

**BLACK
POWER**



COGITO

The Editor is Dead, Long Live the Editor!

Well, nothing quite so serious as that thank goodness, but nevertheless Colin Yardley and Peter Lowe who have made such an impressive impact with the first three editions of COGITO have moved to pastures anew, leaving behind an excellent journal, the level of which I shall endeavour to maintain.

I'm sure all readers of COGITO wish to echo a hearty 'Thank You', and give many thanks to them for having lifted this much needed publication off the ground.

Your new Editor is Ron Vizard, who a few may possibly remember, and more wish to forget.

BLACK POWER, a timely publication

A real need has been fulfilled with the publication of a C.P.U.S.A pamphlet 'Black Power and Liberation', by Claude Lightfoot, price 4/6d.*

A full review will appear in the next issue of COGITO, but meanwhile, for those who purchase it, it will serve as an excellent background from which to regard this issue's cover subject: 'Black Power' by Willie Thompson.

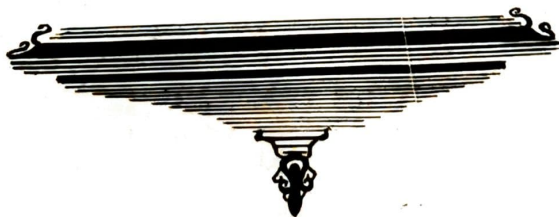
With the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King, and the impending 'Long Hot Summer', the struggle for Negro rights in the U.S.A. will inevitably bring with it many confusing slogans and events which will undoubtedly have their impact here. Is Black Power in England a valid slogan? Willie takes up this highly controversial issue, among others, in his contribution, and his observations and conclusions certainly provide for a spectacular reaction.

* Obtainable from Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Road, London, E.C.1.

Is Teeming Humanity reaching crisis proportions?

Over population, castration, sterilisation, the Pill, starvation, industrialisation: all these aspects of 'World Hunger' are taken point by point in Dr. Tony Chater's article, backed up by an impressive but clear use of statistics to show why, unless the correct preventive remedies are taken soon, this problem will overtake us all.

A quite different treatment of this subject, with widely differing reasoning, from Colin Yardley, is scheduled for the next issue of COGITO.



BLACK POWER

by

Willie Thompson

Negro-baiters and other reactionaries throughout all the Western world have responded with fear, anger and alarm to the slogan of 'Black Power' and the movement which has provided for the first time in U.S. history a militant and nation-wide reply to racial persecution.

The late and very much unlamented George Lincoln Rockwell, "führer" of the American Nazi Party made it his special concern to preach 'White Power' as the first line of defence against progress, and its successful maintenance as the first step towards the American Reich. He even went so far as to write his political testament under that title.

Some people however, who have spent all their lives combating racialism and colour discrimination, have also condemned the nation of 'Black Power' and denounced the slogan as straightforwardly racist. If we endorse 'Black Power' are we not deciding a political attitude on racial grounds, and if 'White Power' is a downright fascist slogan should the other kind be regarded any more sympathetically?

It was Lenin who said that "whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will never live to see it." He was referring here to nationalism and stressing that the defeat of imperialism is not a task for socialists only, but being a mass struggle, will involve sections of oppressed people whose political consciousness is very undeveloped, who may be in the grip of crude prejudices and reactionary fantasies, but who nevertheless contribute a vital element to the success of the battle.

As with subjugated nations, so with oppressed communities inside the imperialist states. In the course of their revolt all sorts of demands and policies will be put forward which are not immediately socialist in nature but should be supported and aided by every socialist since they undermine and weaken imperialism.

This is true of the Black Power movement. No real understanding of it is possible unless we keep in mind the circumstances of its origin in the U.S.A. It rests on a recognition of the fact that Negroes there compose a community which is subject to peculiar and unbearable forms of oppression. If they are to fight back successfully coloured people need to build up a unity which gives them sufficient power to attack and destroy oppressive institutions.

In the Southern States, unvarnished brutality and terror, embodied in such organisations as the Ku Klux Klan have been the favoured technique of the ruling class for more than a hundred years. Negroes have been thus barred from any political activity, all attempts to assert social rights smashed, segregation maintained and trade unions or other such organisations broken up. The need is thus felt urgently for self-defensive and protective associations capable of meeting force with force. Not only that, but in many areas of the South, Negroes are entitled by their numbers to preponderance in the organs of local government. This right has been denied for generations by the racists. It has to be fought for and won, and to do so will involve a tremendous assertion of power both in achieving and holding it.

In the North the position is different, but the fact that the

Negroes concentrated in the slum ghettos of the great industrial cities are allowed to exercise their legal civil rights does not prevent them from enduring the lowest wages, the highest unemployment, the worst housing and social facilities, the meanest educational opportunities in the U.S.A., all combined with vicious unofficial discrimination. Over the years they have tried conventional political activity, constitutional approaches, polite representations. All have got nowhere, indeed the position has continued to deteriorate. The mass outbreaks of the past summers and those following the murder of Luther King represent a new form of struggle and signalise a total rejection of policies which depend on the favours or good pleasure of the official authorities - invariably white. The inhabitants of the black ghettos intend henceforth to rely primarily on their own strength. The problem will be to direct that strength into more productive channels than spontaneous rioting.

These are the lines of approach advocated by the leaders of the Black Power movement in the U.S., and they demand the mobilisation of all potential elements of power possessed by Negroes, political, economic, social and cultural.

Despite any shortcomings, therefore, the appearance of the Black Power demands is a very welcome development for the U.S.A. As Engels said on one occasion, "One real step forward is worth a thousand correct but ineffective paper manifestoes."

The Black Power concept however has crossed the Atlantic and efforts are being made to apply it to the racial situation in Britain.

