

# Fourth International

**DEBATE AT N.Y. UNIVERSITY**

## **Marxism and World Crisis**

**For Marxism: George Clarke -- Against: Professors Antón  
Friedrich, Walter Werthweim, Elsworth Raymond**



## **Capitalism and Democracy**

*By Harry Frankel*

## **Rifts in the French C. P.**

*By Michel Pablo*

## **The Military Coup in Egypt**

*By S. Munir*

*September-October 1952*

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## Manager's Column

Our magazine was ready to go to press as election returns of the Eisenhower victory were being announced. What is lost in timeliness, in not being able to have a review of the results in this issue, will be more than compensated by the added time given us to weigh all the factors that contributed to the demise of the last of the "New Deal" administrations and to survey the new political and class relationships in the country. We promise a thoroughgoing analysis. Watch for it.

\* \* \*

The next issue will also contain full treatment of the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, treating its significance in international politics and what it reveals of the internal situation in the Soviet Union. We can say in advance that the facts at hand are already a salient confirmation of the Trotskyist analysis of the Soviet Union, sharply revealing its contradictory sides in the tremendous power of the nationalized and planned economy, and in the hampering, parasitic role of the ruling bureaucratic caste.

\* \* \*

We also have on hand an extremely interesting study by Ernest Germain of discussions in Soviet academic circles of the class nature of the Chinese Revolution. The article is based on original sources that have not as yet been available in this country.

\* \* \*

We would like to call special attention of *FI* agents and student readers of the magazine to the debate on Marxism and the present world situation contained in this issue. The circumstances and participants of the debate should make it particularly attractive to campus audiences throughout the country. We believe that organized sales can assure an excellent sale of this issue, and gain us many new readers and friends. Please write us your experiences in selling this issue; they are certain to be of interest to others.

\* \* \*

Many readers have inquired about the plans announced some time ago for various changes in the *FI*. Unfortunately we have been held up by many financial and technical obstacles and are obliged to postpone their realization somewhat longer than we had hoped. Readers can take advantage of this period of waiting by formulating their ideas of suggested improvements and changes. What do you like about the *FI*, what do you think the readers like? What *don't* you like? And what do you think should be done to make the *FI* a better magazine? We have already stated some of our thoughts. Let's hear from you.

# FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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## Debate at New York University

# Marxism and the World Crisis

**FOR MARXISM: GEORGE CLARKE**

**AGAINST: Professors FRIEDRICH (Economics), WERTHWEIM (History),  
RAYMOND (Government)**

The debate recorded below took place last April 3 before a packed audience of several hundred students at New York University. It was generally agreed to have been one of the liveliest events at the University for a long time. An undivided interest was sustained for well over two hours, the listeners as much participants as auditors. When the floor was opened to the audience, there were more questions asked than could be answered in an entire day, let alone in the allotted time for the session. As the reader will note, a sea of hands went up in response to the Moderator's request at the close of the meeting for two more questions.

Dealing with the big trends and problems of our time, the debate retains all its timeliness today, seven months later. If it may have seemed daring for the speaker to have made the prediction then of Eisenhower's election, it should be clear from the text that it was done less as a forecast than as an indication of the trend of military domination of the state. This trend, it can be safely asserted, will go on unabated regardless of who occupies the White House next January.

Except for a few literary and grammatical changes, the text is a faithful document of the proceedings, having been

transcribed word for word from a wire recording taken at the meeting. To save space and avoid repetition one or two questions already treated are now omitted from this account. Unfortunately, an important exchange between Professor Raymond and the speaker on the subject of Korea, the "cold war" and the colonial revolutions was lost in switching between wire spools, as were a number of other questions and answers.

The speaker is naturally appreciative that the facilities of N.Y. University were made available for a discussion of Marxism. Once a regular occurrence, this may now appear as exceptional freedom because of the repressive atmosphere in the universities. The Moderator made a special point of this when he closed the meeting saying that even under McCarthy, the McCarran Act and the Feinberg Law we "can still have meetings like this." How conditional this situation really is, and how much closer the speaker really was in describing how much freedom actually exists, was borne out in NYU itself a few weeks ago when Professor Bergum, the only professor there with views akin to Marxism was discharged from his position because he refused to humble himself in testimony before the McCarran Commission.

## PRESENTATION BY CLARKE

Ladies and Gentlemen: The odds this afternoon are slightly against me. But I have always been guided by the epigram of that famous fighter for freedom, Wendell Phillips (which I have paraphrased), that one man on the side of truth is a majority. (Laughter, applause.) The debate we are having this afternoon is not a new one. It has raged for a hundred years. Marxism has been opposed since 1848, when the famous Manifesto of the Communist Party was written, by professors as today, by the ideologues, by the statesmen, by all official society — led by monarchs or democrats — and always, strangely enough, by the judges, the courts and the armies.

So always at a debate we are somewhat at a disadvantage. The odds are always weighted down by other things than arguments. Even today, the opponents of Marxism range, my friends, from Franco and the Vatican down to the coming president of the United States. General Ei-

senhower (Laughter) — I don't say that by way of casting my vote — to McCarthy on the right, who is the most eminent opponent of Marxism (at any rate he receives the most publicity) to Justice Douglas on the left.

Now I believe this is so because Marxism is a philosophy which more than any other is based on the objective reality. By scientific means it alone has been best able to analyze and discern this objective reality of society in its evolution. Unique among all the philosophies Marxism seeks not only to explain but to change the world. We can sum it up in a nutshell in this way: that man's age-old conflict with nature, which still continues, has been superseded by his struggle to bring the social organization into harmony with the forms of production and with his daily needs.

It is this struggle which has produced the conflict between the classes. And there have been different forms of conflict between the classes in accordance with the forms and methods of production in which man has engaged. It

has continued through the ages until today, when the conflict now approaches its final and cataclysmic form. All of you who sit here today will be participants in this conflict in one way or another. There will be no ivory towers high enough or bomb shelters deep enough to escape this world showdown which has been brought about by the anachronism of our modern productive system. Man working on a social basis of production, at a minute division of labor, producing an infinite number of commodities, has in effect socialized the forms of his production. But he lives with the paradox of private property, private profit and private accumulation which is a form inherited from past class systems, but can no longer be adjusted to present forms of production.

So long as this paradox endures, we will have wars, crises, poverty and the final terrible agony of humanity on a world scale.

Now you can beguile yourselves with the rationalization that all of this doesn't apply to the United States; that like God's chosen children, we are exempt from the laws of class conflict, from the inescapable need of social revolution, from the great centralization of wealth on the one side and the increasing misery of the population on the other. You may judge by transitory events; you may think of your tomorrow which may appear secure at the moment. But open your eyes to the reality of our time and you see the trend is toward the restriction of liberty, toward the witch-hunt, toward the erection of a garrison state, and toward the armaments economy being the norm of our economic system.

Open your eyes for a moment and you will discover that there is no philosophy in this university or any other university of a consistent character, of a world comprehensive outlook, which explains society in its change and its changing forms, to oppose Marxism. There is none. There is only skepticism, nihilism, only argument and criticism, but there is nothing which explains man's course of development, nor his present critical position, nor indicates the road to his future in the midst of a world shaking with wars and revolutions.

Furthermore, the problem will become clearer when you find in the near future that Marxism is not just a matter for academic study because you will be called upon to shed your blood in a holy war against it. Marxism is a very virile doctrine that finds no real opposition in the form of consistent and comprehensive theory but much opposition in the form of force.

### **The Course of World History**

What is the course of world history that we observe today? It is this (and this is what is decisive to the argument at the moment): That the industrial and social development of the backward countries of the human race, which are its greatest portion — Eastern Europe, Russia, China, Asia — in their course from backwardness to modernity, are not taking the road of western capitalist civilization. They are not taking the road that begins with the toppling of the monarchs, the overthrow of feudal rela-

tions, the setting up of a system of free trade, competition, surrounded by a system of parliamentary democracy.

On the contrary, 800 millions of peoples throughout the world are moving today directly to a system of collective ownership and planned economy — directly from their ancient backwardness, over the stages of modern private property control — into the future, so to speak, of collective ownership. Oh! you say the path is strewn with blood, and suffering and dictatorship and even with totalitarianism, the favorite epithet of the publicists and the radio commentators. It's true. But that's partly because no new system has ever come into the world as did the world of Cinderella, appearing in all its fineries and beauty at the tap of a wand. Every new system that comes into the world has taken this terrible course of development. It is partly so also because of the backwardness of these countries.

We shall have a much easier time once we are ready to begin here in America. (Laughter.) I see you're not very ready. I hope this meeting will help you somewhat. (Laughter.) But it is mostly because these countries must find their way to industrial development in the teeth of capitalist opposition, from all the big powers of the west. They are shut off from its capital, shut off from its wealth; denied the possibility of easing the course of their industrial development, since the bulk of the world's capital remains in the western world and in America.

Stalinist rule, the monstrosity of Stalinist rule, was not produced by the whim or the wish or the evolution of Socialist thought. It was produced, my friends, in the final analysis, by capitalism. It was produced by wars of intervention, by economic blockades. But the Russian people were not to be strangled and hence in their attempt to rise to an industrial society on the basis of collective ownership of property, there arose this temporary monstrosity, just as capitalism in its rise produced innumerable monstrosities of its own. They will be eliminated when world capitalism, which has blocked the path of free development, ultimately meets its downfall and there is no longer the basis for a bureaucracy because there are no longer shortages, poverty and restrictions, but the world's wealth is divided on a rational and human basis.

### **The East Follows Marx**

Marx said that the West would lead the East and show it its future. He said that the East would go through capitalism and eventually come to socialism. Perhaps Marx was too conservative. Events have moved more rapidly than he could anticipate. The choice before the East today is not a period of such gradual development but a direct one — between capitalism and socialism. It is not even between Adam Smith and Thomas Jefferson on the one side and Karl Marx on the other. It is really between MacArthur and Chiang Kai-shek on the one side and Karl Marx on the other.

That choice is being made today, and not all of the armies of the West could stop it in Korea. A revolution sweeps the continents, through Asia, the Middle East, Egypt, Tunisia, through all of the backward and oppressed

countries plundered by imperialism over the ages. It is nationalist only in form because behind the nationalism there are social struggles in every case. And the rulers are too frightened to carry out the nationalist struggles to the end because behind them stands a mass of poverty-stricken people who cannot wait for the gradual course of capitalist development and exploitation, but must themselves move to the next stage of human society.

This is the biggest reason for the decline of the capitalist west. Its economic props were the east, the Middle East, Russia, Eastern Europe — and they are being knocked out from under it. The west depended in large part upon investments and exploitation in the east for its profit and prosperity. The difference between imperialism having this possibility of investment and exploitation and not having it is the difference between health and decline, between prosperity and crisis.

### European Capitalism Founders

The crisis of European capitalism compounded with the revolt in the colonies is the crisis of world capitalism. It was in Europe that capitalism flowered, there its civilization and its economy first came into being. Look at Britain, now the land of austerity, once the workshop of the world, and you can see the full significance of the crisis. Not all of the gold of America has been able to put this humpty-dumpty of Europe back together again. The pre-war rate of production has been attained in western Europe — even outstripped in Germany, France, England, Belgium and Holland. But that has only aggravated the problem because the markets of Eastern Europe and of the eastern part of the world have dropped out of their laps and because they cannot profitably trade with America because the economies are non-complementary. And so despite all of the billions of the Marshall Plan, Europe continues to decline.

All the plans to save Europe — free trade, customs unification, unification — have all collapsed. You may read a lot of rhetoric about this matter but the facts speak a different story. Now the rise of western Germany once more sets up a new source of crisis and competition with the other powers. On top of it comes our “great contribution” to Europe — the armaments economy — which is blowing up everything (I have seen it with my own eyes) that was presumably attained by the Marshall Plan. What is there in Europe? Nothing but poverty, austerity, and social crisis.

In France and Italy, the people are communists. In the rest of Western Europe, they are socialists. I don't know how many supporters I have at this meeting today, but in Europe most decisive sections of whole populations support Marxism. That is the image of our future. In England, the Labor Party, extremely conservative so far as socialist thought is concerned, has already moved from Attlee to Bevan.

No one will be reconciled in Europe to a return to “free enterprise,” because “free enterprise” (which I may make bold to say does not even exist here) never even existed in

Europe in any manner or form. “Free enterprise” is identified there with the great polarization of wealth, with years of irremediable crisis, and the people are through with it. And in the coming years, and especially if there's a war (let those who wish to make the war take note) “free enterprise” will be doomed and the epoch of socialism will come to Europe because the people will be determined that it shall come.

### The Fool's Paradise

There are those who think that the United States is outside of this historic trend. They live in a fool's paradise. Temporarily, but only temporarily, we profit from the decline of the capitalist world. Basically, we are choking from an over-developed, over-expanded economy, amidst a great centralization of wealth, in a shrinking world. We're still living in the boom-bust cycle even though it may not be apparent at first glance. We never overcame the 1929 depression, and there would be a full-scale depression in the United States today if it were not for the production of the engines of destruction. If it were not for military spending, it is universally agreed that we would be in an economic tailspin. But military spending in the huge national economy of America is not sufficient unless it is geared immediately for war in order to avert a depression.

This war which must be fought throughout the world by American means alone will drain the resources and the wealth and the manpower of this country and reduce it to the status of England. No one atom bomb will win the war, but millions and tens of millions of troops will be required and, behind them all of the national resources and wealth of the nation. There is no alternative for capitalism but this war. Another depression will drag down with America the rest of the capitalist world which is dependent upon it. There is no other way for capitalism to stop the tide of revolution that sweeps through the world.

Harold Stassen called the war a counter-revolution. He was in favor of it. You know where I stand. I'm neither for Stassen nor his ideas. (Laughter.) We're committed to this counter-revolution. Committed to it in Korea. Committed to it in Indo-China. Committed to it in China. Committed to it in Egypt and Eastern Europe. How? We support the French empire in Indo-China. We support the feudal landowners in Korea. We want to bring back the old regime in China. We support Britain's interests in Egypt. And in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, we want to bring back the regime of private property.

No, it won't be a war against totalitarianism. You don't fight totalitarianism together with Franco, Chiang Kai-shek, the King of Greece, the Nazi generals who are being groomed to head the new Atlantic counter-revolutionary army, the Latin-American dictators, the Japanese militarists, not to speak of Winston Churchill. (Laughter.) And he's the most democratic of them all. He was a supporter of Mussolini! It will be a war to turn back the clock of history to restore private property but not as we know it in Britain or America. Look at Latin America, where America's influence has prevailed for years. Look at India, Brit-

ain's colony for centuries. You can see only Asiatic backwardness together with a few developments from which the white man profits.

### Counter-Revolution Is Doomed

The lesson of history — I think there is a history professor here who will bear me out (Laughter) — is that counter-revolution cannot succeed. In the end it must be defeated by tides of history, social organizations, the forces of classes in motion. In the end it must be defeated. It must be turned back. The counter-revolution that followed the revolution in France was temporarily victorious but in the end feudalism by and large was swept from the continent of Europe. Even where it subsisted, it adapted itself to the new forms of capitalist organization which became dominant. Counter-revolution assaulted the Soviet Union for years with intervention, blockades and civil wars and in the end it lost. It lost in China and the "geniuses" of the State Department who tried to stop that revolution are having their political heads cut off in Washington today.

We'll fight this counter-revolution alone and on two continents and against hundreds of millions of people. There are no allies for us. I saw that in Europe. The slogan in Germany is "*ohne mich*." "You can have your army but *ohne mich*" — without me. (Laughter.) The slogan of the French workers is: "We'll never make war against the Soviet Union," and I have listened to tens of thousands of them chant it in unison.

In England it's Bevan's day; and Bevan says that in 1954 the danger will come from a militarized Prussianized America and not from the East, and he reflects the sentiment of the British working people against the war. No allies anywhere in Europe or in the world.

What we can only succeed in doing is converting the United States into the spearhead of this counter-revolution. And to do that means that it must become like the land of Hitler. We start from economics: all guns and no butter. Then we proceed to the McCarran concentration camp law. And we wind up with the General as President of the United States in a garrison state.

Look at where we are today without war. The Bill of Rights is virtually a fiction. People are deprived of a livelihood — they're terrorized by political police, they're thrown into prison for the mere advocacy of ideas. Teachers are forbidden the right of assembly. Justice Douglas was so agitated about this state of affairs that he said a "black silence of fear" is about to descend upon America, that it is already stifling our universities where only the orthodox is tolerated, while the heretic and the critic, which Douglas says is what youth ought to be, is afraid to raise its voice.

But I say, when you take the discussion of Marxism, as is being done in America today, out of the public forum and into McCarthy's defamation and character assassination chambers, into Truman's courtrooms, then you concede in advance the ideological victory of Marxism over all other doctrines which cannot fight it in any other way.

This, mind you, is being done in the United States in the midst of unprecedented prosperity where the Marxists

are a tiny, unfortunately, a tiny minority. When I was in Ohio recently, I saw hysterical headlines in the newspapers screaming: "809 Communists in the State of Ohio." (Laughter.) But many of the people who read that headline have been so psychologized with this propaganda that they probably forgot that there are seven million people in that state.

