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The Worldwide Collapse of Bourgeois Democracy

by N. Syriotis

Parliamentary democracy has been the form of bourgeois rule in times of class peace — mainly limited to the industrially advanced sector of the world. It is now dying a final death because we have entered a stormy period of life-and-death class struggles. The world working class is increasingly engaged in confrontations that pose the dilemma: Socialism or Fascism? Parliaments have become irrelevant in present day struggles. Irrelevant for the ruling class because they are inadequate as control-mechanisms in today's crisis conditions. Irrelevant for the proletariat which is discovering parliaments to be the frauds that they always were.

Throughout the United States, Canada and the major West European countries, the trend in the last four years, but especially since August 1971, has been toward erosion of the power of parliaments and replacement of that power by strongman cabinets and administrations. The main source of strength of such governments is the fragmentation of traditional political parties, the destruction of the old alliances among special-interest groups and classes, the breakdown of society's former ideological cohesion. Western Europe's and North America's governments are all governments by default: no other coherent force has yet emerged from the cleavage of the fall of the Dollar Empire. With the exception of Italy, the challenger has not yet emerged.

If there seem to be superficial differences in this universal process throughout the advanced capitalist sector, it is only because the rule of the Dollar Empire's international financial bourgeoisie was mediated through different, national-specific, alliances with broader sectors of the population. No financial oligarchy, extraordinarily tiny as it is, can rule over the broad masses of working people and their social allies,

unless it first secures hegemony over an intermediate social layer — the petit bourgeoisie, its allies in the bureaucracy, the intelligensia etc. — that exercises hegemony over the working masses, thus maintaining a relatively short-lived social peace.

The arrangement is held together by the adhesive medium of an intricate network of patronage, accommodations to special interests, handouts, little bribes to little clientele, and other sorts of material concessions. The parliament is the market place where the horse trades are struck. The parties are the combinations where dealers accumulate their bargaining power. When the source dries up, they also dry up and degenerate.

The fact that peacetime capitalist rule was maintained in the USA on the basis of the labor-Democratic alliance, in France of the Gaullist alliance between bankers and petit-bourgeois, in Italy of the center-left coalition, etc., etc., in no way affects the universal fact that all of these arrangements have had to collapse for the same reason.

FRANCE

Ever since the betrayed 1968 general strike of France, it has become evident that capitalism could not afford to subsidize parliamentarism without courting immediate worldwide collapse. The secret was given away by de Gaulle's resignation.

To the horror of the huge, parasitic petit-bourgeois scum of France, the franc was devalued over the great man's political corpse. France's jealously guarded gates were opened up for full integration into the Common Market which would expand to include Great Britain. Gaullism, the alliance between the petit-bour-

geoisie and finance capital, once the social base of the moderate police state of the Fifth Republic, had come to an end. Pompidou's and Giscard d'Estaing's banker bosses had taken the irrevocable step and unceremoniously jettisoned the mediating link of the petit-bourgeois mass. They would now risk rule with a much narrower social base.

Jacques Chaban-Delmas, the ultra-right Defense Minister of the Algerian War, the champion of "colons," of old-time petty administrators and civil servants, darling of the solid provincial "citoyen" who invested in Government Overseas Territories bonds, was unceremoniously fired from the post of Premier on July 4, 1972. A mere week before his fall, he had received an overwhelming vote of confidence in the National Assembly: 368 in favor to 96 against. President Pompidou in dismissing the Premier had struck a calculated blow to the parliamentary fantasies of his former petit-bourgeois allies; he had also destroyed the last defense of their anti-Common Market resistance that was led by the old faithful Chaban-Delmas.

The great international trading and banking interests had no choice but to inaugurate a vicious policy of looting further not only the working class and peasantry but also their lesser brothers: Only in 1971 they had to finance an increase in fictitious world liquidity by 61% — from the equivalent of SDR 75 billion to SDR 121 billion. Finance Minister Giscard d'Estaing found a solution in the looting of the domestic market: he has established a discriminatory credit regime with lending rates for domestic trade and manufacturing about two percentage points higher than that available for export-import commerce and export-oriented industry. He has also been threatening to transfer the Banque de France's authority to make monetary policy to a "higher supranational body" (meaning himself in the EEC's name).

Georges Pompidou added the finishing touch:

"Dear Old France! Grande cuisine, the Folies Bergeres, gay Paris, haute couture and fine exports: cognac, champagne and even Bordeaux or Burgundy. That's all finished."

Squeezed between inflation, devaluation, dismal foreign markets and a crushing debt burden, the French middle class has been discovering that for them the Common Market means tighter credit and tighter belts.

EUROPE

In fact, this past October's Summit meeting of the expanded Common Market in Luxemburg was a moral victory for the international banking factions in the European governments. Italy's Minister of Treasury was joined by his German, British, Belgian, et al., colleagues in resolving to carry out a two-pronged of-

fensive of wage gouging and controlled bankruptcies of the capitalist small fry. The most distinguished feature of this international plan — which has already been put into effect — was that it was not ratified by any legislative body of any of the countries involved. The ministers further resolved to submit, IN THE FUTURE, to the authority of a pan-European parliament. It was not simply a victory for European unification — it was a move to undermine further the sagging authority of the PRESENTLY existing parliaments.

Considering the convalescent state of the victim, that resolution of Common Market ministers was no gesture of heroism:

West Germany's Bundestag had already, before the subsequent elections, been goose-stepped into deadlock and oblivion; the country was ruled by a set of emergency laws which, besides granting dictatorial powers to the Chancellor, had also created special police bodies to carry out measures of repression.

In Italy, of course, parliament's only act of sovereignty had been to endorse Andreotti's right-wing cabinet — one whose proclaimed main aim was to create an anti-parliamentarian "strong government." That government not only is doing its best to trample parliament under; it also continues to use the courts in its anti-labor law-and-order campaign while preparing to revive police laws from the Mussolini era.

Holland's and Belgium's regimes were already at the throes of crisis that subsequently ended in hopeless parliamentary deadlock. In Holland after an inconclusive election; in Belgium after another vicious brawl between Flemish and Walloon nationalists fighting for crumb-sized slices of a shrinking pie.

In short, Western Europe's post-war political machinery has been punctured through and through. Surveying the state of affairs inside the major political parties that had emerged with the Marshall Plan period, we are satisfied that no prospect of repair exists. Italy's Christian Democracy is no longer a party but an arena for faction fights; the Gaullist U.D.R. in France is torn between purges at the top and factional strife that had been postponed for after the federal elections; in the meantime, the oppositional Christian Democrats and Social Christians are desperately trying to keep head and feet together after their electoral defeat — a defeat which their leadership had to a large degree sought with cold calculation.

These are the parties that were built and nurtured with the close supervision, advice, funding and dictation of the United States; the parties that built the Dollar Empire. The Empire has now fallen, and so have the parties.

PHASE TWO AND THE WORKING CLASS

The destruction of parties and parliaments, itself a result of the worldwide capitalist crisis, has produced two different types of results. One is exemplified by the prevailing situation in Italy, France, the U.S.A., where the working class was unable to mount an effective resistance to Phase Two, is the emergence of the bonapartist TENDENCY, the drift toward government by clerks and cops. The other, limited mainly to Britain, is the paralysis of the government apparatus as a result of stiff working-class resistance and mass-strike mobilizations. Neither the one nor the other is stable. Their longevity will depend on the subjective mood of the working class: on how long it will take for the initial shock to wear off; on what strategies, what leaderships the working class will resolve on as soon as it comes to terms with the obvious fact that the old, familiar politics is gone forever.

Bonapartism, after all, is merely what is visible on the surface. The important thing hidden beneath is the bankruptcy of "peace-time" working-class organizations; the bankruptcy of their alliances; the destruction of the entire political environment on which their function depended. The case of the last U.S.A. election is particularly instructive. The American worker who cast a vote for Nixon in fact only voted against McGovern. He was duped into accepting the image of Nixon as champion of the two-party system which he'd been duped into believing still exists. A vote for Nixon was a vote to resurrect the deceased two-party system: the ticket splitting was to assert the old Democratic loyalties inside that system.

Alas! Neither a Congress, nor "checks and balances," nor two-party system, nor a Democratic Party, not a labor-Democratic alliance is anywhere to be found. Only a ruthless war cabinet has been produced from the elections, a cabinet above Congress, above parties, above the traditional departments, ready to punish the working class for its last great electoral illusion.

The United States Congress, whose spokesmen already admit that it is only a historic relic, was practically dead when back in 1970 it passed the Economic Stabilization Act, surrendering its prerogatives and thrusting dictatorial powers into Nixon's embarrassed hands. THIS WAS MAINLY THE DOING OF THE DEMOCRATS. On the basis of this, Nixon one year later launched his Phase Two attack on labor. Labor's Democratic allies applauded. Hubert Humphrey chided "a stubborn President who acted only under pressure from Congress and the public." McGovern claimed paternity of the wage-freeze. In this casual fashion, the Democrats had crushed their party.

They should have known. The wage freeze had nothing to do with Keynesian technology, it was plain politics. Arnold R. Weber, a Nixon-appointed "public" member of the Pay Board, spelled it out in no uncertain terms:

"The (90-day) period could be used to build a consensus to implement a more durable system of restraints in what was quickly christened Phase II. It was recognized that while the public might endure a simple, stringent program for 90 days, a longer incomes policy with a longer time horizon would be more complex and would require a concensus more profound..."

In fact, the "new concensus" was destined to be a short-lived bloc of destroyers of the "old consensus," that once depended on organized labor, the labor-Democratic alliance, the Great Society romances, the parties, Congress. The operation has been a success, as New Solidarity has compiled an impressive partial record of the rout of labor. We recapitulate the dismal record only in mentioning that once inside the Pay Board union leaders were falling on each other to get "special exemptions" for their own members, stabbing everyone else in the back.

It was the CP's darling labor skate, "sweetheart" Distributive Workers' bureaucrat David Livingston, who called upon Congress to freeze wages on workers who are earning \$3 per hour or more. USW President I.W. Abel castigated high construction wages and called on labor members to stop inflating. Teamster President Fitzsimmons demanded that all locals abide by the Pay Board decisions. TWU's Guinan OK'd wage cuts since "we'll be in the same boat as everyone else." Teamsters engaged in fratricidal war against longshoremen over containerization. New York AFSCME leader Gotbaum expressed confidence that Meany would insure equity on Pay Board decisions. Meany declared that "Labor's aim is to reduce strikes in all industries." IN THE MIDST OF MOUNTING UNEMPLOYMENT, LOCALS STARTED VOTING FOR WAGE CUTS. Municipal workers campaigned to sell government bonds. And so on down the line. Union leaders led their ranks into the trough of demoralization. Then, after all the humiliating and discrediting was done, they broke with the Pay Board, boasting that they had a plan for a CONGRESSIONAL fight.

By then Congress no longer had any connections in Washington. It had declared itself irrelevant back in 1970 and Nixon was now cashing in on it. A couple of months later, the leaders of organized labor discovered that they didn't even have a political party to do the horse-trading in Congress...and then they split over the issue of endorsement of presidential candidates. Phase Two had been accomplished.

A demoralized working class relied on its bureaucratic leadership. A demoralized union bureaucracy relied on Congress. A panicked Congress relied on the President. The President smashed Congress, Congress smashed the union bureaucrats, the union bureaucrats dumped their members. The old era of bourgeois democracy ended for ever.

LABOR IN EUROPE

The Communist Parties of France and Italy — the largest in the capitalist world — have succeeded in fusing the intermediate steps of this process into one integrated policy of treason, carried out by one agency, namely themselves. These parties are dominated by closely allied cliques of union bureaucrats and parliamentarians. The former demand a strict conservative line from the latter, lest they lose control over their members; the politicians oblige with the proviso that the trade-union executives must turn every movement of the working class into another prop to support the parliamentary squabbles.

Why was Pompidou able to ridicule the National Assembly and dismantle his alliance with the petit-bourgeoisie, thus narrowing his social base? Throughout the year, the working class has been subjected to pitiless hammering: budget cuts in education and social services, skyrocketing unemployment, speedup and high inflation. Wage controls were not a new feature for France — they have existed for the last ten years. Throughout 1972, the national average of wage increases was about 2 to 2-1/2 per cent. Strike activity was the lowest in Europe.

Just as in the U.S.A., the authority of the working-class bureaucratic leaders rested on a rank-and-file demoralization. The French workers have the additional disadvantage of being the least unionized in Europe: only 18 per cent. belong to the syndicates. Under the circumstances, every one of the actual or planned strike actions tended to become the bone of contention between the Communist-led labor-federation, the C.G.T., and the semi-anarchist C.F.D.T. The C.F.D.T. wanted the strikes to be strictly local and intensely militant. (This was the line that had attracted masses of ultra-gauchistes into C.F.D.T. ranks since 1968.) The C.G.T. on the other hand, is viciously opposed to intense local strikes while it prefers to defuse them with "days of national action" (i.e., a few hours of nation-wide work stoppages taking place the same day) — the objective being to build up the CP-Socialist Party electoral campaign.

True, by the middle of the year, at the lowest ebb of strike activity, the two labor federations came to an understanding: The C.F.D.T., reversing completely, supported the idea of "days of national action" as a means of defusing strike-militancy. To put teeth to its new policy, it started a thorough purge of gauchiste

elements (including Lutte Ouvriere colonizers). This made the PCF jubilant. Yet Edmond Maire, the C.F.D.T. chairman, compensated by later announcing that his organization, though closely allied with the Socialist Party, will remain strictly non-political throughout the electoral campaign. Further, he rejected the joint CP-SP program as incompatible with his ideal of "socialisme autogestionnaire" — local control Socialism.

This new slight step toward trade-union unity was based on a rightward turn toward condemnation of militant strikes. The CP, considering this a further advantage for the allied CP-SP parliamentary bid, rejoiced. A "day of national action" was called on June 7, ostensibly to support the common CP-SP demand for a thousand-franc per month minimum wage. The real purpose was to test the extent of trade-union influence among workers. It was a failure.

One month later, Premier Chaban-Delmas, reputed to favor the thousand-franc demand, was sacked by the President, although Parliament had cast an overwhelming vote of confidence in him. Pompidou further declared that he, the President — rather than Parliament — has the sole authority to form and approve cabinets. Parliament and press pleasantly engaged in a mild constitutional debate. The Communist Party decided to provide further testimonials of its loyalty by continuing to campaign against the ultra-left, spreading through the country "anti-repression" resolutions in which the enemy was identified as "the employers, the gauchistes and the government."

With the CP busy policing the Left and exalting the virtues of Parliament, Pompidou and Finance Minister Giscard d'Estaing have practically abolished Parliament. The longer the CP traps working-class energies to improve its position in the phoney National Assembly, the freer Pompidou is to exercise his dictatorship.

In France as well as Italy the death of bourgeois democracy resulted in successful attempts to rule by decree and by raw force. In Great Britain, where working-class resistance has not yet spent its force, the result is paralysis of the government. Every anti-labor government decree, meeting with determined opposition, had to be shelved. Every attempt at policing and intimidating the labor movement ended in another humiliation for the government. Yet, unless an initial orientation toward strategy and program for socialist power emerges, the British working class will be condemned to share the present experiences of French and Italian workers.

There was a point when the French government had been forced not to mere paralysis, as now in Britain, but to actual flight; it had, in May 1968, evacuated the capital leaving France in the hands of insurgent workers and students who had no idea of what to do with their power.

The PCF's intervention on the behalf of the bourgeoisie inaugurated a period of demoralization and retreat, precipitating this year's rout.

ITALY

In Italy, on the other hand, the proletariat was to suffer a worse fate. That country's "May" was a protracted affair, beginning in Autumn 1969 and lasting, with intervening spurts and respites, for about two years. Governments were coming and going in rapid succession during that time — one more ineffectual and unstable than its predecessor. With every strike upsurge another government was feeling the ground give way under its feet, bringing forth renewed pleas from the Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI) for government stability, parliamentary legality — i.e. for its own inclusion in some convalescent, moribund bourgeois parliamentary cabinet. Italy's Central Bank, the only functioning central institution in those days, was joking that "better to have no government at all than have one against which workers would strike. No government means no strikes."

The confidence of bankers in the PCI's unwillingness to organize the working class into an alternative government was richly rewarded. By the beginning of 1972 the working-class movement, with its elan spent, was lying dejected and demoralized. In early spring, with the strike movement at its lowest ebb, the big capitalist "rationalization" campaign, Italy's Phase Two, was well underway. Identifying the problem to be the "outmoded economic structures," the state industries and industrial monopolies began "courageously cutting off limbs" — bringing the number of unemployed above the one million mark. Inflation in the meantime reached the 12 per cent annual rate.

The following May's general elections resulted in a massive vote increase for the fascist Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI) and the subsequent rise of the most right wing faction in Christian Democracy's ranks: Andreotti was invited by the President to form a cabinet.

To the edification of the fascist deputies, Andriotti presented his cabinet's platform to the Senate. Its central theme was revision of the penal code along Mussolini lines, war against students and leftists, imposition of robbery-type agricultural rents, policing labor into the "self-restraint" so necessary for closer integration with the Common Market and, last but not least, abolition of parliamentary immunity. He received a Senate approval with a three-vote plurality, with MSI approving but "not yet trusting" his intentions. The election of all Senate Committee Chairmen was regulated by MSI-controlled ballots.

Communist Party parliamentarian and Central Committee member Berlinguer supported Andreotti's

"self-constraint of labor" theme:

"The PCI and the trade unions don't want to dramatize contract renewals, which should be normal, physiological moments in economic life."

But what was that government, and what were its claims to stability? It was a three-party coalition between the Christian Democrats, the Social Democrats and the Liberal Party, receiving outside support from the Republicans. The combination had resulted from the Liberal Party's refusal to support the Republicans' participation while itself remaining outside; also from the Socialist Party's refusal to participate in a five-party coalition with the above four. Every party in Italian politics had been thrown into a tailspin of ferocious factional wars as a result of this coalition, with even the ruling Christian Democrats split five ways over the issue. The government's stability rested on the paralysis of the bourgeois parties, on the Senate's decision to practically vote itself out of existence and, most importantly, on the PCI's solemn promise to police the working class into "self-constraint."

The general factional situation would not stabilize until late in the fall, as a result of a general rightward drift of the entire political spectrum. While the Communist Party was lending credibility to the official government "restructuralization" excuse for increased unemployment, while the Party press was repeating Berlinguer's capitulation, repeating day after day that:

"The autumn contract renewals should be a physiological act. We don't want them to become traumatic. It would only endanger the working class to exasperate the strike."

MSI's Almirante had issued his firm warning:

"If the government continues to refuse to fulfill its function as the State, then we are ready to take the place of the State. These are not mere words and I invite my adversaries not to consider them mere words."

The fascists held their promise to the extent possible for the time being. While late summer and early fall were laced with strikes provoked by employers, smashed by the government and betrayed by the trade-union and party leaderships, MSI launched a major terror campaign with massive arson, nationwide bombings and even assassinations. The Communist Party responded with a call for a nationwide protest work-stoppage that was poorly attended. The government sat back happily, seeing in the events just so many rationalizations for more "fermo di polizia" aimed, needless to say, anywhere but at MSI.

The government's consolidation cycle closed with the victory this past November of a right-wing faction

inside the Socialist Party, finally rallying that party — the last remaining anti-government force outside the CP — to the support of Andreotti's coalition. The Communist Party chose not to criticise the rightward shift of the Socialists. The government responded with a series of new repressive measures, increasing agricultural rents by 40 per cent., ordering massive layoffs of "parasitic professionals," imposing the new Value Added Tax.

THE ILLUSION OF THE "STATUS QUO"

The destruction of bourgeois democracy in the small but decisive advanced capitalist sector has necessarily been reflected in the emergence of Metternich-style world diplomacy, exemplified not so much by Henry Kissinger as by the Kremlin's orientation toward "Holy Alliance"-type of arrangements in international relations.

The accelerated march toward political unification of the Common Market's repression politics in Western Europe and the almost universal rule by militarists and fascist-like cliques throughout the Third World is a result of the international rout of labor and its corollary, the emergence of the bonapartist tendency.

Horrified by the prospects of adventurism and aggression that, by necessity, have to be aspects of this international rightward drift, the Soviet and Chinese leaders have opted for a policy of appeasement, concession and sellout. It is not the recent types of East-West trade deals and other schemes of collaboration. It is not even just the betrayal of Vietnam. Ever-increasing material and manpower resources are allocated by the Soviet state for the policing of the international labor movement. Unlike the policy of benign neglect of the Fifties and the early Sixties, the U.S.S.R. has, since about 1968-69, been intensely involved in strengthening the world Communist Parties' role as guardians of the status quo.

The irony is that there is no status quo to maintain. Policing the working-class movement into demoralization and defeat in the present conditions of capitalist collapse is precisely what has destroyed the status quo. The other irony, of course, is that the pro-Moscow CPs hardly need any outside help in carrying out this treacherous policy: They are constitutionally predisposed for exactly this sort of role.

Attempting to maintain the present state of affairs is attempting the impossible. Instead of a status quo there is a dangerously fluid situation, with make-do governments trying to hold things together until the stable, fascist solutions are worked out. The dilemma for the working class is this: Either continue to be duped by the general line of "non-provocation" and capitulation in the face of enemy attack, or assume the necessary bold initiatives of building a mass movement for the assumption of Socialist state power in the few remaining years ahead.

The success of the capitalist Phase Two has demonstrated to the present generation of pro-socialist radicals that the Communist Parties are not fit for such bold undertakings. The vicious-circle aspect of CP politics is that after each capitulation in the class struggle they land on a new disaster which in turn provides the basis and the rationale for the following capitulation leading to the next disaster and so on, until the enraged and demoralized petit-bourgeois masses, whipped up by the hysterical instigations of shrewd demagogues, finally constitute themselves as "The People" organized in mass fascist parties.

The collapse of bourgeois democracy has again brought to the fore the question of working-class leadership. Victory's road will pass through the destruction of the trade-union, Communist Party, local control hegemony over the proletariat. Their replacement by the working class, one and indivisible, united around a strategy for worldwide Socialist state power — this is the precondition for victory.

Lessons of the Linz Conference

This past September's Bertrand Russell Memorial Conference, held in Linz, Austria, must be considered a relative success — at least by contrast with the usually dismal affair of the same nominal form. In addition to the valuable topics whose discussion is continued below in the Marcus and Golthier articles, there were several papers of unusual significance, and additional items of collateral merit. In most such conferences, one considers oneself fortunate to obtain one barely readable production. In general, reviewing the collection of papers submitted at Linz, the ratio of merit to "left" rubbish was extraordinarily high.

Much of the credit for that happy result belongs to the conference's chairman and principal organizer, Professor Vladimir Dedijer. It is to be regretted that his original agenda was misplaced in later re-arrangements. It is to be regretted that the 1971 year-end list of prospective participants was subsequently inflated with quite as large a proportion of brainless "left" academics. Despite such added flaws, the positive effect of the original conception survived to produce an assortment of most worthwhile production.

KNOTEN

All the important shortcomings of the Linz affair can be summed up in one word, one of Karl Marx's favorite epithets for the sort of muddlehead who is the usual contributor to *New Left Review*, *Socialist Revolution*, or *Telos*: Knoten — the URPE mediocrities, and in general, the trendy academic left, from Fabian to super-Maoist.

To indicate the presence of such wretches at Linz, it is not essential to name names. The types are common and easily recognized.

There was the distinguished professor from a well-known institution who professed to understand no English. Since the official language of the conference was English, the professor's predicament might be regretted — until one became acquainted with what the gentleman had to contribute in French. He made two main, and quite lengthy, intrusions into the proceedings of one workshop. The first to denounce the adoption of English, which he professed not to understand; the second, to denounce the contents of the English language proceedings in *ex cathedra* terms.

There was another professorial European gentleman, who appointed himself to have the last word on several discussions, his pronouncements based principally either on what one kindly identifies as "invented facts" or simply on the most banal sentimentalities.

There were two academic clowns, at one moment presenting themselves as spokesmen for the anti-Marxian anarchist faction, and at the next juncture rudely interrupting a scholarly presentation by the world's leading anarchist scholar, demanding to know how much longer they had to listen to this rubbish. Their own paper, not accidentally, was a potpourri of casual observations which did not even purport to reach any conclusion. No doubt, they preferred a conference dedicated to productions whose quality resembled their own.

There was also the principal laughing-stock of the economics workshop, a certified instructor in Marx's economics at a certain U.S. college. This unhappy young man carried a copy of Volume I of *Capital* into the conference, limiting his observations to topics treated only in Volumes II, III and IV — of whose acquaintance he was absolutely innocent.

