

The logo consists of the letters 'S', 'W', and 'P' in a stylized, white, sans-serif font. The 'S' and 'W' are connected at the top, and the 'P' is positioned to the right of the 'W'. The letters are set against a dark green background.

discussion bulletin

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REPORT TO THE LOS ANGELES MEMBERSHIP ON

THE PEKING-MOSCOW DISPUTE

by Milton Alvin

The ideological dispute between the Russian and Chinese leaders has reached a new stage. From both sides we now have a series of carefully reasoned arguments setting forth their respective positions instead of the previous exchange of epithets.

The immediate cause of bringing this dispute to a new stage was the "Cuban crisis" of last fall and the different answers given by the Chinese and Russians. Once again we see how a living and developing revolution -- the Cuban -- the problems it poses and the answers it gives, cuts deeply into the workers' movement and its various segments and compels all concerned to take a stand.

In the course of the developing process, differentiations occur, divisions widen, or agreements are reached, all depending upon the stands taken by the participants in the events and in the discussion around them.

The debate now taking place is more in the open because both sides find it urgent to win supporters and to make their views better known and understood. That is why both Peking and Moscow, the two most powerful participants in the discussion, find it necessary to explain their positions in reasoned arguments instead of just calling each other dogmatists and revisionists.

The debate itself is around the most fundamental questions of theory that affect the future of mankind:

1. How to face the problem of nuclear war
2. The road to socialism

All other questions are subordinate to these.

We propose to enter the debate in the most energetic fashion as Trotskyists, setting forth our views, noting where they coincide with those of other participants and where they differ. Actually, there are five tendencies that may be discerned in this discussion: Moscow, Peking, Cuba, Yugoslavia and the Trotskyist tendency.

In making our analysis, we can take the Russian and Yugoslav views together -- they are similar enough. Khrushchev and those who side with him, support as a principle, a so-called theory of Peaceful Coexistence. In practice, this works out as a division of the world into two blocs, a capitalist sector and a socialist, which should live in peace with one another and compete to see who can, as Khrushchev has put it, do better for its people.

This position leaves entirely out of account the class struggle in the capitalist sector and in practice leads to liquidating the workers' movements into supporters of capitalists who are willing to talk coexistence with the Soviet bloc of nations. It also leaves out or plays down the struggle of the colonial peoples for their national independence.

This position flows quite naturally from the material interests of an established bureaucracy in the Soviet Union.

Russia, in our time, is a prime world power and recognized as such everywhere. Its industrial, technological and population growth entitles it to this position. The ruling bureaucracy wants nothing as much as it wants peace to work out its internal problems which have by no means reached a satisfactory solution, either in the sphere of production or in the field of its relations with other segments of the Russian people. This desire for peace and for the status quo in the world relationship of forces reflects the position of the bureaucracy and its needs.

They are little, if at all, interested in revolutions in other countries or the road to socialism elsewhere except insofar as it affects them in their immediate relations with world imperialism. The sum total of their position is one of adaptation to the existence of imperialism and a desire to make peace with it, by agreements, mutual concessions and so on. Their position is nationalistic and is dominated by the theory of building socialism in one country, which they do not by any means conceal.

This is not to say that they do not sometimes aid revolutions in other countries, such as Cuba, but they do so only because of the risks involved in not doing so, and because they see an opportunity to strengthen their own international position.

The positions of the Chinese on the fundamental questions of peace and the road to socialism are quite different and flow from a different place in the world occupied by China. In making an analysis of the Chinese position it would be a mistake to leave out of account the fact that China does not have a place in the world similar to that of the Soviet Union and is, therefore, faced with different problems. Nor is the internal economic development of China on a plane like that of Russia and this, too, is a factor.

China is passing through an extremely difficult period of economic development, the causes of which need not be taken up now. In the international arena, China suffers from its isolation from the world market, imposed by the United States, American hostility and refusal to grant it diplomatic recognition, and admittance on a full scale, so to speak, into the family of nations which is reflected in slamming the door shut against them by the United Nations.

In short, China occupies a place in the world somewhat like Russia did prior to 1933 when Roosevelt granted Stalin diplomatic recognition and established relations for the first time since the 1917 Revolution.

The Chinese view of the world is, therefore, different from the Russian, caused in the main by the material conditions of its place in the present scheme of things. Their view is also influenced both by the fact that they have come to power largely by their own efforts, with little help from others, and because of the rupture of

good relations with the Soviet Union and the consequent cutting down of material aid from that quarter. This has resulted in further isolation.

In developing their views in the current debate the Chinese have expressed a number of correct ideas, particularly of imperialism's predatory aims, on parliamentary or revolutionary roads to socialism and on the colonial revolutions and attitude towards the colonial bourgeoisie.

