

SWP

discussion bulletin

Published by the
SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

116 UNIVERSITY PLACE
NEW YORK 3, NEW YORK

Vol. 24, No. 7

February 1963

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CHINA AND CUBA -- TEACHER AND STUDENT

by Louise Manning

In the light of new lessons learned from the rich experience of the Cuban revolution, it is incumbent on us, as serious revolutionists to reconsider our evaluation of the Chinese revolution. True, the resolution on China of 1955 may deter some of us from making necessary corrections, but if we do not make these corrections, history will.

Examination of both the Cuban and Chinese revolutions reveal similarities so deep, so fundamental, that any serious criteria used in analyzing one, would have to be used in the other. The unfolding of the revolution in Cuba opened up to us a completely new experience in the expanding and increasingly diverse methods used by the masses to push through the socialist revolution. In Cuba, a petty bourgeois leadership was able to progress from the democratic phase of the revolution through the successful culmination of the socialist overturn, thus in effect transforming itself in the process from liberals to revolutionists. For us, the acid test of the leadership was the setting up of a state based upon the workers and peasants, the elimination of the imperialists, native capitalists and feudal exploiters, the monopoly of foreign trade and the institution of planned economy.

We did not say, "Yes, the 26th of July movement led the revolution, but since the leaders have a petty bourgeois origin, this taint remains, and therefore we cannot give them political support. Besides, there were no organs of proletarian control, no soviets, and no Marxist party. All these are part of our preconceived notions of how a revolution must develop. For these reasons, although we support the revolution, we have to seek to supplant the leadership with one more akin to the Trotskyist ideal." To our party's credit, we recognized that such a course would be political suicide.

Yet, this is precisely the method we have adopted in the Chinese revolution. In spite of the fact that the revolution was fought against the dictates of Stalin, we persist in labeling it as Stalinist. Stalinism in China meant the subordination of the Chinese CP to Chiang Kai-shek. It meant remaining within the boundaries of existing property relations. It meant the crushing of the revolution. When the CCP in defiance took a directly opposite course, it broke with Stalinism on nothing less than the question of revolution. Is this not the ultimate test of leadership? Would not any other test border on the flippant? Any other test would be more deserving of perennial democrats rather than revolutionists. As in Cuba, the leadership changed the course of events, and in the struggle was itself changed. We can no more apply the term Stalinist to the Chinese leadership than we can apply the term petty bourgeois to the Cuban leadership.

Comrade Hansen, in his report to the Plenum, on the majority resolution states, page 8: "Now we come to the question of Cuba. For me this was the decisive test of the validity of the position on China. A little more than eight years after the establishment of the Chinese workers state, the Cuban workers' was set up. The events were in striking parallel -- the role of guerrilla warfare, of the peasantry, of a march on the cities, sympathetic response of the workers, destruction of the bourgeois army, the establishment of a petty bourgeois government limited to aims within the limits of the bourgeois democratic revolution, then agrarian reform, arming of the people, radicalization of the government, sweeping expropriations of capitalist property, establishment of a monopoly of foreign trade, of a planned economy, changes in state structure to bring it into line with these developments, armed defense against a counterrevolutionary assault mounted by American imperialism -- all this under a leadership of acknowledged petty bourgeois origin. It is as if Marxist theory had said, you doubt the validity of the analysis of the Chinese revolution? All right, here's something closer to home: take a look at Cuba!"

Then he goes on to explain that there is only one noteworthy difference -- that the leaders of the Cuban revolution were not trained in the school of Stalinism. He does not explain why it was possible for Castro to throw off his petty bourgeois training, and not possible for Mao to overcome his Stalinist past. Besides the school of Stalinism is not the only training had by Mao. Most important was the part of his training against the school of Stalinism.

Even the concrete circumstances surrounding the compelling forces pushing both Cuba and China toward radical measures were similar as indicated in the resolutions.

The resolution on Cuba, sections 6 and 7, states: "The conflict between American imperialism and the Castro forces precipitated a political crisis in Havana. This was resolved by a decided turn to the left, signaled, among other things, by the expulsion from the government of such figures as Urrutia and Pazos; and the coalition came to an end in the fall of 1959. The interacting process between American imperialism and the Cuban revolution swiftly deepened after the end of the coalition government. The measures undertaken by the Castro regime in the interests of the Cuban people met with ever more unbridled attacks from Wall Street, its political agents, propagan-

dists and counter-revolutionary agents. The blows of these counter-revolutionary forces, in turn, compelled the Castro government to resort to increasingly radical measures."

Now listen to the 1955 resolution on China, p. 9: "When the CCP established itself in power in the fall of 1949, it continued to cling to its program of a 'block of four classes' and its theory of a 'revolution in stages,' i.e., the passage of China through an allegedly 'new' stage of capitalist development. The ties connecting China with capitalism were cut when the American military forces drove toward the Yalu and the imperialists clamped an economic blockade on China. The CCP was then left no choice except to seize the imperialist assets in the country and to open, at the same time, a campaign against the native capitalists (the Three-Anti and Five-Anti movements)."

Cannon in the September 1955 Plenum (Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 3) stated, "I give credit for that (meaning the revolution - L.M.) to the logic of the situation, the international contradictions, the weakness of the Chinese bourgeoisie; and to be patriotic, I give a great deal of credit to our own boy from Independence, Missouri, Harry Truman. By his blockade of the New China and his policy in the Korean War, Truman forces the Chinese Stalinists to take the road of socialization as a matter of survival."