What does this hysteria signify except that the defenders of capitalism, who say that the United States is the best of all possible worlds, fear that the social revolution must eventually sweep over this country as well. And it is correct that they should have such fears. America will take the road of Marx but under the goad of great suffering, terrible tyranny, unbearable tensions and class conflicts. America cannot win the counter-revolution. It cannot dominate the world as a capitalist power. But it can lead the human race to new heights as a land of socialism. And under that land of socialism, when America brings its economy, its productive forces, its culture to bear, the shadows of dictatorship, which are temporary, will be removed. Prosperity and abundance will create the situation for real democracy throughout the world.

Marx said that in 1848, and I repeat it here again today — and I am convinced from what I have seen in Europe, from what I have read of Asia and from what I have discovered from a study of the laws of the American economy that there will be no other road than that for our country. And it will be a good one. (Applause, laughter, more applause.)

### PANEL DISCUSSION

PROF. FRIEDRICH: As your chairman said, I am occupying a dual role — one as participant and the other as moderator — between virtue and sin. Now I have a brief introductory question which I hope will still leave me time for others. Well, Mr. Clarke, as I was listening to your statements a thought occurred to me: Supposing you had taken a point of view opposite to that which is generally prevalent in the United States (as opposite as your point of view is to that of the United States) in Moscow, Budapest and in the countries which are on the road to the social ownership of the means of production? Supposing you had taken a point of view there as opposed to that which is forced by the dictatorship of the state? Just what do you think would have happened to you?

CLARKE: Well I would really like to pose the question back to the professor. Suppose that I were a representative of the National Manufacturers Ass'n (God forbid!) and you as a professor were defending Marxism against me. How long would you last in this university? (*Professor Friedrich indicates disagreement.*) I cite you as evidence the case of Professor Wiggins, the only Negro on the staff of the University of Minnesota, who was discharged from the university for speaking in favor of Marxism in a campus symposium called "Issues in Social Conflict." Or of the notorious Feinberg Law in our own state . . . (*tape becomes inaudible at this point.*)

### Doubts "Final Crisis"

PROF. WERTHWEIM: I like the phrase "capitalist democracy." It has offered us quite a bit in the past and will continue to offer us quite a bit. I feel that capitalist democracy has more of a hope for the future than any acceptance of visionary myths or tenets that don't seem to have worked out. I see no particular crisis at the moment other than the fact that we have gone through in history various periods of crisis. That doesn't mean the complete collapse of all forms of capitalism.

Capitalism can emerge in other forms retaining, I hope, as we have under a "capitalist democracy," certain of our own ideals, the ideals that we do have the right to certain privileges. We have the right, in my opinion, to compete freely and openly with others. I don't put it on the basis of mere accumulation of money — the profit motive — but I feel there is room for talent; there is room for initiative, and I don't feel that in any leveling process of the so-called socialist state in the future that those ideals would be maintained. I don't know whether he expects to project us into a vision that somehow or other we are going to arrive at tomorrow.

If this is the final crisis of world capitalism, what does he mean? Is this the crisis today, is it tomorrow, is it 10 years from now, is it a century from now? What is the topic we are discussing? Are we going through this final crisis today merely because he indicates that here and there you have imperialism and you have wars? We've had those things before. You have communist imperialism today as much as you've had capitalist imperialism. You can denounce imperialism, but I can't see that there's going to be that radical a change and all of you are going to live in some future world where it's going to be happy for every one of us if you don't permit certain of the ideals of liberalism and the liberal democratic form of government which has emerged from "capitalist democracy" (if you want to call it that) which permits us the right to speak here today and to gather here today.

I don't think those liberties are going to disappear from this country quite as rapidly as everyone indicates merely because some isolated individual or some isolated professor is in chains here or there. I have no particular question other than that I would like to have an optimistic view presented. Just what is socialism to achieve if capitalism, as you call it, goes down? What's the vision? What's the solution? (*Applause.*)

### Boom-Bust and Repression

CLARKE: Well, I am trying to put my finger on just exactly what the professor wants. I must confess it's a little difficult to get at though. One thing the professor reminds me of (and I think he and I are among those here old enough to remember) is the period of the Twenties. (*Laughter.*) I remember much similar reasoning then. If you read the books of Thomas Nixon Carver, Irving Fisher of Yale, and the first edition of Charles Beard's "Rise of American Civilization," among others, you will find that in that period it was generally believed that America was entering its gold-

en age of prosperity in which poverty was finally going to be eliminated and profit-sharing spread among the great bulk of the people, and all of the causes of the cyclical development of capitalism, of boom and bust, would be eliminated in a general onward and upward march. But just as they had finished writing those books in this optimistic note, a ten-year depression began. Most of those writers are not even known today!

I say there's the most decisive factor — that we are on the eve of war and depression. It is not for me to provide an optimistic note but for you to show how we can avoid this holocaust that is being prepared for us and for humanity.

Now I don't deny the great wonders of capitalist civilization. Marxists were the first to recognize them. Marx borrowed many of his ideas from the classical economists, from the German philosophers and from others. But this society has gone through a number of stages and, as I tried to indicate before, it is now in the stage of its decline when it can only be bolstered, as in our country, by armaments production in order to continue the present level of production. This is decline. There is nothing in the history of capitalism like it except in the period that followed World War I.

When 800 millions of people have left the orbit of capitalism, when European capitalism, once so prosperous and wealthy, is in a state of perpetual deficit and crisis and can only be bailed out by American money (and that in turn puts new burdens on Europe) — put these factors together and you will see where the final crisis is. Will it come in one year, five years, ten years? Well, in the course of history that's a short time. But in the last 35 years, we have seen a development that has completely uprooted and altered a society that has lasted for years along entirely new forms, and only those predicted by Marx.

What of the future? The conclusion is self-evident. Eliminate the vested interests and their centralized domination over man's wealth and resources; eliminate the 60 families and the 265 companies in the United States which have within their hands this tremendous wealth, and who prevent the living standards of the mass of the people from keeping pace with the output of the productive plant. Organize our economy on a socialized, planned basis and then the foundations will be laid for the withering away of the state as an agency of repression.

What we are witnessing in the United States today is something entirely different — the withering away of capitalist democracy. That is the real problem before us today. This is not the work of this or that individual. It pervades our entire society.

The Supreme Court can say of the Bill of Rights that free speech is now to be limited to the point where advocacy of Marxism, which is falsely equated as the advocacy of the overthrow of the government by force and violence, is a punishable crime.

Add to that government by decree which establishes a "loyalty" ruling in which an organization can be designated by the government as "subversive" without a hearing,



and you have a new limitation on the rights of assembly. Who will come to a meeting or join an organization which is so stigmatized by the government and for belonging to which he may be fired from his employment?

Deport a person who came to this country believing it to be a haven for all immigrants fleeing from oppression, not because he is a communist today, but because at one time since he came to this country he may have been associated with communists . . .

Follow these trends in American society today and you can see the withering away of this capitalist democracy. Why? Because we cannot fight this kind of war, we cannot maintain this inequality of wealth and poverty without such restrictions on human rights. Eliminate the classes and you will eliminate the causes for repression and inequality and man's way will be opened to a better world. (*Applause.*)

### Says Marx Is Refuted

PROF. FRIEDRICH: I think that perhaps a preliminary statement on my part is called for also. There are several things characteristic of Mr. Clarke's statements that bother me greatly. One is the utterly unqualified acceptance of what he calls Marxism. I don't know of any human figure, human writer, human philosopher that has taught absolute truth with such certainty. As a matter of fact, if you follow Marx's predictions they are not borne out at all. There are incidents in history which are incidents to which he refers.

But if it is a causal process you have in mind, then you Marxists have to make qualifications. He calls Marx impatient because it was Russia, an agrarian country, it is China, an agrarian and backward country that has taken the lead in establishing social ownership in the means of production. But it was Marx's firm prediction, and it can only be the prediction, because it's inherent in Marxist logic that socialism must come first in a highly industrialized state. It did not come in the highly industrialized states.

Then another thing that bothers me in his logic is that whatever is wrong with the world has but one single cause. I think probably he would exclude measles, but practically everything else has one single cause. That the people of Russia are poor, starving, depressed, terrorized people is because of American capitalism or because of capitalism. If the North Koreans invade South Korea, it's because of American capitalism. Was it American capitalism if we go back to Egypt and elsewhere?

Then there's a third part. I think something should be said for American capitalism. In 1870, the normal work week was 72 hours. It's now 40. All right. American capitalism is not a perfect world. American capitalism has many faults and weaknesses. But it nevertheless remains a fact that in 1870 the normal working week was 72 hours and now it's 40. And if you travel along the highway today and see the millions of cars and then say that the American working class is depressed, it's sheer nonsense. And then say that if we follow the road of Russia and Czecho-

slovakia, then what? Would we have more cars, shorter work weeks? No.

Marx predicted the progressive impoverishment of the working class. But where is the working class the poorest? Where do they work the longest hours? Where do they work under the most severe disciplines and terrors? Is it the working class in America that are picked out of their homes at night, loaded on freight trains sent off to work camps and there worked to death? I suppose the slave labor camps in Soviet Russia are also due to the Sixty Families, the mythical Sixty Families in the United States. Now Mr. Clarke, do you really believe what you've been saying? (*Laughter and Applause.*)

### Accumulation of Capital

CLARKE: Yes, I do believe in what I'm saying. And that's why I'm not a professor. (*Laughter and applause.*) Marxists claim no infallibility for Marx. They claim only that he discovered a set of laws in the materialist philosophy which describes the changes which have occurred and will occur in man's evolution. Marx was not confirmed that the first countries to come to socialism would be the advanced capitalist countries of the West. But his predictions have got to be judged also in the light of world developments.

Capitalism remained not a European phenomenon but became a world phenomenon. Its links were tied to every country in the world. Even China, and India, not to speak of Russia and Eastern Europe, were linked to Western capitalism in the world chain. When the chain broke in the backward countries, it proved more that while Marx was not infallible in the sense of laying down an absolute prediction, he did foresee how the system would finally break up through the struggle of the classes. Now, the fact that it breaks up in the East has become a further cause for its decline in the West.

You make much here in a propagandistic way of the number of automobiles and the good life that the American workers presumably enjoy as compared to the long hours and slave labor camps and oppressive conditions in the Soviet Union. I tried to state briefly what the cause for that development was in the USSR. The Soviet Union had to industrialize without Western capital, which was denied them, and that's a big reason for the distortions in their system.

But the question can better be understood if we turn our attention to the development of capitalism in the United States and England. Where did the capital come from that ultimately went to American industry and to its industrialization? From slavery in part. There was slave labor here and much worse: families were wrenched apart, women were sold on the auction block and children were whipped. The capital came from the slave trade from Africa that everybody has read about in the history books, which enriched the Yankee traders. It came from the inhuman exploitation of immigrant labor in the mines, from the 14 and 16 hour a day labor for women and children in the factories and the sweatshops. You will find the same



process in England except that India took the place of Negro slavery for the English capitalists.

America had the benefit of foreign capital until 1914. In the war of 1914-1918, we were still a debtor country. What's the meaning of a debtor country that is in the process of industrial development? It means that it is being aided by foreign capital. Capital was made available to the United States, easing its development which occurred on a capitalist basis. But it has been denied the Russian people because they were determined to take the socialist road. (*Applause.*)

### Does It Work in the USSR?

PROF. RAYMOND: Well, I hate to get serious (*laughter*) but (*applause*) I happened to live for six years in the USSR and I studied their socialism very carefully even allowing for the armaments and so forth. And there are certain things that strike out right immediately.

In the first place, socialism has natural faults. Don't kid yourself. First of all everybody gets lazy. They're all working for the state. You know it's an old attitude. "Why work hard? It's our state."

Secondly, planning has never been perfect yet, and if you don't believe me, go down and look at the current digest of the Soviet press in our serials room and see what the economic sections say, using textual quotations from the Soviet press, how a planned economy is working. It has all kinds of ups and downs and illogical things. An economy is just too big to ever work perfectly.

Thirdly, a point that I think is one of the most horrible things I have ever seen: the Soviet Union had unemployment, and had it until it started arming. It is armaments in both worlds that has removed unemployment. But you cannot say that socialism is the cure-all. Go look at it. It's been tried. It was tried in China in the Middle Ages. And always it has had trouble. So have we got trouble. Perhaps there is some way in between them that will be the answer. But you always have difficulties. And don't think that just because Marx wrote something that it's going to work out that way. I'd like to ask why a half a million people run away from the Soviet Union? Is that because Marxism is a perfect state? (*Applause.*)

CLARKE: The only thing I wish you would tell us, Professor, is — you don't like Marxism and you say there ought to be something else. What else?

PROF. RAYMOND: That's for you to find out. (*Laughter and applause.*)

### Bureaucracy and Socialism

CLARKE: I'm trying to find that out and I've arrived at my own position. It's not an academic question. It's a question of humanity being faced with atomic destruction. It's a question of innumerable crises. It's a question of servitude of a great portion of a human race. As a thinker, Professor. I think the least we can ask of you, is to come up with some idea, something that the human race and not merely its most privileged part — which perhaps at the particular moment can afford to turn its back on these

problems — can be interested in. And you will not hear as a rule such ideas, such arguments.

Your position is based on the transient *status quo* in the United States. It is based on the fact that planning has not been perfect in the Soviet Union. Far from it. How could it be? It was deformed by the backwardness of the country. It had the obstacle of the lack of foreign capital. It was first tried in a country that was primarily illiterate. Nevertheless by planning, in the course of 28 years, no, less, in 22 years they have built the first industrial country in Europe. With that imperfect plan, with that bureaucratic incubus, with that obstacle and opposition from the West, that's a tribute despite all of its faults, all of its evils.

Now, you say people have left the Soviet Union because Marxism is not a perfect state. Professor, Marxism is not a state. Marxism is a system of ideas, a doctrine. (*Laughter.*) I have to say that at a University! What exists in the Soviet Union is a transitory society. It is not socialism. That is the great lie of Stalin and those who sit on top of the regime. To justify their bureaucratic privileges they must tell the world that there exists the society without classes, the society of abundance. That is their great disservice to the cause of socialism.

But the truth is clear. It was stated by the founders of that state, by Lenin and Trotsky. It is a state of transition between capitalism and socialism. And they were the last to hide from the people of Russia that they would have to enter a vale of tears to complete that transition. Lenin thought that Western, industrial Germany would come to their assistance and come to socialism. Then the road would be much easier. It didn't happen that way. I won't enter upon the reasons for that today except to repeat again, Professor, that the capitalist West did its level best to prevent Germany from coming to the aid of Russia. The international magnates saw to that. It was with their aid that Hitler came to power, rearmed Germany, and finally hurled his Nazi legions against the USSR.

And now in the midst of this, people leave the Soviet Union because of the terrible situation that exists there. It's true. But do you know what the refugees say? I have read reputable studies on this matter. They're all against the Stalin regime, but they say that if the Stalin regime is overthrown, the system of collective property must remain. They say that it is progressive and want only to add the control of the people and the elimination of the bureaucrats. Similarly the people of Eastern Europe don't like their Stalinist overlords, but they are in their overwhelming majority wedded to the new forms of collective property relations, and they are against any restoration of the old regime.

A poll was taken in Eastern Germany by a reputable Western agency. You can see both sides of the question here. Western agencies wanted the poll because they had to have some clear facts to determine future policy. They found that of the people canvassed only 20% said that in the event of a free election in Germany would they vote for the Communist Party, so great is their hostility to the bureaucracy, its brutality and its methods. But of these

people, 80% said that they were in favor of and would fight for the retention of the changes in property relations from private property to collective property which had occurred.

Anyone in Europe will tell you that the reason the "Voice of America" is a flop is because it says that we will restore private property, so-called "free enterprise" in Eastern Europe, and the peoples in that part of the world are finished with it. There you can see the two stages of this development. The first stage distorted by bureaucracy and dictatorship, and the second stage reflecting the consciousness of the people that they have made a great stride forward, that they will continue to move that way but will unlimber themselves of this bureaucracy. (*Applause.*)

PROF. FRIEDRICH: I only hope, Mr. Clarke, that if your prediction should come true, your hopes that the people who get the power will be the kind of people that will do only good. That there will be no Stalin or others to pervert and divert this movement away from the heaven on earth. Now I'd like to ask for questions from the floor. We have some minutes left. I'm sure some of you have questions to ask.

### QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

(*A number of questions and answers were missed here by a break in the tape.*)

QUESTION: Skimming over the predatory state of Soviet Russia, will you please explain the relationship and the right of the individual in a Marxist society?