At a plenary, we encountered a professed social-

ist who presented a truly wonderful recipe for the freedom of oppressed primitive peoples. Since, he argued, it had been demonstrated that the introduction of modern technology into primitive cultures made those peoples more susceptible to dependency on the advanced sector, it followed that the liberation of such oppressed required that they be kept free of the contamination of advanced technology. To which one perceptive member of the conference responded appropriately by calling out "Socialism in one cave!"

The most revolting spectacle was not provided by the Knoten, but by the degrading reactions to their nonsense from among otherwise serious and competent men. The unfortunate case of the closing plenary session is exemplary.

For reasons which need not be developed here, it was decided to abort further serious discussion at the conference by a ruse sometimes termed "killing the clock." For this operation, the well-known Israeli spokesman, M.S. Arnoni, was designated the summary speaker, and Arnoni proceeded to kill most of the remaining time of the sessions by reading extensively from a published paper already in the hands of the participants, a paper as generally silly as it was tedious.

That was not the worst of it. An assortment of persons who one would have thought had at least better taste proceeded to compound the sickening incident by rising to ask Arnoni for clarification on particular points of his paper! At the moment, some of the other participants observing this disgusting exhibition wondered whether, if a genuinely lop-eared, shaggy-pelted jackass had been invited to bray for an hour and a half from the podium, the same members of the audience would have risen to ask the jackass to qualify this or that particular bray. Undoubtedly, such would have occurred.

THE REMEDY

Despite Professor Dedijs's commendable initial conception for the conference, there was obviously a flaw of omission which opened the gates to the intrusion of the Knoten and their fellow-travellers. What was lacking was that sense of reality which distinguishes scientific inquiry from mere opinion-mongering. Ruthless criticism was excluded and the gates were opened to treat the very subject of human survival as a matter of opinion of opinion about opinion on such topics.

Much as we ourselves esteem Karl Marx, his mere opinions would be of little importance unless they were also scientifically verifiable in terms of current processes. What someone's opinion of Marx's opinion might be is of absolutely no consequence to any serious person. Either Marx's views are essentially the body of a science or they are of minor interest.

For examples of this particular problem, consider the popularity of Herbert Marcuse, of Althusser. Marcuse's principal shortcoming in his appreciation of Hegel, for example, is that he shows not the slightest sensibility of that actual process of noesis which is the central subject-matter of Hegel's work. On Feuerbach, or Marx's relationship to Hegel and Feuerbach, Marcuse is downright silly. Althusser's *For Marx* is nothing but a bad joke by a flunking sophomore in the field. Yet, since these are scholars of standing, their opinion about the "interpretation" of Marx's opinion must be ploddingly "taken into account" by "scholars," according to hoary academic protocol for such matters.

The same general problem was exposed in the fall, 1968 split discussions preceding the collapse of the U.S. Socialist Scholars Conference organization. In the steering committee brawl preceding the formal split, the principal factions exposed themselves as fools. The one faction, headed by Professor Eugene Genovese, cogently pointed out that most of the previous Conference's sessions had been farcical — mere "rap" sessions in which this or that decorticated Maoist or worse vomited out a personal gut-reaction without visible intervention by the cerebral cortex. To remedy this, Genovese proposed to eschew all semblance of relevance by devoting the entire agenda of the 1969 sessions to 19th century meliorist movements. Genovese's opponents, with the notorious Stanley Aronowitz characteristically placing himself at the head of what appeared to be momentarily the more numerous faction, argued for mindless topics on the theme of "left basket-weaving." It occurred to neither of them that serious scholarship is required to unravel the underlying implications of urgent strategic and tactical issues of the moment.

So, in general. On the one hand, scholarship is equated with aseptically "scholarly" individuals squatting learnedly outside the real universe, debating opinions respecting opinions concerning opinions. On the other hand, the issues of current struggle are regarded as best kept to about the cerebral level of eructations.

Consequently, as a comparison of the Labor Committee's own "captive" conferences with others shows, most of the serious scholarship about the socialist movement, about the bearing of critical philosophy on method, and other important questions being done in the world today is being done by members and collaborators of our own organization, whose efforts are not accidentally beginning to attract the interest and collaboration of serious scholars in those fields. Granted, some useful results were accomplished at Linz; without old revolutionary Dedijs at the helm, it would have been a dismal failure. Any real scholarship being done today is being done by professional revolutionaries, with other persons sometimes making useful contributions from the sidelines.

The Lessons of Eastern Europe

by Lyn Marcus

Except for some writings by Eastern European socialists, most of the literature available to "Western" audiences on the Soviet bloc is either wilful fraud or author's self-deception. This indictment is, unhappily, not limited to the "57 varieties" of Cold Warriors. The bulk of the output by self-styled socialists has little to do with the purported topic, beyond a sly appeal to pro- or anti-Soviet prejudices.

The object of such socialists' swindles is exemplified by the opposite extremes found in the genre.

The legendary Communist literary hack paints Eastern Europe as a collection of "workers' paradises," a place where every virtuous maiden finds the true happiness of marriage to the collective farm's harvester-combine. Anyone credulous enough to believe the fairy tales of "Socialist realism" becomes a dupe for whatever policies the LOCAL CAPITALIST COUNTRY'S Communist Party is currently peddling. Who would have the effrontery to weigh the wisdom of those controlling a tourist service to Paradise?

Proceeding from the awful to the worst, we encounter the opposite extreme, the "Third Camper," who confides that the Soviet Union is a form of "state capitalism."

From the writings of the semi-detached academic individual of this genre, our immediate impression is that there are pockets of pre-seventeenth-century scholastic tradition still untouched by the Elizabethan reforms of Oxford and Cambridge universities. The significance of the quaint atavism becomes clear in the study of the functioning sects with which such professors are loosely associated. The history of those groups provides a consistent clinical demonstration of the objective of Third Camp catechism: pandering

to Hearstian prejudices is intended to justify some Proudhonist or trade-union chauvinist swindle being perpetrated IN THE CAPITALIST COUNTRY FOR WHICH THE ANTI-SOVIET EDIFICATION IS WRITTEN.

In all, in the proverbial 99% of the cases, the Western socialist author is not concerned with Eastern Europe, but with using real or fictitious "lessons of Eastern Europe" — usually fictitious — to justify his party's policy within this or that capitalist country.

We concede that the socialist is quite properly occupied with the "lessons of Eastern Europe," on the condition that he meets three simple requirements of personal honesty. Firstly, that he exerts reasonable efforts to fairly represent those aspects of Eastern Europe he intends to employ in his lesson. Secondly, that he does not commit fraud by concealing the actual object of his writing. Thirdly, that he does not represent an anti-Marxian method as Marxian policy — as the Third Campers, especially, do.

Our own international tendency (1) has had a two-fold concern with Eastern Europe, China and Cuba.

As socialists occupied with establishing a socialist world, the conditions of life and struggles of working people in Soviet bloc countries are as much our concern as the struggles in the advanced capitalist sector or the semi-colonial regions below the Tropic of Cancer. Our policies for the capitalist sector are in part conditioned by our determination to prevent a capitalist counterrevolution or other take-over in any section of the Soviet blocs. (2)

Our policies are also preoccupied with the establishment of such conditions in the "West" as will permit workers in the Soviet blocs to rid themselves

of bureaucracy — without the major risk of opening the Soviet region to effective capitalist interventions in that struggle.

We have already conceded that the issue of the “lessons of Eastern Europe” is not only a legitimate but an important topic for socialists in capitalist countries. It is important to show workers in capitalist countries that we are not leading them toward the kind of bureaucratic regimes which are characteristic of the present Soviet bloc. This requires frank admission of the obvious ACTUAL evils of bureaucratization in that bloc, and also a comprehensible account of the process by which the October Revolution of 1917 degenerated into such forms. This latter point implies what is emphasized in this writing: How do such “lessons of Eastern Europe” apply to the policies we are proposing for socialist efforts in the capitalist sector?

So far, our lack of published statements on Eastern Europe has reflected the limited extent of our reliable knowledge of conditions there. Apart from the thoroughly documented history of the way in which the October Revolution degenerated into a Stalinist bureaucracy, and our own special competence in interpreting the mass of Soviet bloc and other publications on planning and scheduling problems within the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe, most of the current, more recent information available to socialists in the West is obviously or probably tendentious, and generally could not be used by responsible persons without additional sources to independently verify even those reports which have the appearance of veracity.

Therefore, members and co-thinkers of the National Caucus of Labor Committees attending the recent Bertrand Russell Memorial Conference in Linz, Austria (3), were most gratified by the presentations and subsequent remarks of two Eastern European socialists. These two were professors Mihailo Markovic and Ivan Varga, the former from Yugoslavia and the latter presently teaching in Germany.(4) The competence and credibility of both presentations was obviously enhanced by absence of the anti-Soviet subjectivity so understandably but unfortunately commonplace among embittered “outs” and emigres from that sector.

The responses of Markovic and conference chairman Vladimir Dedijer to a statement by the NCLC’s Peter Rush efficiently located the place in the discussion of the Soviet bloc — and its lessons — for which our tendency is uniquely advantaged to make its decisive contribution.

Rush began: It had become a truism among critics of the Soviet bloc regimes to propose “decentralized planning” as the obvious only remedy for the ills of bureaucratic centralization. He identified the inherent incompetence of “decentralized planning,” and concluded: The alternative to the twin evils of bureaucratic centralization and the capitalist-restorationist

tendencies of “decentralized planning” is DEMOCRATIC FORMULATION of centralized planning policies by actual “soviet” institutions.

Markovic and Dedijer responded to Rush’s remarks in general agreement with his views. According to their report, similar views had evolved, notably among revolutionary-socialist Yugoslavs outside the regime, early during the experience of Yugoslav “decentralization.”

Markovic’s paper alludes to related matters at several points, notably:

“The worker has also been told that after the revolution he will rule the country. Then he finds out that at best he has some say in his factory. At worst he is even there fully subordinated to the manager...”

An excellent observation, to which we shall refer to later on.

It is this issue of democratic centralized planning which represents the key lesson of Eastern Europe for the socialist struggles in capitalist countries, the point on which we shall continue the Linz conference discussion here.

I. — THE THIRD CAMPERS’ VIEW

Especially during the past thirty-two years, there has emerged the persistent self-styled socialist view that the Soviet Union is a form of “state capitalism.” The argument of that left tendency is that the ruling bureaucracy in the Soviet bloc states is a “new exploiting class,” and that by virtue of perpetuating a specifically capitalist form of exploitation the bureaucracy is a “collective capitalist,” the Soviet Union essentially a “competing imperialism,” and Soviet-U.S.A. conflict essentially a continuation of 1870-1945 forms of the old “inter-imperialist rivalries.”

Although similar views developed earlier among so-to-speak social-democrats, the arguments of a Sidney Hook (5) and kindred wretches to this effect are not taken seriously among socialists today, this largely because of Hook’s own and his co-thinkers’ hooligan witch-hunting activities from the late 1930’s onward, a pro-capitalist thought-control pogrom that scoundrel pursues to the present day. (6)

It is the Schachtmanite variety of Third Camper who calls himself “Trotskyist” (on the authority of his tendency’s fundamental break with Trotsky in 1940) which has become and remained most influential outside such CIA adjunct agencies as university and foundation “Russian Research” cabals. On the left itself, in addition to the Schachtman brand of Third Campers, a sim-

ilar view of the U.S.S.R. as "state capitalist" is associated with some anarchist groups and with the pseudo-Marxian anarcho-syndicalist ultra-lefts of the Pannekoek-KAPD tradition. (7) Within the left, such anarchist views are not only less influential, but much less pernicious than the Schachtmanite varieties; the anarchist, at least, honestly represents himself as anti-Marxian, and the anarcho-syndicalists, typified by Paul Mattick, are so obviously anarchists in their outlook that few are deceived by their occasional profession of "Marxism."

THE RISE OF "THIRD CAMP"

The history of the development of the Schachtman tendency, considered in light of the counterrevolutionary role and policies of Third Campers in the labor movement, shows us immediately the real purpose of the Schachtmanite-Cliffite characterization of the Soviet bloc countries.

Contrary to the widespread, almost universal tendentious re-writing of CIO history, the fact remains that the rise of the CIO did not result from militant ferment within the Lewis faction or rank-and-file of the existing AF of L unions. In the entire history of capitalism, at no time has any movement which QUALITATIVELY broadened the organized labor movement arisen out of initiating ferment contained within the previously existing trade unions.

This is confirmed in the 1930's rise of the CIO. It was organizing of alliances of the organized, unorganized and (especially) unemployed, from OUTSIDE the existing trade unions, led by "outside" revolutionary socialists, which created the three general strikes of 1934, established the right to organize and created the ensuing circumstances in which significant numbers of employers virtually delivered their employees to John L. Lewis as "the lesser evil." The actual process leading from the 1934 strikes to the emergence of the CIO as an independently trade-union force was more complex than we could indicate in the space available here, but a fuller account would not modify the basic point we have just made. (8)

The two leading socialist organizations of 1938, the Communist Party U.S.A. and the newly reconstituted Trotskyist grouping, the Socialist Workers Party, represented hard cores of cadres developed either under the conditions preceding or immediately following the 1934 general strikes which had made the CIO possible. During the period immediately preceding 1938, the SWP in particular had also recruited a sizeable proportion of pro-socialist youth and trade-union militants who had not been participants in the organizing or leadership or the 1934-1937 mass-strike ferment, and who were only indirectly or even casually influenced by those struggles.

The date, 1938, is significant in additional features.

By that time, a period of demoralizing renewal of the depression after a modest 1934-37 relative economic "recovery," the revolutionary mass-strike impetus had almost evaporated, replaced by a growing reaction epitomized by the retreat of the best faction of the U.S. socialist movement then, the Cannon group of the SWP, back unequivocally to the old Cannon-Foster CP policy of trade-union opportunism. (9)

If the Cannon faction of the SWP had simply followed the implications of its post-1938 trade-union perspectives and policies to their logical conclusions, the entire SWP would have become openly Third Campers by 1939 or 1940 at the latest. The interesting aspect of the split in the SWP — out of which the so-called "Trotskyist" Third Camp tradition was created — is that a majority of SWPers behind Cannon commendably refused to be so consistent. Despite the latter group's opportunist trade-union orientation, they refused to break entirely with Trotsky and with the collectivist traditions of their experiences in the organization and leadership of the 1934-37 mass-strike upsurge.

The social stratum within the SWP which did follow the trade-union opportunist policy to its logical conclusion was a predominantly student layer, which formed the core of the expelled Schachtman group and the later U.S. Schachtmanite and (later) the British Tony Cliff grouping.

This ironical development is sociologically lawful.

An ebb in a mass-strike upsurge generally results in a growth of chauvinist attitudes, outlooks, and policies among militant rank-and-file strata of the unions. This was also the case from 1938 onwards in the U.S.A. The shift involves a drifting away from the policy of classwide alliances of organized with unorganized and unemployed workers, drifting away from the degree of CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS which characterizes the vanguard of militant workers of all sections during a mass strike upsurge. The trade-unionist rapidly reverts toward a PLURALIST ideology, concerned with narrow trade-union interests even in opposition to the interests and struggles of unorganized and unemployed workers.

To such a re-bourgeoisified unionist, his imagined enemy within the labor movement becomes the person he identifies as the "local communist," the union member or "outside agitator" who is demanding that union militants make common cause with such "outsiders" as the unorganized, unemployed and specially oppressed working-class minorities. The rank-and-file union militant is horrified at the prospect that any of these "outsiders" might succeed in gaining concessions from his own employer, concessions which would leave that much less of the pie available for trade-unionists themselves. He is increasingly antagonistic to any form of alliances but "clean trade-union" alliances. He is violently opposed to subordinating his narrow local

interests to the common interests of his class, the common interests of organized, unorganized, unemployed, and specially oppressed workers.

To him, such alliances belong to the hated social-political category of "collectivism." Any honest communist, who thus represents the struggle for classwide struggle and alliances, is the visible embodiment of "collectivism" and the immediate object of hatred, as an "outsider" or representative of "outside" ("alien") interests.

In socialist groupings, the militant trade-unionist who has previously been engaged in mass-strike work is far less susceptible to the worst moral effects of such trade-union chauvinism than the pro-labor radical student. That, in essentials, is the key to the ironies of the 1940 Schachtmanite split.

The student, the peasant, the peasant-recently-turned worker, the craft unionist, or the worker in countries or regions of countries in which the working class is atomized among small shops, represent social strata which are extremely alienated by contrast with the more socialized worker of mass industries, and therefore anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism have always obtained a readier sympathetic response from among these more alienated strata.

The student radical, like those seen in the New Left ferment in the U.S.A. during the 1960's, is usually an anti-labor parasite by upbringing, and therefore more easily locates his efforts in anarchist ferment among strike-breaking groups of lumpenized strata. Send a newly recruited student radical out to agitate among "workers" and then expect to find him proselytizing on Skid Row.

The student radical recruited under the influence of a wave of strikes, or New Letter influenced by a wave of strikes to the point of shifting his sociological orientation, unless altered by Marxian method, expresses his inherent anarchistic tendencies in a fanatical adaptation to manifestations of chauvinism among trade-union rank-and-file militants.

In the case of Schachtmanism, it was the Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939 which provided the pro-union radical students of that faction with the political rationalization for a complete adaptation to trade-union opportunism. "Me a Communist!? I'm a militant rank-and-file trade-union chauvinist who hates all outside interference in my union," insisted the Schachtmanite ex-student carrying his lunch-pail to his new factory job.

That has been the lawful internal feature of kindred and derived Third Camp groups ever since 1940. Any tendentious appeal to prejudice against the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China, Cuba, etc., is used as a flimsy demagogic trick for justifying trade-union opportunism

in the particular capitalist country or countries in which the Third Camp organizations are functioning. Any real or manufactured evidence of bureaucratic atrocities in the Soviet bloc is used to slander the notion of workers' DEMOCRATIC centralized planning.

THE ECONOMIC ARGUMENT

In his attempt to justify more broadly such opportunist policies, the Third Camper resorts to a sweeping misrepresentation of what little Marxian economics he has picked up. (10) For this, he proceeds, inevitably, from the standpoint of the same existentialist point of view on which he premises his attractions of trade-union opportunism.

He reifies Marx's terms, "Value" and "use-value," with the method of the crudest eighteenth-century British or French reductionist. He defines "Value" as an autonomous secretion of the individual activity of the individual worker of small group of workers in a particular plant, and defines "use-value" as a private relationship between the individual consumer and particular objects of his consumption.

The political object of his sophomoric bullshitting is to lay a specious basis for the argument that the taking away of surplus value from a local group of workers is the definition of "exploitation." A collective agency of the ENTIRE WORKING CLASS "taking away" surplus value from individual plants, to provide employment for the unemployed workers, is "exploitation" to the Third Camper. In fact, this is the actual argument of most of them capable of articulate speech.

From the same standpoint, he opposes any effort to constitute alliances of organized, unorganized, and unemployed workers on the basis of a program of common interests as "elitism," since this would seem to impose "outside," "exploitative" demands on the trade-unionist.

The imbecility of his "economic theory" can be shown from two standpoints.

Going no further than Chapter 1 of Volume I of Capital, which is no doubt the maximum extension possible for the Third Camper's attention span, it would be already obvious to any honest reader that any reductionist interpretation of "Value" and "use-value" is a total rejection of the entirety of Capital. Not only does Marx identify his method as a materialist form of the Hegelian dialectic, in the Preface to Volume I, but the obvious implication of that point is borne out by the inclusion of the famous "Fetishism of Commodities" section in Chapter 1.

Any competent industrial engineer could refute the Third Camper to the same effect, even without resorting to any part of Capital.

The extended analysis of the interrelationship among Bills of Consumption, Process Sheets, and Bills of Materials, starting with any workers' Bill of Consumption in the U.S.A., produces a vast inter-industry network of interdependent activities embracing most of the world's population, all directly or indirectly necessary to the material existence of any individual worker in the U.S.A.

The Third Camper might attempt to rebut this demonstration along the lines used by hippies: The U.S. worker foolishly permits himself the choice of becoming dependent upon supplies from such "outsiders." In fact, the level of productivity of existing production depends upon such an increasing world-wide complexity in the division of labor; to attempt to contract this process to various degrees of relative autarky would necessarily lower social productivity disastrously, turning back the clock of history to the Middle Ages and to the scale of world population corresponding to medieval technology.

The Third Camper's definition of "exploitation" depends upon the capitalist definition of "Value Added" used in producing Gross National Product statistics. (11) If the Value Added "earned" by a particular firm for a specific period is compared with the wages of trade-unionists in that plant for the same period, that deduction yields the approximate Gross Profit, or what the Third Camper mistakenly regards as absolute Surplus Value. It is "exploitation," according to the Third Camper, for an "outsider" to take this Gross Profit away from the local control of the trade-unionists employed in that plant.

The fallacy of his reductionist's argument is exposed as one applies Marx's distinctions between ABSOLUTE and RELATIVE profit (12) to examination of the industrial engineer's world-wide inter-industry network.

If we assign a unitary price to the aggregate Bills of Consumption required for all workers in that network, we have implicitly given a consistent price-valuation to every other element of the network. In that process, the summation of the entire network's input-output relations for any period is reduced to the form of $S/(C+V)$. The magnitude S determined in this way is ABSOLUTE Surplus Value, the absolute increase in useful wealth created by world-wide production of all forms. (13)

Any local determinations of price-magnitudes of Surplus Value which either exceed the valuation of absolute Surplus Value for the whole network, or which attribute Surplus Value to non-productive activities (e.g., military production, speculation, etc.) are obviously either not real Surplus Value (are fictitious) or are merely RELATIVE Surplus Value. To the extent for example, that a local firm's apparent Surplus Value is inflated in price, that valuation can be fully realized

only by looting wealth produced outside that firm — "exploitation"?

In this and related matters, the Third Camper's definition of the interest and proprieties of local trade-union rank-and-files depends entirely on the jiggery-pokery involved in capitalist price-setting.

This poses the interesting query to the Third Camper: "How are local prices to be set in a workers' economy? By each factory unit?..."

Furthermore, obviously, the Third Camper has permitted the unemployed no right but to form local self-government of their unemployment and to demand material concessions from... whom? Without the capitalists, how does the Third Camper's Paradise function?

The economic arguments of the Third Camper reflect hysterical ignorance of modern economy, eighteenth century reductionism at its primitive empiricist worst, and an absolute denial of the existence of the working class as an embodiment of a CLASS self-interest. Essentially, he substitutes the existing trade-union organizations for the entire working class, and offers an economic "theory" expressing the crudest empiricist conception of narrow trade-union interests.

II. — IS THE U.S.S.R. "STATE CAPITALIST" ?

Etiological studies of Third Camp organizations and ideas suffice to show that such views are essentially pro-capitalist ideology — "pluralism." Nonetheless, we concede that the case against the characterization of the Soviet Union as "state capitalist" is not made conclusively by thus demonstrating that the leading proponents of that notion are deluded.

Most of the best artifacts of modern industry are created under the guidance of capitalist ideology. The axiomatic structure permeating mathematical physics is the purest form of capitalist ideology, and yet that body of knowledge has no replacement immediately in sight. In general, all societies to this point are regulated by the most fantastic ideologies, and yet each such society represents a body of more or less effective notions of historically specific practice, despite the rationalizations offered in behalf of that practice.

Therefore, we must ask ourselves: Is the Soviet Union some form of capitalism, DESPITE the arguments used by Third Campers to reach such a characterization?

For the Soviet Union to be capitalism of any kind, the individual or collective means of production would have to be the subject of income-bearing property-titles. In the simplest case, which we shall consider first, one would have to show that the Soviet bureaucracy, or some dominant stratum within it, possesses alienable, income-bearing property-titles to the nation's

means of production. In the second case, in which no section of the bureaucracy is assumed to be collectively or individually capitalists, is that bureaucracy a kind of comprador super-bureaucracy for foreign capital?

The argument for the first kind of state capitalism rests, as we shall summarize here, on a kindergarten misunderstanding of the nature of capital in any economy. Since Soviet constitution and actual practices preclude the necessary political conditions for the existence of actual capital, it follows that the Third Camper is foolishly insisting that capital is simply a collection of objects as physical means of production.

The second case is a trifle more subtle. Since the Soviet Union does incur debts (a form of capital) to foreign capitalists, and debts in the form of agreements with foreign-capitalist concessionaires, it might appear that the Soviet bureaucracy has certain TENDENCIES to become a bureaucratic comprador appendage of actual capitals, paralleling the sense applicable to the governmental and corporate bureaucracies in the U.S.A.