Because of the blockade and the harassment imposed by Eisenhower, the petty-bourgeois leadership of Cuba was also forced to take the road of socialization as a matter of survival. Yet we do credit Castro with leading the revolution. By what right can we deny a similar role to Mao Tse-tung. It is true that Stalinism could not be given such credit, but this was no longer Stalinism, just as the Cuban petty-bourgeois leadership could no longer be considered just petty-bourgeois. It had become something different.

Comrades may retort that in the 30's Stalin instituted a left turn towards industrialization, but still remained Stalinist, and that in the same way a Stalinist party in China could lead the revolution and still remain Stalinist. So determined are some of us to plaster the label of Stalinism on the Chinese that we equate two events by eliminating fundamental differences. The left turn towards industrialization was conducted within the larger confines of the theory of socialism in one country, while the Chinese revolution had to defy this all-embracing Stalinist theory. Theory of socialism in

one country, the hallmark of Stalinism, cannot coexist with the Leninist concept of the extension of the revolution. A revolution is not just a left turn of a bureaucratic caste, but a social overturn which had to go beyond the limited aims of a bureaucracy. We came to the absurd conclusion that Stalinism could lead the revolution to a successful conclusion but come out unscathed by the fires of that revolution; that they came out as they went in, Stalinists pure and simple; that they made a bureaucratic revolution, contradictory as that may be.

Stalin was known as the organizer of defeats, whereas Mao is the acknowledged inspirer of Castro. Stalin was the hang-man of revolutions whereas Mao is the father of revolutionary guerrilla warfare. Stalin was abhorred as a tyrant, while Mao is revered in South America and Asia as a revolutionary hero. Are these differences superficial, accidental, unimportant? Perhaps they would be if we did not have a more concrete, definitive yardstick, the successful culmination of the Chinese revolution and the acknowledged indebtedness of the Cuban revolution to Mao's methods.

If one is to talk of tradition, is it not our tradition, and more than that, our revolutionary duty to take as our point of departure a living, victorious revolution, rather than a defeat which took place two decades earlier. Is it not our tradition to reinterpret, and extend our theory on the basis of new developments, to learn from our experiences, to draw lessons, to continually rebuild and renew our theory. Is it not in our tradition to make critical analyses of our positions in the light of current events, especially revolutions, and more especially victorious revolutions, which in the last analysis is the test of our theories. To refuse to learn the lessons of current revolutions means to be divorced from active participation in the coming revolutions.

Because of its insistence in labeling Mao Tse-tung as Stalinist, the party has lapsed into a methodological error for which it criticized its centrist opponents who were beginning to move away from Stalinism after the Khrushchev revelations. These centrists apologized for Stalin by claiming that his rule was necessitated by the needs of industrialization in the Soviet Union, for which the Bolshevik leadership was not suited. By these means, Stalinism was somehow divorced from responsibility for the crimes committed by the bureaucracy through the supposed operation of an automatic and spontaneous process. We, on the other hand, boldly accused Stalinism of murder, falsification of history, and the

crushing of revolutions in the interests of bureaucratic privileges. As the leadership, they were held responsible for these crimes. Contradictions between leadership and action do not negate its unity.

We must recognize the genuine leadership of the CCP in the civil war against Chiang Kai-shek. In our treatment of the Cuban revolution, we gave full credit to the Castro leadership in spite of its limited aims, and in spite of the economic and social forces pushing it, because it did make decisions which led it to take revolutionary action. How can we do otherwise for the Chinese leadership. We, especially, who have proclaimed that the crisis of our time is the crisis of leadership can ill afford to play down the decisive role of leadership and its connection with the masses in action. To do so would only undermine our own claim to leadership.

No attempt is made to explain the contradiction between Stalinism and a profoundly revolutionary period. Are we to assume that Stalinism is a sickness that can be transplanted on to any period, lifted above the society which nurtured it and carried along with a victory of the revolution, and then stamped upon the leadership which continued, deepened and broadened it. This is not how Stalinism was analyzed in the Soviet Union. In explaining its origin, Trotsky related it precisely to the international climate, permeated with defeats. If the defeat of the revolution on an international scale gave rise to Stalinism, would it not follow that the resumption of the revolution on an international scale would loosen its hold.

Mao Tse-tung is not the gravedigger of revolutions as was Stalin, and the CCP did lead the revolution. It behooves us to study the apparent contradiction where a so called "Stalinist" leadership dedicated to preventing the revolution is forced to lead it to victory, and then to deepen it. We would have to come to the conclusion that either Stalinism is not reactionary or that this was not a Stalinist leadership at the time it led the revolution. In my view, the latter is the only position we can take, and I therefore support the Swabeck-Liang resolution.

February 1, 1963

AFRO-AMERICANISM

by Leigh Ray

The new situation which is found today among the Afro-Americans in the U.S., and which is most clearly shown by the actions in the South, poses a number of questions to us. We must have a clear picture of what is happening, the differences which have developed, and the areas of agreement and similarity which the various organizations show, before attempting any conclusions.

NAACP, CORE, Black Muslims, the Southern Conference are not new organizations, but because of prestige won in the past, they have won in some areas of leadership. How well they have met this challenge has been shown in one of two ways. They have adapted to the changing times, or they have not and so new organizations have risen to fill the vacuum. On the national scene we have seen CORE and the Black Muslims take on new stature in their different ways. On Guard and the Liberation Committee for Africa, are only two groups which have attempted to shape an answer on a national scale. NALC, with struggle within the union movement as its aim, is another. SNCC seems to be a new Southern youth organization aimed at becoming a national organization. Non-violence is not a principle and joint action with whites and left and center groupings is not prescribed. In local areas there have been many attempts at viable organizations, the latest of which in San Francisco has been the growth of the Afro-American Association within the past year.