We have published their views on these questions and others and should acknowledge, where they are correct, a favorable development, one that we welcome. From what they have said on some important points it is clear that they are nearer the truth than the Khrushchevites.

On the war or peace question, the Chinese view is that there must be unity of the Socialist countries against the imperialists, that this unity must constantly be fortified in various ways and that a more firm stand must be taken.

Their conception seems to be that if this is done, the imperialists will back down from their aggressive stand and will be afraid to start a war on a large scale, with nuclear weapons, since imperialism is a "paper tiger." This position suffers from a number of shortcomings; especially its paper tiger theory of imperialism. This is a serious under-estimation of imperialism which is not at all a paper tiger. Further, there is no reason to believe that even if the workers' states were completely unified in their attitude towards the imperialists, the latter would begin a retreat or voluntarily disarm.

The recent "Cuban crisis" showed that even though the Cubans had the support of all the workers' states, the Kennedy administration was ready to start a war against the Soviet Union if concessions were not made. It would be a serious mistake not to understand that, if it has to, the Kennedy cabal in Washington is ready to plunge the whole world into an atomic holocaust to defend American imperialism, especially its home base.

The following summary of the Chinese view on war is taken from their statement entitled "The Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us."

"We hold that the U.S. imperialist policy of nuclear blackmail must be thoroughly exposed and that all peace-loving countries and people must be mobilized on the most extensive scale to wage an unrelenting fight against every move by the U.S. imperialists in their plans for aggression and war. We are deeply convinced that, by relying on the united struggle of all the forces for peace, it is possible to frustrate the U.S. imperialist policy of nuclear blackmail. This is the correct and effective policy for achieving a ban on nuclear weapons and preventing a nuclear war."

Although they correctly describe certain aspects of imperialism and particularly American imperialism the Chinese seem to think that the whole question is one of policy, that is, of choice. The truth is that any advanced capitalist nation, such as the U.S., under the control of finance capital and huge monopolies, must follow an imperialist course and has no choice whatever in that respect.

The Chinese position differs from the Trotskyist on this point mainly because it leaves out of account the role that must be played by the working class in the advanced capitalist countries, especially in the United States. We believe that world peace can be assured only after the imperialists have been removed from political power and in no other way. There will never be any guarantee of peace in the world unless and until the workers right here in the U.S. have taken control of the country. No matter how difficult and long delayed this has been, and even how remote it seems at this moment, any theory that does not take this factor into account or even plays it down, is faulty and cannot be a guide to correct action.

On the war or peace question the Chinese views are not fundamentally different from the Russian. They differ tactically in that the Chinese want a firmer stand against the imperialists, which they think will cause them to retreat and disarm while the Russians are willing to make concessions that the Chinese oppose. It is not difficult to see that this kind of difference flows from the different positions occupied by the two countries in the world. Both the Chinese and Russian positions leave out the decisive role of the workers in the imperialist nations; that is the chief weakness of both positions.

The Chinese have developed and, in most cases, have shown in action, a better position than the Russians on colonial revolutions. The Chinese supported and recognized the Algerian revolution while the Russians were supporting DeGaulle, for example. Undoubtedly, their support of the Algerians helped bring the Russians around to a reversal of their position. In general, the Chinese take a more militant stand on colonial revolutions, particularly in Latin America, and there is no reason not to believe that they would and perhaps already do aid revolutionary groups there.

The Chinese attitude toward the colonial bourgeoisie is more correct theoretically than the Russian. On paper their view is close to ours -- that is, not to support the types like Nasser politically but to aid the working masses in the colonial, semi-colonial and former colonial countries to win political power. However, in action they are inconsistent, judged from their own stand.

In Indonesia, for example, where the largest C.F. outside the workers' states exists, the Chinese approve the support this party gives to the bourgeois Sukharno government. The Indonesian C.F. follows a Peoples Front policy in that country which is indistinguishable from the policy followed by all Communist Parties in the 1930's and after the Second World War.

Perhaps the Chinese go along with the Indonesian O.P. because that party's leaders have been developing their views in the Moscow-Peking dispute on the side of the Chinese, although up to this time they have not gone completely over to that side and have tried to play the role of peacemakers. Or there may be another reason, that is, that the Chinese have never disavowed their own Peoples Frontism of the past and perhaps they still think it correct under some conditions. At any rate, their position on Indonesia reveals a contradiction with their stated theory and they leave themselves open to the charge of opportunism on this point.

The Chinese have also developed an incorrect view of Yugoslavia. They call the Yugoslavs capitulators to imperialism and say capitalism has been or is being restored in that country. The latter point of course is simply not true. There is much to be criticized in Yugoslavia but its internal social character is not fundamentally different from that of China and the other workers' states.

