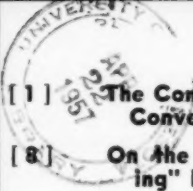


political affairs

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- AN EDITORIAL** [1] **The Communist Party Convention**
- NATIONAL COMMITTEE, CPUSA** [8] **On the Senate "Racketeering" Investigation**
- BENJAMIN J. DAVIS** [13] **"Toward Negro Freedom"**
- NEMMY SPARKS** [23] **A Talk on Socialism**
- MAURICE DOBB** [47] **Some Economic Revaluations**
- HOMER G. BROWN & MURIEL J. BROWN** [53] **New China As We Saw It**
- HERBERT APTHEKER** [60] **Karolyi's Memoirs**
- [63] **Errata**

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A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: V. J. Jerome

The Communist Party Convention**An Editorial**

THE RECENT National Convention of the Communist Party was undoubtedly one of the most critically important gatherings ever held by the Communist movement in this country. Paradoxically, this convention—held at a time when the Communist Party is weaker organizationally than it has been in many years—received infinitely more spotlighting and publicity throughout the country than almost any of its conventions in history. Such publicity is not accorded by the politically-competent capitalist press of our country to a movement that no longer has any impact upon the scene.

The challenge that faced this Convention was, in a new form, the same general one that has been met by the Party at other critical moments in the past—the challenge of responding to major changes in conditions.

* * *

The founding convention of the Communist Party met in 1919 under the influence of such tremendous events as the first socialist revolu-

tion, the end of the first World War, and the failure of the socialists in Germany. The founding of the Workers Party in December, 1921, unified the various Communist groups and marked the Party's emerging out of the worst infantile sectarianism and the state of illegality brought about by the Palmer raids.

The Seventh Convention of the Party in June, 1930, following the defection of the Trotskyite-Cannon group and the Right-opportunist group led by Jay Lovestone, took place at a time when the economic crash had already unmasked the false theories of the "new capitalism," "permanent prosperity," etc., and had demonstrated the Party's ability to give leadership to the masses as exemplified in the historic March 6th demonstrations of the unemployed. And though the Party had been reduced to only 7,000 dues-paying members, the morale of the Party was high and it confidently faced the future, more consolidated ideologically than ever before in its history. Its subsequent growth of in-

fluence and numbers justified this confidence.

In July 1945 the Party found it necessary to adjust its line to the realities of the situation immediately following World War II, correcting errors of revisionism put forward by Browder. The Party emerged from the situation with its organization and the bulk of its membership intact, with strong ties to important sections of the labor movement, the Negro people, intellectuals, and others.

* * *

The present Convention in its turn was faced with the necessity also of adjusting to a new situation, a situation resulting basically from the great changes following World War II. This situation has perhaps best been summed up in the proposition that the emergence of socialism as a world system is the chief feature of our present era.

Within the country, the atmosphere has likewise changed considerably from that at the height of the Korean War when the last Convention took place. Since then McCarthyism reached its peak and was driven back by the American people. Geneva has raised the hopes for peaceful coexistence as a practical goal. The AFL and CIO have been re-united after nearly 20 years of chronic split, and the liberation struggle of the Negro people has taken on a new dimension.

Yet, in contrast to the past conventions referred to, the Party this time found itself facing a most severe crisis. This crisis was described

in the words of the convention resolution as follows:

It is necessary for all members of the Communist Party to face up soberly to the fact that in this period the Party suffered heavy organizational losses, declined in political influence in many areas of work, became dangerously isolated from important sectors of the labor and people's movement, is confronted with the jeopardizing of the Marxist press, and that in general the Party is faced with a serious crisis of a political, ideological and organizational nature.

It seems to us that the gravity of the crisis was occasioned largely by the fact that this time the Party was exceedingly late in coping with the changed situation. For years its most authoritative leadership had been in jail or scattered, and the Party as a whole subjected to the most massive and brutal attack by every agent of the capitalist class and government.

Inevitably when the Party reassembled its leadership at the beginning of 1956, not all sectors, either in the leadership or among the membership, fully or immediately realized the gravity of the situation. To be sure there were exaggerations as regards some errors, and underestimation of the Party's past achievements and positive role, but in time the overwhelming majority of the Party, despite its pride in its great contributions and many achievements, had to face up to the crisis. The above section of the resolution adopted by overwhelming vote of the

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convention shows that the Party was ready to meet the situation.

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Without recognition of the seriousness of the situation it would have been impossible to seek out its deeper roots and to lay the basis for overcoming it. In the year-long discussion and at the Convention there were wide differences of emphasis as to the causes, some laying the stress on the objective situation and the attacks against the Party, others on the Party's sectarian errors. The resolution of the convention summed it up as follows:

Was it inevitable that the Party should become so isolated and suffer such organizational and political losses as it did? The answer must be NO. Against the background of the objective situation and its consequences, the errors and long-standing weaknesses of our Party had a particularly damaging effect. . . .

In correcting such errors, the Resolution points out:

In our struggle for a mass policy we base ourselves on the following Marxist-Leninist propositions:

a) that both Left-sectarianism and Right-opportunism have objective roots in reality—in the system under which we live;

b) that the struggle must be conducted on both fronts, with the main emphasis against that which threatens the Marxist line of our Party at the given moment.

The most important mistakes made in the period under review were Left-sectarian in character. These Left-sectarian mistakes, in the context of sharp

attack against the Party, are the main reason for the unprecedented degree to which it was possible for Big Business and its political representatives to isolate the Party.

To end its isolation and expand its mass work, the main task of the Party today is to overcome completely the influence of Left-sectarian estimates, policies and tactics in all fields of work.

In the process of carrying out the main task, the Party must struggle against existent Right-opportunist tendencies, combatting them at all times. This is especially necessary in view of the extremely sharp turn which the Party is now making in many of its basic policies. The necessary struggle against Right-opportunist errors must be carried on in such a way as not to weaken the main task.

The impact of the Khrushchev revelations was a major factor throughout the year-long discussion that culminated in the Convention. These revelations of the harmful effects of the Stalin policies over a long period of time, only served to emphasize what was becoming clear to many in the Party—the need to put an end to uncritical attitudes towards the views of Marxists of other countries. Needless to say, the shocking disclosures also had—if only temporarily—a tendency to disorient some, at the same time that they caused many to deepen their thinking.

The heart of the Convention's analysis as to the causes for the "serious crisis of a political, ideological and organizational nature," that which constitutes the basis for the "new course" and without which

the crisis could not have been met, is contained in the following passage of the resolution:

The roots of these errors are not to be found in the events of the past ten years alone.

The Marxist movement in our country has suffered historically from dogmatic application of Marxist theory to the American scene. The Communist Party inherited these weaknesses. Insufficient development of the independent theoretical work of the Party over the past decades has contributed towards our doctrinaire acceptance and mechanical application of many theoretical propositions.

Our Party also suffered from an oversimplified approach to and uncritical acceptance of many views of Marxists and Marxist parties in other countries.

Bureaucratic methods of leadership, failure to develop inner-Party democracy and a frequent intolerant attitude to the people we worked with have been in large measure responsible for our inability to correct mistakes in time as well as for much of our sectarianism. All these factors are inter-related; each helped to reinforce the other.

This is far from a routine or superficial analysis. A careful study of these conclusions and a review of the Party's past experience will show that here are some fundamental, new propositions. They serve to explain why the Party has repeatedly made the same mistakes and not corrected them in time, and at the same time provide the key to the successful outcome of the Convention and a substantial basis for facing the future with confidence.

This new approach is already embodied in the Convention documents. All the major decisions of the Convention reflect this new thinking. As regards the approach to theory this can be seen in the Preamble to the Party Constitution which states:

The Communist Party bases its theory generally on the democratic heritage of mankind and particularly on the principles of scientific socialism as developed by Karl Marx, Frederick Engels and V. I. Lenin. These universally valid principles, the Communist Party of the U.S.A. interprets, applies and strives to develop further in accordance with the requirements of the American class struggle, democratic traditions and customs.

As regards relationship to Marxists of other countries, the resolution declares:

. . . The Communist Party recognizes that over the years it held certain wrong and oversimplified concepts of what its relations should be to other Marxist parties. The Party tended to accept uncritically many views of Marxists in other countries. Not all these views were correct; some did not correspond to American conditions. The Party also viewed uncritically developments in the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries. It mistakenly thought that any public criticism of the views or policies of the Marxist parties of these countries would weaken the bonds of international working-class solidarity or bring comfort to the enemies of peace and socialism.

In abandoning the earlier idealis-

tic and uncritical attitude towards the lands of socialism, while recognizing their historic role and achievements, the Party has strengthened its ability to promote true proletarian internationalism.

This new, creative approach and broader understanding of theory has already resulted in the elaboration of many policies in a new way. The new emphasis on peaceful coexistence as a *practical possibility* has broadened the approach to the struggle for peace. The American Road to Socialism, while put forward in earlier years, including the idea of peaceful transition, likewise takes on more content and reality. The Party now places the struggle for an anti-monopoly coalition as its main strategic aim along that path. And from such a coalition which could break the power of the traditional enemies of the American people—the monopolies—it believes the American people could advance in a constitutional, democratic and peaceful transition to socialism.

Addressing itself also to the problem of the unification of progressive and socialist-minded currents among the American people, the Convention also adopted a new attitude towards social democracy, noting the differentiation within its ranks, viewing its supporters as potential allies in the labor and anti-monopoly struggle instead of, as in the past, as bearers of a trend which was to be organizationally defeated and liquidated.

Likewise it recognized the possibility of a number of parties of socialism existing side by side and

affirmed the perspective and aim of an eventual united Marxist party of socialism.

* * *

To those who kept themselves informed of the progress of the discussion, including the various articles that have been published in *Political Affairs*, and have pondered the sharp differences, the proposals for far more drastic changes, and on the other hand the charges of revisionism, it may come as a surprise that such a high degree of unity was reached at the Convention. Certainly the enemies of the Party had engaged in considerable speculation on the inevitability of a split at the Convention. At the same time, within the Party, many had feared that the Party would be liquidated in one form or another and its basic theoretical foundation—Marxism - Leninism — abandoned, while others despaired of the capacity of the Party to break with its old sectarian policies and practices and chart a new course in line with the needs of the present situation.

Some have drawn the conclusion that there was no real unity achieved but instead a compromise of principle. We do not believe this is borne out by the facts. If argument and debate does not have the purpose of reaching agreement through arriving at a more correct and acceptable view than that held previously by each proponent, then what would be the use of conventions and collective discussions altogether? Thus, basing themselves on the main line of the Draft Resolution, the Con-

vention strengthened the Resolution, rounding out certain propositions which had tended towards one-sidedness. The new draft constitution was also adopted with only minor changes.

On the much-discussed question of name and form, the Convention took the following position:

This convention goes on record to affirm the continuation of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. Our chief task is to strengthen, rebuild and consolidate the Communist Party and overcome its isolation.

This convention opposes the transformation of the Party into a political or educational association.

Although we oppose endless debate on this question, this should not close the door to all constructive exploration and discussion of the subject as may be organized by the incoming National Committee.

We recognize that some ideas have been brought forward in this discussion that are revisionist in character. However, it would be wrong to label all proposals for change in name and form as revisionist per se.

These actions do not represent compromise, but instead principled agreement.

Not the least among the reasons for the high degree of unity was the conscious desire of the delegates to unite the Party and avoid the dangers of a split or of continuing factionalism. But the factors that made the unity possible were: first, the new approach to theory which loosened the rigidity with which the membership had been trained to regard theo-

retical and political questions; second, the opportunity in the course of the discussion to test ideas against the events actually transpiring in the world; and third, the growing democratization of the Party which had already been under way in the course of the whole discussion without waiting for its practices to be formalized in the new constitution at the convention.

Thus, the lengthy discussion had been the most democratic in the Party's history and the Convention in which it culminated was likewise the most democratic ever held by the Party. It was the democratic character of the convention that made the biggest impression upon the non-Communist observers who while having reservations and mixed opinions on other aspects, bore witness publicly to its democracy.

The early announcement that the constitution would formalize the right of dissent likewise played a major role in encouraging the membership to examine all questions boldly, free from a dogmatic or doctrinaire approach, testing their opinions in life and recognizing the possibility of honest differences on questions within a united Party. The new Constitution confirmed and guaranteed the advances in inner-Party democracy. This was further demonstrated in the direct representation in the national leadership given to the State organization.

The Convention, by its very nature and the issues that had to be debated and settled in a short four days, was unable to give adequate

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attention to a proposed program of action or to the tasks in connection with saving the Marxist press, especially the *Daily Worker* and the *Worker*. Nevertheless the various resolutions and documents adopted by the Convention add up to a general program of struggle. This is true regarding the general line towards an anti-monopoly coalition, the resolution in support of the historic struggle of the Negro people for freedom and equality, and the resolution in support of labor's struggle for improved economic conditions.

That these struggles are growing in dimensions needs no extended demonstration. The struggle in the South is taking on new features as the white supremacists more and more find their legal resources exhausted, and move in the direction of increasing violence. In regard to this question the Convention in numerous ways dramatized its emphasis on the task of winning full citizenship for the Negro people in the South as the Nation's Number One Democratic Task. A new and broad anti-labor offensive is shaping up in the state and national legislation and the demonstration of 10,000 workers from all over the state at Indianapolis, shows that labor, even if belatedly, is beginning to mobilize. The recent farmers' strike in the New York milk-shed has again dramatized the chronic depressed situation of the farmers. The events of Academic Freedom Week show a new

stirring among the students.

The decisions of the Convention, when mastered by the leadership and membership of the Party, should equip them to give support to these and kindred struggles in a new way, that will ultimately result in the overcoming of the Party's isolation from the basic organizations of labor and the people. The struggle against right-to-work laws, the issues arising from the Senate labor investigations, the struggle in the South and the fight for civil rights legislation, are all fields where the Party can doubtless play a constructive, vanguard role.

Many questions brought up in the course of the discussion, of course, remained unresolved. Some of the theoretical questions will undoubtedly receive further study in preparation for the Party program that is to be worked out in the coming year. Others will, of course, be the subject of continued examination in theory and practice by the organizations of the Party. But it seems clear that the Party has taken a decisive step forward in grappling with the new situation and has taken the correct road towards re-establishing its position as an American Marxist working-class party dedicated to socialism and re-establishing its ties with the labor and people's movement. In this as in its entire work, we believe the Convention has made a contribution to the American working class and people.

On the Senate "Racketeering" Investigation*

By National Committee, CPUSA

SENSATIONAL PUBLICITY accompanying the current hearings of the Senate Committee on racketeering headed by Senator McClellan has created widespread expectation among some union members and the public generally that the Senate body may help to cleanse the unions of corruption.

The history of many similar public probes over the years, the very nature of the general racketeering scourge that blankets America today and experience with the initial stage of the current investigation, should disillusion those who place great hopes in the hearings.

The most effective and sweeping of such hearings, by a Senate Committee headed by Senator Kefauver in 1951, has clearly proved that racketeering, mob rule and various illicit operations that affect our urban centers are not inherent in the labor movement. The Kefauver Committee showed how these vast crime syndicates impose their mobster-enforced influences on business, governments, politicians and various organizations.

