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THE COMING AMERICAN SOCIALIST REVOLUTION:
Draft Resolution on Strategic Perspectives

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Errata

- Page 4 Paragraph 2, line 16. But, exactly one year before the Russian workers destroyed Czarism, they were literally praying to the Imperial Baboon as their "Little Father."
- Page 5 Paragraph 3, line 3. True, a tiny vanguard of the most intelligent, most morally advanced workers come to Leninism as individuals for individual study.
- Page 6 Paragraph 3, line 3. Secondly, since man's existence is proof of the effectiveness of his response (in general) to nature, this suffices to demonstrate that his sensory apparatus (vision, hearing, etc.) affords him a reliable picture of his universe.
- Page 10 Paragraph 2, line 22. When such a combination, embracing the majority of the working-class and its allies, attains more than temporary (ad hoc) existence, the United Front becomes the government of the working class, a power capable of engaging in decisive struggles for the history of humanity with Johnson and company.
- Page 18 Paragraph 1, line 4. Of course a survey of the opinion of capitalist officials and economists is absolutely no basis for demonstrating anything but the state of that body of opinion respecting truths which must be otherwise ascertained concerning the nature of the situation.
- Page 24 Paragraph 3, line 20. It is only necessary for the trade unions to become transformed from trade unions as such into formations of a politically conscious class to assure conjunctural victory once the youth and minorities also are organized. Should the working class of 1958-59 have risked its indispensable capital, its organized combat formations, in order to undertake a struggle without the organized alliance of youth and minorities?
- Page 31 Paragraph 1, line 11. In the same vein, equally counterrevolutionary in effect, are those parties and movements which, in one way or another regard the armed might of the U.S.S.R., centrist (Stalinist or Social Democratic) parties, or "tail-ending" China as the symbol of the colonial revolution--as a substitute for the struggle for socialism at home.
- Page XIII Paragraph 1, line 15. This process, a product of conditions, of each Trotskyist system to get the country was given its subject matter for a lesson on the death of Stalin . . .
- Page 11 Paragraph 1, line 3. Just because some of these tactical opportunities correspond exactly to the determined norms of radical or socialist party strategies this work can not be effectively argued without a

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Page XIII Paragraph 1, line 15. This process, a product of conditions, of each Trotskyist movement in its own country, was given its subjective basis for expression by the death of Stalin and Deutcher's thesis of an evolutionary reformation of Stalinist forces.

Page XVI Paragraph 1, line 4. Just because none of these tactical opportunities correspond exactly to any predetermined norms of radical or revolutionary struggles this work can not be effectively pursued without a constant dialectical dissection of these developments for the purpose of distinguishing their contradictory content from their appearances.

"The crisis may first break out in England, in that country which gives most of the credit and takes the least of it, because the balance of payment due, which must be squared immediately, is against it, even though the general balance of payments is for it."

-- Karl Marx (1)

§1. The Impending Social Crisis

The entire capitalist world, including the U.S., is now rapidly approaching its fifth great social crisis since 1914. This does not arise merely from the fact that the U.S., at the height of its prosperity--as in 1929--faces a probable new world monetary crisis. The impending eruption is being created now by the increasingly desperate measures--including the War in Viet Nam--to which the financiers' governments resort in their efforts to prevent and solve their economic predicament. The slaughter which Johnson, like Kennedy before him, now imposes upon the people of the colonial world is a prologue and rehearsal for the coming attacks Johnson must make upon the working-class in the so-called "advanced" countries.

Since 1914 the objective conditions for the victory of socialism have appeared four times. Yet, that revolution has been confined to the so-called backward countries of Russia, Eastern Europe, China, Cuba, etc. In each of these four situations the failure to transform the whole world to socialism has been the result of profound weaknesses of the organized revolutionary movement in at least one key country, in a country, such as Germany of 1919, 1923, 1932, where the defeat of the working-class forces gave the strategic advantage to the imperialist forces in all advanced countries. In Germany, 1919, the Spartakus party was too weak, too poorly prepared to compensate for treachery (and actual butchery) by the leadership of the Social Democracy. But the post-war imperialist economic slump soon recreated revolutionary conditions in the weakest link of "Western Capitalism," Germany; there was no doubt that but for the capitulation of Zinoviev, Brandler, Stalin & Company, 1923 would have seen a rolling wave of victorious socialist revolutions; but for that incompetent leadership there would have been no 1929, no Great Depression, no Hitler, no extermination of six million Jews, no World War II, no present age of thermonuclear horror, and long since an end to hunger and oppression among two billion of the world's present poor. In Germany, again, in 1931-33, the general conditions for socialist victory existed; the stupidity and treachery of the Social Democrats and Stalin, however, simply handed Germany over to Hitler. A new world-wide crisis emerged at the end of World War II; the French and Italian nations were waiting for the Communists to take power, an act which would have swept all Europe with socialism and created the objective conditions for a socialist struggle in the U.S. within that same period. Here the Stalinized leadership of the French and Italian parties, on direct orders from Stalin, handed France over to DeGaulle and all of Western Europe to U.S. Imperialism.

The lesson that we must all learn from that history is this. At the time when the working-class and its social allies begin to recover their militancy and think of socialism it is already far too late to begin to develop a leadership and program for socialist victory. The moment in which it is possible for the working-class to gain state power in an advanced capitalist country is, above all, brief; it may be a matter of days, before the fascist gangs and demoralization of sections of the working-class and lower middle classes moves the strategic advantage from the side of the workers to that of their enemies. The periods in which that moment approaches are no time for learning by painful processes of trial and error. (The United States is not Cuba, 1959!) Unless a qualified leadership is developed in advance, the likelihood of socialist victory diminishes to an improbability. A qualified leadership, above all, means an organized vanguard that foresees "the social revolution in this country, as the realistic perspective of our epoch." (2) A qualified leadership, above all, is an organization that does not wait for mass movements to exist before acknowledging the conditions for their necessary existence. A qualified leadership, above all, foresees the necessary emergence of great struggles through a scientific analysis of great events being molded in advance in the economic basis of current history. This is exactly the same as to say, with Lenin, "Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." (3)

The emergence of a new social crisis is now fully determined. If the exact dates are not set, the general course of present history is determined within an ever-narrowing range of possible alternatives. Whether the outcome of that crisis will be socialism or fascism, or, whether, in fact, there will be any future human history on earth at all, will be determined by the quality of the theoretical and organizational preparations of the socialist vanguard in the advanced countries at this very instant.

§ 2. Leninism As a Strategic Plan of Battle

To win a "war"--and we dare not regard this struggle as anything less--it is indispensable to proceed strategically at all times from the most precise estimate of the capabilities, resources and self-interests of the contending forces. In one sense, our battle against Johnson's gang of "gook-killers" (4) is usefully likened to a tiger hunt; we prevail not by the mere nobility of our intentions nor more personal bravery than our enemy, but through our most guileful insight into the way in which the tiger is compelled to behave--just because he is a tiger. The materials of our "military intelligence" and "general staff" work are not what Johnson says he will do, nor would we gain much from knowledge of Defense and State Department classified plans and "contingency" papers. Johnson is absolutely compelled, whatever else he may say or think, to use all of imperialism's capabilities and resources in the service of "Rockefeller's" increasingly desperate world-wide interests. In ordinary military staff work, it is by analogous means that a military commander may know far better than his enemy exactly how that enemy must act. This principle was developed to a very advanced practical form by Trotsky, architect and leader of the Red Army: the so-called strategic perspective. (5)

This is not to imply that the highest attainments of Marxism represent a mere contribution to military science. Yet, perversely, one of our strongest proofs of just that reservation is Marx's own extraordinary insight, preceding discoveries of the best military professional by years, into the proper conduct of the American Civil War. This achievement can not be attributed to Marx's study of military questions as such, in which Marx plainly depended upon the superior particular knowledge of both Engels and socialists in commanding positions in the Union Army. The key point is that Marx saw through the limited dimension of purely military considerations exactly at the point at which Engels grew pessimistic respecting Union victory. (6) War is far more than the continuation of politics by other means; it, like the political process it immediately reflects, is governed by the same underlying material processes which determine human history as a whole. Marx's analysis of the North American Civil War and his exact call for the March Through Georgia as the strategic key to Union Victory emerged directly from his economic analysis of capitalism and the way in which the interests of the capitalists and other classes were determined in the means of production and distribution. He thereby understood, as the history of that War demonstrated, that the military course must ultimately be brought into conformity with the material (i.e. economic and class) realities. Trotsky's development of the strategic perspective (also Lenin's!) is a continuation and enrichment of particulars of Marx's strategic conception of the North American Civil War.

E.g., Johnson & Company will absolutely attack the fundamental self-interests of the British, French, Italian, German-- and U.S.--working-class because the course of present economic developments leaves them no choice. E.g., there is only one general form of struggle by which the working-class can defend itself successfully in face of this inevitable attack, the formation of United Fronts on the programmatic basis of transitional forms of "workers' control." (7) The pace of this developing social crisis will absolutely not be determined by the gradual, autochthonous development of "class consciousness" among the workers, nor can the crisis or the course of its social forces be ascertained by plotting the number or extent of votes for socialist candidates, strikes, demonstrations, etc. on graph papers. The crisis will be precipitated, regardless of the previous social and political postures of workers, exactly at the time that the development of the economic crisis compels Johnson & Company to impose the class struggle upon the working-class. In just this same way it is absolutely determined that Wilson & Company must either take the socialist road completely or become the Noskes of the British Social Democracy. (8) The previous political condition, militancy, organization, etc., are hardly irrelevant questions; they have considerable bearing on the preparation and capacity of the workers to resist the attacks by Johnson's "gook-killers"--but they are absolutely irrelevant to the timing of the conjunctural confrontation itself. Such examples are a first step toward grasping the implementations of the strategic perspective.

The one side of our present perspective is, as we have indicated thus far, to determine what Johnson & Company are com-

pelled to do, how they must respond to the resistance we are able to marshal against their atrocities. If we leave matters there, however, we are at best brilliant commentators on the course of current history--a pursuit which we might conduct ably from a climate-controlled "plexiglass"-domed observatory on Mars or the Moon. Our strategic insight into Johnson & Company is only the indispensable context of political analysis for organizing the capabilities, resources and self-interests of our side in this war.

"Arm the U.S. working-class with a strategic perspective for victory?" our critics jeer: "Even if your 'plan' has any merits, you must first find an army with the guts to fight." It would be difficult to slander the majority of the U.S. working class. Fight for their rights?--conditions in many union shops are worse than before the CIO! "Overtime whores?"--not an exaggeration generally. They are plucked and defrauded left and right by union officials conniving with bosses, politicians and gangsters; and swindling union bureaucrats are not entirely wrong in saying, "They have it coming to them." Worse, they are as guilty, in the slaughter of women and children in Viet Nam, Congo, Santo Domingo, as the Germans under Hitler for Hitler's cremation factories. In fact, it seems hardly an exaggeration to say that they would elect "John Bananas" to the Presidency, if he could somehow secure the Democratic nomination; after all, they did vote for Johnson. But, exactly one year before the Russian workers destroyed Czarism, they were literally praying to Imperial Baboon as their "Little Father."

But our critics absolutely do not understand the worker --even when they are workers themselves. Why should a U.S. worker today be anything but a servile apostle of capitalism, why should he fail to congratulate his son for the medal won in bayonetting and napalming the "gooks?" After all, his employment his standard of living, his pension, all depend upon the goodwill of his employer. Idiots who imagine themselves socialists say that it is only necessary for the workers to seize the factories, set up their own government, and all will be well; but the American worker, through all his "stupidity," knows far better. The American worker knows that he, as an individual, or even as a member of a factory committee, is absolutely incapable of running the factories, solving the problems of what to produce and how to distribute it. Tell him otherwise and he will tell you, rightly, "You're nuts!" Therefore, however courageously he may fight the boss, the cops, the state legislatures, the national guards, or "gook-killers" called back to deal with the national emergency at the gates of U.S. Steel, his fight is limited to a struggle for a better deal within the capitalist system. However strongly he hates bosses in general, or a particular corporate flunkey, he still, at bottom, regards the system of capitalist bosses as a necessary, unavoidable evil.

The first practical principle of the strategic perspective is to rid oneself of all foolish notions about the "nobility" of the workers, or the claptrap that it is merely necessary for the workers to seize the factories and elect their own government to set the world to rights. Unless we begin with the facts of the the profound moral corruption of the workers, their profound

incompetence in management, we shall never discover a solution to these key obstacles to socialist victory. The first, and always the most fundamental task and objective of the strategic perspective is to change the human nature of the working-class as a whole entirely.

it is no accident that the name of Karl Marx is today identified with Socialism (or Communism) to the exclusion of all his contemporaries who aspired to that esteem. It is not accidental that Socialism should come into being mainly through the intellectual leadership and programs of the Karl Marx who dedicated so much of his life to the study of the capitalist economy. For, to overcome the worker's servility, his immorality, it is necessary to begin by over-coming his ignorance of the secrets of capitalist production. Marxism distinguishes itself from all other substitutes for socialism by "Opening the Books" of capitalist society. Its "success" depends ultimately on the fact that only Marxism qualifies the working-class to overcome its incompetence; thus, only Marxism frees the working-class from its otherwise inescapable dependence upon capitalist management of the means of production. Other substitutes failed not because their authors loved the workers less, but because substitutes for socialism did not give the working-class the power to feed and clothe itself. Only when the workers are qualified to replace the capitalist butchers of Viet Nam can they free themselves from degrading servility to those butchers. (9)

In Leninist practice, this does not mean organizing a school in economics and production management in any ordinary morally advanced workers come to Leninism as individuals for individual study. But the class as a whole has an entirely different sort of schooling in store for it, the school of transitional struggles, the United Front.

§ The ABCs of Marxism

Once grasped, the principles of Marxism are absolutely elementary; but only a tiny minority of those even in the so-called radical movement have speaking acquaintance with the ABCs of this subject. To be exact, one of the greatest immediate obstacles to the progress of the socialist movement is the extent to which the tradition of the university "survey course," e.g. glibness in reciting empty half-truths, meaningless jargon, irrelevant truisms, etc., passes for competence in radical circles. For this reason it is impossible to say anything of importance about socialist ideas or tasks without first listing the most essential features of Marxist principles and methods.

First, Marxism is a science which depends, unlike all other sciences, on a single premise: Man's active existence. Where other sciences try to establish a rational picture of our universe in terms of objects (such as elementary physical particles) outside man, Marx stipulates that the only premise for all human knowledge is the existence of man himself. This is not to say that objects outside of our skins are not real; they are real just because they exist for us as objects of our human activity. (10)

The most immediate fact concerning the existence of man is his reproduction of new members of his species. This occurs as man expends his energy on "nature" to produce the means of existence for himself and his family. In this way man (as a given population) represents at any time a certain accumulation of consumption of the material means of existence; as such, he is shown to produce a greater material means of existence than he (that population) embodies, thus providing the basis for an increase in the population.