Whether such a slogan is valid here is of course another question. The extent of race exploitation and discrimination in our country doesn't bear comparison with what goes on in the U.S.A., and the coloured communities are a far smaller proportion of the population. In the U.S., the major problem is to overcome the backlog of racialism, here to prevent it developing.

That does not mean however that we must absolutely reject the idea of Black Power, even in Britain. After all, this nation was for hundreds of years the most consistently successful practitioner of imperialist robbery and enslavement on the globe. Numerous centuries of colonialism have not passed without leaving an ugly sediment in the British national mind. In the days when a quarter of the map was painted red, the ruling class and their intellectual hangers-on justified this fact unashamedly on the grounds of racial superiority. From the classroom to the cinema and radio, by way of the newspaper, it was taken for granted - not even argued - that dark-skinned people could not measure up to ourselves in intellect, morality or level of culture, and were generally quite incapable of managing their own affairs. The more reactionary imperialists held that it would always be so and no native could be fit for anything but cheap labour. The 'liberal' school trusted piously that some day in the dim and distant future these lesser breeds might rise to higher levels - under our tutelage of course, through service as cheap labour.

Such attitudes, having thoroughly penetrated the national consciousness, are not overcome in a decade or two. Even with the most favourable circumstances it will probably take generations to stamp them out completely. It would be idle to deny that they probably affect, to a great or lesser degree, a substantial number of our fellow-citizens, and can breed superior and patronising attitudes even in the most progressive and well-intentioned of them.

The slogan of Black Power is a valuable corrective here so far as it means an uncompromising rejection of all paternalism on the part of whites and all deference on the part of coloureds, so far as it makes white progressives aware that they must work alongside coloured militants on terms of absolute equality claiming no special privileges.

Further to this it can be maintained that the slogan 'Black Power' is a valuable asset in creating unity among the coloured population for mutual assistance and resistance to discrimination. The facts of discrimination are generally similar in all cases, but the various coloured communities occupy centres many miles apart, scattered throughout Britain, without any common links, a difficulty made even worse by the fact that such a large proportion of coloured citizens are recent arrivals from overseas. The 'Black Power' idea can provide a handy slogan to express a common aim and link these scattered groups for a coordinated purpose.

The most positive merit of all however is that it exposes and repudiates token concessions to racial equality which don't affect the real position. In the U.S., the policy of 'tokenism' is the means by which the more far-sighted sections of the ruling class have tried to preserve the super-exploitation of the Negro people at large. A Negro general in the Pentagon, a Negro in the Johnson cabinet, one or two in Congress, a few Negroes on the boards of the giant monopoly corporations or the various departments of state, the odd coloured person in the job more or less entirely reserved for whites, in Britain, a handful of coloured policemen. All such regarded as exhibits, put on show to prove how genuine our racial equality is.

This policy is intended to show that it is not absolutely impossible for a coloured person to advance to high position and thereby to tempt as many as possible to try and make it. It is hoped to produce acceptance of the oppressive social order by preserving the marginal hope in each coloured individual that he might squeeze into the elite, and so turn their ambitions towards individual advancement rather than social change. A further bonus from the point of view of the establishment is that the success of this policy would effectively milk the coloured population of its natural leaders.

Black Power on the other hand insists uncompromisingly on the liberation of the entire coloured people, not merely a favoured few, and effectively exposes the sort of integration by which the upper strata of coloured are integrated into accepting and supporting an unjust and cruel society.

Finally it may be said that any slogan which generates a revolutionary mood and creates a sense of revolutionary possibilities among oppressed people is to be applauded, no matter how inadequate. In short, it enables them to fight back.

The inadequacies and deficiencies of Black Power however, are as obvious, if not more so, than its merits. This is true in a general sense but applies with particular force to Britain. Socialists have a duty to point them out, since they have a perspective for the liberation of all exploited people, not only certain sections and a concern with the revolutionary overturn of class society, not only certain aspects of it.

In the first place the hysterical language and behaviour of certain advocates doesn't inspire much confidence in the seriousness of their revolutionary pretensions. One of them, reviewing the book 'Black Power, the Politics of Liberation in America,' by Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamelton, writes that:

"all these who have raged against the slogan of BLACK POWER claiming that it creates confusion while offering no positive content will have to shut their mouths and find some other way to try to torpedo the black liberation struggle".

The implication is that anyone who presumes to differ with Messrs. Carmichael and Hamelton's views on correct tactics is a traitor and a quisling.

In line with this sterile and sectarian attitude, certain preachers of Black Power seem to be less concerned with achieving any concrete gains than vilifying and expressing their contempt for all white without exception. This sometimes has ludicrous consequences. Just as the South African government, to suit its own purposes, classifies Japanese as 'honourary whites', so on the part of these gentlemen we get Latin Americans, with their impeccable revolutionary credentials numbered as 'honourary coloureds'. When the question of race relations is viewed in such a light as that, 'Black Power' slides easily and quickly towards black chauvenism.

The critical defect in the 'Black Power' slogan is that it is, at best, ambiguous. It has no clear meaning other than an end to black subjugation, and any supporter can provide it with whatever content he pleases. One may aim at a programme of limited reforms, another to replace white repression of black by black domination of white. It can mean practically anything.

The idea of 'Black Power' is seriously compromised by the lack of class analysis implied in the concept, by the fact that it encourages its adherents to view class and social problems primarily in terms of race. It is unscientific.

This is not to say that the leaders of the 'Black Power' movement are unaware that the racial conflict arises because the coloured people are a specially exploited group and not from any inherent biological antagonism between races. Indeed there have been some very valuable and subtle analyses of this exploitation and persecution, by Stokeley Carmichael and others, but there has also been a tendency to see all whites as constituting an individual ruling class solidly united against the coloured, and to take no account of the fact that the majority of whites also constitute an exploited class. Though racial prejudice may be found at all levels of white society, it is a corruption which the ruling class deliberately creates, encourages and promotes in order to split and divide its victims from each other and to distract attention from their own crimes. For example it is much easier from the government's point of view to blame bad housing on an excess of coloured immigrants than on its own financial starvation of the social services, the real cause.