The Chinese characterization of Yugoslavia as capitalist is not based upon a serious analysis of the economic and social relations in that country but on political expediency and factional frenzy. The Chinese seem to be developing the idea that agreement with the Russians depends largely upon the Khrushchev attitude towards Yugoslavia. Recent statements from Peking indicate that they have made this a central issue in the dispute. They want the Yugoslavs to be read out of the Communist movement, just as the Russians have read the Albanians out, have broken off diplomatic and every other kind of relations with them.

This attitude of the Russians towards the Albanians is in the tradition of Stalin and the adoption of such a position by the Chinese towards the Yugoslavs is not one whit better. For our part, we are opposed to this kind of thing by either the Russians or the Chinese.

There are different tendencies in the world movement today and they each form a part; they should all be heard and their views given consideration. This applies to the Albanians as well as the Yugoslavs, the Russians, the Chinese, the Cubans and ourselves.

The Chinese theoretical positions suffer from a dependence upon the authority of documents adopted at world-wide meetings of all Communist parties held in 1957 and again in 1960. There were already differences developing then between the Chinese and Russians but they were patched up, in part, by the adoption of documents that satisfied both sides. These documents were a hodge-podge of dissimilar views, giving something to each side.

The Chinese have now extracted from them those points which they support and cite them to refute the Russians. The Russians, of course, can do the same thing. This is a dubious way to proceed in the present discussion; it would be more correct to describe these documents for what they really are and to go on from there.

I think the Chinese did their best job in their answer to Togliatti, in their criticism of the politics practised by the Italian Communist Party. In this field the Chinese statement does a devastating job of refuting the Italians, of showing how their policy is nothing but a repetition of the kind of reformism that the Communist International under Lenin fought long ago and which the Trotskyists have continued to fight. They point out that the Italian C.F.'s political perspective of reforming capitalism out of existence by structural changes is nothing but Kautskyism and Social Democratic in character. We can go along with them in their answer to Togliatti on this point.

But the question arises quite naturally; if the Chinese see so clearly the revisionism of the Italians, why don't they say something about the French, English, American and other Communist Parties that follow a policy exactly like that of the Italians?

How can the Chinese reconcile their correct stand on the Italians and their stand on Indonesia where the Communist Party has prostrated itself before Sukharno?

The Moscow people, who dominated all the Communist Parties until the Khrushchev revelations signalled the breakup of the Stalinist monolith, made a universal theory out of supporting capitalist elements outside the workers' states, as part of their coexistence theory.

It is necessary to note that those Communist parties which have supported Moscow in the dispute with Peking follow the same policy that the Chinese have condemned in Italy. Obviously, having said "A" the Chinese will have to say "B." They will have to condemn the class collaboration policies of all the Communist parties that follow that line. The real test will come for them in the case of Indonesia.

Another test the Chinese should face up to is to subject their own history of class collaboration to a critical analysis. It is difficult, if not impossible, to take their opposition to Peoples Frontism at face value as long as they approve of it in one country and oppose it in another.

Another point on which we do not agree with the Chinese is that they are opposed to the public nature of the debate itself. They complain that they have been forced into a public declaration of their views and polemics and would have preferred to keep the discussion of the differences just among the various C.F. leaders, out of sight, that is of the memberships, to say nothing of the working masses everywhere. We, on the contrary, welcome the debate and the public turn it has taken.

The questions in dispute are decisive for the future of mankind and a public airing, with everyone's voice heard, is entirely in order and even vitally required. We think the present debate is one of the most important events taking place on a world scale right

now. We do not think that current efforts to turn the debate back in upon the narrow circles of the leaders will succeed; it has gone too far and too many people are now discussing the issues.

If I have stressed the differences between the Chinese positions and our own on a number of questions and not said as much about points of agreement there is a reason. What is taking place, on a world scale, and involving literally millions of radical elements of various organizations, backgrounds and opinions, is a theoretical discussion.

In these circumstances it is incumbent upon us to take part with our own theory and to indicate where we have differences and why with other theories that are advanced in the discussion. This does not at all preclude our support to any of the participants in the debate on specific actions.

For example, we defended the Soviet Union in 1939 when Stalin and Hitler divided up Poland between them. We opposed the act, but defended the Soviet Union despite our opposition.

At the present time, if we were in Italy, we would want to cooperate with any pro-Chinese faction in the Italian Communist Party. Similarly in Latin America, or any other region where there are elements supporting any of the correct views of the Chinese; we would seek a bloc with them and try to work together.

But in countries like Indonesia, where the C.P. follows a false policy, even though it may support the Chinese in the dispute, we would be opposed to them.