But as man exploits the material conditions for production about himself, he uses up those conditions, and, as his population increases, he exhausts the existing extent of the material conditions previously suited to his successful reproduction. At this point man distinguishes himself entirely from all other animals by deliberately changing both the material conditions of production and his methods of production.

This rudimentary fact of human existence suffices to prove several interrelated points which are absolutely decisive for any scientific work. First, man's successful existence suffices to prove that his organization, his physical apparatus, is appropriate to the material universe in which he exists. Secondly, since man's existence is proof of the effectiveness of his response (in general) to nature, this suffices to demonstrate that his sensory apparatus (vision, hearing, etc.) affords him a reliable picture of his universe. Since, thirdly, his deliberate changes in the material conditions of production and methods of production have made possible a population which could not exist on earth under primitive conditions, man's consciousness is necessarily appropriate, in the final analysis, to the material universe as it actually exists.

But man does not reproduce himself individually. He is born into a society which already has an established mode of production, and his personality must therefore evolve in a way peculiarly appropriate to that mode of production. Thus, in every sense, individual man is entirely a social product, in his material existence and in the ideas which his society gives to him and otherwise causes to emerge within him.

On this premise we are already able to grasp the meaning of dialectical materialism without resorting to any Hegelian exotic word-algebra. The immediate implication of dialectical materialism is, proceeding from the points listed above, that as man successfully reproduces himself, he alters the material conditions of his own reproduction and is thus compelled to alter in a fundamental way the organization of his society for the production of its material means of existence.(11)

As Leninists, with a particular task in view, our immediate interest in these ABCs of Marxism is focussed on modern capitalism, as it emerged from European feudalism and as it converges upon the limits of its useful existence.

Three general conditions produced modern capitalism. First, productive technology under feudalism had attained the general level at which a large fraction of the population was sufficient to produce the material means of existence of the whole population. This would have meant a surplus of serfs to be employed by their nobles in expanding European feudalism beyond its existing boundaries. However, for many reasons, the rate at which feudalism could expand in this way was much lower than that necessary to employ the surplus serfs reproduced. Thus, a significant surplus population emerged, the second condition. Thirdly, the germs of capitalism already existed,

By simplifying the production of commodities, the primitive manufacturing system, the capitalist was able to employ unskilled surplus serfs in production for sale, to create new luxury commodities to sell to, for example, the aristocracy. Since there was a surplus of serfs, the capitalist did not depend upon the children of workers' families for new labor. Therefore, he could pay his manufacturing labor a wage below that required for the sustenance of healthy workers' families. Furthermore, the lower his wages, the greater his profit, and the more rapidly he could accumulate capital for materials and equipment with which to employ more workers and reproduce more profits. At the same time, by increasing the mass of available commodities, the capitalist increased the appetite of the aristocracy, for example, for the consumption of commodities. In this way the aristocracy was impelled to exact more wealth from its serfs. It resorted both to "speed-up" and to use of its ancient powers to create laws for draining still more of the peasant's wealth. All of this wealth inevitable flowed into the coffers of the new capitalists, who thereby gained the means for employing more ex-serfs, as wage labor. It would be correct to say that the capitalists used the appetites of the aristocracy to bring about their economic ruin. When the aristocracy finally marshalled itself to fight back against this encroachment, it found capitalist, worker and serf alike all turned against it. Thus, with much more zigging and zagging, backing and moving forward, sideways, etc. than we have by any means implied, a previous mode of its successful reproduction of itself created the conditions for its own supercession.

The question, of course, is: What is the corresponding dialectic of the decline and supercession of capitalism?

It is already established (above) that capitalism progressed in its rise by using accumulated unpaid labor for the employment of an increasing labor-force, an increase at least significantly maintained at the expense of the peasantry. The decline to 5-7% of the labor force in the U.S. required to feed the entire population is the most striking demonstration of that process. It is implicit that as the available source of new labor diminishes, by depopulation of the countryside, that drastic changes must occur in the structure of capitalism.

What we have briefly described is the way in which

capitalism reproduces itself. It is also the capitalist mode of human reproduction. It represents, in respect to previous feudalism, an increase in man's power over nature, the ability to reproduce the human population at a greater rate to dimensions way beyond feudalism.

But it is not quite so simple, Apart from the peasantry, which we have already considered in brief, capitalism is composed of two main classes, the capitalists and workers, who reproduce themselves in absolutely different ways, a distinction which, in the animal kingdom, would suffice to distinguish entirely distinct species. The identity of a capitalist in capitalist society is represented by a magnitude of capital. For a capitalist to reproduce himself, for example, to produce an additional species-member like himself, he must reproduce an at least equal mass of capital. Thus, the fertility (the effective rate of increase of the population of capitalists) of the financier-class is exactly expressed by the rate of reproduction of capital, i.e. the rate of profit. It is proper to say that the rate of profit is to the capitalist class what the defense of its litter is to any other animal species. The reproductive needs of the working-class are, however, limited to the fertility of the working-class family. Thus, as the capitalist begins to exhaust the surplus farm labor supply of new workers in his national economy, the material basis for his previous rate of profit diminishes. Work for him, the very need to depend upon the fertility of workers' families for new workers and the accompanying rise in technology, requiring more skilled workers, compels him to further diminish his rate of profit by higher wages! --not with much zest for this change, but material reality enforces itself, however bloodily at times.

Thus, as capitalism diminishes the farm-population to a small proportion of the population as a whole, the material conditions for the reproduction of capitalists begin to disappear exactly at the point where the development of technology favors the reproduction of the working-class in a qualitatively improved way. Implicit, at this point, is the fact that if the working-class can assume the management of the economy, it no longer has any real use for the burden of the capitalist class. Yet, at just this point, the capitalist class is impelled to the frenzy of a species consciously facing its imminent extinction.

Capitalism did not collapse, however, when the boundaries of national capitalist development were reached. It found a new supply of cheap labor to continue the capitalist process in the colonial world: imperialism, the fundamental change in the form of capitalism which began to appear in the last half of the nineteenth century.

Imperialism could not, however, offer a long-term solution for capitalism. Since the colonial countries are so poor in their development and since the profit-hunger of investors from advanced capitalist countries is so large, imperialism, in effect, contracted the very markets it was raping. The

superprofits stripped from the colonial world by imperialism represented the national capital of these regions which would have had to have been left in those regions if their internal markets were to be developed for further capitalist expansion. Thus, between 1905-1914, it became apparent that the billions of cheap labor in the Southern Hemisphere were not sufficient to meet the needs of a handful of capitalists in Western Europe and the United States: World War I. Exactly because that war, like World War II, was simply competition ("free enterprise") in its most advanced form--i.e. save the firm's profits by ruining the competition, its outcome could only be the ruin of capitalist states as capitalist states. This ruin of some capitalist states (i.e. underdeveloped Russia, defeated Germany, etc.) coincided with a period of crisis even among the victors, bringing into being the first general period of social crisis under Imperialism.

The situation today is a more advanced and complex version of that encountered in 1914-1921.

But we have not yet resolved in these ABCs the key to the ignorance of the worker. This omission is merely a matter of organization of this material, for the key to this question is found in one of the earliest theoretical occupations of Marx: alienation.

Alienation, stripped (as we did with dialectics) of exotic word-juggling, is simply this. It is the "essence" of human nature that man reproduces himself by his labor. In the first instance, as we have noted, he represents accumulated consumption of the material means of existence (in rudimentary terms). In reproducing himself, he necessarily must produce more material means of existence than he embodies. Our portrayal is more complete if we extend this same principle to include the ideas and other essential apparatus of human reproduction through labor. It is the integrity, the connectedness of this process of reproduction that embodies a man's identity. However, under capitalism, the worker is robbed of his human nature, his integrity, his identity. He is not free to reproduce himself. On the one hand, he can not actually produce the means of his own existence except by the consent of the capitalist as employer; secondly, he cannot obtain the very means of existence he produces except from the capitalist. He is not free to act as a man, i.e. reproduce himself by his own labor; between the two sides of his human nature stands an alien species, the capitalist, who tells him whether or not he is permitted to be a human being. It is the brutal irony of this miserable condition that just because the worker is compelled to see this alien being, the capitalist, as the necessary link between his labor and his means of existence, the worker surrenders his humanity to an alien being.

In a more primitive state of society, it would seem sufficient to solve this particular alienation by giving a man a piece of land. But such a general solution is impossible. If mankind were to seek to return to such a primitive state of affairs he would compel the majority of the human population to extinction so that a small minority might live "freely" in a

primitive way. The material means of existence of modern life represent the product of many kinds of labors. It is therefore impossible for man individually to liberate himself from alienation. He must accomplish this socially. Marx underlines: "...individuals must appropriate the existing totality of the productive forces." (12)

This is the "secret" of the United Front and the transitional program. (13) Where ignorant socialists propose that factory committees shall seize the plants, Trotsky warns that the struggle for socialism must proceed from demands for the material necessities of life. For example, struggles in the construction workers' industries cannot themselves have a socialist character, since the construction workers, in taking over their industry could not conceivably solve the fundamental problems of its existence. However, if slum-tenants, unemployed, construction workers, workers in construction materials industries unite on a common program of housing, schools, etc., proceeding from consumption, they have broken the back of alienation in principle, uniting their respective immediate material interests as labor with their material interests as consumers of the products of labor. Struggles of the working-class and its allies which thus bridge the division of labor of the working-class respecting programs of consumption or other material and social conditions of life exactly embody the key to the fundamental change required in the competence, morality and combat capabilities of the working-class and its allies. Such a political combination for common conditions of life, material, social, political, is a United Front. When such a combination, embracing the majority of the working-class, a power capable of engaging in decisive struggles for the history of humanity with Johnson & Company. That exemplifies the connection of the ABCs of Marxism with the strategic perspective.

Of course, it is easy to explain the United Front and transitional forms of struggle in such or other words. Yet to have described them accurately is not to communicate their meaning. Since, under the present state of things, we have associations of "different groups" and individuals in clubs, associations, group demonstrations, etc., even trade unions, the first time the reader learns of this United Front he naturally adds it to the bottom of the list of the existing kinds of association he already knows. And, just because he has a useful working-knowledge of trade unions, the Elks, the PTA, Boy Scouts, etc., he deceives himself that his insight into such organizations is more or less sufficient for the new organization referred to his attention, the United Front. It is easy to describe the United Front accurately, but it is very, very, difficult to overcome the prejudices which prevent the reader from understanding plain words on this subject.

It is useful to beg the reader to compare his own situation with that of a group of uneducated fishermen encountering a porpoise for the first time. The porpoise lives in the sea, has the gross morphology of a fish, and will be regarded by fishermen as another fish until something forces them to correct their ignorant first impressions. Otherwise, a

bat resembles crudely some Cretaceous winged reptiles, some moths look like hummingbirds--the animal kingdom is filled with instances of remarkable similarities in morphology and mode of existence among species which are absolutely different. Even today's survey courses in evolutionary ecology present the paradoxical parallelisms in form between marsupials and placental mammals.

These similarities in gross morphology among distinctly different species, among members of absolutely distinct orders of life, are not the product of nature's caprices--for nature, however rich in its variety, is not capricious. A certain kind of carnivorous existence is appropriate to certain forms of limb, torso, fang, sensory apparatus, reproductive mode, cub-rearing; as a marsupial or mammal differentiates itself from other marsupials or mammals to become a species with this mode of existence, its evolution must tend to converge on such parallelisms in form--just as any living creature which takes to a winged existence, reptile, bird or mammal, can only attain this by certain adaptations appropriate to the laws of gravity and aerodynamics. For example, the famous case of the coelacanth first caught off the coast of Madagascar in 1939, which, at first glimpse seems to be merely a strange variation of ordinary fish--to the fisherman; to the paleontologist that fish's existence today is almost as explosive a discovery as a Tyrannosaurus Rex strolling along New York's Fifth Avenue. The coelacanth, which looks grossly like any other ocean fish, was last seen (before 1939) in abundance 350 million years ago, as a fresh-water ancestor of land-dwelling vertebrates. Coelacanth looks like a fish, but on closer scrutiny and dissection we find, in place of ordinary fins, a rudimentary forearm (so-to-speak) and hand (or foot) forming a fleshy part of each important fin. Sometime in the past 350 million years coelacanth left fresh-water existence to slightly change his form and behavior as a deep-water ocean creature, just as the cetaceans, in taking to the sea from their ancestral state as land mammals evolved the fish-like morphology and forms of motion appropriate to that new mode of existence.

This is to emphasize that the United Front, just because it comes into existence in capitalist society, has morphological features which make it appear to be, to the careless observer, just another of the forms of social existence of capitalist society, like the Moose, trade unions, churches, PTAs. In this respect capitalist society can be likened to the sea, as a particular domain of existence which imposes certain general morphologies and behaviorisms among the organisms which subsist there. However, if the United Front resembles a trade union or PTA it is as different in fundamentals, i.e. as a "species" of organization, as the porpoise differs from a fish.

The United Front forms a distinct "species" of organism within capitalist society in this way. Other organizations, like the PTA, Knights of Columbus, or trade unions, are constituted on the basis of very narrow practical interests in common in fact, they are the normal products and means of perpetuation

of capitalist, alienated existence. They in no way change the fundamental relationship of their members to capitalist society they are only institutions of capitalist society, like the church or Washington lobby, through which sections of that society institutionalize, i.e. strengthen, reenforce, deepen, the alienated form of capitalist existence. The United Front exists on the basis of the workers' direct relationship to themselves; the existence of the United Front is a qualitative change, however momentary, in all social relations: with its emergence, for the first time, the working-class has directly linked its fulfilment of its material (and superstructural) means of existence with its own power to produce. If the United Front has more than a momentary existence capitalism must immediately cease to exist. The United Front, as a species of social "organism," embodies a qualitative change in the relationship of man-to-man and of each man to himself.

We have already said that the worker or even the factory committee are utterly incompetent to master the problems of production and distribution. This incompetence obviously does not arise from a deficiency in the workers' brain-tissue, since any intelligent worker can be trained to become as expert a corporate president as any of the skilled flunkies now working for Wall Street in this capacity. His incompetence arises from his intrinsic limitations as an individual (i.e. alienated) worker, just as the incompetence of the factory committee arises from the fact that it can not, organically, see beyond the particular products of its plant, can see its existence only in terms of wages.

