

FEBRUARY, 1966



**P**OLITICAL  
**A**FFAIRS

Editorial Comment

**NATIONAL  
LIBERATION**

José Ratzler

**ARGENTINA**

James E. Jackson

**FREEDOM  
STRUGGLE**

Herbert Aptheker

**VIETNAM**

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**JACK STACHEL**

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# POLITICAL AFFAIRS

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# National Liberation and the Anti-Imperialist Struggle

The recent article by the Chinese Communist leader Lin Piao,\*\* as we noted in our preceding editorial, based itself on the thesis that the Chinese experiences in the war against Japan and the subsequent civil war against the forces of Chiang Kai-shek are of universal applicability. On these grounds it proceeds to identify revolution with war and to call upon the oppressed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America to wage people's wars against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys as the only effective method of struggle for their freedom and for socialism.

With these ideas we took issue. We now proceed to deal with other aspects of the article.

## *The "Policy of Self-Reliance"*

In the people's wars which are to encompass the downfall of U.S. imperialism, Lin argues, the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America must rely on their own strength, for such, we are told, was the experience of the Chinese people in *their* armed struggles. In fact, in the opening section of his article, he describes the war against Japan as if it were *solely* a war of the Chinese people. He asks:

How was it possible for a weak country finally to defeat a strong country? How was it possible for a seemingly weak army to become the main force in the war?

And he replies:

The basic reasons were that the War of Resistance against Japan was a genuine people's war led by the Communist Party of China and Comrade Mao Tse-tung, a war in which the correct Marxist-Leninist political and military lines were put into effect, and that the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies were genuine people's

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\*The first part of this editorial article was published in *Political Affairs*, January, 1966. Copies are still available.

\*\*"Long Live the Victory of People's War!", *Peking Review*, September 3, 1965.

armies which applied the whole range of strategy and tactics of people's war as formulated by Comrade Mao Tse-tung.

This is quite true. But it is not the whole picture. Of the surrounding circumstances—of such things as the world-wide anti-fascist war, the military involvement of Japan with the United States in the Pacific, or the smashing defeat of the Hitlerite forces and the central role of the Soviet Union in that defeat—Lin here says nothing. To be sure, in a later section recognition is given to the fact that the war against the Japanese invaders took place within such a framework, and Lin states: "The common victory was won by all the peoples, who gave one another support and encouragement." However, this mutual interdependence is regarded as being of distinctly secondary importance. The very next sentence says: "Yet each country was, above all, liberated as a result of its own people's efforts." And it is on this aspect that all emphasis is placed. Thus, the article asserts:

The people's armed forces led by our Party independently waged people's war on a large scale and won great victories without any material aid from outside, both during the more than eight years of the anti-Japanese war and during the more than three years of the People's War of Liberation.

When this conception is applied to all countries seeking their liberation today, what emerges is the idea of a number of countries waging separate wars against U.S. imperialism, each relying primarily on its own military means and each independently seeking its own victory. The final defeat of the common enemy is envisioned as resulting from the cumulative impact of a number of such individual wars waged simultaneously.

One must fight with one's own resources. Arms are to be obtained by capturing them from the imperialist adversary, and "foreign aid can play only a supplementary role." Such is the advice given to the oppressed peoples and particularly to the Vietnamese people. Their outlook must be to win on their own, and they can do so. When Mao Tse-tung was asked by Edgar Snow "Can Viet Cong forces now win victory by their own efforts alone?" the answer was "Yes, he thought that they could."\*

We have already dwelt in our previous editorial on the futility of a country such as Vietnam seeking singlehandedly to defeat U.S. imperialism militarily, and on the danger of escalation of such con-

\*Edgar Snow, "Interview with Mao," *New Republic*, February 27, 1965.

licts into nuclear war. Here we wish only to touch on the following points.

To begin with, the proposition that the Chinese people independently waged war against Japanese aggression and achieved victory on their own is, to say the least, extremely dubious. The fact is that the victory of the Chinese people over Japan and the creation of the conditions for the subsequent rout of Chiang Kai-shek were made possible by the crushing defeat of the Axis powers at the hands of all the forces allied against them, and particularly by the historic victory of the Soviet Union over the Nazi invaders. Had the outcome been reversed, had the Axis powers triumphed, could the Chinese people have won their war against Japanese imperialism? Could they have won the people's liberation war against Chiang Kai-shek? The answer is obvious; indeed, it was given by Mao Tse-tung himself in a 1949 speech in these words:

... Had there been no Soviet Union, had there been no victory in the anti-fascist Second World War, had Japanese imperialism not been defeated (which is particularly important for us), had there been no People's Democracies in Europe, had there been no growing struggle of the oppressed countries of the East, had there been no struggle of the masses in the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan against the ruling reactionary cliques—had none of these factors existed, then the pressure of the international reactionary forces would have been much stronger than it is today. Would we have been able to achieve victory in these circumstances? Of course not. (*On People's Democratic Rule*, New Century Publishers, New York, 1950, p. 7.)

In short, the great victories of the Chinese people, ranking second only to the victory of the October Socialist Revolution itself, were possible only as part of the whole anti-fascist coalition, as part of the world forces of progress. In fact, if such a coalition had materialized in the thirties in support of the policy of collective security, it might well have been possible to halt fascist aggression without World War II. It is this great lesson of those years—the need for alliance in common struggle of all forces opposing imperialist aggression—that Lin's article casts aside.

All this is not to deny the basic truth that each people must make its own revolution—that revolution can be neither imported nor exported. But if revolutionary struggles are to be successful, they must be conducted not in isolation but as part of the totality of the forces of progress. Lin's notion that each country must fight U.S. imperialism on its own, on the contrary, is one that leads to fragmenting the anti-



imperialist forces, not to uniting them, to weakening the struggle against imperialism, not to strengthening it.

*The "Cities" and the "Countryside"*

The division of the world anti-imperialist forces is further pursued by Lin along the following lines. If the Chinese experience of waging war independently with one's own resources applies in all other cases, so does the Chinese strategy in such a war, which was one of occupying the countryside and surrounding the cities, in which the Japanese forces were installed. The article states: "It must be emphasized that Comrade Mao Tse-tung's theory of the establishment of rural revolutionary base areas and the encirclement of the cities from the countryside is of outstanding and universal practical importance for the present revolutionary struggles of all the oppressed nations and peoples. . . ." This concept is then applied to the strategic situation on a global scale. Lin writes:

Taking the entire globe, if North America and Western Europe can be called "the cities of the world," then Asia, Africa and Latin America constitute "the rural areas of the world." Since World War II, the proletarian revolutionary movement has for various reasons been temporarily held back in the North American and West European capitalist countries, while the people's revolutionary movement in Asia, Africa and Latin America has been growing vigorously. In a sense, the contemporary world revolution also represents a picture of the encirclement of cities by the rural areas. In the final analysis, the whole cause of world revolution hinges on the revolutionary struggles of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples who make up the overwhelming majority of the world's population.

Elsewhere he expresses the same idea in these words: "The contradiction between the revolutionary peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the imperialists headed by the United States is the principal contradiction in the contemporary world."

There is no doubt that the sharpest struggles today are in the arena of national liberation. And there is no doubt as to the preeminent role which these currently play in the totality of the anti-imperialist struggles. We submit, however, that the way in which Lin places the matter is fundamentally wrong.

In picturing the basic world alignment of forces as one of the "countryside" against the "cities," he assigns no role to the socialist countries and the forces of progress in the major capitalist countries other than the distinctly subsidiary one of giving assistance to the oppressed

peoples in their wars. The brunt of the struggle is seen as resting on these peoples themselves; indeed, the central conflict in the world today is viewed as simply one between them and imperialism, and its overthrow as essentially their task alone.

The obvious effect of such an approach is to isolate the national liberation struggles from other struggles against imperialism, to divide the anti-imperialist forces. But this approach stems from an erroneous conception of the contradictions of modern society. The *basic* contradiction in the present stage of social development is that between imperialism and socialism. *This* is the central conflict in relation to which all struggles, all revolutions must be viewed.

A recent editorial in *Kommunist* ("Proletarian Internationalism and Bourgeois Nationalism," No. 9, 1965) calls attention to the emphasis given by Lenin to this point:

Noting the tremendous role played by the national-liberation movement in the world revolutionary process, Lenin especially stressed the importance of the struggle between imperialism and socialism as represented by Soviet Russia in his time. "If we lose sight of that fact," said Lenin, "we shall not be able correctly to pose a single question of nationalities or colonies, even though it may concern the remotest part of the world. Only from that point of view can political problems be correctly posed and solved by the Communist Parties both in the civilized and the backward countries." (*Complete Works*, Vol. 41, p. 242.)

The 81-Party Statement of 1960 expresses this idea in terms of the present historical situation. It says:

Our time, whose main content is the transition from capitalism to socialism initiated by the Great October Revolution, is a time of struggle between the two opposing social systems, a time of socialist revolutions and national-liberation revolutions, a time of the breakdown of imperialism, of the abolition of the colonial system, a time of transition of more peoples to the socialist path, of the triumph of socialism and communism on a world-wide scale.

*It is the principal characteristic of our time that the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the development of society.* (Emphasis in original.)

In particular, the existence of a socialist one-third of the world has been a cardinal factor in the great upsurge of the national liberation movement in recent years. The socialist countries, and especially the Soviet Union, have been a powerful bulwark and source of aid to all peoples struggling for their freedom. Their assistance in every sphere

—economic, political, military—has been *not incidental but vital* to the successes which have been achieved against colonialism, and is in great measure responsible for the fact that such successes could in many instances be registered without resorting to armed conflict.

Also important are the democratic struggles being waged by the workers and other forces of progress in the imperialist countries. These the article brushes aside with the comment that “the proletarian revolutionary movement has for various reasons been held back in the North American and West European capitalist countries.” It is true that no socialist revolutions are taking place in these parts of the world at this moment in history. What *is* taking place, however, is the growth of democratic anti-monopoly struggles which are serving to lay the basis and mobilize the forces for placing socialism on the order of the day in the not too remote future.

Especially noteworthy on the American scene are the tremendous upsurge of the civil rights movement, the striking rise of the peace movement, and the increasing indications of the development of a new wave of economic struggles. These processes are accompanied by a rising level of political consciousness and by growing tendencies for these struggles to merge into a common stream of opposition to the reactionary policies of U.S. monopoly capital at home and abroad. (Note, for example, the active opposition to the war in Vietnam by sections of the civil rights movement.)

Clearly, these struggles are not of minor, subsidiary significance in relation to the world anti-imperialist conflict but constitute one of its vital components. The struggle of the American people against the war of aggression in Vietnam is no less material in shaping its outcome than the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people themselves. *Both* struggles are essential, and it is their *combined* strength which is decisive.

Indeed, the combined power of *all* sectors of the anti-imperialist front is essential to the ultimate defeat and abolition of imperialism. To reduce matters to terms of a military conflict between the “country-side” and the “cities” is to isolate these sectors one from the other and to weaken the effectiveness of all of them. It is to rule out any concept of alliance embracing the manifold forms of struggle which are required.

#### *On National-Democratic and Socialist Revolutions*

Lin’s underestimation of the role of democratic struggles is apparent also in his treatment of the different types of revolution in the oppressed countries. And here, too, the effort to apply the Chinese pattern

universally leads to erroneous conclusions.

The article bases itself on Mao Tse-tung’s concept of “new-democratic revolution.” It states:

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has pointed out that, in the epoch since the October Revolution, anti-imperialist revolution in any colonial or semi-colonial country is no longer part of the old bourgeois, or capitalist world revolution, but is part of the new world revolution, the proletarian-socialist world revolution.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has formulated a complete theory of the new-democratic revolution. He indicated that this revolution, which is different from all others, can only be, nay must be, a revolution against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism waged by the broad masses of the people under the leadership of the proletariat.

*This means that the revolution can only be, nay must be, led by the proletariat and the genuinely revolutionary party armed with Marxism-Leninism, and by no other class or party.* (Emphasis added.)

Within this framework, Lin continues,

Comrade Mao Tse-tung made a correct distinction between the two revolutionary stages, *i.e.*, the national-democratic and the socialist revolutions; at the same time he correctly and closely linked the two. The national-democratic revolution is the necessary preparation for the socialist revolution, and the socialist revolution is the inevitable sequel to the national-democratic revolution.

The premise upon which the validity of these general propositions is based is, of course, the universal applicability of the experiences of the Chinese revolution. Thus, the above quotations are followed by the statement: “The Chinese revolution provides a successful lesson for making a thoroughgoing national-democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat; it likewise provides a successful lesson for the timely transition from the national-democratic revolution to the socialist revolution under the leadership of the proletariat.”

In sum, Mao’s view is that in the present historical epoch a national liberation revolution must take place *in its totality* under the leadership of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party—that is, it must *from the outset* be a revolution leading to socialism. Presumably, any national liberation struggle under other leadership cannot be considered genuinely anti-imperialist. In keeping with these ideas, the national-democratic and socialist revolutions are viewed as being *invariably* two closely-linked stages in a single revolutionary process,

in which one follows directly upon the other. And, of course, all national liberation revolutions must take the form of armed conflict.

There are, it is true, instances which conform more or less closely to the picture presented by Mao. We maintain, however, that to attempt to fit the enormous diversity of situations in different countries dogmatically into the straitjacket of a single pattern is to depart from Marxist-Leninist theory—and more, to fly in the face of reality.

Whether a given national liberation movement is or is not anti-imperialist is not determined by which class or classes lead it. On this point, it is worth recalling Lenin's views, as summed up by Stalin in *Foundations of Leninism* in 1924 (International Publishers, New York, 1939, pp. 80-81):

... The revolutionary character of a national movement under the conditions of imperialist oppression does not necessarily presuppose the existence of proletarian elements in the movement, the existence of a revolutionary or a republican program of the movement, the existence of a democratic basis of the movement. The struggle the Emir of Afghanistan is waging for the independence of Afghanistan is objectively a *revolutionary* struggle, despite the monarchist views of the Emir and his associates, for it weakens, disintegrates and undermines imperialism; whereas the struggle waged by "desperate" Democrats and "Socialists," "revolutionaries" and republicans such as, for example, Kerensky and Tsereteli, Renaudel and Scheidemann, Chernov and Dan, Henderson and Clynes, during the imperialist war was a *reactionary* struggle, for its result was the whitewashing, the strengthening, the victory of imperialism. For the same reasons the struggle the Egyptian merchants and bourgeois intellectuals are waging for the independence of Egypt is objectively a *revolutionary* struggle, despite the bourgeois origin and bourgeois title of the leaders of the Egyptian national movement, despite the fact that they are opposed to socialism; whereas the fight the British Labor Government is waging to perpetuate Egypt's dependent position is for the same reasons a *reactionary* struggle, despite the proletarian origin and proletarian title of the members of that government, despite the fact that they are "for" socialism.