The position taken at this time by the Chinese is a centrist one, holding left-wing views on some points and right-wing views on others. The nature of centrist movements is to veer sharply from right to left, to be unstable and inconsistent. The Chinese show these characteristics clearly.

But they are a centrist current of a particular kind; one that developed out of Stalinism, and therefore, manifests its own peculiarities. They retain a good deal of the Stalinist baggage they started out with to this day. If certain comrades object to our calling them Stalinist, they are firing their shots in the wrong direction; the objection should be aimed at the Chinese themselves -- they so designate themselves or have up to now.

In the ideological debate now taking place, we must put forward our own full theory -- we see no reason to discard it in favor of that of any of the others.

We don't want to emulate the Marcyites who split from us in 1959 because they approved the crushing of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 along with the Chinese and we opposed it. They have published a statement on the front page of their paper entitled "For Firm Support to the Chinese C.P." in connection with the present

dispute. The article which follows shows a complete adaptation of these people to Maoism, completely uncritical.

We are not Khrushchevites, Maoists, Titoists or even Fidelistas, although we think the Cubans are closest to us and moving closer all the time. The journalist I.F. Stone, who described the leaders of the Cuban revolution as "unconscious Trotskyists" is close to the mark.

On the most fundamental questions the Cubans have developed positions that we have published time and again without any comment -- it was unnecessary.

The Cubans find themselves, however, in a difficult position in the present dispute. They receive most of their material and military aid from the Soviet Union and those countries in Eastern Europe that are supporting Moscow in the dispute. On the other hand, Castro's statements on world peace and revolutionary methods of struggle against oppression put the Cubans politically somewhere between the Chinese and ourselves, and certainly not in agreement with Moscow. The Cuban position has been in the process of development in the correct direction for the entire period since the overthrow of the Batista regime. It has gone farther, both in theory and action, than the Chinese development and stands closest to us of all the tendencies.

One question that up to now has not been raised by any of the participants but which should occupy a place in the discussion is that of proletarian democracy and democratic centralism. The Chinese certainly should raise this question in connection with the views expressed by leaders of some of the Communist parties who have come out in support of Moscow.

In the United States, for example, the C.P. National Committee not only supports the Moscow position in their official statement, but labels the Peking view as "dangerous thoughts" and makes a shameful amalgam between the Chinese and American monopoly circles. We defend the Chinese against this slander.

All this has been done without consulting the membership of the party, without drawing them into the discussion. We have heard nothing much of discussions in other Communist parties; in France, for example, and a democratic decision. Yet it will be difficult for the Italian C.P. to dismiss the Peking views, as well as our own, out of hand.

The fact that the Chinese submitted the Italian political position to a careful criticism will provoke a discussion in the ranks of the Italian and, I hope, in other Communist parties.

It is worth some consideration, from the standpoint of proletarian democracy, to look at East Germany and wonder if the ranks of the Communist Party have the right to disagree with Ulbricht and the pro-Moscow clique he heads. The Chinese could make a good

point on this question. But it is not easy for them; their record on proletarian democracy and democratic centralism is no better than that of the others, up to now. It may very well turn out, if the discussion continues and is not arbitrarily shut off by the leaders of both sides, that in order to gain supporters, the Peking group will have to take up this point.

The Chinese have had to go further than where they were, prior to the Cuban crisis, in the debate with Moscow. They may have to go still further in the future.

What is implied in the question of proletarian democracy is the nature of the various regimes in the workers' states. This question is bound to be raised in the course of the discussion too, although it has not come up yet. The views of the participants, with the notable exception of the Cubans, are similar. All of them conceive of and have actually built social systems based upon nationalized economies and planning but with privileged bureaucracies as the ruling groups, with very little or no democratic rights to the masses of workers and peasants, and with no way provided for changing the regimes by legal means.

It is true that the Soviet Union has gone a short way in de-Stalinization while China still extols Stalin. This is due mainly to the greater pressure upon the Russian regime from a relatively larger working class in a more advanced stage of development. But the ruling groups are all imprisoned by the theory of socialism in one country and each of them looks to a future development of building its own economy under the leadership of privileged bureaucratic groups that make all the important decisions.

The Cubans are an exception. There, the democratic rights of the supporters of the revolution are quite different. The Cubans have maintained proletarian democracy in the country and are working on institutionalizing the forms of rule. All the evidence we have is that they are moving in the right direction.

Of course, our view of building a socialist society is an international one, in contrast to that of both Moscow and Peking. We think the socialist society will be based upon a world system of economic cooperation and planning, including the present capitalist sector of the world. There is no other way.

That means the rule of the working classes must be established in the present capitalist countries; it is the basis for our revolutionary work here in the U.S. and everywhere else. But this revolutionary perspective for the capitalist countries is absolutely necessary not only for the road to socialism, but also for the road to peace.