CLARKE: In the society of socialism, what are the relations or the rights of the individual? Well, you won't have any loyalty oaths (*laughter*), any McCarran Acts. The right to accumulate private property in the means of production will be eliminated (*Question: By whom?*) by the action of the people (*laughter*) and enforced by the state. The right to discriminate against people because of race, color and creed will be made a punishable offense — punishable, I believe, in the first stage of the new society by the final means of punishment which no capitalist society dares employ against race-haters. All of these measures will establish a new relationship between man and man, eliminating the inequality and oppressive features which exist today. (*Applause.*)

QUESTION: From my understanding of your speech, I believe that dearth of conditions in the Soviet Union today is not due to the system, but to the methods in which the system is run. Now, what guarantees have we that were Stalin and his ilk to be taken from Russia that another group of the same kind would not rise in its place?

CLARKE: I think that if Stalin and his group were taken from Russia today and just any other group placed in charge of Russia that it might proceed in the same way. Because as a materialist, I believe that similar conditions tend to produce the same results. What I am saying is this: Stalin was created by a situation of poverty, isolation and

the encirclement of the Soviet Union, a situation of the lack of material goods, of backwardness.

What guarantee is there in any future revolution that a Stalin should not arise? There is none if the same conditions prevail. It is only when there is abundance — and that is what the Western part of civilization has — only where there is plenty; it is only when developed countries take the road of socialism that bureaucratic repression can be averted. And the very extension of the revolution, as it proceeds to the more advanced countries, immediately produces an opposition to Stalin's bureaucracy.

We have seen that, for instance, in Yugoslavia; in the great difficulties the Stalinist machine faces in Eastern Europe. These more advanced people, with a higher standard of living, are already the source of opposition to the bureaucracy. When the movement spreads farther West — to France and Germany and England and finally to the United States, then the past and the position of the people and their economic basis will prevent the rise of a similar bureaucracy.

PROF. FRIEDRICH: Now, you can note that Mr. Clarke's voice is getting somewhat frayed. He's been talking a great deal. And — would you answer two more questions? (*Clarke: Yes.*) What's that? (*Many hands are raised in the audience.*) All right, then I will choose blindly.

### Transformation of Man

QUESTION: In other words the society you envision would have to be a world of people populated by a conglomeration of Jesus Christ, the socialistic man conducting himself for the betterment of society, in other words in the spirit of Jesus Christ?

CLARKE: I think that under socialism man will rise a step in the ladder higher than Jesus Christ. (*Amused reaction and applause.*) Man has been transformed many times in the course of history. From barbarism, from cannibalism to the methods that existed under feudal society, to the comparison that we can see today between the backward countries of the world and advanced America — there you can see many transformations. How has this occurred? Not by missionary teachings, not by the prior transformation of man's values, but by the changes of man's relation to man in the process of production. The changes in the mode of production, and with it the change in the relationships of men, will eliminate greed and the other driving motive forces under present-day society and replace them with entirely different ones. With that, man will begin to undergo a great transformation.

PROF. FRIEDRICH: Well, I tell you. It's a quarter to five. We've been here an hour and 45 minutes. Mr. Clarke's voice is getting hoarse. I'm getting tired. (*Laughter.*) This discussion could go on from now until six months from now and we would still have most of the questions unresolved. What this meeting proves is that the McCarran Act, McCarthy and a lot of others in the United States still allow the expression of a point of view which, according to the speaker, is anathema to those who control the United States. Good night. (*Applause.*)

# The Military Coup in Egypt

By S. MUNIR

## I. The Causes of the Military Coup d'Etat

On the night of July 23, General Naguib occupied Cairo with the help of a group of young officers. On the same day the Hilali Pasha government resigned after having been in power only 24 hours. Three days later, on July 26, King Farouk was dethroned and expelled from Egypt. Events, foreseen neither by the diplomats, the journalists nor the Egyptian politicians themselves, were occurring with a dizzying speed. What is behind the military *coup d'etat*? What social forces caused it? What are the forces it will have to confront? What is its program? What has it accomplished and what will it be able to accomplish?

There are three profound causes for the crisis which led to the military *coup d'etat*: 1) The difficult economic situation which accentuated social tensions. 2) Anglo-Egyptian relations which had reached an impasse. 3) The ferment in the army, the most important and most powerful pillar of the old regime.

### a. The Cotton Crisis

For almost a year, Egyptian economy has been going through a serious crisis caused by the situation on the international cotton market. Cotton accounts for more than 80% of Egyptian exports; the whole situation of the Egyptian economy depends on the price of this raw material. When prices are low and the demand for Egyptian cotton limited, Egypt cannot pay for its primary imports; government revenues deriving from the land tax, export taxes, etc., decline; the buying power of the population falls even lower than it is ordinarily and the economic machine as a whole is thrown out of joint.

This is precisely the situation that has wracked Egypt for a year. The price of cotton on the international market has fallen more than 25%. Egypt's cotton exports have dropped almost 50%. During the 1951-52 season, Great Britain, Egypt's principal customer, purchased only 48,000 bales of cotton as against 284,000 in the previous season. The Egyptian trade balance for 1951 shows a deficit of 40 million Egyptian pounds, the balance of payments a deficit of 20 million pounds. (An Egyptian pound is equivalent to about 4/5 of the British pound sterling.) An even larger deficit is expected for 1952.

Despite growing demands by the health and education departments, for irrigation works and transportation, the Egyptian government was obliged to reduce its budget by almost 20%. At the same time a serious crisis occurred in Egypt's most important industry, textiles. Its market was still further restricted because of the very low buying power of the masses. To that, there has recently been added foreign competition, which has lowered prices. Thousands of workers have been laid off. Wages have been cut as

much as is possible with wages already on the hunger level.

The entire "social equilibrium" has been violently shaken by this economic development. The Egyptian ruling classes were ready to support any force which provided any chance whatever of reestablishing this equilibrium. After the failure of numerous attempts — five different governments in the course of the last six months — they accepted General Naguib's military dictatorship almost without resistance.

### b. Anglo-Egyptian Relations

The extraordinary anti-imperialist upsurge at the close of 1951 and at the beginning of 1952 assumed a clearly proletarian character from the outset. The movement overwhelmed the WAFD which had unleashed it. (The WAFD has been the leading capitalist party in Egypt. — Ed.) The upsurge was then led into a blind alley and suppressed by imperialist troops. The abrogation of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty in October 1951, and the WAFD's anti-British declarations which followed, prevented this party from resuming negotiations with Great Britain without completely discrediting itself in the eyes of the masses.

The ruling classes, led by King Farouk, then decided to get rid of the WAFD. The occasion presented itself on January 26 when the enormous indignation of the masses was diverted by the King's provocateurs to the burning and plundering of foreign property. Nahas was ejected from office and replaced by Ali Maher. His task was the formation of a common front of the royalist parties and the WAFD for the purpose of resuming negotiations with Great Britain.

When this attempt collapsed, Hilali took power in order to curb the WAFD and come to agreement with the imperialists within the framework of the Middle East Pact. But Hilali failed in turn; he could neither undermine the WAFD's popularity nor build his own mass party. At the same time the WAFD made known to the Americans that it was not hostile to participating in a Middle East pact (in the event of its return to power), especially if the principal partner was to be not Great Britain but the United States.

Hilali had to get out; but the King as well as the WAFD preferred that the power not be turned over immediately to Nahas Pasha but to Sirri Pasha who would provide a transition for the WAFD's comeback and would organize new elections. But as a transition government, the Sirri Pasha cabinet could not seriously negotiate with the West. When Hilali succeeded him three weeks later, all chances of an agreement had again vanished for domestic reasons. Hilali had already proved once that he could not crush the WAFD, and any agreement with Great Britain not supported by the WAFD was without significance.

Naguib promised to get out of this impasse by holding up the perspective of an agreement with the western powers to be concluded under the pressure of his military dictatorship either with the WAFD's consent or by crushing it in passing.

### c. The Army

The discontent of the young officers dates from the war in Palestine. They had acquired the conviction at the time that corruption in ruling circles was partly responsible for the defective provisioning of the front, and therefore for the defeat. The arms trial publicly disclosed these scandals. In December 1951, General Naguib was elected President of the Cairo officers' club against the candidate supported by King Farouk, who wanted to give the position to a high officer of the corrupt old guard. Later, the officers' club was closed down.

When the Cairo troubles broke out last January 26, the impotence of the ruling classes and of the court was impressively revealed. The army's bitterness against the aristocracy and its confidence in its own strength could not but grow in these events. Naguib demanded that he be given the Ministry of War in the Sirri Pasha cabinet. The King vetoed it. When Hilali appointed Ismail Sherin, the King's brother-in-law, as War Minister, the officers' indignation reached its peak. Young officers were asking this question: If the corrupt ruling classes of Egypt are incapable of governing without the support of the army, why should the army itself not take power? That is the third cause of the July 23 *coup d'etat*.

## II. Naguib and the Old Regime

To measure the scope of the intervention of Naguib and his officers into Egyptian society, and to analyze the revolutionary possibilities opened thereby, requires an examination of the developments which have occurred in the following spheres since the *coup d'etat*: a) The court and the clergy. b) Relations with foreign capital and imperialism. c) The agrarian question. d) the labor question.

Farouk's departure undoubtedly constitutes an enormous shakeup of Egyptian society. Farouk was the symbol of the corrupt aristocracy which dominated Egypt. The spontaneous mass demonstrations in Cairo and Alexandria which accompanied his departure are very clear indications of the popular hatred of the plundering ruling class. At the same time they indicated how far the masses were ready to go in their enthusiasm and dynamism in overthrowing the whole superannuated social structure of the country. What they needed was a revolutionary leadership.

Of course, Naguib and his officers were far from being such a leadership. Naguib himself had not gone further in his thinking that curbing of the royal prerogative. When Farouk resisted, he was removed. The monarchical constitution was retained and the doors of the Abdin Palace were thrown open to three regents, one of them a member of the royal family. The civil list has been reduced from 1.5 million pounds to 800,000 pounds. There is talk of a careful constitutional reform through a constituent assembly (which remains to be convened) whose task

would be to curb the right of the King to dissolve parliament and to recall governments. But all that is music of the future.

What is certain is that the foundations are not to be altered. Ali Maher, Naguib's prime minister, declared: "*Revision will not change its (the constitution's) fundamental principles which are not only intangible but immortal.*" And Naguib himself said: "*We have no intention of transforming Egypt into a Republic. The state form will remain exactly the same as in the past: a constitutional monarchy.*" (*Al Misri*, July 31)

Nor has Naguib any revolutionary intentions toward the clergy. That is clearly shown in his relations with the University of Azhar, the bastion of clerical reaction in Egypt and in all the Near East. He stated during a visit to this institution: "The most important task is to raise the moral level. That can only be done by adhering strictly to religion. Toward this end, Azhar should be supported in its mission. The army and Azhar have one aim for which they are orienting in common." (*Al Misri*, Aug. 10)

The *coup d'etat* of the Egyptian army therefore does not in any way constitute a revolution. The old institutions are preserved. If Naguib is limiting their functions here or there, it is because they were no longer capable of preserving the existing social structure. Naguib means to demonstrate to the ruling classes, the landed proprietors, the big merchants and the capitalists that the military dictatorship can preserve this structure.

The degree of his cooperation with the traditional institutions depends therefore solely on their willingness to adapt themselves to his plans. Farouk did not want to, and he had to leave. Ali Maher, an erstwhile, faithful, court politician, has been ready up to now to go along. (Since the writing of this article, Ali Maher has resigned. — Ed) The traditional Egyptian political parties have not yet made a definitive decision on this score.

## III. Foreign Capital and Imperialism

The touchstone of any revolutionary movement in a colonial or semi-colonial country is its relations with foreign capital which exploits the country, and its attitude toward the imperialist power or powers which directly or indirectly dominate the state. Exploitation by foreign capital is particularly striking in Egypt. 40% to 50% of all private fortunes are in the hands of foreign capitalists; deducting landed fortunes, this percentage rises to 75%. The key positions in the banks, insurance, credit and mortgage companies and in industry are dominated by foreign capital.

In the past, the Egyptian bourgeoisie made some timid efforts to supplant foreign capital. One of these attempts was the famous 1947 "corporation law" under whose provisions 51% of the shares of all new corporations were to be held by Egyptian citizens. Since that time, several governments have attempted to modify this law. Negotiations for this purpose have dragged on. But Naguib cut the Gordian Knot and altered the percentages: henceforth only 49% of the shares need be in the hands of Egyptian citizens.

Another new law facilitates the conditions of sojourn in Egypt of "foreigners useful to the Egyptian economy" and permits them to become permanent residents. Several declarations have been made along the lines of encouraging the influx of foreign investments and of giving them the necessary guarantees. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abd el-Aziz Salem, vehemently denied the rumor that the Ali Maher government or the army had any intention of nationalizing private enterprises or corporations. (*Al Misri* Aug. 10) These declarations were given much prominence in the U.S. where it is hoped that a new era of American investments in Egypt is in the offing (AP dispatch, August 1).

It is clear that by this policy Naguib desires to obtain the economic and military aid from America which would facilitate the solution of the present crisis. That is why he has been very prudent in his political declarations. He has made no statements on the question of British troops in the Suez Canal zone, on Sudan and on the Middle East Pact which could commit him in one way or another. But he has let it be understood that he is favorably inclined to the pact.

It is logical therefore that Great Britain and the United States should have granted him their complete support. The *N.Y. Times*, Aug. 4, compared Egypt to Iran and eulogistically pointed out that the Egyptian government "had no need of catering to public opinion." In any case, American imperialism has come to the conclusion that democracy is not a good export commodity and that the national and social mass movements in the Middle East can only be repressed with the help of dictatorships.

British imperialism itself is trying to save everything that can still be saved in Egypt and to win over Naguib by some dramatic gestures. On August 24, British troops turned over to the Egyptian army the port of Firdan in the Suez Canal Zone, which they had occupied during the October 1951 troubles. And at the end of August, the British government declared that henceforth it was prepared to resume deliveries of war materials to Egypt.

As a result, Naguib believes himself able to assure the Egyptian propertied classes under his domination the long-hoped for agreement with foreign capital without having to fear the anti-imperialist sentiments of the people. American and British imperialism are doing everything possible, each in its own way, to strengthen this belief in him.

#### IV. Naguib's "Agrarian Reform"

One of the principal reasons which has led the Egyptian ruling classes to grant Naguib their support was the heightening social tensions in the cities and in the countryside. They hope Naguib will succeed in calming the revolutionary ferment of the Egyptian masses by a wise dose of "reforms" on the one side, and by using a "strong hand" on the other. They had good reason for worry. It has been a common occurrence recently for the *fellahin* (poor peasants) to refuse to pay their rent. They even began to attack the domains of the landed proprietors and to burn their estates. It was not surprising therefore that one of the first

points of Naguib's program was agrarian reform. What is its real significance?

According to recent statistics, 2 million *fellahin* owned less than .4 hectares of land each; the average size of their property is .16 hectares although at least from .8 to 1.2 is necessary to feed a family in Egypt. (A hectare is slightly over 2 acres. — Ed) These two million poor peasants constitute 72% of all owners of land. To them should be added 1.5 to 2 million poor peasants without any land whatever! These 3.5 to 4 million poor families make up more than 80% of Egypt's agricultural population. 72% of the landed proprietors mentioned above owning the smallest properties, occupy in total only 13% of the agricultural domain. On the other side of the social pyramid are 12,000 big landed proprietors each owning more than 20 hectares. In all, they constitute .04 of all the proprietors but occupy 35% of all the agricultural domain. Among them are the richest group of 200 large proprietors each owning more than 400 hectares; on an average each of them owns 880 hectares.

Around 10% of the Egyptian agricultural domain is represented by land called *waqf* (lands left in wills for the public benefit). One of the largest landed proprietors in Egypt is the throne itself. King Fouad, father of Farouk, owned 11,200 hectares of land at his death, and in addition managed some 8,000 hectares of *waqf* land. King Farouk himself can claim for the dynasty ownership of more than 40,000 hectares and the management of some 52,000 hectares of *waqf* land.

The Minister of *Waqf* Territories has now announced that religious, cultural and charitable institutions to whom these lands were given in usufruct have not received a penny of their revenues during their management by the King. The King "used these lands as if they were his own." (*Al Abram*, Aug. 11) Since landed rent is today going up on the average to 50 pounds a hectare, the King obtained from his landed property as well as the lands he managed an annual income of 4.5-5 million pounds, or an amount equivalent to annual income of 700,000 poor peasant families!

What then do the reforms announced by Naguib promise? On Aug. 12, *Al Misri* published the plan of agrarian reform elaborated by the army (official sources have since confirmed this news). According to this plan, no one henceforth can own in Egypt more than 80 hectares. The state will buy all lands above this figure. The former owners will receive state bonds, redeemable within 30 years and carrying an annual interest rate of 3.5%. The lands thus taken from the former owners will be divided among the landless peasants and among those who own less than .8 hectares. They are to pay for the purchase of the land in annuities spread over 30 years. In addition the breakup of properties under .8 hectares will be proscribed. The new inheritors of the soil have in one way or another to compensate the old heirs. Finally the share of proprietors in a rented plot cannot exceed one-third of the crop.