The most elementary aspect of the struggle for national liberation is the fight for national sovereignty, and the tremendous successes of the national liberation movement since World War II are registered first of all in the appearance of a large body of newly sovereign states. These are neither imperialist nor socialist states; on the whole, however, they are part of the anti-imperialist camp, and it is very

largely their emergence that has led to the tipping of the world balance of forces against the camp of imperialism.

As we have already noted, conditions, levels of development and relationships of class forces in these countries vary tremendously. In some, the struggle for national freedom has been led by worker-peasant coalitions, in others by the national bourgeoisie, and in still others by a wide variety of coalitions of forces. In some, in fact there exists as yet only a rudimentary working class at best, and its growth awaits the development of modern industry made possible by liberation. Some have taken the path to socialism; in others, struggles for the most elementary democratic rights are in progress.

The achievement of political independence is but the first step in national liberation. It opens the door to a new stage of struggle for economic independence, agrarian reform, industrialization, extension of democratic rights and similar goals. This struggle is part of the national-democratic revolution, and it can be waged effectively, in the words of the 81-Party Statement, only "by all the patriotic forces of the nations united in a single national-democratic front."

For the problems faced by the newly independent nations, the Statement points out, "Different classes and parties offer different solutions. . . . As social contradictions grow the national bourgeoisie inclines more and more to compromising with domestic reaction and imperialism. The people, however, begin to see that the best way to abolish age-long backwardness and improve their living standards is that of non-capitalist development. . . . The working class and the broad peasant masses are to play the leading part in solving this basic social problem."

Where the workers and peasants are in the leadership at the outset, the transition to a socialist revolution may be rapid. In other cases the democratic struggles may be prolonged, and these may lead to the establishment of a national-democratic state of some duration, providing the basis for the ultimate transition to socialism. Concerning the nature of such a state, the 81-Party Statement says:

In the present historical situation, favorable domestic and international conditions arise in many countries for the establishment of an independent national democracy, that is, a state which consistently upholds its political and economic independence, fights against imperialism and its military blocs, against military bases on its territory; a state which fights against the new forms of colonialism and the penetration of imperialist capital; a state in which the people are insured broad democratic rights and freedom . . . the opportunity to work for the enactment of an agrarian reform

and other democratic and social changes, and for participation in shaping government policy. The formation and consolidation of national democracies enables the countries concerned to make rapid social progress and play an active part in the peoples' struggles for peace, against the aggressive policies of the imperialist camp, for the complete abolition of the colonial yoke.

This entire area of richly varied democratic struggle and development, already in progress in many newly liberated countries, finds no place in the narrow, rigid scheme offered by Lin. The logic of his position is that either the working class and its socialist vanguard leads the revolution from its inception toward the socialist goal, or else nothing is accomplished but the exchange of colonialism for neo-colonialism. The alternative that the workers and peasants may strive for leadership within the broader democratic coalition is rejected. The end result is that the increasingly numerous and powerful groups of newly liberated countries is almost in its entirety gratuitously consigned to the camp of the imperialist foe, as countries which yet await their true liberation through people's wars. This concept, too, serves only to divide and weaken the anti-imperialist forces.

#### *Anti-Sovietism: Instrument of Imperialism*

Especially disquieting is Lin's vehement attack against those whom he calls the "Khrushchev revisionists"—a term intended to designate the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the first place, and presumably also those of all other parties which hold similar views on peaceful coexistence. Against these the article makes the following charges:

The Khrushchev revisionists have come to the rescue of U.S. imperialism just when it is most panic-stricken and helpless in its efforts to cope with people's war. Working hand in glove with the U.S. imperialists, they are doing their utmost to spread all kinds of arguments against people's war and, wherever they can, they are scheming to undermine it by overt or covert means.

The fundamental reason why the Khrushchev revisionists are opposed to people's war is that they have no faith in the masses and are afraid of U.S. imperialism, of war and of revolution. Like all other opportunists, they are blind to the power of the masses and do not believe that the revolutionary people are capable of defeating imperialism. They submit to the nuclear blackmail of the U.S. imperialists and are afraid that, if the oppressed peoples and nations rise up to fight people's wars or the people of socialist

countries repulse U.S. imperialist aggression, U.S. imperialism will become incensed, they themselves will become involved and *their fond dream of Soviet-U.S. cooperation to dominate the world will be spoiled.* (Emphasis added.)

A more severe condemnation of the leadership of a sister party—and more, of the leadership of the world's first land of socialism—could scarcely be made. And it has led to the rejection by the Chinese leaders of all pleas for unity of action against U.S. aggression in Vietnam. They state:

... If we were to take united action on the question of Vietnam with the leaders of the C.P.S.U. who are pursuing the Khrushchev revisionist line, wouldn't we be helping them to deceive the people of the world? Wouldn't we be joining them in betraying the revolutionary cause of the Vietnamese people? Wouldn't we be joining them in attacking the Chinese Communist Party and all other Marxist-Leninist parties? Wouldn't we be joining them in serving as accomplices of U.S. imperialism? Of course, we shall do nothing of the sort. ("Refutation of the New Leaders of the C.P.S.U. on 'United Action,'" by the Editorial Departments of *Renmin Ribao* and *Hongqui*, *Peking Review*, November 12, 1965.)

What are the grounds offered by Lin for such grave charges and the consequent division of the socialist camp in the face of U.S. aggression? That the Soviet leaders, as he puts it, consider that "a nation without nuclear weapons is incapable of defeating an enemy with nuclear weapons, whatever methods of fighting it may adopt," that it "must capitulate to the enemy . . . or come under the 'protection' of some other nuclear power and submit to its beck and call." That they maintain that "a single spark in any part of the globe can touch off a world nuclear conflagration." In sum, that they call for a policy of peaceful coexistence and reject the CPC leaders' thesis of the defeat of imperialism solely through people's wars. The implication in the way in which the article treats these disagreements is that there can be no honest differences among Communists on such questions, and that to oppose their thesis is to be guilty of opportunist capitulation to the enemy.

For the further allegation of actual Soviet collaboration with U.S. imperialism, Lin's article offers no documentation. Other articles and editorials attempt to demonstrate it, however, largely by resorting to fragmentary quotations from Soviet and other sources, and by a series of unsupported assertions which at times are directly con-



tradictory to the facts. Of the latter, a most shocking example is the following:

... Before the fall of Khrushchev, they [the leaders of the CPSU] supported the suppression of the national-liberation movement in the Congo (L)\* by the U.S. imperialists under the cloak of the United Nations; and this resulted in the murder of the Congolese national hero Patrice Lumumba. Now Khrushchev's successors have willingly agreed to share the expenses of the U.S. armed intervention in the Congo (L) undertaken in the name of the United Nations, and in the U.N. Security Council they are supporting the U.S. hoax of "a national reconciliation" in the Congo (L) which is an attempt to strangle the revolutionary forces of the Congolese people. ("A Great Victory for Leninism," Editorial in *Honqui*, No. 4, reprinted in *Peking Review*, May 7, 1965.)

To anyone at all familiar with the facts of the case—with the unswerving opposition of the Soviet Union to the use of UN troops which took place in the Congo and its adamant refusal to pay one cent toward financing it, to the point where the United States was compelled to retreat from its insistence on such payment—this statement can only appear as an outright, deliberate distortion, since all these facts are well-known. And the basing of so serious a step as that of refusing joint action in defense of the Vietnamese people on such allegations as this is all the more disturbing.

Space prohibits a detailed examination of the numerous other allegations, nor is such an examination necessary here. There is likewise no need to give an account here of the record of Soviet aid to peoples seeking their freedom, or to dwell on the role which Soviet possession of nuclear weapons has played in obstructing the aggressive cold-war schemes of U.S. monopoly capital. Suffice it to point out that the Soviet Union has unequivocally opposed the U.S. aggression in Vietnam and has given unstinting aid to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, aid which the Vietnamese leaders have on numerous occasions publicly acknowledged. The statement of DRV Premier Pham Van Dong, on the occasion of the 48th anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution, is typical:

... The CPSU, the Soviet government and Soviet people are resolutely and actively supporting the entire Vietnamese people in their righteous struggle against American imperialism. They support

\* (L) stands for Leopoldville.

the correct policy of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the South Vietnam National Liberation Front and are giving the D.R.V. every assistance in strengthening its defense capacity and economy.

As for the Soviet position on relations with the United States, this is, we believe, made unmistakably clear in the recent interview of Premier Kosygin with James Reston of the *New York Times* (December 6, 1965). In reply to a question as to whether the "two major powers could work together for world order," Kosygin replied:

I am not quite clear on what you mean by "world order." What does it imply? The United States and the Soviet Union, the two most powerful states, should dictate our wills to other nations? If we should attempt to command other nations, that would be tantamount to fascism.

In reply to the question: "How can you reconcile 'peaceful coexistence' and these 'wars of national liberation'?" he stated:

We believe that wars of national liberation are just wars, and they will continue as long as there is national oppression by imperialist powers... People will always fight against oppression, for freedom and independence.

There is no peaceful coexistence between the slaveowner and the slave. We have never conceived of such a peaceful coexistence.

On the question of meeting with President Johnson, Kosygin stated: "In principle, we are in favor of such meetings. But I believe that so long as the Vietnam war continues, so long as bombs are falling on innocent people, such a meeting would not be feasible."

These are decidedly not the words of a collaborator with U.S. imperialism. Quite the contrary. And they are not just words; they are fully matched by Soviet support and assistance to the Vietnamese people.

It is not the role of the Soviet Union which gives aid and comfort to U.S. imperialism but anti-Sovietism, which U.S. ruling circles do all in their power to cultivate precisely because they see in the Soviet Union the very heart of the opposition to their aggressive designs.

There can be little doubt that the split in the world Communist movement encouraged U.S. imperialism in its decision to escalate the war in Vietnam, and equally little doubt that its continued existence gives further encouragement to this policy. To defeat the aim of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam, what is needed above all is unity of

action of the socialist countries regardless of ideological differences. Anti-Sovietism and the rejection of such unity do not help, but obstruct, the victory of the anti-imperialist forces.

### *The Role of the American People*

To defend world peace, to force U.S. monopoly capital to retreat from its aggressive policies—this is the central task of the day. But the main responsibility for its accomplishment lies not in Vietnam, not in Africa or Latin America. It lies in the United States. The task of curbing U.S. imperialism rests in the first place with the American people.

Not least among the inconsistencies in Lin's article is its insistence that whereas the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America must rely on their own strength in fighting for their liberation, the people of the United States must be freed from the rule of U.S. monopoly capital by others. But if revolution cannot be exported to other countries, neither can it be exported to the United States. Like all others, the American people must fight their own battles.

Yet, like all other peoples, they must fight them as part of the overall world struggle against imperialism. Moreover, *within that totality* they bear a *special* responsibility, living as they do in the very heartland of world imperialism. To help make them aware of this responsibility, to help mobilize them for the battle—these are the particular tasks of the Communists and other forces of progress in our country.

The logic of Lin's position is that the interests of the American people would be best served by egging U.S. imperialism on into ever deeper military involvement in Vietnam and other countries, so that the people of these countries may destroy it. But nothing could be farther from the truth. This is the path to nuclear war, to mass annihilation. It coincides with the course of action advocated by the fanatical ultra-Right, which clamors for all-out aggression against other peoples and the indiscriminate dropping of nuclear bombs as the means to victory in that aggression.

The interests of the American people will be served rather by organizing the widest possible opposition to the war policies of the Johnson Administration, and by making common cause with the forces of peace throughout the world. They will be served by combatting anti-Sovietism and by striving for closer ties and peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

The struggle for peaceful coexistence is not, as Lin and other Chinese

leaders repeatedly assert, in conflict with the struggle for national liberation. On the contrary, *to fight for peaceful coexistence today is in the first place to fight for an end to U.S. aggression in Vietnam and for the full freedom of the Vietnamese people to decide their own future.*

But it does not end with this. The danger of world war today emanates not only from U.S. imperialism but also from its chief ally, West German imperialism. To fight for peaceful coexistence is therefore to fight against the policy of building a renazified, revanchist West Germany, and supplying it with nuclear weapons, of reviving a reactionary monopolist regime with its own dreams of imperialist conquest. It is to fight against the maintenance of West Berlin as an outpost of provocation and intrigue against the German Democratic Republic and other socialist countries—an outpost which has more than once become the seat of crisis bringing the world to the brink of thermonuclear conflict. This aspect of the struggle is completely obscured by the line of Lin's article with its reduction of the global conflict to one between the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America against U.S. imperialism.

The fight for peaceful coexistence also entails the fight for recognition of People's China, for its admission to the UN, and for an end to the senseless total embargo on trade with it. This, too, is part of the special responsibility which falls upon the American people, and upon its progressive vanguard.

To adopt the approach in Lin's article would be to abdicate all such responsibilities, for it writes off the people of the United States as a major force in the anti-imperialist struggle, and it isolates them from their allies in other parts of the world. It is an approach which reflects a profound lack of faith in the masses of working people, particularly in the United States and other capitalist countries. But it is precisely, such faith which should motivate Communists in their struggles everywhere. Only on this basis can unity of all forces opposing imperialism be achieved and ultimate victory secured in the fight for peace, freedom and socialism.

## IN MEMORIAM

## "A Single-Minded Son of the Working Class"

Of the multitude of each generation only a distinguished few so live and labor in life, that in their passing their fellow-men—their co-workers, neighbors, friends—can say: "We have witnessed the life, the work and the passing of a model."

Or that they can say: "Our lives are richer, we are all better, life has a deeper meaning, a higher purpose. The world is a more beautiful planet, there is greater hope for human society, there is greater understanding, more brotherhood, more decency and humaneness, there is greater social progress for all, because there lived and labored one whom we, and the generations to follow, can all emulate—a model."

Jack Stachel was such a man. That he never thought of himself in such terms; that he never did or said anything for the purpose of building such an image, is only further witness to his sincere sense of modesty, to his deep sense of oneness and total identity with his fellow-men.

The roots of an image that others will emulate are deep within a life with a noble purpose, a life with a meaning, a life that adds to a better world, a life that rebels against injustices, a life that propels and is motivated by social progress. The life of Jack Stachel was such a life.

### *A True Son of the People*

Jack was a model of a patriot because his patriotism was concerned with people. His patriotism above all included the concern for the victims of a cruel society, the hungry, the needy, the victims of class and racial oppression.

The patriotism of Jack Stachel had the ring of a new and a higher civilized quality, because he rejected such narrow, ignorant and bigoted concepts as: "My country right or wrong." He supported the efforts of his country when right, but when wrong, he fought to put it right. Because Jack was completely convinced that the policy of U.S. aggression in Vietnam was wrong and unjust, he gave all his remaining strength and wisdom to right this wrong.

His patriotism had the ring of the future, of a higher form of social order because he rejected the right of any man to exploit another,



**JACK STACHEL**

January 18, 1900

December 31, 1965

to get rich by another man's labor. He rejected racial prejudice in all its forms. He rejected the concept of some nations being the masters while others are the slaves.

Jack's was the patriotism of the people because he rejected and condemned the right of a few large private monopoly corporations to rob the people of their natural resources and the fruits of their labor.