We pose the question in this way: without the removal of the imperialists from the seats of power, peace is impossible, disarmament is impossible and the future of mankind very likely impossible.

That is the chief difference in theoretical outlook between Trotskyism and all varieties of latter day supporters of socialism in one country, among which we must include the Khrushchevites and the Maoists.

Only a complete break by the Chinese from this theory will free them to adopt correct theoretical positions. They have only taken a few halting steps up to now by their better position on colonial revolutions, the predatory nature of imperialism and the political position of the Italian Communist Party. The further development of the discussion will reveal whether or not they will move toward us, as we hope, or back in the other direction.

In the meantime, our best contribution is to make crystal clear the theoretical positions of Trotskyism, to get a hearing for our views and to win converts among those who are now taking part in the Great Debate.

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SUMMARY

by Milton Alvin

A question has been raised, whether there is a majority and minority in the present discussion on the Chinese question. Three years ago the N.C. Plenum voted on Swabek's position. He got one vote -- his own; everyone else voted against.

For everyone's information on this point, the position I and other comrades have taken in the debate is substantially the same as that held by the central leadership in the party.

We have tried to subject the positions of the participants in the Moscow-Peking dispute to a careful analysis and to compare their theoretical positions with our own. In particular, we have studied the views of the Chinese and welcomed the changes in their positions where they have moved closer to us. We have expressed the hope that they will come still closer and we have even gone so far as to indicate where they can, and we think, will have to do so.

But this is not enough for Comrade Swabek and his supporters. They demand that we do no less than declare ourselves to be Maoists on all questions. That is what they have contributed to the discussion here. Arne wants us to join the CCP though not as members. How many Chinese Trotskyists are still in Mao's jails in the 14th year of the revolution?

The minority keeps repeating that the Chinese CP has changed from what it was in the 1930's -- an idea that we also hold. The question is: what have they changed into? The minority say -- a Leninist tendency. We reject that estimate. There is no evidence for calling them Leninist or Trotskyist, which is the same thing.

The Chinese themselves reject Trotskyism very firmly. They refer to Trotsky as a renegade and worse. Salisbury observes that Khrushchev is called a "Trotskyist" by the Chinese. What kind of a party is it that thinks Khrushchev is a Trotskyist? What is their thinking? The CCP should be analyzed from this standpoint. Their political views, as we have tried to show, are not Leninist. At best their's can be called a kind of centrist position.

The minority has been swept off its feet by the fact that the Chinese have taken a better stand than the Russians on some questions. On the basis of this, they are ready to junk Trotskyism and embrace Maoism. We are not going to follow Swabek on this fatal course and we advise all those who have been led in this direction to take pause and begin to do some serious thinking. For our part, we have been, are, and intend to remain Trotskyists.

The world political positions worked out by the Trotskyists have, over the 40 years since Lenin died, stood the test of all the great events of that period. No one else has even come close. No one! It is important to keep this in mind.

Serious people who had been misled by Stalinism in the 1930's and 1940's, who have become acquainted with Trotskyism now say we were right in the past in fighting Stalinism and bureaucracy. If more people had known the truth then the history of the world would have been considerably different. They are right-- absolutely right.

To take up some of the specific points in the discussion:

Comrade Swaback informs us that Yugoslavia is capitalist now and that they should not be permitted to be a part of the workers' states. Edmond nailed this view down very well and I repeat what he said: If capitalism has been restored in Yugoslavia, when and where did the counterrevolution take place? The minority and the Chinese are mum on this point. But there is another interesting and revealing side to this question.

If Comrade Swaback agrees with the Peking view that Yugoslavia is now capitalist, we would like to know when he came to this opinion, especially if he arrived at it prior to two weeks ago last Sunday. If Swaback is indeed the best informed person on such questions as some comrades mistakenly think, he certainly failed to inform the party of his change of opinion on Yugoslavia. We have strong reasons to suspect that his views are of recent vintage -- that, just as soon as Mao declared the Yugoslavs to be capitalist and demanded their expulsion from the international movement, Swaback jumped to attention and saluted.

This should not surprise us. Swaback salutes everything that emanates from Peking. He has capitulated completely.

The minority tells us -- and has told us for some time now -- that they are critical supporters of the Mao regime. We have heard the support -- but we have not heard any criticism. They are silent on that side of the question. Not a single speaker for the minority has had a word of criticism to offer in the present debate. We therefore must come to the conclusion that they are not critical supporters at all, but in reality completely subservient to the Mao regime.

The bizarre view of Yugoslavia expressed by Comrade Swaback is proof of this point.