These organizations have life and response because the local leaders express well and in detail the needs and aspirations of the people they attempt to reach and the program of action they propose.

The method of work which still seems to be the most prevalent is that of non-violence or legal tests or passive insistence that integration take place now. NAACP, CORE, Black Muslims, Southern Conference, et. al., still are working within the framework of the American system and have not, as yet, recognized the need for a change.

The primary cause of this changed situation was the colonial and semi-colonial revolutions of the non-white world, the break from the old colonialism of the pre-World War II world. The Cuban Revolution so close to home gave added impetus.

For some years there has been the growing realization that to be able to demand equality and recognition as individuals in the American community the Afro-American must acquire dignity, confidence and information in order to judge his present position and to gain a unified approach to a solution. The "going it alone" theory developed out of the failure of the union movement, the Negroes' natural allies, to help. This theory was extended to exclude all liberals and radicals. In this principle is a rejection of the old idea that the "white man knows best." It is felt that the radicals have in the past used the struggles and aspirations of the peoples of African descent for their own purposes. The new mood will no longer accept this.

Comrade Breitman (Discussion Bulletin Vol.22, No. 18, August 1961, p.5) lists four points as the central core of the program of the Black Muslims: 1. Unite the Black race (non-white); 2. Achieve racial separation; 3. Build a separate black economy; and 4. Create a separate Black nation. I believe this was true as of one year ago for points 2 and 4 (achieve racial separation; create a separate Black nation). Recently there seems to have developed some change in their attitude on these points. They are no longer so intransigent toward working with whites. Rather it is more correct to put it as Malcolm X did in answer to a direct question, "we will work with anyone but on our terms." Black Muslim newspaper salesmen even ask whites to buy and subscribe to Muhammad Speaks.

Malcolm X in a recent talk, although reiterating the Black Muslim objections to the way the white man has treated the non-white peoples of the world, did make a qualifying statement. "We must be willing to pay the price (of liberty or death) then maybe we won't have to pay the price." These are only straws in the wind which may or may not indicate a change, but it is something which we, as a party, should be aware of, and be ready to cooperate with when it does become clearer.

Points 1 and 3 (unite the Black race (non-white) build a separate Black economy) are instruments to attain awareness of identity and dignity for the Afro-American.

Comrade Breitman said that the admitting of whites to the NALC weakened that organization. He said this was due to the pressures of the Meanys and the Reuthers. He also cites the March on Washington of the 1940's. Would it not be more correct to point out the weaknesses of A. P. Randolph and his

concept of the struggle of the Afro-Americans? Randolph is of the old line type of leadership which follows the traditions of the liberals: he acts on the principle that he knows best how the struggle should be conducted, i.e., leave it to him and he will take care of it. Locals of the NALC which have taken on acts of picketing, demonstrations, and other militant action to solve their local problems have been put in the hands of receiverships, so to speak. All such direct action methods of struggle have been proscribed by A.P. Randolph. For example, he can support the Worthy case, but the Locals are to do nothing, not even hold meetings at which Worthy can speak. The impending split within the NALC on this question of local autonomy based on local direct action will mean an advance toward the formation of a new radical organization.

The Afro-American Association, or Triple A, formed in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1962, has virtually the same program as the Black Muslims. The Triple A takes no stand on religion, holds no meetings in churches, rather has street meetings. A recent all-day conference was held in a public high school with some 1,000 attending, predominantly non-white. This group emphasizes education and is setting up schools, but within the terms of integration. It also works within the Black Ghetto, rehabilitating the buildings, eliminating crime, and establishing Negro-owned businesses. The Triple A insists that the doctors, lawyers, and better-off blacks stay in the ghetto and not follow the whites into the Berkeley hills. The leader and organizer of the Triple A stated that his criterion and answer to all questions was "what is going to be best for my people." Certainly, the black man in America is acquiring a new sense of destiny.

CORE, an older organization, has its differences with the NAACP on how to fight for desegregation. CORE sees integration not as the goal, but as the means to the end of human dignity, a realization of full potential in this country.

Two general types of organizations presently symbolize the struggle of the Afro-American:

1.- NAACP, CORE, etc., type fighting on civil rights issues. There are two aspects of their method of struggle: a) the legal testing of city, state, and national laws regarding discrimination and segregation; b) the mass boycotts and sit-ins throughout the South. Whites are accepted in a cooperative spirit and their help welcomed.

2.- Black Muslims and other groups of black nationalists who advocate separatism to one degree or another.

Whites are barred or extremely limited both in membership or the type of help acceptable.

With the exception of the Negro American Labor Council the leaders of all these organizations are lawyers, doctors, and ministers, the intellectual elite of the Afro-Americans. Past experience of the black worker makes him distrustful of this type of leadership. It will only be through struggle and mass action that these leaders will win the acceptance of the broad mass of Afro-Americans or in the course of these actions a new radical working class leadership will forge to the front.

