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FIFTY YEARS OF SOCIALISM

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The Party of a New Type

This month, *Political Affairs* is devoted to commemorating the 50th anniversary of one of the most notable events in all human history. Of this great event, the anniversary statement of the Communist Party of the United States says:

> Turns in human affairs so earth-shaking as to raise civilization to a new plane and to give an entirely new meaning to all aspects of life are extremely rare. The Great October Revolution, which gave birth to the first socialist state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—is among the most monumental of such turning points.
>
> It marked the beginning of a new era. It marked the end of the existence of capitalism as the sole, all-embracing world social system.
>
> It brought into being a new and higher social order—socialism. It marked the beginning of the end of the rule of grasping, inhuman corporate wealth and gave life to a new social system whose guiding principle is: everything for the good of all.
>
> For the first time in history, power was placed in the hands of those who work. A break was made with the long succession of social systems in which the many were exploited by the few.
>
> The Great October Revolution opened the most far-reaching revolutionary transformation in human history—the era of the passage of society from capitalism to socialism.

What the Russian workers and peasants brought into being fifty years ago was a society in which, for the first time, man became the master of his own fate, in which he was no longer at the mercy of blindly-acting economic laws but was also consciously to utilize these laws in a planned way for the advancement of his collective well-being. Unlike its predecessors, such a society does not simply develop bit by bit within the womb of old society—for example, as capitalism developed within feudal society. On the contrary, it must be deliberately brought into being in place of the old. As the saying goes, "Capitalism develops, socialism is built."

But building requires an architect and a builder. It requires a conscious social force which is equipped with a knowledge of the laws of social development and is therefore capable of mapping out the line of march to socialism. More, it requires an *organized* force, capable of conducting the necessary struggles.

That force, wrote V. I. Lenin at the turn of the century, is the political "party of a new type," a working-class party armed with Marxist theory, containing in its ranks the politically most advanced members of the class, disciplined, free of opportunism, capable of fulfilling the role of a vanguard. This was indeed a new concept of a political party —a concept of a *revolutionary* party, standing in sharp contrast to the reformist Social Democratic parties of that day. It took a strenuous fight on the part of Lenin and his supporters to overcome the stubborn opposition of reformist elements and to bring such a party into existence.

The party they created was the Bolshevik Party, which led the workers and peasants to victory in the October Revolution and subsequently, as the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, led the Soviet people in the pioneering task of building a socialist society and laying the groundwork for the transition to communism.

The American press, radio and television have devoted fantastic amounts of space and time to the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet Union. Special issues of magazines commemorating the anniversary have become commonplace. The USSR has become a power in world affairs with which one must reckon. And despite their basic hostility, the powers that be in this country have been compelled to recognize it as a strong, stable society with many great achievements to its credit. And the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as the architect of these achievements. Particularly noteworthy are the following words of the prominent scholar and former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, George F. Kennan:

> For the fact that . . . the experiment has gone on so long, and for the fact that it has yielded a stable civilization, capable of providing adequate outlets for many if not all of the positive human impulses—for this, credit must be given, even by those who constitute its ideological opponents, to the Russian Communist Party. In creating a new order out of the chaos of 1918-1919; in clinging to power successfully for half a century in a great and variegated country where the exertion of political power has never been easy; in retaining its own discipline and vitality as a political instrument in the face of the corrupting influence that the exercise of power invariably exerts; in realizing many of its far-reaching social objectives; in carrying to the present level the industrialization of the country and the development of new technology; in giving firm, determined and in many ways inspired leadership in the struggle against the armies of German fascism; in providing political inspiration and guidance to many of the radical-socialist forces the world over most of this period, and to some of them over all of this period: in these achievements the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has not only stamped itself as the greatest political organization of the century in vigor and in will, but has remained faithful to the quality of the Russian Revolution as the century's greatest political event. ("The Russian Revolution—Fifty Years After: Its Nature and Consequences," *Foreign Affairs,* October 1967.)

To be sure, mistakes were made and, especially in the later years of the Stalin regime, gross violations of socialist democracy developed. But not least among the accomplishments of the CPSU was its leadership in overcoming the effects of these violations, in restoring and advancing democratic practices, and in setting the country on a path of accelerated development. Today it is leading the Soviet people on the path to a communist society.

Today, too, Communist parties are leading the working people in the building of socialism in a number of other countries. And today there are active Communist parties in more than a hundred countries, with a total membership of close to 40,000,000. "The world Communist movement," says the Statement of 81 Communist and Workers Parties issued in 1960, "has become the most influential political force of our time, a most important factor in social progress."

The forerunner of this powerful world movement is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the party of Lenin. There can be no proper observance of this fiftieth birthday of socialism, therefore, without giving due recognition to the role of this great party.

Today the notion is current in certain sections of the Left in this country and elsewhere that a socialist revolution can be carried out without the existence or the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist political party. It has also become fashionable to downgrade the role of theory, to argue that out of struggle there will emerge spontaneously both organization and theory. For some, the only requisite is a handful of courageous men, ready to take to arms and to launch guerrilla warfare. But the history of the October Revolution and the ensuing half-century clearly show otherwise. Today, no less than at that time, the road to progress lies in the building of strong, influential Communist parties in all countries. For American Communists, this anniversary celebration of the October Revolution should strengthen the resolve to build their own party into a truly powerful force for socialism.

HYMAN LUMER

The Soviet Union in World Affairs

Prior to 1917 the major states of the world comprised only the imperialist powers—a group of states motivated by aggressive designs, by an insatiable appetite for territory which brought them into incessant conflict with one another and drove them to wars for redivision of the world. The culmination of these conflicts was the first world war.

A New Type of State

With the October Revolution, however, there came into being for the first time in history a new type of state, a socialist state with no stake in foreign investments, in colonies, in wars of conquest. It was a state whose one concern was the maintenance of world peace as the vital condition for the building of a socialist society. It was a state, therefore, which found a common interest not with the monopolist warmakers but with the masses of working people the world over, who likewise had no stake in war. And it was a state which found its ties not with the imperialist aggressors but with their victims—with the oppressed nations seeking their freedom.

Here, in the form of the new-born Soviet Union, was the working class, the enemy of all exploitation and oppression, clothed with state power. Here was a new force on the world arena, a bulwark and a guiding star for all who fought for freedom and progress, for a world free of exploitation.

To world imperialism the emergence of such a state was a shattering blow. Now they were confronted not only with one another but also with a new—a common—foe. The contradictions in which they were entangled had multiplied. With the victory of the working class in Russia, the class struggle had acquired a new, international dimension. One part of the world in which the working class had won political power now confronted another in which the capitalist class continued to rule. Needless to say, this complicated life enormously for the imperialists. Their internecine conflicts with one another were now tempered by the need to cope with this new, most dangerous rival which represented the very negation of their existence.

The Central Committee of the CPSU, in its Theses on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Great October Revolution, describes this profound change in these words:

> The October Revolution has precipitated radical shifts in the entire system of international relations, throwing imperialist foreign policy into a deep crisis and proclaiming principles of peace and international security, equality, friendship and co-operation between peoples. The struggle between socialism and imperialism has become the pivot of world politics.
>
> By its emergence, the Soviet country limited the maneuvers of the imperialists in the world arena. In all its doings the bourgeoisie now has to reckon with the Soviet Union. Today there is not a single important international question that can be solved without the participation of the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries.

In short, the imperialist powers found themselves torn between their hostility to one another and their common hostility to the Soviet Union. These contradictory pulls led, on the one hand, to repeated efforts to maintain a common front against the Soviet state, beginning with the collective military intervention in 1918 aimed at encompassing its destruction. And on the other hand, in the face of shrinking markets and spheres of imperialist domination, they led to a growing interest of specific groups of monopolists in seeking closer economic ties with the Soviet Union as a source of advantage over their competitors. These conflicting tendencies gave rise to divisions not only between capitalist countries but within the ruling class of each country.

Soviet Peace Policy

Peace has from the very outset been vital to the existence and development of the Soviet Union as a socialist state. It alone provides the conditions for the development of socialism and ultimately of a communist society. In Soviet society no class exists which grows rich through war and therefore has an interest in promoting it; for the entire people it is an unmitigated calamity. The wars into which the new-born Soviet state was plunged, and later World War II with its immeasurable loss of life and property, enormously set back Soviet economic and social development. The striving for peace and peaceful coexistence is thus inherent in the very nature of socialist society, and it has been the cornerstone of Soviet foreign policy literally from the very beginning. And in its pursuit of these goals the Soviet Union has not failed to take advange of the growing contradictions of world imperialism for the purpose of frustrating the warmakers and establishing peaceful relations wherever possible.

Almost the very first action of the new state was the Decree on Peace, issued by the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets on November 8, 1917. It opened with these words:

The workers' and peasants' government, created by the revolution of October 24-25 (November 6-7 in the present calendar—H. L.) and basing itself on the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, proposes to all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace.

By a just or democratic peace, for which the overwhelming majority of the working class and other working people of all the belligerent countries, exhausted, tormented and racked by the war, are craving—a peace that has been most definitely and insistently demanded by the Russian workers and peasants ever since the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy—by such a peace the government means an immediate peace without annexations (i.e., without the seizure of foreign lands, without the forcible incorporation of foreign nations) and without reparations.

The government of Russia proposes this kind of peace be immediately concluded by all the belligerent nations, and expresses its readiness to take all resolute measures now, without the least delay, pending the final ratification of all the terms of such a peace by authoritative assemblies of the people's representatives of all countries and all nations.

It is the spirit of this decree which has animated Soviet foreign policy to this day. Shortly after, on November 27, 1917, the Soviet government issued a call for complete and general disarmament—a call to be frequently repeated in later years.

Despite intense pressures to the contrary, the Soviet government under Lenin's leadership concluded a peace treaty with Germany at Brest-Litovsk in March 1918, accepting the most onerous terms in order to end the war and safeguard the new state's very existence. The treaty caused consternation among Russia's former allies; indeed, both sides began to seek a conclusion to the war in order to turn their attention to this new menace.

Throughout the subsequent intervention the Soviet government made repeated proposals for peace, and after the interventionists were defeated renewed its calls for disarmament and peaceful coexistence of the two systems based on durable economic and cultural relations.

At the Genoa Conference in 1922 the Soviet Union proposed general disarmament and G. V. Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, projected the idea of peaceful coexistence in these words:

> While remaining true to the principles of communism, the Russian delegation recognizes the fact that in the present epoch, in which the parallel existence of the old system and the nascent new system is possible, economic collaboration between states representing the two systems of property ownership is imperatively necessary for a general economic rehabilitation. (V. I. Lenin, *On Peaceful Coexistence,* Moscow, p. 31.)

An important consequence of the Conference was the signing of the Rapallo Treaty with Germany, which had sought in vain for an easing of the intolerable reparations burden imposed by the Versailles Treaty. The Rapallo agreement restored diplomatic relations and cancelled all financial claims of each country against the other. Thus a breach in the imperialist front was achieved to the advantage of the Soviet Union.

Soviet efforts for peace and peaceful coexistence continued unabated throughout the twenties in the face of an unceasing campaign of the imperialist forces to undermine and destroy the first land of socialism. Not least among these forces were the U.S. ruling circles, which rejected normal economic relations with the USSR and withheld recognition until 1933.

The Fight for Collective Security

Soviet foreign policy was put to a far more severe test in the thirties, with the coming to power of Hitler and the launching of the fascist campaign of aggression. Once again the struggle for redivision of the world was coming to a head, with the fascist axis powers taking the initiative. Their slogan was "anti-Communism" but their goal was world domination. The prospect of a second world war became a frightening reality.

Now, however, the inter-imperialist rivalries were complicated by the existence of a socialist great power. And both sides devoted themselves to the overthrow both of their imperialist antagonists and the Soviet Union.

The bourgeois-democratic states, notably Britain and France, responded to the fascist aggression with the notorious appeasement policy—a policy of giving Hitler his way with the expectation that he would go to war against the Soviet Union and that when both sides had been sufficiently devastated they could step in and take over. The United States, despite its recognition of the USSR, followed a policy which encouraged the aggressors. It was only after Hitler's armies had overrun Europe and directly menaced England that the efforts to turn him against the Soviet Union were finally abandoned.

Soviet Russia, on the other hand, fought together with the forces

of peace and democracy in the capitalist countries for a policy of collective security, of uniting all democratic forces to resist fascist aggression. Her slogan was "Quarantine the Aggressor." She joined the League of Nations to carry on the fight through the forum it offered. And she signed mutual assistance pacts with France and Czechoslovakia—pacts which were nullified at the time of Munich, when appeasement reached its lowest depth by handing Czechoslovakia to Hitler.

The forces of collective security were unfortunately not strong enough to prevail. They were unable to prevent the rape of Republican Spain or the Munich sell-out. And when the Nazi armies stood poised to invade Poland, again with the blessings of the appeasers, the Soviet Union, as a final resort, once again took advantage of the inter-imperialist contradictions by signing a non-aggression pact with Germany.

We do not propose in this brief review to discuss the host of developments surrounding the non-aggression pact. Suffice it to note that by this action the USSR frustrated the designs of the appeasers, avoided being drawn into war under the most unfavorable of conditions— at a time when, isolated, she would have had to fight single-handed on two fronts against Germany and Japan—and gained two years in which to build her defenses. And when the Nazi invasion did come U.S. and British monopoly capital, to save their own imperialist hides, were compelled to ally themselves with the Soviet Union against the forces of fascism.

Thus, throughout this entire period the foreign policy of the Soviet Union was a policy dedicated to peace, a policy which unswervingly served the interests of the masses of people in all countries. Unlike World War I, World War II therefore became a just war, a war against fascist enslavement. And in the war itself, it was above all the heroic struggle of the Soviet people which brought about the defeat of the fascist Axis.

The dependence of the West on the Soviet Union for its very survival was accurately expressed at the time by General Douglas MacArthur in his often-cited statement of February 23, 1942 from Corregidor:

> The world situation at the present time indicates that the hopes of civilization rest on the worthy banners of the courageous Russian Army. During my lifetime I have participated in a number of wars and have witnessed others, as well as studying in great detail the campaigns of outstanding leaders of the past. In none have I observed such effective resistance to the heaviest blows of a hitherto undefeated enemy, followed by a smashing counter-attack which is driving the enemy back to his own land. The scale and grandeur of this effort marks it as the greatest military achievement in all history. (Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins,* Harper, New York, 1948, p. 497.)

Postwar Struggles

The victory over fascism vastly strengthened the forces of world socialism and hence of world peace, and it correspondingly weakened the forces of world imperialism. The Soviet Union no longer stood alone; there now came into being a group of socialist states embracing one-third of the world's people. Moreover, in the postwar years a great upsurge of national liberation struggles occurred, giving birth to a growing number of newly-liberated countries—to an increasingly influential bloc of states forming an added bulwark of peace and freedom. And not least, the forces of peace and progress in the capitalist countries grew impressively in strength.

U.S. imperialism, emerging from the war economically strengthened and in a position of unprecedented dominance within the capitalist world, now pursued in its turn the goal of world domination—of the "American Century." Toward this end the cold war was launched. U.S. imperialism now came forward as the most powerful, most reactionary, most bloodthirsty of imperialisms, embarked on a career of conquest. Over the years, however, the cold-war policies have proven increasingly bankrupt and the goal of the "American Century" increasingly unattainable. More and more, the drive for domination has run into the stone wall of an ever stronger aggregation of forces opposing imperialism and war, an aggregation whose cornerstone is the socialist world and above all the Soviet Union.

At the heart of the cold-war program was the destruction of socialism, for the achievement of which the architects of the "American Century" relied on their monopoly of atomic weapons coupled with the propagation of the Big Lie of "Soviet aggression." But Soviet science and technology soon broke the atomic monopoly and the Soviet Union became a world power possessed of nuclear weapons *in the service of peace*—a powerful deterrent to the launching of a new war whose suicidal character became painfully evident even within the ranks of imperialism. And the myth of "Soviet aggression" has been increasingly laid bare by events, not least by the persistent peace policy of the USSR.

The Soviet Union has consistently fought for the banning of nuclear weapons and for complete and universal disarmament. A

high point in this fight was the visit of Soviet Premier Khrushchev to the United States in 1959 and his presentation to the UN General Assembly on September 18 of the following proposal:

> The Soviet Government proposes that *within four years or any other agreed period all states should carry out in three subsequent stages the complete and final elimination of all their armed forces and armaments.* At the same time all measures for disarmament must be strictly controlled so that not a single state could shirk the fulfillment of its obligations under the treaty on general and complete disarmament and consequently, so that none of them could take advantage of the elimination of the armed forces and armaments of other states for aggressive purposes.

The visit led to agreement on a summit conference to discuss these and other questions; unfortunately the conference was torpedoed by the disclosure of the U2 flight over the Soviet Union. But the Soviet efforts continued, leading to the partial nuclear test ban a few years ago. And today the Soviet government continues to press for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, a complete test ban and other measures.

With the passage of time, therefore, the "Soviet aggression" myth has found fewer and fewer adherents. The ruling circles of the Western European countries have increasingly rejected the idea that they are in imminent danger of Soviet invasion. Instead they have moved in the direction of expanding their economic ties with the USSR. Hence it is that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the U.S.-instigated anti-Soviet alliance, is in a state of steady decline. In this country, too, acceptance of the Big Lie has progressively fallen off, particularly with the rise of the peace movement since the escalation of the war in Vietnam.

The growth of the camp of world peace and anti-imperialism has produced a new balance of world forces. More and more, it is this camp which has become decisive in molding the shape of events. Hence, to a growing extent the imperialist powers have proven unable to impose their will on others by armed force. The U.S. adventure in Korea ended not in military victory but in an armistice preserving the *status quo*. In its invasion of Egypt in 1956, Britain for the first time failed to prevail by force of arms and was compelled to withdraw, as were her allies, France and Israel. U.S. imperialism has not to this day succeeded in overthrowing a socialist regime on its very doorstep in the small country of Cuba. And today in Vietnam it finds itself incapable of militarily subduing a small, underdeveloped

country despite the pouring in of half a million troops and tens of billions of dollars.

Peace and National Liberation

Since the root of war today lies in the imperialist drive to oppress and exploit other peoples, the fight for peace is closely intertwined with the fight for national liberation. And just as imperialist foreign policy is based on national chauvinism and racism, so that of the socialist countries is motivated by proletarian internationalism, by the slogan "Workers of All Countries and Oppressed Nations, Unite!"*

The peace policy of the Soviet Union is thus directly tied to its support of all national liberation struggles and its aid to all countries striving for economic independence and industrialization of their economies. And if imperialism finds itself increasingly thwarted in its aggressive designs, this is in no small measure due to this role of the Soviet Union. Thus, the Soviet threat of military intervention on the side of Egypt in 1956 was a major factor in forcing the withdrawal of the aggressors. The Soviet role in preventing the U.S. invasion of Cuba in 1962 is well known. Of the Soviet support, Fidel Castro, speaking in Moscow in 1963, said:

> All honor to a country which, to defend a small country many thousands of miles away put on the scales of thermonuclear war the well-being it achieved in 45 years of creative labor and at the cost of tremendous sacrifices! The Soviet country, which in the course of the Great Patriotic War against fascism lost more lives defending its right to exist than there are people in Cuba, did not hesitate to take the risk of involving itself in a difficult war to defend our small country. History has never known such solidarity. This is true internationalism! This is communism!

To such examples as these may be added the military aid given to the Arab countries in their struggles against imperialism and above all to the heroic Vietnamese people. And they only begin to describe

*Of this slogan, Lenin said the following in a speech made in 1920: "Today we speak not only as representatives of the proletarians of all countries, but also as representatives of the oppressed nations. The Communist International recently issued a magazine called *The Peoples of the East*, in which it advanced this slogan for the Eastern peoples: 'Workers of All Countries and Oppressed Nations, Unite!' One comrade asked: 'When did the Executive Committee decide on a change of slogans?' Indeed, I cannot remember any such decision. And, of course, from the standpoint of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* this is wrong, but then the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* was written under totally different conditions. From the standpoint of present-day politics, this slogan is correct."

the extent of Soviet assistance to national liberation struggles. As for Soviet economic and technical assistance, this is dealt with elsewhere in this issue; hence we shall not go into it here other than to note that such aid is a cornerstone of Soviet foreign policy.

The support of national liberation struggles and of wars of liberation is not, as some have sought to argue, in conflict with the policy of peaceful coexistence which the Soviet Union has pursued from its very birth. On the contrary, the two are but opposite sides of one coin. Peaceful coexistence means carrying on the international class struggle, the struggle between capitalism and socialism, by peaceful methods. It means not only the absence of war between them but the establishment of durable economic and cultural relations between the socialist and capitalist worlds. Today it means putting an end to the cold war.

The realism of such a policy—even in the days when the Soviet Union was young, weak and encircled by capitalism—lies, as we have noted, in the fact that the contradictions within the camp of imperialism lead sections of it to seek economic relations with socialist countries despite their fundamental hostility to the existence of socialism. The stronger the socialist world and the deeper the contradictions of imperialism, the greater are the pressures in this direction. And in today's relationship of forces they have become powerful indeed.

For many years the forces of U.S. imperialism, along with others, actively sought the destruction of the Soviet Union. They worked to undermine its economy, to subvert it from within, and to encompass its military overthrow. Today, however, there are few, apart from the extreme Right, who consider this a realizable objective. In growing measure, U.S. ruling circles have been compelled to recognize the Soviet Union as a stable, powerful state and to face up to the fact that the only real alternatives are to live with it or to go down to mutual nuclear destruction.

Pressures for Peaceful Coexistence

The Western European countries have not only been expanding the volume of trade with the socialist world but have gone considerably beyond this, a fact highlighted by the announcement of the recent Fiat and Renault contracts for the construction of auto plants in the USSR, Rumania and Bulgaria. Of this development, Emile Benoit writes:

> Such East European industrial-technical cooperation agreements . . . constitute the most rapidly expanding area of international business today. American business is suddenly becoming very much interested. East Europe (including the USSR) already has a combined Gross National Product close to that of West Europe, and even at much lower than present growth rates, will, some time during the 1970's, become an economy as big as the American economy is today. ("East-West Business Cooperation: A New Approach to Communist Europe," *New Republic,* February 18, 1967.)