What well-meaning pseudo-socialists (as those who would confine their strategy to "electrifying the masses," "guerilla warfare," etc.) entirely fail to grasp is a fact which is always foremost in the attention of every tolerably competent corporate officer: that plans of production must proceed from "marketing forecasts," otherwise the best schemes of productive efficiency can not be brought into line with the delivery of commodities to the market place in the right quantity at the time they are needed. Modern capitalists have been compelled to create a special "marketing" department, to organize vast marketing data collection facilities through trade associations, State and Federal Government agencies, etc. because of the falling-rate-of-profit, on the one hand, which makes it difficult to recoup capital expended in surplus production of unsalable products, because of the enormous growth in the quantity of investment per productive worker, and because of the oligopolistic concentration of production among relatively few firms in each division of commodity production. Marketing is the capitalist's necessary way of attempting to circumvent the inevitable anarchy of capitalist production. If individual workers or factory committees merely seized the factories and set up a national government to maintain such institutions, the result could only be a caricature of the capitalist mode of production, which must inevitably lead to the emergence of a "corporate" bureaucracy which resembles in its social outlook and methods of management etc., the existing capitalist bureaucracy--the capitalist bureaucracy without the capitalist. The key to effective national

planning and management of production is implicit in the example we have already introduced: the committee of tenants, unemployed, construction workers, et al, in the development and implementation of a housing program. Just as such "syndicalism" epitomizes the germ-form of the United Front (ultimately, the Soviets), so the United Front, in its permanent form (the Soviets exactly) establishes the complete competence in principle of the working-class to succeed in management of production exactly where the most brilliant capitalist administrators must fail.

For, if there are 190 million persons in the U.S., with a labor force of 80 millions, each representing up to 1,800 annual productive hours of labor-time, the United Front must, by its nature, approach the planning and management of production in the following way. First, it establishes a "minimum wage" and related minimum conditions of life, such as educational facilities, recreation and leisure facilities, etc. On the basis of known material needs (housing, food, clothing, etc.) it is readily possible to translate this bill of human material needs into a bill of production. After meeting these material needs, the United Front discovers that perhaps only 40 millions of the available labor force has been employed. The "saving" of 40 millions (80 less 40) can be used to increase leisure, education, etc., and to accelerate the development of the productive forces (e.g. increase automation) so that, in succeeding years, a constantly higher standard of living can be provided with a constantly increasing population and a constantly decreasing number of per capita labor-hours.

Once that principle is established the worker in the factory ceases to work for wages as he does under capitalism; he works to contribute his social part of his own means of existence. Money does not become meaningless immediately; obviously, the total wages paid must not exceed or fall far short of the prices of commodity-production for consumption. To some extent wage-differentials and even wage-incentives will probably continue for some time, until the virus of capitalist ideology and morality has been washed out of the blood of our species. But his relationship to the means of production ceases to be that of an employee, ceases to be a matter of wages. If he continues to bargain (ultimately with himself) for more wages, this bargaining ceases to have a trade union character, and becomes, as it must, his particular political "axe to grind" in the collective decision of all workers concerning the goods to be produced under the current national plan.

Just because the welfare of society (the United Front) depends upon all of the productive forces available, every man is vitally self-interested in the employment security, education, standard of living of his fellow-man. Your power to produce, the development of your ingenuity, your ideas, etc., become an indispensable part of my own power to exist in a better way. The category of unemployed, impoverished outcasts, ghetto Negroes, Puerto Ricans, etc., must cease to exist not because of a "religious conversion," but because the poverty of one is a ragged cloth which must be worn by all. One's regard for one's fellow-man must necessarily be likened

to the best feature of military combat existence, in which my life depends upon your skill, your morale, your "firepower," your power to create better methods, your power to produce better things, your ability to contribute to the mastery of disease, etc.

It is true, of course, that the United Front tends to come into existence through more limited defensive or rudimentary economic issues, such as defense against police brutality, high rents, imperialist wars, civil rights; these are proper issues of the United Front just because these issues are intertwined with material conditions of human life. However, if the leadership of the existing or impending United Front struggles does not go beyond ad hoc issues to a program of production based on the inventory of human material needs, the United Front must decay to its cancerous, degenerate state, the "Popular Front." It is almost inevitable that the United Front should come into existence under the prompting of attacks by Johnson & Company, as an initially defensive organization; it must immediately, in terms of the program advanced by the socialists, go over to the attack by proposing a program to take over the means of production. If one confines one's struggle to defending oneself against Johnson's crimes, in the end there is no resort but to bargain with the criminal, to perpetuate his power to commit crimes, to give him breathing-time to marshal his forces to crush new defensive mobilizations.

In recent years there has arisen the "myth" that socialist struggle means "independent political action," i.e. "all your problems will be solved if you only elect socialists to power." This myth is as bankrupt as the proposition that workers' control means workers councils, i.e. those of Yugoslavia--i.e. factory committees as a substitute for Soviets. It is, of course, indispensable that socialists be elected to government, but the administration of the capitalist state by socialists can as likely lead entirely away from socialism as toward it. The bankruptcy of the 'independent political action' tactic emerges when it is proposed as a substitute for the United Front. A workers' state, socialism, is brought about only by a distinct species of organization of the working-class and its allies. It is quite necessary to campaign for the election of socialists, but these campaigns are bankrupt unless their main platform plank is the call for practical organizations of the class (as of committees of tenants, unemployed, construction workers, etc.) as the actual state organizations which will have power when he is elected. No socialist will campaign on the platform of proposed capitalist laws to benefit the workers; he can only campaign on the platform of the taking of state power by the workers. If he can win an election (except as a sewer socialist) it is clear that the political and social conditions for the existence of United Front organizations already prevail. Otherwise, independent election campaigns must be propaganda campaigns in behalf of the idea of the United Front on the basis of transitional demands, which include the main points of the socialist's "state budget" for the appropriation and use of the totality of the productive forces.

That, as a view of the relationship between the ABC's of Marxism and national socialist struggles, exemplifies the strate-

gic perspective for "our side" which only needs to be extended, according to the same principles, on a world scale.

84. The Impending Capitalist Economic Crisis

The impending decline of U.S. Imperialism has the same immediate cause as the collapse of the Achaemenid (Persian) Empire, the decline and fall of Rome, the bankruptcy of all of Europe's leading financial houses in the late sixteenth century and the 1929 "bust." While the Persian Empire, and the Roman after it were not capitalist societies, they had each developed a powerful class of mercantile capitalist-financiers-speculators. It was the Babylonian merchant-speculator who drove the peasant from his feudal "bow-tenure" plot and introduced slavery into agricultural production there, thus ruining a carefully-developed and delicate system of intensive hydraulic agriculture developed over two thousand years. In Republican Rome, a section of the mercantile capitalist class appropriated the individual plots of peasant intensive agriculture, turning them into vast, inefficient, estates using slave-production; as a result, Rome lost the power to feed itself and survived, as the Roman Empire, only by looting richer, more productive countries about it, until they, too, fell into economic ruin through the extension of Roman financiers' slave-system. Similarly, in 1929, the speculations of the financiers, which brought the stock market and other investments of that kind to the point at which the entire real profits of the world capitalist system were insufficient to maintain the rate of profit existing stock values required. The same cancer is bringing U.S. Imperialist prosperity, at the very height of its power and prestige, to the same terminal condition in general seen in these examples from preceding history.

Such speculative busts are not always fatal to capitalism. Europe's greatest period of capitalist expansion came after the "South Sea" bubble collapsed. The U.S. Land Bank explosion occurred decades before this nation's most energetic period of expansion. For a capitalist economy with decades of prosperous expansion before it, a speculative bust means that a lot of ordinary working men, women and their children suffer for a while, a few bankrupt financiers take the short road to the sidewalk, but after the undertaker has done his work, the surviving financiers do quite nicely, thank you. In capitalism's youth, busts, like the regular business of shooting down strikers, wars, etc., are no more serious for capitalism-in-general than a mild, endemic virus. But, the same disease, striking its victim in his old age, may have fatal results. This is the present perspective of Johnson & Company.

When U.S. Imperialism emerged from World War II it had good reason to fear an early financial collapse at home, like that of the early 'twenties, following World War I. It was saved from this embarrassment by Stalin, who strictly honored the Yalta and Potsdam agreements (which is more than can be said of Truman and Churchill) by handing the U.S. Western Europe on a "silver platter." In war-wrecked Western Europe the U.S. found a substitute for the cheap surplus farm labor of national capitalism's heyday. Better,

Europe offered a market of unemployed skilled workers, through which to realize capital from the backs of U.S. workers at home as super-profitable investments in the employment of cheap, skilled European labor. In order to provide the internal market of Western Europe with some starting-money with which to pay for U.S. investments (at a superlative rate of profit), the U.S. anted up outright donations and long-term credit. A major part of the U.S. balance of payments deficit today is nothing but the cost of priming the West European pump to maintain the profits of U.S. financier-investors in that region. This process of general credit-expansion of U.S. Imperialism in the U.S. and Europe was begun, as we know, with the Marshall Plan, which set the pattern for the whole two decades since.

However, by 1957 the general basis for the post-war boom had been exhausted. If Western Europe had not had at least six or seven years of vigorous U.S. investment ahead of it, the 1958 recession would have been a decennial depression. But, because of Western Europe, mainly, the U.S., after stumbling through three-odd years of economic stagnation, started on a new spurt of development, the current "Kennedy" boom. Yet, by the late Spring of 1964, it was evident that the glorious days of general Western European expansion were reaching an end. The Italian capitalist renaissance had already turned into a general contraction of that economy; workers recruited for the industrial complex of northern Italy just shortly before were taking the desperate, dusty trip back to the familiar misery of their childhood in Southern Italy. The German Federal Republic's fabled "economic miracle" was waning under the effects of an inflationary rot, like that which preceded 1957 in the U.S. The French economy had entered a period of stagnation. Britain, the junior partner of the U.S. Dollar, was plainly facing a monetary crisis, which actually burst forth in November of that year; in one panic-stricken week, the British economy was only saved from collapse by an emergency \$3 billion loan by the central banks of the other capitalist countries; there wasn't even time to telephone Johnson--Britain's bankers telephoned the real rulers of the U.S., the masters of the Federal Reserve System, direct.

The unfolding events of today are only, in general, a confirmation of the warnings made by the leading imperialist bankers in mid-1958, and of the general economic perspective advanced in the SWP by its Marxist economists at the same time. The U.S. faced the pre-conditions for a probable monetary crisis by the middle or late 'sixties. (14) Referring to Marx's analysis of just such a process of capitalist credit-expansion, a few of the more commonplace facts in general knowledge are sufficient to prove the general character of the present economic situation:

- (1) The nature of U.S. credit-expansion as shown by the present official \$1.3¹/₂ trillion public and private debt;

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- (2) The decline of the industrial labor force as a proportion of the whole labor force; the increase in unemployment and a growing number of permanently impoverished;
- (3) The persistence of the U.S. and British balance-of-payments deficits since 1957-58; the fact that existing potential claims against U.S. and British gold reserves are already far more than sufficient to precipitate a general monetary crisis far, far deeper than that of 1929 and following;
- (4) The galloping rise of stock market and other speculative holdings to trading-values way above that dictated by a price-earnings ratio test;
- (5) Deepening centrifugal tendencies within the U.S. economical bloc on economic policies and on political questions (e.g. DeGaulle's China and South-east Asia policies) which bear directly on the increasing desperate scramble for national solvency which energizes these conflicts;
- (6) The established secular decline in the rate of expansion of Western Europe and Japan;
- (7) The absence of any established areas for large-scale imperialist expansion in the "Southern Hemisphere";
- (8) The fact that the "Kennedy" policy of wage-and price-lines, and of spurring domestic investment by effectively enormous reductions in the corporate tax rate, only seems to increase the long-term rate of U.S. economic expansion by measures which are bringing about the contraction and threatened collapse (Britain, Italy--Japan?) of those very investment markets and national customers on which the whole of U.S. prosperity and economic stability depends.

Jacques Reuff of France aptly sees "the world drifting into a situation similar to 1928-29 unless something" is "done" (15) Both Mr. Rueff and Professor Triffin said there was no need now for increased liquidity. The danger was in the present system breaking down without a replacement.

"Professor Triffin said measures being taken now by the United States to curb the outflow of dollars were aggravating the situation." (16) Such remarks are only representative of the main subject-matter leading the agenda of all published reports of conferences among leading bankers. The London Economist has been generally most frank and accurate on just this subject; the Federal Reserve Bulletin and other official and semi-official U.S. financial publications have been most candid at moments; the 1959 hearings of the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress included many useful insights into the thinking of private and official bourgeois economists, bankers, etc. on this vital ques-

tion of the developing economic crisis. Even the more serious of the "slick" periodicals, such as U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, have veered notably close to open admissions of the nature of the situation. Of course, a survey of the opinion of capitalist officials and economists is absolutely no basis for demonstrating anything but the state of that body of opinion respecting truths which must be otherwise ascertained concerning the nature of the situation. But, the state of official insight into the developing economic crisis does warn us of the mood for policies to deal with such a predicament. Ultimately, the eight facts we have cited, taken in respect to Marx's analysis of a general crisis, suffice to show us the present course of events.

The impending general crisis could break out, in historic terms, almost at any time. The most immediate threat to international capitalist monetary stability is the extreme rottenness of the British economy; while the U.S. economy might conceivably withstand the collapse of Pound Sterling, it is more likely that a really serious City crisis in Britain would set off a chain-reaction which would not end before something far deeper and more devastating than 1929 appeared. It is impossible to state exactly when or how that crisis might burst forth; it is not for reasons we shall consider, even certain that that bust will occur in this period. The best scientific appraisal of the economic situation likens the U.S. dollar's world-position to that of an accumulation of high-test gasoline in one's cellar; the explosive portents can be ascertained with precision. It is more difficult to foresee what damned fool will light a match or how a random spark might intervene to trigger the potential holocaust into actuality. Ours is not to predict the exact date of bust, or even to guarantee its actuality; our object is to understand the problems this presents to Johnson & Company, to the workers, the colonial peoples, and how such tasks generated in the economic foundation of society determine the necessary course of solutions sought by the respective classes in the domain of politics, war and social struggles. Our main concern is for the narrow range of, all monstrous, alternatives which Johnson & Company are compelled to pursue in their attempts to prevent and postpone that crisis and, beyond that urgent task, find some new basis for the survival of U.S. Imperialism for at least a decade or so.

§ From Economics to Politics

- The immediate problem of U.S. Imperialism is that its credit-expansion has flowed substantially into an enormous mass of debt, and has produced a speculative rise in fictitious capital such as inflated stocks and real estate. In order for the capitalist system to forestall a general spread of bankruptcies, a constantly increasing flood of real money (not credit) must be found to meet payments due on the interest account. (e.g. \$434 millions of NY City's estimated \$3.8 billion tax bill must go into the coffers of financiers.) At the same time the present values of stocks and real estate (for example) depend upon an increasing flow of real cash (as "leverage" into the stock and real estate markets; if this increased flow of hard

cash is not forthcoming, the ensuing collapse of stock values is almost automatic. All of this hard cash must come from real (cash) profits from capitalist's production and from the pockets of tax-payers. But, just because capitalism is increasing the number of employed workers at a far slower rate than the mass of combined actual and fictitious capital, the available hard cash needed to keep the financiers from bankruptcy can not grow as rapidly as real capital, fictitious capital and debt collectively require.

