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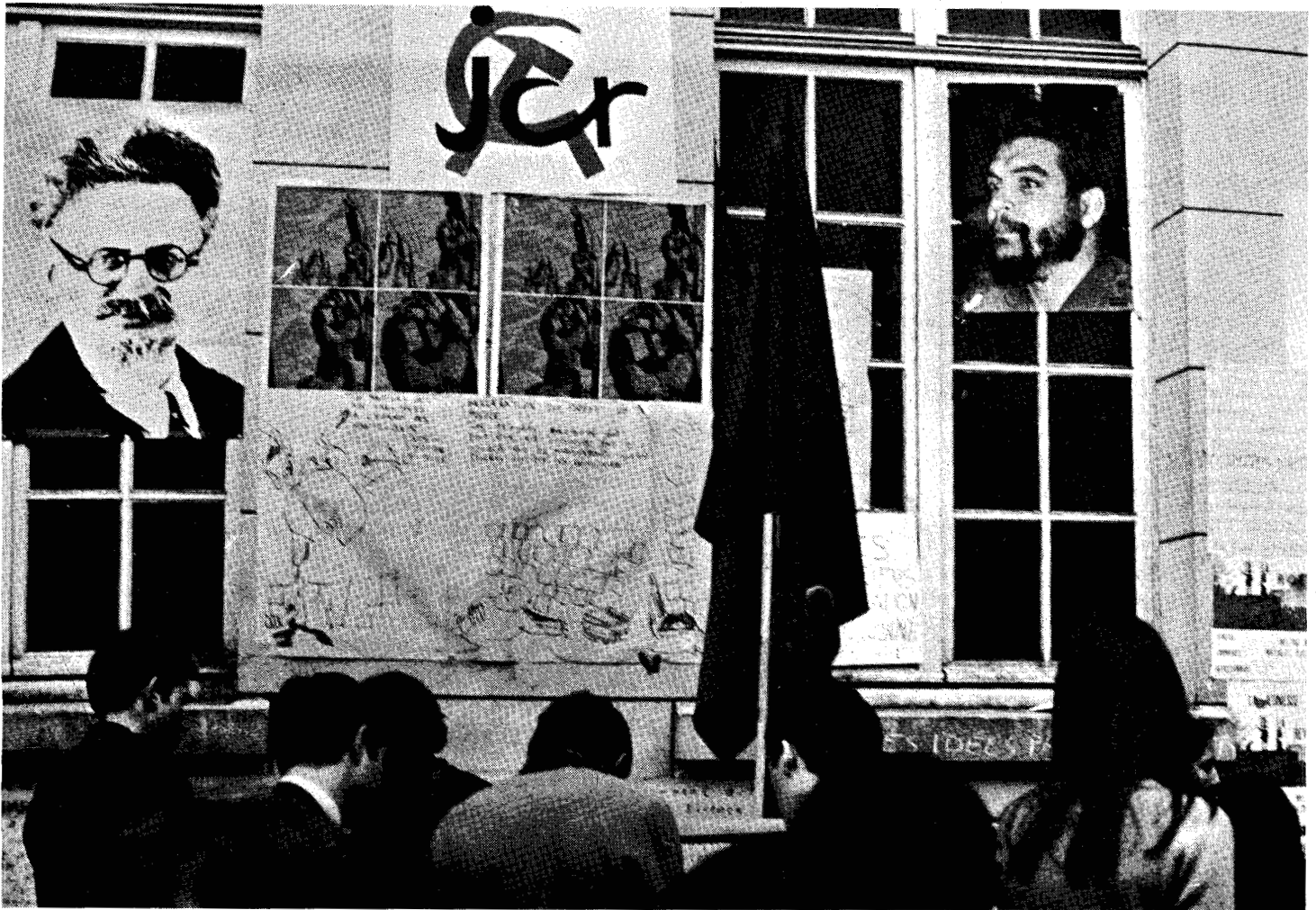
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Reports on French Events



AT THE SORBONNE. Students gather for discussion at literature display of Jeunesse Communiste Revolutionnaire (Revolutionary

Communist Youth) in student-occupied university. The JCR has been in the forefront of French student struggles of recent weeks.