Can such a reform, if effectively applied, resolve the agrarian question in Egypt? Not at all. First, the recovery of all properties over 80 hectares will yield in toto only

290,000 hectares which can provide for 360,00 families at .8 hectares per family, 360,000 families represent 10% of the families with less than .8 hectares or with no land at all. It should be pointed out that if property had been limited to 20 hectares, which in view of land production in Egypt already represents a substantial piece of property, they would have been able to satisfy 720,000 families.

Then, the peasants need not only land but even more, they need capital to work the land. Where will they get this capital if they are saddled in addition with 30 annuity payments? The indivisibility of properties less than .8 hectares is illusory.

The limitations on land rent will not prevent the landed proprietors from dictating their conditions to the poor and illiterate *fellahin* since the "demand" for land is much greater than the "supply." So long as the poor peasants are not organized and so long as there is no control by the working masses over the economy, the landowners will be able to find ways to circumvent the law by all kinds of "arrangements."

Naguib's so-called "agrarian reform" will not therefore be able to attenuate the agrarian question in Egypt, let alone resolve it. But Naguib is faced with a dilemma: on the one hand, social contradictions have been sharpened on the countryside and threaten to assume forms dangerous to the entire social system; on the other hand, he neither wishes to nor can he take measures which will vitally affect the big landed proprietors. That is why there is no solution of the dilemma for him. On the one side, he faces the *fellahin's* indignation and is obliged to take measures which look like reform in an effort to prevent the development of independent actions by the poor peasants like those which have been occurring recently. On the other hand, there is the danger that any shake-up of the social edifice will bring about a collapse which will be difficult to stop.

That is why the Egyptian propertied classes, fearing violent social convulsions, besides not wanting to give up 29,000 hectares, are seeking in every way to limit Naguib's agrarian reform.

The WAFD is sticking to its program calling for sale of government lands to poor peasants and is opposed to fixing a limit on landed property (*Al Misri*, Aug. 1)

Dr. Houssein Haikal, leader of the liberal-constitutional party, expressly declared that limitation of property was a delicate question which is provoking class struggle (*Al Abram*, Aug. 7).

Ali Maher declared that he was theoretically in favor of a limitation on landed property, but added: "But I do not want to expose Egypt to very strong economic shocks at the present time." (*Al Misri*, Aug. 8)

"Ash-Sharq al-Adna," the British radio station broadcasting in Arabic reported on Aug. 24 that the British government had counseled Ali Maher to avoid trouble by not rushing agrarian reform. It appears that the Iranian example has greatly upset the Egyptian rulers and their imperialist bosses.

Rawle Know, representative of the OFNS, news service in Teheran, writes:

"The Shah's gesture of distributing part of his lands (which the communists immediately called the poorest part) to selected poor peasants, which has received such generous publicity, has not done him much good. There is trouble on his rich pasture land in Levasan, on which peasants have trespassed, as well as on his property at Farhazad. Mossadegh's new decree establishing controls over land rents favorable to the farmer is a complicated administrative affair; meanwhile it appears likely that the peasants are going to establish a kind of control themselves!"

## V. The Working Class and the New Regime

But the social ferment in Egypt is not confined to the village. Even more dangerous for existing society are the events which have recently been taking place among the working class. Since the great 1950 strike wave, the struggle of the Egyptian workers for a human living standard has gone on uninterruptedly.

Under pressure of the strike wave, the WAFD government had been obliged in 1950 to grant an increase of 50% in the cost of living bonus promulgated by a special law "for reasons of social security," according to the declaration of Serag ed-Din, Minister of the Interior. But this concession sharpened the workers' struggles. One strike after another was called to compel the employers actually to abide by this law. Indeed, the Egyptian employers did their level best to evade the law and are still trying to evade it today.

There has been strikes of thousands of workers in Shoubra al-Kheima, the textile suburbs of Cairo; a strike of 2,000 electrical workers at Alexandria; a strike of 2,500 longshoremen at Port Said; a strike of 7,000 longshoremen at Alexandria. Many other industries have also been temporarily paralyzed by strikes.

Gradually, other demands were added to those calling for the payment of the cost of living bonus, such as the checking of the books of the big corporations by the Minister of Labor; penalties against all firms not applying the law; prohibition of layoffs of workers, etc. In May, the workers of Shoubra al-Kher formulated the following demands: Rehiring of laid-off workers and employees and full payment of the legal cost of living bonus to them; 40-hour work week without reduction in pay; unemployment compensation; prohibition of layoffs without valid reason; industrial and agricultural public works to absorb the unemployed; equal wages for equal work for men and women; no interference by the police in trade union organizations.

Since then, the situation has been further aggravated during 1952. A high proportion of textile workers were laid off as a result of the crisis in the textile industry. 24,000 workers, who quit work on British projects in the Suez Canal zone during the October 1951 troubles, are still out of work despite the promises of the Egyptian government. 6,000 workers employed by the Egyptian army were laid off because they demanded equal rights with workers employed by the public services. A month-long strike, tying up the Delta railroad, occurred over the refusal of the employers to pay the cost of living bonus. 20,000 transportation workers threatened to stop work on July 27 because



the company tried to cut wages by mass layoffs (the strike was postponed because of the *coup d'etat*). The above are some of the strikes which have occurred during recent weeks.

But the most important event was the conflict in the textile city of Kafr-ed-Dewar, near Alexandria, where 8,000 workers are employed in the spinning and weaving mills of the Misr Co. On Aug. 13, the workers quit work and put forth the following demands: removal of several of the company's influential directors; free elections for officials of the union, whose headquarters should be outside the factory property; adjustment of the cost of living bonus to that paid government employees; wage increases; no layoffs.

Some of these demands are not new, but the outbreak of the strike was closely connected to the abdication of the King with whom two of the corporation owners were closely associated. Hafez Afifi was head of the King's cabinet, and Elias Andraus was manager of the King's investments. (A package of foreign stocks valued at a million pounds, which had been purchased by Farouk, was later to be discovered in a safe in the factory office at Kafr ed-Dewar).

Immediately 6,000 workers of the National Spinning Mills at Moharram Bey, another Alexandria suburb, went out in solidarity with the Kafr ed-Dewar workers. They had previously demanded payment of the cost of living bonus, the rehiring of laid-off workers, and the removal of trade union leaders designated by the employer. But the strike of the exasperated Kafr ed-Dewar workers was soon led into dangerous paths: the outbreak of several fires gave the army its pretext to intervene. There resulted a bloody battle between the workers and the army in which several lost their lives and many were wounded. The provocation also permitted the army to drown in blood the solidarity strike of the Moharram Bey workers.

Telegrams of solidarity poured in from all corners of Egypt condemning the provocations and demanding the right of the workers to form free and independent unions. But many workers still retain illusions that Naguib will take their interests to heart and will permit the formation of free trade unions — just as they nursed similar illusions in the past about the WAFD. However, Naguib demonstrated in the very first month of his dictatorship that if the growing pressure of the class struggle is obliging him to make promises and even occasionally to call his a "workers' and peasants' government," he is distinguishing his government from those preceding it by the fact that he takes more drastic measures and acts more rapidly and energetically.

He has increased taxes on large incomes, but at the same time one of the first actions of his government was to increase indirect taxes (all *ad valorem* taxes and the tobacco tax). To give the appearance of "social progress," all the beggars at Cairo were removed from the capital and locked up in concentration camps. The only law up to now concerned with the workers deals neither with freedom of association nor increase in wages — but the constitution of

compulsory arbitration commissions and the creation of a new bureau for the struggle against communism immediately replacing the political police dissolved at the time of the *coup d'etat*.

It is doubtful, however, that Naguib will be able to honor the promissory note he has given imperialism in return for military and economic assistance: namely, the repression of "communism," i.e. the growing force of the Egyptian working class. As this is being written, the transport workers of Cairo and the provinces are threatening to call the strike they had postponed at the time of the *coup d'etat*. Since Naguib has not altered the foundations of the Egyptian social structure and has no intention of so doing, there is no other way that he can avert strikes than by the use of military force. And the Egyptian workers have shown in the past that they know how to defy the forces of the army.

## VI. Where Is Egypt Going?

Thus the principal reason for the relatively easy success of Naguib's *coup d'etat* rests in the fact that the growing social and economic difficulties of Egypt, as well as the blind alley the conflict with imperialism was in, had led the ruling classes, desirous of maintaining their domination, to support a military dictatorship which promised to overcome the social contradictions and reach an agreement with imperialism.

But the calculation of Naguib and his bosses underestimates the adversary. The roots of the anti-imperialist struggle of the Egyptian masses goes too deep and is tied too closely to the structure of the Egyptian economy, which is largely dominated by foreign capital, to be halted overnight. The agrarian question in Egypt is too vast in scope to lend itself to a "solution" by Naguib's type of reform. The class struggle of the workers has taken too violent forms, and has given rise to much too clearly formulated demands, to be appeased by the few meager concessions Naguib has granted the proletariat.

The 1950 law on the cost of living bonus, granted under workers' pressure and considered a stroke of appeasement by the government, gave rise to one of the most important strike waves Egypt has ever known in years. The Egyptian propertied classes rightly feel that a "liberal" agrarian reform will only lead, as the example of Iran has shown, to more powerful and militant actions on the part of the poor peasants.

It can therefore be predicted that Naguib's regime will not be the "stable regime" upon which American imperialism bases so many hopes; on the contrary it will be convulsed by violent social shocks. By expelling Farouk and by starting the agrarian reform, Naguib has violated what was sacrosanct in Egyptian society. He has involuntarily released an avalanche which can only be stopped with the greatest difficulty.

This situation requires a very clear program of action on the part of the vanguard of the Egyptian workers'

movement that will enable it to lead the struggles which will soon break out in Egypt and lead them in a revolutionary direction. The principal task today is to participate actively in the reorganization of the workers' unions so as to establish unified demands and common aims for the militant workers' struggles. The Egyptian workers continue to suffer today from a dispersion of their struggles, which have often, however, assumed the highest levels of working class struggle, including the occupation of the factories. Only a unified trade union organization under a revolutionary leadership can provide these struggles with a common program and a common leadership. What can be attained with such unity has been demonstrated in the solidarity action of the National Spinning Mill workers during the Kafr-ed-Dewar strike.

The spontaneous actions of the poor peasants which have recently occurred have profound significance for the revolutionary workers' movement. It should make con-

scious efforts to organize, activize and educate the enormous mass of peasants who up to now have been atomized.

The laid-off workers returning to the villages, which they had left to go to the cities for work, represent a natural liaison between the proletariat and the poor peasants. Besides there are millions of landless agricultural wage workers, employed on the capitalist farms, who are often within short distances of the big industrial enterprises (the cane sugar farms of the General Sugar Company, for example).

The demands of the agrarian revolution should be counterposed to Naguib's fictitious agrarian reform: expropriation of all landed property over 20 hectares; collective cultivation of the capitalist farms by the landless peasants assisted by cheap long-term state credits; free distribution of expropriated lands to farmers owning less than 1.2 hectares.

Late August 1952

# Capitalism and Democracy

By HARRY FRANKEL

Christian believers in the Trinity accord veneration to God the Father and awe to God the Spirit, but keep a special warm affection for God the Son. He was a man, had a birthday and a tangible corporeal form, and thus provides more substantial focus for religious feelings. So has it also been with the capitalist class, which came into the world with the trinity "Life, Liberty and Property" on its lips. Life and Liberty have been given a wordy salute from time to time, but the solid all-year-round honors have always gone to Property.

The U.S. capitalist class is now engaged in a worldwide politico-military campaign in protection of the institution of private property; to this material campaign there corresponds an ideological one. The nation has been literally inundated by a flood of articles, speeches, books, pamphlets, etc., all expatiating on the sacred nature of private property. In the new theology, the first incantation against the profane is this tenet: private property is essential to all human rights. End private ownership of the means of production and tyranny will surely come to dominate society.

This superstition has been given a certain plausibility for the superficial mind by present conjunctural circumstances. While many elements of parliamentary bourgeois democracy remain in the capitalist U.S. (the reactionary offensive has not yet destroyed most of them), the first historic instance of collectivized property has been accompanied by exceedingly rigid and absolutist political forms. For those who can reduce the entire significance of this period of great social transformation to a transient contrast between the United States and the Soviet Union, this is

sufficient to close the matter. Private property, they conclude, is indeed the *sine qua non* of human freedom. But science, not being satisfied with surface appearances, must delve a little more deeply.

For a sample of bourgeois thinking on this subject in its most "scholarly" form, we turn to a little book recently published by Robert M. MacIver, Lieber Professor of Political Philosophy and Sociology at Columbia University. MacIver, generally rated among the best the bourgeois academic world has to offer in the politico-sociologic field, delivered five lectures at the University of Michigan in December, 1950; these have now been published in book form.\*

Professor MacIver's argument is as follows: "The central problem of the twentieth century" is the "problem of the relation of society to property." In early history economic power was closely wedded to political power. There was no important role played by "private economic power" separate from government, and there was very little democracy. However, with the rise of modern industry and the newly enriched capitalist class, this "ancient union of property and authority" was broken by the powerful new "private economic power" and this brought modern "democracy" into being.

Professor MacIver then inquires: Can this democracy survive without private property; can it survive in a socialist society? He denies this possibility. The power of the state, he says, being comprehensive and final, is worse than any other kind of power, and will inevitably produce to-

\* Democracy and the Economic Challenge, by Robert M. MacIver, Alfred A. Knoff, 1952, 86 pp., \$2.50.

talitarianism if the entire economic structure is given over to its dominion.

Thus Professor MacIver takes the high road and the National Association of Manufacturers takes the low road, but they meet on the same conclusion: "save capitalism and save liberty." MacIver prefers to call capitalism "private economic power," the NAM calls it "free enterprise," but the switch of names alters nothing.

### Private Property: Then and Now

Capitalist democracy had its best days in the period when the reign of the ancient feudal, aristocratic, landowning, monarchical and ecclesiastical tyranny had been smashed, and the capitalist mode of production had not yet come to dominate the national economy. In that period, commodity production was carried on primarily by independent producers on the farms or in the growing cities; producers who owned at least part of their means of production and hired little or no labor. The capitalist class dominated the economy, but did so chiefly through *exchange*, as a merchant class, and not as yet chiefly through *production*, as owners of the means of production.

The importance of this distinction may be seen from this fact: that the ownership of the means of production was widely distributed throughout the population. This was "private economic power," in MacIver's phrase, but it was fundamentally different from modern private property. While the means of production at that time were distributed through the nation (very unequally, to be sure, but distributed nonetheless), today the overwhelming mass of the means of production in capitalist countries is concentrated in the hands of a tiny class, while most of the population owns no part of them.

In his brilliant and prophetic analysis in *Capital*, Marx demonstrated why and how the early commodity producing system of the independent producer gives rise to the capitalist mode of production, and how this in turn inevitably leads to the ever-tighter concentration and centralization of capital. These laws have been verified with exceptional fidelity in every capitalist country.

In the U.S. a century-and-a-half ago, probably 80% of the population shared in the direct ownership of the means of production. Most of this 4/5 of the population had very little, since most were small family farmers, but all had some. The hired or enslaved labor force made up the rest of the population.

Today this proportion is approximately reversed. Only, at the very most, 20% of the population can be said to share in the ownership of the means of production. Of this 20%, most are farmers, small retailers, professionals who are self-employed. The overwhelming bulk of the nation's productive apparatus is owned by a tiny part of this 1/5 of the nation. According to the recent Brookings Institution survey of stock ownership, only about 6% of the adults own all the corporate wealth of the United States. But the concentration within this 6% is extreme. A Federal Reserve Bureau survey (made by the University of Michigan Survey Research Center) a few months ago concluded that only

about 1% of the families own about 80% of the corporate stock of the nation, and another 1% owns most of the rest.

### Imperialist "Democracy"

Thus the substantial basis for the levelling equalitarianism of the early bourgeois period has completely disappeared. However, in its place there came a new and different basis for the continuation of bourgeois democratic institutions. With the rise of capitalist imperialism, whereby nations representing no more than 20% of the world's population were able to enrich themselves at the expense of nations representing the other 80%, capitalist wealth was compounded to an extent impossible for the bourgeoisie when restricted within its national bounds. The extra grease thus provided lubricated the political machinery, softened the impact of class struggles in the imperialist nations, and prolonged the life of democratic institutions which would otherwise have disappeared for lack of a material basis. The truth of this can be most clearly seen from this fact: that when European imperialism began to suffer the near-fatal shocks which began in 1914 and have continued with increased intensity to the present day, the institutions of bourgeois democracy began to totter and to fall. Those nations like Germany and Italy which suffered most from the decline of imperialism offer the clearest evidence of the modern basis of bourgeois democracy by the negative effects of the loss of that basis.