The confused and even reactionary aspects of certain lines of 'Black Power' thought may be illustrated with reference to the Universal Coloured Peoples' Association, which likes to proclaim itself the most consistent and militant of Black Power groups in Britain.

It is true that this organisation has an appreciation of class realities. Its manifesto states that certain types of 'advancement' mean nothing but, "a replacement of exploitation of Black by White by exploitation of Black by Black ... of colour discrimination by class discrimination ...". The U.C.P.A's detailed programme however, fails entirely to live up to this promising start. Its principal immediate aim appears to be the establishment of various community services for the benefit of coloured people, staffed exclusively by coloured people - a proposal with which the coloured people of South Africa are disagreeably familiar.

This same manifesto, referring to the coloured person, makes the point that "For too many years he has let the white man do his thinking for him ... and lost his own personality." There is absolutely no effort here to point out the real roots of racial discrimination and the alienation of a coloured person's personality in a racially prejudiced society, nothing to relate exploitation in general to race exploitation in particular, in total nothing but an expression of racialist hostility. In fact, this sort of approach actually retards the struggle for liberation, it helps the really guilty man to create a sham solidarity between themselves and their white victims in

opposition to the blacks.

The U.C.P.A. manifesto calls for the destruction of "the system of exploitation of black people," but seems to imagine that this could be done without reference to the system of exploitation which affects everybody else as well. Presumably, according to U.C.P.A. policy black militants should isolate themselves from fellow-workers in industrial struggles, refuse to collaborate with white tenants in rent battles or other sorts of action.

The U.C.P.A. programme could be creditable only under one condition - if coloured people in Britain occupied a definite territorial area. In that case the 'Black Power' movement would have a nationalist meaning. That however is not the case. No programme or organisation which aims at solving the racial problem either in Britain or the U.S. can be considered seriously unless it takes definite account of the fact that the coloured community is a minority and not even a concentrated one, but widely separated and scattered. In such circumstances it cannot fight in separation and isolation with any hope of winning. Even less can there be any possibility of a separate and isolated existence once discrimination is overcome. What justification there is for 'Black Power' now comes from the fact that the racial line represents certain social facts. Once these facts are changed it loses all rationality and integration is the only possibility. 'Black Power' can only mean power to combat persecution. It has no significance beyond that.

The idea has been put forward that the coloured people in the western nations represent an 'internal colony'. In a certain sense this is true, so far as that, like the inhabitants of colonial countries, they suffer specially grievous abuses. This cannot be held to imply however that the strategy for dealing with racialism is to be modelled on that of national liberation.

One aim unites all classes in the national liberation struggle - the expulsion of the colonial power and the formation of an independent state on the national territory. Nobody advocates doing the same thing inside Britain or the U.S., the aim of the coloured people in the most general terms can only be 'equality', whether as a group or as individuals. The 'internal colony' theory therefore, is confusing and misleading.

Another particular red herring which should be disposed of is the question of violence.

The 'Black Power' advocates proclaim that reliance on non-violent methods of struggle is a delusion and a blind alley, reinforcing their case by pointing to the fate of Martin Luther King.

They might well be right. Marxists have never been pacifists. "Force," says Marx, "is the midwife of the new society". In a revolutionary situation force may be the only way to deal with oppressive and violent tyrants who refuse to submit peacefully to the people's will. It is unlikely that the revolutionary overthrow of the American government is on the cards at the moment, but it may be the case that a sustained and determined policy of violent reprisals, such as we see every summer, can restrain the sadistic thuggery of the American racists.

That does not justify the emphasis, all the same, by certain Black Power spokesmen on violence as the only valid form of struggle, the disasterously rigid tactic of concentrating on only one particular line of action, still less the preposterous and lunatic proposals to launch a campaign of "urban guerilla warfare". This fetish of violence is as stupid as its equal and opposite error, the fetish of non-violence. A mature political movement is flexible and adaptive, capable according to the circumstances of using each and every kind of

political weapon.

It is argued sometimes moreover, that whites are constitutionally incapable anyhow of really supporting violent action by blacks, a piece of outrageous twaddle which hardly deserves serious consideration. The cry, popular in Detroit last year, "Black and White, unite and light!" may have its limitations but at least it disposes of this point.

Unity indeed is what is needed if there is to be any hope of reaching the desired goal, but it is sometimes argued in this connexion that white workers, imbued with race prejudice, refuse to cooperate on equal terms with their coloured fellows in the union activity, etc., excluding cold-shouldering them or worse.

This problem certainly exists, but is not solved by refusing to face it, and surely it is the duty of all militants, white and black, to prevent the position of racialism corrupting the working class, as it will certainly do if not resisted, and thereby to create and fight for the indispensable unity rather than to accept racially segregated workers' organisations, a counsel of despair.

It would be as well to remember the experience of Ireland where deep and bitter religious hatred between sections of the working class has paralysed the labour and progressive movement for nearly fifty years. In the intense and severe class struggles which are looming in Britain Black and White hostility could be a thousand times more destructive than Orange and Green.

The phenomenon of Black Power is a complex and ambiguous one and its emergence at the present time indicates that a further stage in world development is under way. After the first stage of the colonial revolution, an unquenchable upsurge of revolt, in the citadels of capitalism itself, and in the U.S., the first real challenge to the ruling powers since 1945 if not since 1900. After Luther King's assassination the rulers of this great despotic military power were forced to cower behind bayonets and machine-guns, in terror of their own subjects. The driving force behind Black Power is the driving force behind a mighty progressive social movement.