There are only two solutions, in principle. One is to open up some new area of the world for investment in cheap labor. The other is to squeeze a larger portion of the cash already in circulation from workers' pockets into the coffers of the financiers. Reduced to essentials, this means either a new wave of U.S. Imperialist expansion or fascism at home. Reading the leading financial journals, studying official speeches on policy, inspecting treaties negotiated in recent years, there can be no doubt that the leading bankers and their advisors have recognized this perspective rather exactly since 1957-1958.

The first response of the ruling circles, at home, in the U.S., was the beginning of the campaign to take a bigger chunk of produced values out of the workers' hides. The first of these steps was the Federal Reserve System's decision to "repeal" the law first and then explain to Congress why afterward. That is to say, the Fed repealed in effect the "full employment security" clause of the National Security Act of 1946 by simply refusing to supply the economy with sufficient credit to keep unemployment in boom periods to within a 3% maximum. This was put into effect in June-July, 1958, not because the Fed was determined to worsen the plight of American Negroes (the social effect of this measure), but because a dangerous speculation had broken out in Federal Securities, the kind of speculation, as the Fed later explained to Congress, that could have led to a collapse of the U.S. dollar on the world market. (in effect, this meant that because the financiers could not control their own efforts to undermine the dollar, the working-class would have to suffer!) The second step in this new policy was manifest in late August, 1958, when all major steel-users began to stockpile heavily (in the depths of a recession!) as part of an open conspiracy by bankers, politicians and corporations to attempt to break the back of the United Steel Workers in a planned lockout for 1959.

Kennedy continued and further developed this anti-labor policy immediately after taking office. His first two important measures were to institute "wage and price guidelines" and to make the first step in a major tax giveaway to the biggest corporations, the so-called investment tax credit. It was not necessary for Kennedy to resort to new statutes to effectively hold down wages. He had the active "cooperation" of the leaders of the AFL-CIO; if dissident factions arose in unions challenged the trade union bureaucrats, the NLRB machinery could--and did--act selectively to reward the trade union-fakers for their treachery by acting as a virtual government goon-squad to help the bureaucrats keep the dissidents in line. Thus far, according to a former labor bureaucrat now with the NLRB, addressing a union, the Landrum-Griffin

Law has never been applied except with the support of the trade union bureaucracy! The so-called "guarantees of union democracy" etc. of this law therefore mean in practice: use your goons on your dissidents, we will only interfere to help you put a dissident local into receivership, or to help you harrass an opposition through dragged-out court proceedings. Johnson, in his State of the Union message identified Kennedy's wage "guidelines" as an essential cornerstone of national policy, a vital question of the "national interest." (17) In other words, Kennedy and Johnson, continuing the policy established under Eisenhower, have effectively held down wages under conditions of super-speed-up while effecting super-reductions in the tax rates of major corporations through the "investment credit" double give-away.

It would be a grave error to limit our attention to the Federal Government's role. The enormous rise in public debt since World War II has been in State and Local Debt. This has been a twofold gift to the financiers out of the pockets (mainly) of the working-class. First, these State and Local Debt-financed projects amount to an enormous trough which every major corporation has gorged itself from, apart from the notorious swindles public works have come to represent. Secondly, by virtue of an ancient Supreme Court decision, the same Debt is contracted mainly through the big investment bankers as a source of tax exempt dividends! In sum, borrow from Rockefeller in order to pay Rockefeller's investments in corporations super-profits, and pay Rockefeller handsome tax-exempt income for the privilege! If it were not strictly legal (by the book) we could call such arrangements by their right name. (Because of the way State and Municipal financing is determined by statute, the City or State Comptrollers' and Treasurers' offices are virtually nothing more nor less than the meeting places at which financiers dictate the terms on which State and City governments will operate. In effect, the Governor's, Legislatures, Mayors, etc., can not make a move without clearance from investment bankers, just as even the U.S. Treasury, before issuing new State Bonds or Bills, provides a closed room in which leading private financial agencies may review and revise the form, denominations and terms of proposed Government indebtedness.)

The other main wing of post-1958 U.S. Imperialist policy was first set before the general public in Eisenhower's 1960 State of the Union message, although detailed discussions of this policy already existed in less conspicuous but public records as early as mid-1958, although the new policy was being put into effect before Eisenhower deigned to let the people in on his new imperialist policies.

The ability of U.S. Imperialism to expand its investments in Latin America, Asia, Africa has been limited by the nature of the industries in which imperialism had traditionally invested: mining, plantation crops, etc. Virtually all of the imperialist investments in the colonial and semi-colonial countries have been in the extraction of ore, etc., in the production of raw materials and semi-finished commodities in the advanced countries. Obviously the rate of such investments in Latin America, for example, is limited by the "demand" for such materials (oil, tin, copper, coffee, sugar, etc.) by industries in the advanced

countries; furthermore this "demand" is limited by the rate of industrial expansion in the exploiting countries.

It would seem, at first glance that imperialism need only shift its perspective from oil, tin, rubber, coffee, to "runaway" consumer commodities industries in Brazil, Chile, India, etc. However, the superprofits extracted from these countries over centuries by mercantile capitalists, outright thieves and imperialist investments have so denuded these countries of the capital needed for their development that these territories generally lack (except for a small proportion of the population in a few metropolitan-type centers) an internal market capable of sustaining direct imperialist investment along Marshall Plan lines. Finally, in order to have a surplus labor force capable of being absorbed in domestic commodity production, it is necessary to develop agriculture to the point that a fraction of the total labor force engaged in food production can competently feed the entire population. But the imperialists' involvement in and support of the plantation system has diverted the best lands to commodities of agriculture for consumption (like coffee, sugar, rubber) only in the exploiting countries. In order to realize superprofits on plantation investments it has been necessary to go even further, to take effective measures to curtail the opportunities for making a living in intensive, individual farmer, agriculture, for the development of healthy intensive farming by individuals drives up the price of agricultural labor on the plantations. In most of these countries, the existing independent peasantry can scarcely feed itself, let alone sustain an industrial population.

Up to 1957-58 there was no serious doubt of the continuing close alliance between the comprador gangs that usually run Latin American countries, for example, and the U.S. State Department, CIA and Marines. The Latin American Junta, the prototype of U.S. foreign policy in the Southern Hemisphere (e.g. Diem in Viet Nam), was an essential part of Rockefellers', Grace's United Fruits' branch offices in these countries. But the "colonels," who generally represented the plantation-owner class or families intricately intermarried with plantation-owners, after 1958 represented as a class a multiple obstacle to the solution of increasingly pressing U.S. needs to open up the internal markets of their countries (the so-called "infra-structure") for U.S. Imperialist investment.

After 1957-58, the U.S. Imperialists committed themselves to a two-pronged policy of "Marshall Plan" aid to these countries accompanied by U.S. support for "managed social revolutions," as Johnson recently repeated in giving instructions to the representatives of Latin American governments. In order to create the conditions in which "Marshall Plan" aid, like the "Alliance for Progress," could produce investment opportunities, it was necessary to eliminate the grip of the plantation class. This deep social and economic change could not be accomplished a la U.S. Ambassador John Peurifoy's direction of fascist Castillo Armas' overthrow of the Arbenz government in Guatemala. The U.S. needed social movements, especially corrupt social-democratic movements, like Betancourt's in Venezuela, or--so they thought in the State Department and NY TIMES offices until Spring, 1959--Castro's in

Cuba.

On these grounds the U.S., throughout 1959, strongly pressed the Belgians to grant Lumumba state power; on these grounds, even as Eisenhower was delivering his 1960 State of the Union address, his State Department was putting signatures on a treaty with Nehru that gave U.S. and Western European Imperialists extraordinary privileges and rights in India. (It is scarcely accidental that India should foment the Sino-Indian border "war" in the shadow of that treaty with Imperialism.) The vacillating support of the overthrow of Trujillo, the subsequent arrangements to overthrow Bosch, etc., etc., ad nauseam, in Dominica and Viet Nam policy are, with the history of the Cuban Revolution, exemplary models of the difficulty which the State Department and Defense Department has encountered in trying to make this policy work. The War in Viet Nam can absolutely not be understood in any way, unless we understand that the \$2 billion Mekong River Development project is a scheme to develop this rich rice-growing area as the means (food-supply) for an imperialist exploitation of the vast population of India, an exploitation that can not even begin without outside solutions (like the Mekong project) to the crisis of subsistence in India. On the outcome of the war in Viet Nam hangs, in a very large measure, the immediate determination of whether U.S. Imperialism has any hope of getting its new expansion launched, or whether it has to face the alternatives of monetary crisis and even fascism in the advanced countries. Anyone, on these grounds, who hopes to influence Johnson to a "saner" course in Viet Nam must be put down as an absolutely ignorant fool in the domain of current politics.

These are the main lines of development along which the current economic situation is translated into its political counterpart.

§6. Again--Economics to Politics

Just because capitalist expansion absorbs the last-to-be-employed and the young, capitalist stagnation, or an appreciable decline in the rate of industrial expansion at home, means a contraction in employment for the youth and the working-class minorities.

Just because, again, human behavior must ultimately respond to economic conditions as they affect the reproduction of classes and sections of classes, the decline in the rate of capitalist development has alienated the minorities and youth most sharply from the "mainstream" of capitalist society. In being denied access to a means of expressing their identities as human beings, according to their previous status or conception of status, youth and minorities form the basis for radical ferment well in advance of the organized working-class. This has been the general course of social movements in this country since 1957-58, a ferment which sharpened under the influence of the rise in prosperity--just because the contrast between much-advertised prosperity and alienation was the sharper, and also because social movements do not arise instantly, but lag in their initial formation behind the pace of events that call them into being.

Just because of this superficial abnormality in the emergence of radical ferment (the relative passivity of the organized working-class) radical currents have ignorantly institutionalized this transitory state of social ferment into various ideologies whose common theme is that the important changes in society must be made without the working-class. These radical currents, just because of their primitiveness, because of their lack of any real comprehension of the historic process of which they are a fragment, project the passivity of the domestic working class (even beyond the license of fact) onto a world scale, in which they see the peasantry in the colonial countries as encircling the "reactionary advanced countries" with revolutions, and, at the same time demanding programs of victory for youth and Black Nationalists in the advanced countries without the working-class.

Carried to their logical conclusion, such views are not only ignorant, but by virtue of their adventurist character, play tactically into the hands of the class enemy. It is the essence of victory to fight on conditions where the advantages of terrain and mobilization are the greatest; Moncado barracks escapades, however heroic, are the acts of incompetents and worse. Victory is impossible without the working-class; without the organized working class it is absolutely impossible for the Black Nationalists, for example, to win anything fundamental from Johnson & Company.

This is not to suggest forbearance by Black Nationalists, but exactly the opposite: to direct their struggles at all times to winning the white working-class, for example, to the Black struggle on the basis of transitional demands, e.g. support for organized workers' struggles against speed-up and compulsory overtime while asking organized workers to treat this support as a campaign for jobs for Black workers.

Now we come to the "essence" of scientific practice in the domain of real politics.

Misguided, if well-meaning, amateurs in the practice of Marxist science attempt to explain the relationship between economics and politics in terms of the effects of economic and related individual experiences on the individual as an individual. In this mispractice misguided radicals only reveal that they have not overcome the absurdity, the "old wives' tale" of university political science, which portrays man's societies and other organizations as "compacts," "contractual relations," etcetera, entered into by individual men more or less in the way that two aspiring capitalists form a partnership. The vulgar myth rampant among ignorant radicals goes somewhat like this: "Because of desperate conditions, workers seek out others in the same boat..." thus and so and so on... And, ultimately, just because such hypotheses do not correspond to reality, these well-meaning bunglers reject Marxism, disown the working-class, etc. Yet, in so rejecting Marxism, the workers, etc., they only liken themselves to absolute amateurs picking up advanced physics textbooks and attempting to practice from these sources as "cookbooks;" what would we say of such bunglers if they cited the "authority" of their experiments as the basis for repudiating advanced physics?(18)

It is the simplest fact of history and of current life that men live and express themselves through institutions and as representatives of particular institutions. Moreover, they do not choose their ideas according to circumstance, but are compelled to begin with those ideas, concepts and ideology which they already find imposed upon their minds by society. If men were otherwise constituted, how is it possible that the idea of property, law, money, et cetera prevent men, under all circumstances from walking into shops to simply appropriate by force what they need? It would be absurd to say that men do otherwise because they rationally compact to fulfil the "contractual" relations of property, law and the money'system. Even the empirical evidence shows, just because so many forms of behavior occur within particular nations, regions, with such statistical significance, that the distribution of human behavior in particular (i.e. individual human behaviors) is not individual, since the frequency-distribution of such behavior exists only for societies, classes, sections of classes. (19) Even capitalist law, which allows ignorance as no excuse for its violation, reveals that it regards the social consensus, socially imposed upon the individual, and not individual reason, as the governing-principle of human behavior.

Thus, scientific method in sociology and politics does not proceed from individual men to institutions and ideas, but from institutions and ruling ideologies to individual men. Since, as we have already shown, the material existence of the individual under capitalism does not depend upon his individual activity, but upon society's productive forces as a whole, it is absolutely impossible for man to have developed capitalism as an aggregation of individual men.

How was it possible for Marxists to foresee, in 1958-1960, that the 1958 attack on the working-class would lead not to militancy immediately in the organized trade unions, but among youth and minorities? (20) It was and is the paramount fact of the organized working-class that it has an established institution, which it must and will defend even to the detriment of the interests of individual workers and groups of workers. To fail to grasp this is to ignore the outcome of the Great Depression. If the AFB-CIO seems to be reactionary, is saddled mainly with a rotten-reactionary bureaucracy, and is, in an immediate practical sense, reactionary in respect to student and minority struggles, is this to say that the organized trade union movement is itself a reactionary formation? On the contrary, the students and minorities, however heroic they may be, cannot solve the fundamental problems of their own existence without the alliance of the organized working class. Together with that organized working class, youth and minorities represent the effective majority of society, and the working-class, unlike youth and minorities, is already organized in effective combat formations in the trade unions. It is only necessary for the trade unions to become transformed from trade unions as such into formations of a politically conscious class to assure conjunctural victory--once the union of 1958-59 have risked its indispensable capital, its organized combat formations, in order to undertake a struggle without the organized alliance of youth and minorities? Absolutely not; Russia, 1905 proves that point exactly. Until the conditions for political struggle are socially matured, the trade

unions must, historically, defend their existence as institutions! It is the radical youth, the Negroes, the Puerto Ricans, etc., who must engage in the radical activity of building combat formations of a quality comparable to the trade unions, It is at the point that the trade union movement itself is prompted to go over to the attack, because palpable gains inspire it to do so, or because it must counterattack against efforts by the capitalist to destroy the trade union institution, that the working-class will definitively take the scene.

Institutions of the youth and Negroes, et al, cannot arise, like Minerva from the brow of Jove, already formed as revolutionary organizations of their sections of society. They can only establish institutions which reflect and celebrate their identity as classes, as sections of classes: they must emerge as student organizations, conscious mainly of their student nature, their need for an organization of students. Negroes, similarly, can only create institutions which, at first, emphasize only that they are Negroes, their need for an organization of Negroes.