Not surprisingly, pressures from business circles in this country for expanded American-Soviet economic relations are steadily growing. And just recently, Theodore C. Sorensen, former advisor to President Kennedy, called for a broad expansion of trade between the two countries. Speaking before the National Businessmen's Council after a two-and-a-half week visit to the USSR, he said:

> Unless the United States and the Soviet Union can keep open some channels other than those for nuclear-tipped missiles, unless we make every effort to increase understanding and minimize misunderstandings—unless we demonstrate that there is some hope for peaceful coexistence, that we are not out to eradicate all Communism from the face of the earth, that methods other than aggression can result in progress—then we will have escalated the risks and prolonged the length of the Vietnamese war beyond all reason and meaning. (*New York Times,* September 30, 1967.)

The view that peaceful coexistence is the only real alternative has become increasingly frequent among spokesmen for U.S. ruling circles in recent years. Among its most outspoken exponents has been George F. Kennan, one-time ambassador to the USSR. In his book, *On Dealing With the Communist World* (Harper and Row, New York, 1964), he maintains "that the concept of destroying Soviet power entirely, as a major goal of policy, is and has always been inherently unsound, quite aside from the nuclear factor" (p. 17). And he argues that "the West has no choice but to accept the quest for peaceful coexistence as the basis for policy toward the countries of the Communist world" (p. 21).*

Senator William J. Fulbright has expressed similar views. In his latest book, *The Arrogance of Power* (Random House, New York, 1967), he says:

> Khrushchev's most important contribution was the practice of

*It should be borne in mind that the modification of monopolist political strategy in the direction of peaceful coexistence by no means lessens hostility to socialism as such or the efforts to weaken its foundations. Anti-Sovietism remains, no less than before, a central feature of foreign and domestic policy.

"peaceful coexistence." I believe that both he and his successors have been earnest in their declared desire to avoid nuclear war with the West. I believe they have been sincere in their stated belief that ideological warfare should be conducted by peaceful economic competition (p. 203).

He calls upon the United States to take up this challenge. But he goes a step further: he recognizes the war in Vietnam as the central obstacle to the pursuit of peaceful coexistence.

And so, indeed, it is. The brutal aggression against the Vietnamese people is without question the most serious roadblock to closer ties between this country and the Soviet Union and the deadliest source of danger of a nuclear confrontation between the two countries. For the American people, clearly, the fight to end the aggression in Vietnam is today the heart of the fight for peaceful coexistence. And for the Soviet Union, its unstinting military aid to the Vietnamese people and its efforts to use all other possible channels of action to bring the U.S. aggression to an end are likewise a vital part of the fight for peaceful coexistence, which is viewed as a fight against imperialist aggression on *all* fronts.

Thus does Soviet foreign policy continue to advance both the cause of peace and that of national liberation. But it does so today at a time when peaceful coexistence has become not just a policy to be fought for but a realizable objective.

In their own struggle for peace, the American people have no firmer ally than the Soviet Union, which stands in the vanguard of the world peace forces. As the peace movement grows in strength and militance, as it develops closer ties with the world peace movement, it will be able to utilize with increasing effectiveness the growing contradictions within the ranks of U.S. monopoly capital, including the position of those who find the Vietnam war an obstacle to establishing lucrative business relationships with the socialist countries, to bring about the actual achievement of peaceful coexistence.

CLAUDE LIGHTFOOT

The Soviet Union and the Equality of Nations

I visited the Soviet Union in 1965 for the purpose of studying both its assistance to underdeveloped countries in all parts of the world and the solution of the national question within its own borders. It was essential to do so, I felt, in order to build confidence among my people, the Negro people, that the socialist path would indeed bring them full freedom and equality and that their experience in a socialist society would be different from that in capitalist society.

In Moscow I received the fullest cooperation from Soviet officials and institutions. I met with their experts on the problems of underdeveloped nations. The picture revealed was one of unparalleled human sacrifice, unselfishness, and dedication to the welfare of man.

The Cost of Soviet Aid

To appreciate what the Soviet Union has given from its own resources to aid the billion and a half newly liberated people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, one has to understand how much suffering and sacrifice is represented by that aid.

In the past, nations devastated by war have usually been reduced to second- or third-rate powers as a result. The Soviet Union, however, is exceptional as a nation that suffered enormous military destruction in war, yet bounced back to surpass its prewar achievements and power. True, after World War I, Germany was restored to a position of power, but this was accomplished with the support of the victor imperialist powers, who helped Germany to recuperate in order to use it as a spearhead against Communism. Similarly, West Germany and Japan, defeated in World War II, have been aided by United States imperialism with untold billions of dollars to serve as military outposts against world socialism and the national liberation movements.

The victory over the forces of fascism in World War II was won at an unprecedented cost in lives and property. Almost all countries on the European continent were severely hit. But nowhere did the devastation approach that suffered by the Soviet people. Over twenty million lives were lost—on the field of battle, in concentration camps,

in the towns and cities which were placed under siege. My wife and I gazed down upon the graves of over three-quarters of a million citizens of Leningrad who perished in that great war, buried in what is perhaps the largest graveyard in the world.

The Soviet Union also suffered huge material losses. The Nazis destroyed towns and villages by the thousands, and million of people were made homeless. Tens of thousands of factories and mills were reduced to ruins, and others had overnight to be removed thousands of miles behind the lines of battle. Thousands of miles of railroad track were destroyed. Collective and state farms, machine and tractor stations were pillaged. This was the greatest destruction of people and material wealth ever. By all past standards, the Soviet Union should have been reduced to a third-rate power; but today it stands second only to the United States in many areas of industrial production, and in some fields it stands first. And it has accomplished this remarkable feat on its own, and in the face of tremendous obstacles imposed by the monopoly ruling circles within our country.

This is the background that one must understand in assessing the aid given by the Soviet Union to the underdeveloped nations, as well as to the other, newer socialist countries. As I rode from the Moscow airport into the city and looked at many pre-fab housing projects that were changing the landscape, and as I realized how far short these fell of the needs of the Soviet people, I was amazed at the capacity of these people to give away so many of their resources while they, themselves, needed far more than they were giving away.

This is all the more astounding when we take into account that this aid has been freely given, with no effort whatever to exploit these countries. This can be explained only on the basis that the Soviet Union is a *socialist* country, adhering to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism. This science, which bases itself on proletarian internationalism—on the identity of interests of the workers of all lands, regardless of race, nationality or color—has been made the property of the entire Soviet people.

Lenin and his co-workers, long before the October Revolution, developed the internationalist concepts of the relationship of the working class in the oppressor nations to the peoples of oppressed nations and of the responsibilities of the working class in countries where it comes to power. Lenin noted that the major capitalist powers, mainly white nations, had brought the whole world under their domination—a process entailing the brutal suppression and super-exploitation of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. With the growth of a world economy, capitalism, having brought people together in the

only way that a system of exploitation can—on the basis of the exploitation of nation by nation and the destruction of national sovereignty—bred among the peoples of the oppressed countries the desire and the struggle for national liberation. It was Lenin's thesis that in order to lay the basis for peoples eventually to be united as equals in voluntary association, it was necessary for the working class to fight for the full right of oppressed peoples to self-determination, including the right to secede from the "mother" country. Moreover, he called upon the working class to render all possible aid to overcome the effects of the many years of exploitation by world imperialism. It is in the context of these internationalist concepts that the Soviet Union has aided the underdeveloped countries at a time when they really needed all their resources for home use.

Socialist Aid and Imperialist "Aid"

The Soviet experts showed me in great detail what they had been doing to assist the underdeveloped nations. They pointed out that Soviet aid, while not as large in terms of money as that of the capitalist countries, was being given to promote economic self-sufficiency of the former colonial peoples, not to strengthen their exploitation. This is a fundamental distinction.

Where there is no economic independence, the content of political independence remains very limited. The chief motive of imperialism, whether in the form of direct colonialism or neo-colonialim, has always been to prevent the building of large-scale industrial enterprises within the countries it dominates. Aid given by the imperialists, leaving aside military considerations, is mainly for such purposes as building roads, ports and airports, and for the purchase of consumer goods. Not more than 10 per cent of American economic aid, and less than 14 per cent of the credit given by the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development have been set aside for construction of industrial enterprises.

Of course, the developing countries must build bridges, roads, ports and airfields. But the imperialist "aid" places the stress solely on the development of those fields of production that preserve colonial structures of the economy of the developing countries and perpetuate their role as suppliers of raw materials. The ports and roads are built to further the monopolist exploitation of their natural wealth. The ruling circles of the Western powers have repeatedly admitted that one of the most important objects of their "aid" to the economically-backward countries is to facilitate the export of private capital to these countries and to strengthen the position of the imperialist mono-

polies in the key branches of their economies.

Industrial enterprises are built in the countries of Asia and Africa on Western credit now and then, but there are very few heavy industry projects among them. Furthermore, what little Western "aid" is provided for industrial development is merely a concession to the persistent demands of the developing countries, and an effort to forestall such aid by the Soviet Union and other socialist states.

Unlike the "aid" of the imperialists, Soviet aid has been mainly for the purpose of building industrial enterprises. Total Soviet commitments for economic aid up to January 1, 1963 amounted to nearly 4 billion rubles. Of this sum, 2.8 billion rubles were allocated to investment in industry or 70 per cent of the total compared with 10 per cent of U.S. aid. By the beginning of 1963, a total of 167 enterprises had been built with Soviet aid and placed in operation. The largest of these was the Bilhai steel mill in India, which has an annual output of one million tons of steel. The largest project in process is the Aswan Dam in the United Arab Republic.

At the same time I was in the Soviet Union, agreement had been reached to help nine African nations build more than 250 projects. Of these, 100 were industrial, 20 were agricultural, 40 were for transportation, and 40 were schools to train technicians. The terms of Soviet aid are remarkably easy. The annual rate of interest is 2.5-3 per cent, as contrasted with 6 per cent or more on loans from the capitalist countries. Loans are to be repaid within twelve years in even parts and payments do not begin until after the completion of a project or provision of the equipment required. Some countries, like Mali, even received aid interest-free.

In addition to aid in the form of loans, equipment and the building of projects, the Soviet Union has sent thousands of its technicians (badly needed at home) to aid these countries in the development of the projects. At the beginning of 1963, there were over 9,500 Soviet technicians working in the underdeveloped countries, not only to help build industrial enterprises but also to train local personnel. Also, the Soviet Union has opened up its doors to students from the underdeveloped countries to come into their universities and training centers to study. It is estimated that there are now more than 22,000 foreign students in the Soviet Union. These receive their transportation to and from their home countries, their tuition fees and a monthly stipend which is higher than that given Soviet students.

These are but a few examples. Clearly, the Soviet people are scaling the heights of proletarian internationalism and blazing the trial for a new kind of world, a world based upon the equality of all peoples.

But whatever the aid given by the Soviet Union to the new socialist nations and the former colonial countries, it is still not sufficient to meet their needs. Especially is this true in the underdeveloped countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The aid which the Soviet Union can give is, of course, limited by the need to improve the standard of living of its people if it is to triumph over capitalism in the West. And certainly, if this helps to bring about the establishment of socialism in at least another major industrial power in the not too distant future, this will greatly expand the aid available to the economically backward countries.

Another aspect of the problem is the fact that the Soviet people have been on a war economy for almost forty years. No nation in history has had to pour as many of its resources into a war effort for such a long time. Hence, the effort to reduce war tensions is a precondition for socialism to win the contest over capitalism in regard to standards of living.

But it is precisely on both of these grounds—the growing accent on consumer goods and the need to reduce the war fever which leads to lopsided budgets—that some self-styled friends criticize Soviet domestic and foreign policy. A strong prosperous Soviet people is a precondition for a strong and prosperous world.

Solution of the National Question

An even more profound contribution is the solution of the national and racial problem within the Soviet Union itself. Here one finds the clearest answer to the question of the Negro's future. Russia, while never a major colonial power, was an empire which had drawn together over two hundred different nationalities into one multinational state. Within that state, there were the oppressing and the oppressed nations, the latter consisting in very large part of the yellow and brown races. This was the legacy that the Bolsheviks inherited when they took power in 1917. The welding of all these diverse peoples into a unified whole was one of the most challenging problems facing the new workers' state.

One of the very first acts of the new government was to proclaim the full political equality of all the inhabitants of the Soviet Union. In pursuance of this goal, the right of self-determination of all the formerly oppressed was recognized, including the right to secede and separate.

Most of these nations chose to remain a part of the new workers' state. For these, the new government established the political means through which they could exercise their national rights as members

of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This was expressed in a document entitled "The Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia," published in November, 1917, as one of the first acts of the new government. It proclaimed:

(1) The equality and sovereignty of the different nationalities of Russia.
(2) The right of nations to self-determination, including secession and formation of an independent state.
(3) Abolition of any and all national privileges and restrictions.
(4) Freedom of development for all peoples and national groups inhabiting the country.

The constitution of the U.S.S.R., adopted subsequently, precludes national inequality. It proclaims the equality of all citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of nationality or race, in all spheres of life—economic, cultural, political, social, etc. Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or conversely, the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for citizens on the basis of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred, are declared crimes punishable by law.

But the concept of equality has two aspects. One is equality under the law, proclaimed in the U.S.S.R. at the very inception of Soviet power. The other is actual equality which depends on the degree of economic, political and cultural development of a people. If Soviet power had limited itself to the proclamation of legal equality, the equality would have remained only formal since any nationalities and peoples, owing to their economic and cultural backwardness, would have been unable to exercise the rights granted them by law.

To implement the proclamation, therefore, the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet was set up in the form of two chambers of equal status: The Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

The function of the Soviet of the Union is to express the common interests of all citizens of the U.S.S.R. irrespective of nationality, and it is therefore elected on the same basis of representation in all of the Union Republics: one member per 300,000 inhabitants.

The function of the Soviet of Nationalities is to express the specific interests of the different nationalities on a basis of equality.

In this body, all Union Republics have equal representation, regardless of the size of the territory or population. For example, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, which has a population of over 113,000,000 elects to the Soviet of Nationalities the same number

of deputies as the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, which has a population of about 1,500,000.

Each Union Republic sends 25 members to the Soviet of Nationalities, each Autonomous Republic 11, each Autonomous region 5, and each National Area one.

To take fuller account of the interests and requirements of all the peoples, the Soviet of Nationalities set up in 1965 an economic committee to help in the further improvement of national economic planning, and to find better solutions for problems of economic, social and cultural development in the Republics.

When I went to the Soviet Union, I was already familiar in a general way with these political actions and the economic and cultural advances of the nations formerly oppressed under the Czar. But I felt this was entirely inadequate. My interest had been sharpened as a result of my trips to Africa, which had made clear to me the necessity for economic equality as the basis of real political equality. As I pondered the need for my oppressed people, the Negro Americans, to obtain economic equality, my interest grew. Hence this "mission to Moscow," to see what had been done to promote economic equality between the peoples comprising the Soviet Union. In Moscow I had a series of meetings with the professors on the staff of the Institute of History. Several of them participated in each session, each came prepared with a sort of working paper to present the picture. It was one of the most illuminating experiences of my entire life. I listened in amazement to the story of how the Soviet Union had solved the problems of economic inequality between the various nationalities in a period of twenty years. The accomplishment was all the more breathtaking in view of the fact that many of these nationalities had formerly been nomadic tribes which had not even reached the feudal stage of social development. Many of them had no written language and lived at a social level characteristic of about 1000 A.D.

Advances in Soviet Asia

The professors were somewhat embarrassed that it had taken so long to achieve these results. But, thought I, if after the establishment of a socialist America, all the ill effects of three hundred years of persecution and oppression of the Negro can be erased in twenty years, I, for one, would be highly satisfied. The Soviet achievement was all the more remarkable in that it was accomplished in a period which included counter-revolution, civil war and World War II. Furthermore, during these years the Soviet Union had to depend entirely on its own resources. It received no aid from the outside, hostile capitalist

world. I was provided with innumerable charts and tables of data detailing developments within the various republics. From these I should like to cite a few examples to show the magnitude of the leap that was taken. Usually a nation's industrial progress is measured by the rate of increase of the gross output of industry. In respect to gross national output, from 1913 to 1963, that of the U.S.S.R. as a whole has increased 52 times. In Kazakstan it has increased 79 times. The Republic of Uzbekistan, to take one of the most striking examples, has for the last several years been developing at a more rapid pace than the U.S.S.R as a whole. The difference in growth rates for a number of key industries is shown in the following table:

Percentage Increase, 1964 *over* 1963

	Uzbekistan	*U.S.S.R.*
Electrical and Thermal Energy	16	12
Fuels	14	7
Ferrous and Non-Ferrous Metals	18	9
Building Materials	13	8
Light Industry	11	3
Food Industry	12	2

In the Uzbekistan Republic today, the leading industrial products are the following: in first place, machines for cotton-growing and processing raw silk; in second place, cotton fabrics; in third place, mineral fertilizers, silk fabrics, and vegetable oil; and in fourth place, cement, slate and coal. At present, Uzbekistan is among the top producers of non-ferrous metals and natural gas.

Soviet achievements in promoting economic equality of different peoples have been accompanied by achievements of equal magnitude in the sphere of education. Of these achievements, Professor G. Glezerman writes:

> An educational newspaper estimated in 1906 that it would take at least 4,600 years to wipe out illiteracy among the Central Asian peoples. According to the most optimistic estimate, it said, the Tajiks, if they survived as a people, could expect to be literate in the year 6,500
>
> The Soviet State, however, wiped out illiteracy in the Central Asian Republics in two decades. (*Democracy in the U.S.S.R.,* Soviet Booklets, London, 1958, pp. 54-55.)

What was achieved in terms of the educational and cultural uplifting of these people is observable in the following figures. The

enrollment of students in middle and higher institutions of learning for the U.S.S.R. as a whole increased 443 per cent and in the Uzbekistan Republic 447 per cent. With regard to the increase in the numbers of people working in mental capacities, the increases are as follows:

U.S.S.R.	884 per cent
Uzbekistan	878 "
Kazakstan	870 "
Tadjikistan	875 "

In addition to the sessions at the Institute of History, I went with a delegation of Americans on a trip to the Uzbekistan Republic. There I found a people whose achievements almost baffle the imagination. I found a very warm and friendly people, very proud of their accomplishments. Traveling through Uzbekistan today, one sees construction going on everywhere. The city of Tashkent is today in many respects more modern than Moscow. We were taken on a tour of the city, in one small quarter of which there had been left standing a remnant of the past. These were mud huts, worse than the cabins of Negroes in the plantation areas of the South.

I was struck by the reaction of one of the Negro delegates, an artist, who showed little or no excitement over the modernization of an ancient city but who became quite interested in painting a picture of the hovels in which people had formerly lived, as representing the "real" Tashkent. One can understand why an artist might want to paint a picture of the old Tashkent. But an artist who would portray reality could not paint a picture of the old without also portraying the new Tashkent—the picture of how its people have been able to "overcome."

We visited many factories, schools Young Pioneer palaces and everywhere we went we found a dynamic force. We met for several hours with the professors of the Academy of Science of the Uzbekistan Republic. I had already been briefed at the Institute of History in Moscow on Uzbekistan's achievements. But now I learned much more. The accomplishments of Soviet power in lifting this formerly illiterate, peasant-based people from the Middle Ages into the Twentieth Century will go down as some of the brightest pages of history ever written.

We were provided with many contrasts between the conditions of life in Uzbekistan and those in other Asian nations which remain within the orbit of capitalism. Indeed, the people of Uzbekistan have not only far outstripped their neighbors in Iran, Afghanistan, India and other Asian countries, but in many areas compare with and even

exceed the more culturally and industrially advanced countries such as France and England. The same is true in many other areas of human endeavor. Uzbekistan which not long ago shook off its feudal past today exports its industrial and agricultural produce to 71 countries of the world. Many foreigners who have gone to Uzbekistan have been astounded by what they have seen. The following are typical of some of the written comments they have left behind.

> Everything I saw here made an unforgettable impression on me. I visited a number of hospitals, talked to many doctors and was very glad that in Uzbekistan, which in its recent past was a very backward country, now, as all over the Soviet Union, medicine has achieved a high level of development. I am surprised at the scope of works for the care of public health, accessibility of medical service for the population.—(Henri Alleg. Journalist, Algeria.)
>
> Over 40 years passed. A bright banner of Socialism is fluttering over independent Uzbekistan. This once backward, poor colony became one of the foremost countries in the world. During 40 years Uzbekistan has stepped from the middle ages to advanced civilization.
>
> You have made a great jump. So far as our country is agrarian your achievements in agriculture are of great importance to us. The experience of Uzbekistan is a sparkling example to the people of the Yemen Republic.—(Abdulla As-Salyal, President of the Yemen Arabic Republic.)
>
> I've been in Uzbekistan only for several days, but even for this short period of time I could convince myself what great success had been achieved by this Soviet Republic in industry, in utilizing the hydro-resources of the Sir Rarya River for increasing the production of cotton, in the development of culture.—(Francois Fumy-Tamus, Deputy Chairman of the Chamber of Representatives of Congo, Brazzaville.)
>
> Your gigantic success shows visually what the people can do who tore off the fetters of imperialism and capitalism. We've come to Uzbekistan to see personally your achievements, and we've appreciated the great success of the Uzbek people. (Negro Woman Trade Unionist, USA.)

My reaction was like those of these distinguished visitors. The late Lincoln Steffens once said of the Soviet Union, "I have seen the future and it works." I should like to paraphrase this by saying, "I have seen the future of the American Negro and have seen how his problems can be solved."

Bashkiria

And now let us take a look at another formerly backward republic: Bashkiria. I first visited this republic in 1935. It is located on the Volga River near Siberia. Its peoples combine the features of the Mari, Chuvash, Ossetian and Kabarbas. I was unable to distinguish one from another. But one thing struck me and that was the great number of people with white faces and completely Mongolian features. This country undoubtedly must have been on Ghengis Khan's path.

Back in 1935, the country reminded me of the films I'd seen of the old West in the United States, of the struggles on the frontier. I saw very hard, dedicated people operating with the crudest tools, but confident where they were going in the world of tomorrow.

Thirty years have passed since then and what is the box score?

Today Bashkiria produces four times as much electrical energy as the whole of Russia did in 1913. Industrial output by large-scale enterprises was 32 times greater in 1966 than in 1940. Sixty-five new industrial establishments went into operation in 1966. In 1929 Bashkiria had only 183 farm tractors. Today there are 26,000 tractors and 13,000 combine harvesters.