From the Bolivian Underground:

New Revolutionary Ferment in Bolivia

THE FRENCH GENERAL STRIKE CONTINUES

By Les Evans

The deepening revolutionary crisis sweeping France passed an important milestone June 4 when a decisive section of the French working class remained on strike despite confident predictions to the contrary by the whole bourgeois establishment in Europe and the United States.

The workers refused to be intimidated by de Gaulle's saber-rattling or by the cowardly decision of their union and political leadership to turn against the struggle for power and meekly go along with the hastily-called elections to be held June 23 under the guns of de Gaulle's tanks.

The bluster and threats of de Gaulle May 30 seemed momentarily to have carried the day for French capitalism when the Communist-led General Federation of Labor agreed to drop the demand for his resignation, and to call on workers to give up the general strike and negotiate separate local agreements on purely economic demands. This stab at the strikers quickly convinced the capitalist press that de Gaulle had won.

The New York Times declared, "Labor Chiefs Seek to End Strike"; the London Observer's June 2 headline said, "De Gaulle gets French back to work"; and the London Sunday Times even ran a special feature entitled, "How the French Revolt Collapsed."

The striking workers, who had not been heard from in all this, chose a dramatic moment to point out that the reports of the demise of their revolt were greatly exaggerated. Premier Pompidou appeared on national television June 3 (which was a holiday) to warn the workers that it was their "national duty" to be back on the job the next morning.

Immediately after he spoke the nation's best-known broadcasters walked off their jobs.

Police and detachments of soldiers were reported to have moved into the buildings of the government radio network during the day.

Ground crews and technicians remained on strike at Orly airport near Paris. While scattered groups of workers resumed work in some industries, the strike continued on the national railroads, in the postal and telegraph services, the nationalized gas and electricity company, and the state-owned Renault automobile company. In private industry, steel and chemical plants remained closed, as did Citroën.

A June 3 dispatch in the New York Times commented, "The strike at the Government network was thought to have great political significance because it was the first strike declared against Mr. Pompidou's new Cabinet and also because the network is one of the most sensitive political factors in the election campaign.... It appeared clear tonight that the Government had lost in its effort to get most of the country back to work tomorrow morning, at the end of the three-day Pentecost weekend."

The teachers' union declared June 3 that the nation's 600,000 teachers would not return to work the next day.

De Gaulle's virtual declaration of civil war against the majority of the French population contained within it a large element of bluff. When even the so-called police unions have warned that the cops may prove unreliable if used against the people, it would be a desperate gamble to attempt to use a conscript army to crush the massive revolutionary strike of ten million workers.

De Gaulle counted on intimidating the weak-kneed leadership of the Communist party and the CGT and getting them to use their weight to break the backbone of the strike. He succeeded in winning cooperation from the bureaucrats, but even together they were unable to halt the strike.

That de Gaulle's rantings about "totalitarian Communism" are sheer window dressing for an accommodation between the CP and the general is understood by the more astute spokesmen for world capitalism. The New York Times testified to this editorially June 3:

"Far from organizing a conspiracy to bring down the Government through worker and student strikes, Communist leaders were clearly astonished at the militancy of the rank and file. They tried to curb disorder and finally even reached a settlement with management under the mediation of Premier Pompidou.

"The workers' rejection of that settlement dismayed the Communists and they now are seeking a new agreement to put the country back to work. Their central objective at the moment is respectability and participation in a Left government coalition. They want to end the strikes to improve their chances."

Despite the fact that the CP was so easily cowed by de Gaulle's threats, his power is more imaginary than real in

the face of a united and determined working class. In the same speech where he hinted that he would use the army against the workers and students, de Gaulle announced the referendum he had promised for June 13 would be canceled.

It turned out that not a single printshop in France would print the general's ballots, and when in desperation he tried to have the ballots printed in Belgium, the Belgian printers refused out of solidarity with their striking brothers.

Another factor in de Gaulle's decision to play it tough was the action of the strikers in rejecting the agreement negotiated for them between the CGT and the government. This indicated that control of the workers was slipping away from the CP to the left, thus for the first time seriously endangering capitalist property relations in France.

Yet the effect of his action so far has been to further alienate the CP from the mass of leftward moving workers and strengthen the revolutionary vanguard of students and young workers.