As Marxists in our movement foresaw exactly in 1960-61, it would be impossible to leap over this initial character and limited (minimal) objectives of those institutions, of the radical ferment which represented immediately only the struggle for institutions. However, if it was impossible to arm these institutions with a socialist perspective (as a whole, not excluding the socialist perspectives of more advanced members of this ferment), it was possible to distinguish between reformist and potentially revolutionary formations by a single criterion. Some of these minimal program movements must necessarily advance demands (politically "innocent" enough in themselves) which represented an absolute confrontation with Kennedy, Johnson, Rockefeller & Company, just because the aspirations of these new movements were diametrically opposed to the policies which the ruling-class must, in its present desperate interests, maintain and enforce. All institutions of capitalist society, just because they are products of capitalist society, must emerge as formations aimed at altering the relations within capitalist society. When their aims are in fundamental conflict with the necessary policies of capitalists as capitalists, these formations must either relinquish those aims, reduce them to mere ceremonial demands, or seek a remedy beyond capitalist society.

Our party, admittedly belatedly, recognized the transitional character of Black Nationalism, albeit in a crude, not-Marxist way, in 1963. Fortunately, "Freedom Now," in its reactionary, adventurist-reformist form as exemplified by Reverend Cleage, James Boggs, et al, collapsed just as Malcolm X, in the very course of his own development, demonstrated the reality which our party overlooked in its 1963 resolutions. Where Cleage represented the bankrupt racewar idiocy and personally opposed and attempted to crush those in Freedom Now struggling for a program, Malcolm exemplified the search for a program, of Black Nationalism becoming something it was not at its inception.

It was, of course, extremely difficult for "white" radicals and assimilated Negro radicals to avoid "tail-ending" Cleage,

Malcolm, et al with masochistic rituals of Jim-Crow turned upside-down: Crow-Jim. The worst ultra-Black Negroes have been, understandably, the assimilated radical Negroes who tried to come back to the Black Ghetto as leaders. Some white-skinned Black Nationalists have offered more grotesque if less effective gestures of counterfeiting a "Black Man's World-Outlook." The worst feature of this process was the degree to which "tail-ending" Blackism was in more or less exact proportion to a loss of historic confidence in the working-class. Just for this reason, some of the nicest lately-developed "friends" of the Negro are, in fact, their most deadly enemies, because, to the degree that they encourage bankrupt perspectives among Blacks they urge these Blacks toward adventurism, and the masses of the Negro community, out of actual or portended defeat of adventurisms, into political demoralization. A "friend" of the Negro is not a guilt-sick white radical who encourages Negroes in foolish ideas, but a revolutionary who arms the Negro with a strategy for victory. The Black Nationalist can not win unless he is armed with revolutionary theory; his friend gives him the best weapons in his own arsenal, and joins him in the fight where those weapons are to be used.

Black Nationalism, like radical student organizations, is, in itself a dead-end. However, in SNCC, for example, we see the step forward that takes both Black Nationalism and the student radical movement out of its dead-end on the road to victory. The student, just because he is petit-bourgeois in character, can only find a place in society as the appendage of either the capitalist class or the oppressed. In SNCC and in persons like Mickey Schwerner, in the inevitable turn of the Southern Freedom Struggle toward labor struggles, we see the germs of the United Front. When Black Nationalists picket plants where rank-and-file trade unionists are struggling against speed-up and compulsory overtime, the Black Nationalist can support these demands in his own immediate material interests. When Black Ghetto tenants organize unemployed and hammer at the construction trades for a housing program, the unity of material interests of the joined forces is the germ of the United Front. When such organizations, such fusions of sections of the organized potentially revolutionary forces, combine, as we have said before, each of the separate institutions they represent change their autonomous capitalist ideological, character into a socialist character. When such formations see a direct connection between their programs and the need to give the United Front political power, all of the essential conditions for a socialist movement exist.

The same principle applies, in a different way, to the manifold radical (socialist and pseudo-socialist) organizations. It is a general rule, as Marxists in our party forgaw years before, that today almost any and every radical organization can recruit if it sets itself with even blundering competence to that task. Some leaders of these organizations regard radical organizations as an extension of petit-bourgeois shopkeeping, and consequently regard every competitor as any grubby shopkeeper regards the new competing store down the block. But the inanities which most of these new (and some old) groupings advance

as program and theory are not to be taken too seriously in our relations to them. That is not to suggest that we regard incompetence and political errors as less than the most serious issues; what is to be emphasized is that we must not "write off" the radicals in these organizations on the grounds of inanities, etc., advanced by their leaders. It is inevitable, under present conditions, that new radical organizations, starting from virtual absolute ignorance of serious politics, should replicate virtually every political idiocy seen in the history of radical and revolutionary politics and add a few horrors of their own innovation. Our task is to develop and present a correct perspective and program, to win them to this program. It is absolute idiocy to "write off" this-one, that-one, simply because he did not spontaneously arrive at a finished form of the correct program. We must not compromise with these organizations to the extent of one micron on theory, on political principle; but we must forge a new revolutionary movement out of all that human material that proves itself capable of mastering Marxist method in practice.

The course of development of new institutions and ferment cannot be even. Individuals and institutions do not respond to the underlying process at a constant rate, but are prompted onto the stage of current events by confrontations imposed by the ruling-class, by "incidents" which release the explosive social forces accumulating as potential in the organization and "social unconscious" of classes, sections of classes and the institutions which embody them. (22)

The critical ingredient which the socialist party must supply at all times, in all of these struggles and incidents, whether the issue is crime, new taxes, Viet Nam, Dominica, et cetera, is a penetrating explanation of the enemy's self-interests, resources and capacities. For example, the SDS and "Teach-In" movements must not be left to imagine that Johnson's War in Viet Nam is a misguided policy which rational estimates would correct; the only rational appraisal of Johnson's Viet Nam policy is that it represents the only possible intelligent course he could follow. It is not sufficient to expose Johnson's lies, because to merely expose these deliberate lies is to give credence to the fable that Johnson is acting on "bad advice," et cetera. The exposure of these lies by itself is bankrupt; however, the exposure of these lies together with an explanation of why Johnson deliberately lies to cover up his real, absolutely rational Viet Nam policy shows why the United Front must destroy Johnson's effectiveness to wage that war and ultimately that the only solution to these problems is to eliminate the Johnson-Kennedy-Rockefeller-et al regimes to make room for the government of the United Front. A policy of "tail-ending," of "patting anti-war movements on the back" because they are being "nice boys," is absolutely bankrupt. Unless we rip the mask from the face of the enemy we are the misleaders of the people.

Yet, even this is ineffective, unless we also constantly present, at least as propaganda, the general lines of the program for state power of the United Front. This must be, first of all, an economic program, the general State Budget of the United Front,

not in the ivory-tower, empty truisms of the Socialist Labor Party, but in terms of the current economic situation, current productive forces, current standard of living, and the existing and emerging institutions of the working-class, students, Black Nationalists, et al. That is to say, the State Budget must be concrete and realistic, and aimed constantly, as propaganda, at provoking a dialogue with workers in trade unions, students, Black Nationalists, Puerto Ricans, et cetera, so that they may sharpen our State Budget, register the modifications required to meet their needs, and thus make our draft State Budget their own, by virtue of the modifications and other corrections they present. It is our first, constant and most essential propaganda task to translate the most abstract (i.e. the totality of social relations and productive forces) into the concrete of individual workers' lives. Our propaganda as well as our agitation must prove our competence as a leadership in matters of feeding and clothing the people, and must elevate their individual consciousness of their own condition so that the task of their appropriation of the totality of the productive forces becomes concretely meaningful, as the basis for the solution to all of their problems of life.

In order to accomplish this it is the first task of the radical to master Marxist science in his own terms. That is only the beginning; he must then, through a dialogue with the workers in motion, translate his abstract scientific knowledge into concrete terms suitable to their comprehension. To accomplish this, it remains our task to deepen our physical penetration into all elements of the mass movement and its ferments, so that we may be "there" as a practical matter, and so that we may maintain the dialogue without which we, however otherwise brilliant, can learn to communicate with the mass movement and hear and respond to what it has to say to us, the orders of the day it, in its own way, will impose upon us.

The consciousness of man, just as it is ultimately entirely determined by his social condition, his social relations, his mode of reproduction through production, is in particular determined by the organizations which are sublated from previous **forms of organizational life**. The United Front is a particular species of organization of the class forces and its allies which affords the unique material basis for a corresponding species of consciousness in its individual members. This is what socialists mean by proletarian or socialist consciousness. However, just because such consciousness can not come into general existence before the organization on which it depends materially, it is impossible for the masses to develop socialist ideas, programs, etc. by themselves. Yet, at the instant these species of organizations, this consciousness emerges, it is already fully capable of assimilating excellently the theory, the programs which are the artefacts of socialist consciousness, just as a newborn babe is already prepared to competently ingest its appropriate nourishment.

The revolutionary party, however, is a germ of the United Front, a United Front of the most advanced elements from all of the mass institutions which constitute, later, the United Front in actuality. The party, through its constant internal struggles

for correct theory and programs among the inevitable factions and tendencies which compose it, is therefore the indispensable ingredient which supplies the United Front with the language of its own new consciousness. At the same time, this same party develops, in a similar way, the theory, the programs which correspond to each advance in consciousness toward United Front proletarian consciousness through the various steps of forward organization of institutions of the working-class and its allies. In that way the Leninist party is the essence of the strategic perspective.

§7. Our Immediate Perspective

We in the SWP are a party in name. Yet we lack today the most essential characteristic of a Leninist party: an active significant connection with the vanguard of the US working-class. Yet, we are a party by virtue of our intention--our strategic perspective--of becoming the party that we are not. We are, in numbers and our relationship to the working-class, a propaganda group bent on creating the party that does not yet exist in this country.

We shall become that party by training intellectual youths and workers who come to us as Marxist theoreticians, agitators, etc., qualified to develop the programs which will make our party actually, in competence and other qualities, fit to lead the working-class and its allies in this country to socialism. We will obtain that leadership not because we wear the mantle of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky; we shall not obtain that leadership by virtue of our traditions, our past accomplishments in leading the first great strikes of the CIO period, but because the working-class and its allies appoint us to that duty. We shall receive that appointment only if we earn it, through, first of all, our mastery of Marxism as a science, and secondly, the excellence we develop in practising that science in the living struggles about us now. We seize Lenin's great work, the work which founded the victory of the Bolsheviks in Russia, What Is To Be Done? That is the cornerstone of our victory in The Coming American Socialist Revolution.

§8. The World Situation

Nowhere today does a socialist state exist, nowhere is there even a true dictatorship of the proletariat. This is apparent to anyone who has a clear view of the tasks of socialist struggle in the U.S., for example. For a worker's government, a workers' society, is founded, not even on democratic factory committees, but on "Soviets," the United Front transformed into a state power. Yet, in the USSR, in Eastern Europe, in China, especially in Cuba, there exist dictatorships in the name of the working-class which represent a great step forward for humanity in two ways. First, the conditions of life of their people, however brutally some of the bureaucracies in charge may blunder, are vastly improved over the conditions of life which would have been imposed upon them by a continuation of capitalism. Secondly, their existence is itself a strategic victory for the socialist forces. It is absolutely indispensable to be honest about these matters.

We call these states, the USSR, Eastern Europe, et al, degenerated or deformed workers' states, because in each of them a state bureaucracy substitutes itself for the United Front government. Just because of these fundamental distortions of society, the workers' relations to production in these countries are those of wage-laborers, continuing certain brutal features of capitalist alienation. Just because of this condition, since the United Front is absent, the workers in these countries generally must lack socialist consciousness; the material effects of this distortion are great. When the United Front establishes its bill of production, the planning and execution of production is a conscious and effective act of the whole working-class. When a bureaucracy, however benign or popular, attempts to substitute itself for the United Front in determining the bill of production, gross stupidities resembling those common-place in capitalist production are carried even to the extreme--as is the familiar fact of life in U.S.S.R. history under Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, and in the penalties of a similar kind imposed on Eastern Europe and other deformed workers' states.

We are, in this sense, in 1000% agreement with Che Guevara's principle of "moral incentives" in Guevara's struggle against the Stalinist hack, Rodriguez, in Cuba. Rodriguez' advocacy of "material incentives" means that he, in the tradition of counterrevolutionary Stalin, regards the workers as merely wage-laborers, whose only relationship to the means of production is that of wage-labor. Guevara's call for moral incentives, means a plan and execution of production based on the consciousness of the working-class and its allies. We endorse Guevara's position fully, and hope for the victory of the United Front in Cuba, together with the defeat of all bureaucratic hacks like Rodriguez. For, to keep the Cuban workers in the political status of wage-laborers in national economic planning is to perpetuate the ideology which is characteristic of capitalist existence, thus undermining the revolutionary morale of the Cuban people, and multiplying the opportunities of imperialist agents and domestic scum in fomenting counterrevolutionary acts and organization

In the world, as in the United States, only the United Front (or the same form by other names) led by a Leninist party maximizes the possibility of the workers and peasants winning and holding state power. Courageous guerilla fighters may pin down Johnson's "gook-killers," may hasten the struggle in the advanced countries, may even, here or there, succeed in establishing new deformed workers' states. But, as the history of Latin America since 1959 has shown, this course is more often the road to defeat and demoralization than victory. In an advanced country, like the U.S., Britain, France, etc, such substitutes for the Leninist course are absolutely bankrupt and counterrevolutionary. The attempt, for example, to import the "colonial revolution" as a conception of the Black Nationalist struggle, for example, is a conception well-suited to the police-provocateur, as recent history in these movements has shown.

Equally bankrupt is the notion that the revolution in Latin America, Asia, Africa is a substitute in this period for the socialist struggle along Leninist lines in the advanced capitalist countries. The attempts of the U.S. to strangle Cuba economically demonstrate the first miserable feature of this "theory." Secondly, a party in an advanced country which has this perspective, must come to a policy of "peaceful co-existence" with its own capitalist class at home, and must, in this way, do everything in its power to impede and eliminate the necessary work of preparation for a conjunctural struggle in the advanced countries. In the same vein, equally counter-revolutionary in effect, are those parties and movements which, centrist (Stalinist or Social Democratic) parties, or "tail-ending" China as the symbol of the colonial revolution--as a substitute for the struggle for socialism at home (22).