Such racketeering influences as exist in trade unions—and they un-

questionably do—are an alien growth fostered within it. The roots of this cancer are in capitalist society—a society that tolerates as part of its routine, the degenerative, illicit and crooked forms upon which racketeering is based. And it is a society in which the distinction between "legal" and illegal forms of making profits and acquiring control of property or markets is in many cases hardly to be recognized.

As labor leader James Carey rightly observed in a speech before the Pennsylvania CIO convention there are many "unethical" practices that are "legal" in our society in general, but are a crime within the labor movement. That holds especially for the various forms of racketeering in union welfare funds and the schemes related to the investment of these funds.

The racketeering probes cannot be relied upon by the labor movement to do much because, in the first place, they do not go into the fundamentals of the racketeering evil nor its roots in the capitalist system. In the second place, most of these hearings, as in the current case, are mainly sponsored and used by those

*Statement released March 27, 1957.—Ed.

who, as the Textile Workers Union of America said, are more interested in "a dead" labor movement than a "clean one."

Hardly had the first week of the McClellan Committee's hearings passed than members of the committee and well-known foes of labor generally, raised the cry for new anti-labor laws and for a renewed effort to obtain enactment of "right-to-scab" laws in the major industrial states, as had already happened in Indiana, and for restriction of political activity by labor.

How can anyone in labor or any well-intentioned person expect a constructive objective from Senators McCarthy, Mundt and Goldwater, members of the committee and outstanding foes of labor and witch-hunters who have shouted the loudest for scrapping of the Bill of Rights and the rights of unions to engage in political action? How can good intentions be expected from men like Senators McClellan and Erwin, two members of the committee of eight, both upholders of segregation, opponents of the Supreme Court's ruling and from states that have "right-to-scab" laws?

Have the latter two Senators demonstrated aversion to the most dangerous racket of all—the Citizens White Council gangsters and segregationists, now a widespread scourge?

Only two men on the Committee, Senators Pat McNamara and John Kennedy, both Democrats, have had labor's support.

The *Wall Street Journal*, viewing matters realistically, observes that there is growing talk on Capitol Hill for legislation to put unions under anti-trust laws (to prohibit industry-wide collective bargaining) and for even more stringent restraints on the constitutional rights of unions to engage in political activity. And, of course, big business expects a few more northern industrial states to join Indiana with "right-to-scab" laws.

The National Association of Manufacturers and U. S. Chamber of Commerce are pressing a nationwide campaign to make the most of the anti-labor publicity to obtain passage of just the type of anti-union laws the *Wall Street Journal* anticipates. Moreover, the foes of labor expect the smear of the entire labor movement that comes with the committee's hearings, to reduce substantially the effectiveness of labor and its allies in the fight for needed people's legislation, like improved minimum wages, more public housing construction, more school construction, repeal of anti-labor laws, a civil rights and a people's tax program. Unfortunately, the hearings have already had some effect in diverting the trade unions from the real issues now before Congress and some state legislatures.

Thus, the primary and overriding fact that every trade unionist and others constructively-minded should recognize, is that behind the Senate hearings is anti-unionism! It should

be fully exposed for what it is to all members of unions and the American people as a whole.

* * *

Having said the above of the committee, its composition and hearings, do we close our eyes to the racketeering menace within the unions; the evidence of strong-arm rule in some places and the widespread "legal," but clearly unethical, practices by union standards? By no means!

The Communists are not strangers to the struggle against racketeering. During the thirties it was the Communists, jointly with others in the Left rank and file movements of numerous unions who successfully drove out corrupt, gangster-backed leaders.

The examples of such anti-racketeering united fronts led by Communists in unions of the fur, hotel and restaurant, painters and maritime unions, are to this day models of the way to fight and clean out racketeers in the labor movement. The job was done primarily by the workers of the industries themselves and those unions remain substantially racket-free to this day. The facts of history should effectively refute those in the labor movement who, apparently more fearful of "Communists" than the racketeers, shout for a struggle against Communism and racketeers as "twin evils."

The effectiveness of labor's effort to beat back the designs of its ene-

mies through the Senate hearings, will depend on the extent to which the leaders and rank and file themselves undertake to clean out the racketeers from their midst. That is the only real alternative to the "remedies" advanced by the foes of labor.

Among the major reasons for the welcome of the AFL-CIO merger among the workers generally was the wide belief that the influence of the CIO unions, together with that of some of the former more democratically-run unions, would be a strong enough force to meet the racketeering menace and to defeat the leaders whose unions are racket-infested and most bureaucratically controlled. The pressure for such cleanup has, indeed, been growing. Some of the leaders of the merged labor movement, notably Walter Reuther, Jacob Potofsky, James Carey and others have been outspoken for action.

* * *

The racketeering influences, while affecting unions with a minority of the organized workers, should not be underestimated. The operations of the Becks and the Brewsters and Hoffas are a clear demonstration of what happens in unions where a bureaucracy holds unchallenged and unrestricted control.

The basic antidote to racketeering and the widespread "unethical" practices in the labor movement, is elimination of bureaucracy and the establishment of full democracy within

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the union and rank and file control over its policies as well as finances. And no less important is the fact that if the racketeering collusion between employers and some union officials at the expense of the workers is to be wiped out, so must collaboration between employers and unions be wiped out as a policy. Class-collaboration "business unionism" is at the base of much of the "unethical" collaboration.

No thoughtful person can expect a committee dominated by McCarthy, Mundt, Goldwater, McClellan and Erwin to contribute towards a positive and basic treatment of the problem. But every honest labor leader can help through arousing the rank and file on the issue and encouraging it to organize through democratic forms and procedures the control and vigilance needed to keep the labor movement clean. The response of 10,000 workers to a demonstration before the Indiana State House to protest enactment of the "right-to-scab" law was evidence that the workers are willing to fight. Only they were called too late.

The members everywhere will fight because they know racketeering lives on job-selling and, therefore, job discrimination; it lives on selling out the interests of the workers to employers for a price to the corrupt officials; it lives on stifling the will of the workers, by means of gangsters if need be; it lives on allying the labor movement to the

most corrupt influences and politicians in society and undermining its influence as a progressive force. The fight must be put into the hands of the membership.

It should be equally clear, however, that expulsion of unions infested with racketeers is, as the textile union said, "a cure that is worse than the disease." The AFL-CIO has a responsibility to the many hundreds of thousands of members in the unions influenced by racketeers. Those members expect help to rid their unions of racketeers, not to help the unionbusters who want to see the labor movement split and weakened. They want help to establish democracy and to get a rank and file movement under way in those unions.

* * *

And just as many unions justifiably express alarm lest expulsion of a union like the Teamsters' be one of the consequences, there is growing concern over the AFL-CIO council's decision to cooperate with the McClellan Committee—and do so even at the price of barring the use of the Fifth Amendment by union officers. A number of unions expressed alarm over this policy of retreat. The Pattern Makers' League, an old-established former AFL union, for example, warned that labor lived for 100 years by grace of just the Bill of Rights and should be the last to agree to scrapping any part of it or rely on the Senate committee to do the job for labor.

Bowing to the anti-labor drive and the Senate hearings that spearhead it; expulsions that weaken and divide labor; casting overboard the Bill of Rights, long labor's protective armor;—this is not the way to meet the racketeering issue. A twin

drive by labor, based primarily on arousing and mobilizing the rank and file itself to clean up the unions and an all-out counter-drive on the legislative front, can meet the problem.

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"Toward Negro Freedom"

By Benjamin J. Davis

THE STRUGGLE FOR Negro rights—particularly in the deep South—is the single most crucial and decisive issue in the United States today. The birth of Ghana highlights the international importance of the question; and the national upsurge of the Negroes in the South, spearheaded by the non-violent integration movement, nails down this truth with respect to the home front.

Even sixteen years ago, Dr. Herbert Aptheker, the distinguished Marxist historian, had a clear bead on this question. In an essay written in April, 1941, contained in his new book *Toward Negro Freedom*,* he said: "The historic role of the Negro in America has, from the earliest days, been to announce and fight for the most advanced demands of the people as a whole. His position as America's most exploited man has made him the surest touchstone, the acid test, of American democracy." One does not have to be a Marxist today, to accept this as a fair treatment of the truth.

It is not given to many authors to see their words come alive, at such a ripe young age. Yet, that is

the reward of the 41-year-old Dr. Aptheker, which none would deny him. It is a sign of the rapidity of moving events today, compared with a half century ago; and it is also an indication of the changing face of our country and of the world, changes which will take place at an accelerated pace. Many of the ideas put forward in this book—as well as in others of the author's volumes—have become the property of the masses. To paraphrase the Chinese Communists, these ideas have been taken from the masses through patient historical research and given back to them in the form of weapons of struggle for freedom and human dignity.

* * *

The massive significance of the national liberation struggles of the Negro and colonial people, here and abroad, envelops this work with additional importance. But this in no wise takes the sharp edge from its individual merit. It stands on its own feet; and published in the midst of the Negro History Week celebrations, it is a worthy contribution to that annual event.

Toward Negro Freedom is a collection of essays, articles and speeches

* *Toward Negro Freedom*, by Herbert Aptheker, New Century Publishers, N. Y., 191 pp. \$2.00 (paper); \$2.75 (cloth).

never before published in book form, although most have been printed in such widely varied publications as the *New York Herald Tribune*, the *Journal of Negro Education, Science and Society*, the *Daily Worker* and *Political Affairs*. Three, however, are entirely new: "The Central Theme of Southern History—a Re-examination"; and two radio addresses, one on the Autherine Lucy case and the other on the barbarous lynching of Emmett Till. The latter two speeches were delivered in the heat of the nationwide protest against these two notorious examples of the American "way of life," while the author himself was participating in the movement.

A number of very important topics are dealt with in the book; examples are: Class Conflicts in the South, 1850-1860; Consciousness of Negro Nationality to 1900; American Imperialism and White Chauvinism; Douglass and Lincoln; Historical Notes on the Negro in Mississippi; America's Racist Laws; The Negro Scientist and Inventor; The Quakers and Negro Slavery; Integration Among Combat Troops in World War II; together with a moving dedication to the late Dr. Carter W. Woodson, founder of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and initiator of the nationwide celebrations of Negro History Week. The twenty chapters of the book are popularly-written and exciting.

The book contains critical com-

mentaries on the writings of V. O. Key, Jr., C. Vann Woodward and U. B. Phillips, with respect to the South and the Negro. There are extended studies of the comparative learning abilities of Negroes and whites, and other valuable contributions, giving the work a permanent usefulness. On the whole, it is an impassioned and objective defense of the dignity, equality and contributions of the Negroes to American democracy.

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If many bourgeois historians—whose writings dripped with racism and white supremacy—have been compelled, in some measure, to modify their tunes, it is, in no small part, due to the pioneering work of such eminent Marxist historians as Dr. Aptheker who—except for the Negro people themselves and the American Communist Party—were virtually lone voices crying in the wilderness about the positive history of the Negro. This writer recalls that when he and the late Peter V. Cacchione were members of the New York City Council, it was with the valuable assistance of Dr. Aptheker that attention was focussed on some of the racist texts used in the public school system, resulting in their removal. Today the campaign against racist textbooks is an accepted feature of the Negro people's movement against jim-crow, segregated and inadequate educational facilities.

Dr. Aptheker has long been a student of American Negro history.

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His first work, *The Negro in the Civil War*, was published in 1938. Since then, his published volumes have included: *American Negro Slave Revolts* (1943); *Essays in the History of the American Negro* (1945); *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States* (1951), and others. He was awarded a prize in history by the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1939 and a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1946, indicating the broad non-partisan value and appreciation of his work. None is better qualified to speak authoritatively on the history of the American Negro.

Dr. Aptheker's unique contribution is his Marxist method. This is a two-fold process involving the application of historical materialism and Marxist-Leninist science to the concrete history, conditions and peculiar traits of our own country. In respect to the study of the South, he writes:

The central theme of Southern history, in my opinion, is the drive of the rulers to maintain themselves in power, and the struggle against this by the oppressed and the exploited. Of course, historical materialism sees class struggle as the basic force in all recorded human history—up to Socialism—and the particularity of Southern history consists of the individual and peculiar and special features in that history, but its fundamental motif is class struggle. This in no way excludes the particular contribution of the Negro people to that history; on the contrary the es-

sence of that history is struggle for freedom against an oppressing class (p. 184).

Because the author uses the Marxist method, his book probes deeply into many historical developments, otherwise glossed over or distorted. For example, the facts presented in the chapter, "The Quakers and Negro Slavery," dispute the concept that this group was anti-slavery because its adherents were born that way, or that their religious convictions led them smoothly to this progressive position. Quite the contrary. The role of the Quakers against human enslavement is a very positive one. But it was evolved only after a long struggle within the Society itself, during which it advanced from one position to another through conflict. First, it thrashed out, against bitter opposition, a position against the slave-trade within the Society, extending that policy against the slave-trade outside the Society. Then it opposed slavery within its own ranks, and extended that opposition to slavery anywhere. It was a process of conflict and struggle between opposing ideas, groupings and leaders, within the limits of their common religion. It remained however, pretty much of a sect because it did not move boldly into the mass Abolitionist movement, and never opened its doors on the basis of equality to Negro members. Many Quaker anti-slavery leaders, moreover, Dr. Aptheker writes,

"could not tell whether their greatest enemies were those who had already seen the Light or those to whom the Truth was yet to be brought."

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Progress through struggle, therefore, is a prime lesson one learns from this volume, and it runs like a red thread throughout the work. When, consequently, the identity of the enemy becomes blurred, then the first pre-requisite of struggle is sadly lacking, and the danger of becoming a sect enormously increases.

One of the big lies that the fabulous capitalist media of propaganda are sedulously spreading against the abolition of segregation in the South today, is that the jim-crow system is of too long a duration to be uprooted immediately, that it has existed unbroken since the first Negro slaves were kidnapped to the United States back in the 1600's. This, of course, is to buttress the gospel of moderation—which, in practice, means: Don't disturb the status quo.

How deeply the American monopolists believe in so-called moderation can very well be dismissed when one thinks of how moderately they passed the Taft-Hartley and Communist Control Acts, how moderately they jail political dissenters, how moderately the monopolists fleece the public, how moderately they undermine the Bill of Rights or how sweetly they impose war bases all over the world—and above all,

how moderately they've enforced racism and white supremacy in America with force and violence!

Dr. Aptheker had occasion to tackle one of these juicy lies in the *Herald-Tribune* of July 14, 1946. Replying to an editorial in this omniscient and class-conscious organ of Wall Street, which asserted that "for the first time in the history of the state (Mississippi), Negroes went to the polls and voted," that is in the Bilbo election of 1946, the author points out that from 1868 to 1899, Negroes not only voted in Mississippi, but held office. "As late as 1899," Dr. Aptheker states, "there was a Negro representative in the Mississippi legislature." It seems then that only in the offices of the saboteurs of integration is the Jim-crow system as old as Methuselah, so old that one should accept it as a part of the landscape. The editorial writers of the capitalist press are not distinguished by their knowledge of American history.