In the U.S., because of exceptionally favorable circumstances for the multiplication of capitalist wealth, the bourgeois-democratic stage merged closely into the later stage of imperialist "democracy." This democracy appeared to have more vitality and stability here than in any other capitalist nation. However, in the recent period civil liberties have become far more restricted in the U.S. than in some of the European capitalist nations, and illusions about the permanence of American capitalist democracy are being dispelled. The assault on civil liberties, the ever-closer identification of the two major parties (a trend which makes elections more and more of a formality), and the tendency toward merger between the top councils of the state and the top circles of finance-capital all testify that the destruction of traditional bourgeois democracy in the U.S. is now in process.

### "Dogmatism" and Illusion on the U.S. State

References to American democracy by Marxists as "capitalist democracy" are perplexing to U.S. scholars and ideologists who shade themselves under the umbrella of illusion. They start back in alarm before such a "dogmatic" stand. They will say: "I might understand you better if you said that the U.S. sometimes has a capitalist government (McKinley, Harding, Hoover) and sometimes a non-capitalist government (Wilson, F. D. Roosevelt, Truman) but you say that the U.S. has a capitalist government *all the time*, no matter who is in power or how he acts on disputed issues, and I can't follow such a dogmatic stand."

This so-called "dogmatism" is actually the only scientific approach to the state power. The nature of the state

is determined by its relation to the economic structure and the economic classes of society. The liberal apologist himself recognizes this fact by implication when he gives his own grounds for believing that the U.S. state is "impartial." No sooner does the government, through a tax bill, legal decision, strike mediation or some other action yield to necessity, to class pressure, and deprive the capitalist class of 1/100 of its profits, than the liberal shouts: "You see, here is an anti-capitalist government." He neglects to notice at the same time that the government has guaranteed, ensured, the other 99/100 of capitalist profits and the economic system which makes them possible.

The thin layer of *disputed* issues which so captivates the attention of the easily diverted observer does not embrace the essence of the state power. Even if the working class or the petty-bourgeoisie were to win their battles on all these issues (which never happens), the government remains capitalist because the whole essential substratum of action and policy, which occupies the attention of the state 365 days of the year, is designed to uphold and administer the capitalist system.

The fact that the capitalist class or individual capitalists cannot get everything they want from the capitalist state does not at all impress Marxists. They can't because circumstances make it impossible, not because the state power is against them. This is particularly true in the present period, when corporations must surrender a large portion of their profit to the war machine in order to safeguard the rest of it. Some thoughtless and irresponsible (from their own viewpoint) capitalists try to make an anti-regime platform of this, but they have been rejected by the overwhelming majority of the capitalist class in both the Republican and Democratic parties. For the rest, the capitalist class as a whole keeps up a running fire against high taxes, not because it could or would alter the tax structure *fundamentally*, but in order to keep its share as low as possible within the limits dictated by present circumstances.

The recent period, since the beginning of World War II, has witnessed a far deeper growing-together of the U.S. state power with the tops of U.S. finance capital than any previous time in American history. Take as an instance five top American policy-makers and administrators: Dean Acheson, Robert A. Lovett, William H. Draper, W. Averell Harriman and Warren Austin.

### **Bankers, Corporation Attorneys Take Over**

Robert Abercrombie Lovett, Secretary of Defense, is indubitably the most important policy and administrative official in the entire governmental structure. From Yale and Harvard he went to the National Bank of Commerce, then became a partner in the Wall Street banking firm of Brown Brothers, Harriman & Co., going from there to the post of Assistant Secretary of War in 1940. From that job he has risen to his present position as czar of the nation's chief activity: war preparations and war-making. In that capacity he has chief responsibility for the spending of at least 2/3 of the nation's budget.

Dean Acheson is Secretary of State: like all cannon, the Defense Department has a mouth, and Acheson is it. He too passed through Yale and Harvard, went next to Covington & Burling, corporation attorneys, and proceeded from there to become a partner in the corporation law firm of Rublee, Acheson and Shorb. A fellow of the Yale Corporation and a member of the Metropolitan, Chevy Chase and Century clubs, Acheson was well equipped for appointment to high office by the Truman administration, his only drawback being that he was a Democrat. Most of the Democratic administration's important appointees in the Defense and State Departments have been Republican bankers and corporate lawyers, but Truman was prepared to stretch a point in this case.

W. Averell Harriman is possibly second only to Robert Lovett in the strategy planning of the administration. He is director for Mutual Security, and as such spends most of the remainder of the budget that is left after Lovett gets through with it. He belongs to the little publicized but all-important National Security Council, which meets weekly to consider global strategy of U.S. capitalism. Harriman is a partner of the big banking firm Brown Brothers, Harriman and Co. (the same firm which so considerably released Robert A. Lovett for government service) and has been Chairman of the Board of the Union Pacific Railroad, a director of the Illinois Central Railroad, etc., etc. He has also found time to become a famous society polo player. These qualifications suited him eminently for the position of Ambassador to the Soviet Union, and for his eventual rise to the place he now occupies as Truman's right bower.

William H. Draper is an Ambassador who, as Special Representative in Europe, oversees all phases of U.S. military and economic policy. Big business, feeling the presence of Walter S. Gifford (U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain and former head of America's largest corporation, American Telephone and Telegraph) in Europe to be comforting but not sufficient, placed Draper there as overlord of the whole works. Draper is another investment banker who started with the National City Bank, which is the J. P. Morgan outfit, went on to the Bankers Trust Co., and settled down with Dillon Read and Co. in 1927 where he became vice-president in 1937. From there he went to the General Staff of the U.S. Army in 1940. Dillon Read and Co. also supplied us with our former Defense Secretary, James Forrestal, and with many other eminent servants.

Finally, for permanent representative and chief spokesman in the United Nations, Truman reached up into Vermont and secured the services of Warren G. Austin, another corporation attorney who used to be a Republican U.S. Senator. Austin possesses an intimate knowledge of how to deal with the insurgent colonial masses from his experience as attorney for the American International Corporation in China.

Thus in this top quintet of U.S. policy makers we find three Wall Street bankers and two corporation lawyers, a full house that is really five of a kind, all jokers. If space permitted we could lengthen this list enormously. But this is enough to suggest the true picture. The instructive lesson

it contains is this: that the tendency of the state and finance capital to draw together and approach amalgamation must be very powerful indeed if it manifests itself so clearly even under a Democratic administration which must after all maintain its ties with the labor movement and its demagogic appeal to the mass of the people.

### Democracy and the Soviet Experience

We have touched upon Professor MacIver's argument only insofar as it deals with the relation of democracy to capitalism. We have maintained that this democracy at its optimum is a restricted and partial form which serves as vehicle for the overlordship of the tiny portion of the population that owns the means of production. Even this limited and essentially false democracy, however, is possible only under special historical circumstances the last of which are now disappearing. So that, if capitalism is maintained into the future, it cannot assure democracy but must on the contrary threaten its very existence.

Let us turn now to democracy and socialism. MacIver, in his third lecture, called "The Portent of Karl Marx," points to the Soviet Union, where the "rulers are masters of everything." This is his proof No. 1 that planned, socialized economy and democracy are inconsistent. But there is ample historical evidence to show that it is foolish to seize upon a conjunctural development (a temporary one due to special and transient causes) like the political dictatorship in the Soviet Union, and to attempt to draw universal history from it.

Here is an instance. Professor MacIver contends, as we mentioned, that the rise of capitalism fostered the rise of democracy. There is a certain truth in this contention. Of course MacIver is absolutely wrong insofar as he credits democratic victories to the capitalist class itself. Historical research into the French, American, English, Dutch and other capitalist revolutions has demonstrated that the masses of the people (independent producers, shopkeepers, workers, etc.) had to wrest these liberties from an unwilling capitalist class, and that this usually so frightened the big capitalist groupings that they hastened in most cases to make their peace with the ancient regime or its remnants.

Nevertheless it is true, and Marxists were the first to make this analysis, that the rise of capitalism was responsible for the rise of the system of parliamentary civil-rights democracy which Marxists have called, because of its partial, class-dominated nature, *bourgeois democracy*.

The greatest impulsion ever given to capitalism by any single historic event was the French Revolution of 1789 which uprooted the old order and established conditions for capitalist growth more thoroughly than was the case in any other capitalist revolution. Professor MacIver would expect, in accordance with the general connection which he has established between "private economic power" and democracy, that the French Revolution would be followed by a flowering of liberty.

Instead it was followed by nothing but dictatorship for many years. The first form was the revolutionary dictatorship and reign of terror (combined with a popular revo-

lutionary democracy of a type very abhorrent, we are sure, to Professor MacIver). Next there was the dictatorship of the Directorate, followed by the Napoleonic dictatorship, and after that came the restoration of absolutist monarchy for another 15 years. It was not until the limited bourgeois monarchy of Louis Philippe, fully 41 years after the supremacy of "private economic power" was established in the French Revolution, that we find the beginnings of French bourgeois democracy, and then only in a very attenuated form. Moreover, so weak was this democracy that within a score of years it was destroyed by another absolutist Bonapartism which lasted two decades. Bourgeois democracy in its recent and MacIver-celebrated form was not established in France until 1871, and then only upon the bones of tens of thousands of slaughtered Parisian Communards.

But, Professor MacIver will protest, this peculiarity was due to special conditions which hampered the developing political-democratic forms. The 25-year assault upon the French Revolution by the old order in Europe, the internal civil war, the commercial blockade and other such circumstances, MacIver will say, distorted French development and cast it, for a while, in special and transitory forms.

Having said all this, MacIver would have made a fairly accurate reply to his own strictures concerning the Soviet Union. The political forms there too are quite apparently a temporary aberration produced by special historical circumstances in which the first collectivized economy exists, and are not inherent in collectivized economy itself. The stresses and pressures which set up distortions in political organisms are particularly acute in a period of revolutionary transition; never in any case in history have these distorting stresses been so powerful as those exercised upon the first workers' state by the capitalist world.

### Capitalists and the "Will of the People"

Professor MacIver, it must be said to his credit, does not conclude the discussion by pointing a finger to the Soviet Union. He appears to be aware that Marxists see the Soviet political form, are undismayed by it, explain it, and show how it will be compelled to yield to new political forms, far more democratic than any which have yet existed in the modern world. He also seems to be aware that Marxists insist that in other cases of transition to socialism, the political abominations of the Stalin regime will not, in the absence of similar material conditions, be repeated. He therefore continues his discussion in an effort to show that political dictatorship inheres in the very nature of *any* society in which the means of production are nationalized in the hands of a central administration.

MacIver's general thesis is that the existence of private ownership of the means of production makes it possible for the people to control the government because there are sources of power for them to lean on outside the government. If however "private economic power" is abolished, then there is "a grave danger that when no power remains outside the government, government itself will rest on power." (p. 58). The "will of the people" could not "prevail

against the new pressures of government." (p. 59). "Since only one power structure remains," therefore "the people are now disarmed." (p. 64).

Here is the capitalist argument reduced to its bare bones: we need the capitalists and their power to rest upon in opposition to government.

Should MacIver try to give some reality to his fanciful theory, he would have to show just where on this terrestrial globe the democratic will of the people draws sustenance from, leans upon or is aided in any way by the class that owns the means of production, and is thereby enabled to resist "the pressures of government." He will not find one speck of reality in this notion. Quite the contrary, the democratic people find the power of the private propertied class to be a barrier in their way in all their efforts to control the government.

Professor MacIver, being a "political philosopher" and a "sociologist" must know that this very capitalist class has been the prime mover behind fascism. The German and Italian fascist regimes, outstanding examples, were both established and maintained as direct instruments of big capital. In view of this record, how can Professor MacIver contend that *this sort* of private property, capitalist property in its present oligarchic form, must be guarded as the guarantee of democracy?

It is impossible to comprehend how private property in its present monopolistic form is anything but a barrier to the democratic will of the people, both in the economy and in the state. Perhaps then Professor MacIver will assert that private property will be restored to its earlier form in which big capitalists were a rarity and ownership of the means of production was widespread? Alas, we see no such claim in MacIver's book. This program, once so popular with the liberals and reformers, has been virtually abandoned with none but a few stragglers still belatedly maintaining it. Despite their vehemence against Marx, they have all accepted his law of capitalist development: that capital grows out of commodity production and that big capital grows out of little capital and that monopoly capital grows out of big capital, and that this process cannot be reversed by protests and lamentations so long as capitalism continues.

Thus we see the ridiculous spectacle of liberals and professors who used to call upon Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson to save democracy now appealing to Morgan and Rockefeller, and moreover, in all seriousness, assuring us that these are just the boys who will do the job!

### The Fetishism of State Power

The heart of the superstitious conception of the state is this: that the state is an entity apart from society which uses one portion of society to oppress another portion. To this Marx and Engels counterposed the scientific conception that the state is a relation between men expressed as a thing, an institution.

If the state is a relation between men, then insofar as it oppresses, represses or dictates it does so in behalf of some men at the expense of others. Those who oppress and

those who are oppressed represent a social division upon which the state is founded. This class division, this social antagonism as the source of the state power is the only scientific conception of the state.

I have said that the superstitious, more precisely the fetishistic view is that the state is a *thing* naturally antagonistic to men. This is the view from which MacIver concludes that men must give "private economic power" to a special group which can then combat the state. Why do our official ideologists cling to such a peculiar, not to say half-witted theory? The reason is very simple: without this misconception they would be forced to admit that popular democracy can best guard itself against state oppression by *ending social antagonisms*. But since their object is to *justify and save social antagonisms* (keep society divided into capitalists and wage workers), since the ruling class will countenance no other ideology than one which is directed to this end, the bourgeois "sociologists" must confuse everything and thereby place themselves outside the realm of genuine social science.

### Social Conflict: Is it "Inherent" in Man?

We have indicated that the conflict among men upon which the state is based is the antagonism between social classes that are formed by the division of society into propertied and propertyless, capitalists and wage workers, exploiters and exploited. This has been substantially the view of all those who have comprehended society, from Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, who incorporated it into No. 10 of the Federalist papers, down through the modern Marxists.

Here some professors may (and do) confront us with another objection, roughly as follows: "Perhaps some of our colleagues are fools who think that the state is a magical thing which oppresses out of a natural predilection, but we know better than that. We agree with you that state oppression reflects a conflict between classes, one of which lays hold of the state to enforce its will upon the rest of society. And we also agree that the main social antagonism today is between those who own the means of production and those who work for the owners. We say, however, that this social antagonism is only the present form of an endless social conflict between classes which has always existed and will always exist. Even if this present social antagonism is destroyed, there will arise a new one, *because this kind of conflict is inherent in men*, in their urge for power, for wealth, for overlordship." (Such an argument was advanced by a man who understood better than most American thinkers the fact that the state represents a social antagonism, Charles A. Beard, in his book *The Economic Basis of Politics*.)

Of these professors who claim not to be fools we say: the more fools they. The precondition for a scientific discussion of society, well established in the historical record of man as well as in his biological and anthropological investigations, is the understanding that man's "urges," desire for power, for prominence, etc., and the forms they take are determined and shaped by his material and social surroundings. No branch of the sciences has yet



discovered biological or psychological "imperatives" of a fixed variety in man. On the contrary, these sciences have all demonstrated that human beings behave, not in accordance with any such categorical imperatives seated in "biological nature" or in commandments from the misty heavens of our religious preceptors, but in an endless variety of ways, varying with the nature of society. Even those physical functions which we know to be relatively immutable in man in his present biologic form, such as nutrition, reproduction, etc., have been cast in widely varying molds according to the stage of technological and social evolution.

Should these professors be right, that would be the end of almost all social science. Mankind would be foolish to expect to play a conscious role in the shaping of society. We would have to admit that society is already shaped for us by inherent factors of our biological nature, and turn to practitioners of the natural sciences with the plea that they alter our "natures" by physical manipulation. Failing that, we would always be condemned to the misery of oppression of man by man in one form or another. But of course these "thinkers" are not right, they are only superstitious, and they themselves understand that their theory is so baseless that they do not usually state it openly, but only by an implication which one may clarify by drawing their thoughts to the logical conclusion.

### Antagonism and Economic Want

The present form of social antagonism in capitalist nations is primarily that between capitalists and wage workers, but the first essential basis for all varieties of social antagonism in human history is material want. Mankind has never been able to wring from nature so abundant a supply of the products of labor required by men as to bestow them in adequacy upon all portions of society.

The connection between this fact and the state power has been abundantly demonstrated in the history of all societies, including the present collectivized economy of the Soviet Union and its satellite states. We can illustrate it for Professor MacIver in the following simple example:

Should he have 100 textbooks to distribute in a class of 100 students, and an abundant reserve against losses and damage, the distribution would present no problem. Should he, however, have only one-quarter or one-third so many books as students, and no reserve, his role would change completely. He would be compelled to decide how to distribute or circulate them, keep his supply under lock and key, guard against theft, make further rules and punish violators, etc., etc. In such a case, Professor MacIver could say with Louis XIV: "*L'etat, c'est moi.*"

Social antagonism cannot be eliminated, nor can the state be reduced to an administrative entity planning and organizing the work of a free collective of producers, until such time as mankind can find its way to the fullness of economic abundance. We can, however, expect the repressive functions of the state to diminish proportionally as want and social antagonisms are reduced throughout the period of transition to a society of relatively unqualified abundance.