We are told now that Li Fu-jen did not support the 1955 Resolution of the party on China. This is news to us. If it is true, it has been the best kept secret in our organization for a long time. Actually, he did support the resolution as virtually the entire party did at that time.

It is now said he was undergoing a change in his views on the nature of the CCP in 1949 and 1951. This is worth some attention as Li Fu-jen used to be the party's specialist on China -- although not now. I quoted from his views of the Mao regime from his 1949 article entitled: "The Kuomintang Faces Its Doom" as follows:

"With scrupulous fidelity they have geared their policies to every twist and turn of the Kremlin 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."

Please note that this was written on the eve of the CCP victory over Chiang Kai-shek.

Li Fu-jen and the rest of our party understood that to the extent that the CCP carried on a war against Chiang, even though the war was forced upon them by him, they were departing from their usual Stalinist line. We have consistently held this view of the Civil War in China that brought the CCP to power.

If we have certain views of the CCP, especially its history, we have to thank Li Fu-jen for all the evidence he uncovered about their real nature.

Swabeck's recent discovery that it has been a Leninist party since Mao came to power in it, in the middle of the 1930's, is disputed by his associate Liang. Liang, who knows better, makes a shame-faced disavowal of Swabeck in his article, "Where I Differ with Comrade Swabeck on the China Question."

Nevertheless, it is pertinent to inquire of Comrade Swabeck, how is it that Trotsky never noticed that the CCP had become Leninist? We have asked this before, but we get no answer. How is it that no one in the world Trotskyist movement noticed this until Swabeck discovered it recently?

One reason that Swabeck is peddling a new version of the nature of the CCP is that given by his associate Liang. This merits close attention.

Liang writes in the same article that Swabeck relies "...not on newly discovered facts, but on the carefully edited writings of Mao Tse-tung, supplemented by the now stale reportage of such fellow-traveling liberals as Edgar Snow and Agnes Smedley."

This is an appreciation of Swabeck's method by his closest collaborator.

In addition, Comrade Mitt reminded us that Swabeck forgets today what he wrote yesterday. His article against the Marcyites of 1957 correctly explained our view of the Chinese Revolution. Apparently Swabeck completely forgot that he wrote this. At any rate, he has not explained to us how he came to disavow his former views and adopt Marcy's that he once opposed.

I hope the comrades appreciate the contribution made here a week ago last Sunday by Comrade Hilda, who asserted that we support the Chinese Revolution like the rope supports a hanging man. This

means our party is the mechanism used to kill the Chinese Revolution since it is the rope that chokes the hanging man to death. Everyone should think about this remark of Hilda's which for sheer factional venom it would be impossible to beat.

The minority comrades take the stand that in the Moscow-Peking dispute we have to line up with the Chinese or we are standing aside in the debate. I don't know by what logic anyone can come to this position.

Just exactly why can't we enter this discussion with our own views? Why do we have to junk our position and adopt someone else's? This has not been explained to us.

Two other comrades in the discussion said that our attitude toward the Chinese is like Wolforth's toward Castro. This is not true. But even if it were, is it not possible that Wolforth has an incorrect position on Cuba and that our position on China is correct? Merely to assert two different tendencies take certain views on two different regimes -- China and Cuba -- does not explain anything at all. They have to be examined concretely.

Comrade May, in her two turns at bat in this debate, I am sorry to say, struck out both times. She told us that if she had to choose between what she calls a bureaucratic revolution or none at all, she would choose the bureaucratic revolution, since what counts is the revolution itself.

This sounds like an attractive proposition on the face of it. At least it puts one definitely on the side of revolution, if nothing else.

May implies that we think the Chinese Revolution is a bureaucratic one but we should support it anyhow, since everyone knows it is better to have a bureaucratic revolution than none at all. However, we never said the Chinese Revolution is a bureaucratic one. In fact, I don't know what a bureaucratic revolution is. There is no such animal. It's like the Purple Cow. Everyone talks about it but no one has ever seen it.

In Eastern Europe, the Russians accomplished revolutionary overthrows by military-bureaucratic means. Maybe that is what May has in mind. But this did not happen in China where a huge mass movement, organized in a military force, fought an open civil war and overthrew the previous rulers.

There was no similarity at all with the way things were done in Eastern Europe by the Soviet armies and the Stalin regime. We don't think the Chinese Revolution was a bureaucratic one at all. We do think it is being led by a bureaucratized C.P.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to make one's way in politics with views like those expressed by May on bureaucratic revolutions. I would like to know if anyone thinks that a revolutionary

party can be built in this country with a line like May's. Who is going to listen to any talk about making a bureaucratic revolution in the U.S. -- or anywhere else?