It would be criminal for socialists in such circumstances to greet the cry 'Black Power' with rigid formulas and dogmatic analysis, to react as the socialist leaders before 1914 reacted to the phenomenon of nationalism, as an irrelevance and distraction from the advance to socialism, while Lenin, almost alone was able to identify it as one of the key forces in the approaching general crisis of capitalism. The mark of a serious revolutionary is his support for and participation in the real revolutionary movement. However 'backward' inadequate and near-sighted it may be he aims to develop and strengthen it. The mark of a pseudo-revolutionary is his refusal to "recognise" real revolutions and upheavals when they fail to correspond with his idealised notions of what revolutions should be. That in essence is why the Trotskyites and all other similar groupings are correctly defined as sects and why they will never be anything more.

At the same time socialists ought to be able to see beyond the immediate significance of Black Power, to be aware of its inadequacies, confusions, and the false paths into which it can lead. The growth and strengthening of its undesirable aspects, blind prejudice, communal chauvinism, ill-directed violence are inevitable if the coloured people are left to fight on their own in a continually worsening situation.

There can be no doubt that things will worsen. As British capitalism tries to solve its problems by intensifying attacks on the working class, every effort will be made to divert attention to the coloured community as the scape-goat for the miseries inflicted,

unemployment, bad housing, over-taxed social services, etc., etc.

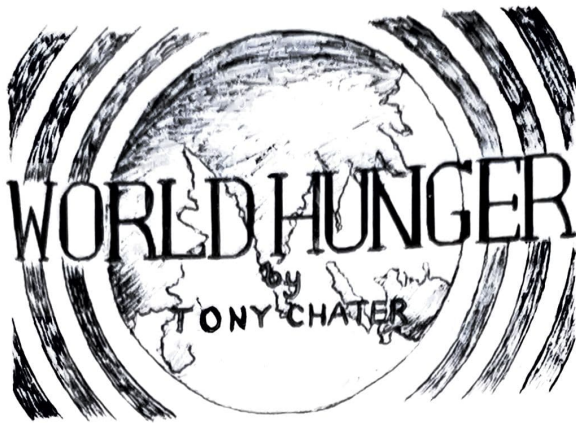
That is why a particular responsibility falls upon Communists. It is up to us to show that working-class solidarity means something, and that Communists have not, in the words of the U.C.P.A., "also become divided into Black and White". We must organise to battle determinedly and with special vigour in every instance where any immediate issue has racial overtones, where coloured people are singled out as special object of attack. We must extend our recruitment vastly and as a priority among the coloured communities.

Only if we do so will we be fit to expose and combat the reactionary aspects of Black Power ideas, explain correctly the class-nature of social problems and ensure that the insufficient and partial nature of the slogan is fully understood.

It would be appropriate to end with a Vietnamese comment. In "New Left Review", No. 47, Oliver Todd, who spent two months in Vietnam wrote that they admire Stokeley Carmichael for his guts, courage and enthusiasm, but were worried by the racialist aspects of the Black Power movement, which "bothered them tremendously." Also they felt that the Negro movement "lacked ideology".

Not a bad lead, on the whole, for socialists elsewhere to follow.





Introduction

There can be no doubt that the next 20 years will be the most critical in world history as far as the supply of food is concerned. Hunger and undernourishment are already commonplace for most of the world's population. The prospect is that this will escalate into periods of chronic famine in some areas of the world following the pattern of Bihar. It is very important for us to be clear about the nature of the problem. Because it is so complex, it is easy to caricature the real causes and to give unbalanced judgements. Thus there are those who assert that world hunger results from excessive population growth. This leads them to put all the stress on birth control. Others assert that with modern science and technology we have the means to satisfy the needs of a far bigger population than we have today or are likely to have by the end of the century. Therefore population growth is not a problem, birth control propaganda is a diversion, everything should go into raising the food supply. I believe that the truth, as is so often the case, lies somewhere between these extremes.

To avoid misunderstanding let me state my position at the outset. There is no obstacle in the long term to providing a much larger population than we have today with the resources required to guarantee them a full, happy, creative, truly human life in all its varied aspects. This is not to say that there will be no difficulties. But given proper social planning, these can be overcome. However, there is a serious short-term problem here and now which is especially acute in relation to food. It is a political rather than a technical problem. Its fundamental cause is imperialist exploitation of the developing countries, which robs them of a fair return on the products they export, and drains them of their wealth through the extraction of profits on investments and interest on loans. This obstructs industrialisation and stymies attempts to raise agricultural production. The consequent failure in the food supply is the primary cause of hunger and malnutrition. But it is aggravated by a secondary factor, the rapid growth of the population, itself a by-product of attempts made by the emergent countries to overcome their underdevelopment. Population control is only feasible to the extent that it is linked with economic and cultural progress. Therefore it seems to me that the solution to the problem of hunger is inseparable from the struggle to end imperialism, a struggle in which the British people have a specially important role to play. On that background of course, each underdeveloped country will need to work out its own balance between measures to increase the food supply as rapidly as possible, and measures of birth control. But because population control requires a cultural revolution which itself demands economic advance, the emphasis will always have to be on the food supply. Such is my position. Now I would like to deal with some of these points in greater detail.

The long-term prospects

Malthus advanced the view that the population was bound to outstrip the available resources. For him this was a law of nature, as inevitable and as much a part of the structure of the universe as the law of gravitation. The advances in modern science make such a view

completely unacceptable today. This does not mean that population cannot outstrip available resources. But if it does, then it means that the cause lies in short-sighted policies, in inadequate planning, in the backwardness of the whole social and political set-up.