After we have dealt summarily with these two cases, we shall conclude this section of our thesis by showing that the only actual tendency toward capitalist restoration in Eastern Europe is located in those "decentralization" measures which the Third Campers recommend as transitional toward "democratic socialism."

WHAT IS CAPITAL ?

Capital, as a property-title, is at the same time two distinct things. It is a POLITICAL FICTION, an income-bearing property title. It is also something quite apart from such capital, a form of social wealth which a political agency seizes for the capitalist as the subject of his property-title.

This two-fold nature of capital, as capital and something not capital subject to capital, is the basic contradiction of capitalism, the cause of periodic crises, economic class struggle eruptions, revolutions, etc. To confuse the two sloppily, to define capital as the objects which are its political subjects, is a blatant delusion of the clinical form of the "fetishism of commodities."

Particular capital depends, for its existence as capital, on four EXTERNAL qualities, four qualities located outside both the property-title and also outside the particular, momentary subjects of the particular property-title.

1. To be income-bearing, the property-title must be a title to a growing mass of objects. If p'/C represents the ratio of newly accumulated capitalist wealth to existing capitalist wealth, capital must be SELF-EXPANDING VALUE of the compound-interest form, $C(1+r)^t$. The nature of capital as particular capital depends upon a mass

of FUTURE subjects lying OUTSIDE the collection of subjects it presently possesses.

2. For a property-title's self-expanding value to be something more than a paranoid delusion in the mind of its owner, the owner must be given the means of force to collect such additional objects. Thus, the primordial capitalist is necessarily a pirate or bandit (or modern gangster), whereas the respectable capitalists (mercantile capitalists or actual capitalists) are so distinguished by relying upon franchises for use of official force issued by a state.
3. If the aggregate expansion of property-titles is not to outrun the magnitude of total existing social wealth, the capitalist must appropriate a form of wealth-production which is itself self-expanding: the labor-process. It is this external quality of capital which distinguished modern capitalist society from those other forms of society which include various degrees of mercantile capitalism.
4. To realize all of the expanded wealth as new, expanded means of production, the capitalists must create credit on account of this new surplus. This creates no inherent contradiction ON ITS OWN ACCOUNT, since the credit-capital thus created is secured by expanded production through productive employment of the added real surplus involved in such credit-transactions.

However, generalized capitalist production and realization cannot depend upon the haphazard creation of local private credit between immediate buyer and seller. To maintain the process of circulation, debt held by creditors must be discountable for more or less immediate purchases on creditor's account. So, the development of capitalism depended upon the previous development of Renaissance merchant banking, which, in turn, grew out of the general credit of first the Papal treasury and gradually the credit of emerging states. Modern capitalism depends upon the creation of credit backed by state debt and debt-capacities, through central banking systems which act as generalized re-discount agencies.

The actualization of a general rate of capitalist profit from many private rates of profit occurs through such a generalized credit-monetary system. Consequently, tendencies for the rate of profit to fall occur not in terms of secular trends in private profit-takings, but in the accumulation of potential illiquidity within the general credit and monetary system.

These points are developed in the author's text, *Dialectical Economics*, and are merely identified here

for the essential bearing on the matter immediately at hand.

For capital in general to exist, it must exist as an alienable (discountable) property-title significantly independent (alienable) of any particular collection of objects representing actual means of production. Indeed, capital can grow, and often does, either despite any corresponding lesser increase in social wealth, or even under conditions of contraction of the productive forces. It is also the case, as in depressions, that the mass of capital may contract disastrously without a corresponding degree of diminution in the scale of social wealth.

As Marx underlines what he identifies as the central internal contradiction of capitalism in the chapter on "Internal Contradictions" of Volume III of Capital, the key to the notion of capital-in-general is the inherent antagonism between the process of capitalist accumulation (self-expansion of capitalist property-titles as such) and the process of expanded reproduction of the labor process itself.

The specific vicious error of the Third Camper, when he troubles himself to consider Marx on this point, is that the proponent of the "state capitalism" characterization of the Soviet Union object actually to the existence of a PROCESS OF SELF-EXPANSION OF THE LABOR PROCESS. He objects to the existence of a process in which the social surplus of existing production is used by the ENTIRE working class to employ the unemployed in new industries and to otherwise develop the ENTIRE society qualitatively and quantitatively. He demands, in effect, a "socialist" society of educated baboons, in which human behavior is bestially fixed to what is possible in terms of existing local plants based on mere permutations of an essentially unalterable existing technology.

It should not be necessary to argue, once the foregoing systematic definitions have been noted, that capital in the sense of capitalists' capital absolutely does not exist either as individual capital or collective capital WITHIN any country of Eastern Europe. (At last report received, some small amount of such capital did continue to exist, at sufferance of the state, in China.)

FOREIGN CAPITAL

If the amount of capital obligations imposed upon the Soviet Union through general state debt and foreigners' concessions became sufficiently large, this growth would tend to force the Soviet bureaucracy to either repudiate a large part of such debt-service or, at some point, be transformed into a virtual collective state-corporate bureaucracy for foreign capitalists.

Something of that order was involved in the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, in which case the gross amount of the foreign debt about to be incurred by

the Dubcek regime was critically large relative to the economy as a whole.

There is within the bureaucracy a social tendency toward capitalist restoration along such lines, the tendency represented by part of the "liberalizing" faction within the bureaucracy, especially those strata who most energetically pushed the Liberman reforms (the tendency for which Ota Sik was a leading spokesman). Without considering here the reactionary aspects of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, or the way in which Soviet looting of Czechoslovakia created the problem in the first place, the fact remains that the Soviet hardliners, representing the ruling stratum of the Soviet bloc, have made repeated limited concessions followed by harsh corrective measures, to prevent solicited foreign capital from securing a large enough material basis to accomplish a transformation of the Soviet economy into an appendage of foreign capital.

This is not a new discussion topic. Notably, during the mid-1930's, in his *Revolution Betrayed*, Trotsky discussed this kind of danger.

After the forced collectivization of the first Five-Year Plan, the kind of capitalist restorationist danger existing in the middle-1920's "Scissors Crisis" had been virtually eliminated. In the 1930's, neither NEPmen nor kulaks existed any longer in sufficient numbers to represent a potential capitalist-restorationist alliance-force. The new source of potential capitalist counter-revolutionary ferment existed in a certain growing sector of the lower Soviet bureaucracy, in the factory management and industries management strata. The potential for this layer's anti-socialist tendencies to become a counterrevolutionary force lay in the potential growth of concessions to foreign capitalists, through which part of the industrial management sector of the Soviet bureaucracy could become in fact and in social tendency an appendage of foreign capitalists.

The Liberman reforms, a concession to just that "liberal" section of the bureaucracy, represented the first important sign of growth of such an actual source of danger within the Soviet bloc.

This is not a simple problem for the analyst. Only ultra-leftists insist that the Soviet Union make no concessions to foreign capitalists. Just because modern technology depends upon a complex, world-wide division of labor, demanding a social base much larger than the industrial population of the entire Soviet bloc, the more successfully the U.S.S.R. keeps pace with advanced capitalist technology, the more the rationality of Soviet production depends upon securing foreign trade concessions, especially for capital goods importation. It is a continuing and correct policy of the Soviet bureaucracy to fight to remove all U.S. restrictions creating a virtual blockade of Eastern Europe respecting those categories of foreign capital which the bloc most ur-

gently requires for balanced internal growth.

What confronts a Soviet policy-maker is the impossibility of a clear-cut decision to either absolutely allow or not allow foreign concessions. To the extent that the Soviet leader is actually concerned to defend the interests of Soviet nationalized property-forms, he must solicit foreign concessions to the extent he dares, up to the point that the very magnitude and strategic effects of such aggregate concessions create the potential for a counter-revolutionary danger.

The Soviet officials' predicament is increased by the fact that the Soviet bloc is a collection of bureaucratized workers' states. They dare not invoke the self-conscious organization of Soviet workers to control local bureaucrats' restorationist tendencies, since such a soviet form would not stop its purging witherring local bureaucrats. The fact that a bureaucratized workers' state deliberately alienates its workers prevents those workers from generally developing the qualities of consciousness and self-government which would reduce the danger of foreign concessions to near-zero.

Therefore, the top-level bureaucratic strata of essentially hard-liners attempt to resolve their problem pragmatically. They make concessions to the liberal stratum of their own bureaucracy — for so long and so far, and succeed this with a hard-liner's counter-move. This undoubtedly occurs along the lines portrayed by Markovic in his Linz paper.

“ LOCAL CONTROL ”

The real source of potential danger for a capitalist degeneration of the Soviet bloc is the very proposed “remedy” generally recommended by Third Campers: decentralized planning.

The precedent for this sort of “planning” in discussions within the socialist movement is found in various Rousseauian, Fourierist, and Proudhonist notions (among others) of “cooperativism.” Long ago, it was settled that cooperatives were capitalist enterprises by nature. They would invariably show that quality wherever cooperative ownership impinged upon the capitalist market.

Admittedly, in the case of socialist revolutions in backward sectors, the workers' government will tend to make concessions to the political backwardness of the peasantry along cooperative lines, as part of the process of transforming the workers' potential ally, the poorer peasantry, into an agricultural working class. This concession is permissible only to the extent that such agricultural cooperatives are immersed in a workers' planned economy, and that certain related conditions are met. Such concessions TO CAPITALIST TENDENCIES are made out of political-economic weakness of a relatively smaller working class in a relatively backward

sector. They remain concessions to capitalist tendencies, and filled with dangers to the workers on that account.

What makes an industrial cooperative a seed-form of capitalist restoration is not merely the phenomenal resemblance of “shares” to capitalist stock holdings. It is not this mere FORM in itself that is decisive, but the essence, the objective social content of that form.

The very existence of a particular plant or industry as the mutual ownership of the workers employed in it is immediately a form of capitalist alienation. It incorporates, in fact, the most fundamental feature of that alienation.

ALIENATION signifies that the worker has been estranged from DELIBERATIVE CONTROL of the production of his necessary material means of existence. Returning for the moment to the industrial engineer's extended inter-industry network, what is the production of any workers' individual means of material existence today? To set any part of that network juridically apart from the rest on the basis of “local ownership” with local control of social surplus, is to deny to the remainder of the working-class population its right to exist.

Some wag might therefore attempt to prove that the Soviet Union is capitalist on account of its isolation! It is worth our time to consider this issue for reasons other than those the wag might wish.

Let us consider an example which Third Camp wise-aces will have overlooked, since such an event could never occur through their efforts: the establishment of a momentarily isolated workers' economy in the U.S.A.

To the extent that the rest of the non-Soviet-bloc world remained largely capitalist (for perhaps a few more weeks), and the fact that the Soviet bureaucracy would face early overthrow by its workers as a result, the working-class government in the U.S.A. would be at least briefly operating as a large cooperative, thus, according to the wag, seeming to alienate a part of the productive forces.

Let us very briefly moot the point that such an isolated workers' economy would seem, in abstraction, to have such tendencies. The obvious point to be considered is whether the U.S. workers would regard themselves as representing such an alienating cooperative. If they did, that parochialist outlook would represent a taint of CAPITALIST HANGOVER.

However, a nationwide soviet is absolutely not comparable to a local cooperative, neither economically, politically, nor sociologically. Alienation is immediately expressed in the social outlook of the organized workers toward the unorganized, unemployed, and specially oppressed working-class strata. Once a soviet is

established on the basis of realizing the common programmatic interests of organized, unorganized, unemployed, and specially oppressed, even in a national sector, that social form itself more or less eradicates the fundamental organic premise of alienation in the workers' mind. Once any group of organized employed workers has adopted the policy of use of "locally produced" surplus value for the productive employment of unemployed, etc., it has essentially extirpated from its nature the distinction between "us" and "outsiders" within the political working class as a whole.

The POLICY of the workers in power in one country toward the workers of all other countries is the key to rebutting the wag. Capital is a political form, not simply an economic form in the naive conventional sense of that term; the question of whether the consolidation of partial gains by one section of the class signifies a capitalist ideological tendency or not is answered decisively in terms of politics: What is the organic policy of those workers toward "outside" sections of their own class?

In the case of the "cooperative" form of industrial "ownership" we have a clear alienation of the rights of especially the unorganized, unemployed, and specially oppressed sections of the working class. It is that issue, expressing the essential reactionary element of trade-union chauvinism — and Third Camp trade-union opportunism — which is the only serious issue which need be considered.

To recapitulate: Cooperativism sets the parochial notion of propertied self-interest of one small section of the class (the employees of a particular plant) against the rights of the entire class, especially the unemployed. This issue is located in the problem: Who has right to the surplus value immediately located concretely in the product of each plant? It is in respect to the notion of self-expansion of value, the ownership of expanded value, that the question of property-right is to be situated. The issue is whether the unemployed have the right to participate as equals in higher authority (soviets) which govern local plants' surplus values.

Once a group of workers has broken free of that capitalist pluralist hangover, the problem of capitalist property-forms no longer threatens us from them.

It is exactly to the extent that "decentralized planning" were instituted in Eastern Europe at the same time as large-scale foreign concessions existed, that a serious danger of the Soviet Union's degeneration into capitalist forms would INITIALLY appear.

On such grounds, one rightly regards the Third Camper's characterization of the U.S.S.R. as wishful thinking... ABOUT THE FUTURE!

III — COULD DECENTRALIZATION WORK ?

That leaves us with only one important issue to be settled before turning attention to the positive remedy. Could decentralized planning work even as well as centralized planning? Obviously, this is the same as to inquire whether a capitalist restoration might not be desirable or tolerable for the workers of Eastern Europe.

Let us momentarily put aside the inherent restorationist implications of decentralized planning, and consider only the practicability of decentralized planning.

Soviet experience with Stalinist planning ironically provides the best empirical evidence of why decentralized planning leads to chaos. The effort of Stalinist bureaucrats to find some "objective" standard other than value (tonnage, quantities, labor-hours, etc.) is a long tale of Gothic horrors. The system worked only to the extent that it was most rigidly centralized, that "explosions" of bills of materials from keystone to supporting industries were rigidly enforced as quotas on the supplier. As the successful development of the Soviet economy proceeded, this success produced a more modernized economy in depth, which is to say an economy becoming so complexly interrelated in its division of labor that more bureaucrats would be required to calculate the plan than workers to fulfil it!

According to Soviet and Eastern European experts' reports available from the late 1950's and 1960's, this growing monstrousness of the bureaucratic planning task contributed to the willingness of the bureaucracy as a whole to tolerate the Liberman reforms.

If one is going to plan local productive activities and equipment development, what criteria are to be used? A capitalist industrial economy uses the price-earnings ratios, relative to the general rate of profit determined by operations of a centralized credit-monetary system. The inherent result of using such capitalist criteria, superior only to tonnage, quantities, etc., ought to be well-known: business cycles, crises of proportionality, unemployed, stagnation in large numbers of basic productive sectors, etc.

Usage of "local profitability" criteria, based on market prices, implies Marx's and Engel's devastating denunciation of a similar proposal in the infamous SPD Gotha Program: "the present-day society without certain of its defects," a picaresque proposal to remove from one's ambition's path the obstacle of EXISTING capitalists.

CENTRALIZED ALTERNATIVES

This issue is settled in a more fundamental way by returning our attention to the network of inter-industry relations of an entire economy.

It should be obvious that any increase in social productivity in any part of that network is a corresponding reduction in the cost of production of human existence on the present level for all human beings. This is the way freedom is realized according to Marx; freedom by effectively mastering the necessity of production to reduce the required working-day.

If the goal of productive development is to increase human freedom, both in terms of new needs, exhaustion of old types of natural and man-made resources, and reduction of the necessary hours of labor, the proper criteria of planning ought to be obvious. To increase the number of persons raised to the material-cultural level of existence and productive employment of the most modern technology, to eliminate backward, labor-intensive forms of production as rapidly as new industries can be opened up, to generally increase the material standard of living and hours of annual leisure.

Since the available rate of improvement for any part of the network depends upon the rate of improvement of the social productivity of the whole network, it is the whole which must represent the point of departure for planning. This means to determine which allocations of surplus value as a whole feasibly represent the improvements of the greatest benefit to the whole, which allocations of surplus value, to what existing or new elements of the network, will effect the greatest improvement in the whole. Which concrete realizations of surplus value will increase the ratio, $S' / (C + V)$, by the greatest amount?

This is no truism, no empty "categorical imperative." The case of fusion-power development is an obvious case in point; so is the issue of allocating total resources between free mass transit and private automobile use. There are always specific priority allocations of greater proportions of surplus value which will have by far the greatest benefit for the rate of reproduction as a whole.

The most absolutely devastating refutation of local control is obtained when we consider the case of free services and products. Obviously, a free public transport system is always much less costly than a paid-fare system, since for any paid-fare system, one must add to the cost of the free system the costs of collecting and accounting for the fares! The same becomes increasingly appropriate to entire categories of manufactured products, beginning with basic utilities, housing, medical services, education, basic foods, especially as scarcities are eliminated. How do we measure the value and surplus-value created by such ex-commodities?

What happens to local "profit" control of these industries?

Obviously, when all products and services are free,

some sort of value-criteria apply to the planning of production: The $S' / (C + V)$ relations still very much exist for the whole society, and adding to, modifying, etc., productive and service facilities has a measurable effect on the resulting quality and freedom of human existence!

This policy of free commodities applies almost immediately to capital goods. From the establishment of a workers' economy, allocations of capital goods to existing and new industries are made essentially on the basis of allocating an entire Department I output, according to policies for depleting obsolete and labor-intensive production in favor of development of new industries, etc.

Admittedly, administrative pricing of capital goods production provides an out, and "administrative pricing" of free-list ex-consumer commodity production can be used. These would provide a basis for some degree of local scheduling control, provided that some central agency set the price-structure according to a centralized plan for development.

In fact, exactly such an administrative pricing arrangement would probably be used in the establishment of a workers' economy in the U.S.A., an arrangement which might persist for a period of time. Such prices would be determined by a kind of "matrix inversion" method, in which one would attempt to approximate the marginal contribution of planned ranges of particular production to the overall value of $S' / (C + V)$.

Such pricing structures would have an obvious use in decentralized SCHEDULING, such as for determining what represents the economical mix of various kinds of current productions, what method changes in productive technology represent probably greater improvements, what local inventory methods are relatively less wasteful, cause relatively less socially costly delay in the overall time-span of production, etc.

In all such cases, the calculation of administrative prices would lead to dysfunctional local scheduling procedure UNLESS THE PRICES WERE DETERMINED BY A CENTRALIZED PLAN.

The following general procedure is essential for a workers' economy.

The first step is to establish a Bill of Consumption (or Bills of Consumption) for the entire working-class population. These standards, which much reflect the necessary levels of explicit material consumption, leisure, and services necessary to reproduce a population of a potential productivity appropriate to emerging technology, define the value of "V" IMPLICITLY for the entire working-class population. On the basis of the "explosion" of Bills of Consumption for the entire population, the relationship, $S' / (C + V)$, for all production

is immediately determinable.

Once that determination is made, the optimal plan is the result of counter-weighting two general demands against thus-calculated existing rates of surplus value. One demand involves the largest possible rate of accumulation, based on the rate of increase of the ratio, $S'/(C+V)$, through capital improvements in both scale and quality. The other demand is to increase the quality of material existence and leisure of the working population as a whole, thus increasing the rate of increase of $S'/(C+V)$ as a result of increased productive potential of the "labor force" as a whole.

The limits of both tendencies are elementary. A rapid development of applied technology, without a comparable development of the quality of existence of the workers, means society's inability to realize technological improvements through the actual labor-process. A rapid improvement in the education, consumption levels, etc., of labor, without comparable capital development means a frustrated population, prevented by capital shortages from realizing its human potentialities.

In general, leaning toward the "over-development" of workers as the lesser error, one must seek to approximate the point where the optimal value of combined increases from surplus value lies. This optimal value is the line of planning at which the longer-term rate of improvement of the quality of life will increase at the most rapid rate. Any undergraduate mathematician should be able to readily illustrate why this is the case.

The inherent difficulty of attempting to decide such a policy through a "benign elite" is the only principled problem for such centralized planning.

The only workable approach is democratic formulation of centralized policies. This is not required on mere grounds of sentiment. The relationship between consumption-leisure and latent productivity is an intangible from the standpoint of the central planner's computers.

It is the workers themselves who immediately con-

front the twin pressures of self-improvement and relieving the oppression of backward productive technologies. This duality is singularly expressed to them in the issue of generally decreasing the necessary hours of labor. A relatively higher level of present consumption means a slower rate of reduction of the hours of labor, whereas a higher rate of accumulation means immediately a slower short-term rate of improvement in consumption in return for a more rapid rate of potential decrease of the hours of labor.

If central planning agencies present the alternative policies to the entire working class in comprehensible terms, then the collective formulation of actual policies by the soviets will usually produce a planning policy which is not only far more acceptable to workers than a benign planner's recommendation, but it will probably be more likely of reaching planning targets than any plan ENTIRELY developed "from above."

The democratic formulation of the centralized plan will itself produce the greatest increase in social productivity. By confronting the workers with the task of deciding the FORMULATION of centralized planning policies, a healthy factional row is stirred up within the population, out of which heated intellectual affray emerges a qualitative advance in the intelligence of the working class as a whole. That is what Socialism's "New Man" is, the New Man, far more productive, created by such a practical uplifting of his intelligence from the narrowness and banality of stumping around in the chicken-coop existence of "local control."

What the proponents of inherently chaotic and bungling "decentralized control" actually propose is implicitly summed up in the indictment offered by Markovic:

"The worker has also been told that after the revolution he will rule the country. Then he finds out that at best he has some say in his factory..."

The proponent of "decentralized planning" proposes to offer the workers nothing more than a perpetuation of that philistine narrowness and banality which is the perpetuation of nearly all the idiocies of daily capitalist pluralist existence, temporarily without one of its present defects — the local capitalist.

FOOTNOTES

1. National Caucus of Labor Committees (U.S.A.); International Caucus of Labor Committees (Europe).
2. "Blocs" acknowledges the Sino-Soviet split, autonomous tendencies in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and other workers' states.
3. See editorial, this issue.

(Continued on page 28)

Why the CIA Often Succeeds

by Hermyle Golthier, Jr.

Recently, in dosages ranging from the MIT-“Club of Rome” Limits of Growth, through the publications of John D. Rockefeller III’s burgeoning Zero-Growth movement, and Herman Kahn’s latest best-seller, intellectual and semi-intellectual readership circles are being deluged with an eerie genre of literature coming to be called “futuology.” Although the collection reeks of the traditions of Nostradamus, Churchward, and L. Ron Hubbard, most of the research behind these publications is sponsored in dead seriousness by such CIA-type agencies as the RAND Corporation, Ford Foundation, and a proliferation of only less celebrated institutions throughout the advanced capitalist sector.

Those agencies are not wasting their time and funds; in a certain sense, the stuff works.

Two of the papers presented at the recent Linz conference attempted to unravel some of the recent output. The first, by Columbia University’s Edward W. Said (1), offered a scholarly overview of a sophisticated U.S. Mid-East policy developed, in part, by the RAND Corporation. The second, which veered off its track at the end, was the provocative review offered by Lund University’s Research Director for the Division of Social Psychology and Conflict Research, Lars Dencik. (2) The Labor Committee delegation’s differences with Dencik provide the point of departure for an account of why CIA operations so often succeed.

Dencik characterizes the genre:

“So called future research is not only humbug, it is not only the last spasmodic attempts by a senile positivistic social science to get out of its hopeless impotency, not only a death-throe in the body of late capitalism. On the contrary, it is something to look out for in the struggle against imperialism, since

what ‘future research’ really is, is an instrument of power in the hands of the most important forces of imperialism.” (3)

So far, so good.

Our issue with him was made clear during the plenary discussions of his paper and oral presentation. During that presentation and subsequent exchanges, he emphasized the need to combat futurology by debunking it. According to both his replies to several queries on on the point and the internal evidence of his paper and presentation, he locates the main significance of the genre in its use for journalistic “brainwashing” of large populations.

Said’s reporting on the Arab counter-insurgency programs locates Dencik’s mistake. Futurology studies may have an incidental significance as they provide the direct propaganda for influencing mass opinion; their important application — and purpose — lies elsewhere. All important futurology studies represent A STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS POLICY, TO BE IMPLEMENTED AS FIELD WORK CONDUCTED BY TRAINED TEAMS OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIVES.