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Footnotes

- (1) Capital, Vol. III, Kerr Ed., p. 577. (Chapters I - XXXIV of this volume together with Engels' important preface, contain the essential economic background material to this resolution.)
- (2) James P. Cannon, The First Ten Years of American Communism, Lyle Stuart, NY, 1962, p. 37.
- (3) What Is To Be Done? Collected Works, Vol. IC, International Publishers, NY, 1929. (The first three chapters of this founding document of Leninism are must intensive study for every serious socialist today. The references may occasionally be outdated, but the principles are the most modern writings extant.)
- (4) Typical of GIs returning from Korea or Viet Nam: "We really fried those 'gooks'". Every Latin American or African or Asian fighting for his liberty is a "gook." It is also a plain fact that GIs do not show a nice distinction between the "enemy" and mothers and children of their native allies; "Wrong gook? No matter, they were only 'gooks' anyway." To Johnson and Company the American Negroes' muscle-power has one modern use (Does Johnson, we wonder, still think the word, 'nigger?'): to don GI uniforms to bayonet and Napalm "gooks" in Asia, Africa, Latin America. Maybe this is why the Defense Department's pet Negro general was recently promoted and put second-in-command in Korea- from which units will be withdrawn to urgent "gook-killing" in Viet Nam. Maybe this is part of the reason why Johnson & Company are really "betraying" their ultra-racist friends, in a gambit to buy Black muscle power for GI bayonets, for the price of one vote.
- (5) Trotsky, "Report on the World Economic Crisis and the New Tasks of the Communist International," The First Five Years of the Communist International, Pioneer, NY, 1945, pp. 174-226. Also, Volume II, New Park, London, 1953, pp. 7-10.
- (6) Marx, articles appearing in New York Tribune and Die Presse.
- (7) L. Trotsky, "Workers Control," Germany--What Next? Pioneer, NY, 1932, p. 166-176. See also, ibid, "United Front," pp. 91-99.
- (8) If one were to require a ready source for assembling a concise world history for the period June, 1964--June, 1965, a most competent means exists in clipping two British weeklies for that period: the Socialist Labour League's The Newsletter and the Economist on the character of the Wilson regime- as a tool of the Bank of England and U.S. Federal Reserve System- is the recommended starting-point of exploration for the historian of the future trying to unravel this period of ferment.

Footnotes - 2.

- (9) Cf. Lenin, op. cit.
- (10) Marx, The German Ideology, Int. Pub., NY, 1947, pp. 6 (bottom) -78, pp. 197-199.
- (11) Just because of the foregoing considerations it follows that the dialectical world-view is the only historically accurate world-view, including the domain of so-called "physical" science. Unfortunately, novice Marxists, too often of a literary background, digress from the practical, immediate use of the dialectic into questionable excursions into the domain of the "physical" sciences. It is of historic significance to note that Engels' own work in this direction has led to a dialectical view of the material universe not via "physics" as such, but through Oparin's (The Origin of Life) and J.B.S. Haldane's work in biology and evolutionary ecology. But to introduce such questions here would be, in any case, a digression from the point at hand.
- (12) Marx, op. cit., p. 66.
- (13) Trotsky, op. cit.
- (14) Marcus and Shane Mage respectively advanced and supported this view in the S.W.P. Cf. L. Marcus, "Depression Ahead," ISR, Winter, 1961.
- (15) NY TIMES, May 25, 1965.
- (16) Ibid.
- (17) The way the U.S. government, trade union bureaucrats, corporations and gangsters connive together at home is dramatized by the effects U.S. export of these same practices produced in Canada, in the famous "Banks Case," which produced a recent parliamentary crisis in that country. The AFL-CIO sent hoodlums, with implicit U.S. State Department, employers connivance into Canada to bust a Canadian convict union. In the wake of Banks into Canada came a trail of heroin, gang-murders and Joe Bananas--the whole sordid record is now a matter of public notice in the proceedings of the Canadian parliament. (After SIU-convict-official Banks had finally succeeded in his mission of busting a competing Canadian union, he was indicted on a non-extradictable charge by the Canadians, put up \$ 25,000 bond and managed to elude the Canadian Mounties to find rest from his labors aboard a union yacht moored off Brooklyn.)
- (18) Marx to Engels, Correspondence, Int. Pub., NY, 1936, p. 346.

Footnotes -3.

- (19) Cf. Engels to Mehring, Correspondence, Int. Pub., NY, 1936, pp. 510-511. Valuable work in this direction has been accomplished by Emile Durkheim (Jaures' "Kautsky"). Unfortunately, because of the deterioration of the large Marxist movements after Thermidor in the USSR, there has been no published effort to put Durkheim in perspective, as Engels put Morgan in perspective before.
- (20) Marcus, 1961 SWP Convention Discussion Bulletin.
- (21) Cf. L. Trotsky, "The Curve of Capitalist Development," Fourth International, NY, May, 1941.
- (22) The most fervent admiration for a revolution abroad, just to the extent that it diverts movements from attention to tasks at home, is actually the more counterrevolutionary in exact degree to its fervor. Cf. Cannon, op. cit. As Cannon underlines, such sympathy isn't worth much to the revolution abroad.

EPILOGUE: Cannonism In Perspective

The title of the accompanying draft political resolution, "The Coming American Socialist Revolution," has been selected to emphasize the relation of our present views to that aspect of "Cannonism" for which Comrades Cannon and Murry Weiss used to be the best and most vigilant defenders. While we have very serious differences with "Cannonism," these are differences concerning the indispensable means for principled objectives we have in common.

Cannon has best stated the basis for our fundamental agreement with "Cannonism" respecting objectives. The central problem of life for any revolutionary party has not been described more effectively, more practically, than ~~in~~ in The First Ten Years of American Communism:

"What happened to the Communist Party would happen without fail to any other party, including our own, if it should abandon its struggle for a social revolution in this country, as the realistic perspective of our epoch, and degrade itself to the role of sympathizer of revolutions in other countries.

"I firmly believe that American revolutionists should indeed sympathize with revolutions in other lands, and try to help them in every way they can. But the best way to do that is to build a party with a confident perspective of a revolution in this country.

"Without that perspective, a Communist or Socialist party belies its name. It ceases to be a help and becomes a hindrance to the revolutionary workers' cause in its country. And its sympathy for other revolutions isn't worth much either." (1)

It is the irony of "Cannonism" that Comrade Cannon should be aligned today with a political combination in the leadership of our party which has become, in his own words, an "obstacle to the revolutionary workers' cause" in this country. He is aligned with a leadership whose most accredited spokesman before the world, Joseph Hansen, has publicly, with the support of the Secretariat, with the assent of the National Committee, written off the socialist revolution in the leading capitalist countries for our epoch, has written off the historic role of the working-class and has also discarded the indispensable role of the Leninist party. (2) Comrade Cannon has, ironically, solidarized himself organizationally with a leadership tendency which has abandoned formally the struggle for a social revolution in this country as the realistic perspective of our epoch, a leadership which at the same time seeks to degrade our party to the role of sympathizer of revolutions in other countries.

"Cannonism" is not able to extricate, unaided, itself from this predicament. While, on the one side, the political demoralization of our basic cadre has to be explained in terms of the objective "factors" of prosperity and reaction, of isolation from the working-class, etc., it would be a fraud to overlook the fatal flaw in "Cannonism" which robbed some of our best "Cannonites" of the means to resist the deadly virus of American Exceptionalism. Yet we must not "destroy and cast out the positive values and achievements of" "Cannonism;" "Cannonism," exactly including all its profound errors, represents the highest previous stage of political and organizational development of the American proletarian vanguard. We follow the example of Karl Marx and, incidently, the prescription of Comrade Cannon, in seeking to "conserve and build upon" the best and highest expression of the real proletarian vanguard as we are compelled to seek it out from among real movements in the real world. Comrade Cannon epitomizes, speaks for--at least generally--the highest expression of the real forces with which the building of a revolutionary party must be undertaken. (3)

We shall get nowhere in our efforts to build a revolutionary party in this country unless we start from a candid admission of the fact that the Socialist Workers' Party is a very sick party--if, indeed, it is a party at all. It is sick because its politically tired central leadership has succumbed to the same disease that took the Cochranites from its ranks a decade earlier. It is sick because no leading member of this party is able to offer any concrete alternative to a perspective of indefinite U.S. prosperity and social stability in the main. It is sick because its leadership has lost sight of the American Socialist Revolution (except for ceremonial postures of such far-sightedness) and is compelled to predicate the fading vestige of its socialist identity on its sympathy for revolutions in other countries. We shall get nowhere in our efforts to build a revolutionary party unless we recognize these plain facts, explore their causes and resolve upon effective corrective measures.

We particularly disassociate ourselves from the view that, just because the party is sick, one must not "rock the boat." That misguided view occasionally resorts to the historical fact that the Bolsheviks, on the eve of 1914, had only a few hundred members. It points to the depth of demoralization which afflicted the Bolshevik party up to February, 1917. The moral of that view is: "You cannot exclude in advance the remote possibility that this leadership will entirely change its political character under the pressure of great events." That messianic fable is, we know, the basis on which a more viable tendency within the leadership, albeit a minority tendency there, has established and maintained the combination, even to the point of supporting the most flagrant atrocities committed in the name of that same unprincipled combination which now monolithically substitutes itself for a political majority.

Our term, "admission," does not represent a resort to a rhetorical device. If the leadership fails to plainly state to the party ranks that this party is sick, the actual views of the National Committee and Secretariat are plainly represented in their acts. The leading evidence of this kind is the growing

resort to outrageous organizational measures for the purposes of expelling or otherwise suppressing sources of serious political discussion, even within the ranks of the leadership itself. The most concentrated documentation of this fact is found in the Plenum proceedings of the Robertson expulsion. The majority of NC speakers on this question argued for the expediency of this expulsion on the grounds that the National (and especially the NY Local) leadership was incompetent to cope with the political views expressed by opposition elements within the party. The most flagrant revelations came from the mouth of Comrade Harry Ring, whose principal argument for the expulsion consisted of the fact that the Robertsonites in the NY Local voted for Comrade Phelps' motion for a Branch discussion on the "Oswald Affair." (The Wohlforthites were expelled thereafter on the pretext that they had petitioned comrades to support their request for a party discussion.) It was represented as party policy thereafter that no serious discussion could occur except during biannual three-month pre-convention discussion periods. We know that this gag rule has been imposed (how effectively we can not be certain) upon even the ruling bodies of the party itself. It is also plain that the Party Secretariat, properly no higher than an administrative arm of the Political Committee, has, in fact, placed itself above the ruling bodies of the party. In evidence of this fact, we need only cite that the Secretariat took it upon itself to suppress a Memorandum submitted to the recent Plenum of the NC, on the pretext that the NC could not review Convention decisions; yet, at the same Plenum, the Secretariat obviously moved and secured an 180° turn in the party's tactical orientation. Furthermore, that same Plenum endorsed the stewardship of Comrade Hansen, on the heels of Hansen's published repudiation of Trotskyism. The strenuous and increasing efforts of the party apparatus to suppress discussion processes, tendency existence and other essential "norms" of Leninist life, can only imply that the leadership regards this party as so sick that any normal processes of political confrontation would blow the organization wide open.

We do not suggest that it is exactly news to Comrade Cannon that he is organizationally aligned with a group of Cochranites--Cochranites at least in their political if not yet their organizational orientation. There is strong evidence to suggest that he excuses this unprincipled practice on grounds of the very messianic fable we have already cited. It is important to compare Comrade Cannon's public address to the Sept. 4, 1964 West Coast Vacation School, in which he made the most devastating and generally correct public attack on the party leadership's program, with his complicity in organizational measures to strengthen that same leadership. It is true that, in that same speech, Comrade Cannon succumbed to grave errors respecting the political implications of the "Triple Revolution" document--those errors are consistent with the outstanding his-

torical record of limited appreciation for the "subtleties" of Marxist theory. However, his tactical orientation in that speech was predicated upon a mainly correct reading of the Transitional Program, which the present leadership of our party has never grasped and which it now most flagrantly rejects in

practice. If Cannon's programmatic call in that address could be taken at face value, a profound struggle was launched at that instant. Subsequent facts show, however, that Cannon was prepared to do no more than "run it up the flagpole" to see who in the party's ranks and leadership would "salute it." He did not, thereafter, name names and cite documents and events, the hallmarks of Cannon's course in making a serious political attack. The address did cause a certain flutter in the leadership, but when it became evident that Cannon "meant no harm," matters returned to the normal state of maintaining the unprincipled leadership combination.

What Comrade Cannon and the "Cannonites" in this party have thus far refused to face is the fact that the alien political tendency now mushrooming in the party leadership is in significant measure a Frankenstein of Cannon's own creation. This is not to discount in the least the "objective factors" which provide the material, sociological basis for the general mood of political pessimism infecting the party's leadership and ranks. Our charge against "Cannonism" and against Cannon is that he misbuilt the central leadership of this party in such a way as to make it extremely susceptible to the influence of alien tendencies under the very circumstances which Cannon should have foreseen, particularly after the Cochran Fight. To face that fact, Cannon would have had to have faced the fundamental flaw in "Cannonism."

That flaw is the myth which grew to such large proportions after the Schachtman Fight: Cannon's distorted conception of the proletarian party and the conceit that "Cannonism" equals Leninism. In fact, we have the strongest grounds to believe that the assassination of Comrade Trotsky prevented this myth from receiving the devastating treatment it urgently required even then. The written word irrevocably testifies to the fundamental differences between Trotsky and Cannon on just this question. Both, of course, agreed that the significance of the Schachtman Fight was the renegacy of a petit-bourgeois social layer of the Trotskyist movement of the 'thirties. Trotsky's political support for the "Cannonites" as the "viable tendency" has been gratuitously extended by the apologists for the Cannon Myth to imply that Trotsky's political support could be equated to 100% support for Cannonism. In fact, Trotsky's and Cannon's conception of the conditions of membership and role of the intelligentsia in the party are exactly opposite. In failing to grasp the "subtlety" of Trotsky's dissections of the Schachtman tendency, Comrade Cannon overlooked and thereby came to repudiate the fundamental axiom of Leninism: "Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement;" it is, as Lenin and Trotsky have stated, the way in which a vanguard selects and develops its revolutionary intelligentsia that is absolutely decisive in determining the party's revolutionary character.

The heart of Trotsky's analysis is provided in the following excerpt from In Defense of Marxism:

"...With a petty bourgeois it is worse. There are, of course, petty-bourgeois elements organically linked with the workers, who go over to the proletarian point of

view without an internal revolution. The matter is quite different with the academically trained petty bourgeoisie. Their theoretical prejudices have already been given a finished form at the school bench. Inasmuch as they have succeeded in gaining a great deal of knowledge both useful and useless without the aid of the dialectic, they believe they can continue excellently through life without it. In reality they dispense with the dialectic only to the extent they fail to check, to polish, and to sharpen theoretically their tools of thought, and to the extent that they fail to break practically from the narrow circle of their daily relationships. When thrown against great events they are easily lost and relapse again into petit-bourgeois ways of thinking." (4)

Since the petit bourgeois is not steeped in the class struggle in his daily life, his class origins deprive him of any rudimentary basis for allegiance to the proletarian struggle. He can not become truly proletarian in this respect by disguising himself as a proletarian, as by adopting the habit of poverty, or by otherwise aping the actual or imagined habits of the working class. Even long years of service in the shops does not eradicate the fundamental contradiction of his presence in the proletarian movement. For his previous origins, habits of thought training permit him to reassimilate himself into petit-bourgeois ways of life and thought whenever the pressures of the class struggle should urge him to escape. Only a small minority of petit bourgeois elements, as Trotsky underlines, can assume a proletarian mode of existence in a real way. A petit bourgeois intellectual, in particular, can only become a proletarian revolutionary in an entirely petit-bourgeois way, according to the example provided by Marx, Engles, Lenin and Trotsky themselves. His devotion to the proletarian revolution in particular can not honestly derive from anything but his thorough, scientific, intellectual comprehension of the necessity and practicability of the socialist revolution in his epoch.