Before the revolution Bashkiria's 198 schools and colleges were run entirely by priests. Today the Republic has 5,000 elementary and secondary schools, 60 specialized secondary schools, seven colleges and a university. One out of every four inhabitants is engaged in some form of study.

Bashkiria has 220 research institutes. Employed in its educational and research establishments are 158,000 specialists, including 54 holding the degree of doctor of science and 777 candidates of science.

Before the revolution Bashkiria *did not have an alphabet or literary language of its own.* Today it publishes about 500 books annually, in a total printing of 3,000,000 copies. There are seven professional theatres, 3,000 cultural recreation centres and 2,000 libraries.

In Bashkiria and in Uzbekistan, as in all the sixteen republics which comprise the Soviet Union, firm industrial bases have been established making each nation equal to the other. When we take into account that the industrial growth of some of the Western capitalist powers required and still requires the colonial nations to remain sources of raw material, markets for manufactured goods and appendages for the industries of the so-called home country, these Soviet achievements are an eloquent testimonial for socialism.

As I was about to leave the Soviet Union, I was shown some of the plans which were being submitted to the 23rd Congress of the Com-

munist Party of the Soviet Union. Again, I was astonished at what I saw. Even though equality had already been established between the fraternal republics, the Five Year Plan of the Congress still placed emphasis on the main growth in the formerly more backward republics.

The Plan called for a growth in industrial output as follows: fifty per cent in the Russian Federation, the Ukrainian, Latvian and Estonian republics. These had been the more advanced nations in the Czar's empire. In regard to nations that were formerly oppressed, the Plan provided for: Seventy per cent in the Kazakh and Moldavian Republics and eighty per cent in Tadzhikistan and Armenia.

In the face of these achievements, I become deeply disturbed when I see the ruling circles of our country attempt to use some remnants of anti-Semitism, or the problems with some African students, to sweep under the rug these magnificent examples of people living in full equality. Soviet society is not perfect. Old habits are not easily changed, and even after many years of Soviet power, only a Utopian dreamer or a dishonest peddler of wrong ideas would attempt to take some minor defects and blow them up out of all proportion to their place in the totality of the problems involved. No matter what ideological problems the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet government have yet to overcome in regard to racial or national chauvinism, the central fact is that the Soviet people once again have shown the world that racism is not inherent in man. They have shown that once the exploiting classes are removed from power, once exploitation is abolished, the various races of mankind *can* live in peace.

> . . . Victorious socialism must necessarily establish a full democracy and, consequently, not only introduce full equality of nations but also realize the right of the oppressed nations to self-determination, i.e., the right to free political separation. Socialist parties which did not show by all their activity, both now, during the revolution and after its victory, that they would liberate the enslaved nations and build up relations with them on the basis of a free union—and free union is a false phrase without the right to secede—these parties would be betraying socialism.
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> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Volume 22, p. 143.

JOHN PITTMAN

The October Revolution and National Liberation

A basic principle established by the October Socialist Revolution, in respect to mankind's emancipation from the bondage of exploitative social systems, is the essential oneness of the struggle for socialism and the struggle for national liberation. It was owing to the strict observance of this principle that the working people of Russia were able to take power on November 7, 1917 to consolidate it in the teeth of armed intervention, civil war and famine, and to build an impregnable bastion of humanity in a cannibalistic world. This is the principle by means of which the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have realized the factual equality of nations, and have changed this erstwhile utopian aspiration into a practicable prospect for mankind.

Today, 50 years after the October Socialist Revolution, this principle has great practical significance. It can facilitate attempts to resolve the current complicated and dangerous international situation in the interests of freedom and peace. Its recognition and strict observance offer the sole means of salvation to the working people of nations with exploitative systems as well as those of nations seeking deliverance from exploitation. In these days a big nation that disregards the right of other nations to self-determination and national independence, and persists in efforts forcibly to subjugate and exploit them, gambles with its own physical existence.

This is so because the great revolutionary upsurge of the 20th century, cresting on the socialist revolution and the national-liberation, anti-imperialist revolutions, and now powered by a scientific-technical revolution, has created a world balance of forces and an international climate antagonistic to the continued subjection of nations. The struggle to rid human society of parasitism and cannibalism is irrepressible, the correlation of forces presiding over its victory irreversible. Forcible efforts to reverse it confront mankind with catastrophe.

Policy of Self-Determination in Practice

This present correlation of forces received its first great impulse from the October Revolution. It was a time when the working people of the other exploiter states, duped by demagogy and betrayed by

their leaders, sacrificed their lives and possessions to help the cliques of parasites controlling their governments redivide the loot from enslaved Africa and Asia. The Russian working people took a different course, thanks mainly to the persistence and patience of Lenin, that man of rare genius whose exceptional intelligence was fired by compassion. Like Marx before him, Lenin keenly felt the horrors inflicted on the "savage Asians" by the "cultured Europeans," and was infuriated by the opportunism of the "socialist" leaders of the European working classes. For years before the first world bloodbath, he tried in vain to convince these leaders of the necessity for joining their struggle to that of the colonial peoples enslaved by their parasitic classes. At the same time, he conducted systematic efforts to win the Russian workers, particularly the members of his own party, for a policy of self-determination and the right to national statehood for the subject nations of tsarist Russia. How thoroughly he taught is related by Andrew Rothstein, the British Marxist scholar, in his *History of the U.S.S.R.* (pp. 33-34):

> The Mensheviks, seeing bourgeois interests as predominant in the coming Russian revolution, and knowing that those interests included the maximum exploitation of existing markets for Russian industry, dared not support the liberation of the various nations and races inhabiting the Russian Empire, for fear this would alienate the capitalist elements from the revolution. They put forward, accordingly, the slogan of "cultural-national autonomy" for the non-Russian people—a slogan difficult to interpret, and non-committal where the claims of the subject peoples were concerned.
>
> The Bolsheviks, on the contrary, saw the subject nationalities as yet another most powerful ally of the working class in the struggle to overthrow Tsardom. First, they were for the most part peasant nationalities, whose feudal and tribal chiefs were used by the Tsarist government as a means of indirect rule; therefore they had to bear a double burden which made them a most explosive element in the Russian Empire. Secondly, the continuation of colonial oppression was the justification in Tsarist Russia for the maintenance of a large military and police force, as well as of an ideology of racial superiority, which could not fail to serve the interests of Tsardom against the Russian workmen in the struggle for Socialism. Hence the Bolsheviks put forward the right of all peoples, large or small, inhabiting the Russian Empire, to national independence, including the right to separate from that Empire if they chose.

It was this policy which subsequently saved the workers' state from its enemies at perhaps its darkest hour. Rothstein says (p. 58):

> And indeed the subsequent history of the Russian revolution showed that Soviet policy towards the former subject nationalities was decisive for the outcome of the struggle, not merely against the relatively puny forces of Russian imperialism, surviving in the shape of expropriated landlords and capitalists and officers of the old Tsarist army, but against the far more formidable Great Powers with whom the Soviet Republic soon had to contend arms in hand. The colonial borderlands of Russia were to be a base for foreign intervention, or else a volcano in the rear of the invaders, according to the nationalities policy pursued by the Soviet power.

Lenin himself acknowledged the decisive role of the Russian workers' alliance with the subject nationalities. In a report on March 1, 1920 to the First All-Russian Congress of Toiling Cossacks (how significant that he addressed it to the Cossacks, who for decades had served as the Tsar's special policemen against the colonial peoples—and the workers!), Lenin said:

> If all these small countries had come out against us—and remember they had been given hundreds of millions of dollars, and the best cannon and other weapons, and they had experienced British instructors who had gone through the war—if they had come out against us, there cannot be the slightest doubt that we would have suffered defeat. That is perfectly clear to everyone. But they did not come out against us, because they realized that the Bolsheviks were more reliable than the others. When the Bolsheviks say that they recognize the independence of every nation, that tsarist Russia was based on the oppression of other nations, and that the Bolsheviks never subscribed and never will subscribe to that policy, that they will never start wars to oppress other nations—when the Bolsheviks say this, they are believed.*

What, specifically, did Lenin and the Bolsheviks do to join the Russian workers' struggle for socialism to the national liberation struggles of the 65 million non-Russian peoples whom tsarist imperialism condemned to ruthless exploitation and to social and cultural backwardness? The uniqueness and majesty of their achievement lies in the speed and completeness with which they transformed their words into deeds. A series of constitutional and legislative measures, establishing equal rights of all the peoples of Russia without distinction of race or nationality, signalled the assumption of this historically unprecedented and revolutionary task. But rights without the opportunity or power to exercise them are worthless, and equality in law

*V. I. Lenin, *The National Liberation Movement in the East*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1957, p. 243.

may become, as it has become in imperialist states, a cover for inequality in fact.

"Abstract or formal treatment of equality in general, and national equality in particular, is in the very nature of bourgeois democracy," Lenin said, in his preliminary draft of theses on the national and colonial questions for the Second Congress of the Communist International, presented on June 5, 1920. "Under the guise of the equality of persons in general, bourgeois democracy proclaims the formal or legal equality of the property-owner and the proletarian, the exploiter and the exploited, thereby grossly deceiving the oppressed classes" ibid., p. 250). And he exhorted the Communist parties of all countries, "in all their propaganda and agitation—both in Parliament and outside Parliament . . . consistently [to] expose the constant violation of the equality of nations and of the guaranteed rights of national minorities that takes place in all capitalist countries, despite their 'democratic' constitutions" (ibid., p. 253).

The young Soviet power, therefore, acted immediately to give substance to its pronouncements and constitutional measures. Nations whose working people wanted to secede were allowed to secede even though, as in the case of Finland, they fell prey instantly to imperialism. Others were encouraged to set up their own states, autonomous republics, regions, districts and soviets. At the same time, taking into account the widely different levels of social and economic development of the numerous nations and nationalities, the Soviet authorities set in motion economic, educational and cultural measures to eliminate backwardness. Throughout the early years of this gigantic effort, Lenin watched over developments with unflagging concern and remarkable sensitivity to the needs, desires and sentiments of the former subject peoples. Repeatedly he rebuked Russian administrators or technicians sent to aid the struggle against backwardness for displaying chauvinism or for a lack of sensitivity to the sentiments of the non-Russians.

In keeping with these measures in the former tsarist empire, the workers' state simultaneously implemented its policy in relation to other countries. It promptly tore up the secret tsarist agreements with the Allied governments for the partition of Persia and Turkey, withdrew Russian troops from Persia, signed treaties of friendship with Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan, and renounced all special rights and privileges for Russian institutions and consular jurisdiction for Russian subjects which had been extorted from China by the tsarist regime. It actively assisted the Mongolian revolution of 1921, the revolution led by Kemal Ataturk in Turkey in 1919-1922, the fledgling

Chinese Republic headed by Sun Yat-sen, and established a climate favorable for revolutionary activities in India, Korea, and the Arab countries of the Middle East.

After the experience of the October Revolution, Lenin was more than ever convinced of the correctness of the Communist policy on the national and colonial question. In the summer of 1920, reporting to the Second Congress of the Communist International, he said:

> World imperialism must fall when the revolutionary onslaught of the exploited and oppressed workers within each country, overcoming the resistance of the philistine elements and the influence of a tiny crust of the labor aristocracy, will unite with the revolutionary onslaught of hundreds of millions who hitherto remained outside history and were regarded merely as objects of history (ibid., p. 261).

This cardinal principle of the emancipatory struggle became a constant of Soviet policy, uninterruptedly applied for half a century in both domestic and foreign affairs. For the present generation, its application in the period between the two world wars is obscured by imperialist censorship and distortion. Yet, the two decades from 1921 to 1941 were marked by Soviet efforts to organize with the capitalist democracies arrangements of collective security against the growing aggressions of the fascist states in Asia, Africa and Europe.

In October 1935, when Italy invaded Ethiopia, Maxim Litvinov called upon the League to punish the aggressor, and Moscow sought unsuccessfully to organize an oil embargo against the Mussolini regime. When Franco, aided openly by German and Italian intervention, launched the aggression against the Spanish Republic of 1936-1939, the Soviets again sought to mobilize the capitalist democracies in its defense, and when this failed, sought to save the Republic with its own limited intervention. When Japan began preparations for a new attack on China, Moscow anticipated it with a mutual assistance pact with Mongolia and, following the Japanese invasion of July 1937, signed a non-aggression pact with China and provided the Chinese with military supplies. In his report to the 18th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party on March 10, 1930, Stalin accused the British, French and United States capitalists of encouraging the aggressors, particularly German fascism in its designs on the Soviet Union, but he reiterated Soviet "support of nations which are the victims of aggression and are fighting for the independence of their country."

The Sweep of National Liberation

It was the victory over the fascist axis which gave the next great

impulse to the creation of the present correlation of world forces. The defeat of German, Italian and Japanese imperialism and their quisling allies rescued scores of nations and nationalities in Europe, Asia and Africa from enslavement, and saved many from genocidal extermination by the Nazi and fascist racists. What the Soviet Union contributed to this great liberating victory can never be fully computed. It is incontrovertible, however, that its contribution was decisive, both in destroying the Hitlerite armies and in crushing the vaunted elite army corps that Japan held in reserve for invading Siberia.

In consequence of this victory, the working people in a number of the liberated nations of Europe and Asia took power, soon to be joined by the Chinese people and later by Cuba. A socialist world system came into being, uniting a third of the world's population on a fourth of the earth's territory and, already by 1963, acounting for 38 per cent of world industrial production with a growth rate of from two to three times that of the advanced capitalist countries. The birth of this socialist world system and its rapidly growing economic might exercised incalculable influence on the struggle for national liberation. It has become a deterrent to the export of counterrevolution, a reservoir of technical and economic assistance for the emerging nations in their effort to escape the imperialist division of labor and overcome the colonialist legacy of backwardness, and a source of inspiration and know-how for the winning and preservation of national independence.

Also as a result of the victory over the fascist axis powers, and in the favorable conditions established by the growth of socialism and the workers' accelerated struggles in the capitalist countries, the national liberation movement achieved world-shaking victories on three continents. In two postwar decades it smashed the colonial and semi-colonial system in more than 50 countries, winning political independence and national statehood for one-and-a-half billion people, drawing them into political and social struggle, and profoundly influencing the course of international affairs in favor of socialism.

The working people of the imperialist and capitalist states were also impelled on the path of militant struggle against the great monopolies and monopoly-controlled governments of their own countries. The struggles of working people in the imperialist and capitalist countries for democratic rights and improving living and working conditons also powerfully assisted the advance of the socialist states and the national liberation struggles.

The impact of these three detachments of the world emancipatory forces on the political configuration of the globe fully confirm the

predictions of Lenin and validates the principle established by the October Revolution. In 1919, colonies and semi-colonies occupied 77.2 per cent of the world's territory; today they occupy roughly 5 per cent. In 1919, peoples subject to political domination of imperialist states numbered 1,230 million, or 69.2 per cent of world population at that time; today they number approximately 40 million, or 1.3 per cent. Thus, fewer than a third of the world's population remain under the political domination of imperialism. The sphere of imperialism's economic domination has shrunk, its maneuvering possibilities are fewer, its economic and military burdens greater, and in consequence, its internal contradictions are deeper and sharper, its crisis both in domestic and in foreign policy more incapable of amelioration, not to speak of solution.

New Stage of Liberation Movement

In today's new, highly favorable climate for the emancipatory movements, wars are being waged to smash the remnants of colonialism in Asia, Africa and Latin America. For the overwhelming majority of the newly independent nations and nationalities, the liberation movement has entered a new stage. It s a stage of struggle for economic liberation and the consolidation of their independence against the still powerful grip of the imperialist monopolies, against imperialist intrigue and intervention, and betrayal by domestic reactionaries. It is a stage of struggle for deep-going economic and social reforms, for the constructing of a new life to abolish chronic hunger and under-feeding, and to build industries and apply science to agriculture so as to develop viable economies. It is a stage of struggle to achieve cultural liberation from the legacy of illiteracy and superstition inherited from the colonialist and pre-capitalist formations, and to realize equality in fact with other nations.

Thus, today the possibility of realizing the equality of nations has become a feasible goal of present generations. Man stands again on the threshold of a world-changing breakthrough of the emancipatory movement. A number of newly liberated nations—the United Arab Republic, Syria, Tanzania, Guinea, Mali, Algeria, Congo-Brazzaville and Burma—have already launched socio-economic struggles in preparation for socialism. The contagion of struggle has spread to the multi-national imperialist states where national and racial minorities (or majorities, as in certain African states) are exploited and oppressed.

Their struggles coincide with and assist those of the working people against monopoly domination and exploitation in countries where

the objective conditions for establishing socialism have fully matured. At this decisive moment for all mankind, victory of the emancipatory movement depends more than ever before on the subjective element, on their clear perception of the direction to their goal, on their understanding of the way to reach it.

Precisely on this point is the October Revolution most eloquent. The experience of the workers' state that was set up in October, 1917 encompasses all aspects of the emancipatory movements among peoples on every level of social development. The achievements of socialism in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have convinced an overwhelming majority of the peoples in both the developed and developing countries of its superiority to capitalism for ordering a rational, efficient and humane society.

The growing recognition and comprehension of these principles means that the subjective factor, traditionally lagging behind changing material conditions, is also maturing among peoples of the non-socialist world for the transition to socialism. It also means that an accretion of numbers and power is now about to give tremendous new force and energy to the socialist world's already decisive influence on world developments.

Imperialism's Weapon of "Divide and Rule"

Imperialism reacts to these developments with policies of maniacal rage. Its spearhead is United States imperialism, which anticipated centuries of uncontested world domination by its monopoly corporations, as the heir of the British, French, Italian, Japanese and German empires—a vampirish dream shattered by the growing might of socialism and the revolutionary upsurge on every continent. Now become the praetorian guard of world counter-revolution, it is intervening in the affairs of all the developing countries, employing neo-colonialist measures in a majority, but direct armed aggression in others. It is waging a genocidal war against the Vietnamese people, conspiring to set off an invasion of Cuba, to turn back the advances of the Arab and African peoples, to police Europe and Latin America, and to stamp out with violence the uprisings of oppressed and exploited minorities within its own borders. Its military bases range the world, and its aggressive predatory alliances foment conspiracies and subversive plots in all the developing countries.

But imperialism combines this direct counter-revolutionary action with another weapon—the ideological offensive against peoples striving for liberation.

Today the ideological counter-attack of U.S. imperialism has energized anew, and in "democratic" guise, the doctrines of racism. A time-tested variation of imperialism's "divide and rule" strategy, racism is now being employed in a two-pronged attack, combined with anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism, to obliterate among the developing and rising peoples of the world the cardinal principle of revolutionary victory—the oneness of the struggle for working class emancipation and the liberation of subject nations and nationalities.

Thus, in the advanced capitalist and imperialist countries, imperialism's ideological counter-offensive is directed toward keeping the working people from perceiving their identity of interests with the peoples of the subject nations and nationalities. This identity of interests is daily becoming more perceptible: imperialism's increasing military burdens and expenses for neo-colonialist conspiracies; its growing bureaucratic apparatus and police forces; the greater rapacity of the corporate monopolies; the enactment of so-called "emergency" laws and other measures to fetter the trade unions and stifle popular opposition; the perpetration of cruelties against the sick, infirm, old and most impoverished sections of the population through the emasculation of welfare and social security programs; the systematic increase of unemployed and unemployable workers (a process accelerated by automation and rationalization)—these and other parallel tendencies disclose how the policy of subjecting and exploiting other nations is also at the same time a policy of intensifying the subjection and exploitation of the working people of the aggressor nation.

It is the working people of the exploiting nation who pay the cost of colonialism, neo-colonialism and aggressive wars of intervention and counter-revolution. It is their sons who die or are mangled in battle. It is their possessions that are confiscated by taxation and the inflation resulting from huge military expenditures. They are the ones who suffer from the deterioration of schools, hospitals, health care, transportation, housing and public services. At the same time the prisons are reinforced and the police are armed to preserve the exploiters' way of life, the exploiters' system of "law and order."

Above all, however, the exploiter state employs racism, decked out in modern dress, to obscure the class character of its aggressions. The "civilizing mission" of the colonial era has been transformed into an "aid mission," the mighty anti-imperialist revolutonary wave of the oppressed nations and nationalities into a "revolution of the poor nations against the rich nations," and therefore a nationalistic or geographical revolution, or more to the point, a "race war." In multinational exploiter states, the struggles of the oppressed national and racial minorities (or majorities, as in the Union of South Africa and

Rhodesia) for equality and democratic rights are represented as racial conflicts, or "blacks versus whites." Such ideas are assiduously propagated among the predominantly white working people of the exploiter states, who are thereby instilled with fear of the subject nations and nationalities, and incited to violence and acts of "self-defense" against them. The mixture of paternalistic condescension and fear thus becomes an ideological prop of the exploiters' aggressions and counter-revolutionary wars.

At the same time, the racist ideological counter-offensive is tailored to fit the national liberation forces. For them the "poor nations versus rich nations" theme is converted into the "third world" concept, and to various geo-political strategical doctrines such as the "world's villages against the world's cities." The "third world" is spelled out to mean the predominantly colored peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, the "villages" of the earth, who are challenging the "cities" of Europe and North America inhabited mainly by whites.

In this racist melange the class concept is lost. There is no room in the "third world" for the socialist states of Europe, including the Soviet Union, although it is also an Asian state. The October Revolution and its significance for mankind is lost and a half century of history obliterated. Marxism-Leninism is scrapped as "irrelevant" and outmoded. The colored minorities (or majorities) seeking equality in the multi-national states are striving to dispossess the whites. And the revolutionary struggle of the subject peoples, the peoples still enslaved by colonialism and plundered by neo-colonialism is not a struggle against imperialism, but a "race war."

The strategic aim of this ideological offensive is clear: it is to drive a wedge between the socialist countries and the developing countries, between the world national liberation movement and the world socialist and working-class movement, between white workers and black, brown and yellow workers. It is to dupe the peoples of colonial and developing countries, the oppressed national and racial minorities, into the belief that they can achieve liberation unaided by the socialist world and the working class movement in the exploiter states, that they can win by "going it alone." The forms in which this ideological counter-revolution is couched may be new; its strategic aim is the same as that which Marx defined when he wrote that the secret of the exploiters' retention of power was in the antagonism it succeeded in sowing among different sections of the working people.