Prophetically enough, Dr. Aptheker wraps this point up with the following: "Americans should know that for an entire generation the rule of greed, racism, and vested property interests was successfully challenged, despite fraud, intimidation and mass murder, right in Mississippi itself. This knowledge will gird us in the present struggle for freedom." The militancy of the courageous Negro students at Alcorn A. & M. in Mississippi, of the Negro leaders and masses in that state, all testify that

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the children and grand-children of Hiram Revels and Blanche K. Bruce, two Negro U.S. Senators from that state during Reconstruction, have not forgotten their heritage.

One cannot overlook the fact either that Jim-crow laws in the South appeared fairly recently, some as late as 1908 in Georgia, that they were enacted over fierce opposition of many whites, and that they spread, in the words of the author "with the burgeoning of American monopoly capitalism, with the appearance of American imperialism" which "needs and breeds white chauvinism." In other words, these enactments are not quite as old and fixed as the weather; they were imposed on the South by the Southern white ruling class, principally the plantation owners to whom the Northern capitalists capitulated after the Civil War—they were made by men and they can be unmade by men. And the unmaking is already under way, as a part of mankind's inexorable march forward.

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Shall this unmaking be moderate or immoderate—that is, now or later on? The whole purpose of Dr. Aptheker's book, it would seem, is to support the immediate liquidation of the jim-crow system and to document it with truthful research into American history. Some of the apostles of moderation believe that even pressure upon the President to speak out against the unbridled terror of the White Citizens Coun-

cils and the Klan in the South, is pushing integration too fast. But the author disabuses our minds of any idea that such a mild act by Eisenhower could by any stretch of the imagination be considered "extremism." Back in June 1918, the wave of lynchings against Negroes reached such a point that the Democratic President, Woodrow Wilson, was pressed to issue a public statement. He, too, hemmed and hawed, even in the face of political prompting from his own White House advisers. "But more important than this prompting," writes Dr. Aptheker, "were the petitions, delegations (which were rarely permitted to see Mr. Wilson), and mass demonstrations. Tens of thousands of Negroes silently paraded in cities throughout the country. Finally, on July 26, 1918, Wilson was persuaded to issue a statement against lynching."

If the President of the U.S. could be compelled to publicly condemn anti-Negro lynch terror 39 years ago, why not today? For in 1957, the allies of the Negro people are immensely more powerful. We have a world socialist system led by the Soviet Union and China, such powerful neutralist countries as India, and burgeoning colonial liberation movements which have brought independence to several formerly imperialist-enslaved nations. These developments alone force every capitalist system to live in a glass house. And, as the author says of our own

country, ". . . the forces of labor, of the common man, are infinitely stronger than they were a generation ago," and this estimate of the author was made in April 1941, 16 years ago! Consequently when, as Southern Negro leaders have proposed that there be a pilgrimage of prayer to Washington unless the President speaks out against lynching, it is not a diabolical plot of the Communists, as such a discredited stoolpigeon as Manning Johnson is being hired to say, but flows naturally from a reasonable acquaintance with indigenous Negro and American history. Moreover, mass pressure is as old as the struggles of man.

It is the unique role of Marxists, by virtue of their organized use of Marxist-Leninist science, to chart the probable course of events for the future, and then to prepare for that future in the present. There is a flurry of examples of this sort in the book. For example, on Feb. 12, 1946, Dr. Aptheker, who rose from private to major in World War II, had published an article castigating with documentary proof the racist practice of a segregated army. As if laying the basis for certain integration which took place in the armed forces in 1952-53, he wrote with respect to relations between Negro and white soldiers in the last world war:

The vast majority of these originally dubious white men stated, after serving with them (Negro soldiers), that

the Negroes fought "very well." It was unanimously agreed that the men got along together (fought and lived together) without trouble, and the vast majority stated they had got along very well. And it was unanimously agreed that this experience of common effort did not result in worsened feelings, but on the contrary, over three out of four white soldiers stated that because of it, their regard and respect for the Negro had risen (p. 136).

Thus Dr. Aptheker supported with pioneering scholarship the struggles of the Negro people and their allies at home against racism in the armed forces, while the combination of these struggles with the growth of the world socialist system and the pressures of the colonial peoples in Asia and Africa, put meat on his prophetic words.

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The future of the Negro liberation movement in the South, is my final topic of discussion relevant to this book. What is its future, its probable course of development? Are we living, as the author states positively on p. 181, "in the generation that *will see the destruction of Jim Crow in the United States*"? (italics in original). These, of course, are the questions of the hour. The answers are being fought out in the crucible of life in the South and in the nation as a whole; and the American Communist Party is debating this question, seeking to apply its Marxist-Leninist science and to examine peculiar American condi-

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But in the first place, one must take note that *Toward Negro Freedom* contains indispensable historical and laboratory material to apply to this discussion. Secondly, the answers to these questions are inextricably bound up with the future of the American working class and with the fate of the American people as a whole. One of the principal reasons why the struggle for Negro rights has not risen to its natural and urgent place of priority as the key to advancing the whole nation, is because the white workers and the white popular majority of the country do not yet recognize this truth as a matter of their own profound self-interest. Thirdly, the only permanent and basic solution of the Negro liberation struggle is the establishment of socialism, in accordance with the national individuality of our own land. "By transforming capitalism into socialism," Lenin declared in *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, with brilliant pertinence to present day realities, "the proletariat creates the possibility for the complete abolition of national oppression. . . ."

Within this broad framework, however, the national liberation movement of the Negro people has a logic and a personality of its own which seeks to complete the unfinished bourgeois democratic tasks of the Civil War and to achieve its free and equal citizenship now and under

the system of American monopoly capitalism, as cannibalistic as this system is. Insofar as bourgeois democracy in our country permits certain rights, the 17 million Negroes want the same portion as any white American possesses. The struggle to achieve these goals—limited as they are—is, in Marxist terms, basic to the national question. It is a struggle no less subject to the laws of social development than the transformation of the society as a whole to socialism—of which the national question is a part, though not always consciously considered so by the participants. One of the unique contributions of Communists, among other things, is to develop the element of consciousness in the struggle, the capacity for knowing under all conditions and at all times where one is going and how to get there. Hence, the necessity for a Marxist-Leninist Party in this—of all countries!—and there will be one!

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Virtually every chapter in the book is germane to the future of the Negro liberation movement. But one in particular—"Consciousness of Negro Nationality to 1900"—is of special probative value, particularly to Communists.

The question of Negro nationality has developed much controversy in connection with the self-critical review of our Party's policy during the last twelve months. Most of the progress made by the Party discussion on this question has been reflected

in a general recognition that its theoretical perspective—expressed in the slogan of self-determination for the Black Belt—has suffered in the past from certain dogmatic tendencies, which retarded, instead of developing, our science. This progress must be pursued much further—particularly in connection with correcting our past dogmatism and doctrinairism, as well as in avoiding these deviations in the future.

However, since the 16th National Convention of the Party—where the Draft Resolution was strengthened and made more mature—far more attention should be given to the danger of liquidating the national character of the Negro question altogether, that is, to the opposite danger of revisionism and Right-opportunism. It is one thing to liquidate deviations, and another, to liquidate facts.

Dr. Aptheker establishes beyond question, by documentary proof, the fact that, up to 1900, important sections of the Negroes—leaders and masses—considered themselves a “nation within a nation” in the United States. Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, the greatest living Negro historian, spoke of the Negroes as a nation back in 1899, and again in the NAACP petition to the United Nations in 1947. So did Booker T. Washington, the principal ideological antagonist of Dr. Du Bois, in 1896. Martin R. Delany, one of the outstanding pre-Civil War Negro leaders, often declared (p. 108):

“We [the Negro people—BJD] have native hearts and virtues, just as other nations. We are a nation, within a nation—as the Poles in Russia, the Hungarians in Austria; the Welsh, Irish and Scotch in the British dominions.”

Concluding the essay on “Consciousness of Negro Nationality to 1900,” written in 1949, the author says (p. 109):

It is believed that the foregoing evidence establishes the fact that the concept of Negro nationality, however rudimentary or distorted the forms, has been expressed by various sections of the Negro population for well over a hundred years. Of no other people within the United States is this true, and this fact constitutes a very significant feature of Negro history.

While what an individual or a nation thinks of itself is not conclusive as to the truth, it is a fact of first-rate importance in making an objective estimate. This characteristic of the life and history of the Negro people cannot be ignored—and to do so only signifies wishful thinking instead of scientific analysis. This must be kept in mind as the Party continues its discussion on the theoretical aspects of the Negro question, preparatory to its resolution.

What needs to be examined more fully, it seems to me, is the consciousness of Negro nationality since 1900, and particularly during the last 25 years beginning with the Roosevelt New Deal, the growth of the labor

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movement, the Negro-labor alliance, population and industrial changes in the South, and related developments.

Far more attention needs to be given to the peculiarly American aspects of the national question as they manifest themselves in our country.

The primary weakness of the American Communist Party in its theoretical approach to the Negro question was not in its promulgation of the concept of the nationality of the Negro people in the Black Belt. In fact, this approach enabled it to make many new, profound and unique contributions to the whole struggle for Negro rights. It was rather the mechanical, doctrinaire and self-righteous manner in which it applied this concept to the solution of this question, investing it with a certain rigidity and sterility which ruled out subsequent turns in events and other dynamic factors which were bound to affect the course of struggle in the deep South. The arrival at sound, and at the same time more flexible and up-to-date approaches, is at the core of the creative theoretical inquiry now being pursued in the Party. The glimpse which the author's essay has given into the history of the concept is exceedingly helpful in emphasizing many important native attributes of the Negro question in our country. Further discussion will be enriched by a study of Dr. Aptheker's findings and particularly by the epic contemporaneous developments in the South.

Undoubtedly, this generation could see the total outlawing and illegalization of the jim-crow system in the United States, which would improve American democracy, though capitalism breeds jim-crow. In fact, the question has already been presented in the slogan of the NAACP: Free by '63! This slogan merits the utmost and broadest support in cementing Negro-white unity for the first-class citizenship of Negro Americans, despite the fact that as long as monopoly capitalism exists, the material basis for continuing jim-crow remains. Even fascism is not impossible. The violent and murderous resistance interposed by large sections of the southern white ruling class to the enforcement of the elementary de-segregation decisions of the Supreme Court, demonstrate that, notwithstanding important gains made in civil rights, the Negro people have a long, long distance to go.

In addition to the basic role of labor and the popular masses in outlawing this system, the American Communist Party has a powerful and unique role to play, in helping to establish the broadest unity of the people, in building and consolidating its own ranks and in fighting out of its present isolation. Communists view their own tasks as being in the interest of the struggle for Negro rights, in the interests of democracy, peace and the general welfare of the American people as a whole. The 16th National Convention of the Communist Party made

a major contribution to the work of the Party in the struggle for Negro rights, registering a sharp mandate and emphasis in this direction. Clearly, the new thing since the 16th National Convention is that our Party should lose no time in plunging at once into the mass struggle for Negro rights in the most self-sacrificing and constructive manner, on the basis of class struggle policies directed against American imperialism.

The stimulating and valuable material collected in this book is a vitally needed contribution to Negro American history, deserving the widest popular distribution. It is of special significance to American Communists who, with a sharp eye to our country's native history, are correctly reviewing all the past work of Marxists over recent years. This book will assist in maintaining a necessarily realistic and sober appraisal of the contributions of the Party and of individual Marxists, rather than drifting into certain nihilistic attitudes toward the Party's past. It also underlines certain fundamentals of historical materialism, of the class struggle and of Negro-white unity which are an integral part of American history and which enable us to examine more efficiently the native peculiarities of our country—and its growth.

Wisely enough, this book does not permit Marxists to forget that consciousness of working-class theory needs to be added to the character-

istic vitality and energy of the American people.

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In my judgment, one of the major achievements of American Marxists over the years has been the volumes and writings of such eminent authorities as Dr. Aptheker, not to mention others. Himself a worthy son of the Jewish people, his work in the field of Negro history has been unexampled. He has helped to establish the ideological foundations of collaboration between the Negro and Jewish Americans, and today takes an active part in cementing these relations on the firing line against racism and pro-fascist reaction. Dr. Aptheker is a people's historian. It is a challenge to the American Communist Party, and to the struggle against sectarianism, that it has, chronically, underestimated the value of such contributions, and failed to give the necessary recognition to the impact which such distinguished figures make upon the cultural and educational life of the country. Dr. Aptheker, as an outstanding Marxist historian of international standing, is one of the leaders of a recognized trend of thought in the circles of the American intelligentsia, setting a worthy example to Marxists in other fields of endeavor in our country. With the proper use and appreciation of *Toward Negro Freedom*, our Party can begin to make the necessary renovation in this vitally important field.

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A Talk on Socialism *

By Nemmy Sparks

SINCE EARLY TIMES human beings have concerned themselves not only with how to avoid the disasters of nature but whether it would not be possible to create a type of society in which they would also be free from the disasters inflicted by human beings upon one another: war, enslavement, injustice and so on. Various utopias were constructed throughout history. The early days of the capitalist system which aroused indignation alike at the "un-natural" method of production in factories, as well as at the extreme exploitation of the working people, gave birth to a number of experiments in cooperative and communal colonies as well as new ideas of utopian socialism.

Karl Marx shared with the utopian socialists their indignation against the horrors of early capitalism, but Marx's approach was fundamentally different. He approached the question as a scientist; that is: he did not begin with the desirability of socialism and how it was to be achieved. He began, as did the other scientists of his time in the natural sciences, with an analysis of *what exists*.

We are all familiar with the kind of heat that was developed in some

of the classical controversies in the natural sciences although superficially there seemed to be no great practical interests involved. The controversies around the great discoveries of Copernicus, Galileo and Darwin were certainly no examples of what we would call objective impartial controversy. Should we not expect, therefore, that the scientific work of Marx, the conclusions and application of which boldly attacked the existing economic order, would also receive far from an objective treatment, and in fact be subjected on the one hand to a conspiracy of silence and distortion, and on the other hand to every variety of all-out attack?

It is true that such foremost American scholars as Beard, Robinson, Commons, and Thorstein Veblen gave a high estimate of the importance of studying Marx, but in general Marxism underwent a scholastic boycott in the past.

Today the scholastic boycott has been replaced by the much more devastating political proscription.

*Delivered as one of a series of talks by visiting lecturers of different political and social beliefs, at the class on comparative social systems at Rutgers University, March 18, 1957.—Ed.

Neither boycott nor proscription, however, stems the flood of works refuting Marxism. An endless number of "final" and "conclusive" refutations of Marxism have appeared in the century since Marx produced his major works. Yet Marxism as a science continues to have a world-wide influence. It is my belief that this continuing influence depends more than anything else on the fact that it *is* a scientific approach to the problems of social organization.

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To understand the scientific character of Marxism, it is necessary, however, to free it from the various vulgarizations which are indeed easily refuted, but which were never put forward by Marx or Engels, and are instead distortions or over-simplifications.