Just because this is the only road for a petit bourgeois intellectual to become a revolutionary, the revolutionary intelligentsia of the party, developed in this way, becomes the indispensable ingredient which gives that party its active revolutionary perspective and character. What they must do each day of their revolutionary life--if they are to remain revolutionaries, i.e. constantly apply Marxist theory, advance it, etc. for the purpose of discovering the real, material connection of the present to the social revolution, is automatically the material which raises the vanguard of the working class from ignorance to revolutionary consciousness. This relationship can be likened to sympiosis in the animal kingdom, where the natural by-products of one species become the means of survival of the species with which it cohabits. It is through the, admittedly, tiny fraction of the bourgeois intelligentsia, which thus replicates the path taken by Marx, that the party, alone, acquires comprehension of "the social revolution in this country as the realistic perspective of our epoch."

Comrade Cannon, without question, wanted the result which only the revolutionary intelligentsia can provide a party. Comrade Cannon, in this respect, can be aptly likened to a housewife who, after hard experience, ultimately discovers which product is more serviceable without, at the same time, having the remotest conception of how it is manufactured. Comrade Cannon's transformation to Trotskyism has exactly that character, as he describes it so excellently in his own autobiography. Cannon knows the "product" which makes a party revolutionary, as we see in the thesis from which we have quoted at the outset of this preface. He has however only vague insight into the sociological and party-organizational process by which this "product" is obtained. This is most dramatized by the Cochranite Fight, in which Comrade Cannon (unlike most of his collaborators at that time) actually fought for the principle that a party must base itself on "a perspective of the social revolution in this country, as the realistic perspective of our epoch." However, to the point of the Cochranite argument, the question of an actual perspective of more or less indefinite U.S. capitalist prosperity and social stability, Comrade Cannon was absolutely incapable of replying in any specific terms.

Comrade Cannon, failing entirely to grasp the significance of Lenin's fundamental axiom or Trotsky's dissection of the petit-bourgeois tendency, used the pretext of the Schachtman Fight to subject the main body of petit-bourgeois elements of our party to the Procrustean bed of "proletarianization," except for a tiny fraction of select wretches who were permitted, by virtue of nothing more nor less than their petit bourgeois training for administrative chores, to perform housekeeping routines in the party apparatus. Cannon's short-cut, his failure to grasp or apply the meaning of "internal revolution," had the effect of demoralizing both the petit bourgeois elements who were "proletarianized" as well as those who were coopted into the apparatus. Under the pressure of the first main wave of conjunctural pessimism, reaction, after the Second World War, the bulk of our "proletarianized colonists" marched from our ranks in a body, accompanied by some of Cannon's formerly most prized petit bourgeois instruments in the apparatus. After that defecation there remained only one comrade with any competence in Marxist economics in our leadership, the late John G. Wright, and apart from Cannon and Murry Weiss, not a single national leader of genuine political stature in the realm of developing political programs.

This is not to suggest that petit bourgeois intellectuals should not be sent into shops. It is imperative that our ranks not be flooded with unemployed or semi-employed petit-bourgeois youth; colonizing is in periods of actual or approaching social crisis a political necessity.. However, it is absolutely disastrous to substitute "proletarianization" or excessive emphasis on narrow practical party activity for the fundamental approach a Leninist party must take toward the problems of assimilating its petit-bourgeois intellectuals, of recruiting from among these elements the revolutionary intelligentsia without which no vanguard can become and sustain itself as a revolutionary party.

A party does not become proletarian by "proletarianizing" its petit-bourgeois recruits. Exactly the opposite. By developing from these recruits a viable revolutionary intelligentsia, it qualifies itself, by attaining what the working-class vanguard can never develop by its own means, to attract the vanguard of the proletariat into its ranks and peripheries.

The first charge, therefore, is that Cannon's policy of "proletarianization" systematically demoralized the social layer from which our party could recruit its indispensable revolutionary intelligentsia. Our second charge is that Cannon was virtually incapable of doing otherwise--by himself--since he lacked comprehension of Marxism as a science that must be practiced as a science. It was sufficient to most Cannonites, if not always for Cannon himself, that the proletarianized petit-bourgeois elements "read the books" and thereafter at least maintained the appearance of using quotations appropriately--this practice laying the basis for the Talmudic or Scholastic School of "Trotskyism" which is the miserable level of "theoretical development" of most of our old cadre and our present influx of youth.

The student recruited to the party will, left to his own imagination, approach the study of theoretical Marxism with the same classroom and "homework" habits he has previously cultivated in bourgeois education. He will work for a "passing grade," aim at "getting the words into the right formulation," attempt to attain some excellence in recalling who said what on what occasion, memorizing (to impress his teachers and peers) those phrases which have a particularly felicitous literary or polemical color. He will "know all about Marxism," because he has "read the books." He needs no teachers, because he can "read everything he needs to know from the books." He introduces into the practice of "Marxism" that same fakery which has earned him passing grades and campus social esteem in the world from which he has come. His Marxism, in fact, takes the form of a dialogue with his former professors, or with past acquaintances of dormitory bull-sessions.

His pseudo-knowledge is never put to the test, because the party provides no "hard school" of real Marxist practice in which to sift out the Talmudist or Scholastic from the developing revolutionary intellectual. How do we know a real revolutionary intellectual? Consider Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky! Seized by the force of revolutionary knowledge, they applied that lesson with unquenchable appetites to every subject of human existence, arts, science, psychology, etc. To be exact, they especially distinguished themselves from bourgeois culture, in which knowledge is fragmented, each speciality into its own compartment. Exemplary of Marx and Engels in this respect is the Dühring affair, of Lenin, the Empirio-Criticism question, nor do we need to detail the scope of Trotsky's uncurbed passion for whatever was relevant to human existence, institutions and activity. Such intellectuals, as our cases-in-point demonstrate, do not merely write in all fields (Cf. Lenin on "Bolshevik-swaggering,") but criticize their own and other such work with devastating precision. The revolutionary intelligentsia, like Marx, is seized literally by the Promethean outlook; it is that Promethean determination to change everything fundamentally

which compels him to devote himself to the proletarian struggle however stupid, brutish the workers may be (as they usually are) and despite the cravenness, apostasy of their comrades and even whole movements. The revolutionary intelligentsia is the product of an internal revolution. It is only such an intelligentsia that can create a revolutionary movement out of the social ferment otherwise brought into being. The practice of Marxist science has this character, and no one is a qualified Marxist theoretician until he or she made that internal revolution, been subjected to testing in that quality of Marxist scientific practice.

Our level of "theoretical" practice in the party at this time does not differ in principle from the "theory" employed in any Madison Avenue Advertising Agency. Our "theoretical" organs (public and internal) are characterized best in the words of Marx: "...making things easily comprehensible, i.e. exposition for the ignorant. Imagine a journal of chemistry where the readers' ignorance of chemistry is constantly assumed as the fundamental presupposition." (6) The Cannonite School, at least through its epigones, has steeped our party in a Proletkult-- exactly of that quality which tore the fiber out of all of the German Communist movements in the period preceding the rise of Hitler. Many of our rapidly-advancing young petit-bourgeois recruits show their real esteem for the party and its tasks by the contemptible sophistries they plainly deem sufficient to earn them a good reputation in its ranks. They are absolutely not serious about ideas: the fervor with which they defend the official line on this or that tactical turn (e.g. "Freedom Now") is only exceeded by the absolute silence with which they abandon such arguments once a sudden turn 180° to the right supplants it. There is absolutely no serious discussion, at this point, of any of the party's political activities. If a few voices of criticism are raised, meaningless phraseology offered by our petit bourgeois youth leaders is only a veneer to the hooligan organizational tactics used to shout down, vote down any possibility of real discussion--as out of order between convention periods! ("The majority is the party; the Secretariat is the majority; anything you do or say is all right as long as you line up 100% in defense of the latest innovation in the official line.") This present caricature of Cannonism only amounts to the fact that the leading tendency has succeeded in destroying all that was viable in Cannonism while adhering with the utmost fervor and energy to all of its political flaws.

As a result of this fatal flaw in Cannonism, there is today not a single competent Marxist economist in our national leadership, to say nothing of persons emerging above the rudiments of materialist science to more advanced political subjects relevant to the social and political superstructure. How could Cannon expect Comrades Weiss, Dobbs, Kerry et al, or even himself, to convince themselves ultimately of anything but the indefinite prosperity and social stability (in the main) of U.S. Imperialism? How long did Cannon expect the leading cadre to maintain its conjunctural optimism on blind faith alone? How long did Cannon expect this party to maintain a competent insight into the historical process while that party was brought down to the abysmal theoretical level of Hansen's weekly re-

packagings of the New York TIMES? In this sick party of ours today we have the most consummate demonstration, albeit perversely, of exactly what Lenin meant when he wrote: "Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."

Dialectical Materialism

It is, of course, more or less inevitable that the crux of the leadership's defense of itself against this criticism will be the cases of Warde and Hansen. If the evidence at their disposal is worse than poor, they have to make the most of the pitiful defense exhibits they may pretend to possess. Yet, in fact, such defense exhibits would better serve to hang them than exonerate them. We will summarily review the redolent case of Hansen in the next section of this preface. Here, we turn to the tragic case of Comrade Warde.

Warde's institutionalized authority in matters of the dialectic is a grave individual and general political tragedy which in itself ably demonstrates exactly how Cannonism has robbed this party of leading Marxist theoreticians. If Warde has opened any of Marx's books on the subject of dialectics, it would be kind to assume that either his brain or the light was turned off at that time. It is not accidental that Warde should have repeatedly decorated the pages of the ISR with the threadbare Stalinist fraud about the errors of Marx's "youthful writings," since these texts represent the only place in which we may discover explicitly what Marx has to say on the subject. It is a tell-tale sign that Warde should, therefore, resort to formulations explicitly rejected by Marx, such as "negation of the negation," and resort to an explanation of historical materialism, "individual greed," which Marx attacked with the most concentrated vitriol.

There is no special political significance, however, in Warde's blunders and revisions as personal errors. He came to the party in that ignoble intellectual estate which C.P. Snow aptly characterizes as the prevailing "Luddism" of our literary intelligentsia. Since that time he has not diminished in the least his utter innocence of any knowledge of how the material necessities of modern life are actually produced. It is quite consistent with this that his efforts to speckle his essays with shop analogies should number among his most pitiable accomplishments. But this is not itself of general political significance, since most petit-bourgeois elements of Warde's background and opportunities have done even far worse than he in this domain.

The immediate political issue is the "official" status given to Warde's blunders during two decades. It is even much worse: poor Comrade Warde's ersatz dialectic has been used as a stalking-horse in the systematic elimination of most potential dialecticians in our ranks. This is not a profound political issue because of the profound political importance attached to dialectical materialism by Comrade Trotsky; it is not a mere matter of philosophical orthodoxy. If one turns serious attention to those "youthful" writings (which Warde slanders) of Marx, it becomes clear that dialectical materialism, Marx's economics, historical materialism, the concept of workers' control, of socialism are

so interlocked that it is impossible to treat any one of these apart from the other without vulgarizing Marxism as a whole.

Without dialectical materialism there is no comprehension of Marx's economics; without that, it is impossible for a party to be revolutionary or Leninist, since without Marxist economics it is impossible for a party to view "the social revolution in this country as the realistic perspective of our epoch." Nor can such a party otherwise offer the working-class, the Black Militant, the student, etc. anything more than a messianic hope of the undefined but wonderful things that will descend miraculously upon them with the establishment of a workers' power which such a party can not define' such a party has, actually, nothing fundamental to offer to the working-class, to the Black Militant, the student, etc. Since a party without these qualifications has nothing to offer the working-class, it can not be, in Lenin's sense a proletarian revolutionary party--however energetically it substitutes attitudes and deeds of proletarian militancy, however energetically it devotes its press to panegyrics on the morality or other qualities of workers. No party without these scientific qualifications can attain anything better than a messianic perspective of socialism.

Warde's official status as dialectician characterizes ours as a party which does not treat theory seriously, but which "saves the appearances" by assigning some apparatus hack to mouth and scribble suitably esoteric jargon whenever the want of real theoretical activity may threaten to come to light. Warde is simply the bureaucrat whose desk sits in a dust closet marked "Dialectical Materialism Department." To do justice to Warde as a comrade one should absolutely not mention his pretensions as a theoretician, but devote the discussion to his services in Civil Liberties, etc.; if only Warde himself would permit us to pursue that course.

Hansen's Disease

In the period immediately following Comrade Trotsky's assassination, Comrade Hansen continued to glow for some time as a revolutionary journalist. As subsequent years were to show, this was merely the inevitable florescence of material exposed to very strong light. Beginning with the discussion of the "Buffer Countries," it became clear that Hansen's former attainments could not be attributed to any internal source of intellectual competence of his own.

It is not easy to determine at exactly what rate Hansen has proceeded to his presently overt apostasy. He is perhaps the most consummate "trimmer" in the party's apparatus, a trait which appears even during the last days of his stewardship under Comrade Trotsky.(7) In apparent contradiction of this fact, he sometimes seems to be in advance of the leadership in his published formulations of a political position. With one or two possible exceptions(8) this appearance is only an illusion.

Just because this party exists in capitalist society, it

is scarcely irrelevant to examine some of the party's own internal life in terms of "models" abstracted from the trade union bureaucracy, Democratic Party or even the corporate bureaucracy. In that respect, it is proper to liken Hansen to the public relations assistant to the corporate president, a position which--like that of the ordinary advertising executive or continuity writer--places a premium on the mentality of the "trimmer." For months preceding the presidential assistant's brilliant exposition of a "new policy", the sentiments embodied in that exposition have been expressed, albeit crudely, with increasing frequency in the clique-politicking among company bureaucrats. The trimmer's existence as a well-paid instrument of the corporate bureaucracy (or trade-union bureaucracy) depends upon his absolutely feral sense of self-preservation in reading the direction of the "political wind" aright. As long as this trimmer succeeds in merely articulating a consensus of the most powerful combination of cliques, he generally continues to advance in position and prestige--not unlike the manner in which Stalin rose to a position of absolute power in the USSR.