POLITICAL ACTION

Like the union movement today, the rising tide of direct action movements among the citizens of African descent does not see the solution as political. Awareness of the need for unity on a national scale is not yet present. A greater local unity is the first step. Some political awareness was shown in the recent elections, but not to the extent of a break with the two old parties. Support was given Negro candidates by some of these organizations but the candidates were not from these organizations.

In 1962 Georgia elected an Afro-American to the State Senate, the first in 92 years. The fact that Mr. Johnson ran on the Democratic ticket indicates that there was no move for independent political action. Also, the fact that his opponent was another Afro-American indicates a lack of unity. The drive for voter registration is another step toward political awareness. The next, most important, question is vote for what or for whom?

If some one individual or organization, such as SNCC, should reach national prominence during the next year and could catch the imagination of the country, we would see a very rapid political development. Whether it will be "based on the Negro community's demands and running Negro candidates for office" as Comrade Breitman states (Bulletin Vol. 22, No. 18, August, 1961), or on a Labor Party as posed by Comrade Kirk (Bulletin of October, 1962, Vol. 23, No. 9), can not possibly be foreseen at this time. Too many factors from many other aspects of the world forces enter into such a prognosis. The likely variant, other factors remaining relatively static, is that events would develop as Comrade Breitman sees them.

Although it is imperative for revolutionists to have a clear understanding of the situation we are not

arm-chair theoreticians. Our observation and analysis of developing events, our action upon those events and a resulting reaction, is a continuing process of development toward the goal of raising the consciousness of all peoples to the need for a change in the economic, political and social structure of the world.

It is the practical aspects of Negro work with which I now want to deal. In the past we have found that it is during the times when we have been most active in struggle on civil rights issues or economic issues with the Afro-Americans that we have made the greatest political headway, in recruitment and in having our political ideas accepted by those with whom we worked.

Our work in struggle is always divided into two aspects: 1. that of the individuals involved; and 2. the presentation of the struggle in our press. These two aspects have had their most fruitful results when combined. That is, when the paper has been sold to the activists by non-involved comrades in conjunction with the work of those involved. This has been true in trade union work as well as in civil rights actions.

Activity of comrades in these growing, new organizations should have many of the characteristics of trade union fractions. This must, of necessity, be divided into two parts. First, those of us who are white must be very cautious in the beginning, working as we would in a factory. That is, go in, do the work, do it well, gain the confidence of those with whom we are working as a good fighter on their issues. This will take time, care, caution, perseverance, and determination to stay in there and prove ourselves as whites who are not out for political gain at the expense of the black. The white must win the respect of the black on an entirely different basis, making a clean break with the past. For example, we tell our new young unionist that he is not to open his mouth for at least a year on his politics. That might well hold true in the present situation under discussion. For the black comrade, some of these points will hold; that is, he must prove himself interested and dedicated to the objectives of the Afro-American. He may be able to begin to talk politically to individuals some time before the white.

These comrades will be able to write for the press articles which will assist these organizations to find the answers for their next steps. The presentation of these experiences to the comrades as a whole educates them to participate in the struggle as it shapes up in a much more intelligent fashion. In fact, it is in this way that we educate a cadre which will be able to effect a change in our system.

What spheres of action does this indicate? This should and must be explored in each local situation. It is difficult since there are so many organizations but if we are to get the ear of the Negro people we must be with them in their present battles in their war for desegregation, equality, dignity.

It is only after we have proved ourselves as workers that we will win the right to be heard politically. We cannot ask them to unite with whites until this new base has been established.

The problem of deepening our contact with the rising tide of Negro activists is one of the most important questions facing us today.

ON THE QUESTION OF NATIONALISM

Historically, in the U.S., the Negro people have followed leaders who advocated separatism in periods when their aspirations faced a seemingly impenetrable wall and when their natural allies, the workers and so-called liberals, had turned their backs on the Negroes' problems. When there seemed no avenues left open to Negroes for integration into the American community as equal participants, leaders have proposed a separate road and this has appealed to the large mass. Then why does nationalism rise in this period when the Negroes in the South seem to be making gains? The question here can be answered on a regional scale. Black nationalism has taken hold of the Northern Negro where no progress has been achieved, but has it gained a foothold in the South?

Many of the "go it alone" groups are using the form of black nationalism in the fight for desegregation as protection from the witch hunt in the U.S. today. Picket lines and meetings which have in their leadership both whites and blacks are charged as "communist" by the kept press, and the real issues are buried under this barrage.

The Resolution of the SWP on the Negro Question of 1957 (Vol. 18, No. 8, April 1957, p. 26) states: "Theoretically, the profound growth of racial solidarity and national consciousness among the Negro people might under certain future conditions give rise to separatist demands....Socialists would be obligated to support such demands if they should reflect the mass will." This theory has been overtly stated in all the resolutions of the SWP dealing with the Negro struggle.

The present period of the rise of interest in "nationalism" and "separatism" gives me the opportunity to express in practical form the disagreements I have had with this aspect of our theory. By stating the

possibility of separatism, we have given the Negroes the impression that we feel that the Negro should go his separate way. But, you say, that was worded very carefully not to give this impression. The very fact that it was said had the negative effect. We do not always and at every step give all the possible variants in all our resolutions, so why state this. The CP held the position of a separate Negro state for years. Although their Negro cadre was always far larger than that of the SWP it was in spite of their theory and not because of it. The CP showed in action in the 30's that it was for immediate gains for the Negro people. It has been during times of greatest activity in the struggle for Negro civil liberties that the SWP has made the greatest gains among the Negro people.