Deep fissures are beginning to appear in the lower ranks of the union officialdom, along with the sharp division between the CP tops and virtually the whole student movement. Pierre Baghi, the Toulouse leader of the CGT, responded to de Gaulle's May 30 speech in a very different vein than Georges Séguy. "If it comes to a test of strength with the government," he said, "the workers are ready to shoulder their responsibilities."

Jean-Daniel Bernard, secretary general of the French National Union of Students, told a student rally in Lyons, "Political power is at stake in the fight that unites us all today. This fight will not be decided in Parliament, but in the factories, in the streets and behind the barricades."

And in the factories the mood is plain. At the giant Renault plant at Boulogne-Billancourt a sign has been put up over the main gate, demanding "Worker Power!" One worker in the plant told a New York Times reporter, "Elections won't solve anything. We want a clean sweep, not just a new Assembly and new Cabinet."

Whatever the immediate outcome, even if the CGT bureaucracy should succeed in bringing the strike to a temporary halt, the workers have had a taste of their own power. They remain undefeated and the movement is on the rise. The key to its endurance and development lies in the linkup of the student revolutionaries with the mass of the workers.

The students succeeded in calling a mass demonstration of more than 50,000

students and workers in a march to the Charléty sports stadium in Paris May 27. The June 2 Observer described the action:

"It was the first full-dress appearance of the new revolutionary force which has sprung up on the extreme Left of French politics....The incredible success of the student leaders was to rally to the stadium thousands of young workers, disgruntled with the stick-in-the-mud unions. The marriage of workers and students, longed for by all student revolutionaries, had come about.

"To none did this alliance seem more threatening than to the official opposition to Gaullism...to the Communist Party and to M. Mitterrand...."

All testimony indicates that the vitality of the student movement is continuing unabated. Robert Stephens, in a June 1 dispatch from Paris in the London Observer, describes the bustle of activity at the Sorbonne:

"The annexe of the Faculty of Letters of Paris University is a modern grey building in a grim side-street on the unfashionable fringes of the Latin Quarter. The glass doors were plastered with manifestos and announcements of party meetings, among them, scribbled with red felt pen: 'Poetry -- 8 p.m.'....

"On the second floor, astride the corner of a table, the Trotskyist student leader, Alain Krivine, is holding an impromptu press conference in the corridor.

"He is a 26-year-old historian, slightly built with a shock of black hair and gold-rimmed spectacles. Brilliant, calm, he talks of insurrectional tactics, recalling alternately a character from Dostolevsky and a St. Cyr officer.

"It was last week, after one of the fiercest nights at the barricades and young militants were coming in to report...."

It is these young militants who are forging a decisive unity with young workers who are becoming repelled by the conservatism and bureaucratic practices of the Communist party.

The Christian Science Monitor described this phenomenon in a May 31 editorial. Of the Communist party the paper said, "Although mouthing revolution, they have been as anxious as the Gaullists from the other direction to cut the youthful revolutionaries of the Sorbonne down to size. Piquantly, however, there is within the ranks of labor on the left a younger generation that feels toward its own Communist leadership very much as Messrs. Krivine and Cohn-Bendit feel toward Rector Roche of the Sorbonne."

WORKERS CONTROL PUT INTO EFFECT IN BREST ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT PLANT

[The following is a translation of a May 28 dispatch from Brest which appeared in the May 29 issue of the Paris daily Le Monde. It reports how a strike committee in an electronic equipment plant extended its activities from mere direction of strike activities to control over the management of the plant. The logic of this development is indicated by the fact that the question of displacing capitalist management by workers management is already being discussed.

["Workers control" is a transitional measure that appeared as a brief phase in the Russian revolution of 1917. It has long been advocated by the Trotskyist movement.

[The establishment of a committee to exercise workers control in a plant signifies setting up dual power at this level. Its political complement is dual government, one of the key stages in the development of any deep-going revolution. The establishment of workers control in the electronic equipment plant in Brest is an isolated instance but in the situation now developing in France it could rapidly catch on and spread across the country.]

