concentration. To establish firmer bulwarks against monopoly pressure the cooperatives have formed larger units through horizontal or vertical integration. Horizontal integration involves absorption of, or absorption by, or merger with, another cooperative enterprise on the same step of the market ladder. Consolidation of two cooperative stores, or gas stations, or grain elevators, or ship-

* "The processing and distribution of farm products and supplies has grown into big business, and that business is often concentrated into a few firms. . . . In the industries manufacturing farm supplies, the concentration is even greater than for the product-processing industries" (pp. 352-353).

ping associations represents horizontal integration. The purchase by a group of cooperative gas stations of a supply depot, or a refinery, or railroad tank cars, represents vertical integration. The establishment of retail stores or delivery systems by a dairy cooperative, likewise represents vertical integration.

Horizontal and vertical integration stimulate each other. An enterprise that has expanded horizontally is impelled, in the attempt to cut costs, toward vertical integration—either forward to the consumers or backward to the sources of supply. Similarly, the vertical integration which results in the acquisition of an oil refinery by a group of retail gas stations stimulates the acquisition of additional retail outlets to utilize the refinery's capacity to the utmost, that is, at the lowest cost of production.

This trend is not peculiar to cooperatives. It is, rather, the path along which consolidation and concentration develop in capitalist enterprises. The "principle of expanding operations through horizontal, vertical and complementary integration has been a leading principle of successful cooperatives." Further concentration is inevitable, some competent observers hold. "The trend toward more integration, both horizontal and vertical, is *irresistible* among cooperatives as long as our economy is largely dominated by large-scale industrial organizations," for "only by integration can cooperatives offer effective competition to powerful integrated non-cooperative firms." There will be further integration among organizations that are themselves the result of consolidation or concentration. "We may . . . expect some degree of merger among existing *federations* or *centralized* associations," "eventually . . . the outright merger of competing cooperatives which perform similar services in the same general area."

The dominant writers on the cooperative movement, and the upper echelons of its officials, see further expansion and consolidation as necessary and desirable. There are some, however, to whom the desirability of this course is not manifest, who question whether the "establishment of new departments or of new enterprises is in the interests of our rural economy," and who suggest that this development may be a move "on the part of management to foster vested interests." It has been charged, further, by some, that many associations have become "feeders or servants" of the "powerful industrial corporations." A critical examination of the movement from this viewpoint should be undertaken.

Some cooperative leaders feel that "if adherence to cooperative principles limits volume, the cooperative principles are unsound and must be revamped." One leader, of a different mind, has said: "Many purchasing associations are losing their souls in fighting to grow big."

It is over-simplified to conclude, however, that the cause lies in the "emphasis on bigness as an end in itself." The cause is the emphasis, in life, not in words, that the cooperative must expand—or die. It is capitalism which provides the "emphasis."

The "irresistible" trend toward bigness expresses itself not only in horizontal and vertical integration but in the growth of the capital in each enter-

prise. Lack of capital and too small a capital structure are "major problems of many farmer cooperatives today."*

The need for additional capital arises from:

1. The expansion of credit operations. Marketing associations cannot always make their sales on a cash basis. Similarly, farm supply associations are increasingly selling on credit. (Cash transaction has been a principle of cooperative operation dating back to the Rochdale pioneers.)
2. The necessity of carrying a much wider and heavier inventory to compete with private enterprises.
3. The longer turnover that results from the development of vertical integration.

Vertical integration increases the amount of capital required in proportion to the volume of farm products sold. "The more stages through which products are followed to market, the longer will be the time between delivery of products by the farmer and the receipt of the returns. More capital will be required to finance these products over the lengthening market interval." Vertical integration in farm supply distribution has similar consequences.

In recent years all of these causes have been aggravated by the rising price level, making an even larger volume of capital necessary.

What are the sources of additional capital for U.S. cooperatives today? The farmers? But the farmers need capital for their farming operations. There is an intense pressure on them already to increase, as the price of survival, the size and efficiency of their farming operations.

Members of a cooperative contribute to the association's capital either through purchase of (1) some form of equity (stock or other security) in the organization or (2) from balances which accrue to them as patrons of the cooperative. The second source includes either (a) deductions made from the proceeds of marketed farm products or (b) refunds from savings attained in the cooperative's operations.

The capital which has been contributed by the members of the cooperatives (voluntarily or without their knowledge) through direct investment or through withholding of patronage dividends from them, have not been sufficient to provide the capital required. This produces considerable dependence upon the banks.

The effective repudiation of the commonwealth objectives that once were associated with the cooperative movement has been accompanied by run-of-the-mill propaganda for capitalism. One educator says, for example, that "cooperative ideas" arose as a "method by which independent farmers could work toward taking their rightful place in a free-enterprise economy." This is not true. The pervasive factor in the development of the cooperatives in the U.S. has not been accommodation to a "free-enterprise economy" but the threat posed by the growth of monopoly in industry, transport, retail distribution,

* *Methods of Financing Farmer Cooperatives* by Helim H. Hulbert, Nelda Griffin and Kelsey B. Gardner. (Farmer Cooperative Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. General Report 32, June 1957, p. 28).

finance, and the like. The cooperative movement has in this sense been "anti-monopoly" in origin.

Some latter-day theoreticians have sought to enroll the cooperative movement in the cold war. It has been extolled as a defender of the "free enterprise" system against a competing system; as a "rival and partner of commercial business in the American system of free enterprise"; its obligation, it is said, is to provide "maximum usefulness . . . to the American capitalistic economy."