The CIA’s Vietnam Hamlet program could easily provide the material for a futurology best-seller of the Kahn type. The policy would be used by such a writer to paint a picture of Southeast Asia in the year 2000 A. D., a culture developed around the principle of “local control.” The significance of such a book would not be that identified by Dencik. Its import would be the elaboration of a policy being conducted in South Vietnam by counter-insurgency teams.

The Limits of Growth and Blueprint for Survival

are the two leading examples of futurology writing in circulation today. As portraits of the future, both are humbug. As statements of operations policy, they are dangerously effective tactical formulations. They set forth a policy to be applied by trained counter-insurgency operatives using a "radical" cover, to mobilize tens of thousands of lumpens and "radical youth" into strike-breaking, even fascist mobs, to break the unions who are "threatening the ecology."

To analyze the import of any futurology publication, one concentrates on adducing from the guise of speculations about the future those present-day operations policies which a trained CIA counter-insurgency operative would read into the document.

APPLICATIONS

It is not necessary to travel to the Mid-East or Asia for clinical material on this subject. The same agencies (e.g., Ford Foundation) which plot counterrevolution abroad have been effectively applying the same counter-insurgency techniques at home in the U.S.A.

Using the same methods employed against Arabs and others around the world, major foundations and government agencies, conspicuously spearheaded by the Ford Foundation, effectively took control of key leaders and organizations of the black militants by about 1968.

These methods have effectively destroyed the former INDEPENDENT Black Nationalist movement. To the extent that some small independent such groups exist, they are life-boat-sized relics and splinters of formerly large and growing organizations. Most of the cadres of those former organizations are now scattered as demoralized individuals or local groupings. Otherwise, excepting the Black Panther Party, now resigned to imitating the Salvation Army, the only large Black Nationalist organizations in the U.S.A. are outright counter-insurgency groups along the lines of the "colonial administration" of the "President Thieu of South Newark" (New Jersey), Imamu (LeRoi Jones) Baraka.

The same methods used to subvert, isolate and destroy independent black organizations, have been applied to the shattered and demoralized National Welfare Rights Organization, with the intent of either turning Welfare Rights organizers into government agents herding blacks into slave labor, or driving the unmanageable organizers out of the NWRO.

What is to be emphasized in all such examples is that counter-insurgency works — when it does work — by providing TACTICAL DIRECTION TO FORCES OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY AGENTS WHOSE FUNCTION IS TO CREATE "RADICAL" MOVEMENTS WHICH SET ONE SECTION OF A POTENTIALLY UNITED ANTI-CAPITALIST MASS AGAINST OTHER SECTIONS OF THAT MASS. It represents, in short, a sophisticated

modern version of the ancient policy of "divide and conquer."

Dr. Said emphasized the relevant points in his presentation. Determined not to have another Vietnam in the Mid-East, he argued, the imperialists probed for ways of preventing the sort of mass confrontations which would demand costly and hazardous direct military intervention.

He identifies the type of background research necessary to develop effective "divide and conquer" tactics:

"Sociological, anthropological and psychological methods expose a region in all its ethnic and cultural diversity, pointing to the interests, dynamics, and sensitivities of each unit." (4)

Said himself does not develop the appropriate observations which ought to follow at that point in his reporting. The implication remains obvious.

The problem continually confronting the counter-insurgency agency is that of preventing a potential mass force from being consolidated under conditions of stress into an actual, unified mass force. As Vietnam demonstrates, once the mass force has been constituted, the usefulness of further counter-insurgency efforts diminishes rapidly. The counter-insurgency specialist must do his work before the mass force can be consolidated.

His successful effort depends upon locating those pluralist tendencies of local ideologies and notions of self-interest which can be exploited to organize various local units of the mass against one another. He must organize around special local issues of the type which tend to set one local group of the mass against the others. He must attempt to make this system of fragmentation self-policing, through creation of attitudes of hostility toward meddling by "outsiders."

The basic techniques he uses for this purpose in the field are not extraordinary. Many skilled social workers have been trained in them. The counter-insurgency "community organizer" manipulates his clients through a show of "non-directive" advice. The manipulation is located in showing the local leaders where and how to obtain certain rewards for approved behavior, and what role they ought to play as leaders. Provided that the counter-insurgency social worker succeeds in winning the group to desired reward-seeking behavior and winning the leaders to the role-playing "suggested," the local group is very much under control.

Domestic U.S. counter-insurgency in the ghettos, in particular, has the following main features.

1. An experienced militant is awarded a small pilot "funding," usually sufficient to open a store-front office, buy a mimeograph machine, install a tele-

phone, a few office supplies, and make a few weekly hand-outs to neighborhood youths who become active in the "project."

2. His operations now become dependent upon continued funding, which he can obtain only by performing in a way which will bring renewal of his pilot-project funding.
3. By defining the performance goals for renewed funding, the controlling agency (e.g., CIA, Ford Foundation, VISTA, etc.) has defined the group's goals, and has effectively taken over the local militant and his following. This is the most crucial aspect of counter-insurgency "social engineering" technology — the proper definition of goals.
4. Collections of such controlled groups are easily mobilized to attack and eliminate competing groups independent of agency control, thus ridding the ghetto of almost every "radical" influence but those controlled by one or another counter-insurgency agency.
5. To obtain the deployment of the controlled group for special operations, the controlling agency need only threaten to withdraw or delay re-funding in a suitable fashion. The technique is to define conditions for re-funding or targets through which alternative funding can be secured. The Ford Foundation's 1968 effort to break the New York City union, the United Federation of Teachers, is a now-classic illustration.

The mechanics of such operations are within the competence of the counter-insurgency operative, often himself a corrupted ex-radical organizer. What such an operative can not efficiently contribute is the set of performance goals required for success. On this point, the field operations of the agent depend upon the "disinterested" contemplations of the social-science specialist "innocently" engaged in compiling his dissertation on the subject of the particular "interests, dynamics, and sensitivities" to be later played upon by field operations.

Said referred in his report to the enormous expenditure of effort on content analysis of field interviews of Palestinians by counter-insurgency agencies and their academic accomplices. This must, no doubt, be typical of current operations. It is such "content analysis" of prejudices, etc., which provide the designer of counter-insurgency tactics with the clues he needs.

On the surface, counter-insurgency tactics appear quite elementary. Nothing more scientific than an experienced confidence trickster's craft seems essential. What makes such craft useful in the end is the performance goals around which the operation is constructed.

That latter topic takes our inquiry into the most advanced realm of investigations.

EPISTEMOLOGY

Dencik came close to the truth — a moment before turning away from it. He was close to the kernel of the problem when he referred to the problem of EPISTEMOLOGY during the discussion period following his principal presentation.

He was correct as far as he was willing to trace out the problem. The "humbug" of "senile positivistic social science" is a significant case-study of pathology for the epistemologist.

For example, the case of the notorious futurologist, Professor B.F. Skinner. Skinner is a primitive reductionist in his epistemology, with whom it is impossible to profitably debate facts, since Skinner's epistemology admits only the existence of those "facts" which concur with his reductionist world-view. For, certainly, he cannot be ignorant of the empirical studies of Wolfgang Koehler and Koehler's successors, which facts totally destroy the very premises of Skinner's alleged psychology.

The fault with all positivistic social science, the point which Dencik implies by his remark, is that it is a delusion corresponding to psychotic states, maintaining internal consistency by inventing whatever factual judgments of experience are necessary to maintain the appearance of such consistency.

Dencik's relevant arguments during the discussion period strongly suggest a mere academic view of the problem posed. He regards humbug social science in the genre of futurology as essentially an extension of the problem of the senile professor down the hallway in the university: an old fool who fills students' heads with reactionary nonsense. He proposes to deflate the charlatan's reputation; one must wish Dencik only success in such a useful enterprise. Unfortunately, his effort will not solve the problem posed to us by the old fool's counter-insurgency techniques.

The paradox of futurology is that it involves not merely epistemology, but APPLIED epistemology — and, humbug though it may be in a certain sense, IT WORKS!

It works principally because the ideology of the positivist's humbug social science is a distilled version of the prevailing implicit philosophy of the subject populations of counter-insurgency operations. The essential technique of all counter-insurgency operations in the advanced capitalist sector is to play upon the deeply-rooted pluralist ideology of the ruled to create radical, highly-energized special social formations which intensify the endemic pluralist antagonism toward

mass institutions, toward "interference" by "outsiders" in "local affairs."

This point is underlined by the way in which even self-styled revolutionary-socialist groups have been co-opted into counter-insurgency operations during the recent period. In the paradigm case of the effort to break the New York City teachers' union in 1968, the Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party (Mandelites), Progressive Labor Party (Maoist-syndicalist), Workers World Party (Maoist-Trotskyist — sic!), and Third-Campers were all engaged as voluntary workers for the Ford Foundation in strike-breaking in behalf of the slogan of "local control," a slogan which expresses the essence of reductionist sociology and is the key term in the counter-insurgency specialist's armament.

Seen in such terms, counter-insurgency is a struggle of an existing ideology OF THE RULED against the imminent new world-outlook of something approximating a class-for-itself. The process of fusion of fragmented sections of a working class and its potential political anti-capitalist allies into a mass force consciously united around a common program of general self-interest represents the material (social) premise for a break with the ideology to which those same masses have been heretofore subject all their lives. Counter-insurgency is essentially applied epistemology, the appeal to radicalized versions of pluralist ideology at a point immediately prior to the consolidation of masses into a new kind of social formation more appropriate to a new (class-for-itself) world-outlook.

One suspects, on the strongest grounds, that the essential source of fallacy of aborted insights such as Dencik's is that he and others at least implicitly assume that counter-insurgency ideology involves the imposition of some alien set of beliefs on a subject people FROM THE OUTSIDE. Such a view assumes that the social science professors represent an ideology alien to that generally accepted by the subject population. If that explanation of his view is the case, as the evidence compels us to assume, then Dencik et al. have missed all the key points.

Although there are features of positivism, for example, which pertain to the caste position of the espouser of such formal doctrines, the essential feature of positivism is the same reductionism, or anarchist belief in individual or parochial self-interest, which is normally the ideology of the ruled. The professor designing counter-insurgency tactics does not impose an alien ideology upon his subjects, but rather appeals to certain features of the ideology which he and his intended victims share in common.

The counter-insurgency tactic advanced by positivist ideologues is often effective despite the fantastic delusions involved from the standpoint of science. It is often effective because the counter-insurgency spec-

ialist, in falling back upon his own pluralist ideology, is more or less effectively reflecting upon the most reactionary prevailing beliefs and prejudices rampant among the population against whom he connives.

CIA TECHNOLOGY

The critical feature of the operations put into effect is not located in the pernicious ideas themselves. Ideas, pernicious or virtuous, find root only in fertile soil. A mere appeal to common reductionist prejudices would not suffice under the unstable conditions in which the services of a counter-insurgency agency might be wanted. The fertile soil for counter-insurgency ideas is established and maintained by creating those "radical" forms of social organization in which the interplay among the participants creates and energizes the sort of pluralist notions on which the operation depends.

All ideas are in essence abstractions of on-going social practice. Their immediate content, in that respect, is the plenum of propitiatory and other actions by which the individual finds social identity of the sort he desires within the interplay of the immediate group where he is situated. It is in those processes that notions of self-identity and self-interest are situated and molded. (5)

In the normal course of capitalist society (for example), such determining features of social formations are functions of established institutions. To construct a counter-insurgency operation for such societies would be worse than wasteful from the capitalist standpoint, since counter-insurgency means organizational change, which is precisely what the capitalist abhors under such "normal" circumstances.

The chore of the counter-insurgency specialist occurs as social crises break up long-established stabilizing institutions, so that those institutions no longer inspire confidence, and no longer exert the ideologically stabilizing control of "normal" periods. It is into these circumstances that the counter-insurgency agency is called, to improvise radical new institutions which will accomplish by design what now-failing institutions accomplished by evolution.

The CIA-type must ultimately define new institutions which perpetuate pluralism in an intensified, outright chauvinist form under the special conditions of general radicalization. In order to produce such controlling institutions, he must find the pathway from present conditions through intermediate transitional forms of organization.

The evolution and degeneration of Black Nationalism in the U.S.A. of the 1960's is an excellent example of his problem — and how he solved it.

For the black young male, especially, Black Nation-

alism was an essential step to A SENSE OF SOCIAL IMPORTANCE, a precondition for serious struggle in his class interest. Without counter-insurgency interference, the normal course of development of Black Nationalism would have been toward alliances with white workers. The exemplary cases of Malcolm X, the Black Panthers (for a period), and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, are merely better-known instances of such a TENDENCY among INDEPENDENT Black Nationalist movements.

What happened to prevent this? In part, the Black Nationalists found no sizeable vanguard group to respond to their tendency for such alliances in an effective way; class alliances between black and white working-class forces remained a mere tendency which ebbed and resurged without acquiring a self-sustaining determinate character. More important, the well-heeled counter-insurgency agencies stepped in, buying up demoralized and ambitious black militants in dozen lots. These recruited agents were funded modestly, enabling them to hustle together small coteries. These groups were given guidance in role-playing and performance goals, mainly aimed at both keeping radical outsiders out of the black ferment and harrasing independent black leaders who refused to get into line with the current project being pushed by the controllers.

These tactics were developed through "content analysis," adducing vulnerable points of Black Nationalist "interests, dynamics, and sensitivities" for counter-insurgency use.

That was the TRANSITIONAL phase: abort tendencies toward class alliances by emphasizing the "nationalism" in Black Nationalism.

The organizational forms toward which this work was aimed are exemplified by today's South Newark under "Papa Doc" Baraka, or almost any of the hideous ghetto enclaves riddled with corruption and bossist hooliganism against dissidents, which represent finished products of "local community control."

As a result, organized Black Nationalism today is mainly a police department of the U.S. government — except for those handfuls of young, independent blacks wondering how it all happened.

CAN IT BE DEFEATED ?

In some cases, such as the "Philadelphia Plan" or the 1968 Ford Foundation operations against the UFT, the evidence of counter-insurgency would be conspicuous through a low-power telescope on Mars. What makes such schemes most transparent to the analyst is the characteristic organizational features whose design bears the thumb-print of the counter-insurgency mentality.

In the general case, it is more difficult to distinguish the agent from the radical fool. In the transitional approaches, before the situation is yet ripe for the controllers to push for radical organizational forms, the agent is exploiting endemic reactionary tendencies among the mass to build a faction which is not essentially unlike a faction formed by Third Campers, anarchists, pseudo-Trotskyist "local control" advocates, etc. In such circumstances, the agent is merely working to increase the odds in favor of what reactionary self-styled socialists and others would do naturally.

Usually, today's factional leader without a visible organizational backing from the existing left is an agent — we find from experience, either a conscious agent or simply an individual working as a radical on the payroll of some counter-insurgency front organization for governmental, Ford Foundation, or similar controllers. It is generally a useful rule in the U.S. today that the outline of the socialist movement has already been determined, such that any person able to attain factional influence comes from somewhere among established political tendencies. The disembodied "individual charismatic leader" who floats from "movement" to "movement" TODAY is in most cases an agent.

Whether particular persons are agents or not is usually of no decisive importance in dealing with related problems.

The problem facing the revolutionary is only typically the problem sometimes represented by the actual counter-insurgency agent. What the agent must do, characteristically, is to organize a faction to oppose the intervention of "outsiders" into the particular trade-union or radical bailiwick the government is attempting to control. In such matters, the agents are usually vastly outnumbered by the reactionary militant trade-unionists and other radicals naturally produced by the effects of bourgeois ideology in those strata. The problem of fighting the agent is subsumed by the general problem of opposing those indigenous radicals or "militants" who do the work of the government without pay or Ford Foundation guidance.

It is Marxians, not the counter-insurgency specialists, who represent the "alien ideology" from the standpoint of the world-outlook previously prevailing in the milieu among which he works!

The Marxian, like his opposite number in the CIA, works on the basis of attempting to establish social forms which provide the fertile ground for special ideas, etc., of the subject populations, to locate those points of entry around which to establish transitional forms of propaganda and agitation leading in the direction of the forms of social organization we aim to establish. Marxians, too, have a program for those intended institutions. Marxians, too, adduce from these phases of their operating policy a definite futurology.

The nature of the struggle between socialists and the CIA is that, but also one more thing. The CIA-type proposals cannot, by their nature, deliver on the promises implicit in their organizing effort; Marxians can. History is not "with" anyone in this battle — in the sense that the outcome of the struggle is somehow fatalistically pre-determined. The only aspect of history

which is with socialism is the underlying potential, and the fact that as revolutionary organizers create the class-for-itself approximating institutions they are committed to build, those institutions are by epistemological principles impervious to the counter-insurgency operations of any CIA.

FOOTNOTES

1. Edward M. Said, "United States Policy and The Conflict of Powers In The Middle East."
2. Lars Dencik, "Imperialism of the Future."
3. Ibid., p. 23.
4. Said, op. cit.
5. Cf. Ludwig Feuerbach, Principles of the Philosophy of the Future, Sections 29-33. Compare with Gramsci's treatment of "organic philosophy."

(Continued from page 22)

4. Mihailo Markovic, "Contradictions in States With Socialist Constitutions"; Ivan Varga, oral presentation on certain distinctions respecting upsurges in Eastern Europe.
5. Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at New York University, whose epistemological competence is certified by his endorsement of President Richard M. Nixon as a "democratic socialist," and his characterization of anti-labor Senator George McGovern, who successfully duped the Communist Party leadership, as a "Communist dupe."
6. The University Committee for Rational Alternatives, a witch-hunting organization led by a self-confessed proponent of Nazi economics Hjalmar Schacht's 1933-37 labor policies for today, Distinguished Professor Abba Lerner of the City University of New York. UCRA is the creation of Sidney Hook, and is best known for its admiration of leading academic luminaries among fascists (B.F. Skinner) and raving racists (Jensen, Schockley, Herrnstein, Eysenck). UCRA is one of those academic groups now emerging in several leading capitalist countries, which shriek protests about threats to academic freedom whenever the policies of one of the racists are challenged to debate. (The witch-hunting Bund Freiheit der Wissenschaft is Hook's cothinkers' group in Germany today.)
7. The group expelled from the VKPD by Paul Levi and denounced by Lenin on several occasions; the example of infantilism used by Lenin in his Left-Wing Communism. Paul Mattick, ex-KAPDer, is the best known surviving spokesman for this anarcho-syndicalist tendency today.
8. Cf. Ed Spannaus and Carol LaRouche, "From Revolution to Reuther," in Campaigner, Vol. 4, No. 2, Spring, 1971. Also, a forthcoming account of the 1928-34 period by Gerry Rose in the same publication.
9. Cf. "Socialism or Trade Unionism — The IWW versus the SP," in New Solidarity, Vol. III, No. 28, Oct. 9-13, 1972.
10. Exemplary are the writings on "state capitalism" and "the permanent arms economy" by members of the leading "Third Camp" group, British International Socialists, manifesting a degree of economic illiteracy which makes the group a favorite literary punching bag on this account even for such mediocrities as Ernest Mandel and the British Healyites.
11. Gross Price of Output less cost of materials, semi-finished goods, supplies, power, etc., equals Gross Value Added (by conversion). The sum of Gross Value Added for all firms and individuals equals Gross National Product.
12. Theories of Surplus Value, Moscow, Part I.
13. For discussion of this see L. Marcus, Dialectical Economics (in publication).

Wilhelm Reich's Sexual Revolution

THE IDEOLOGY OF SOCIALISM OR FASCISM?

by Nancy Spannaus

I. INTRODUCTION

In the current pre-revolutionary period, a period of ferment which has characterized the flow of political life in the advanced capitalist sector of the world since the late 1920's, the doors of "the public" have swung open to radical saviors of all persuasions. As the undeniable indicators of economic, social and political collapse have bored in on the yet-confused consciousness of the population, various sectors of that population, beginning with students and oppressed minorities, have been caught up by the radical movements. From every side they are besieged by the call for revolution — the black revolution, the women's revolution, the sexual revolution, the Jesus revolution, and sometimes even socialist revolution.

Not surprisingly, the most popular of these movements have been those which pander to particular groups' common-sense awareness of their own SPECIAL oppression under capitalism. Hence women's groups recruit by proposing to eliminate the stunting of women's intellect, the sex differential, and other sexual oppression by fighting for WOMEN'S rights. Black liberation groups, taxpayers' movements, rank-and-file trade union caucuses and right-wing vigilante squads — all have accepted their most visible opponent, as THE enemy, and vowed to extirpate it in the most militant fashion possible.

Such radical bourgeois movements might not cause socialists such grave concern but for the fact that the official repositories of Marxism themselves, the major socialist parties, are abandoning themselves to the popular radicalism. The world Communist parties and the Fourth Internationals have taken the part of retailers on the ideological market, coming up with a new blend of Marxism for each category of the population. Each

blend is "diabolically" guaranteed to meet the bewildered worker or student "where he's at" and to entice him ever so gradually into the inner sanctum of "Marxism-Leninism." While the potentiality for expanding the vital but small core of socialist intellectuals increases manyfold, the so-called Marxists toss aside or degrade even their vulgar pretensions at theory in hopes of winning over the bulk of the disaffected masses immediately. Consequently, the theory peddled loses all connection with scientific Marxism; instead we find the world's official Communists sowing the seeds for counterrevolution.

Such betrayals of Marxism are hardly unique to the current period. For example, in the early 1930's the German Communist Party (KPD), legendary for its ultra-left ravings, found it useful to take under its wing one "people's hero" named Wilhelm Reich. Reich's revolutionary credo, combined as it was with his call for the sexual revolution, made him appear to be an opportune drawing card for the Party's recruitment drive, particularly among restless German youth. Indeed, if success could be counted in the numbers Reich attracted to his mental hygiene clinics and organizations for "sexual politics," the ploy was marvelously successful. Yet the heyday of Reich's movement, and of the KPD as well, was only the last swell before the precipitous fall into fascism. Surely this version of "popular Marxism" can be suspected to have missed the mark.

RE-ENTER WILHELM REICH

But today we find a corresponding revival of both Reichian method and his theory of revolution, a revival which extends to even the major "communist" parties. Among a small but crucial layer of radicalized students, sexual liberation is being touted as the touchstone

of revolution. Some of these converts have the audacity to attribute to the Reich-inspired sexual freedom movement at Nanterre a major responsibility for the May 1968 general strike in France.(1) To be sure, most Reichians are unlikely even to recognize the importance of that proto-revolutionary upheaval. But yet they delude themselves that, as devotees of a "synthesizer" of Marx and Freud, they are hastening the coming of world revolution.

In the American section of the Mandel branch of the Fourth International, the Socialist Workers Party, the unnamed Reichian influence is hard to miss. While Reich and the SWP would clash over the SWP's assertion that homosexuality is revolutionary per se, Reich and these so-called heirs of Trotsky have oriented to their sexual liberation movements in nearly identical fashion. Both foster a most debased sense of human identity — sexual satisfaction. They call on youth to abandon the disquieting search for a positive relationship to the human race as a whole; to interpret the dissatisfactions of adolescence in a decaying capitalist society as "sexual frustration"; and to heed the call of sexual liberation as the path to socialism. Both consciously play down "theory" on the pretext of demonstrating their concern that people be accepted at their own level, thus scorning the human potential for creative thought. Both ignore the overriding, imminent issue of world capitalist collapse — fascism or socialism — in order to appeal to the "masses" on the lowest common constituency denominator.

Even the Communist Party (USA), rabidly anti-Reichian since their unsuccessful flirtation in 1928-1932, displays Reichian "constituent" organizing methods, albeit in non-sexual arenas. Black party members or periphery are permitted a taste of nationalism, while trade unionists are not shaken up by exposure to challenges from the unemployed. On the agenda for youth work, according to speeches from the recent YWLL convention, are Reich-like adaptations to popular youth culture — an enticing array of sports clubs, rock concerts, and other social get-togethers. Like Reich, or, more precisely, his KPD sponsors, they aim to set up a smooth conveyor belt into the party. Economics and theory, as Reich once complained, tend to drive large numbers of recruits away.(2)

To dispense with Reich and his ideas as with any organizational centrist, however, is to overlook the invidious appeal of his sexual-political theories among today's left. Reich represents, in many respects, the limiting case among the dehumanizing self-concepts inflicted on man by capitalist social organization. For, when his platitudes about sexual health and oppression are left aside, there is little of Reich's theorizing that does not reduce man to an electrical energy system, requiring complete, periodic orgasms to keep it in (literally) working order. In his own words, "The task of a revolutionary movement, quite generally, is

that of liberating and gratifying the previously suppressed biological impulses."(3)

Man is little more than an eating, sleeping, copulating machine, in this view — the very machine which German fascism, and the fascism now being incubated by world depression and the failures of "revolutionary" parties, strove to create. It is the sad irony that Reich, who has gained some reputation as an ideological fighter against fascism and certainly conceived of himself as in the forefront of the battle against Nazism, developed both a theory and practice which could only find "fulfillment" under fascist social conditions.