It is in the assistance given this divisive, counter-revolutionary strategy that Mao Tse-tung and his adherents, and others of similar persuasion in the revolutionary national liberation movement, display

their renegacy to the October Revolution and its significance. The Maoists have become the main fountainhead of the "East versus West," "village versus city," go-it-alone concepts among the colonial and developing peoples and nationalities. However, while loudly proclaiming their hatred for imperialism and their undying hostility to U.S. imperialism in particular, the Maoists have fomented hatred for and organized acts to alienate their staunchest friend and most powerful neighbor, dismantled the Chinese Communist Party and government and attacked the Chinese working class, waged war only on China's non-white weaker neighbors, blocked the implemenation of united socialist aid for the heroic Vietnamese, removed China's leading military strategists and field marshals and sought to split the Communist movement everywhere and to disorientate every international working class organizations. This abject servility and subservience to U.S. imperialism is at complete variance with the Maoist posture as revolutionary champion of the world liberation struggles. It suits better the image of a counter-revolutionary nationalist regime, dismantling its own defenses and capacity to feed its own people, not to speak of others, and seeking to embroil the Soviet Union in a thermonuclear war with U.S. imperialism which would leave China untouched and the world's most powerful state.

* * *

Imperialism's counter-offensive, however, is being met on military and economic fronts with varying degrees of success. The Vietnamese at enormous secrifice of life and treasure, and with the help of the socialist countries and the working people of other countries, are defending the interests of mankind. The Cuban people, helped by the socialist countries and the workers of other countries, have withstood the economic war waged by imperialism and defied its threats of intervention. The Arab and other African peoples, despite some reverses and defeats, are moving forward toward the realization of full independence with the assistance of the socialist countries and the working people of exploiter states. And the socialist countries are expanding their aid, countering and striving to block imperialist aggressions and interventions, in full accord with the principles of peaceful coexstence.

Announcing its determination to persist in the struggle for peaceful coexistence, the 23rd Congress of the Soviet Communist party recently again emphasized the significance of peaceful coexistence as a form of the international class struggle, reiterating its content as striving to prevent wars between states of different social system, particularly a thermonuclear war, while supporting the struggles of exploited

classes against the exploiters, and of oppressed nations and nationalities against their oppressors. Addressing the 23rd Congress on behalf of the party's central committee, Brezhnev said: "We categoriically declare that if the aggressors escalate the shameful war against the Vietnamese people they will have to contend with mounting support for Vietnam from the Soviet Union and other socialist friends and brothers. The Vietnamese people will be the masters of their country and nobody will ever extinguish the torch of socialism which has been raised on high by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam."

Clearly the collision course of imperialism, particularly U.S. imperialism, is leading to a nuclear confrontation with the socialist world. As the year 1967 draws to a close international tension have risen and the threat of world war sharply increased. The new situation powerfully accentuates all imperialist contradictions, particularly the contradiction between the exploiters and the working people in the predatory states. The working people of the United States can play a decisive role in the avoidance of war and the struggle for liberation if, in their own self-interest, they demonstrate their solidarity with the nations now being attacked by the U.S. exploiting classes.

Now at long last, mankind has attained heights of political and social achievement from which it is possible, using scientific and technological advances in the interest of freedom and peace, to plan the solution of the most formidable and pressing international problems. As the 20th Century, the century of wars and revolutions, enters its final quarter, within reach of all peoples is a future free from the chronic hunger, mass starvation, illiteracy and superstition, "incurable" disease and fraticidal wars that for thousands of years have branded systems based on the exploitation of man by man and the subjection and enslavement of nations.

But the present favorable correlation of world forces, though irreversible in the long run, is not immune to zig-zags and setbacks. Much depends on how soon and how completely the peoples learn and apply the lessons of the October Revolution. In celebration of the 50th anniversary of this epoch-making event, Nguyen Khoh Tuan, president of the Academy of Sciences of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, wrote recently (*Moscow News*, September 23-30, 1967): "Now as never before, the only correct way to the final liberation of mankind is true adherence to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, to Lenin's slogan: 'Workingmen and Oppressed People of All Countries, Unite!', and to the militant spirit of the October Revolution."

IDEAS IN OUR TIME

HERBERT APTHEKER

"There Is Such A State!"

Fifty years ago, when the social order of the Czars lay in ruins and the efforts of the bourgeoisie to refurbish it had manifestly failed, the question arose, whether there was a Party that would dare to undertake the immense task of transformation and reconstruction. "There is such a Party!" was Lenin's answer; facing Herculean tasks, that Party and the peoples of the USSR rebuilt, recast and refashioned.

Despite everything—intervention, famine, blockade, war and again war; despite everything—unprecedented objectives, human failures, inhuman crimes; yes, despite everything, that Party and those peoples did it and now, fifty years later, there they stand embodying the best hopes of civilization.

So, fifty years ago, the Founder of the Soviet state, said "there is such a Party," and now tormented Mankind, excited Mankind, eager Mankind know that *there is such a state.* There is a state: without unemployment, where racism is illegal and considered barbaric, where medicine and education, where Balzac and Gorki, where Beethoven and Shakespeare, where leisure and creative labor belong to everyone. Yes, there is such a state; a state which wept when Spain was crucified, which broke Hitler's back, which gave and gives in limitless quantity the wherewithal to make secure the Cuban Revolution and to make awesome the resistance of the Vietnamese people against the putrid war unleashed upon them by Pentagon and Wall Street.

Despite all the anti-Soviet propaganda of the greatest propaganda machine in history—the Madison Avenue product of U.S. imperialism —even here in the United States, deep in the consciousness of tens of millions it is known that *there is such a State!* Without that knowledge there would be Communists—there were Communists of course before there was a USSR, and it was they who contributed so decisively to its creation—but the struggle against imperialism, and colonialism and racism and war would be a million times more difficult. So, the peoples of the USSR were the first successfully to storm heaven; they have paid the penalty of being first, too, but they have earned undying gratitude and glory.

* * *

Throughout history, all exploitative ruling classes have insisted upon the manifest logic and justice of their systems; all have insisted that what they had was not only benign but that it also was immortal. They were all as wrong about the evaluation as they were about the prognosis.

Throughout history, too, the dominant ones have castigated—when they have not crucified—revolutionists and have sneered at revolution. It is too costly; it is chimerical; it does no good; it cannot be real for "there is nothing new under the sun" or, "you can't change human nature," or, "life is a snare and a delusion," or, "wise-up, life is a racket, and get yours while you can." Rationalizations in support of the status quo are as numerous as the rewards in its service are bounteous. And the main rationalizations always come down to the same thing: the mass of people are oxen or brutes or beasts; they are incapable and that they are incapable is shown by the fact that they are the ruled.

This, too, has many forms; biological, i.e., racist; psychological, i.e., oppression "cripples"; sociological, i.e., a "disadvantaged" environment debilitates; theological, i.e., man is evil;—and each has a score of variations. But the point always is—as Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. (of the McCarthy era, his tune has changed somewhat since), put it: "all important problems are insoluble." Hence for intelligent people, the choice narrows down to two: either tinker, or preserve (depending upon temperament and circumstances), but know that efforts at transformation are at best futile and at worst criminal.

Through the ages—the bloody ages and the heroic ages—the struggle between those who would repress and those who would express, between those who would demean and those who insisted upon meaning, those who would restrain and those who would resist, has continued. The forms have differed, the levels have varied but the essence of struggle against oppression and indignity has persevered. As we Marxists say, the roots of this are in the objective forces and by that we mean the internal and external contradictions besetting all hitherto existing class societies. Sometimes, however, I think we forget and minimize the fact that basic to these objective forces are men and women. Circumstances make man, wrote Engels; but that is not all he wrote. The full sentence reads: Circumstances make man and man makes circumstances. And for the full clarity of that sentence one must add: and man is *of* those circumstances, too.

The greatest fact in history is revolution; ruling classes, despite their power, their assurance, their experience, and their ruthlessness, while always believing in their immortality have always and everywhere

been mistaken! And the greatest of all Revolutions is the October Socialist Revolution in Russia for it was the deepest and the most challenging.

It set itself, consciously, the task of terminating *all* exploitation; that specifically capitalist and that inherited by capitalism from previous epochs of class societies. It set itself the task to extirpate racism, to liberate women, to ennoble labor, to universalize knowledge, to eliminate poverty, to terminate war; and this in a devastated Russia!

It set itself the task not of changing the form of the private possessions of the means of production but to eliminate such ownership; not to alter the forms of class struggle but to eliminate such struggle.

Everything was new, except the people who were to do it; and the surrounding states who were pledged to prevent it. That it was attempted sings of man's aspiration; that it was accomplished testifies to man's capacity.

Knowing what is at stake in this Great October Revolution one can better understand the efforts to "strangle" it and then crush it and always incessantly to vilify it. But, despite everything, *there is such a State!*

* * *

What do we see now in the United States, in "Golden America"? Now, after the "New Conservativism" and eighteen years after Schlesinger the Little had announced the obsolescence of revolution in the world—now what do we see in Golden America? We see a nation and a people distraught; unemployment high and going higher; inflation bad and getting worse; real wages falling; farmers caught in the scissors between rising costs and falling prices; air polluted and water foul; slums growing; ghettos spreading; and the damned war ever escalating with scores of thousands of casualties and half a million young American killing in an accursed cause ten thousand miles from home; and the fascist plague spreads.

All this is true, but there is something else and it is struggle, mounting opposition, growing disillusionment. The youth demand a creative and useful life; the black people are in open rebellion; the agricultural workers are organizing and striking; the "non-existent" working class mounts picket lines from schools to copper mines to auto plants; the Spanish-speaking millions are disenchanted; and it is now universally admitted that *the majority of the American people* are opposed to Johnson's war in Vietnam.

We now have in the United States, from many responsible sources, calls for basic transformation in the quality of American life; calls which are deep analytically and which programmatically have as their

logic the elimination of the private ownership of the means of production and the replacement of this system of individualized greed and socialized misery by a system of the collective ownership of the means of production and the resources of the nation and a society of planning, of solidarity, of community.

We offer a few examples. First, as part of the developing militancy in the Negro movement is a deepening theoretical content. This shows itself, as a notable instance, in the thinking of Dr. Martin Luther King. He now emphasizes not only the organic connection between ending aggressive war in order to reverse regressive domestic policies, but also underlines the need for basic economic changes if racism is actually to be undone. Among intellectuals and scholars in general the interest in Marxism has reached heights not known in the United States in thirty years.

And the writing has a fiercer and more penetrating quality. Thus, a leading Catholic thinker, Professor Michael Novak of Stanford, entitles a recent essay, "The Revolution of 1976"; this is published in *The Commonweal* (July 14). Here are some lines from this remarkable and indicative essay:

> It is time, I think, for many older persons to rebel. Unless many of us are willing to go to jail, too many of our best youths will go. . . . the policies of our nation must be altered, radically altered, not merely modified. We need new organizations and new structures and perhaps new political parties. . . . The logic of "realism" must be superseded by the logic of modesty abroad, social revolution at home, and a fundamental realignment of the bases of economic and political power in this land. 1976 must mark a revolution as important as that of 1776.

From the Protestant spectrum a good example of the new quality in the writing is the essay by Dr. Norman K. Gottwald, professor at the Baptist Divinity School in Berkeley, appearing in *The Christian Century* (August 16):

> Each of us must ask himself: What steps must I take to radicalize the performance of my daily life? And how can I then join forces with like-minded individuals and with "left-out" groups in order to develop realistic alternatives to a corporate-controlled American society? . . . Fortress church and garrison society are part of the older order that must give way; human beings in their personal and social configurations must be allowed to flourish in freedom.

The specific quality of the demands is as new as the note of urgency and the deep social probing. Thus, Professor Harvey G. Cox, of the Harvard Divinity School, writing in the very influential bi-weekly, *Christianity and Crisis* (August 7), insists, and the italics are his:

> We *could* quintuple the poverty budget and put it directly into the hands of black neighborhood groups rather than sifting it through the sticky tentacles of city hall poverty offices. We *could* embark on a massive program of low cost housing, with the construction jobs and the control of the projects firmly in the hands of ghetto residents themselves. We *could* redirect the billions we compulsively throw at Vietnam into rebuilding the rat-infested centers of our cities. We *could* begin paying at least as much for education as we do for booze. We *could* place police, welfare and health services under the direction of the people they are supposed to serve.

A new young poet, Anthony Towne—a book of his poetry will be published soon by Harper & Row—writing in *Be Reconciled,* the Journal of the Committee of Southern Churchmen (Summer, 1967), after castigating the evils of what is now called, even by U.S. Senators, a "sick society," goes on, as he says, "to seize the bull by the horns" and to ask: "Might we not reconsider the rights of property . . . and acknowledge that property does not, in fact, have any rights? . . . Might we not observe that provision of essential public services . . . has outgrown the competence of private ownership?"

In the same issue of this same journal, John Lewis, founding chairman of SNCC (1963-1966), and a Baptist Minister, declares:

> The judgment of history is upon us. Woe unto a government that prefers to wage war on the peasants of Vietnam rather than an all-out and massive war on racism, poverty, disease and misery in the rural South, in the ghettos of the cities, on the Indian reservations and in the migrant labor camps! Woe unto those in high places who act according to the climate of the Great Consensus or listen to the ghostly voices of Political Expediency, rather than act on what is morally right or listen to their consciences.

The examples could be multiplied by the hundreds; notable, for instance, have been the most recent writings of the well-known anthropologist, Ashley Montagu, and of the historian-economist, Robert L. Heilbroner; again, these have shown deeply radical and incisive analyses of the foundations of the present social order and impassionate calls for basic change.

* * *

What has all this to do with the 50th Anniversary of the Great

October Revolution? Everything! The "exceptionalism" of U.S. capitalism is again shown to be false. The bastion of the imperialist system is in deepest crisis on all fronts; the historic manifestation of that general crisis is the Bolshevik Revolution. The general crisis of one system and the beginnings of the other were both heralded by the monumental achievement of the workers, peasants, soldiers and intellectuals of Czarist Russia in smashing that state, in ending imperialist war forever so far as Russia is concerned, in moving from the bourgeois-democratic form to the Soviet form, and in maintaining the new State, despite everything. Not only have they maintained it; they have built it up and made it the bulwark of Man's hopes, the inspirer of revolutionary efforts, and the active supporter of every advanced struggle in the world.

Towering have been the historic contributions of the peoples of the USSR. Great as these have been, their obligations and duties remain even greater. They must mount ever higher peaks of human daring and achievement, they must ennoble further every facet of human existence. The demands are of the highest for the accomplishments and the evaluation are of the highest.

When the great history of the Bolshevik Revolution began, it rang out the challenge, "There is such a Party!"; now on its 50th Anniversary, the world rings out with the confident cry and challenging shout: "There is such a State!"

October 9, 1967

> . . . In the old days, human genius, the brain of man, created only to give some the benefits of technology and culture, and to deprive others of the bare necessities, education and development. From now on all the marvels of science and the gains of culture belong to the nation as a whole, and never again will man's brain and human genius be used for oppression and exploitation. Of this we are sure, so shall we not dedicate ourselves and work with abandon to fulfill this greatest of all historical tasks? . . .
>
> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Volume 26, pp. 481-482

John Reed: A Revolutionary Hero

The name of John Reed is inseparably connected with the great Socialist Revolution of November 7, 1917, fifty years ago. He took part in it, identified himself with it, told millions about it with extraordinary clarity and dramatic skill, and gave his life for the socialist society that the revolution brought in. And his masterpiece, *Ten Days That Shook the World,* won the highest praise from V. I. Lenin, who said:

> With the greatest interest and never slackening attention I read John Reed's book *Ten Days That Shook the World.* Unreservedly do I recommend it to the workers of the world. Here is a book which I should like to see published in millions of copies and translated into all languages. It gives a truthful and most vivid exposition of the events so significant to the comprehension of what really is the Proletarian Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. These problems are widely discussed but before one can accept or reject these ideas, he must understand the full significance of his decision. John Reed's book will undoubtedly help to clear this question, which is the fundamental problem of the universal workers' movement.*

Lenin's wishes were fulfilled. *Ten Days That Shook the World* was published in millions of copies and translated into many languages. A Soviet film version reached many more millions. A stage version was playing to crowded houses when I was in Moscow in 1966. *Ten Days* is still a living thing. And a new American edition, with the imprint of International Publishers, and a new introduction by John Howard Lawson, is now inspiring American youth again.

The new American edition contains a preface by Nadezhda Krupskaya as well as Lenin's famous foreword. In this preface Lenin's wife answers a question that has puzzled many: How was it possible for a visitor from distant America, who was meeting Russians for the first time, "to convey the feeling of the masses" so vividly, and "to grasp the meaning of the events of the great revolution"? John Reed could do this, she replied, bcause he was a "Revolutionary" and a "Communist." Without this revolutionary consciousness, she explained, he could

*John Reed, *Ten Days That Shook the World,* Introduction by V. I. Lenin, xxvii, International Publishers, 1967. Paperback $1.95.

not have understood the masses' revolt or written this book. *Ten Days That Shook the World,* she said, "will have importance for future generations . . . particularly the youth." It is an "epochal" book.

This new edition will rescue *Ten Days* from its enemies in the USA. An edition now before the public is poisoned by a slanderous anti-Soviet introduction and by a series of anti-Soviet footnotes. This dirty work was done for Random House, Inc. by a renegade—Bertram D. Wolfe—who was expelled from the Communist Party with the notorious Lovestone, the CIA liaison man.

A True American Revolutionist

Ten Days That Shook the World, like the October Revolution, belongs to all humanity. Its author, however, was as American as the forests of his native Oregon. He was a partisan of the American working class, who gave his shining talents to striking coal miners, textile workers and oil workers, years before the Russian workers took power. He was an American anti-imperialist when he rode through Northern Mexico with General Villa's revolutionary army while he was in his mid-twenties. He was a fearless foe of imperialist war when he was placed on trial, and almost sent to the penitentiary, after President Wilson and Wall Street joined the capitalist bloodbath in Europe. And—finally—he became a Marxist-Leninist in the crucible of revolution and helped found the Communist Party, USA.

John Reed was not born into the class for which he laid down his life. He came from a comfortable, middle-class home in Portland, Oregon, went to Harvard University, wrote poems and satires for student journals, became manager of the university musical club and captain of its water polo team, and did not have his first experiences in the class struggle until his twenty-sixth year. Then his love for people and his hatred of injustice led him into battle on the workers' side. And his talents expanded in these struggles until they reached their climax in *Ten Days That Shook the World.*

John Reed was a rising young member of the intelligentsia when he took his first steps towards the socialist future. He was a popular member of the editorial staff of the *American Magazine* in New York City. His stories and poems were praised by well-known writers and his income was satisfactory. But this life did not satisfy him. He was not yet a Marxist, but he was disgusted with capitalist selfishness and cruelty. He wanted more freedom of expression than his editors permitted. He began contributing to *The Masses,* a brilliant cultural journal with a revolutionary outlook. He began reading Marxist literature. He met William D. Haywood, an experienced and magnetic

revolutionary workers' leader, who was directing a strike of 25,000 wretchedly paid silk workers in Paterson, New Jersey, near New York City, with the help of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. Haywood told him that Valentine Modestino, a striker, had been murdered by a company detective, and hundreds of workers were arrested. He asked the young writer to help them. John Reed went to Paterson to investigate, and was himself thrown into prison in the spring of 1913.

A Turning Point In His Life

That arrest was a turning point in John Reed's life. The prison became his classroom, and the imprisoned strikers his teachers. The strikers came from many lands in Europe. They belonged to the IWW —the Industrial Workers of the World—whose famous preamble declared that, "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common." Haywood was imprisoned with them. He told them that John Reed was on their side, and they welcomed the young writer as one of their own.

This prison abounded with rats and bugs and had almost no sanitary facilities for its crowded inmates. Many prisoners had been savagely beaten. But John Reed was thrilled by their courage, solidarity and high spirits, as they sang workers' songs together. And the lesson of those prison days stayed with him through life.

John Reed devoted the next two and a half months to the strikers after his release. He was so busy that he slept in his clothes when he slept at all. He led the singing at strikers' meetings, addressed gatherings of sympathizers, and directed a gigantic pageant of the strike that brought 15,000 persons to Madison Square Garden in New York. A thousand strikers took part in this dramatic performance. And he told the strikers' story in vivid prose in *The Masses.*

This was John Reed's first class-struggle report. It was a moving story of workers' unity and a searing expose of the cruelty of their enemies. But it was only a beginning. Several months later he was riding with General Villa, the peasant guerrilla chief, whose army had taken 17,000,000 acres of land from the rich Terrazas family and other big landowners, and given it to the peons of Northern Mexico. This was a people's revolution. And guerrillas told their new friend: "These lands used to belong to the rich, but now they belong to the *companeros.*"

John Reed rode into battle with the *companeros,* while men were dropping out of their saddles around him. He slept in the desert with them, ate torillas with them, and loved them. The guerrilas hated the "gringos," as they called the citizens of the northern power that stole

half of Mexico's territory and exploited Mexico's people. But the *companeros* accepted John Reed as one of their own. And one young soldier fervently told him, "We shall sleep in the same blanket and always be together. And I shall take you to my home, and my father will make you my brother."

The best writing that John Reed had yet done appeared in a series of articles for the *Metropolitan* magazine, and in his book, *Insurgent Mexico*. This magazine series, said Rudyard Kipling, "made me see Mexico." John Reed gives us the wild, naked beauty of the desert, with its giant mountain ranges blotting out half the sky. He shows General Villa covered with dirt in the midst of battle, while he rides up and down the lines without a trace of fatigue. But most of all John Reed loved to describe the rank and file peasants and cowboys, who were fighting without pay, for liberty and land.

John Reed won much support for the Mexican Revolution from honest men and women in the United States. He strengthened opposition to the U.S. mining companies and the Rockefeller oil pirates, who clamored for intervention. To the shame of the United States the Rockefellers had their way. President Wilson invaded Mexico in 1914 and again in 1916. But the continent's anti-imperialists long remembered *Insurgent Mexico*. It was a worthy forerunner of the great book to come.

The Colorado Mine War

John Reed had just come back to New York in the Spring of 1914 when he was called to Colorado to investigate a ghastly Rockefeller atrocity. The oil family's coal miners had been striking for seven months against industrial peonage. The miners lived in company villages, were policed by company gunmen, got beggarly wages, and were evicted from their company houses when they joined the union and went on strike.