This trimmer's Cochranite tendencies revealed themselves plainly in early 1960 to our knowledge. This was manifest in his uncomradely, absolutely swinish behavior (reminiscent of the Cochranites' jokes about Cannon's American Theses) concerning studies of the current economic situation. While we have not seen the end of Hansen's apostasy yet, it is at least possible to trace his progress in overt degeneration from his swinish conduct of early 1960 to his whole-hogged repudiation of Trotskyism at year-end, 1964.(9) The Gestalt which emerges from the pattern of that interval permits us to probe deeper, to trace the etiology of Hansen's Disease to such an early stage as the post-war discussion of the "Buffer Countries" et al.

As with the case of Warde, what is politically important in Hansen's personal political degeneration (not excluding that he, like Lazarus, might arise from the grave) is that he and his renegade views are both an organic appendage of the leading apparatus. This is boldly underlined by the actions of the recent Plenum in renewing Hansen's stewardship following the publication of his consummate repudiation of Marxism-Leninism in the name of "Trotskyism."

It would be extremely difficult to expose the contradictions in the Party's position on the Cuban Revolution without putting that position into the perspective of the preceding discussion of the "Buffer Countries." That position's flaws are that it did not go far enough by half in supporting the progress of the Cuban Revolution in practice, while, at the same time, it completely overstepped the bounds of any approximation of Marxism-Leninism in tail-ending the Cuban Revolution as the model of revolutions to come. In fact, Hansen's position on the Cuban Revolution represents exactly (as his recent apostasy demonstrates absolutely) the substitution of sympathy for revolutions in other countries for the social revolution in this country as the realistic perspective of our epoch. The theoretical roots of Hansen's 1961 position emerge explicitly in the character of the "Buffer Countries" discussion, more than a decade earlier.

Trotskyism emerged from World War II with two general axiomatic perspectives. First, that the War would be followed by a wave of socialist revolutions in the advanced countries. Second, that Stalinism was "counterrevolutionary through and through." True to these perspectives, the end of the War was a period of general pre-revolutionary and revolutionary social ferment in Western Europe, with the concomitant emergence of renewed--though far less advanced--social ferment in the U.S. itself. If the French and Italian Communist leaderships had had a different-than-Stalinist character, they would have seized power in their countries in a period in which the endemic mood of the U.S. and British troops would have prevented effective U.S. military intervention against that seizure. The economic and social consequences of the U.S.' loss of Europe in this way would have been the maturing of the economic and social conditions for a conjunctural crisis in the U.S. But, true to the second axiomatic perspective, Stalinism, on explicit instructions from Stalin, turned over Western Europe to U.S. Imperialism, thus providing U.S. imperialism with the real basis for its post-war recovery, preventing the emergence of conditions for a social crisis in the U.S. and, incidentally, preventing the British Socialist movement from realising the objective conditions for its further development.

However, just because the U.S. was not yet able to marshal the conditions for adventures against the Soviet Union, there emerged new deformed workers' states in Eastern Europe and, despite the efforts of Stalin to sell Mao Tse Tung out to Chiang, the Chinese Revolution. This contradictory development meant to every empiricist in our movement that Trotskyism had failed on the count of both of its axiomatic perspectives. To them, Trotskyism had lost its connection with the social revolution for this period of history; to them, the only course to save the Trotskyist organizations was to either adapt as a leftwing of other political forces, e.g. Stalinism, or to withdraw into a complete sectarian existence for the indefinite future. Thus, the discussion of the "Buffer Countries" et al had, at best, the character of an effort to "save the appearances" of Trotskyism. The Trotskyist position of defense of the Soviet Union's revolutionary achievements was expressed in the description of the "Buffer Countries" as "deformed workers' states," while the purely formal appearance of "Stalinism is counterrevolutionary through and through" was saved by equating the epithet, "deformed" mechanically, to the call for the overthrow of the regimes in those countries. In the course of these bankrupt rationalizations, the historic and social content of a workers' state were replaced by the yardstick of purely economic forms of nationalization, central planning and monopoly of foreign trade.

Hansen, as the documentary record shows, was among the most muddle-headed of the commentators participating in this series of discussions.

It soon became clear that this muddle-headed jargon about conditions abroad was only an abstract refraction of the developing, not-yet-articulated real issues: the growing disaffection in Trotskyist ranks with the perspective of social revolution in each party's own country as the realistic perspective of our epoch. That reality began to be projected into the

realm of at least party-corridor discourse during 1949-50, as the party was compelled to retreat from a leading, active role in mass work, with the attenuation of both the party's practical : relations and political perspectives of leadership of the U.S. (for example) working-class. The "proletarian colonists" inevitably reacted to this development with a deep hatred of the Cannonism that had stripped years from their lives for the apparently fruitless course of "proletarianization." At the same time, petit-bourgeois elements in the apparatus were being driven to frenzy at the prospective loss of an audience to give homage to their petit-bourgeois proficiencies. The "colonists" turned away from the party toward the trade union bureaucracy. The petit-bourgeois apparatus elements sought a broader avenue for the appreciation of their talents in the still numerically significant ranks of the Stalinist peripheries. This process, a product of conditions of each Trotskyist movement in its own country, was ~~STALINISM AND THE WORKING CLASS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS BY J. P. ...~~ Stalin and Deutcher's thesis of an evolutionary reformation of Stalinist forces. The breaking-point in the party came with Harry Frankel's long MILITANT article doing homage to Stalinism's slaughter of the working-class in the East German revolt. But that gabble in the form of differences over events in other countries finds its true basis in the social conditions and political demoralization of the Cochranites and Pabloites in respect to revolutionary perspectives in their own respective countries.

Joe Hansen's outstanding contribution to the Cochran Fight was a maundering treatise on the "molecular process," his own belated, irrelevant effort to formally adapt himself organizationally to Cannon's and Weiss's principled political fight against American Exceptionalism. (That obscure document today would best serve as a dipping-place for left-wing existentialists trying to prove the legitimacy of themselves as a tendency within official Marxist movements.)

When the Cuban Revolution reached the stage at which Hansen deigned (probably for fear of being outflanked by Gitano and the Weissites) to recognize the importance of that revolution, he dredged up the worst features of the Buffer Countries discussions, crudely equating abstract property relations with the historical materialist terms of a workers' state. However, since he retained the stupid mechanical equation of "deformed" with a call for the overthrow of the regime, Hansen was compelled, in order to sympathize with this revolution in another country, to relegate any discussion of deformity to a very obscure "footnote." His propensity to advance sympathy for this revolution in another country as substitute for a conjunctural perspective at home was admittedly given special impetus by the success of a competing tendency, the "Weissites", in making organizational "hay" among radical peripheries. There can be little doubt of the role of this secondary factor in the light of the way in which the anti-Weiss cliques maneuvered between the Weissite and Wohlforth tendencies (with the ultimate aim of destroying and expelling both) prior to and following the 1961 Convention. This organizational consideration, however, is meaningless unless we probe it more deeply, as the historical record now confirms, to uncover the determination of a demoralized political tendency in the leadership to suppress all meaningful forms of internal political life

in the S.W.P.; for this is what the Weissites and Wohlforthites, despite their respective differences, represented: the vital interplay of political factions and tendencies in molding the development of the party. (10)

If we understand and acknowledge that the thesis cited from Cannon at the outset of this preface represents the proper context for a correct position on the Cuban Revolution, no improper constructions can be drawn from the following analysis of Hansen's Cuban Revolution position.

Summary

Hansen's approach to the Cuban Revolution was entirely mechanistic and empirical, exactly as the Socialist Labor League has charged, whatever particular differences we may have with the SLL on its particular analysis of that Revolution. He abstracted that Revolution entirely from the material and strategic political conditions in the world, and confined himself, as his own mendacious formulation has it, "to the facts." The proper interpretation of Hansen's formulations then is now unequivocally determined by his cited documented renegacy of late 1964. The material conditions which Hansen excluded from his theses were the world market conditions which reached a critical point at the time of the 1957-58 U.S. recession, conditions which exacerbated material conditions in every colonial and semi-colonial country, conditions which were dramatically manifest in the Cuban economy from 1957 onward. Secondly, he excluded as a significant consideration the role of the U.S. State Department and its apologist, the New York TIMES, in giving propaganda, aid and comfort to Castro prior to the seizure of power and in simultaneously withholding from Batista that available military and economic aid without which Batista could not have defeated or at least considerably frustrated the victory of the Castro forces in their then present political development and organization. He entirely overlooked the change in U.S. foreign policy during and after 1958 which called for a "managed bourgeois-democratic revolution" in the colonial and semi-colonial countries--as a means for developing those economies for a new wave of imperialist exploitation of their infra-structure. Not only did Hansen and his co-thinkers fail to consider these decisive material and strategic political circumstances of the Cuban Revolution, but Hansen and his fellow anti-Weiss clique associates (Kerry, Warde) variously attempted to suppress publication of materials dealing with those conditions and did suppress Marcus' 1961 Convention document counterposing exactly that strategic analysis to Hansen's empiricism! (11)

Since the U.S., within three months of Castro's accession to state power, reversed their strategic political policy respecting "managed bourgeois-democratic social revolutions" in the underdeveloped countries, by the time that Hansen had deigned to recognize the Cuban Revolution's imports and conditions for a simple repetition of the Cuban Revolution had ceased to exist! In fact, the widespread illusions concerning the Cuban Revolution, that a new short-cut, by-passing Leninism, had been discovered in guerilla warfare, has been a considerable factor in bringing about the defeat and demoralization of revolutionary forces in Latin America. Thus, the practical effect of Hansen's theses: "They made a revolution; we are in no position to openly criticize any-

thing about that revolution or their perspectives," was to prepare for the demoralization of our own cadres and to give license to a disorientation which has aided in creating defeats of the workers' and peasants' of Latin America in the course of the revolutionary situations which have occurred since that time. In effect, Hansen's theses amount in practice to a regression to the old Stalinist perspective of the road to the socialist revolution through the "bloc of four classes." It is this renegacy which he now advertises, with Cannon's yet-tacit support, as the "vindication of Trotskyism." It was in 1961 that Hansen first began to display those actually counterrevolutionary feathers which he now displays with such uninhibited apostasy. To this date there can be no legitimate contention that Hansen is not "counterrevolutionary through and through."

The Organizational Question

The capsule case studies of the leadership's two chief ersatz theoreticians demonstrate the outcome of Cannonism's fatal flaw, while at the same time giving the lie to any pretense by the present leadership combination that it should in any way be placed above the realm of the most active internal criticism between pro forma pre-convention discussion periods. What is required, at least, is the opening of the party's internal discussion processes for a complete overhaul of the accumulated rubbish-bins of its "theory" since the death of Trotsky. This should not, of course, be an abstract treatment of past discussions, but a correction of our traditions from the standpoint of a Marxist interpretation of the tasks and perspectives of this present moment of history.

This is not to argue that many tactical resolutions and activities of the SWP have not been significantly correct, nor is it to state that the party is bankrupt entirely; even many of its present policies respecting Black Nationalism, etc., have very useful and necessary aspects. But tactical blunders or achievements are absolutely third-rate issues when compared with the fundamental question of whether our party is actually preparing to effect a social revolution in this country in our epoch. If every useful tactical activity were to come to a halt in the interests of an internal process of discussion which produced a Leninist strategic perspective, a Leninist party based on the practice of the most advanced theory, such a course should be followed absolutely. In fact, however, such drastic abstention is exactly not the necessary condition for the process of theoretical discussion which must continue from this point onward. We may have fewer meaningless subscription drives, but the very processes of discussion will inspire comrades to put what they have learned into practice, to develop their comprehension of theory by practising it.

In this period of rising radical ferment among youth and minorities, in a reawakening of the pre-stages, in the form of rank and file ferment, of left-wing tendencies in the trade unions, our first task is to train a cadre of organizers, of Leninist "boomers," who can take to the boondocks of U.S. society to explain the current economic situation, to present the strategic

world and national prospects for socialism, to penetrate every facet of radical ferment in student, minority and working-class movements. This will mean penetration of SNCC, SDS, of course. It will also mean a serious turn toward opponents' work. Just because none of these tactical opportunities correspond exactly to any predetermined norms of radical or revolutionary struggles, this work can not be effectively pursued without a constant dialectical dissection of these developments for the purpose of distinguishing their appearances. Otherwise, we shall not free ourselves from the present form of analysis, which determines only which ferment to "tail-end" and to get down to the Leninist's job of intervening. None of these things are possible unless our party is based on theory and unless it steeps its ranks in the active practice of real Marxist theory.

It is for that reason that we so clearly distinguish ourselves from other minority tendencies in the party, who are preoccupied only with this or that particular question--as if the "right formulation" on China, etc., could possibly be an entire remedy for all of the ills of this party. Whatever is the right and wrong of these entirely derivative tactical questions--and some of them are extremely important--they have absolutely no historic significance until we first establish this party as a party which sees the "social revolution in its own country as the realistic perspective of our epoch." That perspective can not be an article of faith, it can not be established by scholastic argumentation from the "books," but must be based on an active analysis of the current economic situation in which we explore constantly the interconnection between the dynamics of the material basis of our society and the sharpening contradictions those movements are throwing up into the social and political superstructure. We are nothing until we utterly abandon the Hansen empiricism of "sticking to the facts," and get down to the dialectical process of determining what is becoming.

Thus, while we have particular and strong views on the correct tactical perspectives at this moment, we subordinate our persuasion on ~~those~~ matters entirely to the fundamental political question which we put forth in the accompanying draft political resolution. We insist that what is fundamental is to "get back" to Leninism, and its policy of always proceeding from a general strategic perspective, such as our draft resolution embodies, to the particular questions of tactics in particular current situations.

Epilogue--footnotes

- (1) Op. cit., p. 38.
- (2) Joseph Hansen, "The Test of the Cuban Revolution," International Socialist Review, Vol. 26, No. 1, Winter, 1965, pp. 14-15
- (3) Cannon, op. cit., pp. 29-32.
- (4) Pioneer ed., p. 45.
- (6) Marx to Engels, No. 163, Correspondence, Int.Publ., N.Y. 1936, p. 346.
- (7) Transcript of Discussion on Browder Election.
- (8) A. Hansen's brief flirtation with the notion that China was a "state capitalist" regime. B. His notorious attempt to substitute Mormonism for Marxism, over the penname of 'Jack Bustelo's "The Cosmetic Question."
- (9) Hansen, op. cit.
- (10) It is an absolutely homeric irony that the Weissites and Wohlforthites, who built the youth should all be out of the party today, except for comrades Murry Weiss and Phelps. Of the second echelon of early youth national leaders, except for Comrade Sherry, and a few others, only Barry and Pete, who turned in their backbones for a pat on the back, remain.
- (11) We must admit that when he forgets organizational combinations long enough to dabble in real politics, Kerry has often enough seemed closest to us on many questions. Perhaps, it is because, underneath his own unprincipled organizational trimming, that Kerry knows that we are politically right that he is the most overtly vicious. It is typical of Kerry that his prologue to his 1961 trade union report should be virtually a word-for-word lifting from the Marcus document that he had just suppressed!