HUMAN IDENTITY

Before we begin our analysis of Reich, it is first necessary to elaborate briefly the positive conception of human identity from which we criticize Reich's work. The human individual is not fully human, in our view, until he is an individual-for-humanity, using the freedom and creativity which are his only through society as a whole. toward the betterment of the human race. Far from being an abstract religious goal, "betterment" refers in each particular historical period to definite qualitative advances in reproduction process and social organization of the working class. To achieve such humanity, an individual must self-consciously appropriate and develop the tasks of his historical period, thus becoming part of the process by which humanity expands itself and its freedom. This usually occurs through his participation in building and maintaining his primary relation to an institution consciously representing the working class as a whole, such as the Paris Commune or the St. Petersburg Soviet.

In contrast to the view of fatalistic determinists such as Plekhanov, the individual is not the mere end-product of a mathematical equation comprised of societal "factors." His self-conception, largely but in many fortunate cases not entirely molded and reinforced by his immediate social milieu, plays a DETERMINATE — rather than strictly determined — role in the historical process. The individual, then, whose liberation was Marx's explicit goal, becomes free by consciously contributing to the freedom of the social order to which he is a moving part. He is defined by his relationship to humanity's COLLECTIVE advance over nature; other "identities" — particular professions, sexual role, psychological makeup — are important to the extent that they add to or subtract from his critical role in human evolution.

"Objectively" the positive role of the individual contributes to the maximization of society's social surplus. This surplus can be defined in a strictly economic sense, as the product or materialized human activity available to society over and above the maintenance of its labor force, nature, and capital equipment at current

levels. Creative utilization of this surplus will not only enhance human potential, but also determine whether or not the human race will overcome the periodic exhaustion of resources inherent in any technology of production, or will doom itself to extinction. Human history indicates that man's ability to solve technological barriers and expand the social surplus are virtually unlimited — granted that the abolition of capitalism allows the mass of the world's people to become human, creative members of a self-conscious world-wide social organism. Hence, "economics" is not a compartment covering those hours when a man or woman labors, or the distribution of goods, or any other PART of human life. "Economics" encompasses society's total activities and the allocation of all its productive energies. In this sense "socialist man" is "economic" man par excellence.

HUMAN SEXUALITY

In establishing our basic frame of reference it is also helpful to differentiate a Marxian view of sexuality — in so far as one can presently be established — from popular "leftist" views, especially those of Erich Fromm and Herbert Marcuse. At the outset we repeat what was stated less explicitly in the previous section — that HUMAN sexuality is expressed in concrete relationships which both enhance and reflect the individual's relationship to society as a whole. Marx himself recognized the importance of sexual relationships in either crippling or furthering human potential when he wrote in the Economic And Philosophical Manuscripts:

In the relationship with WOMAN, as the prey and the handmaid of communal lust, is expressed the infinite degradation in which man exists for himself; for the secret of this relationship finds its UNEQUIVOCAL, incontestable, OPEN and revealed expression in the way in which the DIRECT and NATURAL species relationship is conceived. The immediate, natural and necessary relation of human being to human being is also the RELATION of MAN to WOMAN. In this NATURAL species relationship man's relation to nature is directly his relation to man, and his relation to man is directly his relation to nature, to his own NATURAL function. Thus, in this relation is SENSUOUSLY REVEALED, reduced to an observable FACT, the extent to which human nature has become nature for man and to which nature has become human nature for him. From this relationship man's whole level of development can be assessed. It follows from the character of this relationship how far MAN has become, and has understood himself as, a SPECIES-BEING.... It also shows how far man's NEEDS have become HUMAN needs, and consequently how far the other person, as a person, has become one of his needs, and to what extent he is in his individual existence at the same time a

social being. (4) (emphasis in original)

The most popular "Marxist" psychoanalysts, however, have abandoned a Marxian view of sexuality. Starting from a critique of distorted and destructive sexual relations under capitalism, they seek to establish some trans-social or asocial criteria for sexual health. In both cases the result takes the form of religious affirmation. And while on the one hand, Marcuse's ideals can be described as totally anti-human, Fromm, on the other hand, never moves beyond a formal appreciation of the relationship between human love and "social responsibility."

Marcuse's sexual ideal is the child — who seeks immediate (primarily bodily) pleasure in an infinite variety of imaginative ways (polymorphous perversity (5)). Hence he advocates that adults seek "freedom" through regression to the era of sexual play. "Revolution" then becomes the establishment of a Playpen Society, in which all of those nasty necessities of maintaining life (food production, energy production, etc.) are magically mechanized, and people are free to engage in "creative" sexual release, unrelated to social-reproductive tasks. In adopting this view, Marcuse takes a purely biological and atomistic position on the question of human nature — for him man's ultimate freedom is to titillate as many erogenous zones as possible. Human advance, for Marcuse, does not represent man's growing collective power over nature and himself, but the unbridling of certain "innate" sexual cravings, which are now constrained by the obviously deadly alienation imposed by capitalism. Marcuse's "alternative" is the simple negation of civilization — i.e. the return to the unsocialized child's world. In advocating such a revolutionary sexual life-style, however, he must assume that the "father" — capitalism — will continue to handle the necessities of life. Hence his recent announcement of support for a capitalist representative, George McGovern, for President of the U.S.A. is hardly surprising.

Erich Fromm represents a less clear-cut deviation from Marxian analysis. In his Art of Loving it is clear that he defines sexual health — responsibility, care, knowledge, and respect — in such a way as to be co-extensive with a creative SOCIAL identity. Yet he neither concerns himself with the dynamic specifics of such a role, nor does he seem to grasp the sociological implications and underpinnings of the kind of human connectedness he advocates. While he considers the neurotic distortions of personal relationships to be the reflection of capitalist social relations, he has proposed no SOCIAL (i.e. POLITICAL) method of overthrowing these relationships. Hence while Fromm's theoretical efforts have led him to creative interpretations of psychological development and such historical phenomena as fascism, his character types never escape the quality of shadows. Note, for example, his treatment of Marx as a prophetic Messianist — the equivalent

of Jesus or Buddha — in his Marx's Conception of Man.(6) In failing to grapple with the social-reproductive (economic) basis for human society, Fromm is left with a passive human personality, and no way out of capitalism but by a rejection of its values.

REICH'S REVIVAL

Yet today it appears that both Marcuse and Fromm, idols of the 1960's, are passe. After making certain allowances for the bourgeois press' prejudices in favor of Reichian (rather than socialist) revolution, we must conclude that Reich's ideas have experienced an upsurge in popularity since the late 1960's. His "Mass Psychology of Fascism" has been reprinted three times in the last year and a half; the past three years have seen the publication of numerous articles, books, and translations of a man whose writings can still hardly be found in the most well-stocked libraries; and in various enclaves of student "socialists" — in France, Germany, and the U.S. — we hear the self-definition "Reichian." When the Socialist Workers Party — which scorns no aspect of "youth culture" — holds a forum on Reich, you can bet they are responding to an empirical stimulus!

Those familiar with the range of Reich's work will recognize, of course, that the political identification of "Reichians" runs the gamut. Practicing Reichian therapists such as Elsworth Baker find rightwing Senator Barry Goldwater very much to their taste.(7) Members of such leftist grouplets as Liberation Magazine and the Radical Therapist consider themselves socialist. While the course of this paper will make it clear why Reich can attract such apparent political opposites, it will concentrate on the portions of his literary output that were written during his period of identification with the European Communist movement — a period which ended in 1934.

Reich's popularity among strata of youth who are seeking sexual identity and freedom takes on particular importance because of his own participation in the socialist movement. As a "synthesizer" of Marx and Freud, he thus gains a credibility which popular psychoanalysts Erich Fromm and Herbert Marcuse find much harder to come by. While attracted to Reich because of his radical bourgeois (anarchist) views on sexual liberation, his followers can retain a conception of themselves as social "revolutionaries" by invoking his political involvement as well as his writings. Hence we must deal with Reich's politicking, although sources for this tend to be limited to his own accounts.

PROLETARIAN SEXUAL POLITICS

Reich "discovered" Marx in the early 1920's, not long after he joined the psychoanalytic movement. He joined the Austrian Communist Party in 1927. His activities included, although it is not clear how ex-

clusively, the establishment of sex-hygiene clinics which sought a working-class clientele for lectures on the sexual revolution, as well as individual therapy for workers and their families. In 1930, for reasons which seem to have included the closing of his clinics in Vienna, Reich moved to Berlin. There he not only continued to establish clinics, but founded the Deutscher Reichsverband fuer Sexual-Politik (German Association for Sexual Politics).

The "Sexpol" is reputed to have attracted about 20,000 - 40,000 members, whose political commitment was probably the equivalent of youthful attenders of anti-war picnics today. Reich claims that the attraction of the sexual wing of the Communist movement became so great that the KPD's sexually-repressive and repressed leaders felt compelled to withdraw its sponsorship and Reich's party membership in 1932, on the basis that energies were being distracted from political work. In reality it seems that the KPD figured their gains from the Sexpol were being more than cancelled out by the antagonism Reich aroused among church-affiliated working people. Pressures from the Nazi movement — on both the KPD and Sexpol — also contributed to the dissolution of the "socialist" sexual hygiene movement, and eventually to Reich's fleeing Germany in 1933, under threat of arrest.

With the exception of a couple of journal articles he himself alludes to, Reich abandoned his interest in mass political organizing and the socialist movement once he left Germany. With the U.S.S.R.'s re-establishment in the mid-1930's of laws upholding the nuclear family and traditional strictures against abortions, homosexuality, and sexual freedom, Reich also lost the identification he had once felt with the land of revolution. Over the next two decades his disappointment in the Communist movement transformed itself into raging anti-communism and an abhorrence of all politics and politicians (except for General Dwight D. Eisenhower).

What did Reich's political practice involve? He distinguished himself from the multitude of sex-reform movements in Germany in the 1920's not so much by his activity, but by his simultaneous assertion that a revolution was necessary for the development of "true" sexual freedom. The program of Sexpol was not explicitly anti-capitalist; it concentrated on the following eight demands: 1) better housing conditions for the masses of people; 2) abolition of laws against abortion and homosexuality; 3) change of marriage and divorce laws; 4) free birth control advice and contraceptives; 5) health protection of mother and children; 6) nurseries in factories and in other large employment centers; 7) abolition of laws prohibiting sex education; and 8) home leave for prisoners.(8)

Reich saw housing construction as a prerequisite for the desired private pursuit of sexual freedom — every adolescent and adult needed a room of his own.

The other programmatic demands resemble the thrust of the women's liberation movement today, by proposing to relieve the sexual oppression of women and children by removing laws and adding services — rather than transforming the total complex of social relations which determine human potentialities. Reich claimed that the revolutionary movement had to deal with the sexual problems of the working class — particularly women and youth — BEFORE dealing with questions of employment, production, and political power. There is no indication, however, in any of Reich's writings, or those of his adherents, that he or his following even participated in strikes or other working-class activity between 1927 and 1933.

Reich's writings during this period contain a "political" rationale for his concentrating on purely sexual questions. Reich claims that the anti-capitalist economic program of the National Socialists was virtually identical with that of the Communists.(9) On questions of program, then, youth could never be won from Hitler. The real point where the Nazis were vulnerable, he insisted, was the sexual question.(10) Public exposure of the anti-sexual attitudes of the Nazis would be decisive in driving a wedge between youth and the Nazi movement; it'd be as simple as that.(11)

The Nazis raise the banner of sexuality, albeit in mystical form, to attract youth, notes Reich, and they are very successful. They receive the complete emotional commitment of their cadre. The Communists too must recognize the sexual frustrations which youth grapple with under capitalism and offer them the vision of true sexual liberation — which is only possible through socialism. Our message must be: "In capitalist society there can be no sexual liberation of youth, no healthy, satisfying sex life; if you want to be rid of your sexual troubles, fight for socialism."(12)

Whether Reich ever viewed sexual liberation as a "come-on" that would eventually lure apolitical youth into consideration of "fundamental economic and social problems" (13) or not is beside the point. The organizing he advocated and promoted, no matter how "mass," reinforced the most atomistic, alienated self-conception on the part of youth and others. Sexpol invited the frustrated individual to use the Communist movement in order to find personal sexual gratification, the "highest" happiness. The goal was posed in terms of an individual's sensations — the release of sexual tension through orgasm. The criterion for liberation was contained WITHIN THE INDIVIDUAL HIMSELF, not in his relationship to society and its development. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the youth Reich attracted saw no NECESSARY connection between their search for sexual fulfillment and socialism, and dropped away when "politics" began to interfere with their personal concerns, such as their physical safety from fascist goons.

Today's "left" Reichians are not necessarily in agreement with Reich's sex-political organizing, just as they "reject" his anti-political ravings and orgone-box fantasies.(14) Probably only the Socialist Workers Party adheres closely to Reichian strategy, although semi-consciously — by using "women's issues," especially sexual oppressions, to entice women into "politics." As such, they are following Reich's specific concern with the sexually repressed woman as the foundation of Hitlerism.(15)

Most modern-day Reichians evince a more obvious aversion to politics by organizing themselves into communes and study groups — formations whose very structure discourages involvement in class issues and movements. They more or less explicitly proposed to "liberate" themselves through the group experiment, although some see themselves "preparing" for future involvement with the working-class movement. As shown by the history of the "Socialist Labor Committee" — an excretion of the NCLC in early 1971 — the only thing such groups, as groups, are preparing for is total withdrawal from politics.

Yet, because of his affiliation with the Communist movement, and because of his extensive grappling with the relationship between Freud and Marx, economics and psychology, Reich's ideas muddy the waters for some serious socialists as well. They see in him the holist who integrated Marx and Freud, battled psychoanalytic reactionaries, and used his synthesis to demystify the popular roots of German fascism, while the official Communist movement could only "rationalize" Nazism as Hitler's mad conspiracy. They scorn Reich's explicit treatment, most developed in his work from 1935 on, of man as a tension-release system, ripped from his social nexus, and concentrate on Reich's political period, 1927-1933. During this time Reich wrote six books dealing with the relationship of psychoanalysis to social revolution, as he understood it, plus Character Analysis, his only work that retains any standing in psychoanalytic circles. Of these seven works, we shall examine the bulk of five: *Dialectical Materialism and Psychoanalysis* (1929); *Geschlechtstiefe, Enthaltsamkeit, Ehemoral* (1930) and *Die Sexualitaet im Kulturkampf* (1936) (both included in *The Sexual Revolution*); a portion of *Der Sexuelle Kampf der Jugend* (1932); and *the Mass Psychology of Fascism* (1933). Only *The Sexual Revolution* and *Mass Psychology* have been read extensively in the U.S.; translations of the other works have appeared in small radical journals with limited circulation.

II. PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS OF REICHIANISM

Reich's writings throughout the early 1930's and in the popular English version of the *Function of the Orgasm* (1942) proceed from a typically alienated con-

ception of human identity and total disregard for the sociological process through which individuals mediate their activity.

In discarding the mechanistic correlations between economic conditions and consciousness which are still peddled as Marxist theory today, Reich made a major advance over the official Communists of his time. His elaboration of how ruling-class ideology is mediated through, and reproduced by, individual character structure represents a valuable insight into a PHASE of the social process. Reich reifies this application of the dialectical method, however; character structure becomes totally dependent upon the person's ability to achieve release of sexual energy through orgasm, and THE determining factor in human potentiality. While in the long run orgasmic release required a non-repressive childhood and adolescence, such as only a revolution could establish, sexual freedom was necessary NOW in order to achieve such a revolution.

Reich resolved this problem in various ways — with each resolution taking him further and further from any dialectical relationship between socio-economic organization and an individual's psychology. He begins, early in *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, with the notion of an internal duality, which accounts for the facts that sexually repressed, authoritarian, reactionary workers participate in the Communist movement. (16) While he falsely conceives of this duality — internal polemic — as an antagonism between socially-imposed character structure and the intrinsic biologic drive for freedom, he nevertheless identifies an important dynamic of consciousness by rejecting the "orthodox" communist notion of the intrinsically class-conscious worker. (17) Before he has finished the *Mass Psychology*, however, Reich has constructed an entirely different concept of individual psychology — that of socially induced (by capitalism) BIOLOGIC inability (inculcated over thousands of years) to break free of submission to ruling-class authority.

At this point Reich still could conceive of a revolution which, by changing social institutions, would allow people to be educated to freedom by a revolutionary vanguard which "somehow" escaped the inexorable historical process of suppression. But as Reich lost faith in Lenin and other revolutionaries whom he originally saw as the embodiment of such a vanguard, he not only abandoned the concept of vanguard leadership, but he also moved into the atomistic perspective expressed in *The Function of the Orgasm*. In this book he claimed that escape from repressed and repressive character structure was only available through the "accident" of a satisfactory orgasmic release. At this stage of his career, of course, social institutions become a totally extraneous consideration for Reich, except to the extent that they impinge negatively on an individual's search for personal gratification.

Reich's recognition that socio-economic processes play a determining role in developing character did not lead him into any fruitful resolution of the problems of human consciousness and identity. Not only did he concentrate too exclusively on the family as the mediating institution between society and the individual (18), but he also conceived of societal influence in an almost totally negative sense. Since capitalist economics and social relations served to inhibit individual happiness, freedom, and responsibility, Reich proposed that this economic-social structure be negated. But with what kind of structure would it be superseded?

Although he FORMALLY rejected Freud's proposition on civilization — that repression was intrinsic to civilization, and that work was antagonistic to individual sexual freedom — Reich nonetheless failed to understand the need for social institutions through which the individual establishes a positive relationship to society as a whole. In his ideal society — work democracy — people had a sense of responsibility and pride in their work as their INDIVIDUAL creation, much the same outlook as the artisan or middle-class professional. Reich's view of individual fulfillment in work (as well as sex) never entailed an active and SUBSUMED relationship with collective social-political bodies, deliberative organizations self-consciously representing the interests of humanity as a whole. On the contrary, an individual's positive contribution to society was to be earmarked by his skill and his pleasure in performing his work. The criterion for "health" lay in the individual. It is merely assumed that the autonomous activity of thousands of "fulfilled" individuals will automatically result in coherent economic and social development of society — a profoundly bourgeois view of social relationships.

Reich was most explicit in defining liberation as a negation of modern society in his psychological work. His model of personality in *The Function of the Orgasm* shows clearly that Reich believed that in order to liberate a man, his character structure must be stripped away. Then only the positive, and biologic, wellsprings of love and personal responsibility will remain. But Reich's anthropological work, based on his interpretation of Malinowski's 1931 study of the Trobriand Islanders, clearly indicates his vision of such liberated SOCIAL existence. It is the vision of primitive communism — a small community where everyone's pursuit of pleasure results in plenitude and cooperation. The technological revolutions which transformed these "idyllic" tribal scenes — which, as described by Reich, emit a certain aura of unreality in their neglect of famine, high mortality rates, and dull routine common to primitive societies — are viewed by Reich as evil intrusions, rather than prerequisites for human existence on a freer, and higher cultural, scale.

Reich's conception of liberation involved a step back

in time — not in the grotesque manner Marcuse proposes (19), but to a genital Garden of Eden which is undisturbed by men's active, collective involvement in reproducing himself and his environment. Hence when Reich gave up "politics" for "truth," he made a quantitative, not qualitative, jump. He merely exchanged an idealized projection of petit-bourgeois anarchy for the mystical realm of inhuman cosmic harmonies.

II. THE FORMAL CONNECTION: "DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM AND PSYCHO-ANALYSIS"

While Reich can be credited for seeking and affirming a coherence between psychological processes and political economy, his only formal attempt to link Marxian dialectics with psychoanalysis resulted in an utter travesty. This travesty, entitled *Dialectical Materialism and Psychoanalysis*, was a short formal essay, published in 1929, and was apparently intended, at least in part, as a public relations job. (20) Its sketchy and superficial comparisons between libidinal and social processes avoid mention of Reich's evaluation of the primacy of genital health and sexual attitudes in the achievement of socialism — an attitude that is unmistakably expressed in *Characteranalyse* and other works written slightly earlier or during this same period. Reich seems clearly to be pledging his allegiance to the Communist movement, in hopes of winning a hearing before the German and Russian parties.

Reich begins his essay by taking great pains to carve out a territory for psychoanalysis which will not overlap with the Leninist canon. While he on the one hand asserts that Marxist method serves as a criterion for all areas of science, he on the other hand argues for a psychoanalytic arena free from Marxist criticism. We analysts can't say anything about class consciousness, he concedes...but "Marxism cannot illuminate neurotic phenomena, disturbances in a man's working capacity or in his sexual performance." (21) A clear enough horse trade — a non-aggression pact. His subsequent quotation from Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach* dealing with individual consciousness only shows up the vulgarity of his proposed deal (22) — that he was conscious of the double-talk he was proposing.

To obtain his franchise to the territory of the psyche, however, Reich must prove himself orthodox on two points: 1) that psychoanalysis is a materialist science, and 2) that psychological processes follow certain "laws of dialectics."

Reich's "proof" that psychoanalysis is materialist rests on two major assertions. The first is that certain psychological concepts (internal processes) first identified by psychoanalysis — shifting erogenous zones, the Oedipal complex, repression, etc. — correspond to, or result from, actual EXTERNAL events. The oral

stage occurs in conjunction with the period of life where the child does little but eat (and sleep); the Oedipal conflict reflects the father's demand that his son give up sexual aspirations for his mother.

Reich's formulation — which is based explicitly on Lenin's epistemology in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, where Lenin asserts a material reality independent of human experience — totally eliminates the critical role of the subjective processes. By Reich's philosophical criteria one would have to deny the existence of an artistic person within a non-artistic family, or of a sexually-repressed offspring of promiscuous parents. Without direct contact with behavior that can be "taken over from the outside world," "acquisition," there is no Reichian explanation for such frequent occurrences. To understand such "anomalies" requires

a psychology that comprehends the child's activity upon his parents, his parents' response to that activity and conception of what their child should be, and the broader definitions of social role which influence the child through other relationships — rather than the simple stimulus-response of castrating mother (23)-repressed child. Reich essentially denies therefore the possibility of morality-in-general in the sense of Feuerbach's conception of morality (24) — identification with and action toward the benefit of humanity as a whole. For Reich, all morals come from "fear of punishment or...love of those who bring him up." (25)

Reich also contends that every psychoanalytic process has an internal physiological source. This is not a shocking or unreasonable assertion, until it becomes clear that Reich emulates Freud's crudest formulation of psycho-physical parallelism (26) — that psychic urges are CAUSED BY, i.e. epiphenomena of, bodily chemistry and movement. The tension-release system is Reich's model. "After each satisfaction of a need, followed by a short period of rest, the instinctual apparatus tenses itself like a spring again and again." (27)

The individual is portrayed as a rudderless coil, whose area of involvement is determined by "social factors," but whose particular act is a response to inner twitchings. Reich also gives away his mechanical notion of psychic processes in characterizing the ego, which could most accurately be described as self-consciousness, as follows:

The material nature of the ego is unassailable, if only because the ego is linked with the perception system of the sensory organs. Furthermore, as already stated, Freud derives the ego from the effect of material irritations or stimuli upon the instinct apparatus. (28)

THE "LAWS OF DIALECTICS"

Having hocked psychoanalysis to the mechanical

materialists — whom he understandably but erroneously confuses with Marxists — Reich then proceeds into “dialectics,” which he conceives in an even more vulgar manner. He begins by setting out seven “fundamental principles of dialectical materialism,” through which he embraces the following misconceptions. First he identifies the Dialectic as a process “given in matter independently from thought.” (29) He further rejects society as an interdependent process by stating that “the development, not only of society, but also of all other phenomena, (occurs)... out of an inner contradiction, out of contrasts which are present in matter...” (30)

In Reich’s application of this “principle” to psychoanalysis, he exemplifies it with the process of reaction formation — through which a desire to defecate, for example, contains and is turned into its opposite, compulsive cleanliness. Although many orthodox Freudians find Reich’s formulation congenial (love turning into hate, fear into bravado), this psychological process obviously has little meaning, and cannot possibly be predicted, outside of its relationship to not only the individual’s psychological history, but also the historically-specific conditions which he encounters. It is therefore not an intrinsic “development principle” at all, but a contingency within man’s active relationship with the species as a whole at a particular time.