The evicted families found refuge in little tent villages. Their solidarity was unbroken despite hunger, cold and a series of murders. And, on April 20, 1914, some 400 gunmen and state troopers attacked a tent village near the town of Ludlow. This tent village was a stronghold of the miners' union, and soldiers told John Reed that they were ordered to kill every human being in it. The attack began with a long machine-gun barrage. Then the tents were soaked with Rockefeller oil and burned to the ground. When the massacre ended the burned bodies of eleven children and two mothers were found under one of the tents. And John Reed wrote that soldiers told him that "the fearful screaming of women and children continued" while the troops looked

for loot.

I have read many accounts of the Ludlow massacre, but John Reed's is the most revealing. Its 14,000 words of masterly reportage first appeared in the *Metropolitan* magazine under the title, "The Colorado War." It was later reprinted in *The Education of John Reed*, by John Stuart (International Publishers). The title of this book is well chosen. John Reed was maturing as an artist and a revolutionist.

John Reed's eyes were fixed on the workers, and his ears were tuned to their words throughout his long report. We hear a Mexican miner telling the writer of the "river of friendship" that he found in the union. We see Louis Tikas, the heroic Greek miner, sacrificing his life in the effort to save burning women and children. He was plunging into a flaming tent when state troopers grabbed him, smashed his head with a rifle butt and pumped bullets into his back. We see "doctors, ministers, hack drivers, drug clerks and farmers" joining "the fighting strikers with guns in their hands" after the massacre. We get dozens of incidents that blend into a symphony of mass action.

Portraits of Rockefeller Gunmen

John Reed also presented the enemies in unforgettable lines. The young revolutionary writer visited every battle front and talked to men on both sides as he did in Russia later. He met Rockefeller gunmen, who were under bonds on murder charges in other states. He discovered that Colorado state troops were recruited from strikebreaking agencies and paid with Rockefeller money. He listened to the cynical stories of soldiers, who did the killings. He quoted General Chase's boast that, "We will kill every damned red-neck striker." He examined the armored railroad train that shot up tent villages. He entered the Trades Assembly Hall of unionized workers in Trinidad, Colorado, where John D. Rockefeller, Jr.—the father of Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York State—was described on a blackboard as a "pious hypocrite, who worships Christ in New York and goes gunning for miners in Colorado."

And I wished, as I reread John Reed's Colorado report, that his fearless pen could be at work in Vietnam, where the burning of women and children continues.

The Colorado report was written in cold anger. John Reed was a sensitive poet with an eye for delicate shadings of color and an ear for nuances of speech. But his style in this report was different from the style in *Insurgent Mexico*. He presented the harsh facts of the mine war simply and bluntly. He could not sing of victory. A heroic struggle had ended in temporary defeat. The strike was lost when Presi-

dent Wilson sent federal troops to Colorado. But John Reed knew that the miners would rise again. His life was now entwined with the struggles of the working class.

The Colorado experiences underscored the lessons John Reed was learning from Marxist books. The ferocity of the capitalist state had become very plain. And his contact with the enemies of the workers helped to prepare him for the counter-revolutionists he would meet in Russia later.

"Not My War"

This class-war background helped to immunize John Reed against propaganda for America's entry into the imperialist world war. That jingo propaganda swept many American socialists off their feet. Walter Lippmann—Reed's Harvard classmate—a young socialist, fell early. Upton Sinclair and others yielded in 1916 and 1917. But John Reed had seen the selfishness and cruelty of the capitalists who were financing the war cries. He remembered Colorado, Paterson, the Standard Oil refineries at Bayonne, New Jersey, and other industrial battlefields that he had visited. He wrote many appeals for peace. He spoke at many meetings. And when Congress was about to declare war he declared his opposition to the capitalist butchers again.

"Whose war is this?" John Reed asked *The Masses*' readers. "Not mine," he replied. "I know that hundreds of thousands of American workingmen, employed by our great financial 'patriots,' are not paid a living wage. I have seen poor men sent to jail for long terms without trial . . . Peaceful strikers and their wives and children, have been shot to death, burned to death by private detectives and militiamen. The rich have steadily become richer, and the cost of living higher, and the workers proportionately poorer. These toilers don't want war . . . But the speculators, the employers, the plutocracy . . . they want it, just as they did in England and Germany."

John Reed had seen the horrors of war. He visited the French, German and British fronts as a war correspondent after the shooting began in August, 1914. He fraternized with unhappy conscripts, who were dying for their masters on both sides. He was inspired by an interview with Karl Liebknecht, the heroic socialist, who voted against war credits in the Reichstag. But he was shocked by another Social-Democratic deputy, who proudly told him that the German party was "collecting dues in the trenches; and that, when requested, the Government deducts the dues from the men's pay and hands it over to the party organization." John Reed found, to his distress, that the great majority of socialist leaders in France, Britain and Germany,

deserted internationalism when the capitalist bloodbath began. And one of his articles carried this warning: "Do not be deceived by talk about democracy and liberty. This is not a crusade against militarism, but a scramble for spoils. This is not our war."

This article was suppressed by the *Metropolitan*, a liberal magazine with socialist pretensions. But John Reed's dramatic sketches of life in the trenches and behind the lines were very popular. The editors needed the famous young author. They sent him to the Eastern front in 1915. There he found more death than before and he vividly described what he saw in his book *The War in Eastern Europe.*

"Valley of Corpses"

Typhus and bullets were depopulating Serbia. John Reed visited villages where almost everyone had died. He saw thousands of little crosses in the typhus cemeteries. On the mountain summit of Goutchevo he walked through the "Valley of Corpses," between deserted Austrian and Serbian trenches, where dogs were tugging at the rotting bodies of conscripted peasants. "In one place," wrote Reed, "the half-eaten skeleton of an Austrian and a Serbian were entangled, their arms and legs wrapped about each other in a death grip that could not even now be loosened." Ten thousand bodies were heaped close together for six miles.

This chapter closed with lines that were symbolic of the contrast between life and death. John Reed rode out of the Valley of Corpses into "fruit orchards heavy with blossoms . . . under high wooded hills that caught the sun like silk. Everywhere springs poured from the hollows, and clear streams leaped down canyons choked with verdure, from Goutchevo, which the Turks called 'Mountain of Waters'—from Goutchevo, saturated with the rotting dead. All this part of Serbia was watered by the springs of Goutchevo; and on the other side they flowed into the Drina, thence into the Sava and the Danube, through lands where millions of people drank and washed and fished in them. To the Black Sea flowed the poison of Goutchevo . . ."

No other American corespondents dared to write in this way, even if they had the talent to do so. They were paid to glorify war. But John Reed knew that his countrymen needed the truth. He visited Serbia, Greece, Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Russia on a seven months' truth-telling tour. And he came home a passionate fighter for peace.

But freedom to tell the truth was now much restricted. The *Metropolitan* was feeling the pressure of advertisers and bankers. Ex-President Theodore Roosevelt, a strutting jingo, had become a contribut-

ing editor and urged American intervention in almost every number. John Reed was allowed to write a few honest articles, but the break came at last. And he told a friend that he would never write anything that did not express his hatred of capitalism and that did not aid the revolution.

Then Congress declared war, mass arrests began, and John Reed met the test that many young men are meeting today. He declared that he would not fight for Wall Street. And he was taking an active part in the anti-war movement when the Soviets of Workers and Soldiers began to spread in revolutionary Russia. He wanted to reach Russia at once. But no capitalist editor would send him. His trip was delayed while friends collected funds. And he did not arrive in Petrograd until September.

The Revolution Begins

The historic *Ten Days* were approaching. General Kornilov's putsch was crushed. The Bolshevik slogan—"All Power to the Soviets"—had become a mass slogan. Soldiers were rebelling; peasants were seizing estates; the masses were turning to Lenin's Party in the struggle for peace and land. And John Reed joined the revolutionary current that was sweeping Russia.

John Reed now felt the power of the masses as never before. He attended their meetings. He spent days and nights with soldiers and workers. He fraternized with Red Guards at the Smolny Institute and saw much of Bolshevik leaders. And he studied the people's enemies as well. He interviewed Alexander Kerensky, the timid and slippery head of the Provisional Government, and talked to big businessmen, Right-wing socialist leaders and other foes of workers' power.

Then the *Ten Days* began. John Reed entered the Winter Palace with the victors on November 7th. He heard Lenin tell the Congress of Soviets the next day that, "We shall now begin to construct the Socialist order." He saw this construction begin amid incredible difficulties. He rejoiced in the defeat of the first waves of counter-revolution. He wrote appeals for peace. These appeals were distributed in the German trenches in large quantities. And he returned home in spring to tell his countrymen the truth about the Revolution.

John Reed had helped to weaken the German front. President Wilson had no gratitude for this, however, and the young author was arrested when he returned to New York for things he had written in *The Masses* in 1917. His diaries, notebooks and hundreds of Russian newspapers were seized. And he could not begin writing his well-

documented book until this material was restored six months later.

Meanwhile John Reed began a series of more than a hundred speeches in defense of the Revolution. He was also busy defending himself in the courts. He boldly denounced Wilson's intervention in Soviet Russia when put on trial with other editors of *The Masses*. He might have been sentenced to twenty years in prison if convicted, but the jurors disagreed. A jury acquitted him in another "sedition" trial, and a third "sedition" indictment against him was finally dropped.

John Reed, however, continued to denounce the undeclared war against Soviet Russia in which American conscripts were dying. And in late 1918 he helped to bring Lenin's "Message to American Workers" to his people. This story has escaped Reed's American biographers, but I heard it in Moscow from the lips of Peter Travin, the veteran Bolshevik, who carried the famous message through the cordon sanitaire. Travin's feat was astonishing. His difficulties were enormous. But he ran into new difficulties after he slipped over the side of his ship in New York. Then the editor of a small Russian language paper insisted that the message appear first in his pages. But John Reed was wiser. He insisted on the widest possible circulation in the capitalist press as well. He said this could be done. He took the message to Washington and showed it to U.S. Senator Hiram Johnson of California. Johnson was a Republican and a capitalist, who believed that the intervention was bad for his class. Lenin's message convinced Senator Johnson that the Soviet Government wanted peace. He told the American people about it from the Senate chamber. And Lenin warmly approved John Reed's tactics when Travin made his report.

"Ten Days" Appears

Ten Days That Shook the World came off John Reed's pen rapidly when his papers were returned in the autumn of 1918. It was finished in January, 1919, and it made its appearance in March, like the sun bursting through the clouds. It illuminated our revolutionary horizon at once. It was hailed by Walt Whitman's biographer and closest friend, Horace Traubel, and other vanguard intellectuals. Many radical workers could think of little else for some time. My own copy passed from hand to hand and was read to pieces. And the mass campaign that brought American conscripts home from Archangel was speeded by the knowledge and inspiration that came from Reed's book.

A Russian edition with Lenin's foreword came next. And Clare Sheridan, the American sculptress, made this entry in her diary during a visit to Moscow in September, 1920: "I am told by the Rus-

sians that . . . *Ten Days That Shook the World* . . . has become a national classic and is taught in the schools."

Ten Days That Shook the World was soon appearing in many languages in Europe and Latin America—and later in Asia. New editions came out in the United States. My wife has a special "Russian Famine Edition" that she bought in California in March, 1922. All profits and royalties—fifty cents out of every dollar—went to feed starving people in the Volga region, who were suffering from foreign intervention.

"While a man lives in the hearts of his countrymen, he can never be dead," said Louise Bryant, Reed's widow, in a preface to the famine edition. "And he can never be dead while his work goes on."

John Reed's work has gone on through the years. I know many Americans, whose understanding of Communism was enriched by *Ten Days That Shook the World.* Among them was Henry Winston, the Negro chairman of the Communist Party, who lost his sight but not his political vision in prison. "This was the first Marxist book I read as a youth," he told me.

This classic story of Revolution "is journalism raised to the level of the highest art," declared John Howard Lawson, the well-known playwright and critic, in his introduction to the new International Publishers' edition.

John Reed's magnificent report must be read as a whole. Each part adds meaning to the rest. The following portrait of Lenin at the Congress of Soviets might stand alone, however:

> It was just 8:40 when a thundering wave of cheers announced the entrance of the presidium, with Lenin—great Lenin—among them . . . Dressed in shabby clothes . . . Unimpressive, to be the idol of a mob, loved and revered as perhaps few leaders in history have been. A strange popular leader—a leader purely by virtue of intellect . . . but with the power of explaining profound ideas in simple terms, of analyzing a concrete situation. And combined with shrewdness, the greatest intellectual audacity.

John Reed was supreme among U.S. reporters in describing mass action. He brings a host of details into a mass picture, and weaves these details together into one living thing. We see this technique in perfection when singing Red Guards, armed women and children, pour out of Petrograd to defeat the enemy on November 13. And beauty and triumph glow in the following gem as John Reed is returning to Petrograd:

> Across the horizon spread the glittering lights of the capital . . . like a dike of jewels heaped on the barren plain.

> The old workman, who drove, held the wheel in one hand, while with the other he swept the far-gleaming capital in an exultant gesture.
>
> "Mine!" he cried, his face all alight. "All mine now! My Petrograd!"

Some of John Reed's finest lines are taken from the lips of ordinary workers and soldiers. Joseph North, the author of *No Men Are Strangers,* is especially fond of a conversation between a young soldier and an arrogant middle-class intellectual near Petrograd. The intellectual abuses the Bolsheviks and Lenin. He calls the soldier an "ignorant peasant," who knows nothing of socialism. The soldier admits that he lacks education. He only knows that "there are two classes in society—the proletariat and the bourgeoisie," and that Lenin says "what I want to hear." The argument runs for two pages like a scene in a play. The soldier's answer about the "two classes" is repeated again and again. And the dialogue ends with the soldier insisting that "whoever isn't on one side is on the other."

A Founder of the Communist Party

The completion of *Ten Days That Shook the World* gave John Reed more time for the political activities that would bring the Communist Party into being on September 1, 1919.

The Socialist Party was in crisis. Many good socialists were in prison. Middle class Right-wingers controlled the Party executive, but a revolutionary Left-wing, based on the American working class and on a policy of firm support for embattled Russia, was coming together. John Reed helped to prepare the Left-wing's manifesto, became a leading member of the Left-wing executive, wrote for its organs, the *Revolutionary Age* and the *New York Communist,* and spoke at many meetings. And I remember the applause that always greeted him.

John Reed's popularity with progressive workers was demonstrated in a national referendum of the Socialist Party when he was selected as the Party's international representative by a vote of 17,235, compared to 4,871 for a Right-winger. In the same referendum balloting, 12 Left-wingers were elected to the Party's 15-member national executive committee. But the members' decision was ignored by the Right-wing bureaucrats, who entrenched themselves in power by the expulsion of more than 50,000 militant socialists, most of them members of the Foreign Language Federations of the Party.

These expulsions started the decline of the Socialist Party. It has shriveled to a shadow today.

The details of the founding of John Reed's Party, the Communist Party, have often been told. The Party was founded while the socialists were holding their national convention in Chicago. A large group of Left-wingers, with Reed as one of the leaders, tried to take the seats in the socialist convention, to which they had been elected. They wanted to explain their revolutionary positions to honest delegates before taking further action. Police were summoned by the Right-wing bureaucrats and the Left-wingers were ejected. Other Left-wingers decided to boycott the convention entirely. This difference in tactics resulted in the formation of two temporary Communist Parties, which later united. And John Reed played an active part in the unification.

William W. Weinstone, a founding member of the Communist Party, has vivid recollections of John Reed at this time. "I remember Jack Reed as a passionate fighter," he told me. "I remember his pride in the fighting spirit of the American working class and his confidence in its future and his devotion to the principles of international solidarity."

John Reed returned to Russia as a correspondent for *The Liberator* —the successor to *The Masses*—after the Party's founding. Soviet territory was still blockaded, so he crossed the Atlantic as a stoker on a Scandinavian ship under the name "Jim Gormley." In Norway, he stowed away on a ship for Finland, and then made his way quietly to Russia.

His Friendship with Lenin

In Moscow, John Reed was given a warm welcome. And guides have shown me the chair in a small office in the Kremlin where he held long conversations with Lenin, who liked him very much.

That was a cruel autumn and winter. The Soviet economy had been almost wrecked by White Guards and interventionists. The enemy was still raging. The people had little to eat and John Reed lived with workers on tiny rations of bread and fish. But his articles for *The Liberator* were full of enthusiasm for the indomitable Soviet people.

My wife and I followed him—44 years later—to the industrial city of Serpukov. I spoke in the same Hall of Nobles where John Reed addressed hungry workers in early 1920. We met old workers, who had tramped many miles through the snow to hear him. And we felt immense pride in our great countryman, when we saw a street named after John Reed and attended a big meeting in his honor.

John Reed was working on a second book—*From Kornilov to Brest-Litovsk*—when word came that mass arrests of Communists were going on in many cities. The home front was calling. He tried to slip out through the cordon sanitaire by way of Finland. But Baron Mannerheim's police threw him into an icy, solitary cell with little to eat. He won his release by threats of a hunger strike after three months. He was not allowed to go home, and returned to Moscow in bad health, but with spirits unbroken.

Socialism was triumphing again in 1920. The major counter-revolutionary armies were defeated. Revolutionary ideas were spreading in Asia. John Reed was sent to Baku as a delegate to the Congress of Oriental Nations. Two thousand Asians were present from many lands. Indians and Chinese were among them. John Reed was much inspired. But on the way back he was bitten by a typhus bug—a deadly legacy of counter-revolution.

John Reed died in Moscow on October 17, 1920, three days before his 33rd birthday. Soviet leaders and thousands of workers followed him to his resting place under the Kremlin wall. His friend Haywood, who initiated him into the class struggle, lies near him. John Reed would have been 80 on October 20, this year, had he survived. But to those who knew him he seems eternally young.

> The strength of communism is inexhaustible, and on its side is the truth of life. Only communism can solve the fundamental problems of social development, deliver mankind from oppression and exploitation, from hunger and poverty, from militarism and war, and establish on our planet democracy, peace and friendship between peoples, a life that is in keeping with the dignity of man.
>
> —*Theses of the CPSU on the Fifteenth Anniversary*

VICTOR PERLO

The Economic Reform in the USSR*

The economic reform in the USSR and other socialist countries is a complex package of measures with the following fundamental aims:

1. To find the methods of economic management and planning suitable for a socialist economy in the period of the scientific-technical revolution.

2. To bring economic regulation into conformity with economic laws, minimizing the weight of arbitrary and often counterproductive administrative routine.

3. To come closer to realizing the formula "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work"—thereby harmonizing individual and social interests and increasing the incentive of the individual to work more effectively.

4. To eliminate super-centralization, multiply the scope for local decision-making and initiative, strike a new balance between centralized planning and decentralized responsibility, between the role of the high-speed electronic computer and the practical contact between buyer and seller.

5. Through the new system and other measures, to achieve a faster economic growth rate, a considerably faster increase in living standards, a faster modernization of industry and agriculture, and a democratization of economic life.

The new system of economic management and planning is being introduced simultaneously with other important changes which, strictly speaking, are not part of the reform, but which are correlated with it in objective and spirit:

1. A closer approximation of consumers' goods to producers' goods in annual growth rate.

2. A shift in planning emphasis so as to concentrate, more than ever, on economic effectiveness of production rather than crude quantity. This embraces modernizing the structure of output and productive techniques, enhancing product quality, major alteration and coordination of regional production patterns, fuller use of capacity, economizing materials and using cheaper substitutes, increasing labor skills and economizing on labor.

3. A series of measures to improve labor conditions and equity among groups of workers, with strong incentive features. These include the five-day week, the basic three-week vacation, radically increased minimum wages, greatly increased premiums for work in the Far North, substantial wage and bonus premiums for seniority in an enterprise, improved pensions.

4. Increasing emphasis on international trade in socialist economic planning, with particular emphasis on increasing economic coordination among socialist countries.

* This article is adapted and updated from a paper delivered by the author at the Second Socialist Scholars Conference, September, 1966.

Evolution of Socialist Planning

Economic planning is a law of socialist society. Socialism is unthinkable without centralized planning, just as capitalism is unthinkable without private control of enterprises. Thus economic planning has been a characteristic of socialist economy from the early years of Soviet power, from the Goelro Plan inspired by Lenin for the electrification of the country. Planning has expanded, changed, become more universal and effective, with the development of the country's economic and technical might, its socialist economic science and the level of knowledge of the people.

Up to 1931, the economic plans were essentially a set of "control figures," general guidelines for the course of production, backed with the allocation of necessary materials and labor for the relatively small number of major enterprises and construction projects. The collectivization of agriculture made it possible to include that decisive branch in economic planning. Beginning with 1931, economic planning embraced the entire national economy. From 1935 on, complex plans, embracing technical, industrial, and financial components were combined into a single master aggregate. After World War II the system of material balances, coordinating the flow of goods and components throughout the economy, was improved and made more comprehensive. Planning of production of consumer's goods according to norms of consumption was introduced. During the postwar period there was a gradual decentralization of the planning process, with an increased role for the Union republics, the city administrations, and the individual enterprises (and, temporarily, the Sovnarkhoz system of economic regions). More people took part in the planning process, although it remained basically quite centralized. The fulfillment of plans became more precise and uniform.

However, there were no *fundamental* changes in the method of economic planning during the entire postwar period. The system lagged seriously behind the rapid growth of the economy in size and com-

plexity, behind the increased possibilities of scientific planning inherent in new technical means, such as electronic computers, and in improved understanding of the theory of socialist economy. It lagged behind the capabilities of the large corps of managers and engineers, of the more highly educated working class, trained during socialist years. Lagging behind the possibilities, the old methods in the 1960's began to hold back progress, to slow down the rate of economic growth and the advance in living standards.

The lag of planning methods behind the requirements of the time fundamentally resulted from the long-lasting effects of the "cult of personality" of the Stalin period, with its growth of bureaucratism, command methods of operation, and partial stultification of mass initiative. For over a decade the socialist countries have been progressing towards the reduction and elimination of these harmful phenomena. The economic reform is an extremely important phase of this process, making possible an accelerated offensive on remaining inequities, irrationalities, and bureaucratic deadweight, an accelerated flowering of mass participation in social affairs—political and economic —of effective cooperation among the people.

The economic *reform* is just that. It is not a complete break with past planning methods, but embodies a series of major changes. It is being put into effect gradually, with many details being corrected on the basis of early experience. It will be several years before it can be fully evaluated. But the accelerated progress in production and living standards in the USSR, and in other countries where the reform is underway, are a good augury. They indicate, if nothing else, that the masses of the people have confidence in the new directions, and have been stimulated to work more effectively therefore.