In the struggle for civil rights, Jack Stachel was also a model, especially for white Americans. Equality among people was a principle of life for Jack. He understood, he joined hands with those who were ready to take the first step in eliminating some of the evils of the jimcrow system. He welcomed those who were for civil rights because it was in their immediate self-interest. He joined in the struggle and applauded every advance towards equality.

But Jack Stachel's own commitment to the struggle had much deeper roots. For him each step forward was only a step towards the complete elimination of the system of jimcrow. His commitment for the duration was based on his deep knowledge that the system of discrimination was a part of the system of exploitation, that it was tied to the drive for private profits.

Jack was an uncompromising foe of jimcrow because he saw beyond the formal granting of equal rights. He saw the need for a continuous struggle to cleanse the human mind of all prejudice and race hatred. As a white American he felt a deep sense of responsibility, and more, he accepted that responsibility of doing all he could to wipe out all practices of discrimination, to remove all vestiges of bigotry prejudice, and chauvinism, from the minds of our people.

Stachel was one of the pioneers in the struggle to get the trade unions to be the representatives of the whole class—Negro and white. For Jack the concept of Negro-white unity was an essential element of victory in all fields of social progress.

Equality—full, complete equality, was a way of life, a way of thought, a method of struggle for Jack. In this sense too Jack Stachel will be emulated by his fellow Americans.

What were some of the other ingredients of life that molded this noble fighter, this deep thinker, this Communist, this humanitarian. There are many other Americans who express concern for the poor, who even make contributions to welfare funds and to the 100 neediest cases. There are others who in general terms disapprove of racial discrimination. There are many who are for peace and there are others who do not see the wisdom of the war, of aggression against Vietnam. But Jack's commitment to these struggles was something special.

#### *An Organizer of Struggles*

Jack Stachel was a man who not only disapproved of evil, he

fought it. He was an organizer of struggles, an inspiring leader of men. From the Pacific to the Atlantic his name is associated with the glorious struggles of his generation against class and race oppression. His name is on the roll of honor of steelworkers, auto workers, coal miners, seamen, electrical workers and garment workers. He is remembered for his leadership in the Sacco and Vanzetti case, the Herndon case, the Trenton Six case. He directly participated in the strikes of steelworkers, coal miners, auto workers and many others.

For Jack, poverty, racial bigotry, wars of aggression, class exploitation were not unfortunate but unavoidable features of human society. For him they were not permanent features of civilization. For him they were by-products of a class society, to be fought and to be eliminated.

This profound sense of direction of history, this knowledge of what is the cause of these deformities made of Jack a model revolutionary. He was a life-time fighter against such evils and against capitalism. Jack saw the final correction of these social malignancies in a system of socialism to which he dedicated his life.

To understand the full measure of Jack Stachel, one must see his working class beginning and direction. For above all else, he was a working man. He was from, and molded by, the working class. In his early youth he was attracted and drawn into the turmoil of a vibrant, militant, socialist-orientated New York working class movement. Here he was at home. This was his class.

With great eagerness and skill he gathered up the accumulated experiences of this class. These experiences became an integral part of Jack. He had the ability to express the workers hopes, their ideas, because they were now his own hopes and ideas also. He understood, expressed the ways of workers, the cultural expressions, the class hatreds, the militancy, the tenacity and steadfastness in struggle. He learned from, and became a part of the garment workers, the automobile workers, the coal miners, the Negro workers the workers of Jewish, Hungarian, Polish, Italian and Russian descent, the workers from families of generations on U.S. soil, and all became Jack's class family.

For Jack saw America, the melting pot of national groups, become the molding pot of a class society, the polarization of wealth and poverty.

Other factors influenced Jack's life but above all else the working class became the mold; the working class became the star that guided his life's travels.

Jack contributed much to his class. He is one of the leaders of a movement that finally resulted in the organization of the mass industrial unions in the basic industries. He helped pioneer the concept of labor's independent political action. He is one of the early pioneers

in the struggle for social security, for job equality. His was one of the toughest voices against the vicious practice of "last to be hired and first to be fired," the system of discrimination against the Negro workers.

Jack was a model of a working-class fighter because he was a model of a Communist. He never wavered from this course. He never had to halt to rethink whether he should turn back or step to the sidelines. His only thoughts were whether it is possible to do more, to move faster. The course of life, the course of history and Jack Stachel, were moving in the same direction. Jack was influenced by history's direction, and in turn he influenced its course.

For his dedication, he was the recipient of the love, admiration and affection of his class, and the hatred of the class he fought. In spite of his serious heart condition, Jack was forced to go through the agony of nine months of trial for the crime of thinking. The hatred of his class enemy was expressed in the cruel and cynical statement of the judge that prison would "do his heart some good."

#### *A Brilliant Marxist*

Jack Stachel was one of the finest Marxist thinkers. For him the guidelines of Marxist thought were no fetters, they gave him freedom and confidence, the boldness to probe, to explore that which is new.

For Jack, the science of Marxism was a weapon of struggle, a tool of social progress, a compass, a guideline leading from the realities of today to the promises of tomorrow.

Jack was a brilliant tactician in struggle. His tactical approach was always firmly tied to specific movements of people. His approach was concrete. He dealt with down-to-earth political reality.

Those of us who worked with him have a special appreciation of his modesty, of his ability to work as a part of a team. For Jack, more important than to make a contribution in thought, was to make it collectively. For him, more important than Jack was the team, the collective.

The Communist Party helped to mold Jack Stachel into the Marxist leader that he was. But in turn Jack Stachel made an historic contribution in influencing and molding the Communist Party.

The name, Jack Stachel, shines brilliantly on the roll of honor of the heroes of the working class struggle. He will be remembered and honored the world over as one of the architects and builders of the new social order—socialism.

Jack Stachel's monument is the people and the better world he helped to build. His hermitage is the thousands of young rebels who will try to match his greatness, who will emulate him because they saw in his life's work—a model.

## Political Situation in Argentina

For many years it was typical of Argentina to follow a relatively simple pattern: an agricultural-cattle economy, dependent on imperialism, with a capitalist development restricted and distorted by this dependency and by an alliance between imperialism and the large latifundists (called the "landed oligarchy" in the national political idiom). The peculiarity of the Argentine historic process is that between 1810 and 1824 (in the final battle against the Spaniards waged in Ayacucho, Perú) the country won its political independence, but it did not succeed in achieving national unity nor did it resolve its fundamental problem—land.

It was not until the period between 1852 and 1861 that national unity was secured. Argentina in 1861 was largely uninhabited; the major part of the land had no owners. Two possibilities were open: either a land fund was to be formed so as to follow the American way, giving land to immigrants by legal grant along the lines of the Homestead Act of the U.S.; or it could be handed over as private property to managers of large estates and to foreign corporations. After a brief struggle, the latifundists imposed this second course. Argentina was transformed into a country of large estates (latifundias), a situation which persists until this day.

The development of agricultural and cattle production had to take into account the world market on which Argentina had to depend more and more. The slow, long path of capitalist development that prevailed in the countryside was not the American way, but rather what Lenin called the Prussian way (the merging of large scale land ownership with capitalism). In other words, the solution of the land question, which was the historical task of the bourgeoisie, was inherited by the proletariat. But the proletariat began to act as an independent class only after the country had become subject to imperialism (first British and afterwards U.S.). As Lenin might have put it in *Imperialism*, the political independence of Argentina remained a formal independence. In this way, the democratic revolution in Argentina

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was developing as an agrarian and anti-imperialist revolution moving toward socialism.

Within the framework of the above-mentioned backwardness and independence, the productive forces were growing in spite of everything. As a result, the proletariat emerged early as did the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democratic movements. The rise of the Argentine bourgeoisie always bore the stamp of dependence on imperialism and the distortion caused by big land ownership. For this very reason, the relationship of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democracy with the proletariat never grew into a broad, inclusive national revolutionary movement.

In 1890, when the world first celebrated May Day, the workers' organizations were already strong enough to hold a public meeting of some importance in Buenos Aires. That same year, the first newspaper with a revolutionary Marxist orientation appeared. Likewise, 1890 was the year of the first large insurrectionary uprising expressing the revolutionary aspirations of the democratic bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie. Through the activities of the workers, the Socialist Party was born; the uprising gave birth to the Radical Civic Union. There were neither agreements between them nor joint actions for many years.

In this way, the classical Argentine political pattern was formed. The land-holding oligarchy and the conforming bourgeoisie fundamentally expressed themselves in conservatism (which never took the form of a national political party, but rather remained as a confederation of parties of provincial oligarchies, thus permitting different levels of alliances and combinations with the bourgeoisie as well as with different imperialist nations). The rising bourgeois and petty-bourgeois movement developed along the lines of radicalism. The working class, moving toward socialism (after winning the ideological battle against anarchism) had two wings: one was reformist—generally prevalent in the leadership of the Socialist Party—and the other revolutionary Marxist. The principal Socialist leaders were reformists and during the war of 1914 they adopted a chauvinist position. The revolutionary Marxist wing of the Socialist Party, in struggle against reformism and for an internationalist policy favorable to the Zimmerwald Manifesto on the war question, formed the Communist Party on January 6, 1918.

Until 1945, the political set-up consisted essentially of the following four parties: Conservative, Radical, Socialist, and Communist.

Meanwhile, a number of changes had occurred. U.S. imperialism, favored by the two world wars which weakened its British rival, was

displacing Britain in domination over the Argentine economy. Inter-imperialist frictions were sharpening. In addition to contradictions between the two English-speaking powers, there were clashes with Nazi-fascist interests (sustained in Argentina for reasons of economic expediency, similarity of political aspirations with some sectors, activities of immigrant groups of German and Italian origin, etc., and "neutralist" trends among certain bourgeois groups).\*

Benefitting by the two world wars and the 1929 world crisis, light industry grew in Argentina, dependent on the large industrial powers for equipment, patents, technology, raw materials, etc. As this important development of dependent light industry proceeded, the largest enterprises, which are key in each industry, came directly into the hands of U.S., British and other foreign corporations; at present they are fundamentally in U.S. hands. Industrial growth never succeeded in breaking away from structural dependency and backwardness. Even on those occasions when a government reached the point of taking on a more pronounced bourgeois content, its alliance with imperialism and the latifundists was nonetheless maintained.

#### *The Crisis of Bourgeois Democracy*

To the extent that these changes occurring in Argentine society and politics became more pronounced, possibilities for working-class political action on a national scale increased. The dominant groups, in their attempt to obstruct this process, lost the capacity to direct it due to their accommodation, conciliation and vacillation. As a consequence, the bourgeois governments became powerless to retain their influence over the masses. The immediate result was the collapse of bourgeois legality with the coup d'état of 1930. The governments that followed came to power by out-and-out electoral fraud, called "patriotic fraud." The landowners and open agents of imperialism again rose to top government posts. Violence and terror alternated with more subtle methods to achieve anti-working class and anti-people's objectives. The Communist Party was outlawed; jailings, persecution and assassination of political and trade union militants began.

Nevertheless, the activity of the workers and the people kept open

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\*In a confused form neutralism represented the aspirations of a certain section of the bourgeoisie—not the conformists—and of the petty bourgeoisie to develop an economy independent of imperialism. Due to the dependence of the economy upon the foreign market, foreign policy always had a big influence on Argentine domestic policy. This was apparent as far back as the end of the last century in opposition to pro-U.S. Pan Americanism, in the neutralism of Radical President Yrigoyen, in the "third position" of Peronism.

ing new perspectives. In the year following 1930, the unification of the trade unions into one single trade union center was achieved for the first time.\* The movement for solidarity with the Spanish Republic acquired unprecedented breadth. The conditions were being created to build a great national movement for reestablishing democratic standards which would simultaneously facilitate the attainment of definite social gains.

Meanwhile, the productive forces kept coming into conflict with the crippling cast of the backward and dependent structure. Industrial production was approaching the volume of agricultural production in the gross national product, and finally reached first place around 1945. The numerical growth of the working class became quite apparent.

Little by little, the conditions were developing for a new revolutionary advance in which the working class would emerge with its ranks strengthened opposing a bourgeoisie whose inherent vacillations had led repeatedly to deals with imperialism and the latifundistas. In addition, the new world conditions, the global battle against fascism, alliances on an international level, all coincided to mobilize the masses in pursuit of social and political victories.

In 1943 there began to appear the possibility of a broad united front movement against conservative, pro-Nazi and fraudulent governments. At that moment the army went out into the streets, overthrew the conservative president Castillo, and formed a government among whose leaders the then Colonel Juan Domingo Perón began to stand out prominently. The coup was of a preventive character. The pretext

\*This trade union center, the General Federation of Labor (CGT), was under the leadership of reformist unionists, but at the end of the thirties and beginning of the forties the Communists had considerable influence in it. The CGT was undermined by the maneuvers of corrupt and reformist unionists. This latter facilitated its reconstitution under the auspices of the state apparatus, with Peronist leadership (partly former unionists and reformist trade union bureaucrats). In the line adopted by the Communist Party at its 11th Congress in 1946, the strengthening of unity within the CGT was emphasized. By dint of great sacrifices to overcome the sectarian tactics of Peronist leaders—sacrifices that went as far as dissolving major Communist-led unions in some fields—this trade union unity was secured. During the Perón regime, the CGT was a very important part of the official apparatus. After the overthrow of Perón, it underwent various changes but its leadership in the main continued in the hands of Peronist trade unionists. At times there were agreements between them and militant Communists and others. At other times these agreements were broken under the pressure of the Right. The program adopted by its conventions has the full support of the Communists and other class militants, but they do not support the interpretations often given it by the Rightist leaders when they profess to apply it.

was to fight "administrative corruption," but the truth is that by combining open repression and social demagoguery, it was intended to serve as a dike to check the advance of the mass movement and the growth of the Communist Party.

### *Peronism*

The military coup d'état of June 4, 1943 was the product of a combination of varied factors. The *Outline of the History of the Communist Party of Argentina* says in this connection that "along with democratic elements, fascist civilians and military men predominated, and gave it its programmatic content."

Within the government that arose as a result of the June coup, the figure of Perón continued to stand out. Along with the post of Minister of War and participation in the executive power as Vice President of the Republic, he took over a new post especially created at his request—that of Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare. Through this office he initiated systematic work among the toiling masses, especially among those recently absorbed by industry. Up to that time, in view of the composition of the country, the bulk of the proletariat, or at least an important section of it, was recruited from among European immigrants or their children. Under the conditions of world war, with international migration channels closed, the growing industrial population was supplied by new workers (rural workers and impoverished peasants from the provinces) and immigrants from near-by countries.

Hundreds of thousands of farmers and their families, crushed by the chronic agricultural crisis, moved to the large and expanding industrial centers.\* They brought with them the typical sense of rebellion of the peasant masses, but they lacked the long trade-union and political experience that had been acquired by the previous generations of the Argentine proletariat with their international ties with the class movements that had been developing in Europe. The political and social demagoguery of Peronism concentrated on these masses, without at the same time neglecting to attract certain groupings of corrupt trade union leaders. Peronism also facilitated the creation of a substantial trade union bureaucracy. At the same time there was unleashed the most brutal repression against democratic militants, especially the Communists, thousands of whom were arrested.