As I said, Marx began with an analysis of existing conditions, and from this analysis he set himself to discover what are the actual forces governing the development of society. He developed the general principle known as the materialist conception of history. This has been vulgarized into what is known as "economic determinism," that is: "economics decides everything." This is not Marxism. On the contrary, as Engels once indignantly explained, what they asserted was only that among the various factors affecting the development of society, the economic factor is *ultimately* the determining one. This is a far cry from saying that historical, psychological, cultural, national and other

factors carry no weight. Such conceptions have always been only a travesty of Marxism.

Of course, as with other scientists, Marx's ideas did not spring full-blown from his own head. They had their origin in the ideas current in his time. Thus our own James Madison also wrote as early as 1787:

Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. . . . From the protection of different and unequal faculties of acquiring property, the possession of different degrees and kinds of property immediately results; and from the influences of these on the sentiments and views of the respective proprietors, ensues a division of society into different interests and parties.

The stroke of genius that Marx added was to recognize and develop the primary role of this factor and to see that it is the struggle between the different classes that is the *motive force* of the political development of society. In general Marxism recognizes its origin in British political economy, German philosophy and French utopian socialism and revolutionary traditions.

Having developed the general principle of the materialist conception of history, Marx then proceeded to an analysis of the existing economic system—capitalism. And far from analyzing capitalism with a preconceived view as to why it fails or how it breaks down, Marx's analysis was devoted precisely to the ques-

tion that was mystifying all the economists of his day, that is, *what actually makes capitalism work?* It was through analyzing how capitalism works that Marx was able to understand *within what framework* can such an economic system work, what are its limits, its soluble problems and its insoluble problems, and in what direction are these problems determining its development? It was on the basis of this analysis that Marx came to the conclusion that capitalism, like slave-holding society and feudalism before it, was not a system that permanently solved the problems of the organization of society; and that just as feudalism created all the pre-conditions for the succeeding stage of capitalism, so capitalism was creating the pre-conditions for a new system of economic and social organization that would succeed it—a system which has been given the name of socialism.

Of course, there are many who would like to believe that capitalism is a permanent system. Undoubtedly many people under feudalism felt the same way. Others, of course, struggled against what they felt were the increasingly restricting conditions of feudalism. This struggle was the active force leading to the replacement of feudalism. But it was the scientific laws of the development of society that determined the kind of system that replaced feudalism. It is these same scientific laws that determine the fact that when capitalism proves finally unable to solve the basic problems of the or-

ganization of society, it is a system of socialism that will replace it, and that will be able to solve the problems of the next phase of social organization. It is in this way that Marxist thinking arrives at socialism, not just as something desirable but as something developing out of existing reality. That is why Marxists refer to their type of movement as scientific socialism.

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What is the nature of the insoluble problems which Marxists believe lead to the eventual replacement of capitalism by a more modern system? The basic conflicting tendency or as it is generally termed "contradiction," is the inherent conflict between the social method of production and private appropriation of the product. In contrast to all previous systems, no one can deny that production in modern society is a vast interlocking system requiring the co-operation not only of thousands of workers in a single industrial plant, but the co-operation of other thousands of workers in mines, in transport and in distribution, and beyond this the cooperation of entire industries and branches of industries with one another. This is not the production of an individual farmer or craftsman or even of a number of individuals. It is social production. Yet the product does not belong to society but to the individual capitalist or group of capitalists who own the enterprises.

Of course, in our opinion this is morally wrong since it subordinates

the workers, and in fact the whole of society, to the arbitrary will of the capitalists. But it is this basic condition of the capitalist system which gives rise to its central insoluble economic problem: the basic contradiction between the tendency of capitalism to continually expand its productive capacity without limit, and the actual limitation of the market. It is this discrepancy that is responsible from time to time for the economic crises or, as they are now called, depressions. Originally it was naively assumed that production and consumption would automatically balance out. Economists today, however, generally accept the position of Keynes that this discrepancy is real and inescapable, but can be rectified by appropriate conscious action on the part of business as a whole or the State. It is believed by many, therefore (although most of them do keep their fingers crossed) that depressions can now be avoided and that the present prosperity is permanent.

We do not share this view. But we also reject emphatically the most common newspaper slanders that we are "prophets of gloom and doom," or that we "want a depression" or "want chaos." If, for instance, a geologist, or let us say the army engineers examining the lay of the land, for example in Connecticut or around Pittsburgh, predict a flood, this does not mean that they *want* the flood or are trying to create it. As for "wanting chaos," we are for the most orderly possible solution of the prob-

lems of society, including as we believe the ultimately necessary transition to socialism. I think it must be admitted that the chaos of the two world wars and of the great depression as well as the earlier ones resulted from the workings of the *capitalist* system.

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It is true that there have been a number of ameliorations of the situation in our country. Many of the features quoted today as "built-in stabilizers" and "safeguards" are gains which the people fought for and won under the New Deal. There is no contradiction in the fact that while we are for eventually replacing capitalism by socialism, we are nevertheless for every variety of improvement in the conditions of the people today. Nor is there a contradiction in the fact that the big business interests who presumably are most concerned with maintaining capitalism, fought tooth and nail against all these improvements under the New Deal which they now recognize as "stabilizers," etc. Thus, we Communists played a leading role in the fight for unemployment insurance and social security while Big Business denounced it as a plot by Moscow agents to wreck the American economy. Yet today it is recognized on every hand that the social security system is one of the main features that may delay or mitigate the impact of a depression.

It is true that we have sometimes made errors, letting political estimates run ahead of scientific investi-

gation, and together with a lot of other people predicted depressions when they did not take place. Yet today it is Secretary Humphrey who talks about "a depression that will make your hair curl" if inflation is not controlled. The fact is, whatever may be one's short-term predictions, that our present American prosperity does rest on a very shaky foundation. A considerable section of our production and employment rests upon the armaments industries. This is not a reliable or permanently acceptable basis.

Next we must recognize that America is almost alone in the world in its present high standard of living. This is not a matter for self-congratulation as some short-sighted people think. It is rather a matter of deep concern that such a large portion of the world, including the industrially developed countries, live at a level so far below ours. This is not a stable basis of affairs, and creates increasing problems for our own economy. But it is in the undeveloped sections of the world, the colonies and former colonies, that the biggest challenge exists. When we see that America's foreign investments have increased to \$45 billion (four times the pre-war level) and that these investments do not lead to increase in the standard of living of the people of these countries, we must recognize that too many peoples throughout the world feel that our high standard of living is to a certain degree, call it through the fortunes of war or of history,

or call it imperialism—at their expense.

It seems to me, we should not be too sweeping in our assertion of the high level of American prosperity or that we have so solved our problems that we can call this system by the Madison Avenue name of "people's capitalism." The fact is that whereas in the days of the New Deal President Roosevelt spoke of one-third of a nation ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed, in last year's election campaign the same slogan went out about one-fifth of the nation. Is it such a proud boast that in an entire generation of the American capitalist system, the greatest and strongest in the world, we succeeded in raising only an additional 13% of the population above the line of impoverishment and semistarvation? Today the Heller Budget places the necessary weekly wage for a family of four at \$108 a week. But the average worker's wage in American industry is only \$80.13.

How does the average American family make both ends meet? Only by having two bread-winners in the family, the wife and husband working alike making whatever provision they can for the care of the children, or by the man holding two jobs—the second one in the evening, or weekends or whatever—or working unconscionable hours of overtime on the one job. The answer to the question: how do they make ends meet, is also to be seen in the huge level of consumer debt, where a family sits surrounded by a tele-

vision, washing machine, refrigerator, car and the home itself, all owned by the finance company, while they try not to think what would happen if the breadwinner were to lose his job. Coupled with this is the increasing intensity of labor at the assembly line and work bench as industry continually strives to increase its productivity with the same or smaller number of workers.

It would also be, to say the least, highly unrealistic not to note that as much as 10 percent of our population, the Negro people, stand in their vast bulk on the lowest rung of our economic ladder and through a whole network of discrimination are kept in the most impoverished sector of our system—in sharecropping, unskilled labor and menial occupations.

Thus, we should not be too complacent about our prosperity, but should recognize that it is of a very uneven character, including also whole sick industries, like textile, the anthracite, etc., as well as the unsatisfactory condition of our farming population.

* * *

What then are the characteristics of socialism that it should be superior in every way to the system of capitalism?

Again, if we want to examine this question scientifically, we cannot start with the question of desirability of equality in distribution or even the question of distribution in general. It is the system of production that is basic and determining

in every economic system and the method of distribution is dependent upon it. The basic feature of socialism is that it takes the vast socialized production mechanism that has been built up under capitalism and frees it from its restricted status as private property of individuals or corporations and makes it the property of the whole of society. The values created by the workers over and above their wages, which under capitalism become profit, therefore, go no longer to those owning the capital but to society as a whole, for enhancing the standard of living, for the purpose of maintaining and expanding the economy, and for all other social purposes.

Society's economic purpose is therefore no longer restricted by the standard of whether any particular operation enriches a particular individual or group—perhaps at the expense of other groups or even through operations detrimental to society. The economic purpose of society becomes directly what it should be—the provision for all members of society of an adequate and increasing standard of living and cultural level and the enrichment of every facet of human life.

The social ownership of production makes possible a rational organization of production. Under capitalism where the sole regulator of production is profitability, the balance of production is achieved by the time-honored sink-or-swim, dog-eat-dog method: successes and failures, from the microscopic to the

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colossal—the corner candy store to the huge trusts—nationwide and worldwide booms and depressions.

Socialism makes possible a planned economy. The reason is simple enough. Where production is privately owned, society cannot tell a producer what to produce or how much; but where society owns the productive system, it can make its own effective decisions. Of course, it is obvious that within our monster industrial combines a tremendous amount of planning goes on all the way from the mine or forest to the retail outlet. There are some elements of planning in whole industries, but all this is chiefly technological planning rather than social and economic planning and goes hand in hand with intense and bitter competition among the big monopolies, as well as at, and between, all other economic levels.

Of course, planning under a socialist system does not mean planning independent of economic laws, or that economic laws no longer exist. But it does mean that society is now consciously able to utilize these laws, as in any other science, for its own planned objectives, instead of finding these laws operating independently through the uncharted workings of the system, producing economic results that even our most skilled economists cannot actually foresee.

Does planning pay off? I think there would not be too much argument about it today. When the chips were down for us in the second

world war, our government did plenty of planning to get the necessary war production. But it had to pay tremendous tribute to private ownership in the colossal amount of waste, graft and disorganization even within its limited area of planning. Of course, it was during the last depression that planning showed its true worth when the only system in the world exempt from depression was the planned economy of the Soviet Union.

Naturally, socialism requires abundance. It cannot be a system of "sharing the poverty." For this reason, it does not come upon the stage of history as a practical possibility until capitalism has already brought about the tremendous development of the productive forces embodied in modern industry and agriculture. Socialism has to take over from there and add still a new dimension to productivity.

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History being what it is, real life has not worked out as simply as a text book. The material and the political prerequisites for such an epoch-making change in the organization of society have too often not been in balance in any given country. Thus, the first country to achieve success in placing political power in the hands of the working class for the achievement of socialism was a country with an exceedingly backward economy and a minimum industrial plant. In case the prospect did not look unpromising enough, we must also bear in mind that this first

working-class government had also to cope with the devastation of the first world war, with continuing civil war and with military intervention by 14 foreign powers. Yet they remained firm in their conviction that the advantages of the socialist system of society would enable them to overcome their difficulties. And today, in less than 40 years, that country, the Soviet Union, has become the second strongest industrial power in the world.

In the course of these 40 years others have followed in their footsteps and today the system of socialism embraces one-third of the population of the world, including not only the largest country in area, the USSR, but also the most populous country in the world, China. Other huge countries like India and Indonesia have declared their commitment to socialism which they hope to achieve by different roads that they will develop themselves. And in Western Europe, Socialism is widely and freely regarded as a pressing alternative. Yet the Soviet people bear undoubted scars from the extreme difficulties of their heroic advance. The tremendous emphasis on overcoming their economic backwardness at all costs under the perennial threat of war, the terrific forced march in the economic field, led to many distortions and restrictions on the democratic character of their society that have for the time being marred the picture of their truly epoch-making achievement.

For us in America of all countries

certainly no such forced march would be necessary in the field of construction. Our country already enjoys the greatest industrial plant in the world. Even in 1934 the Committee on National Survey of Potential Product Capacity reported that every family of four in our country could be provided with an income of \$4400 a year at 1929 prices if America's productive resources were used to the full and their product equally divided among all families. Since then, the productivity of American industry has taken another great leap forward, and close at hand for the coming generation is the challenge of the full utilization of the techniques of automation and the resources of atomic energy. These forces are too vast for private control. But half of our industrial production is controlled by 500 corporations—a tiny percentage of the people. Socialism by nationalizing the huge trusts would place all this enormous productive equipment in the hands of society as a whole.

Public ownership of the means of production does not mean any necessity to nationalize small industries, family farms or other minor enterprises that have no decisive effect upon the system. On the contrary, a considerable amount of such decentralization and free trade for as long as people might desire it, would help to give flexibility to the system. And, needless to say, there is no nationalization of personal property.

Just as capitalism could not be established without the capitalist class

winning the dominant political power in the country, so, of course, socialism could not be established without the working class gaining political power.

Strange as it may seem to many people, our American Constitution itself does not establish or require the economic system of capitalism, nor prohibit or make impossible, the establishment of socialism; though, of course, just as the Constitution was amended at the time of our last great change—the abolition of private property in human beings, of slavery—so, too, some amendment would be needed for socialism.

* * *

Despite the occasional outcries by anguished reactionaries that the New Deal was socialism, that other progressive proposals are socialism, the fact is that socialism will come about in our country only when the overwhelming majority of the American people insist on it. The statement in our Declaration of Independence still holds true: "All experience hath shown that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed." It is our hope and belief that the American people will decide "to right themselves" with a minimum of suffering of increasing evils of capitalism, or difficulties of transition.

Above all, socialism will render war obsolete. Wars are fought for *something*, not just out of "combative instincts." It is the drive for greater

expansion of capital and profit, for exploitation of foreign peoples and markets that has been the basic cause of war in this century. These causes will disappear under socialism.

Socialism will not be a society without problems. It will not be a utopia. Especially in its early stage, socialism will carry with it, as is inevitable, many of the features of capitalism reflecting the lower stage of social organization. It is nonsense that you can't change human nature, as every scientist knows; but it would be equally nonsense to imagine that human nature can be changed overnight. Thus, equality in distribution cannot be immediately introduced. New social incentives arise from the start, but it would be folly to imagine that they immediately and permanently become the property and the inspiration of everybody. Thus certain differences in material reward remain under socialism. The slogan is, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work." But there should be no unemployment under socialism and people are free from the nagging economic insecurity that is such a major concern in America today and responsible for such a large percentage of mental illness.

With public ownership of the means of production and planned economy, it is clear that the system would be free from the basic contradiction of capitalism, the discrepancy between the continually increasing capacity to produce and the limitation of the market.