Economists played a particularly important role in preparing the way for and developing the principles and operating details of the reform. The work of Liberman of the USSR, Sik of Czechoslovakia, and *many others* represented a breakthrough in creative Marxism, an important advance in the development of an economic science geared to an advanced, industrialized, socialist system. The application of the reform has required the economic training of industrial and agricultural executives and engineers, the inculcation of thinking in economic and accounting terms as well as technical terms.

Preparation and implementation of the reform involved a high degree of cooperation among the economists, Communist parties and governments of the socialist countries. There was an active exchange of opinions, scientific studies, and results of economic experiments. In many ways, the experience of Bulgaria and the GDR, which adopted

versions of the economic reform earlier, were valuable to the USSR; while Soviet experiences are now being studied intently by other socialist countries.

The general approach was developed and set forth in the early 1960's. The Liberman articles of 1962 set off a national wave of discussion in the USSR, the great bulk of it favorable, and aroused bureaucratic opposition to change which delayed introduction of the reform somewhat and still hampers the full application of its spirit. In the USSR and other socialist countries, tens of thousands of engineers, managers, accountants, economists, and industrial workers submitted written suggestions concerning the reform, and millions participated in organized discussions around it.

The adoption of the reform and its general structure represent a new historic advance in economic democracy, an early indicator of the potential of socialist—and later communist—society for the *effective, meaningful* realization of the slogan "Government by the People."

Description of the Reform

Central features of the reform in the USSR are:

1. The use of profit as a key indicator of the success of an enterprise.
2. A reduction in the number of centrally assigned planning targets, giving each enterprise considerable leeway in working out details and flexibility in procedure so as to maximize profits and output.
3. Establishment of direct contacts between producers and purchasers, without centralized administrative intermediaries, and increased use of the contract system of distribution.
4. Emphasis on the value of sales rather than production, encouraging better conformity of the pattern of production to consumer demand.
5. A major increase in the share of incentive payments in labor income, and a linking of a larger part of these payments to the profits of the enterprise.
6. Enhanced powers and responsibility for the unions, particularly in the determination and distribution of incentive bonuses, and increased opportunities for workers to participate effectively in management and planning.
7. A charge of interest to enterprises on capital employed so as to encourage economy in the use of assets.
8. Renovation of the price system so as to put it on the basis of the law of value.

The new incentives come from three funds, constituted out of a share of profits. To some extent these replace previously existing "Directors' Funds," but those were too small to be effective in any general way. The three new funds are (1) for material incentives; (2) for housing and cultural measures; and (3) for the stimulation of production. The first, largest, and most important, is used to pay cash bonuses. The second is to permit the enterprise to provide more housing, recreational and cultural facilities for its workers, in proportion to their accomplishments. The third, used in conjunction with part of the depreciation funds, is to permit the enterprise to arrange for and carry out some of its own capital expenditures.

The new funds are improvements in several ways. They can become large enough to be helpful, and to stimulate the activity of the masses. They are determined more rationally. Briefly, the old funds were mainly from overplan profits. This pitted enterprise managers in a game of wits with the planning authorities to get their plans as low as possible, to the detriment of the progress of society. The new funds are highest in proportion to *planned* profits, which provides an incentive to set up higher but accurate plans. Finally, the new system sets up only general rules centrally, leaving the enterprise to work out detailed methods. It calls for widespread activity on the part of each shop and section of the enterprise, each group of workers, the trade union local and shop club of the Communist Party, in developing the details.

The industrial reform coincides with an agricultural reform which, while different in details, is similar in essence. This includes:

1. Higher prices paid to farmers and reduced prices charged farmers. There has been a radical gain in the "farm parity ratio" of Soviet farmers, whose real incomes have increased spectacularly in the last several years, markedly reducing urban-rural differentials.

2. More leeway to farm enterprises in planning crops, and a reduction in quotas for compulsory sales to the state.

3. High cash payouts to collective farmers, including monthly advances against expected crop income, amounting generally to two-thirds of the total. Pension rights also have been extended to farmers.

4. An increase in the scope for private plots and private animal husbandry, along with a shift to a positive attitude towards subsidiary private farming activity.

Theoretical Questions Concerning the Reform

Many Western writers have characterized the reform as a departure from socialist principles. Capitalist ideologists praise it, Maoist propagandists and romantic radicals condemn it for this alleged characteristic. Thus the theoretical questions arising around the reform have great pertinence, nowhere more than in the U.S.

First, about the role of profits in a socialist society. Many Americans have been misled by the use of the term "the profit system" in referring to capitalism. The real description of capitalism, however, differs from this. It is the system of private ownership of the means of production and exploitation of wage labor, leading to the private *appropriation* of profits. Profits is an accounting term for the contribution made by workers' labor to the social surplus of a society. Every society needs a social surplus if it is to expand, modernize, and provide public services. Contemporary American capitalism, in addition —and now mainly—uses an ever-rising part of the social surplus for military purposes and foreign investments, not to mention the segment used for luxury consumption by the rich.

If profits meant capitalism, then the USSR isn't *going back* to capitalism; it has had it all the time. Official Soviet statistics show profits of Soviet enterprises at 3.3 billion rubles in 1940, 8.6 billion in 1953, and 30.7 billion in 1963. Lenin, Stalin, and Khrushchev all emphasized the importance and necessity of profits in a socialist economy. The present leadership hopes to improve on its predecessors in realizing profits and utilizing them effectively. The Maoists, now, are vociferous in denouncing the USSR on this score. But as of 1955, when statistics were published, the Chinese reported that most of their state revenues came from the profits of enterprises.

Socialist society requires profits as much as capitalist society. There are two essential differences, however. In the USSR and other socialist countries, profits accrue to the public, as the owner of all enterprises, and to cooperatives, rather than to private exploiters. Under capitalism, profits are the specific objective of economic activity, everything else is incidental, no matter what the apologists of capitalism claim. Under socialism, profits are a means to the end of increasing the material and cultural level of the people. These differences are more than differences in slogans or propaganda, they are rooted in the operative mechanisms of the two systems.

Second, about the alleged convergence of the two systems. It is claimed that capitalism, with the "welfare state" and the "managerial revoluton" is becoming more socialistic, while socialism, adopting capitalist methods of industrial management and accounting, emphasizing the profit motive, is becoming more capitalistic. The two, it is claimed, will meet somewhere in the middle.

This argument is designed, above all, to discourage the struggle for

socialism in capitalist countries. It confuses technique with structure, means with ends, occupations with social classes.

Certainly, socialist society learns what is useful in management and accounting techniques from capitalism, just as it learned what it could about engineering and science from capitalism. Similarly, captalist societies learn what is useful to them in these areas from socialist societies, and in particular strive to adapt socialist technique of economic planning to ease the contradictions of the capitalist mode of production.

Starting from a lower technical level, it is logical that over an extended period the USSR should draw closer to capitalism in technique. But along with the technical convergence, there is increasing structural, moral and social divergence. Socialist forms have become universal in the USSR. A new socialist morality, a cooperative approach to life, gains headway, while alienation and individual competition become more corrosive in the USA. Full national equality, long achieved essentially in the USSR, becomes richer and more meaningful there, while racial oppression and division is used more viciously and determinedly by American capitalists. International cooperation among socialist countries, increasing socialist aid without strings or exploitation to developing countries and national liberation fighters, contrasts with the ever-more-monstrous oppression and robbery of other countries by American imperialism. The elements of communist practices and relations within socialist society, the conscious preparation to build the foundations for a highly advanced society of plenty, mutual brotherhood, and creative, technically proficient work, called communism, in the USSR, contrasts with the rise of reaction and militarism, the invasions and wars of conquest, the threat of nuclear annihilation, emanating from the capitalist world.

Third, about the relationship between moral and material incentives in a socialist society. A decisive human advance in the USSR was the achievement of a new relationship between the working people and the state, whereby people work hard not only under the lash of hunger, or the fear of it, but also, and sometimes mainly, because of a consciousness that the new society is theirs, of a desire to build up their own socialist economy and state power.

Under capitalism, with relatively rare exceptions, workers labor overwhelmingly in response to material incentives, positive or negative. Negative incentives have all too often dominated—fear of being fired, of being left without savings in old age, of being unable to provide for one's family, etc. Moral or esthetic incentives, limited to begin with, dwindle as mechanization and automation curtailed opportunities for self-expression through craftsmanship. The minority acquiring high technical and scientific skills see them corrupted by militarism, advertising promotions and ubiquitous profiteering.

Under socialism, moral and material incentives always had to be combined. As long as the socialist economies remain relative shortage economies, without enough goods and services to satisfy everyone's needs at a high world standard of living, as long as it is necessary to follow the formula for the first stage of communism (i.e., socialism) "to each according to his work," material incentives must remain important.

Nor is there anything evil in satisfying man's material needs. Marxists believe that man's material welfare is important, and intimately connected with his cultural progress and spiritual welfare. Marxists are not ascetics. There is nothing evil or vulgar in a comfortable standard of living. What is evil and vulgar is the perversion of human standards in the drive for an excessive standard of living, the robbery, oppression, exploitation, impoverishment and slaughter of millions so that a handful may flit between a half dozen mansions in different countries, each equipped with armies of servants and, in the American fashion, dozens of toilets. What is despicable and must be fought is the rampant class arrogance, racism, reckless militarism and war with which the capitalist class drives for ever more profits, power, and luxury.

Material incentives can be ignored only for brief periods of national emergency—as during a war—but not indefinitely. The Maoists, at the time of the Great Leap Forward, made the mistake of attempting to get away from material incentives before the necessary material and social conditions for it existed. The result, after some initial surface success, was a major setback to the Chinese economy.

In the USSR and the European socialist countries, material incentives were always used, but despite many attempted improvements, they were not brought up to date to correspond to modern conditions of production and distribution. They became relatively too small, and in many cases unscientifically determined, so that people would be rewarded for doing things that might be counter to the national interest and penalized for doing things best for society. In some cases, this harmed labor morale and caused ideological alienation among segments of the working class.

The new system aims to raise substantially the role of material incentives. As of 1965, incentive payments to Soviet workers accounted for about 10 per cent of labor income. Soviet economists hope through the new system to raise this ultimately to one-fourth or one-third of

all labor income. Simultaneously, the aim is to improve the system of incentives, so that it reflects, directly or indirectly, the contribution of the individual and the group to the profits of society. The basic approach is scientifically founded, and has a better chance of success than earlier piecemeal incentive systems.

The idea is not to abandon moral incentives, but to strengthen their effectiveness by combining them better with material incentives.

Results to Date

The last two years have seen a notable advance in the socialist economies. In the USSR industrial production, which had been rising by 7-8 per cent per year, is now increasing at a rate of 10 per cent per year. Agricultural production, relatively stagnant for a number of years, has leaped into new high ground, is becoming steadier, more resistant to drought and other adversities. The USSR is gaining much faster in economic competition with the USA than earlier in this decade.

Living standards are increasing faster, with real per capital income going up 6 per cent per year, instead of the 3½ per cent per year of the early 1960's. Collective farmers' incomes have gone up 20 per cent in the past two years. Food and clothing are plentiful and of improved quality. Consumers durable goods are pouring out of socialist factories and into workers' and farmers' homes. The housing situation is rapidly improving as is the network of stores and service establishments. These gains are being made despite increased military budgets forced on the USSR by U.S. aggression in Vietnam and U.S. escalation of the arms race.

There is marked increase in the purposeful participation in management, in creative enthusiasm, of the working people. This applies especially to the millions of administrative, engineering and technical specialists trained in Soviet times. Also, large numbers of shop workers are able, through trade union committees, Communist Party branches, production committees and socialist competition groups, to participate much more effectively than formerly in the management of the enterprises where they work, and to share appropriately in the resulting productivity gains. Farmers' morale has improved with their living standards.

Particularly important is the enhanced role of the local union committees, which are not only permitted, but required, to participate on an equal footing with factory management in working out details of the incentive system, and its distribution between different categories of workers, different shops, etc.

It would be wrong to attribute these gains mainly to the economic reform as such. In agriculture, true, the economic reform, buttressed by much larger supplies of machinery and fertilizer, probably was the key factor. But in industry, the reform is at too early a stage to directly account for most of the observed gains. For example, only perhaps 10 per cent of industry, on the average, worked under the new system in 1966. The new prices didn't go into effect until the middle of 1967, and the entire economy will not be working in the new way until some time in 1968.

But the type of leadership which is effectuating the reform, the combination of a reasonable, non-dogmatic, practical and business-like approach with adherence to socialist principles, has become more common in the USSR and other socialist countries. Applied in the reform and in other ways, this essentially eccounts for the gains. Fundamentally, perhaps, the gains reflect a maturing of the people and of the Communist parties of the socialist countries.

There remain a number of aspects concerning which there are important differences of opinion among economists in socialist countries. To what extent shall enterprises have flexibility in detailed price-setting? To what extent shall the "market" rather than the central plan determine the pattern of production? There are a number of difficulties associated with the still partial application of the reform. Enterprises working in the new way find it difficult to coordinate activities with suppliers and customers working the old way.

In addition, shortcomings and still unsolved problems have appeared. To a considerable extent, these result from the necessity to introduce the new system gradually, as individual enterprises and groups of enterprises make the necessary preparations. Yet timely correction of weaknesses will be required if the accelerated pace of economic and social progress is to be maintained. Major shortcomings, noted by Soviet experts* and in correspondence in the Soviet press, include the following:

1. In many cases ministries and other central authorities attempt to dictate too many details of operations to enterprises, hampering the development of flexible initiatives required of the enterprises under the new system. Operations of enterprises authorized by the reform are sometimes blocked by financial restrictions still in effect from the old system.

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* Particularly valuable is the discussion by Academician N. Federenko, director of the Institute of Mathematical Economics, in *Planovoye Khozaistvo* (*Planned Economy*), No. 4, 1967.

2. Failure to solve the material supply problem completely. Because of the continuous, rapid pace of industrial growth, sufficient reserves of materials have never been built up. This has greatly hampered efficient, continuous operations at factories. A new agency, along with the economic reform, is responsible to set up reserves, a system of warehouses, and improved distribution methods. There has been some progress, but still insufficient, to date.

3. Complicated formulas for the incentive funds. The method provided is more elaborate than is technically necessary. A degree of refinement is required, if a system is to be scientific. But perhaps some existing formulas can be simplified and perfected at the same time, facilitating mass participation and understanding by the workers.

4. Lack of available materials and machinery for the enterprises to use fully the housing and cultural fund and the fund for the stimulation of production.

5. In some cases the material incentive funds have been inadequate to provide a major incentive for most workers. This results partly from the early stage of the reform—the funds will build up later. It results also from the need to use part of the available resources for very worthwhile increases in wages not connected directly with the new system of planning and management—higher minimums, higher scales for underpaid occupations (e.g. teachers, doctors, machine tool operators), higher premiums for work in the Far North, more benefits for seniority.

The plan for 1968, with its provision for a faster rise in consumers' goods than in producers' goods output, signifies a determination on the part of Soviet leaders to provide additional goods for workers to purchase with their rapidly rising incomes.

6. There have been complaints from a number of factories of inequities in the distribution of bonus and other benefits. These could develop where the trade union committees fail to exercise their powers under the reform, and to involve the workers themselves in developing the details of the incentive system.

One of the primary tasks of the reform was to stimulate the work of engineers and administrative personnel, many of whom had not been receiving incomes corresponding to their professional and technical level. Partly for this reason, and partly because of the broader scope of their work, the incentive bonus formula for these workers differs from that for the blue collar workers. But it appears that blue collar workers as a whole are benefiting as much as white collar workers from the combined effect of the reform and other feasures to raise real incomes. As the system of accounting required for the

reform is perfected and extended to the shops, and as the technical and educational level of workers increases, the types of payments received by different categories of workers should become more uniform.

Pravda early this year editorialized on the work of enterprises operating on the new system as follows:

> Splendid achievements have been scored by the metal workers of the Nizhni Tagil and Zaporozhstal steel works, the Balkhash and Norilsk plants, the Voskresensk chemical works, the Moscow Borets works and of Sigma—the first association of enterprises to operate on the basis of cost accounting. The directors of these enterprises . . . are efficient executives, skillful organizers and educators of masses. They correctly utilize the new opportunities offered by the new system of industrial management and promotion of workers' initiative arising from the economic reform. Practice has revealed that the introduction of an effective system of incentives, which is clear to all, correct combination of material and moral stimuli and timely registration and fair remuneration for each labor achievement are an important lever in promoting efficiency in production. This helps improve the overall economic indicators and fulfill the plans with minimum expenditure of labor and means. (February 16, 1967.)

Another editorial emphasizes the positive role of the local union at Nizhni Tagil:

> Our democracy widely embraces not only political and social life but also the sphere of production. As production is expanded and the economic reform is carried out, the role of the working people in tackling economic problems increases. . . . The Presidium of the Soviet Trade Unions noted the valuable experience of the trade union committee of the Nizhni Tagil steel mill in drawing the workers into the management of production. A bonus system, taking into account the interests of the mill as a whole and of its personnel, was devised there with the participation of the workers. A broad and concrete system of material incentives introduced at the mill helps enhance the labor activity of the workers and improve the work of production conferences, science and engineering and other voluntary societies. (August 11, 1967.)

Much depends on the extent to which these positive experiences are generalized. But note the contrast from American reality, where the government, the press, and the employers combine to rigorously exclude workers from "intefering in management prerogatives." Under

socialism the government, the press, the national union leadership are striving to create the mechanisms and to encourage workers, by the tens of millions, not only to "interfere" but to participate in every respect, to "integrate with" and essentially become part of the management of the enterprises where they work, transforming them into *their* enterprises in the fullest sense of the word.

It will be several years before one can fully appraise this stage in the forward movement of socialist society. The whole trend and atmosphere in the USSR is such that a strikingly favorable ultimate appraisal is likely.

But there is one ever-present proviso. The U.S. escalation in Vietnam provides significant external strain on the Soviet economy. Should international tensions become so severe as to force the USSR to a state of semi-mobilization, many features of the reform will have to be postponed, administrative methods will have to be used much more widely, and the role of moral incentives raised to decisive top priority, as in any crucial war situation.

> Communism is a classless social system with one form of public ownership of the means of production and full social equality of all members of society; under it, the all-round development of people will be accompanied by the growth of productive forces through continuous progress in science and technology; all the springs of cooperative wealth will flow more abundantly, and the great principle "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" will be imlemented. . . .
>
> —*Program of the CPSU*

BETTY GANNETT

Material and Moral Incentives

For many years following the October Revolution bourgeois commentators prophesied the inevitable collapse of Soviet society. Their "clinching" argument was that socialism, by eliminating free competition, destroys material interest and production is, therefore, bound to stagnate. Now that the Soviet Union has become the world's second largest producer of industrial goods and a leader in both science and technology, new explanations are devised, but all are designed to fit into the same old pattern.

How the Truth Is Twisted

If the Soviet Union has made progress, the commentators argue today, it is only because she has been compelled to discard the original concepts of Marxism for the "tested" practices of capitalism. The application of material incentives in socialist production—suddenly discovered in the West—is proof positive of this contention. Since to the bourgeois mind, material stimulus is generally associated with private gain, of course, there can be no true socialism in the Soviet Union. At the very least there is a creeping convergence with capitalism.

From this it becomes simple to interpret rising living standards as having given birth to a new elite—a "middle class" with a "middle-class psychology" which is "quite at variance with the stern Marxist-Leninist precepts." "It is clear that the Soviet bourgeois is frankly out for himself and does not care two kopeks for the party-decreed collective." So, in fact, writes Professor Albert Parry in an article entitled "Russia's New Bourgeois Grows Fat" (*New York Times,* June 5, 1966).

To make their logic stick, the Marxist vision of socialism is reduced to a crude equalitarianism of "share-and-share-alike." While the "learned" professor points out that Marx and Lenin were "vague n spellng out the glorious morning after," they both did say that "comes the revolution, every citizen will have no more and no less than any other citizen." He further underscores his thesis: "Higher pay for the professionals and bureaucrats leading to the rise of the new middle and upper classes was not in the original Marx-Lenin preachment," for "the regime meant to be strictly egalitarian."

From a somewhat different aspect—that human nature is inher-

ently selffish and egotistical and can never be changed—but obviously with a similar intent, Leonard Gross, in the special issue of *Look* on "Russia Today" (October 3, 1967), writes:

> . . . Bonuses, profit-sharing, incentive pay, personal possessions, all once frowned on by Marxist purists are now justified with a logic that bewilders Western visitors. . . . What they [the Marxists] will not acknowledge is that in their fundamental assumption about man, Marx and Lenin were wrong. Both believed that people raised in a Socialist environment would be selfless. The current love affair with profit is just one more oblique Marxist concession that ego cannot be subdued. . . .

W. Averell Harriman, writing in the same vein, concedes that "state ownership of the means of production will not be abandoned" but the "party leaders have found they can't get people to work unless there are rewards," therefore, "material incentives will play an increasing role in the Communist system" (*ibid.*).

Bourgeois apologists have always depicted socialism as a crude leveling of requirements, tastes and abilities, with people, whose personalities have been crushed, living a barrack-like, drab, monotonous existence. Regrettably, this picture of socialism has now been given a further measure of credence by the Maoist leadership of People's China in their "Great Cultural Revolution" and in their slanderous charge that the land which first blazed the path to the new society is now rapidly "restoring capitalism."

"All this talk of material incentives is sheer revisionism," the Maoists repeat again and again. They are "sugar-coated bullets directed against the working class . . . the poison that produces 'peaceful evolution' towards capitalism" (*Peking Review*, September 29, 1967). Material incentives, furthermore, are "turning all human relations into money relations and encouraging individualism and selfishness" (*Peking Review*, July 17, 1964).

Echoing the bourgeois press, the Maoists hold that emphasis on raising the living standards of the people not only violates the very essence of socialism, but has given rise to a "privileged stratum." "This privileged stratum appropriates the fruits of the Soviet people's labor and pockets incomes that are dozens or even a hundred times those of the average Soviet worker and peasant . . . they live the parasitical and decadent life of the bourgeoisie" (*ibid.*).

"To promote devotion to the public interest it is necessary to destroy self-interest" (*Peking Review*, November 11, 1966). Thus moral

incentives—revolutionary zeal and enthusiasm—are counterposed to material incentives and considered mutually exclusive. Personal interests and public interests become diametric opposites. Rising living standards dull "revolutionary ardor," while self-abnegation and poverty breed the "true revolutionary spirit."