In a famous passage in *Anti-Duhring*, Frederick Engels predicted: "The interference of the state power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then ceases of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the processes of production. The state is not 'abolished,' it *withers away.*"

This breathtaking forecast has been made the subject of much debate, but it can never be understood without a study of the entire chapter in which it occurs. Engels says: Men have long dreamed of a society which collectively owns the means of production, but this has been a vague ideal of the future. Society has been divided into exploited and exploiters because of "the low development of production hitherto . . . So long as the sum of social labor (Engels wrote) yielded a product which only slightly exceeded what was necessary for the bare existence of all . . . so long was society necessarily divided into classes. . ."

He continued: "The possibility of securing for every member of society, through social production, an existence which is not only fully sufficient from a material standpoint and becoming richer from day to day, but also guarantees to them the completely unrestricted development and exercise of their physical and mental faculties — this possibility now exists for the first time, but it *does exist.*"

Engels summed up his point in this remarkable sentence: "Men's own social organization which has hitherto stood in opposition to them as if arbitrarily decreed by nature and history, will then become the voluntary act of men themselves."

### Society Tests the Idea

This dispute which we have been pursuing with Professor MacIver is now being fought out in far grimmer form throughout the entire world. The battle, under way for a century, carries the fate of mankind in its outcome.

The validity of a social idea may be tested by the attitude taken towards it by mankind over the course of a long period of experience with it. Marxists, even though they have often been a small minority, do not hold with those philistines who attach no importance to popular opinion on grounds of the alleged "ignorance" or "superstitions" of the people. Professors, as we have seen, can be superstitious too. In actual fact the masses fight their way through to the truth in the long run because they live the reality that doctrinaires only talk about.

A century ago the entire human race followed the capitalist class in its contention that private property is the key to human welfare. Today, tens of millions of people throughout the world, probably the majority of mankind, act in the conviction that collectivized property is the first requirement for the well-being and progress of society.

Marx and Engels spoke alone, but today millions speak with them. The inability of the MacIvers to reply to Marx and Engels has its dramatic and inspiring counterpart in the inability of world capitalism to suppress the world's revolutionary masses. Never has social theory been so brilliantly vindicated, and never with such good omen for the future of society.

# Social Conflict in Indonesia

By TJOKRO

The real situation today of the Indonesian masses was, in our opinion, correctly described by Soetan Sjahrir, leader of the Indonesian Socialist Party and former prime minister, in a speech in February 1952 at the first convention of his party. He said:

**"Indonesia has not accomplished any more up to now than the maintenance of the country in its old way of life. The Indonesian people continue to live under the old colonial laws although the constitution promises a much different world. There has been no change in the economic sphere. The principal key positions are still in the hands of foreigners."**

These observations are accurate even if Sjahrir's explanation of them, attributing them to "the moral collapse of the Indonesian people," applies only to himself.

Sjahrir highlights a number of important problems which characterize the situation. In the first place, all the pre-war properties of the imperialists (landed property, banks, industrial enterprises, mines — oil, coal, tin, — transportation, plantations) are with few exceptions again in their possession. This is in keeping with the Linggadjadi, Renville and Round Table Conference agreements between the imperialists and the Indonesian nationalist leaders. The most important exception is the oil properties in the northern part of Sumatra: Pangkalan Brandan, Susu and Tantau in the Antjeh province near Kwala Simpang. These oil deposits had been owned by the Bataafsche Petroleum Company. After Japan's surrender, the workers occupied these enterprises and have continued to administer them to this day to the great chagrin of the Indonesian government and the oil magnates.

In the second place: Colonial laws have in large part been retained in the political and economic spheres.

In the third place: The stratum of nationalist intellectuals who represent the rising national bourgeoisie are not prepared to resolve the most elementary problems in the political, economic and social spheres.

The most outstanding of these problems are the organization of general elections for parliament (the present parliament was not elected but appointed), an effective struggle against famine, illiteracy, epidemics and the housing shortage.

The following facts confirm these declarations. Last April 16, Minister of Information Mononutu told a correspondent of the Aneta agency: "At least a year of preparations and a return to stable conditions would be required for the holding of general elections." The re-establishment of stable conditions means the liquidation of the partisan movements and that, as we will show later, means in practice that there will be no elections.

The state of national health is shown by facts such as these: Last year there were up to 1,700 cases of smallpox a week on the island of Madura; up to 260 cases of smallpox a week in Surabaya, one of the largest cities on the island of Java. In 1950 the number of deaths from the

plague rose to 2,083 in the center of Java alone. A recently published report indicates that although a large part of the population of southern Java suffers from tuberculosis, there are only some tens of beds available in sanatoriums.

Out of a population of 70 million, 30 million suffer from malaria. And to complete the picture, there is the declaration of Dr. R. Hartono (February 10, 1952), head of the pharmaceutical service in Jakarta, that a half a million medicines are stolen annually in the health services.

Hunger edema is widespread. It is only in cases of extreme urgency that rations of three to four kilograms of rice and stale fish are distributed.

The housing shortage gets worse instead of better because the authorities forcibly intervene to evict "illegal occupants." Thousands of persons who have built a small house or hut in a city are evicted because the ground on which they have built does not belong to them. Then, there is terrible corruption in the distribution of available housing. Often, there are several authorizations granted for the same lodging, each of them having been bought for a big price.

The struggle against illiteracy, which before the war encompassed 96% of the population, has been carried on only in a very limited way. According to the declaration of the Minister of Public Education, in March 1952, more than half of the children between six and twelve, i.e., almost six million children did not attend school in 1951. There is a shortage of 21,000 teachers. In all of Indonesia, with its 70 million inhabitants, there are only 800 schools for children over six years of age; the rest of the schools are for those under six.

Another characteristic of the regime is the existence of tens of thousands of landless, homeless and unemployed who are forced by hunger to move to the cities. In the first week of April, action was started against 10,000 persons living in wretched conditions in the city of Surabaya. There are hundreds of thousands of such unfortunates in Jakarta, the Indonesian capital. Some of them are thrown into camps and then sent back where they come from — a really vicious circle.

From the mass of uprooted, unemployed and homeless people, who do not come to the cities, is provided the manpower for numerous partisan groups which, usually under Moslem leadership, undertake a struggle against the government (Daroel-Islam, Tentara Islam Indonesia, Bambu Runtjing) and seek a way out of their misery in the struggle for an anti-imperialist Islamite state.\*

This brings us to the central problem of the Indonesian

\*There are guerrilla forces of the Masjenni, the Partai Sarikat Islam Indonesia, the Kartalegawa feudal elements), of Herman Westerling (a Dutch imperialist adventurer) and of the revolutionary workers' movement, the Laskar Rabjas (people's army), Laskar Nurah (non-Stalinist Red army).

revolution: *the expropriation of the big landed proprietors and the accomplishment of the agrarian revolution.*

Because of their ties with the Dutch imperialists, the nationalist leaders are incapable of realizing the fundamental tasks of the revolution such as the abrogation of the Round Table Conference agreement, the nationalization and collectivization of large landed property. The regime is well aware that it will perish because of the present situation but its efforts to transplant population can be compared to those of a man trying to cure a mortal wound with a band-aid (especially on overpopulated Java island).

How extreme this overpopulation has become is indicated by the engineer Tambunan, chief of the repopulating service. He declared in a conference of his department held in early May 1952:

"The island of Java covers an area of 132,000 kilometers. It numbers 55 million inhabitants. 80% of this population (i.e., 44 million people) live from agriculture. The sawahs and available lands, covering an area of eight million hectares, cannot furnish a livelihood to all the inhabitants. Estimating five persons to a peasant family, some eight million peasant families, each family requiring two hectares to exist, there would then be an overpopulation of four million families or 20 million people even if the land was divided equitably."

In other words, there is an overpopulation which consists of half of the peasant population, and this is under conditions where the plantations remain in the hands of the imperialists.

This present government is absolutely indifferent to this misery since it has provided only three million rupia for the repopulation service, half of which was used for administrative expenses! In this way, it was able only to aid 3,500 people which has merely meant "an attempt to consolidate the colonized areas" according to engineer Tambunan. Under such conditions he justly proposed that it would be preferable to liquidate the entire repopulation department.

Just as the armed masses imposed the transference of sovereignty from Holland to the Republic, so new actions of the proletariat, the poor peasants and the plantation workers will force the expropriation of imperialism in the economic sphere.

### **The Condition of the Working Class**

The conditions of the working class is slightly better than that of millions of landless peasants and small proprietors because the workers have built powerful organizations which have carried on a struggle for the improvement of their lot. This refers first of all to the SOBSI. Besides this large trade union center under communist leadership, there are four non-communist federations: the SOBSI, the GSBI, the BPSS and the GSBP. Merger discussions are now going on between the various trade union centers for the purpose of forming a single national federation as was indicated in a dispatch on April 30 from Jakarta.

The SOBSI is the most powerful trade union federation, numbering some 2 million members (industrial workers, workers on government enterprises and plantation workers). It is composed of a series of trade unions on a shop basis like the Sarbupri (plantation workers union) which

is the most important of these. The SOBSI cannot be compared to the bureaucratized Stalinist trade union federations in Europe although the top leadership is Stalinist and bases its policy on that of the Indonesian CP. A typical instance of Stalinist policy, for example, was the sending of felicitations by the SOBSI leadership to the new prime minister Wilopo at the time of the constitution of his cabinet. The preceding Sukiman cabinet had to resign because of the protest of several political parties against the signing of the "mutual security" agreements with the USA by Subarjo, former minister of foreign affairs. The Indonesian Communist Party also sent a telegram of greetings. The Central Committee of the Indonesian CP explained in its telegram that it was ready to support the government provided it abandoned the old political orientation and oriented toward a *national* policy based on "peace and democracy."

### **Wages and Strikes**

It is superfluous to point out that the level of wages does not meet minimum living standards. What is the relation between prices and wages? On April 7, the day laborers employed on the public services went out on a three-day strike. All the unions, including the union covering police personnel, supported the strike. They demanded a minimum wage of 4.5 rupia a day. The strike was victorious. But if this minimum wage is compared with the price of rice (3.4 rupia a kilogram) and milk (2.5 rupia a liter) one can get an idea of the conditions of the public service employees!

The number of strikes is tremendous and today has become almost an avalanche. According to the Semarang Bureau of Labor (central Java) there were 327 labor conflicts in March. According to the same bureau, there were some 292 strikes in Central Java between January and March, 34 of which were in industrial enterprises, four in maritime enterprises, five in printshops, 24 in machine factories and 150 in unspecified enterprises. The number of workers involved in strikes was 540,744. According to the same report, these strikes cost the government five million rupia and private employers an even larger sum.

If we compile the news reports of the last weeks we get the following picture:

On April 19, a strike was suddenly declared from 8 to 9 a.m. in the port of Tandjong Priok. The strike was called by the leaders of the port workers and seamen's union, the SBPP, affiliated to the SOBSI federation. On April 15 there had already been a first sit down strike in the port and on the vessels.

This is the background of the struggle: A tieup of vessels resulted from a trade union action of two weeks against overtime work in the port of Tandjong Priok. On April 3, without prior warning the tugboat lines were cast off before the ships could enter the port in safety and under their own steam. This was because of the decision of the union that tugboat sailors were to quit work at 4 a.m.

On April 16, there was a general strike against the construction companies on the east coast of Sumatra (Deli Estates Engineering Co. and General Union Ltd. at Glu-

gur). The metallurgical union had drawn up a list of demands in 21 sections.

Since April 1, there was a wildcat strike on the rubber plantations near Tandjunbalai in Sumatra. The strike was accompanied by demonstrations and sabotage. Telephone wires were cut several times. Under these conditions, the management seriously considered evacuating the wives and children of the European planters. 700 workers participated in this strike.

On April 1, there was a general strike on the Balai Gadja rubber enterprise near Tandjung Pura in Sumatra.

On April 26, the port workers and sailors union, SBPP, called a sit down strike in the port of Tanjun Perak. There had been a strike every day since the preceding Wednesday.

On April 26, the metal workers union SBIM (affiliated to the SOBSI federation) announced that after the end of the three week waiting period, a general strike would be declared in the 12 metal working plants on the island of Java. (Three weeks' advance notice of strikes must be given to governmental conciliators on penalty of being prohibited by the government).

On April 24, the workers at ANIEM (gas and electricity) began a two-hour sitdown strike daily at Malang, on Java island.

The workers of the public services of Muatjap threatened to begin a general strike on April 23.

On the morning of April 30, 600 day laborers in the communal services at Makassar (southern Celebes) began a wildcat strike.

A letter of the printing workers union, Surabaya section, on April 17 to the P4 service (government conciliation) indicates that the trade union intended to take action if the employers did not live up to the decisions made.

On April 24, the workers of the *NV Dagblad De Locomotief* printing plant in Semarang began a sitdown strike for the satisfaction of their demands. The newspapers, *Locomotief* and *Suara Merdeka*, did not appear.

On April 28, the leadership of the SBKB union (bus drivers) decided to organize a rotating sitdown strike in the eastern part of the island of Java (there are 20 bus companies). During the strike, the personnel will sign in and out as usual; red flags will be raised over the companies and the buses affected by the strike.

Around 3,000 workers of the public services at Riouw have been on strike since April 15 in solidarity with the public service workers of western Sumatra who quit work on April 10. The strike in western Sumatra involves 3,500 workers. It is not excluded that this strike will extend over the whole central section of Sumatra.

The leadership of the personnel of veterinary services which has its headquarters in Surabaya has given instructions to its members in all Indonesia to hold themselves in readiness to strike.

All the above-mentioned cases which occurred in the month of April 1952 involve conflicts for better working conditions, wages, demands in kind (rice), increase of foodstuff and textile rations, protests against overtime work, against the dismissal of comrades from the job. The

tactic utilized varies from the sit down strike to the rotating strike, to the occupation of plants or to the stoppage of work in a key department of a factory which results in the stoppage of work in the factory as a whole. The latter tactic is particularly used in the print shops: the typographical workers stop work every four hours, the pressmen every hour and the mailers every two hours.

Our list is necessarily brief and could be completed by numerous other instances of labor struggles during the same period.

Caught as they are in the stretch between prices and wages, the workers are obliged to resort to action again and again. By themselves, the present struggles of the workers against the constant rise in prices will remain a real tilting at windmills unless the trade unions alter their demands. Although we are in complete solidarity with the workers' struggles, and we have the greatest admiration for their combativity and for the general attitude of the trade union leadership, we are nevertheless of the opinion that things cannot continue like this.

The task of the Indonesian unions, of the SOBSI as well as the other federations, is to establish a *guaranteed minimum wage* for all the workers. This guaranteed minimum should be tied to a *sliding scale* under which wages would rise automatically proportionately with all price increases.

The second great task is the struggle against the increase of unemployment. In this sphere also, everything should be concentrated on one single demand, namely the establishment of a sliding scale of working hours. This demand means that there are to be no further layoffs but that working hours should be divided in each shop among all the workers at the same weekly pay as before. The enterprises and plantations continue to furnish large colonial dividends and the proprietors must be obliged to pay all personnel once employed.

Only an effective organization of the struggle for these two demands will permit a substantial improvement of the untenable conditions of the proletariat.

### The Guerrilla Movements

Of the above-mentioned guerrilla formations, the Daroel Islam is the most important. The political aim of Daroel Islam is the foundation of an Indonesian Islamic state. Armed activity is directed primarily against the army, the police and the functionaries of the administration. A report in the *Indische Courant* on April 30 is worded as follows:

"A band of 300 to 400 Daroel Islam partisans carried out an attack against the army and police posts at Tarogang near Garut (Java). The attacked who were outnumbered answered the fire of the terrorists for three and a half hours. The residence of the assistant wedana was set afire."

Reports of this kind appear very frequently in the press. In the southern part of Celebes island, the guerrillas, who fought against the Dutch, refused to allow themselves to be incorporated into the Republican army. They established themselves in the interior of the island. Their number was estimated at 15,000 in the past year. According to

recent information they are said to have affiliated to Daroel Islam under their leader Kahar Muzak.

Besides Daroel Islam, there are hundreds of partisan groupings, small and large, in action, among whom there are those who live only by banditry and do not hesitate to steal the meager belongings of the workers when they attack the plantations.

News about guerrilla activity is difficult to check. Take for example the following dispatch dated March 15, from the Netherland telegraphic agency ANETA: "They write from Bandung (Java) that in recent days a large band of around 1,000 men, possessing 200 automatic weapons was repulsed. A police agent as well as 16 members of the band were killed."

It is true that guerrilla activity has its origin in the first place in unemployment among the workers and in the postponement of agrarian reform. We have few indications that allow us to believe that the guerrillas are consciously fighting for such an agrarian reform. But we know that land belonging to the big plantations is "illegally occupied" and that the people reap the harvest itself before the planters can get to it.

There is no political party which links the guerrilla problem to the problem of agrarian reform and considers the former as a source of revolutionary energy in the struggle for a government of workers and poor peasants.