The conversion of the means of production to public ownership also eliminates the basic class division of capitalist society, that between the capitalist class and the working class. Both the economic and the social contradictions, therefore, which lead, as we believe, to the eventual replacement of capitalism by a new system, would not be in operation under the new socialist system. Society will have reached a new qualitative level in its organization—a classless society.

This is not the kind of organization of the ant-hill or the bee-hive so fondly depicted by some of our satirical novelists of the day. Instead it is a type of organization intensely human, placing the values of humanity above all values, providing for the fullest development of the individual, not in accordance with his greatest narrowness but in accordance with his greatest potential breadth. It is a type of society which, as old habits and selfish concerns lose their necessity and their survival value, eventually leads in the more remote future, without interruption or sharp breaks, into Communist society where the problems of social organization are fully solved, developed into the matter-of-course of human

living, and the human race at last reaches its full social maturity. In this sense, as Engels implied, we are still living in the pre-history of mankind.

The British scientist and writer, Arthur C. Clarke writes in his book *The Exploration of Space*:

One would give much to know what verdict an historian of the year 3000 . . . would pass upon our age, as he looks back at us down the long perspective of time. Let us hope that this will be his judgment.

"The 20th Century was, without question, the most momentous hundred years in the history of mankind. It opened with the conquest of the air, and before it had run half its course had presented civilization with its supreme challenge—the control of atomic energy. Yet even these events, each of which changed the world, were soon to be eclipsed. To us a thousand years later, the whole story of mankind before the 20th Century seems like the prelude to some great drama, played on the narrow strip of stage before the curtain has risen and revealed the scenery."

I believe, the social scientist, looking back on our great century, will render a similar verdict.

A. On the "Italian Road to Socialism"*

By Roger Garaudy

(Member, C.C., Communist Party of France)

THE SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF ITALY

ON THIS POINT our comrades insist on two essential ideas:

- 1) The characteristics of the Italian Constitution.
- 2) The conditions of the struggle for agrarian reform.

The Italian Constitution, our comrades think, is "different from the traditional type of those of capitalist democracies." This difference has to do with its origin. It is said in Point 6 of the theses: "Upon the fall of fascism there was felt in Italy the need to install not a regime of parliamentary democracy of the old type, but to construct a new society and a new state in which the roots of fascism would be extirpated forever."

The first feature of this constitution, say the theses, is—in opposition to fascist centralization—to institute a certain local autonomy.

The second trait is not to limit the political rights of the citizen merely to voting for the parliament, but to permit through the right of petition, permanent participation in the political, economic and social organization.

The third is not to stick to formal

principles but to affirm that "those obstacles in the economic and social order should be discarded, which limit in fact the liberty and equality of citizens and prevent the full development of the human person and the effective participation of all the workers in the political, economic and social organization of the State."

From these characteristics our comrades draw the following conclusions:

Granted that the biggest and most original victory of the Italian democratic and socialist movement lies exactly in the field of the state, our present Constitution, one must foresee a socialist progress which develops precisely on the field that the Constitution establishes and foresees and which is the field of democratic liberties and progressive social transformations.

This constitution is not yet a socialist constitution; but since it is the expression of a vast united renovating movement it differentiates itself profoundly from other bourgeois constitutions; it represents an effective choice for development of Italian society on the path which goes towards socialism.

* This is an excerpt from an article appearing in *Cahiers du Communisme* (Paris), January, 1957.

. . . This is the sense in which we think that the working class can arrive at carrying out its function of leadership of the socialist revolution in the concrete Italian situation.*

This is what brings Giolitti at the Congress to this affirmation: the Italian road to socialism passes through the Constitution of the Republic and structural reforms.

In fact, the Italian Constitution does not seem qualitatively different from other bourgeois constitutions, especially those which were born from the post-war Liberation. It never goes beyond the affirmation of formal rights: Just like the French Constitution, it guarantees the right to work, but there are two million unemployed in Italy. It includes an article limiting private property but if it has been applied somewhat in the field of landed property, it in no way prevents a capital concentration stronger even than in France: "Seventy percent of capital stock is concentrated in the hands of 180 companies; 40 of these companies control two-thirds of all capital stock; 0.05 percent of these stockholders control one-half of all capital."**

Certainly it is not a matter of indifference that in the drive of the people the day after the liberation, and thanks to the Italian Communist Party which played an heroic and decisive role in the resistance to fascism and in the liberation, there

were introduced in the Constitution certain principles in contradiction to the foundations of the bourgeois state; it is of obvious interest to sharpen to the maximum this contradiction in order to develop Italian democracy. In this there is a very strong base for the rallying of the democratic forces. Our Party shares wholeheartedly a similar concern: it is one of the elements of the struggle for a popular front. But does it not create parliamentary illusions to call it a "road to socialism?" Our Italian comrades, it is true, possess a very rich experience, one which we have not yet had in France: that of the struggles for agrarian reform. In the years following the liberation, invoking the principles of the Constitution and basing itself on a peaceful movement of the peasant masses, some of the great feudal domains were occupied and parcelled out for the benefit of the landless peasants. Around 1,625,000 acres were expropriated and almost as much were acquired through the right of settler's pre-emption. Family farms thus augmented their area by about 20 percent in the last ten years.

Basing themselves on the experience of these struggles, our Italian comrades seek to gain the same success against the monopolies which they have gained against big landed property. The theses point out (Point 9): "Does there not correspond to the success obtained up till now through the mass struggle for the transformation of our agrarian forms,

* Speech of Togliatti to the Central Committee, June 28, 1956.

** Report of Togliatti to the Eighth Congress of the C.P.I.

analogous results along the road of dismantling the monopolist structure and superstructure?" This approach seems to us to raise a number of questions:

First: The struggle against the big agrarian proprietors was a struggle against feudal survivals in a country where the bourgeois revolution has not been pushed to its final conclusions, above all as regards the land. In such a battle the working class and its Communist Party not only were able to base themselves on the poor peasantry, but did not meet a unanimous resistance from the bourgeoisie, since this anti-feudal battle clashed basically in the bourgeois class only with that section which had achieved, especially under fascism, the interpenetration between capital and agrarian property. In the struggle against the monopolies it is doubtful whether the class relationships would be the same: it is no longer a question of bourgeois-democratic reforms (as in the case of agrarian reform) but either of measures of a socialist character, or of illusions on the possibilities of a step backward in the development of capitalism. And the resistance of the monopolist bourgeoisie in power will be much more desperate than in the case of agrarian reform.

The report of Comrade Togliatti shows concretely, elsewhere, that the alliance with the small and middle producers is conceived not as an historic objective of the working class, but as a compromise with the middle

classes for the purpose of struggle against the monopolies:

Objective analysis indicates to us for our country that there exists a convergence on a wide front of social forces for the struggle against capitalism in the present circumstances. This convergence represents the objective base of a system of class alliances, vast, mobile, novel . . . In our country, around the working class, the historic adversary of capital, are gathering the great peasant masses, the small and middle independent farmer, a very numerous middle layer of urban producers; we do not exclude that in certain regions a good number of small and middle industrialists might also take part in action against the monopolies. The very conditions which determine these class alliances determine also the particular patterns of development in the construction of a socialist society. For our class of artisans, for the great mass of farmers, for important groups of small and middle industrialists, the passage to a form of production of a socialist type—that is, founded on the principle of co-operation—is far off and can only be the result of a spontaneous movement of that long reflection of the peasant on his parcel of land of which Frederick Engels spoke. *Meanwhile socialism must guarantee to these social layers their property which monopoly capital threatens and destroys.* And to struggle against monopoly capital it is in the interest of these social layers today to unite and struggle alongside the working class. . . . The struggle of the working class against capital and for socialism is what guarantees their future.

It is true on this point that the particular conditions of the development of the monopolies in Italy are very different from French conditions. The belated and very rapid development of the trusts in Italy has not created, as in France, the solidarity and "links" which to a greater or lesser degree tie small and middle industry to the big monopolies; there exists therefore in Italy greater possibilities to isolate the trusts, and our Italian comrades show legitimate concern to utilize these possibilities to the full, drawing along, for example, large layers of middle classes in the struggle against the political grip of the trusts.

It is important for us in France to draw conclusions from the big mass struggles of our Italian comrades, to study the magnificent examples which they have given, notably when, taking account of the national Italian peculiarities, of the situation in the South of Italy with its semi-colonial character, they have been able to lead the struggle for agrarian reform in alliance with the middle classes. The Italian Party has given us other rich and instructive examples in the big mass campaigns that they have led, whether in the victorious struggle for lowering prices or in the mass campaigns for *Unita*, for the working-class press.

But, dealing with the problem of the indispensable rallying of the middle classes, it is important not to open the doors to ambiguity: the

struggle of the working class against the monopolies is a progressive struggle leading towards their socialization; the struggle of the artisan, of the small and middle industrialist against the monopolies is also a struggle for their "dismantling," for the utopian return to a pre-monopoly capitalism.

And this poses a second question:

The struggle against big landed property and the distribution of small parcels to the landless peasants was a progressive struggle against feudalism. But can one transpose this struggle to a different level, to that of the capitalist monopolies, looking to "the dismantling of the monopolist structure and superstructure"? Imperialism brings the objective conditions for socialism to their maturing. The establishment of monopoly in one or another branch signifies a "capital socialization" of this branch and prepares, economically and technically, its transition towards leadership of the collective. But how can one go backwards on this point? Does not the dismantling of the trusts raise the risk of taking the march towards socialism on to a Proudhonist path which would represent a retreat of socialism in technique in relation to the current forms of capitalist production? The theses themselves show that if the output by the worker had increased on the average by 53 percent in the entire Italian industry from 1938 to 1954, it increased by 184 percent in Fiat, the most typical of the Italian mo-

nopolies. The remarks of Comrade Novotny concerning the decentralization of the Yugoslav economy and the centralization of the Czechoslovak economy on this subject seem to us quite interesting.* We find ourselves dealing here with a problem which has already been raised from another aspect: that of the difficulties raised by the participation of workers in the management of the enterprises. Just as it is necessary to struggle to limit the hold of the trusts on political life, so it is questionable whether one should try to limit or to "dismantle" its economic and technical structures.

The 8th Congress of the Italian C.P. is very rich in teachings for us, and leads us to pose a series of questions on fundamental principles of tactics.

These questions might be summarized in the following manner:

1) A large number of elements, which our Italian comrades call "the Italian road to Socialism," seem to us to constitute rather elements of an immediate program, as for example, regarding the constitution of a people's front government. If in France we do not give them the name of the "French road to Socialism," this is not just a question of terminology. Evidently immediate demands, even the most elementary and attainable ones, when they are valid, are situated along the road to socialism. An increase in wages or a strike, even the smallest one, is also situated along this road. But does it not create

illusions to present one or another small step as defining "the road" to socialism?

2) Does not the emphasis placed on the Constitution and on structural forms risk the rejection, in the second place, of other demands, in particular struggles for immediate demands, and even to blur perspectives? For the insistence on parliamentary aspects, which are obviously not negligible, might result in the following drawbacks:

a) Is not there a danger that the theses might become vulgarized, equating the Italian road purely and simply with the parliamentary road? This is in no way contained in the thought of the Party leadership but many speeches at the Congress give that impression;

b) This insistence on the Constitution and on structural reforms opens up a perspective of peaceful development. But does this not risk creating the illusion that we alone have the power to determine our road? It does not depend upon us alone whether the path to socialism will be a peaceful path: the resistance of the monopolies and their allies may force us to take other paths, and perhaps we should not too quickly content ourselves with envisaging this development but rather concretely examine how the problems might be posed under those conditions. This raises the question wheth-

* The speech of Antonin Novotny is in *Frances Nonvalle*, Dec. 27, 1956.

er it is possible to define unilaterally the road to socialism.

It is probable—it is even quite probable—that the bourgeoisie will not peacefully surrender its place to the proletariat, but on the contrary, at the decisive moment it will have recourse to violence to defend its privileges. Then there will be no other path for the working class to achieve its aim but that of revolution. That is why the program of working-class socialism speaks of taking political power in general without defining the method by which it will arrive at it, for this choice depends on the future which we cannot define with precision. But to limit the action of the proletariat in every case to a peaceful “democratization,” we repeat, is deliberately to whittle down and make insipid the idea of working class socialism.*

How much more is this so since there is up till now no historic example of this peaceful development? Not only was the October Revolution created differently but the popular democracies were born after the war out of the victorious struggles of the Soviet armies and of the resistance armies of the people, and the Chinese Republic was born out of long years of armed struggle. Without doubt we will be told that it is a question of the peaceful passage from the democratic revolution to the socialist revolution. But the

problem was very different for Lenin in April 1917, or for China today, when the bourgeois-democratic revolution has been carried out under the direction of the working class, and for Italy and France where the Revolution of 1789 and the first *Risorgimento** were made under the direction of the bourgeoisie.

c) A certain number of measures proposed by our Italian comrades, notably the “structural reforms” and the “nationalization,” do not seem to us necessarily (while the monopolies control the state) to serve the interests of the working class or of the middle classes but may well serve the interests of capital. They may, therefore, in certain cases constitute a democratic objective, but does it not create illusions to make them one of the essential elements of the road to socialism?

Such are the problems which we may discuss frequently for our mutual instruction.

We have raised them frankly with respect to the glorious Italian Communist Party, whose Congress has just shown the confidence which it has in its leaders, the spirit of solidarity and proletarian internationalism, and its readiness to struggle for our common cause: the victorious construction of a democratic and socialist society.

* Lenin, *Complete Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. XIV, p. 254.

* The 19th century movement for the political unification of Italy.—Ed.

B.A Reply to Comrade Garaudy

By Editors of "Rinascita"

NEEDLESS TO SAY, it seems to us quite in order that the French comrade Garaudy, who was present at the VIIIth Congress of our Party, after having given a clearly positive evaluation of the Congress, should pose questions and make critical observations. Such a polemic, which is developed within the framework of mutual confidence and the conviction that we conduct a common struggle against a common enemy and having in common fundamental objectives is not only possible but is today useful and profitable. It cannot but serve, in fact, to elaborate better the important questions of method and substance which today confront the international communist movement.

The first observation which we shall make, in reply to Comrade Garaudy, relates to the method itself of the discussion. The method followed by him in formulating his critical remarks is one, indeed, which does not lead to perceiving the substance or the true content of the questions which our Congress discussed. The method which he follows consists essentially in isolating a statement regarding a problem of a general type, counterposing to it a

position of principle usually set forth by the citation of a classic, and from this concluding with a doubt as to the full exactness and correctness of the statement first enunciated. The doubt is then expressed in most instances by pointing out the "risk" that a given position might be misunderstood, the danger that it might create illusions which could hinder the movement, and so on.