Communism: A Society of Abundance

It is well known that Marxism from its very beginning rejected the "communism of scarcity" as the goal of the socialist revolution. In contrast to the far distant past when man, still victim of the little known forces of nature, worked in common and equally shared the scarce food supply as the only way to survival, Marx and Engels foresaw a society of abundance, in which man not only dominates nature and makes it serve fully the needs of man, but where man at last controls his own destiny.

Already in 1844, several years before the appearance of the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx critically examined what he characterized as that "crude and thoughtless communism." He said that it not only negated "the personality of man in every sphere," but rejected "the entire world of culture and civilization" to advocate a "levelling-down" and "the regression to the unnatural simplicity of the poor and undemanding man . . ." (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, International Publishers, New York, 1965, pp. 133-134.)

Communism is incompatible with the ascetism of the early religious communities or the levelling of people's needs of the utopian socialist communities in the 19th century. Marx and Engels did not conjure up a utopia in forecasting the society that would inevitably replace capitalism. Their generalizations—drawn from a precise scientific study of the laws of capitalist development—emphasized that the new society would eliminate the exploitation of man by man, lead to the disappearance of classes, and vastly expand the productive forces created by capitalism to guarantee the satisfaction of all material and cultural wants and ensure the full and all-round development of each member of society. Thus, Engels points this out when he writes (*Anti-Duhring*, International Publishers, New York, 1966, p. 320):

> . . . Its place must be taken by an organization of production in which, on the one hand, no individual can put on to other persons his share in productive labor, this natural condition of human existence; and in which on the other hand, productive labor, instead of being a means to the subjection of men, will become a means to their emancipation, by giving each individual the opportunity to develop and exercise all his faculties, physical and mental, in all

directions; in which, therefore, productive labor will become a pleasure instead of a burden.

Lenin, likewise, as early as 1902, in his critical comments on the draft program of the Russian Social Democratic Party (*Collective Works,* Volume 6, p. 54), emphasized that planned socialist production would be organized "not merely to satisfy the needs of its members, but with the object of ensuring *full* well-being and free *all-round* development for *all* the members of society" (Lenin's emphasis).

Marxist theory has stressed, and the experience of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries fully confirms, that reliance on revolutionary enthusiasm alone, without improvement in the material conditions of the working people, can result in increased production for short periods of time, but in the long run this cannot be maintained, and a slowdown in economic growth must inevitably ensue.

The elimination of the private ownership in the means of production has made it possible for the Soviet Union not only to overcome the age-old backwardness of its economy—inherited from tsarism—but to achieve higher growth rates than those of the most advanced capitalist nations. From 1929 to 1966, Soviet industrial production grew at an average annual rate of 11.1 per cent as compared with 4 per cent for the United States and 2.5 per cent for Britain and France. (See "Theses of Central Committee of the CPSU on the Fiftieth Anniversary.")

These high rates of economic growth, however, were not achieved automatically. Building socialism, especially in an economically backward country, was a difficult and complex task requiring the creative participation of the working people over a long period of time, and at great human sacrifice. Only a sound economic policy, which skillfully combined the self-interests of the worker and the collective farmer with the interests of the nation, could finally ensure a steady, uninterrupted rise in production with a simultaneous improvement in the standard of living of the population as a whole.

New Work Principles Operate in Soviet Society

But, one may well ask, why cannot people's requirements be fully met once a socialist society is established? Marx in his *Critique of the Gotha Program* provides the key to an understanding of the objective conditions that prevail in the first or lower stage of communist society, which makes this unrealizable. Thus, he states:

> What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has developed on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *emerges* from capitalist society, which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges. Accordingly, the individual producer receives back from society—after the deductions have been made [for the social fund]—exactly what he gives to it. What he has given to it is his individual quantum of labor. . . .
>
> In a higher phase of Communist society, after the enslaving insubordination of the individual to the division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis betwen mental and physical labor has vanished; after labor has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of cooperative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability to each according to his needs!

So long as the productive forces of society have not yet reached the level necessary to produce an abundance of material values; so long as substantial differences continue to exist between skilled and unskilled, heavy and light, mental and physical labor, and between the industrial worker and the collective farmer; and so long as the people have not been accustomed to look upon work as the prime condition of human existence—society must observe the strictest control of the measure of work and the measure of consumption. This Lenin underscored, time and time again, in his polemics against all those who, once state power was in the hands of the workers, advocated the equal distribution of goods in the first years following the October Revolution.

However, the new workers' state does put into practice entirely new principles to guide the planned development of the socialist economy. These are codified in the Soviet Constitution adopted in 1936:

> Article 12: In the U.S.S.R. work is the obligation and honorable duty of every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." In the U.S.S.R. the principle of socialism is realized: "From each according to his ability, to each according to the work performed."
>
> Article 118: Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to work, i.e., the right to guaranteed employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality. . . .
>
> Article 119: Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to rest and leisure. . . .

Article 120: Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness or loss of capacity to work. . . .

Article 121: Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to education.

Embodied in these provisions of the Soviet Constitution are the fundamental changes that have taken place in the position of the working people with the establishment of socialist production relations. The principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat" obligates all able-bodied members of society to participate in socially useful work. Work becomes more than just a means of earning a living, it becomes the duty of every citizen, the only legitimate source of subsistence, determining the individuals's status in society.

Above all, this principle signifies the end of the exploitation of man by man. No longer does the surplus product go to maintain the exploiting classes of capitalists and landowners, for this minority, which formerly lived at the expense of the labor of the majority, has been eliminated for all time. Furthermore, this principle becomes an important educational and ethical lever to combat all vestiges of parasitic inclination—of living at the expense of society without giving anything in return—by employing subterranean methods to exploit socialist property for personal aggrandizement. Indeed, for the first time in the history of mankind, work finally becomes universal.

Significance of Material Incentives

The principle: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work," which assures payment to the worker in accordance with work performed, is the most direct manifestation of material incentives operating in socialist society. No longer does the share the worker receives depend on the value of his labor power. It now depends entirely on the results of his work. While there is equal pay for equal work, there is unequal pay for unequal work. Since skilled work is work of a higher quality and is more productive than unskilled work, it pays more. Given unequal skills heavier work is paid more than lighter work to compensate for greater expenditure of energy.

In the early five-year plans, when primary emphasis was placed on the development of the key branches of the economy, then non-existent—industries which produce the means of production—higher wages were fixed for workers in such industries. Similarly, in the development of new economic regions—in Siberia, the Far East, the Far North, etc.—special inducement in the form of higher remuneration are given to workers who resettle in these communities and help

build up these regions, so vital to the expanding economic life of the country.

It is not inconsequential that the level of wages—determined by the state to guarantee that equal pay for equal work is uniformly in effect throughout the entire economy—is largely based on the piece work system. Piece work, with payment for each unit of output at the same rate in the given type of work, allows the strictest control of the worker's output. Here piece work does not mean exhaustive speedup as is the situation under capitalism. Rather, it makes possible the fullest, rational use of equipment, of raw materials and of working time and the heightening of labor dicipline. At the same time this guarantees maximum interest of the producer in the results of his work. The bonus system, suplementing the wage rate—already introduced in 1918—is variously applied for output above the standard quota, for economy of fuel and raw materials, for the reduction of spoilage, for output of higher grade products, etc., etc.

Payment in accord with the quantity and quality of work means, however, that inequality in income and, consequently, differences in standards of living among the people, continue to exist in Soviet society. The level of economic development does not yet make possible the elimination of this inequality in distribution. Lenin in *States and Revolution,* developing the theses contained in the *Critique of the Gotha Program,* casts light on the causes for this inequality:

> The first phase of communism, therefore, cannot yet provide justice and equality; difference, and unjust difference, in wealth will still persist, but the *exploitation* of man by man will have become impossible because it will be impossible to seize the means of production—the factories, machines, land, etc—and make them private property. . . . Marx shows the *course of development* of communist society, which is *compelled* to abolish at first *only* the *"injustice" of the means of production seized by individuals, and* which is *unable* at once to eliminate the other injustice, which consists in the distribution of consumer goods "according to the amount of labor performed" (and not according to needs) (*Collected Works,* Volume 25, p. 466).
>
> This is a "defect," says Marx, but it is unavoidable in the first phase of communism; for if we are not to indulge in utopianism, we must not think that having overthrown capitalism people will at once learn to work for society *without any standard of right.* Besides, the abolition of capitalism *does not immediately create* the economic prerequisites for such a change (*ibid.,* p. 467).

Actually, a levelling of wage payments would lead to an unjust

distribution—for the good worker and the shirker would receive equal payment. What incentive would there be then to learn how to work better, to work to the maximum of one's abilities. At the same time such levelling would quickly result in the exhaustion of the accumulated stocks of commodities, hinder extended reproduction and halt the uninterrupted expansion of production. Without an abundance of goods, it would at best introduce a system of rationing.

The objective of the principle of material incentives is not to make permanent existing differences in income. On the contrary, the objective is to create conditions for a continuous narrowing of the sphere of inequality until true equality can reign. Payment according to the quantity and quality of work is a powerful incentive to all workers to improve their skills and technical knowledge, to strive to increase labor productivity, and to catch up with the status of the more advanced workers. Limitless opportunities exist for the workers and collective farmers to develop their abilities, not only in the institutions of higher learning, but in schools and classes conducted at the enterprises and collective farms, through correspondence courses, and on-the-job retraining. Every year, millions of working people take advantage of these opportunities to enhance their technical know-how and skills.

Furthermore, since the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956, serious attention is being given to reducing wage disparities by systematically raising the wages of the lower-paid categories. In the past few years alone, some 20 million employed in the service industries received a substantial wage increase in conformity with the resolution to narrow the gap between the lower-paid and higher-paid categories. To eliminate the differential between the worker and the collective farmer special provisions have been enacted to assure a greater increase in the incomes of collective farmers each year than will be true for the workers in industry, office and service.

A series of new measures has just been adopted by the USSR Council of Ministers, to go into effect on January 1, 1968, to increase minimum wages (in some instances by as much as 50 per cent); to eliminate, or further reduce, taxes on the lower incomes; to increase pensions and sick benefits, etc. The rise in the general educational, cultural and technical level of the population and the economic successes in industry and agriculture, while not yet sufficiently high to eliminate all wage differentials, are the foundations for narrowing the gap in the incomes received by the various sections of the population.

Of historic significance—not unassociated with the rising standard of living of the Soviet peoples—is that abject poverty which prevails

in so much of our world and the scourge of unemployment has been abolished once and for all. Nor can we ignore the fact that the principle of payment according to the quantity and quality of work is implemented by constantly expanding benefits that accrue to each citizen from the public consumption fund, without regard to his skill or lack of it.

Therefore, under socialism there is an objective coincidence of the personal and public interest. The consistent growth in social productivity is accompanied by a steady improvement in the material conditions of life of the people. Through the correct application of the principle of material incentives the most effective link is established between personal self-interest and social progress. That does not as yet mean that everybody automatically accepts the social interest as his own personal interest. But in the process of production the worker begins to realize that if he works according to his ability he will bring maximum benefit to himself and to society at the same time, for a rise in labor productivity means a better life for himself and his family while increasing the wealth of society as a whole. In this way it becomes evident to increasing sections of the working population that personal and public interests are mutually interdependent and not contradictory.

That is why, too, the principle of material incentives is not just an economic lever to accelerate economic growth, but serves as an important ideological lever to overcome manifestations of the survivals of capitalism that still persist and to create a new, socialist attitude to labor.

Growth of Moral Incentives

It is alien to Marxism, therefore, to counterpose material incentives to moral incentives. Of course, in the process of transforming socialist labor into communist labor, moral incentives will rise in importance and finally replace material incentives, just as the guiding principle of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work" will give way to the guiding principle of communism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." Work as a means of livelihood will be replaced by work for the common good—without regard to compensation—as the primary foundation for the members of a communist society.

Despite the bourgeois slander that human nature cannot be altered, despite the ranting of the Maoists that material incentives breed "individualism and selfishness," the Soviet experience proves that a communist attitude to work can and does arise within the framework of

paid work based on material incentives. It is not contrary to socialist morality for individuals to strive for a better, fuller and more cultured life. What is incompatible with socialist morality is the desire to obtain a larger share of goods than one's labor warrants, or to attempt to live well without any labor at all. To work both for oneself and for others reflects already the rise of a new consciousness, a new attitude toward labor—in which moral incentives to work for the good of society begin to take the upper hand.

At the very dawn of Soviet society, when the people had not even begun to overcome the ravages of World War I, and in the midst of the civil war, the first expressions of a conscientious attitude to work came to the surface. On May 10, 1919, the workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway organized the first "subbotnik," volunteering a day's labor without pay. In his "A Great Beginning" (*Collective Works*, Volume 29) Lenin paid eloquent tribute to the heroism of these workers and discussed the significance of this "shoot of communism" to which they gave birth:

> The "communist subbotniks" are so important because they were initiated by workers who were by no means placed in exceptionally good conditions, by workers of various specialities, and some with no speciality at all, just unskilled laborers, who are living under *ordinary*, i.e., exceedingly hard, conditions. . . . They are constantly underfed, and now, before the new harvest is gathered, with the general worsening of the food situation, they are actually starving. And yet these starving workers, surrounded by the malicious counter-revolutionary agitation of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, are organizing "communist subbotniks," working overtime *without any pay*, and achieving *an enormous increase in the productivity of labor* in spite of the fact that they are weary, tormented, and exhausted by malnutrition. Is this not supreme heroism? Is this not the beginning of a change of momentous significance? (Pp. 426-27.)

The "communist subbotniks" were precursors of the wave of socialist competition during the five-year plans prior to World War II, widely known as the Stakhanovite movement. Shock brigaders—workers, engineers, technicians, scientists and collective farm workers—set out to improve methods of work; to help in the mastery of the new technique being introduced in the factories and on the land; to raise labor productivity by setting examples of increased production, without additional exertion, and the effective utilization of the new instruments of production; to spread the understanding that by working well the worker can improve his own lot and that of society at the same time.

At present some 32 million men and women are taking part in a rapidly expanding movement of socialist emulation through the establishment of shock brigades and communist labor teams. These are characterized especially by the determination to set the new norms for communist labor by working more productively to raise the living standards of all Soviet people—that is working for the common good. They display a new spirit of collectivism and comradely assistance to those lagging behind in order to achieve overall progress. At the same time they seek to give examples of the communist man of the future by striving to become educated, cultured, highly skilled and politically conscious advanced elements of present-day society.

That this movement is inspired by high moral incentives is testified to by a poll carried through by sociologists in May 1966 of some 15,000 young men and women in 15 regions, territories and republics. Of these, 84.5 per cent said the social usefulness of their work came first, and only 2.6 per cent said "any work is all right if it pays well."

The attitude to work for the benefit of society is seen also in the millions of worker-inventors—more than six million belong to the Society of Inventors and Rationalizers and to other scientific and technical societies—who systematically strive to improve technology by new innovations which save society billions of rubles every year.

* * *

It is wishful thinking to hold that there is a growing section of the better-paid strata of the workers and intellectuals in the Soviet Union who are concerned only with enriching their own personal existence at the expense of other sectors of the population. Today, 50 years after the October Revolution, the shoots of communism are expanding, heralding the day when all-round mechanization will accelerate the growth of the productive forces to create abundance; when differences between physical and mental labor will all but disappear; when the disparities of life in the countryside and the city will be eliminated; when work will have become a habit, recognized as the necessary condition for human existence; when the satisfaction of the requirements of the members of society, without payment, will become the one and only form of distribution.

GEORGE SHAW WHEELER

Competition Between Capitalism and Socialism

The fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution invites us to review in proper perspective the competition between capitalism and socialism.

The attempt to found socialism in Russia began under such highly unfavorable conditions that very few persons, aside from its own revolutionary leaders, thought that it had any chance of success. The more "expert" the opinion the more certain it was that too many factors would be unfavorable: the terrible destruction and disruption in the wake of the loss of the War, the primitive agriculture and generally undeveloped industry and transport, the vast area mainly too cold or too dry for easy development, and, most serious, a population mainly peasant and illiterate and hampered by a multitude of languages, religious and social customs.

On top of this was the determination of the imperialist powers to take no chances, to strangle the infant socialism in its cradle. The outside interventions were the most massive and persistent that the combined capitalist powers could muster. And when these failed, in the periods of comparative peace, there followed boycotts and all of the tricks of sabotage and subversion that intelligent and unscrupulous minds could devise.

After 1945 capitalism in developed countries moved ahead in productive power at a tempo never before experienced. Yet today the Soviet Union has surpassed all of the capitalist powers but one and now has such economic and military strength that it cannot be defeated.

There are constant attempts to belittle these accomplishments of the Soviet Union and, since World War II, of the newer socialist countries. Some charlatans have even argued that Russia under capitalism and the Czar would have made as much progress! They forget that the ruins left by the Czar were not accidental, but a result of inherent capitalist processes. They refuse to examine the reasons that make it possible for a socialist economy, from its internal resources, to develop Siberia, while the United States, with its huge surpluses of capital to invest, fails to develop Alaska—an area six times the size of Great Britain and with a population (in large part military)

only one-fourth that of Prague. If we are to understand the major conflict today, the world-wide competition between capitalism and socialism, we must dig out the actual economic and other factors of the socialist economies and analyze, as rationally and scientifically as possible, the fundamental differences and similarities between socialism and capitalism.

Most fundamental, of course, was that the advance of technology was making production increasingly social in character—as the means of production advanced large-scale production and monopoly became increasingly profitable. With monopoly the inherent contradictions of capitalism became more acute, even in Russia where industry was concentrated, though not generally in an advanced stage. But it took an advance in philosophy, Marxist dialectical materialism, to permit an understanding of these developments. This philosophy which permitted a scientific analysis of capitalism, its sources of strength and weaknesses, led Marx and other founders of scientific socialism to such concepts as the class struggle as a moving force of change and to the necessity of the dictatorship of the working class until capitalism was liquidated and society could advance to a higher stage. The course charted by Lenin and his followers was both visionary and practical.

Planning and Growth

On the practical side, and intimately related to the social ownership of the means of production which facilitates it, was the pioneering effort at the centralized planning and administration of the economy. The concept of central control of investment and other economic activity in the interest of society and through an economic plan was a major breakthrough in economic thinking. It enabled society to mobilize and use its resources with much greater speed than had been possible under capitalism. Through the over-all plan for the economy it was possible to determine, at least approximately, the total volume of investment, to consider the competing demands for these investment funds, and to give priority treatment to those projects which are judged to be most important. Similarly, essential consumption could be protected, luxury consumption cut down or even ruled out.

These were often drastic decisions, yet exactly the kind of arbitrary management or "dictatorship" necessary to protect the infant socialism and promote its maximum growth under conditions of capitalist encirclement. We must skip over the extremely complex problems of what are appropriate measures of growth. Many learned books have been written which proved that the Soviet data on output, for example of wheat, were exaggerated in the past. But the same experts

were quite contented with the fact that the "Gross National Product" in the capitalist countries includes many such items as increasing costs of advertising for cigarettes and liquor. It is sufficient for our purposes to know that the comparisons are not precise, but do reflect general long-term trends. Note again that these long-term data are unfavorable to the Soviet Union since they do not allow for war losses which were much greater in the Soviet Union than in other countries, with the possible exception of West Germany—and there the rate of growth was stimulated by huge investments from the United States.

With all of these facts in the background, let us examine some data relating to physical output of some major products, as seen in the following table. In such a key item as electric power Czarist Russia produced only 17 per cent as much in 1913 as the *combined* total of Britain, West Germany and France. By 1966 the Soviet Union was producing 112 per cent of the total electricity produced in those three countries.

U.S.S.R. Output in Percentages of Total for Great Britain West Germany* and France

	1913	1966
Electric power	17	112
Coal	7	135
Iron	16	123
Steel	17	122
Cement	15	104
Sulphuric acid	4	93
Cotton Fabrics	18	196
Sugar	88	193

This was a period in which West European capitalism was increasing its output at a high rate, particularly after World War II, yet in many important items the Soviet Union jumped from a fraction of the output of the leading capitalist countries to far greater totals. It is an unintended compliment to socialism that comparisons between capitalism and socialism are usually made with the most advanced capitalist economy, the United States, as the base for capitalist standards of output. During the period of central economic planning from 1929 to 1966 Soviet industrial production grew (despite war losses) at the average annual rate of 11.1 per cent—an almost incredible figure. This period included the "great depression" of the capitalist world, offset for the United States by the extraordinary inflationary growth of World War II and the post-war period. Yet the average rate of growth in U.S. industrial output was "only" about 4 per cent, itself an extraordinary accomplishment for a mature economy. The lead of the United States is still impressive in terms of productivity per worker: 2.5 times that of the Soviet Union in 1965. But in 1913 productivity of workers in the United States had been *nine* times higher than for Russian workers! In the last half century productivity per worker in the Soviet Union has increased fivefold. (*World Marxist Review*, No. 4, April 1967.)

*The 1913 figure is for the whole of Germany. *New Times*, No. 26, 1967.

Soviet agriculture has been the most critical part of the economy. In a 1967 book* Naum Jasny, a "dean" of these critics, charged Soviet agriculture with an "inability to solve even the simplest tasks." The following table indicates that some "simple" problems must have been solved. In reading the table remember that although 1966 was an unusually good crop year it is also a fact that when socialist construction began farm output in the Soviet Union was *only half* the 1913 level. (Theses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, *New Times*, No. 27, 1967, p. 40.)

Agricultural Output in Russia and the Soviet Union** (in millions of tons)

	1913	1966
Total grain harvest	86.0	170.8
Wheat	26.3	100.4
Cotton	0.74	5.98
Sugar beet	11.3	73.8
Meat	5.3	10.8
Milk	29.4	75.8
Eggs (000 million)	11.9	31.6

Judged by pre-war standards, this would be a record of great success. But the Soviet people are quite right in being critical of their agriculture. With the application of modern technology and science and with improved methods of management, socialist agriculture could (and will) produce much more per worker, per hectare and per animal. We will return to this problem after we glance at a few indicators of advance of the general economy. From these data we can see that agriculture has indeed lagged behind.

* *Soviet and East European Agriculture*, J. F. Karcz, ed., p. 219.
** *New Times*, No. 26, p. 13.