Take the overall possibilities for the production of wealth. Industrial production increased at the rate of 5% per year in the capitalist countries during the fifties and early sixties. In the socialist countries the annual rate was over twice as much at 11.9%. It should be possible for the industrialised countries which are at present capitalist to equal the performance of the socialist countries if all the artificial restraints imposed by their inefficient social organisation are removed. In short, our present level of technology should permit us to increase the annual output of wealth per head at least as fast as in the socialist countries. In the U.S.S.R. the rate of expansion is equivalent to doubling the output per head every nine years. So on the most conservative estimate it is surely now possible to double the output per head every ten years. In that case, annual output of wealth per head would be multiplied by 4 in 1987, by 8 in 1997, by 16 in 2,007. Using present national income figures we can calculate that this would mean that at the turn of the century, each individual in Britain, not each earner, would have between £4,000 and £5,000 per year at today's prices for personal use - £20,000 a year for each family. In addition, each individual's share in the part of the national income that is not spent privately would be nearly £2,500. Of course, the increased wealth might not be distributed in that way. But however it were distributed, and even if a half or if you like three-quarters of it were donated to the underdeveloped countries, one could hardly plead poverty. We would have enough to provide housing, first-class education and health services, community facilities, adequate pensions, cultural and sporting facilities, in short, the good life. These calculations indicate how rich the world could be. They are based on the actual performance of existing technology. Yet it is well-known that we are on the verge of a breakthrough in automation and computerisation capable of multiplying productivity several times over, so that future prospects are potentially even brighter and make nonsense of the pessimistic claim that today's problem arises from the fact that the world simply cannot afford more human beings.

Of course it may be argued that these calculations are pie in the sky because they ignore the social obstacles preventing the full use of present and future techniques. But this is to confuse the long-term with the short-term. We have already said that the short-term problem is a political one, involving radical social changes. How long it takes to win these changes depends upon the political activity of the world's peoples including our own. But whether this takes a short time or a long time does not alter the fact that we have in our hands already the technical means to produce enough wealth to provide everyone with the good life in all its aspects. How long it takes to make this a reality depends more on politics than on technology.

Now let us get away from these global figures and look at the question of food production itself. Professor Dudley Stamp, the geographer, estimates that we already have the necessary technical knowledge to produce enough food for 10,000 million people - three times the present population. Yet by the year 2,000 world population is only expected to double, that is to rise to over 6,000 million.

Improved grains, fertilizers, pesticides, mechanisation and soil improvement, all in the hands of farmers with greater knowledge and technical skill, could produce a three- to four-fold increase in yields in the developing countries. In a recent book from Iowa State University, it is estimated that "in developing countries where there is little or no insect or rodent control either in the field or during storage, more than half of the food produced is lost before it reaches the consumer." Of course great care would be needed to guard against possible long-term effects of more intensive agricultural production. But we are already aware of the possible dangers - the effect on the

so-called balance of nature, that delicate interdependence of the various animal and plant species which, if brutally disturbed, can have unexpected and sometimes disastrous effects on agriculture itself; or the effect on the soil if attention is not paid to the principles of soil conservation and improvement; or even the direct toxic effects of pesticides on man himself. If we are aware of the dangers, surely they can be averted if we plan properly for the necessary research and the education and training of the farmers.

As regards the land available to agriculture, we cultivate at present 10% of the earth's surface. Another 10% could be cultivated in the immediate future with moderate schemes of reclamation and irrigation, both requiring considerable mechanisation of course. A further 20% could be opened up at a later date but would require far more expensive reclamation and irrigation work. Still farther into the future, new techniques of cultivation could open up the deserts and rain-forests, another 30% of the surface, if cheaper industrial food production had not already made it unnecessary. In the deserts water is the problem. It might be overcome by desalting sea water using nuclear energy, and reducing evaporation by a sort of greenhouse culture under plastic. In the rain forests the problem is to prevent essential mineral salts from being leached out of the soil. The answer might be to breed trees with bountiful foliage which could be cropped and processed for food. Fish farming and the exploitation of the sea is another long-term possibility - we only use one millionth of the food resources in the sea. In addition we burn or plough in four fifths of all vegetable matter grown. Research could lead to methods of processing this waste which could extract valuable protein for animal and possibly human consumption, provided, in the latter case, that the problem of palatability could be overcome.

Thus agriculture still has enormous potential for satisfying the food requirements of a population far greater than we expect at the turn of the century. At the same time a revolution in food production is beginning which will have effects on the way we live as far-reaching as those which followed the change from hunting to agriculture in pre-history. I refer to factory production of protein by large-scale cultivation of micro-organisms. Yeasts have been found which grow on crude gas-oil and produce protein which has been fed to pigs and poultry. British - Petroleum recently announced plans to build a £2 million plant to develop the process. Bacteria have been found which can produce protein from methane, although much work remains to be done on this. All this work is still very much in its infancy. The same applies to its logical sequel - the production of artificial food by chemical means. This can be done; the Russians have produced palatable artificial caviare for example. But infancy or not, its potential is enormous. Naturally, artificial food produced by chemical or microbiological methods would have to be made palatable. This is a matter for research, and also involves overcoming eating habits ingrained in mankind over centuries. Doubtless to begin with the artificial food would be used as an additive or to produce meat by being fed to animals. But in the long run there is no reason why factory methods should not take over from agriculture. They are not dependent on climate. They require far less space. They involve continuous bulk production and so are innately more efficient, making possible a big leap forward in food production.