Today, Comrade Breitman poses correctly for us the very real problem we face in the important aspect of the position of the revolutionary movement in the U.S., that of our relationship to the Negro movement, the most militant section on the American scene. On the one hand we have a very small and relatively weak Negro cadre, and yet we expect that "our party must prepare itself, starting now, to meet this radical Negro organization and to work together with it as equals and partners" and also "we must equip ourselves theoretically and practically so that our Negro members can take their place inside this developing movement and so that our party can measure up to the demands that will be placed on it as allies of this movement." (Emphasis added) (Bulletin Vol. 23, No. 9, pp. 8 & 9).

With the implication that the Negro may go a separate way, our Negro cadre has been hesitant about playing a leading role in the Negro community. And they are hesitant about even joining these newer organizations, or even the older ones like the NAACP and CORE. Thus we have disarmed our comrades from playing a leading part in the struggles of the Negro people. They are integrationists or they would not be in the SWP.

How then are we to equip our Negro comrades to take their place in the "radical Negro organization"? We must recognize that separatism is only a tactic in the Negroes' struggle for admission as equals, with no strikes against them. And that is all that it is.

To state, as Comrade Breitman does, that the Negro movement may choose either the form of "equality through integration or equality through separation" is to deny the realities of what actually exists in the U.S. today. As Baldwin defined nationalism (Bulletin Vol. 23, No. 9, p. 6), this can only have meaning outside the geographical, political and economic boundaries of the U.S.

Because the Negro in the U.S. is so closely intertwined within these boundaries, in housing, schools, and jobs, to speak of separatism in a physical sense is to speak of an impossibility. It raises some interesting practical questions. Would blacks in the "white" states emigrate to the "black" states? Would the "black" economy be a separate economy operating in the interstices and crevices of the U.S. capitalist economy? Either of these courses poses some insoluble problems. Even the proposed rehabilitation of the ghettos contains some of these problems. Do nationalists propose to buy the properties, or to spend their time and money reconditioning property for landlords who have been bleeding the Negro for decades with high rents for sub-standard housing?

As a tactic, in a period such as the Afro-American is in at the present, we must accept his interpretation of "nationalism" in either way it is used. We must work in so far as we can with such groups as the Triple A, but keep in mind that it is only a tactic which serves to unite the Afro-American.

It seems to me that this talk of nationalism or separatism is a tactic which has been raised to the level of strategy by those comrades in the SWP as a substitute for real analysis of the situation.

Evaluating the nationalist organizations as a tactical move on the part of the Negro people to gain a good bargaining position from which to demand integration, we should do all we can to be a part of these same organizations as we do in the union movement. This should be true especially for our Negro comrades as well as for a number of white comrades who are free and have the qualifications. This is a necessary part of our work in the U.S. As Trotsky indicated in his conversations, we must find our way to the Negro segment of the population.

Today we must be activists in both the separatist and the integrationist types of organizations, the NAACP, CORE, Black Muslims, Triple A, and even in some areas be in the forefront of organizing new groups where there is a need. It is through this work that we will gain the confidence of the Negro people and have a chance of presenting to them a Marxist program. After working with them, when a revolutionary formation does occur, the Negroes will have (at the least) fraternal relations with us and be aware that we are working for the same goal: a society organized for the benefit of mankind, not just for white men, but all human beings, regardless of race, sex, or creed.

Comrade Breitman's position does not lead to unity in the end but to separateness. The Negro will resent another manifestation of segregation and this will lead neither to confidence and respect for the ideas of revolutionary socialism nor confidence in us as a party when the chips are down.

January, 1963

A NOTE ON THE MUSLIMS AND THE NALC

Feb. 14, 1963

Leigh Ray
San Francisco

Dear Comrade Ray:

Thanks very much for sending me a copy of your article, "Afro-Americanism," at the same time you sent it to the discussion bulletin. Some points in it were of special interest to me:

1. I agree with you completely that there are signs of change in the Muslims, and that the party should be alert to them. In this sense, the two books on the Muslims, by Lincoln and Essien-Udom, are both somewhat dated and inadequate. For the last year Muhammad Speaks has considerably modified its attitude and tone toward the integrationist organizations. Last summer Malcolm X spoke at a rally for the striking hospital workers union; most of the workers were Negro or Puerto Rican, but whites are included in the union and union leadership. I found it interesting that the story and pictures about that rally were not printed in Muhammad Speaks until this year -- perhaps a sign of a difference of opinion over their "fitness" for that paper.

I tend to think that there is more than one tendency in the Muslim leadership; that one of them is more interested in the Negro struggle than in the religious side of their movement; and that the Muslims, like all other Negro groups in this country, are subject to the pressures of the Negro masses and their "new moods." I think the initial successes of the AAA in your area, which resembles the Muslims in everything but religion, will strengthen the tendencies favoring change inside the Muslims.

2. I am afraid you misunderstood what I said in the August, 1961, bulletin about the NALC. You say that I wrote that "The admitting of whites to the NALC weakened that organization." This is not so. I was trying to point out why many Negroes want their organizations to be all-Negro -- because they think it is a necessary tactic to mobilize the Negro masses, who are justifiably suspicious about organizations that may be controlled by whites, even indirectly. I then said that the NALC leaders were at first inclined to exclude whites from membership for this reason, but succumbed to the pressure of the Meanys and

Reuthers and decided to let whites join too. I then said I thought "the decision made on this point is symbolic and typical of the weaknesses of the NALC as a whole. It would be a stronger and healthier organization if it had been imbued with more of the spirit of the other new organizations -- namely, the spirit that the needs of the Negro struggle come ahead of the feelings of so-called white liberal friends."