Basic Indicators of Soviet Development*
(1913 = 1)

	1913	1940	1965
Gross social product	x	1	5.7
National income	1	5.3	32
Basic production facilities	1	3.0	15.2
Gross industrial output	1	7.7	61
Gross agricultural output	1	1.4	2.5
Capital investment (1928 = 1)		6.5	58.1

These are the results of centrally directed planning with tremendous increases in capital investment, a favoring of industrial and largely extensive development, with industrial output in 1965 61 times that of 1913. In 1913 Russia produced about 4 per cent of the world's industrial output; by 1965 it was 20 percent of the much greater total. An important feature of this rapid growth was that it was greatest in the previously neglected areas, in Siberia and in the republics of the south-east. These areas are rich in resources, but the investments from the center are not just for the "colonial" extraction of raw materials. Instead, there is a rounded development of heavy industry and manufactures for the benefit of the local area as well as for a high total social return.

This kind of socialist development of areas that have difficulty in financing their own expansion is found in other socialist countries with centralized control of investments. An example is the aid the Czech lands have given in the development of Slovakia. This type of planning has the advantage of unifying the economy and income levels in a country. Failure to attain these results through decentralized planning is one reason why Yugoslavia is now turning toward more centralized controls of infrastructure investment. A capitalist society, even a rich one like the United States, cannot make with private investments a sufficient rate of profit on all types of projects to encourage development on a socially balanced basis: the automobile industry gets a disproportionate share of investments, while housing in the city centers is neglected; the Eastern part of the United States becomes a megalopolis, Alaska remains practically uninhabited.

New Technology and New Management

A characteristic of advanced economies is that science, and the new technology that flows from it, have become an integral part of

* *World Marxist Review*, No. 3, 1967, p. 26.

the production process. Advances in productivity now depend primarily upon new technology, including technology of information processing which permits more efficient methods of management. For this reason the comparative ability of socialism and capitalism to advance and apply science has become a decisive factor in the competition between the two systems.

Science determines not only the processes of production, it determines also what are economically available resources, how they can be used, and even how they can be found. Coal, for example becomes with scientific advances in technology not just a source of heat and power but also the basis of a widely differentiated chemical industry. Most of the fuel resources of the Soviet Union (some 87 per cent) lie east of the Ural Mountains while the main population centers lie in its west. The Donets basin, rich by some standards, is dwarfed by many of the eastern deposits. The Kuzbas coal reserves are estimated at 200,000 million tons. In the Krasnoyarsk territory one lignite bed stretches for nearly 400 miles along the Trans-Siberian railroad and in places is 180 feet thick with only a thin overburden so that it can be mined with open-pit methods at costs of less than half a rouble per ton. Soviet science has solved the problems of transmission of electricity by ultra-high voltage direct current (750 kv to 1,000 kv) so that, with electric power generated at the mines at a cost of 0.12 to 0.15 kopeks per kwh, electric power can be delivered to the Central region at only half the cost of power generated by Donets coal.

Similarly, advanced geophysical science led to the discovery of the Tyumyen natural gas and oil field in Western Siberia. Transmitted to the Central region in pipelines, this gas will cost about half as much as sub-Moscow coal. Substitution of gas for coal is planned to take place at an urgent rate because it will save, with one pipeline, about 150 million roubles a year for the power industry. Consumers will get a more convenient fuel, one which pollutes the air much less, and save about 1,500 million rubles a year. (*Pravda*, January 16, 1967 and *Rabochaya Gazeta*, March 28, 1967.)

This advance of Soviet science and applied technology is of great benefit not only to citizens of the Soviet Union, but also a major contribution to the industries and standards of living of other socialist countries. As Siberian gas and oil flows westward to the Central regions, oil and gas from the Volga basin flow west by pipeline, rail and tanker to Poland, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Cuba and Hungary. There it makes possible a transformation and development of the chemical industries, including the production of fertilizers essential for the intensification of agriculture. Those who

charge the Soviet Union with economic colonization of the smaller socialist countries should spend some thought on these vital flows of raw materials to them—a very untypical transaction for colonizers!

Application of Science

Capitalism and socialism have quite different types of problems in the development and use of science. Capitalism, despite the tendencies of some monopolies to hold back on the introduction of some types of technology and some new products, is generally characterized by enough competition that profits can be increased by the rapid introduction of new products and new technology. As world competition has increased in the post-war period, new technology became essential both to lower costs per unit of product and to produce new kinds of products, or to improve the quality of old ones. Failure to adopt new technology often resulted in loss of markets, loss of profits and even bankruptcy.

At the same time that capitalism, as in the United States, was leading in introducing new technology, the corporations were reluctant to invest in science itself, in which the prospects of profit were much more uncertain. In the period before World War II the development of science was regarded as a function of the universities. Then, as science became more social and more costly, the government increasingly financed, and in some cases carried out, scientific research and development. Now we find whole areas of scientific research in which private enterprise does not function: it may be barred for social reasons, as in nuclear research; or it may be too costly and risky for even the largest corporations, as in the case of supersonic airplanes; or it may be that there is no feasible way to make a profit, as in the case of elimination of pollution of the air or water. In any event, science has become so social in character that it is primarily a non-profit function, and this represents both a significant modification of capitalism, and a demonstration of the ability of capitalism to make adaptations essential for its continued survival.

In contrast, the social ownership of the means of production and the social planning of production itself, is fully compatible with the development of science. This starts with the social concern for education to the maximum level that the individual is capable of attaining—with no economic or racial barriers to higher education. Planning enables society to concentrate great effort on particular projects regarded as having high social priority. The success of socialist science has been demonstrated in many fields ranging from astrophysics to microbiology.

But this is not the whole story. In some fields there has been a serious lag in the development and application of science and its related technology. These shortcomings are *not* inherent in socialism. But it may be correct to say that they were inherent in the highly centralized and directive form of management which was first adopted and which has prevailed up to this time. The planners had no objective records of costs and values and so had no basis for rational evaluation of competing demands for research funds. Moreover, there was a departure from scientific methods in favor of bureaucratic dictation and control of both research itself and of its application in new methods and technology.

In agriculture, for example, Lysenko and his followers were allowed to silence scientists with competing ideas; experimental testing of theories was neglected and often the erroneous dictates were adopted in other socialist countries, again without testing as to results in different climates and otherwise different conditions. Even when real science produced correct conclusions in regard to such things as the advantages of maize (corn) under certain conditions, an overcentralized concept of management and bad methods of management distorted the correct original idea into ordering each farm to produce a given number of hectares of maize even though local climate and soils differed, and lack of proper machinery, fertilizers and pesticides made full success a practical impossibility in some areas. The central administrations confused hopes with reality, gave orders in regard to agriculture which were unrealistic, and suffered from repeated failures to fulfil the plans. Often the blame was placed on the local cooperatives or state farms, when the real causes were the lack of appropriate incentive, inadequate machinery, or other factors that made it impossible to apply modern science and technology.

In contrast, in the capitalist countries, with socially developed science available free to farmers, but *not* compulsory, the problem was not so much the lack of incentive to use technology, or even lack of knowledge, but lack of capital resources on the part of small farmers and inability to reduce costs per unit on small farms even if they happened to have funds to invest in machinery and good seed, animals, fertilizers and pesticides. The competition among farmers was anarchic and brutal—millions of those who could not improve their productivity were forced out of farming, often after long periods of bitter poverty. Under this kind of intense pressure, productivity in agriculture in the United States has advanced even faster than in industry. By 1966 output per man-hour was more than three times as high as it had been in 1947. (*Economic Report of the President,* 1967, p. 249.)

The Role of Incentives

How can socialism attain for agriculture (and the rest of the economy) a high rate of application of science and new technology without the brutal pressures om capitalism; without its bankruptcies of small farmers and without the whip of unemployment? Here we come to the main and the most difficult problems of socialism: incentives which stimulate the most effective and increasingly productive use of all resources, labor power as well as materials and fixed assets, and methods of management which protect the long-term social interest, yet continuously test values in the market and respond promptly to changes in demand.

Socialism must rely heavily on moral incentives and social motivation. All Marxists look forward to the time when such incentives will become the dominant motive for work. At the same time it is unrealistic and completely un-Marxist to expect that moral incentives could survive and develop in the face of countervailing economic motivations. When economic rewards are based on the quantitative fulfilment of the plan, the managers of enterprises lose interest in efficiency and cost reduction. In fact, if they hoarded labor and wasted plant capacity and materials, they were more certain to fulfill the plan, since its fulfilment was measured by volume of production, not in terms of socially useful and saleable units but of costs.

Now, most of the socialist countries are moving toward a system in which economic rewards (including part of wages) are based on sales. This means that the enterprises will be interested in satisfying consumer demand with quality products and in cutting costs so that the margin of returns above costs will be higher, and for that reason the funds for distribution within the enterprise also higher. Incentives will then be in line with social interest in lower costs and steadily improving quality of products. The new system requires: 1) a rational price structure—one responsive to both costs and demand, and 2) a management which uses economic incentives based on volume and quality of socially useful products. That can be achieved only by intensive investments in new technology, by more efficient use of all resources.

The Soviet Union still has resources for extensive development of some industries, but it has reached a stage in agriculture in which much higher rates of return can be attained by intensive development: better management, better machinery, better animals and seed, more irrigation, more fertilizers, etc. These problems are much more complex than most people realize, and in agriculture it is particularly

hard to get the right mixture of centralization and decentralization in management. This is because local conditions vary so much that scientific agriculture must be flexible, able to make responsible decisions locally—and to change them in some cases on an hour's notice, if for example, the weather changes. Too much centralized direction robs the farmers of their essential initiative and zeal, too little can result in social waste.

Change in Methods of Administration

One essential, and this applies to industry generally as well as agriculture, is to change some of the methods of administration and management. Centralized planning is necessary to protect social interests (all advanced capitalist economies are groping in this direction, blinded and thwarted by interests of private property) and becomes more necessary as technology becomes more complex and interrelated. But that does not mean that the methods of centralized management that were first evolved are the only form. In fact, it is clear, from experience in all advanced socialist countries, that the directive form of centralized planning and management, after a period of high-rate advance, begins to generate wastes and contradictions which require a shift toward decentralization of decision-making. This does *not* mean decentralization of *all* decision-making and management, but it does mean more than a superficial gesture at redistribution of power.

Only the decisions essential to attain social goals should be made at the center, and in general decisions should be made at as low a point on the economic structure as possible. This has the virtue of democratizing the decision-making and, in that process, sustaining the interest of those involved in production. It reduces alienation to a minimum. Long ago (1776) Adam Smith pointed to the advantages of the market in testing and making production decisions. In the Stalin era it was assumed that the operations of the market were incompatible with socialist planning. Now it is beginning to be realized by the capitalists, on the one side, that the development of monopoly has introduced factors in the market which require government intervention to keep the economy from crisis. This still shocks some proponents of *laissez-faire*. On the other side, socialist economists have been slow to realize that the market was not just an institution of the capitalists, but could very well *supplement* planning—in fact has become indispensable to it in advanced and complex economies. Sales in the market are the only way of effectively realizing value, of testing both producers' and consumers' demand.

It will require a great deal of experimentation to find out the most

effective forms for this use of the market in a planned socialist economy. But now a healthy discussion of these problems is going on in the Soviet Union and most other socialist countries. Many types of change are being tried out, not in the spirit of abandoning socialism as the proponents of the *status quo* argue, but with the purpose of realizing more of the inherent advantages of socialism. Socialism is young and may take different roads to its economic and social goals and still retain the essential features of socialism—public ownership, planning and management of the economy to attain the greatest possible social advantage.

This certainly does not mean repeating the capitalist pattern of production of consumer commodities, much less does it mean imitating its culture. We must judge the success of an economy in large part by its ability to provide a high standard of judgment of each component of consumption. Further, it is not just the total amount of commodities or services which is important, but also their contribution. One of the satisfactions of socialist medical care, for example, is the knowledge that it is available to all of one's neighbors on the same bassis as to one's self. The same is true of education—an essential element in all democracy and increasingly important in employment opportunities. Security, which socialism provides in much greater degree than capitalism, does have its costs, particularly when it curbs competition in many forms. But the insecurity which is one of the main driving forces of capitalism also cannot be left out of the balance sheet of the two systems. For the workers one of the main forms of insecurity is unemployment, and from unemployment flows a whole chain of closely linked problems: poverty, rats and riots, racial discrimination, alienation from society, crime and fear.

Finally, and in this thermonuclear age probably the most important, an economy must be judged by its compatibility with peace. Socialism, and the Soviet Union in particular, passes this test. But if some members of an economy, as they do under capitalism, can profit from war, and therefore excuse and promote it at the expense of the rest of society, and even at the cost of destruction of other economies and other peoples—then, this too, must be weighed in the balance. If wars of aggression are one of its main products, the system must be condemned—completely and finally.

PHILIP S. FONER

U.S. Radicals Hail October Revolution*

The formation of the first Socialist government thrilled and inspired the American radicals. Subjected to unprecedented harassment because of their anti-war stand especially after the United States entered the war in April 1917, many of the radicals were becoming discouraged as to their ability to continue activity. Now in backward Russia, symbol of oppression, there had occurred the most successful Socialist revolution the world had yet seen. Now, at long last, the champions of socialism could point to an example of success.

With but a few exceptions, almost all Socialist party members, officials and journals praised the Russians for what they had achieved, and expressed enthusiasm for the Bolsheviks. Three months after the October Revolution, the National Executive Committee of the Socialist party hailed the fact that "the revolution of the Russian Socialists threatens the thrones of Europe and makes the whole capitalist structure tremble." Commenting on the ability of the Bolsheviks to accomplish their revolution "with hunger stalking in their midst, without credit, without international recognition, and with a ruling caste intriguing to regain control," the NEC welcomed the Soviets' "message of proletarian revolution," and gloried "in their achievement and inevitable triumph."

These sentiments were voiced by almost every Socialist leader. Eugene V. Debs consistently praised the Bolsheviks from the beginning of the revolution, and expressed himself very clearly in 1919 when he announced that "from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet I am a Bolshevik, and proud of it." Morris Hillquit, in June 1918, saw "Russia "standing in the vanguard of democracy, in the vanguard of social progress, in the hands, all through from top to bottom, of the people themselves, of the working class, the peasants." Victor Berger, too, prased what the Bolsheviks had done in Russia. On the first anniversary of the revolution, the Milwaukee Socialist wrote that

*This brief excerpt is from the informative introduction to *The Bolshevik Revoluton,* Internatonal Publishers, 1967, containing a wealth of material reflecting the impact of the October Revolution on American radicals, liberals and labor. Paperback $2.85.

"the Russian people love the Soviets. They are the Soviets. Here is a government of the people and for the people in actual fact. Here is a political and industrial democracy." The Soviets' survival, "in the face of all attacks," proved that "it has satisfied its own people. It has fitted their immediate needs, it has maintained their interests, and they are with it.". . .

Although the wealthy Jews in the United States joined with others of their class in opposing the new Soviet government, none were more enthusiastic in welcoming the end of the rule of landlords and capitalists in Russia and its replacement by the rule of the workers and peasants than was the Jewish community. B. Charney Vladeck spoke for the mass of the Jewish people when he declared: "Life is strange: my body is in America. My heart and head and soul and life are in that great wonderful land, which was so cursed and which is now so blessed, the land of my youth and revived dreams—Russia." The Jewish Socialist Federation and Jewish unions are represented at every celebration greeting the Soviet republic. . . .

Negro Socialists joined their Jewish comrades in supporting the Bolshevik revolution. *The Messenger*, a Negro Socialist journal edited by A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen, ended a long editorial (May-June 1918) on "The Soviet" with the ringing declaration: "Long Live the Soviet." The *Crusader*, another Negro Socialist journal, praised the Russian revolution and declared (October 1919): "If to fight for one's rights is to be Bolshevist, then we are Bolshevists, and let them make the most of it." The Negro Socialist press devoted much space to Lenin's famous doctrine of "national self-determination" under which every nationality within Russia could be autonomous or, if it wished, enjoy independent political and cultural existence, and contrasted this with lynching and mob violence against Negroes in the United States. Writing in *The Messenger* (September 1919), W. A. Domingo, a Negro Socialist, asked: "Will Bolshevism accomplish the full freedom of Africa, colonies in which Negroes are the majority, and promote human tolerance and happiness in the United States by the eradication of such disgraceful occurrences as the Washington and Chicago race riots?" He replied:

> The answer is deducible from the analogy of Soviet Russia, a country in which dozens of racial and lingual types have settled their differences and found a common meeting ground, a country which no longer oppresses colonies, a country from which the lynch rope is now banished and in which racial tolerance and peace now exist.

BOOK REVIEWS

A. W. FONT

The Soviet Union Today

Two happy parents coddling a plump infant are depicted in a lithograph by Kathe Kollwitz which decorates the cover of *Half a Century of Socialism.** The relevance of this picture to the contents of the book is not instantly clear and I have concluded that the infant represents the Soviet Union—that very infant which Winston Churchill said should have been strangled in its grave.

But, as we all know, the baby was spared this fate and is now grown to full manhood. Just imagine—fifty years old! Here the stages of the human life span must be dropped. Fifty years is middle age in our lives. In the life of the first socialist state it is just a beginning.

The title of William J. Pomeroy's new paperback volume suggests that it is a history of the Soviet's first fifty years. Actually the subtitle better defines the contents: *Soviet Life in the Sixties.* This is what the book is really about, with glances backward and ahead to help us understand how it evolved and where it is going.

The author, who was born in the year before the October Revolution, tells us he has been a friend of the Soviet Union "for over thirty years." It was not until he undertook to prepare this book that he first visited the country. Like so many of us he had never seen the "living proof" of what he had "passionately supported in debate with others." But, he goes on to say, "I was sustained by this belief that the socialism put into practice there was the answer to the basic problems of mankind in this epoch."

Pomeroy's book appears to have been designed to answer some of the most frequently asked questions regarding the fundamental aspects of Soviet life as well as some of its more superficial features. Many are questions asked by friends, others by enemies. Some of the same questions are asked by both.

Marxists have always argued that human nature can be changed. Well, what about the people in the Soviet Union? Pomeroy quotes the Soviet writer Sergei Mihalkov: ". . . there is not a single volume, not a single film, not a single radio or television program containing a single word to inculcate in the growing generation a spirit of hatred of man, cynicism, or filthy ideas of racial

*William J. Pomeroy, *Half a Century of Socialism: Soviet Life in the Sixties,* International Publishers, New York, 1967. Paper, $1.25.

discrimination." And the author adds: "It is inevitable that this educational atmosphere would be reflected in the present generation."

There is, for example, the question whether this new generation —raised and nurtured in a truly humanist spirit—is being corrupted by the growing material well-being they enjoy. This may sound preposterous but it is seriously propounded both on the "Left" and on the Right (both quarters apparently believe that a good communist is a hungry communist).

Pomeroy discussed this question with many Soviet citizens and he summarizes their answers as follows: "What did the workers take power for unless it was to raise their living standards, their cultural opportunities, their use of the values they create . . . What have we been trying to do all these years, if it was not to make our life better? What is the use of having socialism if it isn't used to satisfy our wants and desires? . . ."

The USSR has gone through the phases of War Communism, the New Economic Policy, collectivization of agriculture, a series of five year plans for industrialization. Now it is undertakng a fundamental adjustment in its system of planned production, commonly called "economic reform." This raise questions, too. Does it mean the Soviet system is in a crisis which has led it to abandon a planned economy? (This is the tack of certain capitalist propagandists.) Does it mean that the Soviet Union is restoring capitalist relatons? (This is the charge of certain Chinese leaders.) Answering these questions furnishes Pomeroy with material for one of his most interesting and informative chapters, dealing with the intensifying of social producton.

How profound is democracy in the USSR? How real is the repudiation of Stalinism? A chapter on "The Growing Socialist Demoracy" treats with these questions. Pomeroy says: "Soviet democracy today is many-sided and can be seen operating not only in the formal sense . . . but in many aspects of ordinary life. Underlying this is the declaration made in the new Party program, that opposing classes have ceased to exist in the Soviet Union and that what prevails is a 'state of the whole people.' In other words, the dictatorship of the proletariat is no longer thought of as the instrument to suppress counter-revolutionary tendencies within the country, but as an instrument directed solely against enemies from outside."

Two ludicrous slanders of Soviet foreign policy are the Rightist charge that it constitutes Red Imperialism and the "Leftist" accusation that it represents the abandonment of the world socialist revolution. The false essense of these distortions are explicitly dealt with in the fifth chapter, fittingly subtitled "Internationalism as a National Interest." Soviet aid to underdeveloped countries, Soviet relations

with other sccialist nations, Soviet military assistance to democratic Vietnam—all this and much more are concisely explained within the scope of a dozen and a half pages.

Other questions occur. What about the youth? Every older generation down through the ages has shaken its head over the "problem" of the amazing young people who always seem to do things differently—and to do different things—than their parents did. In our country the varied doings of socially committed young people who are the militant backbone of the peace and civil rights movements, of the Hippies who have dropped out (so they think) of society, of the spreading youth gangs—these are subjects of much study and comment. And what about the USSR? Do the youth of that country perplex their elders? Do the elders perplex their youth? (After all, it is the elders who decreed that Moscow cafes must close at 11 P.M.!) In summarizing part of his discussions with Soviet young people Pomeroy writes:

> In their view, the "revolutionary romanticism" and the inspirational type of literature published by the Komsomol, the emotional loyalties to socialism that were encouraged, did not develop the higher kind of Communist required in present, or future, Sovet society.
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> These youth emphasized the need for the investigative spirit and for the completely scientific approach to all understandng. An emotional, or romantic, acceptance of Marxism, they felt, had contributed to the blindness that had enabled the phenomenon of Stalinism to go uncorrected for so long . . .

There is a chapter, too, on the cultural aspects of the present Soviet scene. Here again there are questions: Is there freedom of expression? What about socialist realism? And many more. A final chapter deals with the next big subject on the Soviet agenda—the transition from socialism to communism. And then there is finally the question: "Is there a 'Socialist Man'?" You'll have to read the book to get the answer.

Half a Century of Socialism is an excellent, highly compressed, survey of the Soviet scene. Within the scope of a small, readable volume, Pomeroy answers most of the questions that might be posed by a serious inquirer. Some will regret that he has neglected one or another area of special interest (the status of women, the national groups, especially developments in Central Asia, the matter of religion). But we have here a useful, inexpensive book which might well have been titled *The Soviet Union Today: Your Questions Answered.*