Reich continues his list of principles by stating his view that all dialectical developments (which must be all developments) are “unavoidable and necessary” — a position that would ingratiate him with Plekhanov, but certainly not with Marx. Then, after genuflecting before the dogma that “everything is in flux,” he proposes the “negation of the negation” as his fifth tenet of dialectics. By this he means that each development can essentially be defined by its relationship to what it has superseded, rather than to the positive self-development of society as a whole. In illustrating this tenet, he reveals the substance of his view of socialism, which is the negation of commodity production (itself being the negation of primitive communism), or a return to primitive communism.

Reich’s “dialectical” principles also include affirmation of the “reciprocal effect of strictly separate phenomena (sic!)... a whole process of mutual interpenetration and reciprocal action,” and the orthodox “Marxist” saw about quantity turning into quality.

The above conception of dialectics serves the bill for Reich in that it provides a schema easily imposed on (or perhaps derived from?) orthodox psychological processes. He describes an individual’s development as the continuing resolution of contradictions between instinctual needs and social pressures. Hence “the refusal of instinctual satisfaction becomes, through the conflict which it causes within the child, the motive force of its development.” (31) The individual is rele-

gated to a mere battleground for biological and social-economic forces; while more weight is thrown on the “social” side than Freud himself would allow, the notion of the human being as “subject” — the active molder of his “natural” and social environment — is nowhere to be found, except in a sloganeering form. Nor do we find any appreciation of the individual actively determining his behavior in order to maintain or enhance his identity as defined by hegemonic social institutions. Instead Reich envisions the individual acting in accordance with direct economic demand (rationality) or direct instinct (irrationality), or some vector determined by the pull of the opposing forces. (32)

THE CRUCIAL OMISSION: SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

What Reich’s formal treatment of dialectics shows is that he completely overlooks the critical role of self-consciousness in human life — both individual and “mass.” Take one crude but useful example. Two women, both raised in patriarchal families, with middle-class professional parents and values, with “feminist” instincts to succeed, facing the same moment of capitalist economic and political breakdown, grow up to diametrically-opposite social roles — one a WAC, one a revolutionary socialist. Is it a fluke? Can Reich explain it?

No. While the “instinctual” and “environmental” “factors” are very similar, they are not decisive. What makes the difference are their self-conceptions, where they locate their identity. While the outcome of this process of identification can be strongly indicated by knowledge of specific social pressures, libidinal relationships, and economic processes, no mechanical “factor analysis” could determine the result — only the subjective, yet social, process of self-definition, a process of which Reich has no comprehension.

This process is the mediation between the crude socio-economic and biological factors Reich relies on. While it depends heavily on the social institution (trade union, church, community group and the like) which the individual finds most “efficient” in maintaining a positive self-concept and livelihood, there is even then no absolute correspondence between social position and self-concept.

Under capitalism all workers are influenced by the “objective” processes which indicate that the abolition of capitalism is in their interest. They are also organized into social institutions which claim to be responsible for sustaining them under a continuing capitalism. Until social institutions are created which self-consciously represent the working class as a whole, most of the population will continue to locate their identity in, and act to preserve, capitalist institutions against their “objective” interests. Reich can only understand this irrational behavior as determined by special “irrational-

al" forces — neurotic interference with the instinctual pleasure principle — not as a LAWFUL RESULT of the formation of consciousness. Even in his socialist period, he sees human character as a process determined by unmediated economic and physiological events. When his religious adherence to socialism faded, it is no surprise that Reich was left with an electronic animal — whose life energy and processes can be most clearly elucidated by reference to amoebae, and protoplasm itself. (33)

III. ANTHROPOLOGY OR MYTH: THE INVASION OF COMPULSORY SEX-MORALITY

That Reich's notion of socialism was essentially a naive religious ideal imposed on his primarily mechanistic psychological conceptions, is well illustrated by his book *The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality*, written in 1931. In this short work Reich interpreted Malinowski's study of the Trobriand Islanders as a vindication not only of the Bachofen-Morgan-Engels thesis of primeval matriarchy, but also as evidence for his own view that sexual freedom is THE precondition for communist existence.

The Trobriand Islanders do not exemplify the perfect harmony of sexual freedom and the communal economy, even in Reich's view. They practice strict monogamy, and sexual relations within marriage are ritualistically regulated. Although marriage partners are chosen "sex-economically" (Reich's term for partners' free choice), the marriage contract involves an economic obligation for the wife's family — the yearly marriage gift.

Yet, with the exception of youth destined for special cross-cousin marriages, Trobriand children and adolescents enjoy what Reich calls "self-regulating sex-affirmation." Not only are they permitted to choose sexual partners as often and variously as they wish, but also they are allotted special huts in which they may be alone with the various lovers.

Reich describes these contradictory sexual moralities as illustrative of the transitional nature of Trobriand society — that it is in transition from a community completely free from sexual-morality and organized along the matrilineal axis, to a patriarchal sex-negative culture. He argues that sexual freedom such as Trobriand youth enjoy is absolutely incompatible with their eventual submission to repressive economic and sexual measures — and the increasing concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. This assertion — which is the king-pin of Reich's entire sexual-political strategy and political outlook — is thus not "proved" in any sense by Reich's study — but again merely asserted axiomatically.

Reich advances the proposition that "the impairment of genital sexuality makes men and women capable of marriage" — which in turn "constitutes the backbone of the authoritarian ideological factory, the patriarchal family." (34) Hence he attributes the marriage regulations among Trobrianders to the economic imposition of a certain group of males, who will eventually find it necessary to institutionalize their economic domination through child-rearing practices that will produce sexually-crippled, submissive adults. His hypothesis is that in an earlier period the Trobrianders had no restrictions on sexual satisfaction throughout adult life as well as in their youth.

The major thrust of Reich's anthropology, however, is not his evidence of primeval matriarchy (and therefore the historical specificity of repressive patriarchy), and the appropriateness of a society's selective sexual restrictions to the greed of powerful members of that society. It lies instead in his assumptions about more ancient primitive societies — that in them people were motivated solely by the pleasure principle; "(their)... main interest was genitality." (35) Far from being a historical hypothesis, this assertion of Reich's represent his goal and dogma. Socialism is to bring a return to the primeval state where "the individual's interests were mainly genital and were SATISFIED, the material needs were slight." (36)

As is obvious from Reich's analysis of the Trobrianders, his view of human motivation relies on an atomistic, mechanistic model of man. He expressed no interest in the general level of culture or the material hardships of the organization of production among these "savages." He does not assess an individual Trobriander's social situation in terms of his overall contribution to the reproduction of his society, but in terms of his individual sexual gratification or accumulation of goods. Reich presents two alternatives: greedy economic (and sexually-suppressed) man, or the naive, warm, sexually free native. He opts for the latter, a state where there is an "equalization of tension and discharges in the psychic apparatus." (37) He argues that the recapture of such bliss will automatically be accompanied by the desire and ability to work productively. But not only does he restrict mention of work to a few parenthetical nods in the direction of moralists, but also he has no concept of the allocation of social labor for the maintenance and expansion of its material existence. This conception is a prerequisite for an evaluation of work which transcends the criterion of whether it's pleasant or not.

In sum, Reich's work of "anthropology" serves primarily to bolster his contentions that the establishment of a "sex-affirmative" climate will pull the major prop out from under capitalism, and that there is historical evidence for the viability of a society based on "free" instinctual satisfaction. People are too frightened of their animality, he writes in the *Mass Psychology of*

Fascism. The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality aims to dispel this fear by presenting idyllic primitive life — no violence, no material want, just sexual play and minding one's own chores. If we took Reich seriously, we would have to consider industrialism a totally irrational development, required not by the exhaustion of the agricultural practices of feudal society, but by male greed. We would have to organize society in the interest of immediate sexual gratification, not maximum human control over nature.

But Reich's aim is to set the "scientific" stage for the counterculture's youth communes, which he himself advocated only briefly, but which have been calling on his name for legitimacy in both Europe and the U.S. for several years now.

IV. PROCESS OR ILLUSION: REICH'S WORK-DEMOCRACY

Reich labelled his specific version of socialist society "work-democracy." While this concept originally presupposed the abolition of capitalist property relations, Reich's only available essay on the subject was written after he'd left the communist movement, between 1937 and 1939. Hence he explains work-democracy as a natural apolitical process, the analogue of the Marxian Law of Value which governs the socio-economic process whether or not it is consciously grasped by society's members. What really matters in life, he writes, are not these POLITICAL questions of universal suffrage, nationalization of industry, and the like, but the simple self-evident manifestations of love, work and knowledge. In fact, the entire essay takes the form of a polemic against politics as both IRRELEVANT AND/OR HARMFUL TO THE NATURAL ECONOMIC HARMONY within society. According to Reich, it has always been the politicians and the state — not the sociological and economic organization of society — which has inhibited "natural" joy and decency. What this natural process consists of is indicated in the following juxtaposition: "The politician speaks of 'the interests of the economy and the state'; the simple working man wants 'gratification of needs and an untrammelled food supply.'" (38) Just let a man seek out his own sensual gratification and everything will fall into place!

Reich is totally correct that the capitalist political process and parties do NOT represent or deal with the economic processes which maintain society. In fact, one of the major points of confrontation between the NCLC and other left groups has been our conception that socialist politics are economic policies — that a concrete program of investment, of socialist reindustrialization, is the heart of socialist program. But, of course, Reich's "economics" has little correspondence to the NCLC's and Marx's economics. Socialist economic policies cannot be accomplished by stripping

away conscious political and social organization, leaving the "natural" "organic development of the work process." "Every vitally necessary and practical work" is NOT "a rational, organic development in itself," (39) as Reich asserts.

Work only has direction and meaning through its relation to the overall development of the productive forces and the thrust of investment policies. To use Reich's favorite occupations, the engineer or the shoemaker cannot individually improve upon and develop his skills in an organic progressive manner — for with qualitative leaps in society's productive forces not only would engineers completely shift their mode of work, but shoemakers as we conceive them might perhaps be totally eliminated! While Reich has a concept of "vitally necessary" work which might conceivably exclude the pencil pushers, stock-brokers, and technologically obsolete jobs we find in superabundance in the "advanced" capitalist world today, he develops this concept as an "objective" natural harmony — whereas the organization of production is determined precisely by POLITICS and political parties, which he seeks to eliminate. There are no "natural" work functions in HUMAN society. The closest one can come is by returning to the most primitive and inhuman of those societies and relinquishing all attempts to master nature. Unfortunately, it appears that it is this reactionary "ideal" which inspires Reich — and some of his contemporary adherents (communards) as well.

V. MAN'S ANIMALITY VS. FASCISM: THE MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM

To deal with Reich's gropings toward a positive society, however, is to skip over his "left" period and the richest effort of his career — The Mass Psychology of Fascism. In this analysis of the success of the Nazi movement, Reich attempted to come to grips with the conflicts between his biological mechanism and his Marxian credo in the analysis of a living phenomenon. The Mass Psychology is therefore rife with contradictions. On the one hand, fascist victory in Germany is attributed to the biologic armoring of the masses (40); on the other hand, to the lack of leadership by the German Communist Party (KPD). (41) One section of the book will proclaim the hopelessness of revolution until the masses have attained sexual freedom; another will hail the possibilities within the Russian revolution for the party to create the conditions for gradual liberation for the masses. In general, however, Reich has so tightly locked himself into the view that human character structure is a biologic phenomenon, and changeable only through biologic changes, that he cannot maintain even a nominally socialist perspective except as a moral litany or deus ex machina.

The Mass Psychology of Fascism purports to ex-

plain why fascism was able to win mass support, or toleration, in Germany. It is in this arena of examination where Reich makes some insightful contributions—contributions which in some sense anticipate those of Erich Fromm in his *Escape From Freedom*. When Reich moves into an explanation of what fascism is and how it could be defeated, however, he completely capitulates to the bio-sexual mechanism which we found rampant in his treatise on dialectics.

THE BARRIERS TO CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS: PSYCHOLOGICAL OR SOCIOLOGICAL?

Why did millions of German workers capitulate to Hitler and his goons without a fight? Did Hitler's anti-capitalist demagoguery deceive them into thinking he was pro-labor? Did Hitler become a madman after he rose to power? Reich joins Trotsky — and other non-CP historians — in rejecting these theories and placing the blame squarely on the bankrupt leadership of the SPD and KPD. But he does not consider this explanation sufficient — far from it. Fascism could not have come to rule Germany unless the German population had on some level WANTED such a vicious authoritarian government, according to Reich. To learn why fascism was victorious one must examine its psychological meaning and the psychology of the masses. For Reich contends that German workers knew Hitler for the anti-human autocrat he was. In his view, the working-class consciously acted against its own self-interest, with many workers even voting for Hitler, as Reich goes to great pains to demonstrate.

Reich's reduction of German working people to sado-masochistic perverts is an application of reductionist logic. After presenting nearly every aspect of the evidence for petit-bourgeois embrace of fascist mysticism from a sociological point of view, Reich extends his argument to explain the workers' capitulation. In so doing he transposes the extreme RESULTS of fascist social relations (presaged by the petty, destructive competition of small businessmen), which took their toll on German workers, into the CAUSE of fascist victory. He magnifies the normal sado-masochistic qualities of social relations under capitalism beyond recognition.

Nonetheless Reich raises an important question and provides one ray of light toward the answer. Having observed irrational behavior on the part of the working class, unlike the CP, he does not try to deny it or rationalize it away! Instead he argues that the very process of socialization in capitalist society has molded the character structure of working people, so that they will not wholeheartedly resist dictatorships, economic privations, and the like, but prefer such rule to a freedom and self-determination that they feel ill-equipped to handle.

In other words, Reich correctly notes that capitalist rule is upheld not merely by the police, army, and

state propaganda; it is embedded in the very personality — and, to Reich, the very cells — of a person raised under capitalism. Hence Reich recognizes that socialist consciousness is not secreted by a worker's place in the productive process, but is reached OVER THE VIOLENT OPPOSITION of the everyday thoughts and habits of workers themselves.

Having advanced beyond the CP and other witnesses to "proletarian virginity," Reich opts for a mechanism of another sort. Either one is motivated by strict economic considerations, as is a union which responds to a pay cut with a strike, or one acts according to psychological demands.(42) But in reality, a worker's activity does not flow from his direct response to either an external (economic) or internal (characterological) stimulus. He acts so as to maintain his social identity within his sociological network — his religious group, his trade union, his social club. It is this social network, through which he mediates his day-to-day activity, which does the most to determine whether he will strike today or scab tomorrow.

When this reference group is torn apart and ineffective — or vacillates hopelessly before threats to its existence, as happened to the KPD—its members do not permanently revert to atomistic individuals, acting according to their private yearnings. They rather begin to mediate their activity through some other grouping which promises to give their life meaning—such as the Nazi Labor Front.

In the case of the active Nazi followers, this process can be easily traced — particularly among those de-classed veterans and unemployed youth who formed the core of the fascist gangs. Similarly, among the white-collar and small business strata, where the economic crisis was destroying any hope of self-esteem and survival, the Voelkisch movement offered an intoxicating uplift, a new "higher" identity.

In the anomie of capitalist breakdown crisis, the very foundations of all social institutions — and hence an individual's sense of stability as well —are shaken. Radical changes are demanded.

The alternative to the mystical identity obtained by avid fascists could only have been participation in a socialist movement with a positive program for socialist transformation, and a coherent strategy. Neither of these conditions was met by the KPD. Firmly under the thumb of the Comintern and stinking of both vacillation and failure since the bungled revolutionary opportunities of 1923, the German Communists were militant but ineffective snipers at the German Social Democracy. Their sectarianism led them to do EVERYTHING BUT make serious preparations for power — from refusing tactical alliances and defense with the Social-Democrats to allying with the Nazis to overturn the Prussian government. The KPD even

episodically accepted the possibility of fascist rule as a STAGE for the proletariat on the way to socialism.

Ironically, Reich—who in 1933 had no difficulty sensing the bureaucratic and sectarian dead end of the KPD—agreed that fascism was a NECESSARY stage. Only when they had experienced the worst that capitalism had to offer, wrote Reich, would workers turn toward socialism (43). It would be the solution of last resort—and perhaps not only in Germany, but throughout the advanced industrial world.

Having examined his analysis of the roots of popular support for fascism, we must now evaluate Reich's specific explanation. First, to outline his thesis:

Reich divided the individual personality into three levels. The superficial layer consisted of conventional morality and manners, as determined by GENERAL historical conditions. Hence, under capitalism, this layer would include the compulsions to stay with and support one's family, to pay one's bills, to discipline one's children, etc. An intermediary level involved the violent anti-social feelings and rebellion against societal restraints — the very anarchy which capitalist propagandists identify with "socialism," and of which "sexual bolshevism" is not an insignificant part. True humanity, however — represented by orgasmic potency and self-regulating morality — lies at the core of every character structure, according to Reich.

Within this schema Reich defines fascism as the uninhibited release of the second level of the character structure. While the fascist has freed himself of conventional morality, he is yet terrified of the prospect of governing himself. He experiences wild sadistic and pornographic emotions before which he (his alienated ego) must bow, or else from which he must seek protection. Hence, in Reich's view, the fascist sees dictatorship as salvation from the internal anarchy which he cannot tolerate.

What the fascist actually experiences, however, according to Reich, are the life-giving stirrings of orgasmic potency — the sensual abandon which is epitomized in Reich's view of the sexual act. These stirrings — waves of released tension — are distorted by fear. Hence, says Reich, fascism is a stage on the way to a non-vicious sensuality. If the fascist were only shown how to gratify his unbearable yearnings for sexual release, he would abandon authoritarianism and brutality. As it is, the fascist seeks sexual gratification through erotic fascist forms — the goose-step, the swastika sign, sado-masochistic submission and torture, etc. That these sexual modes never really provide him with full tension release — or satisfaction — is what leaves Reich's "fascist" vulnerable to socialism, which is only economic and social structure within which true sexual freedom is available.

To paraphrase Reich in *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*: fascism is the violent rejection of man's animality. He elaborates as follows:

"Away from the animal; away from sexuality!" are the guiding principles of the formation of all human ideology. This is the case whether it is disguised in the fascist form of racially pure "super-men," the communist form of proletarian class honor, the Christian form of man's "spiritual and ethical nature," the liberal form of "higher human values." All these ideas harp on the same monotonous tune: "We are not animals; it was we who discovered the machine — not the animal! AND WE DON'T HAVE GENITALS LIKE THE ANIMALS!" All of this adds up to an overemphasis of the intellect, of the "purely" mechanistic; logic and reason as opposed to instinct; culture as opposed to nature; the mind as opposed to the body; work as opposed to sexuality; the state as opposed to the individual; the superior man as opposed to the inferior man. (44) (emphasis in original)

Hence Reich can assert that the sexual question — liberation of women and adolescents from the restrictions on their sex lives, removal of legal constraints on sexuality and provision of every adolescent (and up) with a room of his own — was the decisive question for the KPD to address. If the sex-negative attitudes of the Nazis can be exposed to their youthful adherents, he proclaimed, we will have destroyed the Nazis' ability to recruit. After all, our economic program differs little from that of the Nazis — we can't win hegemony by screaming ours louder than theirs. But we can touch people's "real" concerns — their sexual hangups — an area which Hitler's minions dare not approach. To buttress this assertion Reich cited innumerable examples of sex-negative practices and ideology on the part of the Nazis — including bans on abortion and contraception, sexually-segregated barracks life, the adulation of the family. These are the sex-negative heart of fascism, he asserts.

We have to grant Reich a certain coherence with reality.

Obviously a certain layer of fascist hoodlums displayed the extreme sado-masochistic character traits which he describes. It remains to be proven, however, that masses of Nazi supporters much exceeded the norms of sado-masochism prevalent in capitalist society.

ESCAPE FROM FREEDOM: NEUROTIC OR LAWFUL?

We would also have to admit, with Reich, that the bulk of the population was UNPREPARED TO GOVERN ITSELF — that it "chose" the Nazis as what people perceived to be a "law and order" alternative to the

frustrating chaos of the Weimar Republic. Yet is this, as Reich claimed, an irrational response to the rush of sexual longing now released by the breakdown of the bourgeois order? It would appear that, instead, the sexually-repressed masses responded quite "rationally" to this chaos, if one understands that man's "reason" generally reflects his sociological position.

The German masses were without leadership, without a plan for reordering society in their interests, without the kind of unifying institutions which could provide them with a lasting and positive connection with other sections of society. They were unprepared not only subjectively, but intellectually and organizationally, to take power over the entire society, not just their sexual lives. It is likely — as Reich insists — that fear of unstructured love relations accompanied the desire of the German follower of Hitler to find a structured haven from bourgeois chaos. But in this case — as in all others — sexual insecurity is a DERIVATIVE feature of the individual's shaken social identity.

Erich Fromm in *Escape From Freedom* interprets the same submissive character of the German people in a far different manner than Reich's, while making the important differentiation between Hitler's active supporters and the impotent working class registers. Nazism — at the same time as it often provided practical inducements such as jobs, clothing, and other necessities to its most devoted adherents — helped a certain layer of the lower middle class to overcome its sense of isolation and aloneness. This sense was fostered by the impotence of the Communist movement, and the German economic crisis, and was a product of the RELATIONSHIP between these individuals and their society, not the dissatisfaction of the individual's (or masses of individuals') sexual drives. Whereas Reich admits the economic and social anomie of Germany to be CAUSAL in releasing the sado-masochistic (a term Fromm also uses) impulses of the lower middle classes, he proceeds from there to deal with the psychological cravings as instincts IN THEMSELVES. From then on the fascist's actions are neurotic and irrational. At this point Reich's method can scarcely be differentiated from Freud's description of World War I as the massive release of the Death Instinct of the population.

One would also have to grant Reich his point that Nazism is a love-suppressive ideology par excellence. But we would argue that the degradation of human sexuality by Nazism is only ONE ASPECT of fascism's ultimate anarchy and degradation of humanity.

In the fascist state every individual stands in an antagonistic relation to every other — the most fierce competition for jobs and daily bread characterizes "normal" fascist existence. During World War II, for example, former trade union "brothers," neighbors or even family members would rush to win government

favor, to take revenge, or to protect themselves by denouncing each other for treason. (45) Such an atmosphere is not derived psychologically, but from the destruction of the defensive organizations of the working class and the political-economic necessity of the tottering capitalist system to maintain its rule and increase its accumulation of capital when it is incapable of providing any facsimile of decent living conditions. Hence all GIVING relationships — though hardly all sensual satisfaction — become the antithesis of the ruling ideology and reality. How can you trust a lover, for example, when you and he must both prove to the state that YOU are more necessary to it than HE — in order to ensure your daily survival? (46)

SURRENDER TO NATURE

At this point it is useful to clarify exactly what Reich means by orgasmic potency, which is the goal of his movement for social liberation. While he repeatedly asserts that the ideal sexual experience presupposes sincere identification with the sexual partner, his actual criteria are totally physiological:

Orgasmic potency is the capacity for surrender to the flow of biological energy without any inhibitions, the capacity for complete discharge of all dammed-up sexual excitation through involuntary pleasurable contractions of the body. (47)

Yet does not this unconscious "surrender" to "natural" forces remind us of the so-called "masochistic" surrender of the fascist character? Reich would tell us that the masochist actually "surrenders" in order to gain control over others (his argument in "The Masochistic Character"), while the sexually-healthy individual submits to life energy without ulterior motives. But where does the difference actually appear — except in the differing degrees of "success"? Both characters seek a viciously anti-human relation to the world — a passive experience of inhuman "nature," as opposed to self-conscious unity with MANKIND through the specificity of a concrete love relationship.

Reich argues that the capacity for sexual fulfillment precedes the capacity for productive work and meaningful ties to society. But how could this be? This could only be the case if Reich means orgasmic potency in the PURELY BIOLOGICAL sense — the same sense in which Freud originally posed the question of mental health.

And this is exactly what Reich does. He takes his interpretation of neurosis as a damming-up and misdirection of psychic energy from Freud's concept of *aktual-neuroses*. While Freud later changed his concept of the etiology of neuroses to the interpersonal arena, Reich claimed that his clinical experience proved that orgasmic impotence CAUSED neurotic functioning. Allow a person to gain successful orgasm frequently and

he will become a healthy member of society.