It wasn't admitting whites that weakened the NALC; as I pointed out even then, not many whites joined or are influential. But the reason why they admitted whites symbolized the weakness of the leadership -- a kowtowing to the white liberals, including the labor bureaucracy. I think subsequent events have borne this out, and I don't find it at all in contradiction to the correct point you make about Randolph's general policies, weaknesses and bureaucratism; in fact, the two points fit together very well.

The NALC is in a bad way for these very reasons. If a split is not impending, as you put it, then it may just collapse. Thanks to Randolph's policies, the NALC doesn't amount to anything as a national organization; the only strong unit is in Detroit, which acts in a virtually autonomous way. So far it has failed miserably on its main reason for existence -- which is why the NAACP has been able to take over leadership of the fight on discrimination in the plants and unions.

3. The points you raise in your concluding section on nationalism, expressing your differences with the party's position, will have to be discussed, and settled, at the party convention. I wish I was able to comment on your analysis now; if I can do so later, I will send you a copy as soon as it is written. Meanwhile, I am glad to note that despite our differences on this point, we agree that "Today we must be activists in both the separatist and the integrationist types of organizations."

Comradely,
George Breitman
Detroit, Mich.

THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY HAS CHANGED;

LET'S ACKNOWLEDGE IT!

by Lois Saunders

At the recent East Berlin conference of representatives of some 70 national Communist parties, the Chinese delegate, Wu Hsiu-chuan, was shouted down when he attempted to present his country's views on the ideological dispute now splitting the Communist world.

Most of the delegates, in a manner reminiscent of the Stalin era, loudly proclaimed their allegiance to Moscow, including the Communist Party of the United States which a short time earlier (January 11) had issued a statement supporting Khrushchev's peaceful co-existence policy and attacking the Chinese Communist Party as "anti-Soviet, anti-peace and anti-Marxist," and further accusing the Chinese of following "dangerous and erroneous" policies that give encouragement to "adventurous U.S. imperialists."

The sharpness of the tone indicates the depth of the dispute.

Reports from the conference did not make clear where many of the delegates stand. North Korea, however, refused to join the stampede and reports from elsewhere make it evident that parties in some countries, especially in the Far East, lean toward Peking but still hesitate to take sides.

At the conference the Cuban delegate merely called for socialist unity, but Castro, in his speech in Havana on the occasion of the anniversary of the Cuban revolution, showed where he stands. Only by "hurling the masses into combat," he said, can revolutionary leaders attain national aspirations. "That is what they did in Algeria and what the Communist patriots are doing in South Viet Nam...that is what we did, too." Had the Cubans followed any other course, he continued, Fulgencio Batista would still be in power.

No mention of the Algerian delegate was made in the news reports from East Berlin, but at the time Algeria achieved its independence, a Ben Bella spokesman gave full credit to China for nothing less than "saving the Algerian revolution." China, he said, supplied Algeria with money and arms and arranged for

the training of flyers at a time when that help "was most needed." He differentiated between Peking and Moscow. Peking he described as a friend; Moscow he criticized for its reluctant attitude and for attaching conditions to whatever assistance it proffered.

Thus while we do not have a definitive picture of the present line-up or even of the trends, country by country, it is apparent that the two opposing views are being weighed in revolutionary and colonial circles the world around and that a new global alignment is in the making.

The China position is set forth in statements reprinted recently in the Militant. Peking declares that Moscow's policy is one that "boils down to this -- the people of the capitalist countries should not make revolutions, the oppressed nations should not wage struggles to win liberation and the people of the world should not fight against imperialism."

China's position was then stated positively:

"The Chinese Communist Party holds that the struggle for the defense of world peace supports, is supported by and indeed is inseparable from the national liberation movements and the people's revolutionary struggles in various countries. The national liberation movements and the people's revolutionary struggles are a powerful force weakening the imperialist forces of war and defending world peace. The more the national liberation movements and the revolutionary struggles of the people develop, the better for the defense of world peace.

"In branding this correct view of ours as 'warlike', those who attack the Chinese Communist Party are, in fact, placing the struggle in defense of world peace in opposition to the movements of national liberation, the people's revolutionary struggle, and in opposition to wars of national liberation and People's revolutionary wars."

This position -- rejection of peaceful co-existence and advocacy of the revolutionary road to socialism -- is our position, the one that we as Trotskyists have held since our party was founded, and there can be no question that today, as in the past, we give our full support to the oppressed people in their every battle to rid themselves of the strangling imperialist octopus.

The magnitude of the ideological dispute that is affecting every party in the Communist monolith, every revolutionary tendency, every colonial struggle emphasizes the importance of the discussion over China now taking place in our party.

This leftward movement, world-wide in scope, looks to the Communist Party of China and to the Peking regime as its leader, but the Socialist Workers Party has repeatedly branded this party and its government as Stalinist or Stalinized, and we call for its revolutionary overthrow.

Our 1955 resolution, still supported by some comrades, states: "At Bandung in April, 1955, Chou (Chou En-lai) served notice that the Chinese Stalinists were prepared to derail the colonial revolution for the sake of 'socialism in one country.'"