\*According to official figures, the number of people employed in Argentine industry rose from 380,000 in 1934 to 1,040,000 in 1944.

With the aid of the state apparatus, Peronism could secure the support of the majority of the workers as well as of other sections of the people, benefitting by the unusually favorable economic situation created by the war and the opportune post-war period. When, as a result of the war situation, many widely consumed items could no longer be imported, the Argentine consumer goods industry developed rapidly. This assured a more or less prolonged period of full employment. In addition, the exceptional status of cattle and agricultural products during the war and immediate post-war periods created a favorable financial situation.

For these reasons the Perón government was able to give the masses something. He did not undertake basic reforms, but he was in a position to make economic and social concessions. This gave the people a feeling that he was really moving toward a new system of social justice. In that way he was able to win the support of the masses. That was how the growth of the working class was stymied and how it was kept from strengthening its revolutionary class positions which had been developing since the previous century and had already established a Communist Party theoretically and politically steeled in battle and enjoying considerable influence. That was the way the ideological dominance of bourgeois nationalism was established on a broad working-class and people's base. Because of this bourgeois-nationalist, class-conciliation content, the most important groups of the Argentine bourgeoisie united to support Peronism, although there was some wavering.

As a result of these realignments, and based on the growing weight of the workers within Argentine society, relations changed within the landholder-bourgeois alliance which ruled the country with the approval of foreign imperialism. The leadership passed into the hands of the bourgeoisie although the bourgeoisie never sought to go into problems more fundamentally or to overcome dependence on imperialism and latifundist backwardness. But what the landholding oligarchy, the big and conformist capitalists and foreign monopolies feared most (and still fear) was the mass base of Peronism. The social demagoguery of Perón had succeeded in holding back the forward movement of the masses toward the position of the Communist Party between 1943 and 1946. But, like a double-edged sword, it had cut deep.

It is clear that under the conditions outlined, leadership over the working class and demagoguery could not be sustained in the abstract. Important concessions were made and, above all, the power of the masses of workers, organized into unions, won a place in the Argentine political picture that was not to be minimized.

### *Evolution of Peronism*

The nature of Peronism can be described as follows: It never disturbs the leading role of the nationalist bourgeoisie which is conciliatory toward imperialism and the oligarchy; but political and social fluctuations alternately gave predominance to groups more committed to the workers and the people than to more openly reactionary groups.

In the last years of Perón's government, the masses were demanding more and more insistently the fulfillment of the social policy he promised and they were repudiating anti-Communism. And if Perón tried on various occasions to resort openly to reaction (attempt to send troops to Korea, prevented by mass actions led by the Communist Party; congress on "productivity" to increase exploitation of the proletariat; promise to join the "Western" camp in the event of aggression against the USSR; brutal persecution of Communists and other democratic sectors), under the pressure of the masses he often had to step back for fear of losing his influence over them. His influence was declining during the final period of his government. He was unable to do everything he wanted to do. For this reason, the dominant groups which gave him their support at the beginning were losing confidence in the Perón government as a dike to hold back the mass movement. They began to conspire against him until they overthrew him by a military coup in September 1955.

That was the way a new period began, the period of open Peronism.

After his fall in 1955, the economic situation of the country, which had been getting worse since 1950, was becoming even more serious. The high cost of living became intolerable, unemployment and chronic semi-unemployment set in. An important section of the masses think that "under Perón" they were better off and that is one of the reasons that Peronist influence still persists. During these years there have been many zigzags in the policies of Peronism, but the motion of the masses toward the Left is becoming more pronounced every day.

The struggle of various tendencies within the Peronist movement makes its ideological outlook extremely confused. There arose a somewhat eclectic, opportunist current, which merged tendencies of the purest fascist type with others from the political arsenal of the Argentine radicals, and labor theories of a reformist character with nationalist ideas and anti-imperialist phraseology. In broad outline we may say that ideas like the conciliation of labor with capital, apolitical trade unionism, membership in the "Western and Christian" world, the paternal and arbitrator role of the State, constituted the dominant, negative side of Peronist ideology. Pro-Nazi sympathies and attitudes

favorable to Franco on the part of Peronist leaders, plus their efforts to construct a corporative state apparatus, only emphasized the negative character of this bourgeois-nationalist leadership. Certainly the growth of the productive forces stimulated the adoption of some reforms, among them the extension of the sector belonging to state capitalism. But latifundist property and imperialist domination over the Argentine economy remained intact. Besides, there came into existence a whole stratum of office-holding capitalists who distorted even further the social content of the aspirations of the masses.

However, the commitments to the masses and the equilibrium established in order to maintain control were deepening other aspects. A strong note of social demands, together with the numerical and economic growth of the unions, tended to unite more and more with the anti-imperialist and anti-latifundist aspects of the dominant ideology. At the base relations between Communists and Peronists were constantly growing closer.

During the last period of its rule, Peronism very often resorted to open repression not only against Communists and other non-Peronist or non-party militants, but also against strikes and demonstrations led mainly by Peronist masses. However, when the 1955 coup d'état triumphed, the tremendous anti-worker and anti-people's repression it unleashed aroused the class sentiment of the workers who had not joined the Communist Party. The class sentiment made them defend as their own the trade unions as well as the union leaders and the whole Peronist apparatus under their leadership. Logically, the Communist militants, although they had a different political outlook, were in the forefront of the struggle against the repressive measures and for the defense of the political and trade union rights of the masses.

### *The Left*

A few months after Perón took over the presidency of the Republic, in August 1946, the Communist Party Congress met. In that Congress a political and tactical line was put forward to be applied in depth, designed to help the masses under the influence of Peronism to learn from their own political experience. It was foreseen that the social demagoguery of the Peronist leaders would clash with the social policy demanded by the Peronist masses and that they would turn toward the Left.

The work of the Party for many years was persistent, sometimes discouraging, always painstaking. But no one could divert it from its line of action: to work with the masses, especially those influenced by Peronism and, through mass activity, to change the situation. The

fruits of this policy are becoming more apparent each day.

In strengthening fraternal bonds between Peronists and Communists in this way, a new stage in Argentine political development was ushered in.

The stage is indicated, in the first place, by the advance in the proletariat's class consciousness. One section, the clearest in understanding, is joining the Communist Party. The Party, without counting those affiliated with the youth, has reached the figure of 120,000 registered. (Conditions of secrecy or semi-legality in which the Party has had to operate for so many years, have not permitted it to assimilate them all.)

But we must not look askance at another process—one that is much more complex—that is evident among the masses who continue to be Peronists. No one can say that their ideology has remained on the low bourgeois-nationalist and class-conciliation level that prevailed in 1946. More or less definite socialist aspirations, encouraged by the example of the great Soviet gains and those of the other countries in the world socialist system, have taken a big spurt forward since the Cuban revolution took a socialist direction. Experience is destroying the mainstays of class conciliation. Paternalism is being undermined by the increasing political and trade union activity of the workers.

The Communist Party points out the two aspects of nationalism in Argentina: the positive side (opposition to imperialism) and the negative (struggle for hegemony in the democratic, national liberation movement). It is evident that the national bourgeoisie finds it constantly more difficult to maintain its leadership over the working class. On the other hand, national and world events call for emphasis on the anti-imperialist aspect of this nationalism. The struggle for leadership between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is being waged ever more openly inside a political movement—Peronism—whose social base consists mainly of workers who have constantly at their side the Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party.

The crisis of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois political parties, stemming from their inability to keep the masses within the framework of bourgeois legality, finds expression in the fragmentation and disintegration of the old parties, sometimes formally unified but with very diverse wings, and at other times openly divided.\* This crisis makes

\* The old Civic Radical Union is divided between the People's Civic Radical Union (government party, with clearly defined factions within it) and the Intransigent UCR and the Movement for Integration and Development (MID), which are the two parties into which the Radicalism that followed Frondizi has been split. Socialism has two parties ("democratic" and "Argentine") and a multitude of groups on the Left. Within Peronism

the Peronist outlook even more confused since various groups are making or breaking alliances or are trying to make deals. For that reason the rightist groups in and outside of Peronism are trying to stop the masses' turn to the Left by means of agreements opposed to the interests of the people, made behind the backs of the workers.

At the same time, inspired by the great class battles, groups and factions ready to proceed along the path of democracy and progress are taking shape in all bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties with a mass base.

The existence of united labor unions and big mass movements acts as a catalyst in this process of moving toward the Left. A characteristic of the Argentinian situation is that along with the big trade union and student centers and the peasant movement there are a number of mass movements, many of which were created by Communists who still actively participate in practically all of them. We might mention the peace partisans' movement, the coordinating committee for agrarian reform, the women's union, youth groups, the movement against the high cost of living, big cooperative organizations (especially credit cooperatives), all kinds of neighborhood institutions, the League for the Rights of Man, various solidarity movements (with Cuba, for self-determination, for Spain and Portugal, for Paraguay, for Venezuela), the Alliance of Intellectuals, the children's movement and others. All of these are developing vigorously, producing their own leadership, and are playing an increasing part in the life of the country. Whenever the working class and other sections of the people have been in a position to wage successful battles (for example during the CGT struggles or during the imperialist aggression against Santo Domingo),\*

an endless number of parties and groups coexist which sometimes act together, at other times lend their names and legal approval, and at still other times are opposed to one another.

\*It is appropriate to mention that with regard to the mobilization of solidarity with Santo Domingo, during the first three weeks in May, practically the whole country declared itself in favor of the Dominican people's right of self-determination. This was true of all the democratic political parties, the CGT, the student groups, provincial and national legislatures, municipal governments, cultural and social societies, etc. There were big demonstrations all over the country, especially in the city of Buenos Aires, with barricades in the streets in struggles against the police. It all climaxed in a great united event called by the CGT and the students. Speakers from the platform included, among others, Peronist, Communist and Socialist leaders. The Communist Party and united front organizations in which Communists take part played an important role in these demonstrations. As a result of the mass struggles, the government was obliged not to send troops to Santo Domingo. This in turn exasperated reaction which intensified anti-Communist McCarthyism.

the political picture has tended to shape up advantageously for the Left forces.

### *Reaction*

The forces of reaction rely on their traditional strongholds (the conservative parties, factory, industrial and rural organizations, finance groupings, etc.). But more and more they are trying out a tactic which combines anti-democratic repression with infiltration and corruption of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties and the transfer, more or less, of executive powers to the armed forces (the "power factor" or executive arm of the power of the landholders, imperialists and conformist bourgeoisie).

Of course, there are bickerings and quarrels among the rightist groups; diversity of internal interests and inter-imperialist conflicts create clashes among them, as was the case until a couple of years ago with the series of military coups and counter-coups. But they have definitely succeeded in preserving a common front whose political banner is anti-Communism and whose social slogan is "the Western and Christian concept of private property and free enterprise." Benefitting by the imperialist manoeuvres of the U.S. monopolies, they have raised high the doctrine of "the domestic front," of war preparations for the "ideological" frontiers within the country (and, incidentally, against neighboring peoples); and they argue for these doctrines to justify repression as well as to blackmail the government, while at the same time they are ready to serve as Latin American gendarmes on behalf of the U.S. monopolies, especially against Chile and Uruguay.

They are doing everything possible to promote division among the democratic and anti-imperialist forces, since they are aware of their own numerical weakness and know that their power is based on divisions among their opponents.

### *The Government*

For some time now the political plans of the Right have been colliding with popular resistance in a very unusual relation of forces. The workers and the people have been successful in bringing about the failure of the direct, primary aims of the ruling classes. But the lack of unity of the democratic forces and the influence of conciliatory bourgeois nationalism within the labor movement prevent them from consolidating these victories and opening the way to a government supported by the workers. A typical example occurred in the last elections for president and vice president: the various candidacies



supported by the reactionary circles were defeated, but the people's movement did not have the capacity to impose its political solutions. As a result, there emerged the present Radical government of the people (one of the factions of the old Radical Party) headed by Arturo Illia and Carlos Perette. The Communist Party has characterized it as a liberal bourgeois government composed of diverse elements.

Because of the weakness of its own base, because of the complicated electoral process through which it came to office (the Peronist and Communist parties were banned), the government is extremely sensitive to pressures exerted upon it. The strong point of its policy, the point on which it has tried to solidify its position, is the guarantee of a certain political "stability" and a climate of relative democratic freedom.

But the economic and social problems urgently demand solution. Therefore the maintenance of a democratic climate is linked with the response to these economic and social problems. The unbridled offensive of the landholders, imperialists and conciliatory capitalists impels the government to take a backward step on some of its positive measures.\* On the other hand, when the people's forces—especially the Communists and Peronists—act in unison, mobilizing the unions and the CGT, government trends and actions of a democratic character are strengthened.

Lately the Right has been resorting to conspiracy more and more openly; the military groups linked to the Pentagon, according to the Army Chief of Staff, General Onganía, and other military authorities, have again begun to operate as a "pressure group," without even concealing this intrusion into government matters. All this has once again placed as a matter for immediate discussion the possibility of a reactionary coup.

### *The Solutions*

The continuing turn toward the Left by the masses in general is becoming more and more apparent, especially on the part of those under the influence of Peronism. Because of this, at the 12th Congress held in 1963, the Communist Party was able to open the perspective, "through the action of the masses toward the conquest of power," a perspective that runs through the program and other important reso-

\*Recently, on the initiative of the attorney general and under direct pressure from the most reactionary groups, legal action has been initiated against hundreds of young Communists charged as "terrorists." For some time now the political police has lost no opportunity to strike a blow against the limited legality won by the Communists and other people's forces.

lutions adopted. Among the broad masses of workers, there has matured the conviction that profound changes are necessary in the Argentine structure, and because of this a government with a new social content will become indispensable. The Communist Party considers that the base of support for this government will be a broad national democratic front, whose social base will be the working class, the peasant masses, the intellectuals and the progressive sections of the national bourgeoisie. In the Argentine situation the question is not whether these sections of the national bourgeoisie should be included in the democratic front. The question is to assure the leadership of the proletariat in this front.

The consolidation of the vanguard, maintaining the unity of the working class, the alliance between the workers and peasants, and the building of the democratic front are the elements of this policy. The Central Committee of the Communist Party, meeting in September 1965, outlined important steps on each one of these aspects, but it also confirmed that these steps are inadequate. For that reason the offensive of reaction has not been completely turned back, nor can the democratic forces secure greater gains. However, reaction is deeply worried about the growth of the Communist Party and its fraternal relations with the Peronist workers; it is worried because the CGT has for the first time in its history convened a congress for agrarian reform, because other movements along these lines are growing stronger and all kinds of mass movements are advancing.

As a consequence of the vacillation and the back-tracking of the bourgeoisie and the absence of leadership by the proletariat, the Argentine people until now have been frustrated in their struggles. But the political and social battles are increasing the experience of the masses, especially of the working class. These experiences are mingled with strains of bourgeois nationalism that still persist, and with the influence of the Peronist leaders upon the masses. For this reason, in the midst of this complex situation, the Communist Party favors a broad realignment of forces. The axis of this realignment is winning for a proletarian ideology that section of the masses who are "socially akin to the social composition of our party, in order to create together with them a fighting and numerically strong vanguard."