Others recommend that the "cooperative purchasing associations should be pace-setters in promoting" Eric Johnson's "progressive cooperative capitalism"; for if "capitalism doesn't correct its abuses, it will commit suicide as an economic system."

This rescue operation would not be difficult if it were true—as one writer puts it—that monopoly, rather than being the dominant characteristic of our economy, were only an "imperfection" in it.

One comes upon the recommendation to "industrial leadership" (the monopolists) to "see the wisdom of supplying their services to the public on a long-run cost basis," and the "adoption of low-price policy in corporate business," that is, that they should cease to be monopolists. Whatever one may say about the utopian ideas of the "reformist" cooperators of the last century, their belief that capitalists were a cut-throat lot had much to recommend it, in terms of reality as contrasted with the foregoing type of analysis.

One of the principles of the Rochdale and other rank-and-file cooperators has been that the organization should be controlled by its members. There is, however, considerable evidence that this is frequently not the case and, worse, that the tendency is away from membership democracy.

The situation is that "too often complete control becomes vested in the management and small groups of advisors," that "very little control is actually exercised by the members of very large cooperatives"; that "democratic control as a principle frequently receives more lip service than practical application in some huge centralized and federated associations." The "smaller operators who constitute the great majority of the membership . . . find it most difficult to spare the time either for membership, committee or directors' meetings" and, in consequence, these activities are usurped by the large operators.

Furthermore, "too often, the attitude of the managers and directors is that the members exist for the benefit of the cooperative, as if the cooperative were the end sought." The fault is not in the managers or directors, but in the economic environment, that the cooperative is often subverted from its alleged purpose.

It has been said that "cooperatives can be a firmly founded bulwark to help protect our family-sized farms against their danger of being overwhelmed by economic problems too big for them to handle." An even more extreme statement holds that "cooperation protects the small farmer as well as the big farmer." Both assertions are at variance with the facts. While the cooperative movement has grown, the number of farmers has declined rapidly. Hundreds

of thousands of family farmers have been eliminated from agriculture despite the expansion of the cooperative movement.

The main problems confronting the cooperatives, in respect to the interests of the small and middle-size farmers, are:

1. The developing economic crisis will create grave perils for the existence of many cooperatives, which have expanded in a boom period.
2. The tendency is for the associations, especially the larger ones, to adopt the goals and methods of capitalist enterprise: profit (even if it is disguised as "patrons' savings"), aggrandizement, expansion.
3. The tendency is for control to be lodged in the officers and directors, and for the bulk of the membership to be deprived of any real determination of the associations' course.

To meet these threats to an institution which is of great import to millions of farmers, participation of the bulk of the membership in determining policy will be essential.

The three problems mentioned above are not cut of the same cloth. The consequences in the first case—the impact of the widening crisis—are immediate. The depression may undermine the solvency of some cooperatives. The investments which small and middle farmers have in such coops would be threatened; under such circumstances, federal assistance to forestall coop insolvencies should be invoked.

The only cure for the second problem—the weakening of membership participation in the direction of the coops—requires a protracted struggle to arouse the members to an understanding of the serious consequence of their passivity. If they do not participate in direction of policy, there is no reason to believe that the cooperative will serve their interests.

The third problem, I believe, will continue with us. The orientation of the cooperative movement along bigger-business channels will continue under capitalism. Under socialism, the coops could become a part of a socially-oriented system of product distribution.

ERIK BERT

New Spring Books

HISTORY AND CONSCIENCE:

The Case of Howard Fast

by Hershel D. Meyer

The first full-length study of the social and personal dynamics which lie behind the political reversal announced by the formerly progressive writer. Dr. Meyer probes to the heart of Fast's not-so-special case, buttressing his analysis with historic, philosophic and psychological data in a study which goes beyond the Fast case, into major issues facing intellectuals in our time.

ANVIL-ATLAS, Cloth \$1.75; Paper \$1.00

HERE I STAND

by Paul Robeson

"Robeson weaves his background with overtones of moving beauty. Pain and struggle, poverty and heartbreak, humiliation and disappointment are there; but there is too so much love, so much devotion, so much of unselfish giving. . . *Here I Stand* is a blueprint for action. It is a book to read and to pass on and on."

—SHIRLEY GRAHAM in *Mainstream*

OTHELLO, Cloth \$2.50; Paper \$1.00

THE DAY IS COMING

The Life and Work of Charles E. Ruthenberg

by Oakley Johnson

The long-awaited biography of one of the chief founders of the American Communist Party vividly describes his socialist background and typical midwest boyhood in Ohio, and the lessons of his life and work for today.

INTERNATIONAL, \$3.00

TOWARD A SOCIALIST AMERICA

by 15 Contemporary American Socialists

Edited by Helen Alfred, this volume contains essays by Herbert Aptheker, Homer Ayres, Reuben Borough, Carl Dreher, W.E.B. Du Bois, Philip Foner, Stephen Fritchman, John Howard Lawson, John T. McManus, Broadus Mitchell, Scott Nearing, George Olshausen, Victor Perlo, Bertha Reynolds, and Paul M. Swezey, setting forth their views on the political and economic shape of socialism in the U.S.A.

PEACE PUBLICATIONS, Cloth \$3.50; Paper \$1.50

New Century Publishers • 832 Broadway, New York 3