This point has importance not only because it deals with our perspectives here but because it shows how far some of the minority have travelled from any kind of logical thinking or realistic perspectives. It is impossible to build a revolutionary movement in this country by advertising the Mao regime as something we want to copy.

I don't doubt for a moment that Trotsky is turning in his grave, as Swabek said, but it isn't because of what we say and stand for. It is because of people like Swabek, presumably educated in our movement, who have now gone over bag and baggage to Maoism.

Comrades have brought up the question of democracy in China. Grace said they have democratic rights at the Commune level and there is no more democracy in Cuba than in China. The facts speak differently. In China, following the first Khrushchev revelations, Mao inaugurated the Hundred Flowers Bloom campaign, permitting critics to speak out, which they did. But the flowers did not bloom very long; the campaign was abruptly terminated. The critics, including left-wing critics, were branded Rightists and some were unceremoniously thrown into jail. A thing like that doesn't bother Comrade Swabek very much.

In one of his articles, "The Peking Regime and Stalinism," he blandly describes how so many tens of thousands were rehabilitated after so many years, and more a couple of months later. He doesn't bother to tell us what happened to those who were in jail nor how many more remain in the jails.

But we have evidence of some who have gone through Mao's distinctive rehabilitation course. Before Chiang Kai-shek was overthrown, an American couple named Rickett, went to China to teach at one of the universities and at the same time to do a little spying for the U.S. government. After the Communist Party had overthrown Chiang, they remained at the university, teaching and spying as before. Eventually, they were suspected and apprehended. The man was jailed for a few years and the woman was under virtual house arrest for most of the period. Finally, they were released and permitted to return to the U.S. where they published their book "Prisoners of Liberation."

Their experience in China converted them into supporters of the Mao regime -- that is why their evidence is important. They travelled all the way from agents of the U.S. government to Maoism -- quite a distance. Their book gives descriptions of how political prisoners are "re-educated" in the ideas of the CCF.

A compulsory class is held in the cell every day at which one of the more experienced and already convinced prisoners presides. Naturally, all the texts are by the infallible Mao. If a prisoner

is not convinced, or not convinced to a degree which satisfies the jailers, his ankles are chained together. If that doesn't bring him over to the proper frame of mind, his hands are chained behind his back. After these lessons, the prisoner is required to write a document explaining his conversion. Usually the first attempts are scorned and returned to him again and again with the demand that he do better and explain more convincingly why he is a devout Maoist. At any rate, the couple who wrote the book finally succeeded after a few years in convincing the authorities that they were bona fide supporters of the regime -- and they were.

What kind of ideology is it that requires this kind of systematic, brutal brainwashing? Is it Leninism? Is it Trotskyism? Is it proletarian democracy?

This book does not testify to the existence of any democracy in China, among the people at large. Nor does it exist in the party itself. We never hear a dissenting voice from the party -- only announcements that deviationists and Rightists have been removed from their posts. What the critics of the regime had to say -- in the more than 13 years since Mao came to power, is unknown; blacked out.

This testifies not to a unanimity of opinion but to a well organized totalitarian regime that prevents opponents from getting a hearing. This side of the CCP is thoroughly Stalinist; they have just as efficient a way of removing critics as Stalin ever had. The only difference is that Stalin purged his victims physically while Mao prefers the brainwashing method. Comrades who have been misled into believing that there is democracy in China today of any kind should read "Prisoners of Liberation" and do some serious thinking about Maoism.

Nothing of this sort has been reported from Cuba where Castro has called for making the revolution "a school of unfettered thought" -- and carried this demand out in action. Even the Bay of Pigs prisoners did not report any attempt to brainwash them. All visitors to Cuba, friendly and unfriendly to the regime, report that critics of every kind speak freely in the streets. (Even Life Magazine -- rebidly anti-Castro as it is -- was obliged to admit in its recent spread on Cuba that everyone in Cuba enjoys freedom of speech and thought.)

These facts demonstrate that there are differences between the Cuban regime and the Chinese regime -- they are not, as the minority claims, identical. The Chinese regime is heavily Stalinized -- the Cuban is not.

One further point -- on the 1955 Resolution, and the question of a political revolution. Our conception of a political revolution is not the distorted, undialectical version given by Liang in his Open Letter, but the one I described in my reply to him. The charge made here that to advocate political revolution is counter-revolutionary is but a feeble echo of the Stalinist slanders of long ago.

So long as no means are provided in China, the USSR or other workers' states for opponents of regimes to function as revolutionists, a political revolution is in order. At the same time if the facts demonstrate a drastic change in the situation, we too can change our documents in keeping with the new situation.