This task of seeking ways to strengthen the vanguard of the proletariat should help develop with utmost boldness a policy of unity among democratic and anti-imperialist parties and tendencies. Such a policy will be capable of restraining attempts at a coup and will open the way to the desired government of a new type, with a new social content.

## Class Confrontation in Freedom Struggle

The capitalist monopolists' domination of the country is characterized by the merciless exploitation of the working class, the ruination of the farmers and the savage oppression of the American Negro people.

### *Majority Are Workers*

Though only one-tenth of the nation's population, the Negro people supply nearly one-fourth of its industrial working force.

It is a mark of their special oppression that the Negro people have been bound in the main to the bottom-most rungs of the ladder of social classes. They are the most proletarian of all the peoples or ethnic groups who make up the population of the nation. About one-half of the number of white workers are engaged in occupations classified as white-collar jobs but only one-fifth of the Negro are employed at jobs above the blue-level.\* Less than five per cent of the Negro people can be classified in middle class and professional employee categories. Among the small capitalists there are only the barest representation of Negroes and none are to be found in the higher rungs of big capitalists and monopolists.

In the total population the farmers are a small part of the working force—about seven per cent. This ratio also holds true in respect to the Negro people where just eight per cent of the Negro working force are employed in various kinds of farm work.

The special racist character of the economic exploitation of the Negro people by monopoly is disclosed in the fact that Negroes are paid less than whites for equivalent work in every category of employment, from unskilled laborer to university-trained professional.

As the Negro Americans have been ruthlessly exploited and robbed of their rightful share in the economy, so have they been deprived of

\* *White-collar* refers to skilled workers, technicians and clerical workers. *Blue-Collar* refers to unskilled and semi-skilled industrial workers and service people.

their just share of social services, educational and cultural opportunities. Racist laws, discriminatory customs and poverty have conspired to force the mass of Negro Americans to dwell in the most depressed areas of the cities. The big city ghetto and rural slums are everywhere, North and South, the home communities of the Negro people. They are segregated parts of the larger communities which are systematically cheated of their just share of housing, parks, street cars, hospitals, schools, cultural centers, etc. They are supplied only with an abundance of police by the local government authorities. The police who patrol the Negro sections and communities operate as defenders of property and the privileges of the "downtown" ruling class interests. They are committed to defense of the Establishment through subjecting the people of the slums to endless and brutal assaults upon their dignity, their lives and liberties with billy and pistol and arbitrary acts of arrest of innocents.

The greatest indictment against the social system of the U.S. monopolists is revealed in the fact that the Negro people have been deprived of the minimal political rights associated with the Constitutional guarantees of citizens and the basic criteria of democracy and human rights. In the southern states even the elementary right to vote is still a cause to struggle for and not yet a universally won and exercised right of the Negro citizen. Throughout the country, South and North, Negro Americans are deprived of their rightful share of the political power, of fair representation in government from the local to the national levels. Along with the political, economic and social discrimination which express the fundamental nature of the oppression of the Negro people in the United States, Negro Americans also are confronted on every hand with the ideological assault upon their human dignity and self-esteem by the barbarous doctrine and practices of white supremacy, of racist prejudices and chauvinist arrogance.

### *Integral Part of Workers' Struggle*

It is such circumstances which characterize and define the conditions of the Negro people in the nation and which have given rise to the modern movement for freedom and equality of the Negro people. During the past decade especially, this movement has conducted wave after wave of heroic mass actions which have set millions of Negro Americans and white masses in motion in support of its goals. The ceaseless struggles of the Negro people have attracted the active support of ever-larger sections of the rest of the nation. Furthermore, world public opinion has rallied to the cause of the Negro Americans

in battle for their just rights. As a consequence, some declaratory measures have been won from the government which affirms the justness of the Negro people's demand for an end to the discrimination system, but the *system remains* as oppressive as ever.

In the present and developing phase of the Negro people's struggle for equal rights and freedom, a new quality of emphasis must be placed on the question of the interaction and interdependence of this battle with the historic working-class obligation to lead the entire nation in struggle to break through the barrier of the capitalist social system itself. It becomes increasingly evident to the Negro freedom fighters that the real enemy is the big business-dominated society which is structured primarily to serve the profit interest of the monopolists rather than to satisfy the ever-expanding needs and requirements of the masses of the people.

Lenin noted that it was necessary to be mindful of the wide range of the correlations between the movement of the oppressed and the proletarian emancipation movement of the oppressing people; to help each in turn to identify its cause and goals with that of the other. He saw the convergence and mutual reinforcement of these two movements as essential for the victory of either. This concept has special validity for our time and the struggle in our country; emphatically so, when we give consideration to the overwhelming working-class composition of the Negro people.

In the period ahead the Negro freedom movement will increasingly develop a consciousness of the objective fact that *the struggle for Negro equality and freedom is a specialized part of the working-class struggle*; that ultimately the Negroes' oppressive condition is perpetrated by the capitalist-monopolist class which is able to gain additional profit advantage from the super-exploitation of Negroes as a consequence of their deprivation of equal rights.

More and more clearly the Negro freedom movement will draw anti-monopolist conclusions from the experiences of its struggle. The heavy proportion of working people to the total Negro population dictate such a course of development for the Negro freedom movement.\*

What is more, capitalism in the U.S. has historically victimized the Negro American, even as capitalist-imperialism victimized his ancestral kinsmen of the African continent.

\* The Negro Americans are 70 per cent urban; 85 percent are of the working class; eight per cent are farmers and farm workers, five per cent are of the middle class, only a fraction of one per cent are petty capitalists.

From its earliest establishment in America, capitalism has been guilty of enriching its private fortunes out of the most savage robbery of the Negro people and the most ruthless exploitation of the labor power of the Negro working people both during the era of chattel slavery and throughout the span of the century since emancipation.

Capitalism instituted the dreadful system of human slavery to translate "the blood, toil and tears" of Negroes into personal profit and corporate capital and maintained it by terror and law and savage racist social customs for over 300 years.

The operation of the slave system in the U.S.A. then, like the discrimination system against Negroes now, were developments of capitalism and functions of this nefarious system of human exploitation for private profit-making.

### *Vital Front of Anti-Monopoly Struggle*

Notwithstanding all the disabilities and oppression—the excluding and the denial, the segregation and the discrimination—the Negro people are an integral part of this American nation.

*The Negro is an American and this United States is his native land.*

Other than the Indians, all Americans have ancestral origins abroad. Negro Americans' ancestors stemmed from Africa, from peoples who today are playing a great role in the world cause of emancipation from the bondage of colonialism and imperialism.

The struggle of the Negro people for integration in the economic, political and social affairs of the nation on the basis of full equality with all other Americans *is a struggle to enlarge democracy in the entire nation.*

Negro Americans of all classes are compelled to enter into the struggle against racial discrimination and its social consequences. However, the fact that the Negro people are predominantly working-class will increasingly influence the program and goals of the Negro people's movement, the strategy and tactics of the struggle, as well as assure the permanent nature of the alliance with the organized labor movement. Indeed, labor and the Negro people are destined to march together in pursuit of a common future free of capitalist exploitation and capitalist racial oppression.

Because of the high working-class composition of the Negro people and the strength of the Negro workers in key areas of the economy, *the freedom struggle of the Negro people presents itself as a vital front of the anti-monopoly struggle.* It is geared into the tasks related to the fulfillment of the historic goal of the working class, that is, to

effect the transformation of society from capitalist to socialist. The freedom objectives of the Negro people directly benefit the working class and serve the democratic interest of the whole nation.

The Negro people's fight to eliminate political discrimination is, in essence, a *struggle for genuinely representative government*.

It entails full freedom to vote and to be voted for. The *majority* must be secure to exercise its *right to the power* in local political subdivisions—precincts, wards, counties, Congressional Districts, Assembly Districts, etc. The *minority* must have the right to *its just share of the power*, to proportional representation at all levels of the three branches of government—the legislative, administrative and judicial as well as an equal share of the police authority.

The struggle of the Negro people for full access to the political arena in the southern states and the northern ghettos is a struggle to oust the worst reactionaries, Dixiecrats, racists, warmongers, anti-labor servants of the monopolists from the Congress and from the state and local governing bodies and to place in public office genuine representatives of the people chosen by and from the Negro people, the labor movement and the progressive forces generally.

The struggle of the Negro people against economic discrimination is a major front in the real *war against poverty*.

It requires the trade union organization of the unorganized, especially in the factories and the fields of the South.

It necessitates the development of the economy in the South in particular and in the other areas of blight and poverty as well. The reconstruction of agriculture on a modern scientific basis and big expansion of industry in the southern region is needed.

The economic needs of the Negro people require a vast and countrywide program to wipe out the shame of the slums of the metropolitan centers and rural areas and to erect in their stead unsegregated, open-occupancy, controlled low-rent and low-cost housing, recreational facilities and playgrounds and parks, as well as all necessary schools and hospital facilities.

Capital for the financing of such development programs which are needed to reduce the accumulated discrimination gap in the economic status of the Negro people must be supplied by the government out of the profit hoards of the monopolists and from the savings that would flow from a drastic reduction of the military appropriations.

To secure the scale of anti-poverty program needed to wipe out the economic discrimination and social deprivation of Negro Americans is to make an assault upon the profit-grabbing of the corporations

and the trusts, is to enter into struggle against the economic and political pillars of monopoly capitalism itself.

### *Seeking Alternative to Capitalist Oppression*

Central to the solution of all problems that present themselves in the area of strategy and tactics for the Negro freedom movement is the necessity to identify the Negro people in terms of 1) their relation to the nation as a whole, and 2) their relation to the working class (whose destiny it is to lead the nation to its classless future). In this regard:

1) Negroes are an internal part of the nation, though suffering special oppression and racial discrimination.

2) The number of Negro capitalists is minimal and none are big capitalists; the middle class category is a small percentage of the total; the *mass* of the Negro people is of the working class.

The approach to all policy questions, to all matters of tactics and strategy in respect to the developing struggles of the Negro freedom movement must take into account the necessity that all policies and tactics need to correspond to both the immediate as well as long-range interest of the *basic numbers* of the Negro people, that is, to its working class majority.

During the past decade the young generation, especially, of the Negro people, have gained a wide experience with the *class* nature of the capitalist *state* and how its police and court system defends its privilege and power. They have gained much experience in the matter of building organizations, cultivating unity, reaching out to forge alliances with a wide stratum of white people. They have, out of their experience, grown profoundly critical of the whole nature and structure of capitalist society. They seek a progressive alternative to capitalism. Now, as at no other time in its history, the Communist Party of the U.S.A. has the opportunity and duty to disclose the socialist alternative to the young generation, to bring to the Negro militants the science of Marxism-Leninism to help illumine the way to lasting victory for the masses in the struggle for freedom, equality and justice.

HERBERT APTHEKER

## Vietnam: An Eyewitness Report

*On January 16, 1966, about five thousand people jammed Manhattan Center in New York City to hear reports from the three Americans—Professor Staughton Lynd, Mr. Thomas Hayden, and Dr. Herbert Aptheker—who recently returned from a fact-finding mission to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Chairing the meeting was that veteran leader in the crusade for peace—A. J. Muste. Upon that occasion, the following paper was delivered by Comrade Aptheker—The Editors.*

Everywhere are air-raid shelters. Atop them children romp, and watching the children are grandmothers. They are the target.

Hanoi with its one million people is calm—determined, but quite calm. Lights, shops, bookstores, the opera, the cinema, ten thousand bicyclists; here is the target.

A large and lovely lake is in the city's center. Fronting it, I am told, were flowers but now these have given way to air-raid shelters. Still, there are stalls where flowers are sold and as I stroll by late in the evening many women are preparing displays—binding bouquets, trimming the leaves. Again, the target.

This lady is on the Peace Committee. She is pleased to meet Americans who are friends; she has met others in international gatherings. Some American women among them. They were just like we women here, she thinks. Is it not so? I mean they seemed to me to be as sentimental as we are—they love their husbands and want their children to grow up. So do we. Why can this not be? There is nothing like loving children, I think—except it is loving independence. Independence, freedom and loving children; these are things women must have, is it not so? She is the target.

A village some twenty miles south of Hanoi. Here live 850 families—some 4,500 souls. Now there are many less, for the men are in the army. An elderly peasant with the characteristic wisp of a beard—just like “Uncle Ho”—sits in a cart and allows himself to be pulled by the faithful buffalo to his work. He is reading as the animal plods the familiar path.

We say good morning. He is happy to welcome me to his village,

from America. I have come a long way and others have come from my country, too. But you have come with open hands and are a friend—so, good morning.

May I know, please, what are you reading?

This? O, this is Sholokhov. Of course, you know Sholokhov?

Yes. And what do you think of Sholokhov, I ask.

There is no doubt he writes well. An interesting writer and he knows people. But do you know something? I must say it; his stories are a little pat sometimes. Do you know what I mean? I mean things come out too well and too soon. It does not happen that way all the time. Still, a fine writer.

He goes off and next to him is his rifle. For while the young men are away, everyone else—the aged and the women—are all armed. Indeed, the village people tell me they have a special name for the old man's brigade—it is “the gray-haired force.”

I watch him go off into the Asian landscape, engrossed in Sholokhov, the gun by his side. He is the target.

What labor is here! With pride I am told of what they have built in the village that now is theirs. The drainage ditches, the brick homes, the bicycles, the newly-planted trees, the cabbage and rice, grapefruit and tangerines; the pigs they have bred, the ducks they have raised; the harvest that was good. O, what labor is here and what sweetness now that at last the village is theirs! The young woman, in charge of the local guerrilla forces, says that if President Johnson comes to take this village we will fight for it and no one will take it. At last this is ours—everything now we share and now that we share we no longer quarrel. Everything is a target—the harvest, the brick house, the pigs and ducks, and this young woman with the rifle—targets for the Pentagon.

It is Nam Dinh, a city of 90,000. This is the battle zone; eleven times in the past planes have roared across the city dropping bombs and strafing with rockets. In the province of which Nam Dinh is the capital live many Catholics—250,000 I am told.

It is evening—one travels only at night. I ask to see the oldest priest and am introduced to a man of 75 years.

Sixty years I have been in the church, he says. In the old days—with the French—the church was not free and now it is.

What do you mean, Father?

In the old days, early mass was for the French and not for us; we had to go to late mass. In the morning soldiers guarded the church doors with guns and would not let us enter—only they—only the French—could enter.



Why was that? Father? Why—why to keep us apart and to make us feel like intruders in our own home. They had two Christs in those days—one for the Vietnamese and one for the French.

I say it is like in my country, Father. At home, we have a Black Christ and a White Christ. Really, he says, I see. Then, abruptly: Why is it the Americans are bombing my city? What have we done to the Americans? Can you explain it to me? I do not understand. Why do they come here and bomb this city? It is so cruel, it is inhuman. Can you tell me why it is?