In the light of these considerations I cannot concede that of necessity the food supply will limit the population sooner or later. Sheer physical space is much more likely to do so. However I am not entirely convinced of that. A man requires more space than the small area on which he stands. He needs the space required to produce his food and other necessities, not to mention recreation. But we only live on a tiny part of the earth. More space could be won if we so desired, and if we planned our resources accordingly. Indeed, factory food production would tend to free space for living. It seems to me that it will be a long time yet before all the space which could become available on Earth is used up. And who knows, by then we may be colon-

ising other parts of the solar system. Be that as it may, any problems with space we have today do not arise because there simply isn't any more left for us to colonise. They arise because we are using our existing inhabitable spaces incorrectly - think of transport in Britain for example - or because we have not made the necessary arrangements for inhabiting additional space. Whichever it is, the problem is political and economic.

All this does not mean that population control is unnecessary. On the contrary population must be planned as much as the provision of adequate resources. This is needed to ensure the maintenance of a proper balance between people and resources. It is necessary to avoid short-term crises. But I do not foresee a situation where the Malthusian "law of nature" forces us to limit the population permanently. Certainly this is not the case today. Neither will it arise within the life-time of anyone living today. What they have to grapple with is a political problem, but science has made the objective attainable - to combat famines which may now be difficult to avoid, and to transform the world to provide the good life for the millions who will greet the 21st Century.

The short-term problem

Since the end of the war the population in the developing countries has grown at twice the pre-war rate. It was 1.4% per year from 1930-40, 2.1% from 1950-60. Paradoxically this arises mainly from efforts to overcome underdevelopment. Now as in the past, these countries have a high birth rate, double or even treble that of the developed industrial states. But the population has shot up because improvements in sanitation and the health services have led to a steady decrease in the infant mortality rate (the numbers who die before reaching 12 months) and in the total death rate. In the U.A.R., the infant mortality rate dropped from 15.3% in 1945 to 10.9% in 1960, and the death rate from 2.7% to 1.7%. These changes can be brought about more quickly than the social, cultural and economic changes needed to guarantee the success of any campaign for effective birth control. Thus, despite all the efforts of the Indian Government since 1951, it is estimated that only 2% of couples of reproductive age practice contraception systematically (New Scientist, Dec. 14th, 1967).

In some parts, particularly Africa, an acceleration, not a slowing down of population growth is expected. Improved health services will cut the death rate further and eradicate diseases which result in total or partial sterility in women. Selective research in the Congo has shown that only 20% of women aged 45 or over had children; in the Central African Republic, the figure was 16%, in the North Cameroons it was 12% (quoted by Guzevaty, International Affairs, Sept. 1966). The birth rate also rises when nomad peoples become settled - in settled agricultural areas it is 80% higher than in nomad, cattle-rearing areas. It does not seem reasonable to expect that the present rate of population growth will be substantially lowered for another 20 to 30 years even with vigorous campaigns for birth control. Even the more draconian idea of sterilising all males who have sired three or more children has its problems. As A. S. Parkes has pointed out in the New Scientist (July 27, 1967), even if all the victims in India could be rounded up it would take 1,000 surgeons or para-surgeons operating eight hours a day, five days a week, 8 years to sterilise existing candidates, and the stock of candidates grows by leaps and bounds daily.

Professor Erlich underlines the cultural problems in the New Scientist (Dec. 14th 1967):

"Consider the probable results of a governmental attempt to sterilize 40 million males in a Western country with an informed populace and efficient transport and communications systems. Then imagine it in the mess of India where the difference between castration and sterilization (still not clear to many Westerners) will be almost impossible to explain."

The rapid rise in population creates grave problems for the underdeveloped countries precisely because they are underdeveloped and so have difficulty accumulating capital, or to put it another way, in creating a surplus over and above daily needs which could be invested in industrialisation and the modernisation of agriculture. Thus in Asia, food production in 1961-62 was 40% above the pre-war level. But because of population increase the food output per head was 93% of the pre-war figure. This very unsatisfactory position means that the developing countries have no significant reserves, so that food supply is completely at the mercy of the climate. The Food and Agriculture Organisation estimates that the advances made in food production by the developing countries between 1955 and 1965 have been wiped out by agricultural disasters in 1965 and 1966. For the 1965-66 total food production in Latin America was down 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ %, but the output per head dropped 5% because of population growth. In Africa, food output dropped 2%, but per head 4%. It is easy to see how famines could become inevitable. A responsible agronomist like Professor Rene Dumont foresees these as breaking out on a wide scale during the eighties (Observer, Dec. 10th 1967).

The fact that the increase in population is very largely due to a decrease in the infant mortality rate means an increased percentage of comparatively non-productive young people requiring to be fed, clothed, housed and educated. In developed countries, the proportion of the population under 15 varies from 20-30%. In Afro-Asian countries the proportion is 40-45%, a very heavy burden. Another consequence is overcrowding. Whilst vast areas of the developing countries are uninhabited, the population tends to crowd into the smaller, already settled areas in the valleys of rivers and lakes and on the coastal plains where conditions become progressively more intolerable. This overcrowding is mainly because the capital required to open up new territories is simply not available.

Such are the problems. And whilst giving every encouragement to campaigns for birth control, it would appear that the problems will almost certainly have to be solved with a high rate of population growth, not substantially different from that of today. Can it be done, and if so, how? Increases in the food supply are inconceivable without mechanisation and chemisation (use of fertilizers and pesticides). Whichever aspect of the problem of underdevelopment you study, you come up against the crying need for the products of industry. Industrialisation is a must. There is a feed-back process between agriculture and industrialisation once it can be got underway. Advances in industrialisation make it possible to modernise agriculture and so to produce more food with fewer agricultural workers. This provides the food needed by the workers already in industry and at the same time releases additional workers for more industrial production, research and education. So the process goes on, with industrial and agricultural production, and hence living standards, rising progressively. This has occurred in the developed, capitalist countries where only 5-10% of the population live on the land, compared with 90% in the underdeveloped countries.