The task of the revolutionary Marxists in Indonesia is to work for the formation of such a government, the only power capable of breaking the bondage to imperialism and of placing nationalization and collectivization of the land on the order of the day.

Such a government will also be the only power capable of providing assistance in all forms to small proprietors (credits, abolition of a series of taxes, furnishing of farm implements, etc.). The constitution of agricultural co-operatives on as broad a scale as possible would be encouraged by such a government in order to obtain the most intensive cultivation of the soil, better irrigation and fewer bad crops.

All these are vital questions for Indonesia which will only be resolved by a change in state power, i.e. by the establishment of the state power of the workers and the poor peasants.

### The Imperialists in Indonesia

The abrogation of the treaties between Indonesia and the foreign "investors" (of capital); the nationalization without compensation of industry, plantations and the mines, as well as transportation and the banks, is the key problem the revolution has to resolve if it wants to halt the present retreat and take a step forward again. Many opponents of nationalization in Indonesia argue that the country lacks an adequate qualified technical personnel. This is baseless. There are many technicians in the world ready to work for much lower salaries than those now paid to the Dutch in Indonesia.

In 1951, some 30,000 Dutch "technicians" in Indonesia received 30 million florins (1 florin is approximately 30 cents) as "vacation pay," more than 25 millions as bonuses

on their pensions as well as 10 millions for life insurance. During the same year, in round figures, they saved to the tune of 33 million florins. In all, according to the Indonesian currency institute at Jakarta, a sum of almost 100 million florins was sent to the home country.

The second argument put forward by the opponents of nationalization is that nationalization would lead to the refusal of foreigners to continue to invest capital in the country.

We doubt that this would really be a catastrophe for the Indonesian people as a whole, let alone the exploited masses. If we remember how the foreign investors have been draining the country in their imperialist manner and have once again established their control over the whole national economy, then we are led to the contrary conclusion. P. van't Veer, special correspondent of *Vrije Volk*, the social democratic paper in Indonesia, wrote on May 29, 1952:

"Despite all the somber perspectives regarding insecurity and the theft of crops, murders and transportation difficulties, Dutch enterprises were able to transmit more income to the Netherlands in 1951 than at any time since the boom year of 1929."

According to "official" figures the amount transmitted to the Low Countries in 1951 came to 400 million florins, or 1,200 million rupia.

Total Dutch investments are estimated at 18 billion rupia or 6 billion florins. To that should be added the investments of other countries (France, England, United States, etc.) which have realized enormous revenues during the past year especially in shipping and oil. Foreigners as a whole during the year 1951 earned 4 billion rupia.

In reality the position of foreign investments is very unstable since they have to be protected by a state force such as Sukarno's which exists only by virtue of the anti-imperialist struggle of the masses.

Up to now, the nationalist leaders have protected imperialist property and they utilize foreign entrepreneurs as a shield against the tendency of the masses to put an end to colonial domination — in all its forms, including the Sukarnos and the Hattas, the nationalist leaders who are tied as by an umbilical cord to imperialism. An examination of the Indonesian budget for 1952 shows that 35% of income comes from customs receipts. This is the result of colonial rule. This is, moreover, very unstable revenue dependent on the world economic conjuncture. That is why the government finds no other solution than the increase of production (so as to provide even greater revenues to the imperialists) to cover the 4 billion rupia deficit in the budget which includes a raise of 500 million rupia in salaries to government employees.

An examination of the situation as a whole — the powerful position of the proletariat and the small expropriated peasants brimming with revolutionary energy, the very weak military and political positions of the imperialists, the bankruptcy of the Sukarno regime shot through with corruption and careerism — leads to only one conclusion: the proletariat and the poor peasants have to prepare directly for the conquest of power.

During a speech delivered to Indonesian journalists on Jan. 15, 1952, on the question of Iran, President Sukarno quoted Karl Marx as follows: "A ruling class can never voluntarily abandon its privileged position."

Let the Revolutionary Marxists who are in the forefront in the struggle against colonialism and all other

forms of exploitation remember this quotation and explain it a thousand times a day to the masses! Sukarno is again transforming Indonesia into a hunting ground for the imperialists. Only the conquest of power by the masses can prevent that from happening.

May 15, 1952

## Rift in the French Communist Party

# Behind the Marty-Tillon Case

By MICHEL PABLO

On Sept. 17, the leadership of the French Communist Party removed Andre Marty and Charles Tillon from top positions in the party and demanded they "self-criticize" their "errors." The attacks against these very prominent figures — Marty, the leader of the Black Sea fleet mutiny in 1919, and Tillon, leader of French CP partisan bands during the war — climaxed a long standing crisis in the party.

The first sign of its existence was the publication of an article by Francois Billoux, a member of the Political Bureau, who had just returned from a visit to Moscow and with Maurice Thorez, General Secretary of the CP convalescing there from a paralytic stroke. The article swung the CP's line sharply to the left, saying that the main enemy to be fought was the French bourgeoisie, and that the struggle for a change in the regime had to be associated with the struggle for socialism.

With General Ridgway's arrival in France to replace Eisenhower a new train of events began. The CP attempted to mobilize the workers in protest but only the vanguard responded and the various strikes called by the CP-controlled CGT (General Confederation of Labor) failed miserably. The Pinay government counter-attacked by arresting Jacques Duclos, another outstanding CP leader, and raiding party headquarters. Again the CP attempted to arouse a vast protest movement, but again it failed.

Thereupon a new session of the Central Committee was held (in June) and after extensive "self-criticism," the line was swung again to the right by the acceptance of another leader's, Etienne Fajon, report. Since then the pot has continued to boil until Marty and Tillon were put on the carpet as scapegoats, denounced for sundry "crimes" by Leon Mauvais, the Central Committee's prosecutor.

Michel Pablo's article is a lucid analysis of the whys and wherefores of the various turns and their meaning for the future of the revolutionary movement in France. For further background material, the reader is referred to "The Politics of French Stalinism" by Pierre Frank (FI, July-Aug. 1952)

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Ever since the beginning of the "cold war," the Soviet bureaucracy as well as the leaderships of the Communist parties have been thrust into a new set of conditions out of which certain inevitable reactions have arisen. The meaning of the "cold war" is this: for the first time since the Russian Revolution, the antagonism between capitalism and the USSR — which is being extended to a more fundamental antagonism between capitalism and the socialist revolution in all its forms — has definitively transcended antagonisms between the imperialist powers. The "cold war" is moving inevitably toward a war of the imperialist

coalition against the USSR, the "people's democracies." China, the colonial revolutions, the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries.

The Soviet bureaucracy, fearing this inevitable outcome of the "cold war" because of the military strength of the imperialist camp and especially because of the revolutionary upheavals this war will not fail to produce on an international scale that will forever destroy its position as an all-powerful privileged caste in the USSR; would like to avoid the war or at least to put it off as long as possible. This concern is at the bottom of its propaganda for "peaceful co-existence," the "Peace Movement" ("Big Five" agreement, "peaceful settlement of the German and Korean problems" . . .).

But on the other hand, the speeded-up war preparations of imperialism oblige the Soviet bureaucracy to base itself on the masses in a struggle against these preparations by "effective mass actions." The actions and pressures brought to bear against the bourgeoisie are much more strenuous in countries which the Kremlin believes are definitely incorporated in Washington's Atlantic coalition than in countries where it still counts on "neutralizing" the bourgeoisie. Each time imperialist antagonisms temporarily flare up in the Atlantic Coalition, the Kremlin sees a new chance of "neutralizing" this or that partner of the coalition, and adjusts its policy accordingly.

### How the Kremlin Transmits the "Line"

The role of the leaderships of the Communist parties in the capitalist, colonial or semi-colonial countries is to apply this policy in their own country, while being obliged to some extent to take account of special national considerations and the scope of the mass movement they lead. Hence the important variations that can be noted in a comparison of the application of the policy by the French CP with that of the Italian, English, Greek, Indian or Chilean Communist parties.

This policy, always based on promoting the general propaganda themes emanating from the Kremlin, may appear at the moment as being more or less "left," depending on whether it involves a country like France where the



bourgeoisie is a dissatisfied element in the Atlantic Coalition, or a country like England where the bourgeoisie goes along more readily with Washington.

What is striking in a comparison of the present policy of the Communist parties with the one they followed before the 1939-1944 war is its relative *diversity* rather than its *uniformity*. During the "third period" (1928-1933) and then the *People's Front* period (1934-38) the almost *mechanical automatism* of Communist party policy, directly transposing the Kremlin slogans to their own countries, was much more marked than it is today. These changes, particularly since the war, are to be explained by the probable absence of Kremlin controls as strict as in the days of the Comintern, and particularly by the scope of the movement led by some of these parties.

It is entirely too pat to believe that the leaderships of the Communist parties as a whole act as mere transmission belts for the daily orders of the Kremlin. It is not likely that there now exists, even from time to time, the semblance of political analysis by an international leadership of the Communist parties which attempts to garnish the Kremlin's policies with a "theoretical" sauce and then submits them as directives to the different national leaderships. There may have been a beginning made along these lines at the time of the Cominform during its first periodic meetings. But this form of leadership and of relative coordination of the CPs seems to have been disrupted since the Yugoslav schism.

The Kremlin's "line" is transmitted to the national leaderships of the Communist parties through episodic documents such as Zhdanov's famous report in 1947, this or that "historic" declaration by Stalin on "peaceful co-existence," on how to "preserve peace" or on the "non-aggravation of the war danger between 1950 and 1952," the decisions of the Congresses and Councils of the World Peace Movement, the editorials in *Pravda* and in the Cominform paper, *For a Lasting Peace* . . . The most recent of these were Stalin's article in the *Bolshevik* and Malenkov's report to the 19th Congress of the CP of the USSR.

### How the Parties Apply the "Line"

Since all these sources of the "line" are often contradictory, and never sufficiently clear nor buttressed theoretically, since they often change without reference to past positions or any attempt to justify the change, leaving a series of questions unanswered, the national leaderships face the perpetual problem of discovering what the "line" really is and how to interpret it correctly. The line does not exist as such, i.e., as political conduct which conforms to the conclusions of a Marxist analysis of the international situation. The Kremlin's line is its way of utilizing the CPs and their mass movements for the changing aims of its foreign policy toward the bourgeoisie of this or that country. By its very nature, it is full of contradictions, ever-changing and incoherent. It isn't submitted to the test of critical and thoroughgoing examination which would quickly reveal its contradictions, opportunism and

inconsistency. However, the leaderships which have to apply the line are obliged to concretize it so that it becomes comprehensible to their members and the masses who are to be mobilized on this line.

Caught between the need of acting faithfully to the Kremlin, of correctly interpreting its ideas without "nationalist" deviations or errors, and of maintaining their base while mobilizing for these aims, the CP leaderships (by the very nature of this very complicated and difficult game) are given to wavering between what they call "opportunism" and "sectarianism" and to stirring a permanent crisis in their own ranks.

The primary and fundamental source of the difficulties which the leaderships of the mass CPs of the capitalist countries encounter today rests in the contradictory and incoherent nature of the policy the Kremlin now assigns them: The struggle by "effective mass actions" against war preparations on a basis of general propaganda for "peaceful co-existence," an agreement between the "Big Five" and the disruption of the Atlantic coalition. A real struggle against war in any country whatever means a struggle against the capitalist system, against the bourgeoisie by a united front of proletarian and impoverished petty-bourgeois masses (in the city and country) oriented toward the taking of power and the workers' and peasants' government.

Twist or turn this question as you will with any amount of tactical dexterity and you will find no other answer, no other solution to it. But to desire simultaneously to mobilize the masses against imperialist war preparations and to speculate on the "neutralization" of this or that bourgeoisie means in practice to sabotage the realization of the primary objective. That is the contradiction in which the leadership of the French CP has been floundering for some time.

### France -- the Unstable Ally

A special series of factors in France and in the French CP has to be borne in mind for an understanding of all the recent waverings of its policy since the Billoux article uncovered the simmering crisis which has long existed in its ranks and which broke out into the open in the Martyr-Tillon affair.

The French bourgeoisie now constitutes the unstable element in the Atlantic coalition. Handicapped by the bloodbath inflicted on it by the Indo-Chinese war, troubled by the power of the national movement in its North African colonies which are coveted by Washington, frightened by the economic rebirth of Germany and its more and more preponderant role in the Atlantic coalition, an important part of the prosperous French bourgeoisie and middle class has become discontented and is dreaming of getting out of its difficulties and fears by overcoming its inferior position in Washington's Atlantic coalition.

The Kremlin is speculating on this state of mind and may also be dreaming again of a future "neutralization" of France. (This hypothesis is confirmed by the emphasis Stalin put in his recent article on the "inter-imperialist" antagonisms and his special mention of France.) It is pos-

sible that these speculations on the gyrations of France within the Atlantic coalition, which have assumed a certain breadth precisely in recent months, have played an important role in the gyrations of the French CP.

On the other hand, since February 12 the leadership of the French CP has suffered a series of resounding defeats in its attempts to mobilize the masses against the Pinay government's policy of war and reaction. This has revealed the enormous gulf between the party's electoral activity and its ability to mobilize this influence for action when and as it wishes. Handicapped by the absence of Thorez, its real leader; jarred by internal dissension now of long standing; obliged to defend itself and alarmed by its failure in mobilizing the masses which its bureaucratic mind cannot grasp, the French CP leadership has in the last few months presented the really pathetic spectacle of a group that doesn't know what saint to swear by.

### Thorez Changes the Policy

It seemed last May, at the time of the publication of the article by Francois Billoux, that the CP leadership, taking stock of the recent evolution of the international situation, was somehow completing the left turn which had become more marked since the Korean war. The emphasis in Billoux's article was placed on the need of centering the struggle against the French bourgeoisie, the willing "servant" of American imperialism, and of more boldly presenting a socialist perspective to the masses who were to be called upon to force by their extra-parliamentary actions a "complete change of (the nation's) political orientation." Then came the publication of Jacques Duclos' notebooks (which were found on his person at the time of his arrest), which contain a synopsis of the discussion in the Political Bureau of the CPF on April 11, 1952. They demonstrated that the Billoux article in reality summarized the line which Maurice Thorez himself held at the time, as well as the unanimous approval of the line by the Political Bureau after discussion. For the first time in years, a relatively clear and firm class orientation was presented in a Stalinist internal document.

To the general astonishment of all those who considered the Billoux article to be a victory of the "leftists" and the "sectarians" in the CP leadership, it turned out that it had in reality been Thorez who had called for completing the left turn. Neither Marty nor Tillon had anything to do with this turn as they also had nothing to do with the really sectarian and adventurist actions, particularly the demonstrations after Duclos' arrest, which followed the publication of the Billoux article. In this connection, it should be remembered that the anti-Ridgway demonstration was endorsed by the Peace Movement, and the entire Political Bureau supported those actions which followed Duclos' arrest. Moreover these actions were by no means implicit in the Billoux document, nor in Thorez' directives as we now know them from the publication of the Duclos' notebooks.

They were due to the unbelievable overestimation of the possibilities of effective mobilization of the masses for

suddenly established political objectives, as well as to the exaggerated forms of action demanded of the masses, and to the bureaucratic preparation of this action. If the Political Bureau itself had to admit that Maurice Thorez' ideas had obliged it to reflect on a whole series of political questions which it had overlooked, underestimated or poorly understood, and that it was slow in preparing politically—then it was absolutely inevitable that the ranks of the party and particularly the masses, who had long been educated in a different spirit and a different line, would not quickly absorb the turn or follow the leadership in the new action.

Only bureaucratic leaders can think that they are capable of leading the class at the whim of their shifting desires. In reality, mobilizations of the class for political actions like those ordered by the CPF leadership on Ridgway's arrival or after Duclos' arrest, could be effective only if there had been a consistent policy of the revolutionary party over the years which educates the mass and wins and consolidates their confidence. Because of the opportunist character of their policy, Communist parties are incapable of acquiring such confidence from the masses. The masses vote for the CP, sympathetically support the "hards" of the party when they fight the police on the streets of Paris, but are not themselves ready to engage on short notice in such forms of action neither to receive Ridgway nor to protest Duclos' arrest. The prerequisite for the mobilization of the masses by the revolutionary party is a consistent and coherent policy practiced over a number of years. This is exactly what the CP leadership lacks and what they will continue to lack as long as they are primarily instruments of the Kremlin's policy and not conscious representatives of the interests of the mass movement they lead.

Thorez' directives insisted on the need of "effective mass action and organization" for the purpose of fighting effectively both for "peace" (against the war) and to bring about a "complete change of (the government's) political orientation." But Thorez remained cautious on the forms of action after the dismal results of the February 12 mobilization. He advised "keeping in mind the differences of the level of combativity and the possibilities of having varying continuing actions, slow-down strikes, strikes before quitting time, 24-hour strikes, street demonstrations, etc." On the other hand he cautioned against "improvised actions."