My hosts come and tell me we must leave. There is an alert—they are forty miles away and we are not sure but it is not safe. I beg to be allowed to remain, but they will have none of it and I must leave. I ask the Father's pardon for leaving so quickly—and to myself, I ask the Father's pardon for a million other things, too.

The police directing traffic are women—everywhere they are women and they carry no guns and no clubs—nothing but their hands. In this terrible land of tyranny and Communist slavery everyone is armed—except the police! Why do your police carry nothing at all, I ask? Because, I am told, under the French and the Japanese we had enough of the armed police and the police with their clubs; the police shot us and clubbed us and now that the police are ours they carry nothing at all. We cannot stand to look upon police with clubs.

It strikes me then that in Hanoi—unlike the pictures I had seen of Saigon—there were no barricades before the hotels, and no fenced-in cafes. There is no danger from within here—the danger is only from without and from the skies.

\* \* \*

On our way home I get the free world press again—and the insanity again. In the *Herald Tribune* of Dec. 29, Ted Sell writes from Washington that the bombings of North Vietnam have not succeeded in dislocating its society. And he reports that in the Pentagon, many are saying—I quote: “Now, only massive attacks, perhaps with nuclear weapons, could cause such immediate dislocation.”

Before I came to the target area, I read these things and shuddered. But now, now that I have been in the target area with the kids on the air-raid shelters, with the 75-year old priest, with the Sholokhov-reading peasant of the “gray-haired force,” now it is—I do not know what to say—it is like a nightmare.

I looked upon the concentration camps 21 years ago; I saw the ovens and when our outfit arrived, the places still stank. I saw it but I could not believe it. It was a nightmare. But we had fought against this, we had been on the side of the inmates. If that was a nightmare, what

was this? Now, the crematoria were made in the United States and were portable and were called napalm and phosphorus—and journalists were coolly writing of “dislocation” with massive attacks through nuclear weapons!

I read in *Newsweek* of January 10, 1966, that Bob Hope is in Saigon entertaining 10,000 troops with his inimitable wit. The magazine says, “They roared when Hope called the U.S. bombing raids on North Vietnam ‘the best slum clearance project they ever had.’” I remember that we forced some of the German officers to go through the concentration camps and we all filed through with handkerchiefs to our noses, and I remember that when we emerged into the air and the nazis dropped their handkerchiefs—I remember that some were laughing! The crematoria constituted one huge sewerage project to them, in which scum—Jews, communists, Slavs—were wiped out.

Professor Morgenthau writes truly when he indicts this “senseless, hopeless, and brutalizing war.” Dr. Benjamin Spock wrote truly when he declared, of what U.S. armed might is doing in Vietnam—“When Hitler's armies used such tactics we called them atrocities.”

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And when Hitler's armies marched, he did not say but the world knew that he wanted the oil and coal, the wheat and iron of the Ukraine, that he wanted to annihilate the idea of popular sovereignty, that he sought to extirpate Socialism. Such realistic considerations are scarce today in the noble rhetoric with which American-made atrocities are bedecked. But it was not always so. Thus, when the French were doing most of the fighting against the Vietnamese, the *New York Times* editorialized—February 12, 1950: “Indo-China is a prize worth a large gamble. In the north are exportable tin, tungsten, zinc, manganese, coal, lumber and rice, and in the south are rice, rubber tea, pepper. . . .”

And a little later—but while the French still held the line—President Eisenhower permitted himself to express these thoughts at the United States Governors' Conference, August 4, 1953:

Now let us assume that we lost Indo-China. If Indo-China goes, several things happen right away. The peninsula, the last bit of land hanging on down there, would be scarcely defensible. The tin and tungsten that we so greatly value from that area would cease coming . . . So when the United States votes \$400 millions to help that war, we are not voting a giveaway program. We are voting for the cheapest way we can to prevent the occurrence of something that would be of a most terrible significance to the United States of America, our security, our power and ability to get certain

things we need from the riches of the Indo-Chinese territory and from Southeast Asia.

Lyndon B. Johnson, as President of the United States, tends to deliver himself of elevated prose—though at his order the armed forces deliver something other than prose. Still, one wonders whether the truer Lyndon B. Johnson was speaking when as a Congressman he said on the floor of the House of Representatives, March 15, 1948: “No matter what else we have of offensive or defensive weapons, without superior air power America is a bound and throttled giant; impotent and an easy prey to any yellow dwarf with a pocket knife.”

It is this chauvinism, racism, colonialism, this parasitic appetite—as well as considerations of strategic position and future activities against other socialist lands—that lie at the base, I think, of the aggressive foreign policy now dominating Washington.

Whatever demagogic purposes may have prompted the issuance of President Johnson's Fourteen Points, and whatever devious intentions may lie behind the “peace offensive” and the halt in the bombings of North Vietnam—that the language is closer to the necessities of peace is to be welcomed, that world public opinion, Vietnamese resistance, and American public opinion played a part in inducing the “peace offensive” and halting the bombings is all to the good.

The first point of the Fourteen Point Statement issued by President Johnson on December 27—acceptance of the Geneva Agreements—represents the essential point of both the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam and of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. If adhered to and implemented, it means an end to the war in Vietnam and basis for a lasting peace in Southeast Asia.

The Geneva Agreement of 1954 was for the people of Vietnam what the Treaty of Paris of 1783 was for the people of the United States. Both represented treaties entered into after prolonged negotiations by defeated colonial powers—in the earlier case, Great Britain, in the later case, France—with the formerly colonial peoples—American and Vietnamese, respectively—who had won their independence through struggle.

The Geneva Agreement was a generous one offered by the victorious Vietnamese to the defeated French. Thus, though the Vietnamese had proposed that the temporary military line of demarcation be at the 15th parallel and the French at the 18th, the final Geneva Agreement set that at the 17th, representing a concession to the French not only of considerable territory but also of some two million people.

But this was agreed to and Geneva as a whole was signed by the

Vietnamese because it contained the main things: the acceptance of the independence and integrity of the Vietnam nation, affirmed the temporary non-political character of the split at the 17th parallel, required the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Vietnam, prohibited the future introduction of such troops, and set down procedures for the reunification of Vietnam by 1956. And it was accepted by and the terms were carried out by the Vietnamese people because “Uncle Ho” asked them to do so—and Ho Chi Minh is to the Vietnamese what Washington, Lincoln and Lenin taken together represent.

The Geneva Agreement terminated a “dirty war” waged for over eight years—1946-1954—by the French with the massive assistance of the United States.

It is universally acknowledged—as by former President Eisenhower, for example—that the 1956 elections were not held at the insistence of Saigon and Washington authorities because it was certain that Ho Chi Minh would have emerged as the choice of the overwhelming majority of the Vietnamese people, in both the north and the south.

Nevertheless, since Geneva and since 1956, the DRV has tried repeatedly, though without success, to normalize relations between South and North Vietnam. Furthermore, in three important respects—as was emphasized during the trip—agreements already have been offered going further than the Geneva accord. Thus, the DRV—and since 1960, the NLF—have agreed to:

- a) the neutrality in foreign policy of the South Vietnam interim government;
- b) the coalition character of such a government;
- c) a prolonged process for the reunification of North and South Vietnam, determined without outside interference by the people involved and confirmed by a general, free election.

None of these three points was in the Geneva Agreement. All—and this was emphasized in the course of our journey—illustrate the moderation of the DRV approach. Certainly their existence—undoubtedly unknown to the vast majority of Americans—refutes the Washington stereotype of the DRV and the NLF as intransigent and stubborn, not to say war-seeking.

The fact is that after twenty-five years of war no people on earth craves peace more than those in Vietnam. But those twenty-five years of war were inspired by the goal of the independence and integrity of the Vietnamese nation. This is an indispensable prerequisite. And let it be added that the very long experience of the Vietnamese people—covering thousands of years—has shown them that without independence, existence becomes either impossible or unbearable.

As just a single example of what is meant: In the one year from 1944-45, under the Japanese and the French, two million Vietnamese starved to death. Hence, without independence, it is passionately felt in Vietnam—of this my trip persuaded me beyond any doubt—any “peace” can only represent surrender and no one—least of all the United States, created in a war for independence—should demand or expect such abandonment.

It was independence, unity and national integrity which were the heart of Geneva, and many Vietnamese wonder if it is not because of this that the highest officials in the United States Government—such as Secretary of State Dulles and President Eisenhower—expressed so low an opinion of the Geneva Agreement at the time of its signing.

If the first of the Fourteen Points of December 27 is meant in full seriousness, nothing else is necessary. That point means the recognition of Vietnamese independence, unity and national integrity and it forbids the presence of foreign troops in Vietnam. Let the first be solemnly affirmed and let the second process be undertaken and—my journey persuades me—peace is well on its way in Vietnam.

In this connection, however, it is necessary to observe that so universally respected a commentator as Walter Lippmann, in his column dated December 29, concludes: “I believe it a grave mistake to attempt to make permanent our military presence on the Asian mainland . . . Making this artificial and ramshackle debris of old empires permanent and committing our lives and fortunes to its maintenance means, I believe, unending war in Asia.” It is necessary also to observe that Tom Lambert writing from Washington in the *N. Y. Herald Tribune* of December 31—several days after the announcement of the Fourteen Points—notes that while the U.S. will accept “a nonaligned South Vietnam,” nevertheless the U.S. “will not let South Vietnam go to the Communists and will remain there militarily if necessary to preclude any such Communist takeover.” This rules out the free and unfettered choice by the people involved. Furthermore, since it depends upon what Washington considers “Communist” it may well rule out anything to the Left of the present “Premier” of the Saigon regime, who has stated that his favorite hero is Hitler!

And Mr. Lambert went on in the same dispatch to quote the President’s assistant, Mr. Bill D. Moyers, as repeating that the “basic” aim of the United States in Vietnam—as stated by President Johnson in Baltimore in April, 1965—remains, namely, the U.S. “demands an independent South Vietnam securely guaranteed.” But the whole point of Geneva was the temporary character of the two-zone separation of Vietnam and the agreement as to the unity and sovereignty

of Vietnam—not North and South, but Vietnam. One cannot affirm adherence to Geneva and simultaneously reasonably insist that a “basic” demand is for a separate, independent and “non-Communist” South Vietnam!

Clearly and correctly, I believe, the Vietnamese feel that their struggle is a just war for national independence. It is a continuation of an anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist effort waged against the Japanese, the French-American and now the American government.

Further, the struggle seeks not only the cause of the triumph of the national liberation of the Vietnamese people. In addition, such a victory would thwart the effort of the U.S. government to establish a military stronghold in southeast Asia for purposes of exploitation and conquest of that area, and as a base for further assaults throughout Asia, thus clearly opening up the prospects of a general and even a Third World War.

The Vietnamese, I believe, take very seriously the unanimous agreements reached at the 1957 and 1960 conferences of the Workers’ and Communist Parties. There it was agreed that a prime task was to exert every effort to further the cause of national liberation and simultaneously to prevent world war. Both were viewed as two sides of the same anti-imperialist effort. The present struggle against the United States government’s policy of aggression in Vietnam is held to be exactly that kind of struggle. It is, then, a fundamental issue in the central task of our era—the achievement of national liberation and the prevention of world war—i.e., the implementation of the policy of peaceful co-existence.

Note is to be taken that the Vietnamese emphasize the distinction between the American people and the U.S. government. They value most highly the impressive efforts for peace being waged by large segments of the American people. It is a historical fact that the present degree of opposition to an actual war being conducted is without precedent and the relative absence of passionate support of such an actual war also is without precedent in the history of the United States. Let it also be observed that the Vietnamese do not seek the defeat of the United States and do not conceive of themselves as capable of defeating the United States. That is, they are not waging war upon the United States and do not seek the destruction of our cities, let alone the capture of Washington. They are seeking to defeat the American aggression upon their soil; they seek to defeat the American government’s aggressive foreign policy.

The aggressive war policy of the Johnson Administration brings death and maiming to thousands of Americans and ruin and devasta-

tion to Vietnam. The aggressive policy of the Johnson Administration threatens all social progress and democratic achievements in the United States—there is a 3½ per cent ceiling for wage increases, but there is no ceiling at all for rates of profit by corporations! There is impotence in the face of the murder of civil rights workers in the United States and the capacity to send 200,000 American soldiers ten thousand miles from home to kill peasants and burn villages!

The Johnson policy of aggression threatens the American people with the kind of catastrophe that Hitler's policy of aggression did bring the German people.

The President of the United States speaks of our honor as a nation. Does it honor our nation to ravage a people who have done us no harm? Does it honor our nation to spread chemical poison upon the labors of farmers? Does it honor our nation to turn children into beggars and women into prostitutes? Does it honor our nation to hurl phosphorus shells and napalm bombs and beneficent gases upon the homes and bodies of millions of men, women and children?

If to shout to the heavens in denunciation of such "honor" be treason, then let my name forever be enrolled among the traitors.

The truth is that a reversal of the present aggressive foreign policy of the U.S. government is in the best interests of the people of Vietnam and of the United States, and of the entire world. Pressures for such a reversal are mounting throughout the world and they are mounting here. And, of course, here is the main responsibility.

Never since the days of chattel slavery has a question of right and wrong been clearer in our country than it is today with the war in Vietnam. Among those who opposed slavery there were many differences—but finally one thing united all—a sense of humanity, an elementary feeling of decency, a concern for fundamental morality.

The differences that seemed so important to the various camps in the anti-slavery effort now have interest only to historians; and the greatest lesson they teach all of us is this: whatever prevented unity in the struggle against slavery was helpful to the slaveowners. Whatever prevents unity now in the struggle to STOP THE KILLING IN VIETNAM is helpful to the "crack-pot realists" and the "stone-age" Generals. We must go to the American people in their multi-millions, and say to them plainly and convincingly in terms that they will understand and act upon—this war is atrocious, immoral and intensely harmful to our country and to our own everyday interests.

I refuse to admit even the possibility of failure in this great crusade. We will not fail; we will succeed and in succeeding we will make America a beacon of decency, justice, equality and peace.

# COMMUNICATIONS

WILLIAM C. TAYLOR

## The McCone Commission on Watts Upsurge

In the *Political Affairs* of last October, in my article on the Watts "uprising," I pointed out that the Report of the Commission appointed by the Governor and now known as the McCone Commission "is awaited skeptically, with an attitude of 'wait and see.'" After an expenditure of nearly \$300,000, the Commission has issued a 100-page report containing facts and information which had long been available, offering a mass of contradictory proposals (most of which had been made several years before), whitewashing the basic issues raised, particularly that of police brutality, and placing the responsibility for the upsurge on the Negro population and its leadership.

It is obvious from the response to the issuance of the Report of the McCone Commission, that last October I understated the attitudes of the population. The Report has been overwhelmingly rejected by the Negro people, by labor and by all progressive-minded people in Los Angeles. Even though it does grant some concessions to the demands of the Negro community, it is rejected because the concessions are behind the times. They may possibly

have been in order prior to August 11, 1965, but certainly not since the upsurge.