CELEBRATION OF ANIMALITY

Far from representing a rejection of animality (as Reich argues), fascist practice puts man's bond with inchoate nature in center stage. Man "submits" to natural forces, just as animals do. Erich Fromm gives several examples in his section on Nazism in *Escape From Freedom*, of which the following is typical:

He (Hitler) ridicules the idea that man could conquer Nature and makes fun of those who believe to become conquerors of Nature "whereas they have no other weapon at their disposal but an 'idea.'" He says that man "does not dominate Nature, but that, based on the knowledge of a few laws and secrets of Nature, he has risen to the position of master of those other living beings lacking this knowledge." There again we find the same idea! Nature is the great power we have to submit to, but living beings are the ones we should dominate. (48)

Surely some Reichians will call this slander. Did Reich ever attack industrialization or rising living standards? they'll ask. Did he not reject Freud's notion that sexual fulfillment and work are inherently contradictory and affirm that genital satisfaction will allow man to work productively once more, instead of being mastered by machines?

They can be answered in brief. Reich's conception of productive work — to give him the greatest benefit of the doubt — is ambiguous. It reads very much like a plea to satisfy man's material needs AS HE NOW EXPRESSES THEM, his animal needs for daily comfort and activity. As such, Reich's view is static, and demonstrates that Reich has no conception of social reproduction, or the exponential expansion of human productivity and creativity. Instead — as has been shown in the previous analysis of his anthropological work and tellingly in the lifestyle of his followers — he seeks a return to the simple life of primitive communism.

Fascism also calls for a return to primitive modes of production and social relation. The cost-cutting methods of fascist rule call for labor-intensive production, rather than submitting the worker to the rhythm of a machine. In the fascist "social experiments," their work camps, the "diversions" of politics, of culture, of compulsive ritualism were eliminated. All that remained were man's powerful urge to maintain his body, to maximize the discharge of tension according to the pleasure-unpleasure principle. Man is forced into the most alienated individualist identity wherein he loses all sense of society and is pushed to act only out of bio-

logical necessity. Life in Nazi concentration camps, well documented by Bettelheim and others, well illustrates the limit, and trend, of fascist methods of dehumanization.

While Reich abhorred the fascist state, and the fascist abhorred his cry for sexual revolution, the irony still stands: the total breakdown of cohesive social institutions based on fulfillment of even partial HUMAN needs, e.g. the fascist state, represents the living-out of Reich's false psychological theories.

REICH'S SOLUTION

If one can see that fascism, and the ideology of the mass movement which brings it to power, epitomizes the very anarchic and submissive ideal of human activity which Reich espouses, his proposed attack on fascism becomes little more than laughable. Fascism will not solve your sex needs, he cries, pointing the accusing finger; we communists will! Forsake the mystical unity preached by the lying fascists — come to the ones who will allow you to seek your private sexual goals in peace! We will not bother you with economics, political theory, history. We are only concerned that you fulfill your innermost longings — your sensual longings. And eventually you'll realize that to gain this satisfaction requires you to be a socialist. But don't worry about that — that will come later.

To support his approach, Reich reports several meetings where he or other sex-economists made fools out of Nazi adherents on the sexual question. But did these youth then forsake Nazism? No. Reich would admit that they did not. But not understanding that youth attracted by the promise of sexual liberation, and driven by the search for ultimate orgasm, are unlikely to adjust to a socialist life-style, he attributed the falling away of such youth to the general sex-negative ideology of the KPD.

What Reich cannot understand is that the abolition of puritanical sexual regulations and limits on sexual discussion within the communist movement could not pull youth from fascism. The KPD did not need "sexual liberation," but a positive conception of the working class' political fight for power and a form of organization and organizing which brought all segments of the class together around that conception.

Simply the fact that Reich considers the economic programmatic differences between the Nazis and the KPD insignificant is a tip-off to the utter bankruptcy of the KPD's practice. A lumping together of demands against the government and big business will not become "socialist" by the addition of anti-sexist demands. Only within the context of a program of socialist reconstruction by the political working class as a whole can "sexual" demands — such as abortion and contraception, for example — have any positive meaning. Otherwise

the movement maintains its bourgeois mentality — and its bourgeois organization — and offers no alternative to the most RADICAL of bourgeois ideologies — fascism.

THE FUTURE OF REICHIANISM

The tragedy of Reich's career is that he never escaped the Freudian biological reductionism which he embraced in the early 1920's. His attempt to accommodate and integrate himself, both theoretically and organizationally, into Marxism could not succeed without a fundamental shift in his philosophical method, from the view of the human being as a distinct biological unit of instincts and desires, to the recognition of the individual as a unique, but determinate contributor to the human race as a whole.

Reich joined the Communist Parties during the period of their rapid rise, during a period of rumblings which threatened the very survival of capitalism. While his basic approach was not altered, he was swept into a social and explicitly pro-working-class movement, and, under that influence, made strides beyond the vulgar empiricism of the CPs in explaining how capitalism actually works to control and inhibit working-class thought and organization.

But when the 1930's battle between socialism and fascism had been decided in favor of the latter — when capitalist social relations and their attendant sado-masochism, mysticism, and repression had won — even by default — a new lease on its deadly life, Reich quickly fell into the explicit anti-socialist theory and practice which had lain dormant in his "communist" period. His orgasm theory gave him no basis on which to formulate, or continue, socialist practice; its logic instead led him to concentrate on releasing the life energy in INDIVIDUALS — to ignore the socio-economic basis for sexual repression which he once insisted to be the CAUSE of mental illness.

Similarly, Reich's popularity today is dependent upon the ebb in the working-class movement. In such a period as this, all the anti-human ideologies which the capitalist organization of society fosters come surging into prominence — to serve their struggling capitalist masters. Indeed the glorification of "man as animal," an ideology which Reich explicitly espouses, has only begun its penetration into every facet of life in the advanced capitalist world. This fascist ideology is now spreading like the plague in the form of sex clinics and massage parlors, sexual communes and sexual therapy — as well as under the academic cover of the Skinners, Jensens and Banfields. We find it in the endless search for the biological base for women's liberation, the movement of homosexuals (whose rights are a valid, but quite minor aspect of the tasks for socialist transformation), and even the private assertion of the socialist that "our comrade X will be able to function politically once he gets his sex life straightened out."

The Reichian school of "revolution" will continue to survive, even flourish, as the revolutionary crisis deepens. Some of the hybrid "Reichian socialists" will abandon the pursuit of "sexual liberation" as the working class emerges politically. But we cannot expect to obliterate the bestial concept of man, which Reich represents, until we have annihilated its source: capitalist social relations. For it is capitalism which views man as an energy machine; it is capitalism which organizes people to view their liberation as separate from that of the world working class; it is capitalism which seeks to preserve the power of "inexorable laws of Nature and Instinct" beyond man's control — a "Nature" which quite naturally coincides with the requirements for capitalist political control. And only socialist social relations will make it possible for people to escape dehumanization — to participate creatively in social reproduction, and to escape the individualistic assertion of sexual satisfaction, an assertion which is today "justified" as revolutionary by the theories of Wilhelm Reich.

FOOTNOTES

1. Baxandall, Lee, in *Sex-Pol: Essays 1929-1934*, New York: Random House, c. 1972.
2. Wilhelm Reich, *The Sexual Struggle of Youth*, reprinted in *The Radical Therapist*, vol. 2, no. 4, Dec. 1971, p. 4.
3. Reich, *The Sexual Revolution*, trans. by Theodore P. Wolfe, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, c. 1945, p. 239.
4. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, trans. by T.B. Bottomore, in Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man*, New York: Frederick Unger Publishing Co., c. 1961, pp. 126-127.
5. POLYMORPHOUS PERVERSITY is Freud's characterization of infantile sexuality, which accepts every possible outlet for erotic gratification without moral inhibition.
6. Fromm, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
7. Baker, Elsworth, *Man in the Trap*, New York: MacMillan & Co., c. 1967.
8. Baxandall, Lee, Introduction to *The Sexual Struggle of Youth*, in *The Radical Therapist*, vol. 2, no. 4, Dec. 1971.
9. Reich, Wilhelm, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, trans. by Vincent R. Carfagno, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, c. 1970, p. 191.

10. Ibid., p. 202.
11. Ibid., p. 127-8.
12. Reich, *The Sexual Struggle of Youth*, p. 5.
13. Ibid., p. 4.
14. After he emigrated to the U.S., Reich developed a treatment device for the mentally, physically, or sexually ill called the orgone-box, which he claimed contained a high concentration of orgone (life) energy.
15. Reich, *Mass Psychology of Fascism*, pp. 30-31
16. Ibid., p. 21.
17. Cf. L. Marcus, *Dialectical Economics* (in publication).
18. Reich, *Mass Psychology of Fascism*, p. 60.
19. See Introduction.
20. This idea was suggested to me by Paul A. Robinson in *The Freudian Left*. I concur with his judgment.
21. Reich, *Dialectical Materialism and Psychoanalysis*, trans. by Anna Bostock, in *Studies on the Left*, vol. 6, no. 5, 1966, p. 7.
22. Ibid., p. 10.
23. whom Reich recognizes to be influenced by broader social forces.
24. Reich in fact mocks this concept as a form of sexual sublimation, equating it with religion and sexual morality (both of which he at this time renounced vehemently).
25. Reich, *Dialectical Materialism and Psychoanalysis*, p. 20.
26. Psychophysical parallelism is Freud's term for the appropriateness of man's physical and mental lives to one another. He chose it to avoid the very reductionism which Reich adopts — the thesis that physical occurrences cause every thought, or vice versa.
27. Reich, *Dialectical Materialism and Psychoanalysis*, p. 16.
28. Ibid., p. 21.
29. Ibid., p. 23.
30. Marx explicitly attacked these notions in his *Theses on Feuerbach*.
31. Reich, *Dialectical Materialism and Psychoanalysis*, p. 31.
32. Reich, *Mass Psychology of Fascism*, p. 19.
33. Reich, *The Discovery of the Orgone, The Function of the Orgasm*, trans. by Theodore P. Wolfe, New York: The Noonday Press, c. 1942, p. 264.
34. Reich, *The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality*, 3rd edition, New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, c. 1951, p. 69. While Reich expunged many of his Marxian terms in this edition, the changes are unlikely to have altered the structure and thesis of this book.
35. Ibid., p. 151.
36. Idem.
37. Ibid., p. 156.
38. On Natural Work-Democracy, last chapter in *Mass Psychology of Fascism*, p. 375.
39. Ibid., p. 379.
40. Reich, *Mass Psychology of Fascism*, p. 346.
41. Ibid., p. 73 and throughout Chapter One.
42. Ibid., p. 19.
43. Ibid., p. 329.
44. Ibid., p. 339.
45. Grunberger, Richard, *The 12-Year Reich, A Social History of Nazi Germany 1933-1945*, New York: Ballantine, c. 1971, pp. 118-126.
46. John Hersey's *The Wall*, a description of life in Warsaw's Jewish ghetto, documents very well how the jobs created this inhuman state of intimate relations under Nazi rule.
47. Reich, *The Function of the Orgasm*, p. 79.
48. Fromm, Erich, *Escape From Freedom*, New York: Avon Books, c. 1941, p. 261.

Exchange with Lutte Ouvriere

The Labor Party Issue in the United States

In practice all of the various groups claiming to be the organizational inheritors of the Fourth International have abandoned the construction of proletarian, revolutionary parties. This abandonment takes many forms.

In the U.S. one of the most important forms is that of aligning politically with petty-bourgeois black organizations and leaders.

A second form is the abandonment of an independent policy in the trade unions as an accommodation to "progressive" elements and tendencies in the union bureaucracy.

The largest American Trotskyist organization, the Socialist Workers' Party (S.W.P.), is moving away from the union bureaucracy to better glorify the essential role of the peace movement, the women's movement, and many others. This shift is only accomplished, however, to the extent that the S.W.P. sacrifices what was originally its distinguishing characteristic: its base in certain sectors of the working-class; and to the extent that it becomes a party which recruits primarily from petty-bourgeois movements.

Nonetheless, the attitude which the S.W.P. held, and to a degree still holds, toward union leaderships has profoundly marked the American Trotskyist movement, including the groups which have split out of it. Thus the problem remains. And someday, if flirtation with these elements of the union bureaucracy were to again appear profitable, it is quite probable that this policy would reappear inside the S.W.P.

This accommodation of the S.W.P. to the union bureaucracy is nothing new. It was exposed by Trotsky who closely followed the evolution of the American section. One of his last political statements, in a dis-

ussion in 1940 with the American leadership, included a warning on precisely this issue.

In the course of this discussion, one of the S.W.P. leaders boasted of the Trotskyists' successful work with the progressive members of one particular union. He expressed concern, however, at the proposal — advanced by Trotsky — that the S.W.P. call on people to vote for a Stalinist candidate in the presidential elections. He argued that such a decision would only confuse those "progressives" who probably envisaged voting for Roosevelt.

Trotsky replied as follows:

TROTSKY: "I believe we have the critical point very clear. We are in a block with the so-called progressives — not only fakers but honest rank and file. Yes they are honest and progressive but from time to time they vote for Roosevelt — once in four years. This is decisive. You propose a trade-union policy, not a Bolshevik policy. Bolshevik policies begin outside the trade-unions. The worker is an honest trade-unionist, but far from Bolshevik policy. The honest militant can develop but it is not identical with being a Bolshevik. You are afraid to become compromised in the eyes of the Rooseveltian trade-unionists. They, on the other hand, are not worried in the slightest about being compromised by voting Roosevelt against you. We are afraid of being compromised. If you are afraid, you lose your independence and become half-Rooseveltian. In peace times, it is not catastrophic. In war-times it will compromise us. They can smash us. Our policy is too much for pro-Rooseveltian trade-unionists. I notice that in the Northwest Organizer this is true. We discussed it before, but

not a word was changed; not a single word. The danger — a terrible danger — is adaptation to the pro-Rooseveltian trade-unionists. You don't give any answer to the elections, not even the beginning of an answer. But we must have a policy." (1)

The tendency to align with a wing of the union apparatus is the expression of a social phenomenon, of the social pressures experienced by trade-union militants in a revolutionary organization. The smaller the organization, the stronger the pressures. It is in no way specific to the American Trotskyist organization after Trotsky's death; but as long as he was there to closely follow the S.W.P.'s activity, the manifestations of these pressures were recognized for what they were and dealt with as such. Today these manifestations are displayed as virtues and presented as the expression of a conscious analysis of American social reality.

Certain texts by Trotsky — who was the first to fight the pressure of the trade-union bureaucracy within the S.W.P. — are taken out of context and used as the foundation for a whole theoretical edifice designed to justify the most flagrant compromises with the union bureaucracy. This is particularly the case with his positions on the question of the independent labor party in the United States.

A MASS LABOR PARTY — A NECESSARY STEP IN THE BUILDING OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS' PARTY IN THE U.S.A.

The most significant feature in the development of the U.S. labor movement is the absence of a mass political party of the working-class, the absence of any significant tradition of proletarian political organization. Both the social-democratic and the communist currents have failed to gain any notable influence. Yet if the notion of working-class political organization is deeply rooted in the traditions of the vanguard of the European labor movement — and even to some extent in the traditions of larger masses of workers — this is by no means the case for the American labor movement.

The similarities between the earlier evolutions of the British and American working-class movements would tend to corroborate the hypothesis of an "English" development in the American labor movement. In both cases, during the first period, powerful trade-unions became deeply rooted in a labor aristocracy which managed to receive the crumbs distributed by an opulent imperialist bourgeoisie. Then later, as the bourgeoisie became less and less capable of maintaining the privileged positions of the upper layers of the proletariat, the union leaderships' room for maneuver were increasingly reduced. Thus the hypothesis is that the American trade-unions, like the British trade-unions before them, in losing their capacity to improve the workers'

living standards would be pushed into political action and into the creation of a political party.

Does this hypothesis correspond to the objective conditions of the American working-class movement? Is the acquisition in this manner of a tradition of working-class political organization a condition for the development of a revolutionary communist organization? And lastly, what should be the attitude of a revolutionary communist organization toward those currents within the union apparatus which push the unions toward playing an independent political role? This triple question has been the subject of continuous debate within the American Trotskyist movement.

When in the 30's, as a result of the great economic crisis, the rapid development of the American labor movement burst open the corporate narrowness of the American Federation of Labor, giving birth to the industrial unionism of the C.I.O.; when the worsening of the economic and social crisis demanded the passage from economic to political action, Trotsky was in favor of putting forward the demand of an independent labor party based on the unions.

What for Trotsky was a concrete response to a concrete situation — on the one hand the objective need for the American working-class to have a political party, and on the other the inability of the S.W.P. to be that party — was transformed into a prophecy by those who claimed his inheritance. This prophecy established in advance the route which had to be taken by the American working-class movement in order to end up with the building of a dominant revolutionary party.

The implications of so many compromises with the trade-union bureaucracy is primarily that the creation of an independent labor party is a necessary step in the development of the consciousness of American workers toward the building of a revolutionary party — an analysis that Trotsky carefully avoided to formulate this way. The consequence of such a formula would be to consider that the main task of revolutionary militants would be to support those tendencies in the union apparatus favorable to the creation of a labor party even at the risk of accepting their opportunistic politics. Not only did Trotsky never draw this conclusion, even in response to particular cases, but on the contrary he fought against it.

In the first place, the question of a labor party based on the unions was always considered by Trotsky in relation to the concrete general situation and not as an absolute.

If, in 1932, he envisaged the building of a labor party in the British sense as one of the possible directions in which the political movement of the working-class could develop, this was but a hypothesis and the least likely one at that:

“One can declare that even the general term ‘party of the working-class’ does not exclude a labor party in the British sense. Be that as it may. However, such an eventuality has nothing to do with a precise tactical question. We can admit hypothetically that the American trade-union bureaucracy will be forced, under certain historical conditions, to imitate the British trade-union bureaucracy in creating a kind of party based upon the trade-unions. But that eventuality, which appears to me very problematical, does not constitute an aim for which the communists must strive and on which one must concentrate the attention of the proletarian vanguard.” (2)

Trotsky was very careful to add that even if this did occur it would by no means be a step forward:

“One can say that under the American conditions a labor party in the British sense would be a progressive step, and by recognizing this and stating so, we ourselves, even though indirectly, help to establish such a party. But that is precisely the reason I will never assume the responsibility to affirm abstractly and dogmatically that the creation of a labor party would be a ‘progressive step’ even in the United States, because I do not know under what circumstances, under what guidance, and for what purposes that party could be created. It seems to be more probable that especially in America, which does not possess any important traditions of independent political action by the working-class (as Chartism in England, for example) and where the trade-union bureaucracy is more reactionary and corrupted than it was at the height of the British Empire, the creation of a labor party could be provoked only by mighty revolutionary pressure from the working masses and by the growing threat of communism. It is absolutely clear that under these conditions the labor party would signify, not a progressive step, but a hindrance to the progressive evolution of the working-class.” (3)

The deepening of the economic and social crisis, the acceleration which it imposed upon the evolution of American capitalism toward total collapse, and at the same time the impulsion it gave to the American workers’ movement, led Trotsky, as we have seen, to change his analysis. From then on he regarded the formation of an independent labor party as an absolute necessity. Explaining the reasons for his change in analysis and the conclusions he then drew, he stated:

“The other question is the speed of its development; and in this respect, in view of the strength of American capitalism, some of us, and myself among them, imagined that the ability of American capitalism to resist against the destructive inner contradictions would be greater and that for a certain period American capitalism might use the decline of Euro-

pean capital to cover a period of prosperity before its own decline... That is why eight years ago when I discussed this question with American comrades I was very cautious. I was very cautious in my prognosis. My opinion was that we could not foresee when the American trade-unions would come into a period where they would be forced into political action. If this critical period started in ten to fifteen years, then we, the revolutionary organization, could become a great power directly influencing the trade-unions and becoming the leading force. That is why it would be absolutely pedantic, abstract, artificial to proclaim the necessity for the labor party in 1930 and this abstract slogan would be a handicap to our own party.” He added: “We must change our program because the objective situation is totally different from our former prognosis.” (4)

As we know, the crisis of the 30’s, profound as it was, was nonetheless overcome. American capitalism gained a new period of respite, albeit at the expense of “declining European capitalism.” Trotsky had touched upon just that possibility in discussing the question of the workers’ party, maintaining that:

“Of course the question of the labor party cannot be considered independent from the general development in the next period. If a new prosperity comes for some time and postpones the question of a labor party, then the question will for some time become more or less academic...” (5)

After Trotsky’s death, the S.W.P. transformed concrete analysis into academic dogma in order to use it as theoretical justification for opportunistic political practices which during his lifetime Trotsky had combated.

A radical new change in the situation of American capitalism could give new immediacy to the question of a union-based workers’ party. In this case it would be vital to put forward the slogan, vital to jump at the occasion which would permit the working-class to express itself politically. Of course this expression would not yet be the revolutionary communist workers’ party. But such a policy, even if a hundred times more necessary than it might be, would never justify any sort of blind following (suivisme), any accommodation with any current whatsoever of the union bureaucracy. A revolutionary’s action can be oriented in the same direction as that of certain factions in the union machine, partisan to the creation of a party; even circumstantial and tactical alliance might conceivably be made with these factions. A revolutionary can never forget that whatever might be the momentary similarity between their points of view, his objectives and those of the union bureaucracy are fundamentally different, even if he is dealing with its most “progressive” faction. For a revolutionary, the political struggle for the construction of an independent workers’ party aims at raising

the working-class' level of political consciousness in order to get the workers to take a step toward the organization of the revolutionary proletariat. For the union bureaucracy, whatever be its immediate political positions, taking the initiative in the construction of an independent workers' party merely reflects an adaptation to developments in the workers' struggle in order to better control it, and in the end, to sabotage it. Political confrontation between the two forces is inevitable. The day this confrontation arrives, there must be no confusion among the workers.

If an independent workers' party, based on the unions and attracting the vanguard of the working-class, was born in this present period — that is at a time when the revolutionary movement is extremely weak and lacking an audience, and unable to entertain the notion of quickly becoming the political expression of the working-class — it is nonetheless certain that revolutionaries ought to be in that party. The implication is that if the objective situation imposes the necessity, revolutionaries must know how to take the initiative and propose it.

But whether or not this situation presents itself, and by way of whatever corresponding tactical positions, the objective remains constant: the formation of a revolutionary party in the Bolshevik sense of the term, with all of the implications in terms of clarity of ideas and political positions; with all that that implies, as well, on the level of selection and formation of militants. Yet this objective would become unattainable if the revolutionary current dissolved itself organizationally within a broader political grouping, as unattainable as if it dissolved itself politically.

To join an eventual reformist workers' party would

require that the revolutionary current defend its program, its banner, and its political line all the more relentlessly; that it struggle against all the opportunistic notions with that much more determination, denouncing the role of the political and union bureaucrats that much more vigorously, whatever be their progressive coloration.

This is the exact opposite to the political behavior of the S.W.P.

The point is that even if the evolution of the American working class' consciousness toward a revolutionary consciousness lends itself to possibilities other than the formation of a union-based workers' party, the absence of an independent workers' party and the necessity of creating one can and must be a constant theme in the propaganda of a revolutionary current. This might be the case particularly at the time of presidential elections when the absence of any workers' political representation becomes all the more glaring in the eyes of large portions of the working class. So, the propaganda for an independent workers' party ought to be a simple, popular, and one might say, educational presentation of the necessity of such a workers' party, the necessity that workers become conscious of themselves as a class. It is the evolution of the concrete situation which will imply the content for this general objective presented through the propaganda. There is no way of saying categorically whether or not this party would directly become the revolutionary party. But in any event, the propaganda must aim at clearly demonstrating to the workers that it is up to them to construct this party, that they have the possibility, that they have the power, and that they must not place their confidence in the union bureaucracy in this area nor in any other areas.

FOOTNOTES

1. - 4. Discussions with Trotsky — stenographic draft — June 12, 1940, in "Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939 - 40)", Merit Publishers.
2. - 3. Letter from Prinkipo, Turkey, May 19, 1932, in "Leon Trotsky on the Labor Party in the United States," Merit Publishers.
5. Discussion in Mexico City, July 20, 1938, in "Leon Trotsky on the Labor Party in the United States," Merit Publishers.

Response to Lutte Ouvriere

For A Working-Class Party

by Anton Chaitkin

In publishing its analysis, "The Labor Party in the United States," *Lutte Ouvriere* has performed a notable service to the socialist movement here — by signalling the widespread disgust throughout Europe for the policies of the Socialist Workers Party. The editors of *Lutte Ouvriere* reflect disgust for abject tailing of every available petit-bourgeois "movement," and for the SWP's shameless scuttling, as "unprofitable," of even its own traditions of working-class orientation.