Finally, before anyone goes too far in junking Trotskyism and embracing Maoism, here is a summary of some of the positions now taken by Comrade Swabeck:

1. His support of the dictatorial, bureaucratic regime in China and, to borrow an expression from the Chinese, his "prettyfying" of it.
2. His readiness to throw the Yugoslavs out of the fraternity of workers' states.
3. His one-sided and pragmatic view of the Great Debate as one limited to Moscow and Peking, leaving out the Trotskyist position as of no consequence.
4. His undialectical identification of revolutions and their leaderships without analyzing their differences.
5. His approval of Mao's type of Peoples Frontism.
6. His false charge that we are dogs yapping at the heels of a great revolution because of our critical appraisals of its leadership.
7. The criticisms of his views expressed by Liang, his closest associate, who refuses to re-write Chinese history.
8. His attempt to junk Trotskyism and along with it the Trotskyist scientific method of appraising and evaluating regimes in workers' states.

* * *

The issues between the majority and minority are now clear. Fundamentally, it is a dispute between Trotskyism and Maoism.

The greatest mistake we could make in America is to become supporters of any bureaucracy, either in the workers' states or anywhere else. This would destroy our movement.

Our course should be to enter all discussions and participate in all events with the program of Trotskyism, the genuinely scientific doctrine. In the long run it is the Marxist ideas which will triumph in life as they have already done in theory. We do not intend to abandon them.

POSTSCRIPT

On page 8, paragraph 2 in "The Alvin-Reed School of Quotations," (Discussion Bulletin, vol. 24, no. 8) Hilde MacLeod attributes the following to Evelyn Reed and me as our estimate of the Chinese Communist Party: "rotten, counter-revolutionary, class-collaborationist, crassly cynical, trescherous, deadly foe of the toilers, the greatest obstacle in the path of revolutionary development, a too corrupt ever to redeem itself bureaucracy." We deny writing this and want to know where Hilde MacLeod is quoting from. All the quotations in our articles were carefully identified as to authors and sources. It is unfortunate that Hilde MacLeod was not equally careful, above all in an article devoted to honesty in quotation.

M.A.

THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY PLAYED A HISTORIC REVOLUTIONARY
ROLE IN AN HOUR OF MANKIND'S GREATEST PERIL

by I. Warwak

The acid test of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary politics was manifest in the Cuban crisis of October. The Chinese Communist Party organized demonstrations of millions in defense of Cuban sovereignty, and in opposition to U.S. imperialism. The caste in the U.S.S.R. bartered Cuba's sovereignty, and whitewashed Kennedy.

The privileged caste in the U.S.S.R. is the betrayer and hangman of revolutions, the organizer of working class defeats. Their current chief N.S. Khrushchev doesn't have the same leeway as Stalin did to carry out a counterrevolutionary program, but he does his best in the given circumstances.

Khrushchev's aid to Cuba, military and economic, is partly due to popular sentiment and pressure on the caste for such aid, emanating in the Soviet bloc and advanced sectors of the world working class and peasantry.

The caste uses that aid to strengthen their supporters in Cuba, and so that they themselves have leverage for their counterrevolutionary peaceful coexistence. Khrushchev's program in the Caribbean crisis would have sold the Cuban Revolution down the river and dealt a monumental blow to the opening stage of the socialist revolution in the Western hemisphere. The Chinese Communist Party defended world peace, the Cuban Revolution, and made a historic contribution to the victory of the world revolution, in a moment of peril greater than any mankind has yet faced.

The CCP gives widespread publicity to major documents of Revolutionary Cuba, including Castro's speech denouncing bureaucracy and sectarianism. This act of theirs in contrast to the Escalante's and Khrushchev's around the world who would like to see that speech gather dust, and were busy preparing thermidor for the Cuban Revolution, raises an important question. Does the bureaucracy in China control the party and state apparatus or is it controlled? Castro's speech attacked most that Stalinism is. If the Chinese bureaucracy were in control would they indict themselves? The bureaucracy in China is more servant than master.

The following are the reasons we should give the CCP critical support:

1. The CCP led the Chinese Socialist Revolution.
2. The Chinese Communist Party's domestic policy is based on the alliance of the working class and poor peasantry and reflects their interest.
3. The Chinese Communist Party has a revolutionary foreign policy.

From these undisputable facts it follows that:

1. The Chinese Communist Party is no longer a Stalinist party, i.e., the instrument of a specially privileged caste having interests in conflict with the world proletariat and peasantry.
2. Trotskyists the world over should give the Chinese Communist Party critical support.

Our criticism should be based on the demand for implementation and strict adherence to the norms of proletarian democracy, plus an attack on the ideological remnants, and the organizational carryovers of their Stalinist period. Critical support means never failing to criticize them on positions we think are in error. But the first task is to make clear our support in words and deeds.

Chicago
April 10, 1963