We want to dispose of this type of objection at once by stating flatly that in our opinion there is no policy which is not bound up with a certain risk. But the gravest risk which a Communist Party can encounter, it seems to us, is that of remaining tied to certain statements of principle, more or less well understood, and of not having any policy—that is, of not facing up to the reality of the situation which it confronts, with initiatives and proposals, and hence with movements which aim at changing the situation in a direction favorable to the aspirations of the workers and to the development of the whole movement toward socialism. Without doubt the dangers, the possible harmful illusions, etc., must be recognized and overcome, wheth-

er by correct political analyses, or by the necessary combination of political action with propaganda and organization; but woe to us if, just because we perceive certain risks, we condemn ourselves to standing still.

Further, as to the method of citing and counterposing isolated statements, this is certainly valid, but only if it proceeds intertwined validly with the examination of real situations in relation to which determined objectives of work and struggle come to be placed. The general political statements themselves made by the great masters and classics of our movement, to gather their meaning properly, should always be considered in relation to the concrete situation, if one does not wish to lose the correct understanding of our doctrine as a method and guide to action, and not as a sum of universally valid rules—which it neither seeks to be nor is.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF ITALY

Moreover, the line elaborated by our Congress cannot be reduced to a few propositions, particularly to those which Comrade Garaudy touches on. Nor is it possible by following this method to describe it accurately. This line, in fact, is first of all the expression of a great movement in growth and of a many-sided effort to adjust the action of the Communist vanguard to the reality within which this movement is ful-

filling itself. We cannot be content with recording here and there in passing that the Communist Party has been and is at the head of great proletarian and popular actions and that today, as a consequence, it is the representative of a notable part of the class and political forces which move on the Italian scene, without first of all going thoroughly into this fact and explaining it. Why has the Communist Party experienced this development in Italy? It has experienced this development because it has known how to break decisively with the habit and custom of a pure propaganda association and to establish a tie with the laboring masses which, before being organizational, has been and is political; that is, flowing from the fact that the Party has known how to place itself and constantly strives to place itself at the head of the masses in the struggles which arise at every moment and the character of which is determined not by the will of the Party itself but first of all by objective conditions. The French Communist Party, too, has developed as a great party because it has known how, at the decisive moments in the life of the country, to follow this method and maintain faith in it. There are, on the other hand, many Communist Parties which have not attained a large growth, whether because they themselves are still satisfied with the schematic repetition of principles, or because after having found—during the anti-fascist war, for example—

the path of struggle which links them with the popular masses, they permitted themselves after the war to return to the old, purely propagandistic track. But a party which has succeeded—like ourselves or like the French party—in entering the great highway of political struggle and becoming one of the determining elements, finds itself continuously confronting the necessity that its line and action be adjusted to the changes that have taken place in reality and which often are the consequence of the very actions which previously were brought to a successful conclusion.

Comrade Garaudy seems to fear, for example, that the orientation towards reforms of structure—which orientation moreover is not only that of the Communists in Italy, but of all or nearly all of the forces which place themselves on the Left (also of the radicals, and, in part, also of the Social Democrats)—is a kind of substitute for actions on immediate demands. If he had not limited himself to a comparison and an argument based on formulas, but had set forth from an examination of reality, he would have seen that in the last years Italy has been and still is (in all probability) the Western country where there have been the most numerous and most extensive struggle for immediate economic demands. Imagine! Even our magistrates, besides the professors and state functionaries, have gone on strike! The demand for reforms of

structure, therefore, is not a substitute for, but a consequence and an outgrowth of the immediate struggles. And thus, analogously but in a larger sense, the policy which our party proposes to the working class and to the Italian laboring population is a consequence and an outgrowth of a whole complex of struggles, economic and political, parliamentary and direct (and even armed!) in which the Communist Party has been one of the driving forces, and which—with the inevitable ups and downs, with periods of advance, of partial stagnation, and also at times of partial retreat—have encountered all the problems of the structure and organization of Italian society, problems that are at once class and national. If Comrade Garaudy will make an effort to look at things from this perspective, the significance of many elements in our policy which now escape him will thus become clear: the historic and political value of our Constitution, for example, as the culminating point of a great advance and programmatic formulation for further advances. And many other things will appear clear for him, far more than from a simple comparison of texts.

THE REAL SITUATION

It should have been obvious to him, for example, that in the examination of the present situation, our Congress took as its point of departure the findings which first of all

were made by the 20th Congress of the CPSU. These relate to the consequences which follow, as regards the strategy and tactics of the Communist parties, from the new situation arising today in the world and in the working class movement itself. These are essentially, as everyone recalls, the opening up of new perspectives for the transition of countries and nations to socialism; the probability that these forms of transition will become more varied; the fact that it is not obligatory that the realization of these forms will in all cases be connected with civil war; the possibility of passing to socialism by making use of the parliamentary paths; the possibility of preventing wars and so forth. Comrade Garaudy could not have forgotten the enunciation of these theses made at the 20th Congress as a result of collective development and experience. Are these theses still valid? We believe they are. And our Congress, in large part, worked in the light of these theses, a portion of which moreover did not come as something unrelated to experiences which we already had had.

After the 20th Congress have come the Polish events; the tragic happenings in Hungary; the aggression against Egypt. There is taking place a great offensive of imperialism to drive the world back to the cold war. Are we to hold that these new facts taken together should induce us to declare that the statements made at the 20th Congress were not

were made by the 20th Congress of the CPSU. These relate to the consequences which is now arising? We are not of this opinion, nor do we believe Comrade Garaudy can be. Just the contrary is true. Though it was carried out at a moment of weakness of the anti-imperialist movement in the capitalist countries, the aggression against Egypt failed. Those imperialist circles which sought to unleash a new war did not succeed in their criminal undertaking. One of the theses of the 20th Congress received a clear confirmation.

Naturally, these theses never meant what some opportunists say they mean: that the period of revolutionary class struggles is over, etc., etc. And our Congress was careful not to place itself on this road. On the contrary, these theses need to be illustrated and understood properly. We were, for example, among the first who, commenting on the assertion in *Pravda*—the 20th Congress just having concluded—that it is possible also to utilize parliamentary paths to pass to socialism, pointed out in the clearest manner under what conditions this would come about. However, we understand that the elaboration of this question is easier for us than for the French comrades. The latter, indeed, when they found themselves confronted with a law which took away their full representation in Parliament did not unleash a mass struggle against this law even remotely comparable to that which we conducted against the "Swindle"

Law. Also, thanks to this struggle, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary at the same time, the Parliament in Italy has acquired a very large importance in the eyes of the masses too. And we take this into account.

* * *

But how can we define briefly and in a summary form the real situation which faces us in Italy and from which our Congress took its point of departure? Politically a country where truly the banner of liberty has passed into the hands of the parties of the working class and of the popular masses—parties which overthrew fascism (with the help of the whole international situation), worked out a Constitution of a very advanced political and social type, were (in connection with new international events) driven back from power, but remain such a force as to constitute a majority in the politically active population even if it is not a majority in the electorate. Economically, a country where capitalism has been restored in the interests of the great monopolist groups which are dominant, at the same time as there exists advanced forms of state capitalism. A country where technical and economic progress is accompanied by an aggravation of very acute internal contradictions (there has not yet been either an agrarian revolution or an agrarian reform, there are two million permanently unemployed, there are extensive areas of fearful misery, there are striking imbalances between re-

gion and region, etc., etc.) To have the complete picture, it is necessary to add to this that the force itself of the movement of the masses has up to now prevented the dominant classes from covering over these profound contradictions with a regime of open reactionary violence (of a fascist type) and has instead induced them to prefer the Christian-Democratic regime which conceals bourgeois rule under the bland mask of social pseudo-reformism coupled with violent anti-communism.

THE LOGIC OF THE STRUGGLE

In this situation, the Communist Party, through the same role of leadership which it has had in all previous struggles, cannot but offer itself as a party which has an immediate program for governing and seeks to participate in realizing it. But what program? Neither that of a government which is building a socialist society nor of a government which limits itself to preventing reactionary developments. Of a government, therefore, which, basing itself on a powerful movement of the masses, would carry out a series of reforms in favor of the workers and of the class, and directed against the great monopoly groups. Here is the whole problem of transitional forms of the government of society and of the program adequate to these forms which has been the problem of our congress. Here is the kernel, which escaped the attention of Comrade

Garaudy, of our whole discussion on the problem of the state. The theme upon which we are working is therefore similar to that which posed itself between 1934 and 1939 in the development of the united anti-fascist struggle. But this is a matter of analogy not of identity and for this reason we use different terms, even at the cost of not being immediately understood by those who continue to speak only in terms of the former experience.

But it is objected that the anti-monopolist reforms which we propose do not operate of themselves in favor of the working class, that nationalization can proceed in favor of the same capitalists, etc. These are elementary truths, also valid for reform measures of another type, in agriculture, for example. What is decisive is the character of the government and of the rule. But as to this, we present this program as a moment in the struggle to give the country a new political direction. Reforms of structure and changes of political direction are two aspects of the same struggle. There is no doubt that in posing the question of reforms of structure, the working class passes the bounds of action on immediate demands. But this is in the logic of the class struggle. The logic of this struggle Comrade Garaudy seems to say, consists in the demonstration of the absolute and relative impoverishment of the proletariat under the capitalist regime. When the workers become convinced

of this truth, they will rebel against capitalism and all will be done. We do not reason in this way! The class struggle of the workers for their immediate economic demands and for their *immediate political demands* tends to build an obstacle and actually sets up an obstacle to the operation of those laws of capitalism which are, as is known, laws of tendency. From this collision are always born new problems and new contradictions. There are determined, within the confines of the general laws of capitalism, new developments, new forms of the organization of production, new disciplines of labor, and therefore, once again, new conditions and new objectives for the whole movement. One would have a very clear example if one worked out the history of the struggle for the eight-hour day or if one examined how to place the question of the further reduction of the work day. Compelled to give up one part, the capitalist has sought and seeks to compensate himself through other ways and the struggle is rekindled and continuously is rekindling itself on new ground.

Anti-monopoly reforms are understood by us as one of the moments of this struggle and not as a cure-all. But they truly offer the possibility of winning for the proletariat in a highly developed and differentiated capitalist society new alliances with the middle class, both urban and rural. This middle class does not have a modern conception equal to

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ours of economic development. This makes no difference. We do not believe that the Russian peasants in 1917 had a very modern conception of the developments in rural economy. In uniting ourselves with these classes in the struggle against the most aggressive, selfish and reactionary capitalist force, we however, do not make any concession of principle if we declare that the economic plan of a socialist government in Italy would certainly not include nationalization of thousands upon thousands of artisans shops and very small enterprises which exist in our country. Poland and Hungary show what happens if this nonsense is carried out. The alliance of the working class with this productive middle class can, instead, really lead to the isolation of big monopoly capital, an effective struggle against its powers and privileges and hence the creation of a new unique economic and political situation in which the great reforms of structure can be realized which Italy needs and which above all the laboring classes need. As is evident, we never separate the economic struggle from the political, the utilization of Parliament from the actions of the masses, the reforms of structure from the struggles for immediate demands. Such a separation would be a grave error. But equally grave is the counterposing, which Comrade Garaudy does in order to negate the value of one of the aspects of this complex movement. He is so persistent in this

counterposing that he reaches the point of making two different things of the defense of liberty and the defense of the revolutionary struggle of the working class. This is pure formalism and pedantry. The working class, to the extent that it makes its own the banner of freedom, fulfills a revolutionary task. The forms of the struggle will vary in accord with the situation. In Spain and in the mountains of Italy we defended liberty with guns. Later, we defended liberty with parliamentary action and with strikes against the "Swindle" law. We defend it by calling for votes for the Communist Party against the present governing parties.

And so it appears to us that Comrade Garaudy falls into pure formalism when he does not accept our term—the Italian road to Socialism—and would have us speak instead of a popular front. Our formulation too is derived from the theses elaborated by the 20th Congress; it is bound up with a certain tradition of our party; it has besides this so much general significance that there should be linked up with it those slogans, which, in the present situation, will be most proper. Perhaps Comrade Garaudy has not fully grasped the fact that when we speak of an Italian road to socialism we are not pronouncing a slogan (to counterpose to it "popular front" is really a little strange!) but rather we wish to underline both our fundamental objective, socialism, towards which we strive with all our activity, as

well as our method, which consists in advancing towards socialism by taking exact account of the conditions in our country and adjusting ourselves always to these conditions within the framework of a great international movement.

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We have not replied with these hurried notes to all the observations

made by Comrade Garaudy, because some of them touch on marginal questions. But we shall have occasion again to return, in more detail, to all the problems which he raises. It should be clear that we thank him for the contribution which he has made to the clarification of such important questions of Communist policy at the present time.

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Some Economic Revaluations*

By Maurice Dobb

PERHAPS BECAUSE SO many of us have been so busy for so long learning to keep in step, perhaps because everyone waits for someone else to take the plunge and is cautious of committing himself, the long-overdue discussion of a number of economic questions where new thinking and revaluation are urgently needed is remarkably slow in starting. Here is an attempt to get out of step on a few of these questions in the hope that it will provoke some creative discussion.

I shall begin with two theoretical points. I believe that a forthright statement is needed to make clear that Marxists do *not* hold to the dogma that it is an unalterable law of capitalism that the workers' material standard of life (as usually interpreted) must fall as capitalism develops. This is an interpretation of the so-called "Law of Absolute Impoverishment" that was pronounced until quite recently by Soviet economists (*vide* the first edition of the Political Economy textbook), is still (I understand) being defended in France, and has ap-

peared from time to time, almost unquestioned, in Marxist writing in this country. My own view (on which I shall not enlarge here) is that it is extremely doubtful whether Marx ever meant to propound a law of falling wages (the "Law of Capital Accumulation" he talks about in *Capital* referred to the growth of the industrial reserve army). Even if he had, he would surely have been the last to suggest that any such tendency could remain unaffected by the outcome of the class struggle —by the economic and political action of the organized labor movement. Moreover, he emphasized that the *value* of labor-power (as distinct from its price) was not an unalterable physical-subsistence minimum but could change with changing historical conditions and social standards (let alone vary with skill and intensity of work). A statement of my own on this subject in the *Economic Bulletin* in 1957 was (I now think) insufficiently explicit and forthright; and I believe that future statements on this subject should be free of the kind of sophistical having-it-all-ways interpretation that has too often gained for Marxists

* This article originally appeared in *The Marxist Quarterly* (London), Jan. 1957.

the reputation of "talmudists" and casuists. Needless to say, there are fairly strict upper limits beyond which wages cannot encroach upon profits however strongly organized wage-earners may be—but that is another story.

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Secondly, I think we have to recognize the major role played in modern capitalism by variations in *capacity-working* of productive plant and equipment, and to embody this recognition in our analysis, e.g., of booms and crises, to an extent that we have never explicitly done (and I include myself in this criticism). In the early days of capitalism the fixed-capital element (machinery and building-structures) in constant capital was relatively unimportant—much less important than it is today. This remained so even in the 1860's when Marx was writing *Capital*; and accordingly it was then natural to suppose that when production, employment and surplus value changed, capital (both constant and variable) changed more or less proportionately. In modern capitalism, with the outstanding importance of the technical means of production (i.e., of the fixed-capital element in constant capital), we can no longer ignore this as a factor in determining not only total surplus value but also the *rate* of profit (since employment of labor-power can vary considerably with a *given* quantity of fixed capital). And

I think we have to recognize that those Keynesian economists who have put this factor of degree of capacity-working in the front of their picture (I'm thinking especially of writers like Kalecki and Steindl) have in this respect been more realistic than we have in seizing on a leading feature of modern monopoly capitalism.