Everything that then happened in June, about two months after the Political Bureau discussion and hardly a month after the publication of the Billoux article, demonstrated that the leadership of the CPF, unnerved by the events and by the offensive of the bourgeoisie, failed again to preserve proportions and to apply Thorez' line. It actually sinned by an inordinate sectarianism and adventurism in "mass action," having ordered bureaucratically improvised forms of action which were completely out of keeping with reality. On the other hand, neither the ranks of the party nor the broader masses, who vote for the CP, had time to make the turn indicated by the Billoux article. (During the discussion in the Political Bureau on the Bil-

loux article, Etienne Fajon warned "not to give the impression of a turn" and that "these [new] ideas [of Thorez] should permeate the press and our various organs of opinion" — recorded in Duclos' notebooks.) The political actions decided upon in June by the party leadership came as a surprise to the masses at a time when the bourgeoisie was vigorously counter-attacking, and by arresting Duclos was hurling a direct challenge at the CP, driving it suddenly into a test of strength.

### Was the Turn Too Far Left?

The way that the CP leadership interpreted its defeat in this test, and its reactions to it, were a new demonstration of the political mediocrity, empiricism and cowardice which characterize so many petty-bourgeois bureaucratic formations which history has put at the head of the workers' movement. It was none other than the workers who voted for the CP and the CGT who did not act and did not follow the party's slogans of action after Duclos' arrest.

Can it be seriously said that the workers did not act because they were frightened by the too "leftist" character of the new line set forth in the Billoux article? Or was it rather because this line was suddenly thrust at them after years of an opposite course which dissociated the socialist perspective from the daily struggles and did not involve the masses in a fight primarily aimed at their own bourgeoisie?

On the other hand, even if the class line and the education needed by the masses for such a line had been pursued over an extended period by the CP leadership and not just a brief two months before its application, an action of the scope decided upon in June by the nervous and disoriented Stalinist leaders would have had to take into account and adapt itself to the real state of mind of the masses for its choice of the forms of action.

### Masses Sceptical of CP Leaders

If the workers did not act in defense of the CPF last June when it was attacked by the bourgeoisie, it was because at bottom, although voting for the CP, they maintain reservations and scepticism toward the opportunist policy which the CP leadership has pursued over the years. No "left" turn could dissipate this sentiment in two months and transform it overnight into enthusiastic support for a decisive action in defense of the CP. On the contrary, the "left" turn appeared to many to have been once again dictated by passing factors, determined by the Kremlin's interests and not as a genuine expression of a sincere return to a consistent class line.

In fact, the Billoux turn was condemned from the beginning by the petty-bourgeois fellow-travelers of the CPF as a "sectarian" and "leftist" manifestation which was sabotaging the realization of a real policy of "co-existence" abroad as well as at home, meaning of course real class collaboration. The June events and the defeats suffered by the CP in action have reinforced their criticism as well as their pressure on the Stalinist leadership. Judging by the reaction expressed in the Fajon report to the Central Com-

mittee on June 18, this leadership appears much more sensitive to the pressure of the petty-bourgeois wing of the movement it leads than to the feelings of the working masses, which explains their passivity.

Without explicitly condemning the Billoux article or its main line (its analysis of the international situation, the role of the French bourgeoisie, the need for effective mass actions), Fajon again shifted the emphasis to the right by limiting the importance of the struggle against the French bourgeoisie to a struggle against some "millionaire capitalists," by speculating again on "differences" within the bourgeoisie and by separating the struggle for peace and economic demands from the struggle for socialism. In this shift of emphasis to the right, he saw the possibility of fighting against "sectarianism," which threatened to swerve the party far from the "right road," and of renewing the links with the proletarian and petty-bourgeois masses at the lowest and most elementary level, that is, at the level of economic demands and the defense of democratic rights.

It should be said from the outset that neither the criticism of how the June actions were prepared and carried out, nor the decision thereafter to center the party's activities around elementary economic demands and democratic rights, as contained in Fajon's report, are in themselves erroneous. The self-criticism of the incredible bureaucratic adventurism of the leadership and the need of resuming contact with the masses at a lower level were positive points. But the explanation of the passivity of the masses, and how this could be overcome in the long run, were false because they again denied the importance — which had been emphasized in Thorez' directives — of linking the socialist perspective and class political solutions to elementary mass struggles precisely in order to make such struggles possible and to raise them to higher levels. The working masses will be mobilized neither against the war nor for any other political objective of the party if the socialist perspective is concealed and if they are not educated ahead of time and all the time on a class line.

### Why the Turn Right Again

The Central Committee meeting of September 4-5 slipped still further in the same right wing opportunist direction by extending the right wing conceptions in the Fajon report to include a United National Front, proposed by Duclos, to encompass certain sections of the bourgeoisie itself, and relegated the socialist perspective to the exclusive domain of propaganda detached from the day-to-day party campaigns.

Looking back upon the road traveled from the April 17 Political Bureau discussion, the Billoux article, and up to the September Central Committee meeting, one is perforce led to inquire into the deeper reasons and more decisive initiatives than those of Billoux, Fajon or Duclos to which this extraordinary switching of positions can be attributed. Was the change caused by internal factors geared to the evolution of events in France since last September, or by new directives originating in Moscow? To what extent has the internal crisis of the CPI leadership,

as it now appears in the Marty-Tillon case and which has long wracked the CPF leadership, also influenced this course of events? At best one can conjecture in a field where the facts are lacking.

Thorez' directives, supported unanimously last April by the Political Bureau, were clear and firm. Coming from the principal leader of the party residing in Moscow, they had a special import and normally should have been interpreted as expressing the results of Thorez' thinking after he had first undoubtedly taken the Kremlin's pulse. Can it be possible that Thorez had changed between April and June, or even between April and September, or that Moscow had changed in the meantime? It is not excluded that the wavering exhibited by France in the Atlantic coalition precisely during this period actually played a certain role in this connection; that, for example, the element of "differences" and "contradictions developing among the capitalists," which Thorez had already stressed, again appeared so important to him as to justify *"an appeal to all Frenchmen who, while not wanting socialism, are hostile to the war, the American occupation, fascism, poverty, to join their efforts to ours to secure the victory of a broad democratic government of national independence."*

It should not be forgotten that capitalist circles seriously envisage the possibility of a rejection of the German contract by the French parliament and the fall of the Pinay government on this question. And on the other hand, there are persistent rumors of secret Franco-Soviet conversations on Germany.

Naturally Stalinist opportunism finds new sustenance in this view which serves to complement the present relative inactivity of the French masses. Far from their passivity during the June events having served to demonstrate to the leadership of the French CP the need of a firm and clear class line, it has been interpreted on the contrary by the right wing of the petty-bourgeois bureaucrats as mass disapproval of the "left" turn. As we have already noted, they were more sensitive to the arguments and pressure of their petty-bourgeois allies than to the real causes of the passivity of the working masses.

### Internal Crisis in the Party

Finally there is the possible outbreak of crisis which has wracked the Stalinist leadership for several years. Although nobody yet knows the real position of Marty and Tillon, it appears from the criticisms levelled at them and especially from the astonishing indictment in the (Leon) Mauvais report, concocted with all the disingenuousness of bureaucratic masters of the art, that their tendency in the Central Committee and in the party in reality reflects the expression of a left wing — certainly deformed in character but also a largely conscious grouping — in the party and the mass movement it influences.

However partial was the base on which this wing developed, it drew on the experience of a number of elements, leaders and others, and upon the fluctuations of CP influence during and since the war. It grew at the beginning of the "cold war" and continues to grow as the new war

which is identified with the final and decisive struggle for the world socialist revolution draws closer. It expressed differences with the tactics of the leaders who had spent the war-years in Moscow and who blindly followed the Kremlin's orders during the "liberation" period by disarming the popular forces in the interest of the bourgeois state and thus breaking the revolutionary spirit of the whole movement emerging from the war; then on the inoperative character of the struggle for peace through petition campaigns for the Stockholm Appeal and the Big Five pact. It supported a more correct policy toward the Socialist Party by refusing to put it on the same footing with the political formations of the bourgeoisie, but rather proposed a united front with it against the de Gaullist danger. It even put its emphasis on a struggle directed primarily against the French bourgeoisie as the willing ally of American imperialism.

All these charges, explicitly or implicitly stated, are to be found in Mauvais' indictment. Naturally it may be that the accuser exaggerates the degree of clarity and the scope of the differences, that he falsely attributes some of them to Marty or to Tillon, that he makes amalgams, that he tries to demonstrate that a coherent opposition existed over a long period and sought to set itself up in organized form as a parallel leadership of the party. The fact nevertheless remains that such ideas were germinating in the minds of the rank and file and even among outstanding CP leaders, and were occasionally although confusedly finding expression, and circulating and sowing trouble and panic among the strictly Muscovite-type leaders.

### The Charges Against Marty and Tillon

[At the time of writing, there has appeared in *P'Humanite*, Oct. 3, the Political Bureau document entitled: "The problems of party policy and the factional activity of comrades Andre Marty and Charles Tillon." This vehement indictment confirms and broadens the differences which could have been divined from careful reading of the Mauvais report. It states that "the disagreements bear especially on the role of the Soviet Union, the attitude of the party during the second world war, the preparation of the national insurrection, the national policy of the party, the role of social democracy, action for the preservation of peace. The differences bear also on the conception of the party and on the role of Maurice Thorez as General Secretary of the French Communist Party."

According to the document it appears that the two "culprits" expressed differences more or less clearly on the following questions: the German-Soviet Pact of 1939 and the attitude of the CPF at the time; the attitude of the CPF during the war, Marty presenting the CPF and its members as the "most consistent deGaullists"; the return of arms to the bourgeois state and the dissolution of the patriotic militias; the role of the USSR in the liberation of France and the "people's democracies." Marty believed that it was necessary to put the emphasis on the action of the masses and not of the Red Army; on the inoperative character of the struggle for peace by collecting signatures; and on the contradictory turns on the German question; on the sectarian attitude toward the social democracy.

The aim of the Political Bureau document is to oblige Marty and Tillon to recognize the existence of these differences and to declare their agreement with the explanation the leadership gives of them and with its justification of the policy followed. This is how they carry on a "democratic" discussion — by first sealing the lips of the critical elements who, accord-

ing to the leadership itself, have occasionally expressed this kind of disagreement. But the very fact that the leadership is obliged to recognize the existence of these differences, and to "discuss" them, in its own way of course, will objectively facilitate a critical awakening of the members and contacts of the party. The essential fact is that a "discussion" of this kind has been begun for the first time in years.]

In any case, this confirms — and sooner than we ourselves believed — the inevitable development of conscious left currents at the present stage in all the mass organizations of the proletariat, including the mass Communist parties, and this development is favored by the evolution of the objective situation toward war and revolution. At the same time that the CP leaderships as a whole have been obliged by this direction of events to shift their policy to the left as compared to the one followed up to 1947 and to give an impulse to mass struggles, more conscious and more consistent left currents are forming within the Stalinist movement seeking forms of expression and organization. (Marty is accused in the Mauvais report of having contemplated the publication of an internal bulletin and Tillon of "securing the means to support an opposition.")

It is probable that the left tendency, represented as imperfectly as it is by Marty and Tillon, has in a contradictory way influenced the entire policy of the CPF in the last months. Insofar as this tendency found an echo in the ranks and especially corresponded to the realities and needs of the movement, the CPF leadership was obliged to make concessions to it both to cut it off from its base, to halt its potential development and to be in a better position to attack it afterward without itself appearing to be aligned with the right.

It was for these reasons, among others, that Duclos and Lecoeur were careful to avoid the appearance of proposing a "sacred union" with the bourgeoisie, of abandoning the socialist perspective or purely and simply capitulating to the right wing pressure of their petty-bourgeois allies in the Peace Movement. That is why they attacked Pierre Cot (a CP fellow-traveler who said that a policy of "co-existence" on a world scale implied a policy of class collaboration at home. Agreeing with international collaboration, Lecoeur denounced co-existence at home as "betrayal" — Ed.). But at the same time, they are trying to discredit the left not only by attributing factional activity to it but by allowing it to be understood that it was the position of the left which indirectly favored sectarian excesses in language and in action.

### The "Democratic" Discussion Begins

The accusation of "factionalism," Taboo No. 1 of bureaucratic parties, is hurled against any element who, without having the possibility of making his ideas and differences known, and of discussing them democratically in the party, finds himself driven to conceal his contacts with members of his own party from the policemen of the bureaucracy. The solitary fact of a conversation between two members of the Political Bureau, one of whom is a secretary of the party, is characterized as a factional crime. On the basis of such a charge, and without the party being

permitted to know in advance what the political differences are so as to be able to make a sound judgment, they are called upon to condemn the "culprits" who themselves are daily summoned to make "their self-criticism."

This revolting bureaucratic operation is presented as usual as a striking manifestation of the "democratic" character of the party which is generous toward any leader who admits a mistake and does not fear "open self-criticism." What cynicism and what a farce!

One cannot help but be astonished that this flagrant anti-democratic aspect of the action staged against two Communist leaders has almost passed without notice by all these "democratic" fellow-travelers and other sympathizers of the CP who see only what they consider a probable "just" punishment of "leftists" and "sectarians." How infinitely more determinant in politics is social position than the verbal cult of "democracy." But these "democrats" are greatly in error to accuse Marty and Tillon of representing a "sectarian" wing.

### The Real Sectarianism

If there is at present a sectarian position which blocks all possible progressive development in France, it is much more reflected in the attitude of Duclos, Lecoeur and Co. toward the Socialist Party. To say as Lecoeur did in his speech at the September Central Committee meeting that the "main obstacle" in "the path of unity of action is the social democracy" and to emphasize that "it is impossible to advance toward unity of action without first denouncing the social democracy" — to say that is to reject the united front from party to party and to practically call upon the Socialist rank and file to desert their own party. It means turning one's back in the most sectarian manner on all real possibility of realizing the united front of the proletariat and broadening it to the impoverished petty bourgeois masses of the city and the countryside.

These masses are organized or politically oriented in one way or another and if they have not thus far joined the CP, that means they still retain confidence in another party. The only way to realize a united front with them now is through their party, in this case, the Socialist Party. Whether the SP leadership accepts or rejects this proposal is not the determining consideration for a systematic party-to-party united front campaign directed at the SP just as the CGT, for example, directs its united front appeals to other trade union federations. If this campaign is well conducted and arouses a strong movement among the rank and file in favor of the united front, the socialist leadership will either have to accept or will expose itself and in that way only will lose its influence over its own rank and file.

But a campaign for this national united front must remain a hollow one and devoid of all concrete meaning so long as the attempt is made to achieve it by first demanding that the masses leave the parties in which they still have confidence. The policy of united national front is inevitably doomed to defeat because the objectives of the front cannot set into motion either the proletariat or the

impoverished petty-bourgeois masses, and because the CP leadership is adopting a sectarian and criminal attitude toward the SP which is in reality the only other party that represents the bulk of these masses.

A genuine party-to-party united front policy with the SP is the only policy at the present time which can consolidate the unity of action of the proletariat, broadening it to the impoverished petty-bourgeois masses of the country. (The broadening of the front to "democratic" and "anti-American" bourgeois strata fits into the sphere of pious dreams which the Kremlin entertains for the exclusive purpose of aiding its diplomatic objectives in France.) This would unfold important new political perspectives: a Socialist-Communist workers' government, or even a Socialist government supported by the CP. There is no other realistic role, no other method of causing the "change of political orientation" of the country and not merely "changing a ministry or government" that such a policy and such immediate aims which are possible given united action of the proletariat and the impoverished petty bourgeoisie.

### A Look Ahead

So long as the CP leadership devotes itself to speculating on the inter-imperialist and internal "contradictions" of the French bourgeoisie and so long as it maintains its sectarian position toward the SP it will not consolidate any "front," either "national" or otherwise, but in practice will sabotage the consolidation of the only kind of front that is now possible. The sharp, successive and contradictory turns of the last month, the public demonstration in action

of an unbelievable degree of spasmodic, bureaucratic improvisation far removed from the realities of the forces they lead have caused extreme ideological confusion among the rank and file and the cadres of the CP and has greatly injured its prestige among the broad masses.

The theatrical exhibitions of self-criticism from one month to the next have only contributed in deepening the uneasiness and distrust of all critical proletarian elements. The revolting, bureaucratic action it has instituted against the left wing of the party, and which it is now using as a diversion, adds to the harm it has done. Its policy and its practice threaten to waste the most precious of its capital — the confidence of the working class in the CP — as well as long undermining all possibilities of effective mobilization of the proletariat for the political objectives of the party. Perhaps the unnerved and disoriented bureaucratic leaders, buffeted by events, are awaiting the announced return of the leader to recover their confidence as well as to re-establish a line and unity in the disunited leadership.

But the genuine and thoughtful revolutionary elements who are, correctly, working patiently and methodically within the communist movement in France, have only themselves to count on in order to strengthen the genuine left wing current which is already in formation and which will openly emerge in a more advanced stage of the workers' movement in France as its real revolutionary leadership. Their possible allies within the communist movement are now already numerous and their potential allies, arising out of the inexorable development of events, will be even more numerous.

September 30, 1952

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