### *Onus on Negro Community*

The major conclusion of the report is that the Negro community itself must bear full responsibility for the evils that exist in the community. A mass of testimony before the Commission pointed out the plethora of Negro grievances arising from the jimcrow chauvinism of white authority, both governmental and police; this was rejected by this blue-ribbon commission.

Ignoring the present demands of the Negro community, the report instead outlined what the Commission felt was needed. So blatantly was this done, that one of its members, Reverend James Jones, a Negro minister and a member of the Los Angeles Board of Education, had to write a dissent, stating; "I do not believe it is the function of this Commission to put a lid on protest registered by those sweltering in ghettos of the urban areas of our country." Reverend Jones goes on, describing his reasons for determining that the Report "put a lid on protest," and concludes his dissent

by stating that a member of a disadvantaged minority "has a right to protest when circumstances do not allow him to participate in the mainstream of American society. Protests against forces which reduce individuals to second-class citizens, political, cultural, and psychological nonentities, are part of the celebrated American tradition. As long as an individual 'stands outside looking in' he is not part of that society; that society cannot say that he does not have a right to protest, nor can it say that he must shoulder a responsibility which he has never been given an opportunity to assume."

Governor Edmund G. Brown, in his charge to the Commission, when he appointed it on August 24, 1965, gave full and unlimited scope to its inquiries, and to its recommendations. He detailed some of the issues to be investigated and concluded his charge by stating that "the Commission should develop recommendations for action designed to prevent a recurrence of these tragic disorders. The Commission should consider what additional can be done at any level of government or by any agency of the government to prevent a recurrence. Of equal importance, the commission should consider whether there are steps which private citizens may take, individually or jointly to prevent a repetition of the bloodshed."

In its findings the Commission reported that about two-thirds of the Negro population of 650,000 in Los Angeles County live in an

area of 46.5 square miles; that of these about 10,000 were active participants in the upsurge. As a result of the eight days' uprising, from August 11 to 17, 1965, the statistics, as the Report stated, "are staggering. There were 34 persons killed and 1,032 reported injuries, including 90 Los Angeles police officers, 136 firemen, 10 national guardsmen, 23 persons from other governmental agencies, and 773 civilians. 118 of the injuries resulted from gunshot wounds. Of the 34 killed, one was a fireman, one was a deputy sheriff, and one a Long Beach policeman." (The last mentioned was killed by a trigger-happy fellow officer in Long Beach, miles from the area of the upsurge.)

Property damage was listed as \$40,000,000, and 3,952 persons were arrested, of which over 500 were youth. It must be noted that this one upsurge involved more brutality attributed to the forces of law, resulting in more killings, arrests and injuries, than in all of the seven upsurges of 1964 occurring in New York, Rochester, Jersey City, Patterson, Elizabeth, Chicago and Philadelphia.

With the typical CIA approach of its chairman, McCone, the Commission outlined as the major responsibility for the mass upsurge: "Throughout the nation, unpunished violence and disobedience to law were widely reported, and almost daily there were exhortations, here and elsewhere, to take the most extreme and even illegal remedies to right a wide variety of wrongs, real and supposed."

After this introduction, the Report states: "Improving the conditions of Negro life will demand adjustments on a scale unknown to any great society." (Emphasis added.) It goes on:

"The consequences of inaction, indifference, and inadequacy, we can all be sure now, would be far costlier in the long run than the cost of correction. If the city were to elect to stand aside, the walls of segregation would rise ever higher. The disadvantaged community would become more and more estranged and the risk of violence would rise. The cost of police protection would increase, and yet would never be adequate. Unemployment would climb; welfare costs would mount apace."

#### *Police Brutality Minimized*

Conducting inquests into the deaths resulting from the upsurge, the Los Angeles County Coroner's office, laboring mightily, completely whitewashed the Los Angeles Police Department, responsible for 16 deaths, and the National Guard, responsible for 7, declaring all of them "justifiable homicide." This travesty was accepted without question by the Commission. Further, in examining the charges of police brutality, the Commission reported: "The Los Angeles Police Department has been the subject of severe criticism by many Negroes who have appeared before the Commission as witnesses." Further: "Chief of Police Parker appears to be the focal point of criticism within the Negro community. He is a man distrusted by

most Negroes, and they carefully analyze for possible anti-Negro meaning almost every action he takes and every statement he makes." Then, going on to exonerate Parker, the Commission states; "However, Chief Parker's statements to us and collateral evidence such as his record of fairness to Negro officers (not explained—W.T.) are inconsistent with his having such an attitude." The Commission completely ignored the wanton shooting and the destruction of the Muslim Temple in the final part of the August days. This is particularly important and shows the bias of the Commission, since those arrested by the police during the course of the attack on the Temple were exonerated in court and all charges against them were dismissed.

The charges of police brutality are twisted, and the Commission leaves the impression that such charges arise from attempts to discredit law and order. The only recommendation it makes in this sensitive area is for the strengthening of the Police Commission, and the appointment of a so-called Inspector General (a member of the police force) to investigate complaints against the Police Department, together with the building of better public relations by the Police Department. This, in the face of the unanimous demand of the community for a Citizens' Review Board.

#### *Economic Issues*

Admitting that 160,000 Negroes

are unemployed, the Commission points out that unemployment in the Negro and Mexican-American communities of Los Angeles is "two to three times that in the white community." Pointing to a survey by Governor Brown to determine how useful jobs could be created, the Report goes on: "His survey found many [jobs] in such fields as law enforcement, education, public health, and conservation. Thus, he advocated a national program estimated to cost the federal government 2.5 billion dollars annually (\$250,000,000 for California) which would provide some 50,000 jobs within our state and a proportionate number of jobs elsewhere throughout the nation. An equal amount of money would be needed each year the program continues. Obviously such a program is bound to encounter tough sledding in Washington, especially as the Vietnam costs escalate, and one can readily imagine that months, if not a year or two, might pass before approval would be given and money made available, if it ever is." (Emphasis added.)

Following this pessimistic view, the Commission then makes a recommendation that "in the affected area a job training and placement center through the combined efforts of Negroes, employers, labor unions, and government" be developed, and proposes: "Legislation should be enacted requiring employers with more than 250 employees and all labor unions to report annually to the State Fair Employment Practices Commission the racial composition of

their work force and membership." (Emphasis added.)

A glaring omission is the question of raising wages so that income be at least equal to or above the poverty level. The reference to wages is mentioned only in the context of a discussion on welfare, as follows:

"We are assured that many of the present recipients would rather have work than welfare, but the simple arithmetic of the matter makes us uncertain. A job at the minimum wage pays about \$220 per month, against which there would be transportation, clothes and other expenses. When the average AFDC family receives from \$177 to \$238 per month (depending on the program), the financial incentive to find work may be either negative or non-existent. (Indeed, we were told that the 18 year old girl who is no longer eligible for assistance when living with her mother may have considerable incentive to become a mother herself so as to be eligible again as the head of a new family group.)" This has long been the argument of the Right-wingers against welfare assistance.

Nothing was recommended in connection with the apprenticeship program, which has only 3 per cent Negro participants, and less than 10 per cent who are Mexican.

Paul Talbert of the Los Angeles Urban League, in criticizing the Report with reference to education and employment, said: "Statistics show that the average Negro college graduate stands to earn less

than the white high school graduate, and, in some instances, less than the white 8th grade graduate."

#### *Education and Transportation*

In the area of education, the Commission found that in the Negro community there was extreme overcrowding in the schools, with double sessions almost everywhere, while in the areas outside of the Negro community there were 328 unused classrooms. Many schools in the minority communities of Los Angeles have no libraries, while all schools in middle-class areas do. The physical facilities, the buildings in the minority communities are older, some not even meeting minimum safety standards. However, the Commission made no recommendations for equal rights for the children in the "disadvantaged" areas, for libraries, more classrooms, teachers and other facilities. No criticism of the Board of Education was forthcoming because of its refusal to review the school districts, to guarantee equal distribution of funds and facilities without discrimination, or to do anything to desegregate the schools.

The recommendations of the Commission include provisions for designation of "disadvantaged" area schools as "Emergency Schools," with "Emergency Literacy Programs" to be established, together with the establishment of a permanent pre-school program in these areas, beginning at age three.

Consumers are told in the Report that the problem of spoiled meat, old bread sold at the price of fresh, high interest rates on furniture and clothing, and a "bias against the curfew area in the practices of insurance companies and institutional lenders are not due to systematic racial discrimination, but rather result from the traditional interplay of economic forces in the market place, aggravated by poverty conditions." (Emphasis added.)

The Commission can be commended for one part of its Report—that dealing with problems of commuters. But even this positive portion is a recommendation not for the Negro community but for the whole city. Recognizing "that transportation improvement for the Watts area cannot be achieved without similar transportation improvement for the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area," the Report goes on to make recommendations for unifying all transportation systems, for transfer privileges, for crosstown service in Watts.

#### *Same Problems Raised in 1963*

In all the areas studied by the McCone Commission, similar presentations and demands had already been made at a conference held in Los Angeles in June, 1963. Present were Negro leaders, county, city and state officials, the Chamber of Commerce, labor leaders and other citizens. Problems presented at that time included:

"There is grossly intolerable segregation and discrimination against Negroes and other minori-



ties in Los Angeles, City and County. Such segregation in our society is illegal, immoral and destructive to all citizens . . . Without further delay, every effort must be made to eliminate these evils and to speed the achievement by all citizens of the full and complete freedom, justice and equality, promised by the United States Constitution . . . In the immediate future, the most urgent advances must and can be made in housing, schooling, relations with law enforcement agencies, and employment."

The demands and the problems raised at the 1963 conference were ignored. The recommendations in the McCone Report do not meet even its minimum demands. Therein lies the resentment of the Negro community and much of the labor movement. In its exoneration of the Police Department, and particularly of Chief of Police Parker, the Commission played the true role laid out for it. Basically, the Commission was to report that the August days were a *riot*—not an upsurge—and therefore the blame for those days of protest must lie in the Negro community where they occurred. The wanton killing by both police and the National Guard during those eight days was exonerated, with the fault lying not in the laps of a Parker-led Police Department but with the Negro community. Chief of Police Parker was in no way made responsible for the unlawful attitude on the part of his policemen, despite his own words which belie the Commission's whitewash and

praise of the Police Department.

Official white reaction to the upsurge is best described by an ironical cartoon in the *Los Angeles Times* depicting a Negro lying on a couch being questioned by a group of psychiatrists: "You have mentioned unemployment, housing, education, police brutality and despair . . . but what was the reason for the riots."

Completely ignored was the analysis of Dr. Harold W. Jones, a Negro physician with the Los Angeles County Department of Health that "It is possible that part of what happened was a *normal response to an abnormal condition.*" (Emphasis added.)

#### *New Political Awakening*

The upsurge has created new relationships in the Negro community. Political leaders have discovered that they have a responsibility first to the community above the dictates of the white political leaders. Billy Mills, a councilman from the heart of the Negro community, has stopped being a yes-man for Mayor Yorty and has renewed his ties with the community.

Mervin Dymally, a state assemblyman, has also broken his ties with Mayor Yorty. He is now running for the State Senate, with good possibility of success because of the recent redistricting resulting from the Supreme Court "one-man, one vote" doctrine. Reverend F. Douglass Ferrell, the only Negro office-holder who remained completely silent during the days of August and afterwards, is silently fading

from political life. He knows he will not be able to win this time.

There have been two important political developments since the days of August. First, the Negro Political Action Association of California, a non-partisan (although almost solidly Democratic) organization, is growing fast and is recognized as a major force in California politics. They are determined to elect Negroes to all levels of government. In addition, the Negro officeholders, led by Thomas Bradley, a city councilman, have also united to guarantee the election of more Negroes to office, particularly in the area of Los Angeles County Government, with an eye to the office of county supervisor. (This is the office for which this writer ran as a Communist in 1964, receiving almost 35,000 votes.)

#### *What the Community Needs*

The ferment of the days of August has by no means subsided. The people of Watts are determined that they, too, are citizens of this country, and are entitled to the fruits of their citizenship. Their demands must be met. A minimum program for the community should contain the following:

1. Police brutality must be wiped out in all its manifestations. Chauvinistic and sadistic policemen must be removed and prosecuted, together with their superiors who encourage or acquiesce in such brutalities. Police double standards in the treatment of white and Negro "suspects" must immediately be eliminated.

The whole question of the attitudes of police departments must be examined and evaluated, particularly in view of the recent election of Sheriff Jim Clark of Alabama, a notorious racist, as Vice-President of the National Association of Sheriffs.

2. Reforms and new legislation are needed for the tackling of the problems of discrimination in employment. Special attention must be given to those areas where the Negro is missing — the vast stretch between the token employment in top echelons and the concentration among the unskilled. A special crash program must be instituted to break through the barrier of lack of skills to bring the Negro into every level of employment. Industry itself must be forced to bear the cost of special training to make up for the many years of discrimination.

3. There must be special federal and state subsidies to education, based upon the special needs of each pupil, rather than the needs for an entire area. Inequalities that exist between middle-class areas of our city and the areas of Negro and Mexican-American population must be eliminated with special aid to those areas to bring them up to the level of the best schools outside the community.

4. The state government must take full responsibility to see that minority areas are not subjected to usurious practices, excessive interest rates for building loans, and overcharges and cheating in installment buying. Special attention must be paid

to the question of public transportation, with abolition of the zone-fare system and the establishment of a single-fare system that would benefit the residents of the ghetto.

The year 1966 is an election year, and that means that those running for office are especially vulnerable to the demands of the population. The August days of Los Angeles resulted from the general practice of white supremacy with refusal to listen to the demands of the population, and especially the demands of the Negro population. Certainly, this can be illustrated by the punitive action taken against those ar-

rested during the days of August. Amnesty can and must be won for those arrested during the eight days of the upsurge. Fullest and widest support must be given to the mass campaign of the Southside Citizens Defense Committee and the legal appeal of the NAACP to the Supreme Court for such amnesty.

Following the upsurge, the California Negro Leadership Conference, at its meeting held at the end of August, called for a memorial to be raised in honor of those who were killed during the upsurge. Such a memorial should be supported throughout the country.

#### MARXISM AND RELIGION

The special issue on Marxism and Religion originally planned for March, has been postponed for July, 1966. The task of securing contributions from abroad and from a number of Marxists in our own country requires additional time. Furthermore, we are setting aside a section of *Political Affairs* in the coming months, for a discussion of the *New Program of the Communist Party (A Draft)*.

## A Factual Correction

To the Editor:

I meant to write much sooner to correct your statement contained in the September, 1965 issue (p. 35) that the Communist Party of the United States was "born underground." If you would ask some of us that were there or for that matter read Foster's *History of the Communist Party*, which I find pretty accurate except for some dates, you will find that there were three conventions. The first was held

at 1221 Blue Island Avenue, Chicago, which formed the Communist Party; the second was the Socialist Party convention; and finally, the expelled Left-wing delegates who met and formed the Communist Labor Party, in Machinist Hall, 119 S. Ashland Avenue.