This rise in the rate of profit through a rise in capacity-utilization is what occurs in every boom, and the converse process in a slump reinforces the decline by spreading despondency and discouraging investment. To emphasize this factor is, of course, to lay stress on the so-called "realization problem" in crises, i.e., the problem of market demand. But lest we should give such an emphasis too much of a crude under-consumptionist twist (as our formulations have been too apt to do in the past), it is well to bear in mind what Lenin always emphasized in his controversies with the Narodniks: that demand does not here mean only consumption-demand, and that a characteristic of capitalism is the tendency for demand for means of production (e.g., for technical innovation and renewal) to proceed faster than demand for means of consumption.

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To bring this a little nearer to questions of practical interpretation: it is quite clear that the problem of under-capacity working was a central feature of the crisis of capital-

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ism in the inter-war period. It was a major fact in depressing both total profit and the rate of profit, and thus in the *cumulative* tendencies of the crisis (i.e., it decreased demand for Dept. I industries, and by multiplier-effects the demand for Dept. II industries as well, and thus accentuated the problem of under-capacity working still further). I believe that much that has happened since must be seen as a reaction of capitalism to this major consequence of its own "anarchy"; and in particular the tendencies to state capitalism which, fostered by the war and continued as features of peace-time economy, have to be seen against this background.

The extent of (and precise character of) state capitalist developments as a feature of post-war capitalism has received all too little attention, partly perhaps because we were afraid of some of the implications of emphasizing it (e.g., propaganda was rightly devoted to dispelling illusions in the Labor movement arising from an exaggeration of the extent and significance of post-war nationalization), and partly perhaps because we could not see how to fit it into our traditional scheme of concepts about monopoly capitalism. Manifestly both the forms and extent of such tendencies vary considerably between different countries and have been subject to change; and these concrete differences need to be studied. In our own country what needs to be recognized is that

the state sector of the economy bulks much larger in gross investment expenditure (of which the state sector accounts for about a half) than it does in production. In the U.S.A. state expenditure exerts its influence through the enormous size of armament expenditures (and from 1950 to 1954 something like 20 to 25 per cent of all industrial production was in response to armament expenditure). This type of expenditure does not respond to economic incentives (e.g., profit-expectations) in the traditional way and *may* even be used deliberately as an anti-cyclical device. I think we have got to face it that these state capitalist tendencies have assured for capitalism a certain degree of stability that it did not possess in the inter-war period. At any rate, Varga was right after the war in forecasting for capitalism "an upward phase" and his critics were to this extent wrong. One can admit this without swallowing neo-Fabian fantasies about the "American miracle" and a rejuvenated crisis-free capitalism that can evolve smoothly and imperceptibly into a "Welfare Socialism."

* * *

Much of this has, indeed, been tacitly admitted when we have explained the persistence of boom conditions in this country and America by the scale of armament expenditures. Armament expenditures evidently explain a great deal; and at any rate it is doubtful whether the degree of state influence over the

economy that exists today would have been tolerated unless it had come under the banner of rearmament and cold war. But although it doubtless explains a lot, I do not believe that armament expenditure can bear the whole burden of explaining the persistence of the post-war boom. To this question the facts of American experience are most relevant, both because of the size of American armament expenditures and because of the dominant rhythm of American capitalism in post-war capitalist economy. Of these facts I can claim no special knowledge; and those which I am going to cite are admittedly culled at second-hand (here I have drawn heavily on articles in Sweezy and Huberman's *Monthly Review* and on the important article by Berman in *Political Affairs* for June 1956). If I understand these facts correctly, some other explanation than armament expenditure has to be looked for.

Summarized very briefly, the relevant facts are these. Firstly, let us take the recovery from the "recession" of 1948—a recovery commonly attributed to the Korean War. Actually the recovery in the U.S.A. started six months or even more before the outbreak of war: housing rose more than 30 per cent during the first six months of 1949, and total construction, expenditure on durable consumer goods and consumers' credit increased appreciably between the first and fourth quarters of the year, while Government

expenditure fell by some 10 per cent over the year. In the first half of 1950 private investment was higher by nearly a fifth than during the previous year. Secondly, let us take the new "recession" of two years ago, which was expected to follow the levelling-off of American defense-expenditure, but which has not happened. Government purchases reached their peak in 1953 and by the beginning of last year had fallen by some 12 per cent; since when there has been a slight rise again, but by no more than 2 or 3 per cent. Meanwhile ordinary consumers' expenditure at the end of last year was running at a level higher than in any of the corresponding quarters of the past four years; and for last year as a whole industrial national product were 30 to 40 per cent higher than in 1950. Business investment reached a peak last year, and there have been estimates that it may rise again this year by as much as a third.

What needs to be explained is evidently the very high rate of private investment in the U.S.A., which over the post-war period, 1946-54, maintained an annual rate which in *real* terms was 40 per cent greater than 1929 and more than three times that of the 1930's, and which is still rising, apparently. One factor in the post-war years (which may still be operative to some extent in this country) was renewals of buildings and plant after a long period of non-renewal and even de-

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struction. This was the reason emphasized by Khrushchev at the Twentieth Congress: "modernization of the capital equipment which had seriously depreciated and been damaged during the war." But it is hard to believe that this can bear the brunt of explaining the American investment boom of the past two years, a decade after the end of the war.

I do not pretend to have any final explanation to offer. All I can do is to indicate the direction in which I would suggest that enquiry should be turned, and to throw out a tentative hypothesis. Even this can be no more than very roughly and crudely sketched in a short discussion contribution. An outstanding feature, to my mind, of the big monopoly corporations in America (and to a less extent this seems to apply elsewhere) is the size of their accumulated financial reserves and the extent to which industrial expansion as well as renewal is financed out of these reserves. According to some figures given by Kalecki in a recent number of the Polish journal *Ekonomista* (1956, No. 4, p. 7), current accumulation of reserves by monopoly corporations grew as a proportion of national income by three times between 1937 and 1955, and in the latter year amounted to nearly a third of gross private accumulation (and more than a half of productive investment). To the extent that big corporations possess these reserves, they can change their

investment policy at short notice without any of the traditional financial limits. They acquire a financial independence that smaller firms lack: indeed, they have become their own banks—a novel sort of finance-capital capable even of challenging the influence of Treasury and central bank. Such investment policy will, of course, be dominated by profit considerations; but what I suggest may be novel about it is: (a) that large corporations may at any one time have a queue of profitable projects, for which they have the finance and which they plan to launch over a period of years at a rate that may be governed by a variety of administrative, etc., considerations; (b) in an age when competition between monopolies so largely takes the form of introducing a new product or model, and hence of innovating in this sense faster than one's rival, whether investment in some new project is profitable or not to its initiator largely depends on how much is spent on it to finance the sales drive and pressure campaign to put it across.

* * *

All this may serve to give an investment boom an impetus such as it lacked at earlier stages of capitalism, render it less sensitive to unfavorable turns in objective conditions and enable it for a long time to "create its own draught" (it has to be remembered that as long as this impetus lasts, investment acts as a boost to demand for products of

Dept. I, and by associated repercussions to demand for Dept. II also). If, of course, profit-expectations receive a big enough jolt, even the big boys will freeze their investment plans and live on their fat for a while; and the downswing may be all the more violent when it comes. But it may have to be a big jolt and not just a small one.

Maybe the crisis when it comes will be another 1929: this I do not profess to know. All I would say is that there are sufficient new elements in the contemporary situation (which we have little studied and less understood) to warn us not to be dogmatic as to its coming in the same way as in 1929 and to stop expecting another 1929 every six months. It may well be that we are in a phase where crises of inflationary pressures (with, in this country, associated balance-of-payments crises, or crises

associated with the effects of automation) are more likely to be on the agenda of the next year or two; with sharpened *unevenness* of development and the sharp conflicts that go with it. I would emphasize only that we should avoid prejudicing such questions *a priori*, and (in Lenin's phrase) approach them by "proceeding not from abstract positions but from visible concrete realities."

My concluding word is this: I do not regard the type of question I have discussed as an academic issue or a matter only for specialists. I regard the frank and open discussion of such questions as a crucial part of re-establishing confidence in Marxism among the Labor movement—confidence that we *are* open to thinking about the facts and have turned our backs indeed on past dogmatism that too often fitted facts to the straitjacket of theory.

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New China As We Saw It

By Homer G. Brown & Muriel J. Brown

The Rev. Homer G. Brown and his wife, Muriel J. Brown, were missionaries in West China from 1913 to 1942, under the United Church of Canada. They revisited China for several months in 1955, and wrote of their experiences in a pamphlet that has been published very recently. Selections from this are printed below.—ed.*

CHINA'S LEADERS have decided that within the next twelve years China must pull abreast of the most advanced nations in Science and Arts. To anyone who has not been in that country recently the aim must seem fantastic. The Chinese do not consider it so. It seems to be accepted that everyone must become literate as soon as possible and everyone must keep studying as long as he lives. Chairman Mao is reported to be carrying on systematic study two hours daily. At the Institute of Foreign Languages each professor and instructor is expected to take, as well as teach, courses. Most of the workers in the schools are continuing their education in courses given by students or staff early in the morning or in the evenings.

In increasing numbers factories are running evening classes for their workers. Nine big technical schools are now giving four-year evening courses. Everyone is encouraged to

improve his knowledge and technique to the limit of his ability. Leaves of absence from work, scholarships, increased salary for higher qualifications and greater privileges are among the inducements offered.

Schools are crowded. There is not yet accommodation for all applicants at any level but new schools are being built to increase accommodation from seven to twelve percent annually. On September 1st, 1955, there were approximately 55 million children enrolled in Primary School; 4 million in Middle Schools and almost 290,000 in Colleges and Institutes of Higher Learning. Many thousands are studying abroad, the majority in Russia. Seven new colleges were opened last fall. . . .

The School for Minorities in the Western Suburbs of Peking has seven hundred men and women from forty-six minority groups preparing to take College courses in education, medicine or industry. Some understand only limited Chinese as yet and many have not completed their primary education. But no problem

*The pamphlet may be ordered from the Rev. Brown, Box 680, St. Marys, Ontario, Canada, at 25c per copy.—Ed.

seems too hard to tackle in China these days. Some of the women students are mothers who have come bringing several children. These also go to school. . . .

Education in Marxism does not begin till Middle School. The younger children are carefully taught the FIVE LOVES: Love of motherland, of people, of work, of science and respect for public property. Competition between individuals is put on developing the habit of co-operation. One works for the good of the group and develops a feeling of responsibility for the progress and welfare of the other members of the group.

We learned that a lesson on Dr. Norman Bethune is part of the Social Studies Course of the Primary School. Said a pedicab man, "Where are you from, sir?"—"I am a Canadian." "What, from Dr. Bethune's country?"—"Every Chinese knows of the Canadian who saved the lives of thousands of our soldiers and gave his own." There seems to be a warm feeling for Canadians.

When we left China last fall, modernization of the language had begun. Two hundred characters had been simplified and were already in use. Another list was to be out soon. The alphabetization of the language is also under way. All schools in China are now teaching the Peking pronunciation. This will not only make China a one-language nation but makes possible a phonetic script.

Such an alphabet has been chosen and is at present being criticized by groups all over the nation. It is expected it will reach its final form and be adopted in time to have ready for school opening this fall (1956) first year primary texts for those already using the Peking pronunciation.

English has again become an important Senior Middle School subject and is being taught in an increasing number of Junior Middle Schools. The Institute of Foreign Language accepts as students for English courses graduates of Senior Middle Schools who have obtained good grades in English and gives an intensive four-year course to prepare them for translation work and to be interpreters at home and abroad.

Changes in Medical education have met with much criticism from the West. The present government feel it more important that all should be able to receive medical care of a fair standard than that a much smaller number should receive highly skilled service.

In four colleges 120 students in each of four years are taking the dental course. Other schools are being opened where Junior Middle School graduates will be trained as dental technicians in a three-year course.

To be able in the near future to staff a hospital in every county town, and several in all large cities, the medical course has been shortened

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by two years. From the beginning of his course each student specializes in one department. At present no general practitioners are being trained. This is expected to be a temporary program. Other men and women are given shorter courses sufficient to enable them to give inoculations according to the general health program, treat ordinary sores, cuts, colds, eye infections of the simpler kind, and to send to hospital clinics all patients with more serious ailments.

In this way all residential schools and the factories are provided with medical care. One such "doctor" with the aid of a practical nurse, met at least three quarters of the medical needs at the Institute of Foreign Languages.

Famous old Chinese prescriptions are being studied and tested. An old-style doctor with some training in modern physiology, is now being attached to an increasing number of hospitals.

Industrial Schools and Colleges teaching science and especially Mineralogy and Geology are among those with highest enrollments. . . .

ON DEMOCRACY

The Chinese with whom we discussed this subject are convinced they have a democratic government. They are so sure of this that failure to receive an invitation to attend the conference of democratic parliamentarians held last summer at Helsin-

ki was a great shock. They felt there had been a slip that would be rectified as soon as the conference opened, and their delegates waited some days near air ports, ready to depart as soon as the invitation came. . . .

All important matters are sent to the trade union groups to be discussed before the National Congress deals with them. During the month before Congress assembles each deputy is expected to go to his constituency and learn what is the wish of those he represents. If they do not like the way he votes, a constituency can recall a deputy and elect another.

An unbelievable number of hours is spent in these trade union meetings. Almost every adult is in one. The farmers say, "Under the Kuomintang it was taxes, taxes, taxes. Under the present government it is meetings, meetings, meetings." The result, however, is that everyone knows what is taking place, and is convinced it is "our" government.

The Constitution states that the National People's Congress exercises the power of electing the Chairman and other chief officers of state and also has the power to remove them from office.

It represents several points of view. It is not "a Communist government." This term, commonly used in the West, is not heard in China, since they do not have one-party government. There is a vice-premier from each of seven other

parties which, though small, represent various sections of the people. Two of these parties are splinters from the Kuomintang. Other large national organizations, including religious bodies, are also represented. Many leading posts are filled by the non-Communist members of the National Congress and of the provincial and municipal governments.

We were told not more than a third of the members of the National Congress could be Communists. It would seem their Party derives its great power from the ability and devotion of its members and their tremendous activity in seeing the needs to the people, thinking out best solutions, spreading their ideas effectively, and in every way possible enticing others to strive to their utmost to bring in the better day for all.

There does seem to be a steady pressure exerted toward uniformity of thought and action that seems undesirable to people brought up in countries free from regimentation—or fairly free.

Over the radio recently, we heard a delightful Cockney tale of the signing of the Magna Carta, which ended, "And that is why to this day an Englishman can do as he likes—as long as he does as he's told." . . .