We agree with the editors of *Lutte Ouvriere* that it is imperative to work for the establishment of a mass working-class party in the U.S.A., a party to play an intermediate role between a revolutionary cadre party and the fragmented working-class mass of today. As we shall emphasize here, we see our present electoral work as a necessary approach to such an accomplishment.

It is not certain that such a mass working-class party will actually ever come into existence as an intermediate form of that sort. It is not excluded that the masses in the U.S.A. will go directly into a mass cadre-party. IT IS UNNECESSARY TO SETTLE SUCH INTERESTING QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE. If the masses go directly to a revolutionary party, rather than through an intermediate class-party form, that happy result will occur as a result of our excellent efforts toward building an intermediate form.(1)

Unfortunately, *Lutte Ouvriere's* present proposals on the labor party issue are not appropriate to the problem. As that magazine's editors struggle for a correct formulation of the problem of creating a mass working-class organization in the U.S.A., they are stuck in the same fundamental methodological errors that have blinded and disabled most socialists during the last century.

Two passages from the *Lutte Ouvriere* article exemplify the kind of blunder involved.

After quoting the long passage in which Trotsky indicts the SWP leadership for centrist tendencies of trade-union opportunism, the LO editors apposite the remark:

"The tendency to align with a wing of the union apparatus is the expression of a social phenomenon, of the social pressures experienced by the trade-union militants in a revolutionary organization."

LO's editors refuse to acknowledge Trotsky's warning against adaptations to RANK-AND-FILE trade-union MILITANTS! This slight distortion of Trotsky's point is most significant.

The second symptomatic passage to the same effect occurs later in the article. They write:

"When in the 30's, as the result of a great economic crisis, the rapid development of the American labor movement burst open the corporate narrowness of the American Federation of Labor, giving birth to the industrial unionism of the CIO..."

It never happened that way. The CIO did not come out of the AF of L, but actually developed independently of internal ferment within the AF of L. In making this error, LO's editors fall victim to the outright falsification of the history of the 1930's by the Socialist Workers Party, as well as CP and other historians.(2)

Again, LO's editors have overlooked the point of the very passage from Trotsky which they have quoted: "You propose a trade-union policy, not a Bolshevik policy. Bolshevik policies begin OUTSIDE the trade-

unions.” (emphasis added)

In the trend of argument exemplified by these two errors, LO's editors fall prey to the same policy which more or less inevitably led Cannon's centrist-leaning faction into the petit-bourgeois opportunism of the SWP today. LO's argument tends toward that Foster-Cannon centrist policy of trade-union opportunism which is caricatured by the various U.S. petit-bourgeois “nut” groups of today, (3) those silly little tribes of sectarians who amuse themselves by throwing harmless epithets, like marshmallows, at trade-union bureaucrats. The eternal recipe for this opportunism, from the yore of Proudhonist “workerism” to today, is: “Trade-union bureaucrats are bad, but trade-union militants are the instinctual embodiment of class-consciousness and all other virtues.”

We shall summarily describe the methodological blunder of the editors, and then proceed as soon as possible to the positive statement of our own approach to building a working-class party in the U.S.A. in the period immediately ahead.

A non-Marxist, empiricist, mechanistic world-outlook underlies a whole spectrum of political thought from naked Menshevism to ultra-revolutionary position-mongering. This outlook locates the problem of “exploitation” as a matter of the individual product created by the self-evident individual worker, or by the self-evident small group of workers in a particular capitalist firm.

Ignoring the mere fact of a world-wide division of productive labor, this mechanistic view does not acknowledge that the creation of value — and, consequently, surplus value — can not be a matter of individual workers or individual firms, but is necessarily a creation of the class as a whole. That mechanistic — non-Marxian — view therefore locates the class struggle in the immediate sense-experience of the individual worker, his shop conditions, etc., and locates his class-consciousness in the immediate, local struggle between him and his employer. It denies that class consciousness must necessarily be consciousness of himself as representing only the interests of the class as a whole, that the surplus value manifest in his local firm is the property of the entire class, not of the particular group of workers immediately employed there.

The mechanistic view of the worker denies that it is the relationship between the employed and unemployed workers which expresses the social actuality of workers' expanded reproduction. It is such alliances between union members and non-union members that are the STARTING-POINT for class consciousness. The mechanist mistakes a form of militant bourgeois ideology among workers, trade-union consciousness, for a degree of class consciousness. He denies that class consciousness begins as the NEGATION of trade-

union consciousness.

As a result of empiricist trade-union opportunism, the empiricism and opportunism of substituting the unions for the class as a whole, there arises among socialists a kind of neurotic amnesia regarding the actual history of the working-class movement, and of the indispensable creative role of revolutionaries in making that history. At the same time, there is a connected, consequent inability to deal concretely with current history in revolutionary terms — an inability to situate perspectives of class struggle within the conjunctural crisis of capitalism, and a tendency to ignore the programmatic challenge thrown up to the vanguard by the tasks that history has lain before the working class as the representative of the interests of the entire humanity trapped in capitalist decay and oppression.

THE LESSON OF THE 1930's

During the late 1930's, the principle behind the proposal of the labor party was that of politicizing a mass movement of the working class which had recently been channeled into the form of the CIO. Specifically, this tactic was aimed at springing workers free of the ideological dependence on “Roosevelt-friend-of-labor.”

This tactical proposal was not a scholastic fantasy, as it would be in the U.S.A. of today's unions. It was a tactic situated in concrete historical development: the mass-strike upsurges of the 1930's had united workers not only across craft and industrial lines, but the very existence of these unions depended upon the fighting alliances of employed with mass organizations of unemployed. The labor party proposal was not premised on eternal metaphysical qualities of trade unions as such. The viability of the 1938 CIO unions lay outside them, in the still living tradition of subordinating narrow trade-union interests to the interests of alliances of employed and unemployed.

We, as an organization, have analyzed that mass movement, going past the tendentious official histories of the rise of the CIO to the original sources: newspapers, leaflets, and other original reports. We have already published a number of articles which explode the myth that the CIO was created by John L. Lewis' breakaway from the AF of L. (4) This research is continuing, and much more relevant evidence in preparation for the struggle ahead is yet to be printed.

It is sufficient to emphasize the following here. The 1938 CIO was just emerging from a workers' mass movement which incorporated the organized and unorganized, employed and unemployed in common class fighting fronts. The major battles of 1934-37 were not trade-union fights, but class battles.

As this mass-strike movement decelerated in the 1937-38 recession period, strikes were still being fought in a form which is ILLEGAL in the U.S.A. today: sympathy strikes, boycotts, etc. The trade unions were not, even then, the mechanism of disciplining and restraining the workers that they become during and after the war.

During and following the war, the trade-union bureaucracy — and the CPUSA — undertook to ensure that struggles went through the acceptable channels of legal strikes, “collective bargaining,” etc. Unions in the U.S.A. underwent a qualitative change in this and the subsequent period, a change which represents a decisive break with the 1930’s CIO.

Even so, the CIO institution of the 1938 period represented a step away from revolution, not toward revolution. The late-1930’s consolidation of industrial trade unions, while advancing the condition of the working class, was the product of an aborted revolutionary mass-strike period in which the alternative outcome was socialist revolution — if the class had possessed the appropriate leadership.

Despite that, in 1938, while the unions still represented workers fresh from the great mass-strike battles of 1934-37, the labor party based on the unions meant a class party of organized, unorganized and unemployed — quite the opposite of a labor party based on the existing unions of today.

As bad tendencies are seen most clearly in their extremes: All the history of the 1930’s has been reduced by the petit-bourgeois “nut” groups in the U.S.A. to the following pathetic sort of explanation.

They begin with the infantile truism: “production workers create all the wealth on the job; when we look at workers on the job — Lo and Behold! — we are looking at the entire working class, which creates all wealth.” Blushing with euphoria, they continue: “Under capitalism the working class is inherently revolutionary. The best organized of these inherent revolutionaries are found in the trade unions.” They repeat “trade unions” several times over, intoxicating themselves with the sound of that magical name. They pause, glassy-eyed, for a moment, recover themselves and then continue with the self-assurance of one who has just undergone an Astral religious episode: “The only reason that trade-unions are not making revolutions daily is that the rank-and-file militants are kept from their Holy Destiny by the vile, conniving, all-clever Satan himself, the trade-union bureaucrats.” Whipping themselves into a rage, their faces contorted to anger, on the verge of a stroke, they begin to shriek: “We must kick out those bureaucrats! We must make the workers more militant and then they will kick out those bureaucrats! Then...” the spokesman for the “nut” group pauses, listening to organ music sounding from the distant places within his head. He continues,

“Then we shall have a Labor Party.” With that he collapses into a near-faint of religious fulfillment across whatever piece of furniture he can imagine for a moment to be the lectern from which he is addressing the vast masses. Somewhere in the background a Heavenly Host directed by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky sings an anthem to the unions.

With such groups — and, unfortunately, too many serious socialists — the concepts of CLASSES, UNIONS, LEADERSHIP, and CONSCIOUSNESS are reduced to empty constructs, more phraseology ripped from a century’s socialist literature and fixed into eternal categories — categories which correspond more exactly to one’s social aspirations in the PARIAS role of a “revolutionary” impishly offending his conservative father’s sensibilities. It must sometimes seem that a quirk of Fate has caused such a wretched petit-bourgeois philosophical method as theirs to be mistaken by so many credulous persons for the thought of Karl Marx.

Lutte Ouvriere’s treatment of the labor party issue does not separate its own outlook from the “workerist” banality as we have just described. The editors posit an hypothesis about American history, which has no connection to real American labor history, but only to the myths of Foster and Cannon. On this premise they offer an appeal to history, addressed metaphysically to some purely abstract History-in-General. In this vein, with this hypothesis and a scattering of conjectures, the question of a labor party in the U.S.A. is posed: If the objective situation called for a labor party, then revolutionaries should put forth the slogan at once. If not, they should not.

It is therefore almost pathetic that LO should warn the readers: the labor party question must be considered in relation to the concrete general situation. A most sympathetic exploration of that article reveals not a single word about any real aspect of human life today — only a few timid commonplaces with respect to the crisis of the 1930’s.

Even so, LO is correct to insist that the issue of a working-class party must be considered only in the context of the general concrete situation. We attack that problem as it now presents itself.

OUR HISTORIC TASK

The process through which capitalism developed modern industry, through which the working class developed as the modern labor force it has become, through which an integrated world division of labor and world market came into being, through which increasing productivity and a rising living standard were tortuously extracted from the labor of subject classes — these processes are being arrested today on a worldwide scale.

The failure — the refusal! — of the capitalist system to carry on expanded reproduction, to extend production qualitatively and quantitatively, is now materialized in the form of monetary collapse and accelerating material decay.

To sustain inflated property values, to stave off complete industrial collapse, capitalist looting of the industrial and agricultural sectors has replaced their further development as the overall tendency of capitalism and the policy of capitalist governments. Capitalist exploitation, the extraction of surplus value from property-less workers as a whole, loses any trace of its former positive and progressive nature, becomes altogether one-sided, as what is extracted leaves the working class with less than it requires to maintain its current standard of living, and whatever actual surplus is produced is "invested" in military waste, speculation, and the financing of literary projects to argue that growth itself is now undesirable.

As we continue to move toward the deeper regions of the second great depression of this century, the fury of the capitalists at their own failure is directed against a working class which is organizationally and ideologically unprepared to resist the kind of onslaught now being mounted against it.

The atrophied U.S. trade-union movement, having made no major organizational gains in the past quarter century, today encompasses a smaller proportion of the working class than it did in 1938. Not only are the fighting tactics which built the CIO now illegal, but their prohibition is maintained less by external law enforcement than from within the union movement itself.

Under President Nixon's (and Senator McGovern's) Phase Two, a general offensive of capital against labor, unions have retreated in isolation from each other and from their unorganized and unemployed class allies. Rear-guard battles against the most ferocious speed-up, against wage-gouging and against layoffs have been monotonously unsuccessful, resisted impotently with the narrow framework of George "No-Strike" Meany's AFL-CIO.

The jobless and low-paid unorganized sections of the working class, fragmented and demoralized, bear the brunt of capitalist stagnation and decay, occasionally fighting "their own" isolated battles against further lumpenization and degradation at the hands of sweatshop owners, slumlords, and the cannibalistic welfare administration. The government herds them into the scab armies of the unemployed.

Capitalism today attempts to make its failure and disgrace seem the height of humanistic virtue and wisdom. Out of the surplus value it refuses to realize in productive development it finances a new propa-

ganda industry, the production of ecology-worship proclaiming depression the accomplishment of that Great Goal of Zero Growth. This vicious ideology is propagated among the middle-class layers facing unemployment, lumpenization, and a generally disintegrating future, mobilizing them against the "greedy" workers who insist on benefits which could be provided only by that Greatest Evil, expanded reproduction. If production must shrink then the unemployed and futureless must contend against employed workers whose "greedy consumption" denies the others their "fair share" of the misery. In this way, cadres are drilled for the ranks of a future fascist movement.

Along the same path, in the absence of any successful organized class struggle, pro-capitalist forces can mobilize blacks and whites to fight each other over dwindling resources in employment, education, and housing, exacerbating the division of the working class into races, which is the most tragic expression of the disunity pervading the U.S. working-class fighting forces.

After the presidential elections this year, the capitalist government will be less obliged to paper over its assault on the population with lying promises of prosperity ahead, of cheerful references to temporary sacrifices. With the worsening international monetary situation, all stops will be pulled.

Surely the workers will respond; surely rebellions will break out. People will not simply slide, grey-faced, silent into oblivion. Will we see only scattered uprisings, but isolated and defeated strikes, riots — and then a collapse into a deeper despair? Shall we place all hope of the future of humanity in begging, threatening, pushing George Meany to convene a conference to form a labor party? Shall we push Meany to the head of a general strike — PERHAPS A 1926 BRITISH GENERAL STRIKE? Better we should fill ourselves with gunpowder and light the fuse to rocket briefly in one glorious arc across the sky to the same doom.

In this period of accelerating crisis only a madman with his head buried in a catechism would propose to wait for the U.S. workers to "acquire a tradition of working-class political institutions." History is not some Shakespearean drama — or Moliere farce! — a mere bag of fixed lines to be faithfully recited by each succeeding generation. Marxism — revolutionary practice — is not a doctrine whose observance gains one the smile of Heaven beyond the grave. It must be a science. It is imperative that a growing institution of UNIFIED CLASS-WIDE STRUGGLE play increasingly a leading role in impending class battles in the U.S.A., and that this institution fight for the allegiance of the entire working class around a program for proletarian rule — a program for the socialist reconstruction of a decaying capitalist society. We cast aside all cate-

chism, all Menshevik parlor games of "fixed stages," and address ourselves to what must be done — the building of a mass party of the working class for the coming period.

THE NEW YORK 1973 CAMPAIGN

Capitalist organization of society has created the objective conditions — the concentration of productive forces, the integrated activity of the world's peoples — for the realization of a collective self-interest, for the conscious self-rule of the human race — once it is free of the domination and restrictions of private property forms. Yet, the organizational — and therefore the subjective — state of the working class under capitalism lags behind those objective conditions. Every advance toward broader working-class self-organization requires the DEFEAT of the workers' OWN bourgeois notions of conflicting individual self-interests, of interest groups, of trade-union chauvinism, opposition to "outsiders" from his own class, opposition to uniting himself with the unemployed, etc.

As Trotsky correctly emphasized, socialists' adaptation to the prejudices of the workers — the militant rank-and-file workers — is absolutely fatal!

The creation of a form of Being in which class consciousness can emerge for the first time, a united class front, a "soviet" form, requires the broadest possible propagation of the socialist programmatic outlook. That is the programmatic expression of the collective self-interest of the class as a whole, IN OPPOSITION TO the narrow notions of self-interest of trade-union militants, etc. In this period, trade-union ideology is the philosophy leading to defeat and the ideology of despair.

We can aptly illustrate the vital role that the socialist mass propaganda effort plays in the organization of classwide fighting organizations, by now describing the just-launched 1973 New York City mayoralty campaign of the NCLC.

This campaign is and will be conducted as a nationwide fight against the intensifying and virtually unresisted austerity being imposed by all levels of government.

In New York City itself, slum rents are being raised while slum-dwellers' income is pushed down. Transit service is being cut back. Teachers are being laid off. Welfare recipients are being scab-herded, are otherwise being herded into UNPAID municipal work, or simply thrown off relief rolls into the street to steal or starve. Hospital services are being cut. Bridge and tunnel tolls have been doubled. Sales taxes have been raised and re-raised. Working-class cultural facilities have been decimated — with cut-backs and admission charges.

The cumulative effect of capitalist decay makes life intolerable. The subway system is an ancient wreckage, auto traffic outrageously congested and parking impossible. Schools are overcrowded and crumbling. Hospitals are the scene of chaos, misery and despair.

Recent German visitors to this city, although themselves socialists familiar with reports of U.S. decay, were astonished by slum sections resembling 1945 Berlin, and were physically sickened by the pervasive stench, filth and decay.

The decaying corpse of the Democratic Party, a party formerly in overwhelming command of New York's political life, now vomits up over thirty mayoral candidates, each with anti-welfare, anti-crime, and anti-union "get tough" policies. The crumbling of the national Democratic Party around the dismayed McGovern only replicates the New York pattern throughout the U.S.: with moral authority of all institutions vanishing, the relics of those institutions direct their death-agony rage against working-class organizations and living conditions.

The NCLC seizes the 1973 New York City elections in the unique moment of opportunity presented by collapse of the Democratic machines, to move into a vacuum to advance our ongoing national work of strike-support organizing.

The "proletarian masses" are not in motion. They are presently sitting in the moral squalor of accumulated defeats and decimation, generally capitulating without sign of the will to fight except as speed-up becomes so severe that the body itself revolts despite the mind that has already surrendered. Out of this we see an opportunity. Out of this we propose to surge forward in building a mass-based working-class party.

In the midst of this widespread demoralization, there are small groups of individuals — in each pore of the organized, unorganized, and unemployed. These few, the precious organic future mass-leaders of the larger number around them, are learning the lessons of the past defeats. They are stunned, cautious, but not demoralized. The peace like that of the grave over the class struggle gives them a needed quiet moment or so to think...to think. Trade-unionism doesn't work against Phase Two, they reflect. Narrow, my-group-only militant struggles by any group must fail, they reflect. They have no answers, but they are freeing themselves of their former disabling ties to trade-union consciousness and similar reactionary subjective obstacles within themselves.

Whoever wins those scattered handfuls today leads the class struggles of tomorrow.

To those vital handfuls, unable to find the desired alternative by their own individual efforts, we bring the

class-for-itself method of Marx applied to the concrete general situation of today. As we reach them, by bringing the socialist programmatic outlook to bear on the daily problems of working-class life, we draw them toward the embryonic united-class-front formations of our strike-support organizing committees and their allies. In that class-for-itself linking of the mere handfuls, we have established the embryonic form of the future mass united front, a future mass-based working-class party.

We do not limit our perspectives for the campaign period to nothing more than the handfuls. Even in a period of general labor ebb and retreats, strikes and other forms of resistance will continue to appear, if only on a relatively reduced scale by comparison with the 1969-71 period. As these manifestations occur anywhere within our reach around the nation, we shall focus the forces drawn around our campaign to deal with these challenges — as the motion and size of forces permits.

Instead of merely denouncing government strike-breaking, and gloating over leadership sell-outs, instead of recommending wisely to the workers that they stiffen their spines, we shall attempt in every case to mobilize "outside" class forces for the political defense of each such struggle, attempt to spread the struggle, and exert what resources we have to attempt to win the struggle.

Our mayoral campaign will present each such fight to region-wide working-class forces as part of the defense of general living standards. We will demonstrate the bankruptcy of the "go-it-alone" strategy at a time when every strike immediately pits the workers against government power, when every rebellion has an inherent political character.

Bringing the socialist programmatic method to trade unionists, welfare victims, tenants, students and organized radicals (viewed as forces to be unified in a political class, rather than as "constituencies" with separate preoccupations), the campaign will attract to itself ones and twos of the most advanced pro-working-class fighters from these layers, people who are willing to help in the advance preparation of the population, the wide implantation of socialist ideas necessary for a successful resolution of things when the big conflicts inevitably break out.

In putting together a working-class political organization, we take a consistent united front approach. We have offered cross endorsements of slates with every pro-working-class group willing to take part in the city's political life. We stand ready at a moment's notice to negotiate joint practical work on behalf of our own and any other socialist campaign that may appear. We will press every other organization which proclaims itself on the side of working people to join us in building

a united front strike support organization; and we will report to a wide working-class audience the willingness or reluctance of each group to undertake practical tasks.

In this campaign we will make maximum use of a unique propaganda opportunity to pit socialism, the program of working-class government, directly against capitalism in its decline. Capitalist politicians, declaring the bankruptcy of their government, advocate cost-cutting layoffs, welfare slashes, increased "productivity" (speed-up) and wage gouging as "hard-nosed realism" in view of the financial crisis. Their unstated premise in this "realism," of course, is the continuation of the present class structure of society, more specifically the undiminished flow of income to capitalists on all "legitimate" property titles. Once this premise is accepted, there is no viable answer to wage austerity under intensifying depression conditions.

OUR premise is the fulfillment of the needs of society as a whole, and our campaign demonstrates concretely that it is these property titles, or the arrangement of the flow of society's resources to service them, that now prohibits and sabotages the fulfillment of society's needs. Our national program for the revival of production and development (Emergency Reconstruction Program, in the pamphlet *Socialism or Fascism*) explains how an economy strangled into depression by debts and other unproductively-invested income obligations to capitalists, can be swiftly freed of these encumbrances by a workers' government; and it outlines the vital tasks of infrastructural development — thermonuclear fusion power, modernized transportation and heavy industry, beating pollution — which must be expedited simultaneously with the rapid improvement of wages, working conditions, education and housing.

This program can only be implemented by a victorious working class on a national (ultimately international) scale. But a regional approximation of the national program, EXPANDED EMPLOYMENT in education, housing and transit construction, health care, etc., could be implemented by a mass strike movement which has put a socialist government into local office, with the most profoundly invigorating consequences for the working-class movement worldwide. The fundamental principle is the development of the productive forces to meet popular needs, to eradicate poverty, at the expense of capitalists' wasted income.

"We haven't the funds" to build housing, schools, hospitals or other "frills," say the swinish city hall representatives of banks and slumlords. "We'll need austerity to pay our debts."

But our campaign will redefine the expression "available funds" for the working-class electorate. We intend to suspend all payment of interest and principal on city debt. We will impose a graduated income tax on landlords' rental income which will expropriate slum-

lords and wipe out billions in parasitical mortgages. Instead of borrowing from banks, we will tax them. We will take full advantage of New York's role as the world's financial center; there are, in fact, HUNDREDS OF BILLIONS OF DOLLARS in "available funds" chasing speculative gains in lower Manhattan.

We propose certain other immediate measures to reverse the flow of funds between the classes: the toll-collection devices will be removed from subways, bridges and tunnels, and public bathrooms. Rents will be immediately reduced to levels working people can afford.

We stress that the construction programs, the rent reductions, the taxation of capitalist income, can only be implemented and enforced by the kind of united class front which we are continuing to build through this campaign — encompassing employed and unemployed workers, welfare victims, students and middle-class allies.

The capitalists are immensely vulnerable. Their failure becomes more glaring every day, and they are trying to extract payment for their failure from working people's hides. But they expect no effective revolutionary opposition. They are in for an increasingly rude and unsettling time. We will make fighting issues, for the whole population, out of the more outrageous capitalist policies such as forced scab labor for welfare

recipients, policies which immediately oppress the entire working class, policies which could never withstand knowledgeable public discussion. And our political intervention will be all the more effective now, when capitalist politicians are afraid to discuss the basic issues of daily life in the city ("crime in the streets" being the one sterling exception). Even liberals cannot discuss material issues because their notions of "solutions" to each problem would impose worse burdens on the population in some other area; they have for the most part completely given up on economic development, often in favor of proto-fascist anti-welfare demagoguery.

Under these circumstances, the ONLY substantial discussion of material issues will be in the socialist framework, putting in question the continued payment of parasitical income to the capitalist class, putting in question the "impracticality" of high-wage productive employment for millions of the region's jobless and misemployed.

With this campaign we are putting socialism on the agenda, and continuing to build the united class front — the only actual "party of labor" which can prepare itself to become the government. It can do so as its social composition as a fighting institution and its programmatic orientation, its aims, make it representative of the working class as a whole.

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