If at any time you need some historical information about our Party, please ask me. I'll be happy to furnish you what I can.

F. A. P.

## The Editors Reply

We welcome the point made by F. A. P. It is true that the 1919 conventions of the Communist Labor Party and the Communist Party were held openly. However, in the same year massive repressions began, culminating in the infamous Palmer Raids, in which an estimated 10,000 were arrested, thousands of suspected Communists deported and the Communist press and offices forced to close. These conditions compelled the newly born organizations into semi-underground conditions. As William Z. Foster writes:

... A. Mitchell Palmer, J. Edgar Hoover, and the others carrying out the offensive against the Communists did not succeed in stopping completely the open and public activities of the Communist movement, which persisted in spite of the

government's efforts to drive it underground" (*History of the Communist Party of the United States*, pp. 175-176).

In December 1921 a convention of all Communist groups was held which accomplished the needed unity and named the new organization the Workers Party of America. But the repression of Communists was not over. The Bridgeman convention held in 1922 was raided, and seventeen delegates were arrested on the spot and 40 more soon thereafter. All delegates were charged with the violation of the Michigan anti-syndicalist law. It was not until 1923, that the Workers Party emerged as a public organization, ending the two and one-half years of semi-underground existence.

# BOOK REVIEWS

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

## A Marxist View of Ethics

The Marxist view of morality and its base in society is the subject of Dr. Howard Selsam's book, *Ethics and Progress*.<sup>\*</sup> It is presented with a profundity and lucidity characteristic of the mainstream tradition of Marxist philosophy. Typical of this tradition is also the fact that it is addressed in clear and simple language to Marxists and non-Marxists alike. At the same time, it requires more than one reading to get the full profit from the author's thought, and there is probably no reader who will not find many of his notions both upset and clarified by it.

The core of Dr. Selsam's treatise, as indicated by its very title, is the thesis that morality is socially created and developmental; in other words, that there is progress in morality just as there is progress in real life. In contrast to some traditional views which see all struggle as evil, wordly or sinful, and demand that the "moral" person satisfy his

conscience by living in isolation from a corrupt society, Selsam writes: "Although there is a 'real' world . . . there is no given and universally accepted 'ideal' one to which our human world can and should correspond. Men have to make their better or 'ideal' world, and men must make it out of their struggles, their needs and interests, and the ever-renewing contradiction between how they live and ideals of how they could, might, or should live." And so science and knowledge become crucial elements in the development of ethics. As Selsam puts it with profound insight: "The realm of ethics expands . . . as man's possibility of increasing the control of his total natural and social environment is enlarged. What was once a fundamentally natural condition becomes a moral problem when we discover the means of changing it in accordance with human purposes. All human problems, from inadequate food to insufficient education, from poor housing to overpopulation, are transformed from natural events to moral problems when they can be solved by concerted social action."

In a society made up of antag-

## MARXIST VIEW OF ETHICS

onistic classes, the struggle involved in morality takes the form of class struggle. But there is a crucial difference between bourgeois "interest" which says, "I must trample on others to keep them from trampling on me," and the working class, socialist "interest" which says, "I will progress only along with my fellow human beings." If, to Marxists, morality involves struggle, it is because people must struggle for the conditions of life which enable them to live morally. There is progress in morality, because there is morality in progress. An oppressed class struggles not for itself alone but for the interests of all society. Selsam puts the connection between class interests and ethics in these challenging terms:

The ethics of the future can be a goal to conceive and achieve only for those who have never had a stake in the existing order, or who, having had it, have given it up for moral and intellectual reasons. Only those can be said to have an all-human ethics who seek no wealth, no position of power or prestige, at the expense of others.

Today, in the countries where there is the greatest concentration of monopoly, whose lifeblood comes from the exploitation of the people and resources of as much of the world as they can lay their hands on, there is no longer a pretense of belief in human progress, moral and social. The very concept of progress is attacked as a "myth." If the government of officialdom still boasts that it is moral and democratic, it does this

only by adorning itself in the tatters of the old banners of the past, when bourgeois society was rising out of the feudal world. As for the present, it openly proclaims, it cannot act morally, however much it desires to, because it must be "practical."

Thus our own United States officialdom shows no horror or sense of urgency at Negro children bombed in the South, civil rights leaders murdered, their murderers going scot free, and the sponsors of murders running the law enforcement agencies, because it would not be "practical" to do anything substantial about this. Meanwhile, it tells the world, "our hands are clean, because we have declared ourselves in theory as being against segregation." And in Vietnam, "our" position is that we are basically moral and democratic, but since the economic interests of our moral society are at stake, we must primarily be practical, and so we must use every kind of barbaric destruction, gloat over the bodies of those we kill, set up military dictatorships, and wipe out an immense population.

Selsam's lucidly reasoned thesis reaches its height in the detailed discussion of "means and ends." Bourgeois theorists have long used the question, "Does the end justify the means?" as a trap against those working for human progress, by demanding of them pure and abstract rules of conduct which bourgeois society itself makes no pretense of following in its own social life. Every word of Selsam's discussion of this

<sup>\*</sup> Howard Selsam, *Ethics and Progress; New Values in a Revolutionary World*, Little New World Paperbacks, International Publishers, New York. 126 pp., \$95.

question demands to be read and thought over, and what can be presented here is only an inadequate summary. He points out first that the question itself is put falsely. "End" and "means" do not fall into separate pigeonholes, and it is life itself, not abstract logic, that creates them. The real way in which the question must be put is, he says, when we agree on a broad social goal, to "discuss clearly and objectively the best way of reaching it." Means and ends correlate. Thus the achievement of socialism is impossible unless the working class learns under capitalism to supplant rivalry with cooperation. Of course, capitalists regard the very solidarity of the working class as something immoral, an infringement of their own "freedom" for untrammelled profiteering. And with regard to socialism, Selsam writes, "it has to be won and consolidated with means appropriate to its nature—the fullest development of democratic processes and the fullest participation of all working people and their supporters in the determination of all the conditions of life."

Furthermore, Selsam says, "this movement towards socialism takes place in a society ruled by a minority that is rapacious, ruthless and desperate in its efforts to maintain its economic, political

and social domination . . . Yet it is only in such an immoral world that the moral goals of socialism can be achieved, and that world determines in large part the means that alone can achieve it."

There are problems and situations to which this writer wishes Dr. Selsam had devoted more attention. The main focus of his argument for Marxist and socialist morality is to compare it to bourgeois moral principles at their best and highest. And this approach, of course, is basic. But there are also the moral crises appearing as imperialism sinks to its depths, with the death camps of fascism, the question raised at the Nuremberg trials, the question of the moral complicity of those who did not take an actual hand in the murders but turned the other way and let them go on, the morality of real or pretended "ignorance of what is going on." These are burning questions that are affecting an increasing number of people in our own country. Thus, many are taking part in civil rights movements or demonstrating against the killing in Vietnam because they would feel a moral complicity in evil if they didn't. But to raise these matters for further analysis is not to criticize Dr. Selsam's illuminating treatise. It is to suggest and urge that he write a second volume.

## A Civil Rights Documentary

*Letters from Mississippi\** is a moving and clarifying book. It cannot fail to be a source book for future historians. It reveals, among other things, the high human quality of the young men and women—nearly a thousand—who volunteered at great bodily danger to go to Mississippi to help register potential Negro voters and teach citizenship, Negro history, French and other subjects in the new Freedom Schools. It is their letters home in the summer of 1964 which constitute the content, and their ideas and observations that give the book its power over the reader.

The accomplishments of this summer are astounding, when one comes to think about it. The undertaking brought about whatever degree of enforcement of the Civil Rights Act there has been (in the face of a presidential slowdown); it stimulated an increasingly powerful indigenous Negro leadership within Mississippi itself, and the formation of the Freedom Democratic Party; it sparked the magnificent battle waged by the FDP Negro delega-

tes at the Atlantic City convention of the Democratic party, a battle which stirred not only the world at large but the watchful black citizens of the state who elected those delegates.

The book is unobtrusively but well edited by Elizabeth Sutherland, formerly a researcher for the United Nations and presently Administrative Secretary of the New York office of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Other civil rights organizations that took part to one or another degree in the Mississippi Project were the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

The book is divided into eleven chapters, roughly chronological, beginning with "The Road to Mississippi" and ending with "The Road Back." The map of Mississippi opposite page one, and the dates on the letters, enable the reader to follow this narrative (written by a hundred fifty different persons!) as though it were a unified drama, both tragic and triumphant. As the young people—largely white college students—were leaving Oxford, Ohio, where they were taught and trained by Negro and white SNCC leaders, to go to Mis-

\**Letters from Mississippi*: Personal reports from volunteers in the Summer Freedom Project, 1964, to their parents and friends. Edited by Elizabeth Sutherland, Preface by James W. Silver. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1965. \$4.95.

Mississippi, news came (June 21) that three civil rights workers were missing: Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney. As the summer passed, and the volunteers carried out their duties, the suspense deepened. Where were the missing three?

At last their bodies were found, on August 3. The announcement was made in Meridian, Mississippi, during a concert by Pete Seeger (189).

It was at Philadelphia, Mississippi, that the lynching of the three had taken place, nearly three months previously. The girl who wrote the news of their disappearance at that time, said in her letter: "Everywhere you go, there's hate." Another volunteer stationed at Gulfport described the "hate stare . . . the most terrifying and ugly thing" (139).

But the climax of the story is not the cruel deaths of Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney. That is to be found two months later, in the Freedom Democratic Party's great exploit at the Atlantic City convention. For that victory (it *was* a victory, even though L.B.J. tried to rob the Freedom delegates of what they had won) was a triumph for the three murdered heroes and for the Mississippi Freedom Project that they and their colleagues carried out so splendidly.

Many absorbing and illuminating ideas emerge from these letters. There is first of all the unwanted but inevitable conflict between the Negro participants and the white learners: the yearning

for friendship on both sides combined with distrust and misunderstanding. This maddening situation, evident in the early letters, gives way, when they get to Mississippi, before the dangers and problems, the frustration and fatigue, of the teaching and canvassing, the jailings and beatings.

Another problem was that of "non-violence," discussion of which is carried on intermittently during the entire summer but is never completely solved. One volunteer says in an early letter that "non-violence is a perverted way of life, but a necessary tactic and technique" (30). There is the Negro woman that some white girls stayed with who slept with a hatchet under her bed (45). At Batesville in the Delta, says another letter: "Yes, the Movement is still non-violent; but every farmer—white and black—in the Delta has a gun. Mr. Miles [a Negro farmer] has seven, all loaded" (88). At Hattiesburg two of the Freedom Schools held a debate on the question: "Resolved: that violence is necessary to obtain civil rights." The debaters were twelve to sixteen years old. The affirmative won the debate (108). But out of the many discussions emerged a distinction between "non-violence" on the one hand and *self-protection* and *self-defense* on the other (186). An example is given of Silas McGee, a Negro youth, who concludes finally that "just taking the coke bottle by the neck and *not* shooting back saved his life." (180).

The occasional visits of celebrities is noted, sometimes with

unexpected effect. When Harry Belafonte and Sidney Poitier spoke at a meeting in Greenwood, Mississippi, the Freedom workers, excited at first to see the two well-known actors, found them "fumbling and amateurish" (184). Congressman Ryan, however, insisted on seeing the back tests of a young Negro woman who failed the registration examination *nine times* when she tried to register to vote. Because of his practical and persistent in-

quiries she passed the tenth test—"the only Negro to be registered in Leflore County all summer" (206).

That political knowledge grows fast is shown toward the end of the book by a letter from Gulfport to "Dear Mother and Father." The writer says: "The people we're killing in Vietnam are the same people whom we've been killing for years in Mississippi" (229).

**BILL LEONARD**

## Imperialism In The Making

An anecdote may serve to underscore the point this reviewer wishes to make with respect to this fine contribution toward an understanding of the United States of the past.\*

At a meeting of students from some of our large eastern universities this summer Gil Green was an invited participant in a discussion session. The former leader of the Young Communist League, a prominent Marxist and a Smith Act victim, was asked at the outset by one of the students: "Mr. Green, have you ever worked with the poor?"

Gil Green conceded that he had had some experience along that line and then went on to detail a number of the struggles of the

depression days, the hunger marches, building support for unemployed legislation, the battles for relief.

The students, many of whom were fresh from demonstrations on civil rights, listened with increasing interest as Gil Green unfolded pages of history that were unknown to them.

There is a reason, of course, for this historical blackout. It was created by the cold war, by McCarthyism, by the intimidation of the academic world, the purge of textbooks, the ouster of the Left from the unions, the persecution of Marxists and the difficulties of the circulation of press and literature edited from a socialist viewpoint.

Still, with all the explanations, it is a jarring revelation that a younger generation has been cut off from its rightful heritage of

\*Ray Ginger, *Age of Excess*, Macmillan, New York, 1965, pp., 386. \$5.95.

American history. Moreover, one appreciates that this present young generation, which has so many who fight with courage, audacity and initiative, needs the powerful weapon of history in order that it may better confront the enemies of the nation.

The generation that came to adulthood during the depression was far more fortunate. For those who were radical, there were going organizations to join: for those who were seeking answers, there were publications, lectures, debates. That older generation can relate the Watts revolt in Los Angeles this summer to Scottsboro and back into the betrayal of Reconstruction. Or it can relate Vietnam and Santo Domingo to Sandino and the American Marines, to Wilson and the intervention in Mexico, to McKinley and the seizure of Cuba and the Philippines.

Today there are those who speak of "the power structure" as if this were some new phenomenon on the American scene. That "power structure," or more accurately "class power," has been operating for many, many years. It is good and profitable to study the beast from the beginning.

The book by Ray Ginger, author of the best biography of Eugene V. Debs to date, is an account of our history from the end of reconstruction to World War I. It was in this era that American imperialism was born, and to appreciate fully what happens out of Wall Street and Washington

today, it is necessary to have knowledge of that past.

*Age of Excess*, however, is not confined to the gigantic growth of the American economy. It relates the struggles of the poor, the farmers, labor, the Negro people, the reformers, the socialists, against the brutalizing sweep of the industrial giant. It details the connection between the money power and politics—how corruption is utilized, how complacency rots the core of a nation:

"Our grandfathers lived amid changes so swift and so basic that nobody could grasp more than a fraction of what was happening," Ginger writes. "Their problems were so urgent and complicated as often to overwhelm them." Nor was it easy to catalog prominent figures. The union-busting Andrew Carnegie was one of the founders of the Anti-Imperialist League. The peace-loving William Jennings Bryan at the head of Wilson's State Department was a first rate imperialist in Latin American affairs.

The impact on the cultural life of the country is well detailed. And this was a time of giants: in literature, Howells, Mark Twain, Dreiser, London; in the social scene, Jane Addams, Alice Hamilton, W. E. B. Du Bois (who was to overlap into another era); in teaching, Dewey and Veblen.

An excellent feature of the book is a concluding Essay on Sources which enables the reader to follow through on those particular aspects on which he desires more detail.



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