Industrialisation requires both capital to buy the machinery and labour to use it. At the moment the underdeveloped countries have a surplus of labour although its level of technical skill is very low. The bottleneck is in the availability of capital and of teachers and equipment for basic education and technical training. In the end, of course, the educational problem is really just another reflection of the shortage of capital.

We can estimate that at present the developing countries would need to invest about 5-6% of their national income to keep pace with the rising population, in addition to the investment needed to replace worn-out means of production. Any further investment would then lead to an increase in the national income per head. Some of this would undoubtedly go to personal consumption and the social services. But to overcome underdevelopment, a large part of it would have to be re-invested in industry, with emphasis at first on heavy industry and

machine tools. In this way, industrialisation would be got under way and a point would be reached where the mutually beneficial feed-back between industry and agriculture would get off the ground. How much investment would be required to reach this stage of "take-off" in a reasonable time? Here the estimates vary from £3,000 million to £20,000 million because it depends what is meant by a reasonable time, and furthermore, the time taken for new investment to bear fruit is influenced so much by the way the economy is planned, the cultural level, the success or otherwise of birth control, indeed, the whole social set-up. There can be no doubt in this respect that those countries which have taken a firm decision to follow the non-capitalist road of development, despite its difficulties, have chosen the way to get the best out of their resources. A strong public sector is able to mobilise available funds and plan their investment for the long-term task of industrialisation. Left in private hands the meagre resources of the developing countries are more likely to go where they can return a quick profit - in trade, in black-marketeering, or in carrying out minor services for foreign owned monopolies.

In its publication "Programming Techniques for Economic Development" (1960), the U.N. has calculated that in India and Malaya, an increase in annual output of £43-10-0 resulted from every £100 of net investment (that is, investment additional to that needed to replace worn-out means of production). In Ceylon the return was £40 per year. Socialist planning could of course produce better results because it is the most effective way of ensuring that capacity is kept working to the full. But assuming that these figures are fairly representative for the underdeveloped countries, then we can calculate that an investment of around 15% of the national income would produce a growth rate of about 7%. At the present rate of population growth this would mean that within twenty years the national income per head would have increased $2\frac{1}{2}$ times. This would be a big improvement although it would still be only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the national income per head in the developed capitalist countries today. Naturally even better results would accrue from any progress towards socialist planning and from any successes in birth control. But as I have said we cannot count on the results of birth control during the next twenty years, and most of the developing countries are not yet in the stage of building socialism.

So it would seem to me that the underdeveloped countries need at least £10,000 million a year to get off the ground. Where can this come from? Stern government measures against the rich, the black marketeers and speculators and the bureaucrats could release funds for investment which are at present going to waste in the developing countries. But apart from stopping the junkettings of the indigenous parasites, foreign imperialist exploitation has to be fought and brought to an end. It is here that our people have a special role to play.

Imperialist exploitation robs the developing countries of the wealth they already produce in three main ways:

(1) Profits on direct investments

Writing in the Communist Party's Economic Bulletin and using information from the Board of Trade Journals, Tom Drinkwater has estimated that in 1963, profits on private British investments in the underdeveloped countries came to £134 million, excluding profits from oil. This amounted to 10% of the total investment. However, a profit of 10% on overseas investment is apparently regarded as extremely low. In 1965, the Overseas Development Institute published a survey of answers to questions put to British firms investing in East Africa. Most firms expected a full repayment of their capital in two to three years - a profit of 33% to 50%. A few expected to reach 100%. Only 2 out of 96 firms were prepared to wait 5 years which means an annual profit of 20%. As far as oil is concerned the profits are staggering, so much so that it is difficult to get any hard facts. Total profits

for British Petroleum and Royal Dutch/Shell were £464 million in 1966. The extent of the oil robbery is illustrated by the American economist Victor Perlo's estimate that for every dollar's worth of products derived from Middle Eastern oil, the Middle Eastern Governments get about 10 cents and the Arab workers less than 1 cent (don't look too hard in your pockets for the remaining 89 cents). To the profits of the British capitalists must be added those going to the U.S.A. (estimated at £1,000 million by the U.N. in 1963), to Germany, France, Sweden, Belgium, Japan and the other developed capitalist countries. In total, these profits must add up to a healthy slice of the £10,000 million needed so badly by the developing countries.

(2) Unfair trade practices

Big business has a monopoly control of the world's commodity markets and uses the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to wring the last ounce out of it. The developing countries are in a weak position because they depend on the export of one or two basic raw materials, and some of these have had to contend with competition from synthetic substitutes and the fact that improvements in technology tend to reduce waste and cut down the requirement for raw material per unit of manufactured output. Big Business has exploited its more powerful position. The result - prices of the raw materials which the underdeveloped countries export have slumped disastrously, whilst the prices of manufactured goods which they need to import for industrialisation have gone up. The following figures show how this has meant that the underdeveloped countries have had to increase the amount they export two to three times in order to buy the same quantity of manufactured goods. To buy 1 ton of steel, Ghana had to export 202 lbs. of cocoa in 1951 and 571 lbs. in 1961, an increase of 283%. In 1951 Brazil exported 158 lbs. of coffee to buy the ton of steel, in 1961 it needed 380 lbs., an increase of 240%. A ton of steel cost Malaya 132 lbs. of rubber in 1951 and 441 lbs. in 1961, an increase of 334%. As a result of this price manipulation, the underdeveloped countries lost £5200 million from 1951 to 1961. The figure is increasing. By 1970, if present trends continue the loss in one year alone will amount to £2,800 million.

(3) Interest payments on loans

These were £280 million in 1956, £1080 million in 1964 and will be £1730 million in 1970. In 1966 interest payments were 9% of total export earnings. Annual repayments of the actual loan amounted to another 3% of export earnings.