LAW COURTS

For some justice seemed to refer to the administration of law in the courts. I asked an American lady if

she had had any experience in court. She replied she had had so much trouble with her landlady that she had finally taken the matter to court. She laid her complaint and went home. Soon an assessor called on her and made a careful inquiry into her case. Then he went to the landlady and heard her side of the matter. Then he inquired of the neighbors. After studying the report, the judge gave his decision. Both women thought it a fair one. There had been no more trouble. If not satisfied with the judgment received, appeals may be made to higher courts. Recently the first legal advisory office has been set up in Peking. The services of this office are available to the people at all times. It gives legal assistance free of charge to those who cannot afford the expense. Most of the 90 lawyers attached to it are professors, assistant professors or lecturers in the big universities or in the Peking College of Law.

One of the professors at the Institute had not been living with his wife and filled an application for divorce. He had returned from study abroad and felt his wife was not his intellectual equal. She had no desire to broaden her intellectual and social interests. An assessor visited each of them, though the wife was living in a quite distant city. He explained to each that divorce was not the correct solution, and showed how each would have to make a real effort to make the marriage a success. This they are doing. We met

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them several times and they seemed a well-adjusted couple. Fashions and the cooking of exotic dishes remain matters of primary common interest to them!

The assessor method seems to have the approval of the people. It links up with the old tea-house method, so familiar to us in our missionary days. When two people had a dispute, instead of going to court the matter was usually settled in a tea-shop, which, in Chengtu, was to be found on almost any street. The parties to the quarrel came, bringing their friends. Each presented his case. Everyone joined in discussing it. Finally an agreement was reached as to the right solution. The loser paid the tea bill. They seemed to be appealing not to any written law, but to what people felt was right. The Chinese of that day tended to have the feeling that the lawyer's job was to find an old law by which the rich man could be upheld in his oppression of the less rich or less influential. They now seem pleased to have him succeeded by an assessor. . . .

* * *

Recognizing the power of the Collective, the present Chinese Government has sought to get every person into an organized group. Teachers and medical personnel, office and factory workers, have their Trade Union groups, limited to from eight to fifteen members. These not only discuss work and working conditions but spend con-

siderable time in criticism and self-criticism, that they may improve both their work and themselves, and they plan excursions and other recreational activities together. It was more difficult to get the farmers and small handicraft workers organized. For several years cadres went among the farmers talking Mutual Aid Teams and Co-operatives. Reluctantly the braver ones began small organizations. Each year the movement has gained impetus. Each year appreciation of the benefits of working together, and discussing and planning together, increases. Financially the improvement is conspicuous; but the spiritual satisfaction is, to many, the great thing. After a meeting to discuss how to plan so that the old couple who has just joined, and the widow with the five little children, have profitable work within their ability, a spiritual satisfaction is experienced greater than dollars can give.

CONCERN FOR THE WEAK

This concern for the weaker ones seems to be characteristic of the present regime. It was demonstrated in the land reform, undertaken while the revolution was still in progress. Also, as cities were taken over, conditions in factories were radically improved. Private industrialists could continue—but only if they met a minimum standard set for wages, working conditions, and management-workers relations, under the

control of the trade unions.

One of the first laws passed by the National People's Congress was the New Marriage Law. This law makes woman equal to man in every way. She is free to marry; if a widow, to remarry; or she may remain unmarried. She may engage in what work she wishes, and in what social or political activities, and the husband is equally responsible for the home and children. It was very interesting to see how the men at the Language Institute were learning to carry these responsibilities. It was a common sight to see fathers carrying babies about the campus in off-hours, or leading little toddlers by the hand. No longer are concubines taken, nor are there slave girls.

The majority of women have taken jobs or are studying. Their children attend nursery schools till seven years of age when they start more formal education. What the effect is going to be on the home and on the new generation, remain to be seen.

During our missionary years in West China we became acquainted with members of several of the minority groups, Mohammedans, and the tribes people who were being steadily pushed back into the mountains by the Chinese. We knew a good deal of the treatment they received from the Chinese and of the animosity constantly encouraged between the various groups. In 1955 we were impressed by what had already been done to right old wrongs. By law the members of minority

groups are now citizens with equal rights with the Chinese. Though they form but six percent of the population, they have fourteen percent of the representatives of the National People's Congress. This seemed necessary to insure proper representation of those scattered in small groups.

Special schools have been established in Chengtu and Peking where representatives of the various groups are trained for political leadership of their own people and where others are given pre-college education that they may take university training in education, medicine or industry, and provide leadership for their people. Many of the forty-six minority groups have as yet no written language. Scholars are now working on this problem. In the old days the Chinese merchants, made maximum profits in their dealings with tribe folk. For example, one small box of matches would be given in exchange for a pound of wool. The new government handled the problem quickly and easily. It established state stores in a few central places and paid 180 boxes of matches for a pound of wool. It sold what was wanted at the correct prices. Local stores changed their prices and general procedure. . . .

A popular Chinese phrase in constant use is "pi t'si, pi t'si" and means "mutual, mutual." This happily, represents the Chinese mind. They understand and enjoy the policy of give and take.

A better day is surely coming. Both in China and in the West, there are a few known and many unknown peacemakers, who in these days of the cold war, are risking their security, their freedom and even their lives, by their fair-mindedness in word and deed.

With their alertness, with a more or less reasonable world situation,

and with the guidance of God, one can see China rising to be one of the great national pillars of righteousness from her long sojourn in the wilderness; she has come through the dread turmoil of her revolution. She is prepared to take her place in the Parliament of Man, in the Federation of the World.

Such is our hope for her!

Karolyi's Memoirs

By Herbert Aptheker

AMONG THE PERHAPS dozen books published since World War II which really illuminate the modern history of Europe must be placed this work* from the pen of the late Michael Karolyi. Karolyi was born into the top-rung of the families of magnates which, together with the Roman Catholic Church, ruled Hungary for a thousand years up to 1945. After World War I, he broke with his class (as did his remarkable wife, also of the great landowners), became the first President of the Republic of Hungary, was betrayed by his class brethren, and in the counter-revolutionary Terror that, with the active help of the Allies, overthrew the Kun Communist-Socialist government, was forced into exile.

In exile, Karolyi remained, as a Left-wing Socialist, until Hungary's liberation by the Red Army in 1944-45. Thereafter he returned to the New Hungary, as an honored guest, and from 1947 to 1949 served as Ambassador to France. Convinced, by personal knowledge, of the innocence of Rajk, he tried to prevail upon the Rakosi government to re-

examine the evidence by which the Communist leader had been convicted of treason and sentenced to die. After failing to halt what he knew to be a fearful injustice, Karolyi announced his resignation and chose to leave Hungary, returning once again to exile. As an exile, he died early in 1956.

In his second exile, however, Karolyi did not permit himself to become an enemy of Socialism, nor did he ever lose the essential perspective of today's world: monopoly capitalism, imperialism, as the fundamental source of reactionary strength and of the danger of war; and the world of Socialism, despite all aberrations, as the basic force making for colonial liberation, social progress and peace.

Eighty percent of the volume deals with the period up to the 1945 liberation, and it is in its presentation of the realities of Old Hungary and the politics of Old Europe, that the work makes its greatest contribution.

* * *

Here, from the inside, one gets unforgettable pictures of the extraordinary chauvinism of Old Hun-

* *Memoirs of Michael Karolyi: Faith Without Illusion* (E. P. Dutton & Co., N. Y., 1957); 392 pp., \$6.50.

gary; of the rabid anti-Semitism of the ruling groups and its deep infection of Hungarian life; of the rigid caste system that marked all levels of Old Hungary's life; of the extremes of intense impoverishment for the masses and fantastic luxury for the magnates; of the basic tie between the Catholic hierarchy and the ultra-reactionary ruling cliques. The colossal concentration of land-ownership (extraordinary even for Eastern Europe); the permanent unemployment of the "three million beggars"; the intimate connection between reaction at home and a pro-German (later pro-Nazi) orientation in foreign policy—these and other fundamental attributes of Hungarian history and development, without understanding which one cannot, of course, comprehend post-1945 Hungarian history, are presented in the most convincing manner, and in expert writing.

The aristocratic boy asking his governess, if the nobility dies, too; the hunting parties where the noblemen are provided stags for their afternoon's pleasure and peasant girls, summarily apprehended, for their evening's diversions; the college student whose monthly allowance exceeds the Prime Minister's salary; the captain going off to the wars, with his Persian carpets, twelve special uniforms, and his private cook; the beating of servants as a matter of course; the purchase of seats in the Parliament (for all the world like the House of Com-

mons in the days of George III)—these are unforgettable etchings, that bring to the reader more about the actuality of pre-1945 Hungary than a dozen tomes.

Here, from the inside, is the old ruling class; degenerate, treasonous, powerful and ruthless. Here, from the inside, is the picture of the Allies' betrayal of democracy; their starvation of the Hungarian masses; their deliberate foisting of a fascist terror upon Hungary in the name of defending democracy and fighting for freedom. Here, from the inside, is the bestiality of the Horthy White Terror:

Workers and peasants were hurled alive into burning furnaces, a proceeding jokingly called "using them as fuel." Innocent Jews were dragged out of a train and hung on trees. . . . Wives of Communists were raped by officers and then turned over to the ranks. The editor of the Socialist paper, Somogyi, and his associate, Basco, were one day found murdered in the waters of the Danube. Although well known, the murderers were not arrested.

Meanwhile, of course, the rest of the capitalist world was adjusting to these splendid conditions; a British Admiral reports to his Government that "there is nothing in the nature of a terror in Hungary" and that his fellow Admiral—Horthy—is "a man of Liberal tendencies and his Government a Christian Government in a Christian country." And with

Herbert Hoover in charge of "relief": "The choice for the needy population was submission to the ruling clique or starvation," writes Karolyi.

The physical annihilation of the Left thereupon proceeds for a full generation, and the official Social-Democratic Party of Hungary, led by Peidl, Peyer, Garami, and Anna Kethly, comes to terms with the Regent. Indeed, as Karolyi writes: "It was the Social Democrats who were the only safeguard of private property." This collaboration continues into and through the years of World War II, when Horthy is fighting side-by-side with Hitler.

Karolyi's book is generous in its praise of the miracles accomplished after World War II in revolutionizing the Hungarian social order and in rebuilding a country which suffered greater physical damage than did any country in Europe. He pays tribute particularly to the leadership of the Communist Party in the heroic years from 1945 to 1949. His leaving at that time is an incident in the developing estrange-

ment between the Party and the people, particularly as the Cold War is intensified. Since Karolyi then left Hungary, his memoirs do not deal with the years from 1950 to 1955, but they are of great consequence in making that exceedingly difficult era comprehensible.

The work does contain some errors, most of them apparently the fault of the American publishers. Thus, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is rendered as the Union for the Rights of the Colored People, and the American Civil Liberties Union is referred to as the American Civil Liberty Union. Other mistatements of greater consequence in terms of the reader also occur; notable is the confusing of the Premiership of Ferenc Nagy, right after the War, with the name of Imre Nagy.

In a second edition such slips can be remedied. The book itself is of prime importance for anyone seeking a comprehension of post-World War II Europe in general, and of Hungary in particular.

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Errata

The editor apologizes to the readers for a mistake which resulted in the transposition of three paragraphs in the Keynote Address of Eugene Dennis, published in last month's issue. The error occurred on pages 4-5 of that issue; the pertinent sections are reprinted below:

Fortunately, as the zero hour approached and the danger of a split in the Party loomed as a possibility, substantial sections of our membership and some of the leadership rose to the occasion. As distinct from the conciliators of either the "Right" or the "Left," they began to intervene forcefully. They combined a resolute struggle to save the Party, defend its Marxist-Leninist principles and make the necessary changes, *with* an all-out effort to preserve its unity.

Our task here is greatly facilitated by the partial success of these principled efforts to achieve party unity, which had a positive effect on many state conventions. I am sure we all appreciate the special contribution made by the New York State convention when it achieved unity on the thorny question of Name and Form, and on support for the general line of the Draft Resolution as supplemented by appropriate amendments.

As a result of the New York and several other state conventions, it is clear that the bulk of our members have affirmed the continuance of our Communist Party and opposed its replacement by a political action association. They have overwhelmingly re-emphasized their unshakable

conviction that the American workers, like the workers in every other industrialized country, need an independent, work-organization devoted to the welfare of our people and the national interests of our country. They have also made it clear that any and all proposals to change the name, form, or policies of the Party can and should be examined and discussed on their merits, in accordance with regular party procedures—in accordance with the provisions of the Draft Constitution.

It is true we still have many serious differences in our ranks on a host of important questions, some of which we shall not be able to resolve at this convention. Nonetheless, we are now in a position to hammer out a collective and unified approach to many programmatic questions and to most of the pressing issues facing us and the American people generally.

This is not wishful thinking; and we should not let the heat of controversy obscure this important fact. For it is significant that most state conventions, while submitting various and much-needed amendments, have approved the main political direction of the Draft Resolution

which is based on a sound, scientific socialist approach to our own American conditions and problems.

* * *

Thus there is substantial agreement that the world forces of peace now definitely outweigh those making for world war, and that hence the peace aspirations common to all people, including our own, have become more attainable.

World war is no longer inevitable. If the popular peace forces everywhere, together with the socialist, the Bandung and neutral states, actively unite their efforts—world war can be successfully averted.

In approving this estimate, on which the Draft Resolution bases

its outlook of a realistic perspective for promoting peaceful co-existence, most state conventions have correctly stressed the reactionary and aggressive role of U.S. imperialism. They have emphasized the need for vigilance and struggle against the provocative Eisenhower-Dulles Mideast Doctrine, the atomic war buildup, and other sinister attempts to revive the cold war.

Yet most have recognized that even such explosive events as the British-French-Israeli aggression in Egypt and the imperialist-backed attempt at counter-revolution in Hungary have not reversed or cancelled out the basic world trends and relationships making for peace.

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The Ordeal of Mansart

By W. E. B. DU BOIS

Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, the dean of American letters, has completed a monumental study of what it has meant to be a Negro in the United States from 1870 to the present. This work is in the form of a novel, totaling 1,500 pages, to be issued in three volumes, one a year, beginning April, 1957, by Mainstream Publishers, of New York. The overall title of the trilogy is *The Black Flame*. The first book, entitled *The Ordeal of Mansart*, is scheduled for release on March 25, 1957.

Dr. Du Bois, who wrote two novels a generation ago, and is the author of such classical studies as *The Souls of Black Folk*, *Black Reconstruction*, and many other works, brings to this great novel everything that has made him a figure of world-wide renown. The book is written with the poetic imagery, the incisive wit, fierce devotion to justice and absolute commitment to truth which have characterized the career of this preeminent American.

In recognition of his achievements and contributions, the New York Public Library has officially accepted for its permanent exhibit a bust of Dr. Du Bois by the distinguished American sculptor, William Zorach. This statue will be formally presented to the Library, in April, by Van Wyck Brooks and other notable men of letters.

Historian Herbert Aptheker says of *The Ordeal of Mansart*:

"At the age of 89, Dr. Du Bois has capped his life-work with an historical novel which will endure for generations."

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