This concept is false. We cannot now maintain that the Peking government is Stalinist, unless the term Stalinist has lost all meaning. Instead of seeking to derail the colonial revolution, Peking has backed colonial revolutions, as Cuba, Algeria, Korea and North Vietnam attest, and instead of following a policy of "socialism in one country," Peking is the dominant voice against Moscow in denouncing such a policy and in calling, in its place, for the extension of world revolution. Moreover, its deeds are in consonance with its words.

The position that we have held up to now, contained in our 1955 resolution, elaborated in a series of articles by Dan Roberts in the Militant and most recently embodied in a discussion article by Comrade Milton Alvin, places us in an awkward contradiction: The Communist Party of China, a "thoroughly Stalinized" party, is following a "thoroughly Trotskyist" policy on the vital issue of the road to power; it is, moreover, the leader in the world-wide revolutionary challenge to the hitherto unchallenged dictates of Moscow.

Our untenable position, in the face of the revolutionary strides of the Peking government for more than a decade, immobilizes us on the sidelines and renders us incapable of participating effectively in the far-reaching debate and revolutionary developments that are erupting everywhere.

* * * *

The concept that the Communist Party of China is "thoroughly Stalinized" is expounded at length in Comrade Alvin's article in the September, 1962, Discussion Bulletin, "The Nature of the Chinese Communist Party." In it he

seeks by extensive quotations from Trotsky, Harold Isaacs' "Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution" and articles by Li Fu-jen to refute the position taken by Arne Swabeck and John Liang that the CCP is revolutionary and not Stalinist, and that we must adopt a policy of critical support for the Peking government, not advocate its overthrow. (Li Fu-jen is a Trotskyist writer who in our party is regarded as an authority on China where he lived for many years.)

The argument goes something like this: Trotsky, writing in the '20s and '30s, found the CCP to be Stalinist; Isaacs, writing in the '30s, found the CCP to be Stalinist; Li Fu-jen, writing in the '30s and '40s up to 1946 also found the CCP to be Stalinist. Ergo, the CCP must be Stalinist today. (Quotations given by Comrade Alvin from an article by Li Fu-jen in 1949 need special comment.)

This "appeal to authority" based on analyses that were essentially correct up to about 17 years ago is no substitute for an analysis of conditions that were not even envisaged at the time those articles and books were written. Conclusions arrived at in an earlier era might still be applicable today if there were stagnation in China, with change so imperceptible that sons follow in the footsteps of their fathers and grandfathers, tilling the same small strips of land, using the same wooden tools, even thinking the same time-worn thoughts.

But the Szechwan or Honan peasant who in 1946, under conditions of semi-feudalism, eked out a bare existence, or failed and starved to death, was catapulted by the revolution and the new society into the most advanced type of agricultural development anywhere in the world, the commune.

A revolution, a thorough-going revolution, has intervened between 1946 and 1963. One social class, the capitalist class, has been overthrown and a new class, the working class, has taken power. Despite its early history, it was the Communist Party of China that led the revolution and proceeded to establish the foundations of socialism.

Comrade Alvin admits that the changes have been far-reaching, although he disparages them as merely "progressive." Nevertheless he lists them correctly:

"After winning the power, certain progressive steps were taken by the party (CCP) including unification of the country, transforming property relationships on the land, nationalization of the principal industries, introduction of economic planning and securing the independence of the nation."

Yet he would have us believe that all of this was done without a whisker being changed on the Stalinist visage of the CCP. He tells us that the CCP today in no way differs from the party of the same name that once followed a policy of peaceful co-existence with Chiang Kai-shek. This viewpoint is now 17 years out of date. It is based on conditions that existed before 1946 but which underwent a change in that year when the Communist Party of China began its all out struggle for power, as Li Fu-jen noted in an article appearing in the February, 1949 Fourth International, "The Kuomintang Faces Its Doom," written some months prior to the full seizure of power. Said Li Fu-jen:

"What is the meaning of the dramatic events now unfolding on the Chinese scene? Are we confronted here with just a pure and simple case of Stalinist expansionism, or, as the imperialists would phrase it, 'Soviet imperialism'? We can readily admit, as one press commentator put it, that Mao Tse-tung and his leading henchmen are 'stooges' of Moscow. With scrupulous fidelity they have geared their policies to every twist and turn of the Kremlin line for twenty years and more. In doing so, they have not hesitated to violate and betray the most elementary interests of the Chinese workers and peasants, not to speak of the fundamental interests of the Chinese revolution.

"But when you have designated these dyed-in-the-wool Stalinists as stooges of the Kremlin, you have disclosed only a part of their political physiognomy, and not the most important part at that. In addition to being Stalin's agents, Mao and his cohorts are the leaders of a mighty, indigenous mass movement, the rebellious peasantry which constitutes more than 80 per cent of the Chinese nation. This movement is no concoction of secretive plotters. It springs from the social soil of the country. It is this gigantic mass of rural toilers which is the source of the impressive power which the Stalinists have been translating into massive military victories.

"The changed relationship of class forces which characterizes the present situation is marked in the political sphere by the fact that in the space of three years the Stalinists have passed from the policy of a People's Front with the Kuomintang, and class collaboration with the exploiters, to a policy which calls for the overthrow of the Kuomintang and the expropriation of the landlords. If we probe into the reasons -- both internal and international -- for this political about-face, we shall be able to discover the basic causes for the present developments."

Thus by 1949 Li Fu-jen was of the opinion that Stalinism was "only a part" of the "political physiognomy"

of the CCP "and not the most important part at that" and that "in the space of three years the Stalinists" had passed "from the policy of a People's Front with the Kuomintang and class collaboration with the exploiters, to a policy which calls for the overthrow of the Kuomintang and the expropriation of the landlords."