If we add these three items together, profit on investment, booty from unfair trade practices, interest and repayments, then we must have a sizeable part of the £10,000 million needed by the developing countries. The remainder could come from cuts in armaments expenditure. World armament expenditure is estimated at over £50,000 million per year (Powell in "Science of Science"). The cut required would not even involve complete disarmament. I think it is obvious from what I have said that the capital is available, but to release it demands inroads into the power of the big monopolies, bankers and armament manufacturers.

Of course it may be argued that the capitalist powers do give aid to the developing countries. I would only make three points. A large part of so-called aid is to bolster the cold-war foreign policy of the capitalist powers and so is used for military and economic support of right-wing governments. The Times (March 28th 1963) estimated that 72% of American 'aid' was for this purpose. President Johnson gets 35 billion dollars for his war in Vietnam but only 2.3 billion dollars for foreign aid. (Observer, Dec. 17th). Secondly, much of the aid is to provide basic utilities like roads, railways, ports, the so-called infrastructure, the express purpose being to encourage private investment and make it more profitable (see the World Bank Report 1946-53). Thirdly, the aid, such as it is is wiped out by the profit, interest and loss on foreign trade. Lombard, in the Financial Times (July

19th, 1965) asserts that the funds from all forms of aid, including private capital investment are cancelled out in this way.

Aid from the socialist countries is aimed to help the developing countries throw off imperialist domination. 70% goes into the development of industry. Soviet credits are long term and carry the low rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3% interest. They are repayable in the currency of the receiving country and in many cases can be repaid in the supply of goods so that there is no drain on the reserves of foreign currency. Soviet economic aid is provided only for the public sector of production since it has no profit motive (see the Novosti booklet "The U.S.S.R and Developing Countries" for details).

However, socialist aid is limited and by itself cannot solve the problem. The long term solution is to end all forms of imperialist exploitation which means ending overseas private investment for the extraction of profit and closing overseas military bases. The struggle for this aim will have to be waged on many fronts and around a whole range of comparatively short-term demands. To win them will require the united political activity of the Labour and progressive movement in Britain, the U.S.A., and the other imperialist states, together with the people of the developing countries. Because of the influence of our country in the world despite our crises, because we are still a very rich nation, because we were the dominant imperialist power for many years, our people have a specially important role to play. Among the demands for which we should be pressing now are:

1. More equitable prices for the goods exported by the developing countries without price increases at home.
2. Long-term credits, linked to the sale of British capital goods and technical services.
3. An end to overseas military expenditure and restriction on private overseas investment.
4. Outright grants and interest-free loans, paid for by cuts in the arms bill and higher taxes on profits and wealth.
5. Support for the demands of the developing countries at the forthcoming U.N. Conference on Trade, Aid and Development.

These measures are not only important for eliminating hunger, starvation and abject poverty. They will also open up vast markets for our factories. They will wipe out the balance of payments deficit. And since they mean imposing the will of the people upon the monopolies, they would represent a big democratic advance on the road to socialism in Britain.

(N.B. The piece that follows also comes from Professor Ehrlich's article in New Scientist)

Many people oversimplify the problem of population control by equating it with the introduction on a mass scale of an acceptable contraceptive. Unfortunately by itself contraception is largely irrelevant to the problem. By itself contraception would achieve family planning; that is, it would reduce the proportion of unwanted births. But the real problem in population control is the number of wanted births and finding the right way to change the social, cultural and economic factors which influence that. This is a long-term task. It involves amongst other things, for example, altering the place of women in society, granting them real equality of opportunity, a real chance to play a full and active part in society.

"Science", the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, has brought this out clearly (November 10th 1967). Taiwan has been very successful in introducing contraception. What is likely to be the effect? In Taipei, the largest city, a survey of women aged 15-29 showed that they wanted an average of 3.75 children each, in a fishing village they wanted 4.9, in a farming village 5.03, for Taiwan as a whole 4.5. In the past, women have had an average 6.5 children, so we can expect a big drop in the birth rate. But with improvements the death rate should continue to decline: 4.5 births per woman plus a life span of 70 years equals a population growth of 3% - no improvement. In other developing countries the number of wanted children has turned out around four - 4.3 in Tunisia, 4.3 East Java, 4.2 in Mysore, 4 in a village near New Delhi.

LOOKING AHEAD

Trots. under the microscope

It's an absolute certainty that the majority of people on the Left who oppose 'Trotskyist' activity, do so not so much from a reaction to the man himself, but rather as a result of contact with those who claim allegiance with his ideas, and Marxist understanding.

A brave approach to alter this state of affairs, and raise the level of critical approach to ultra-Leftism will come from Monty Johnston in the next issue of COGITO in which he will attempt first to look at Trotsky's life and see how his major doctrines stand up against what has actually happened in History!

Such an article he says, must not be 'carried out from the old positions of Stalin or Trotsky'.

From those with any entrenched ideas, Monty's bold assertions should ensure the next issue a lively reception.

A Plea to the Opinionated!

The pages of COGITO are open to all those on the Left who have a worthwhile contribution to make in the never-ending common aim for which we all strive, i.e. a socialist Britain.

Suitable letters concerning COGITO or its contents will always be published.

Above all, we plead for the participation of our youthful readers: students, young workers, layabouts, anybody that holds a valid and presentable case.

Issues for the future are hoped to include Germany, with contributions from students both in the F.D.R., and the G.D.R., together with an outline of the Weimar Republic: Propaganda for which contributions are particularly welcome: Democracy, including an appraisal of trends in the Socialist countries.

It is hoped that the next issue of COGITO will be published in July. The main contribution is to be Trotskyism by Monty Johnston. Y.C.L. branches should take advantage of this knowledge to arrange classes around this article.

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A plea to the distinguished

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