This point is worth stressing, for it is precisely this issue -- recognition of the break of the CCP from its subservience to Stalin and its embarking upon a new course -- that demarcates the position of Swabeck-Liang from that of the 1955 resolution and from the position defended by Comrade Alvin.

Li Fu-jen developed his views further in an article in the January-February, 1951, issue of the Fourth International, "China: A World Power." (The Wu Hsiu-chuan referred to in the 1951 article is the same Wu Hsiu-chuan who was howled down at the East Berlin conference in mid-January.) Li Fu-jen wrote:

"When Wu Hsiu-chuan, representative of the Chinese government at Peiping, looked blustering Warren Austin (U.S. representative to the U.N.) calmly in the eye at a United Nations meeting, and said coldly: 'I must tell you, we are not frightened by your threats,' his statement was a dramatic emphasis of the fact that a whole epoch in relations between China and Western imperialism had come to a close and that a new epoch had begun. It denoted the fact that the old semi-colonial China, victim of imperialist appetites for more than a century, had gone from the scene and that in its place had come a mighty, independent China, a new world power...

"The source of Mao's power was and is the great mass of the people of China, above all the peasantry. Stirred into action by abysmal suffering, fired by visions of freedom and a tangible stake in the land of their birth -- 'the land to the peasantry' -- they pounded their way irresistibly to victory. It was the great floodtide of revolutionary mass ardor and determination, still far from receding, that stood back of the defiant words used by Wu Hsiu-chuan at the United Nations. In the past, if the masses had any program at all, it was the program of suffering and submission preached by reactionary rulers. Today they have a program of their own. Limited it may be, but in it they can readily discern their own interests.

"The fact of the mass entry of the Chinese people on to the political arena, with the corresponding class pressures, should be pondered by those who contend that Mao Tse-tung is just a 'puppet' of Moscow and the Peiping government merely a creature of the Kremlin. Such a view ignores the reciprocal relationship between party and class.

It must be recognized that in recent times Mao has manifestly acted more in response to the pressure of his own popular support than in obedience to any Kremlin directives. The potency of mass pressure caused him to execute an about-face on the land question toward the end of the war, leading the movement of agrarian expropriation when the peasants would no longer wait for the land.

"Moscow's line was to preserve the 'united front' with Chiang Kai-shek at almost any cost and, to that end, not to encourage social conflicts. Again, when the war was over, Moscow's policy was to engineer a coalition government between Chiang and the Chinese Communists on the basis of a few democratic concessions by Chiang. But the intense hatred of Chiang's regime and the flaming agrarian revolt compelled Mao to break off negotiations and declare all-out war against the Kuomintang. These weighty, incontestable facts should give pause to those who declare that Mao is simply a push-button stooge of the Kremlin."

The views expressed here by Li Fu-jen accord closely with those of Swabeck-Liang in "The Third Chinese Revolution, the Communes and the Regime," in the January, 1960, Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2:

"Viewing the Peking regime as a carbon copy of the Kremlin regime, which is what the 1955 resolution and the Roberts articles (Dan Roberts in the Militant) did, violates our time-honored concept of the reciprocal relationship between party and class. Trotsky dealt with this question in his preface to the 'History of the Russian Revolution.' He wrote: 'Without a guiding organization the energy of the masses would dissipate like steam not enclosed in a piston-box. But nevertheless what moves things is not the piston or the box, but the steam.' In China, the steam was provided by a mighty mass movement that could not be halted but insisted on going all the way. The masses not only welcomed, but they demanded, and themselves undertook the most decisive shake-up and abolition of bourgeois property in city and village. The Communist Party not only rode but, as its policies show, tried to guide the rising revolutionary wave with which it was compelled to keep step. This dialectical relationship of party and class was the decisive factor. Aside from the early limitations already noted, the party promoted measures essential for the socialist reorganization of society..."

"Just as the Stalin regime was conditioned in its rise by the factors of revolutionary retreat, so the Mao regime has been conditioned in its development by the distinctive factors of revolutionary advance."

In contrast with both Li Fu-jen and Swabeck-Liang, Comrade Alvin offers a totally unacceptable explanation of why, to use his words, a "Communist Party...as thoroughly Stalinized and opportunist as the evidence shows" was able to win the civil war. He seems to lean toward the "vacuum" theory. "The Kuomintang regime had virtually no support left among the people. In these circumstances the Communist Party leading an insurgent peasantry won the military victory and opened the period of the Third Revolution."

There is no instance in history where a ruling class, no matter how corrupt and venal, no matter how oppressive or despised, merely collapses or fades away. It has to be vanquished. Nor is there any instance in history where a leaderless insurgent peasantry overthrew its oppressors, took over state power and established a workers' state.

And it didn't just "happen" in China, either. Chiang Kai-shek didn't just give up; the leaderless peasant masses didn't just rise and take power. Instead they were led, and effectively led, by the Communist Party of China.

* * * *

In 1955, information about China was not too readily available, but today there is a large amount of material at hand that illumines what has taken place there. In light of the knowledge we now have, we can no longer repeat the old phrases that describe conditions of a quarter century ago; we must stop tagging the Peking regime with the label of Stalinism and cease calling for its overthrow. We must recognize that it is, in fact, a revolutionary government and one that merits our support.

January 31, 1963