* * *

BREST, May 28 -- A structure for management of the enterprise by the workers is now being worked out at the Brest plant of the CSF (Compagnie générale de télégraphie sans fil) [General Electronics Company]. Since May 20, the day the strike began, the personnel (workers and around seventy percent of the supervisors and skilled layers) have been considering setting up a new organization.

"The week of work stoppage has been utilized to put in question everything that existed before. We think that the workers commissions and the factory committee which we have outlined constitute irreversible decisions," said the spokesmen of the CFDT [Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail], the only union in the plant.

"The rupture is complete with the organization, the traditional staff. This is due," the unionists added, "to the preparatory work already accomplished. The CSF-Thomson merger led us to explain to the personnel the mechanism of the economy, of capitalist society, the banks,

etc. Our union action had considerable influence not only on the workers but also on the engineers and supervisors.

"The confidence of the personnel in the union action," it was further explained, "has been one of the most important elements leading the personnel to think about the problems of self-management advocated by the union. The demonstrations by the students have also favored this rise in consciousness. People no longer accept being mere cogs."

Beginning with the first day the plant was occupied, groups made up of representatives of the different departments (workshops, laboratories and all the offices) elected a strike committee first of all and then began studying reform of the staff. Some seventy engineers are participating in this work.

What is the strike committee's role? Composed of members and nonmembers of the union, it has democratic powers of decision in the plant. It has complete latitude to oppose the union office. "It's for sure that we're not going to replace the capitalist authority by a trade-union authority," said the leaders of the movement.

The workers commissions will be set up at the departmental level (workshops, laboratories, offices). They are composed of representatives of the various professional categories. They are competent to handle anything of concern to the workers in their work -- classification of jobs, methods of work, working conditions, distribution of jobs, promotions, enforcement of rules permitting all the workers to advance in accordance with their capacities, wage increases, hiring and firing.

"Power" is shared with the management. However, in case of disagreement, a factory committee is projected to play the role of arbiter.

"At this level there could still be conflicts. We have not studied this aspect fully. We will do so in the next week. We have had to work out a body able to undertake important decisions which have been made up to now by management at the top level...or by the banks. We no longer want some banker to decide our fate. This is our next objective," stated the members of the CSF.

A RETIREMENT FUND?

Sources in Saigon estimate about \$16 billion, or one-fifth of all U.S. aid to its Vietnamese puppet regime, has found

its way into private accounts in Bern, Basel, and Zurich, according to a report in the Italian weekly Espresso.

PCI CONDEMNS NEGOTIATIONS OF CP UNION BUREAUCRATS WITH DE GAULLE REGIME

[The Parti Communiste Internationaliste (French section of the Fourth International) is issuing bulletins on a daily basis on all the important turns in the fast-moving revolutionary events now shaking capitalist France.

[The following bulletin, a typical one, issued the evening of May 22, gives the stand of the French Trotskyists on the negotiations conducted by the heads of the CGT with the de Gaulle regime. The Confédération Générale du Travail is dominated by the French Communist party.

[The PCI bulletin is headlined: "To Bring Down the Gaullist Regime, Let's Strengthen the Unity of the Workers and Students."]

* * *

On May 22, a National Assembly that does not represent the country upheld a government that has aroused universal contempt. This parliamentary comedy was staged before the eyes of more than 9,000,000 workers on strike.*

On the same day, Séguéy, in the name of the CGT, declared that he was ready to negotiate with this scarecrow government.

On the same day, while the UNEF [Union Nationale des Etudiants de France -- National Union of the Students of

*The reference is to a motion to censure the de Gaulle regime for its handling of the student rebellion which was submitted by the Communist party and the Social Democrats. It was defeated by a narrow vote in the National Assembly May 22.

France] was demonstrating against the ban on Cohn-Bendit, a ban that was a genuine provocation on the part of the government, Séguéy chose to slander the UNEF and to break with the organization which had acted as the courageous spokesman of the student struggle.

Séguéy's two decisions were complementary -- he is seeking to halt the immense movement of the working class after winning a few demands, leaving de Gaulle and his chienlit [foul mess] in power. He denounced the UNEF and all those who supported the battle on the barricades and who intend to continue the strike action until de Gaulle leaves. Séguéy's attitude helps give the government a green light to repress the student vanguard.

Séguéy made his decisions without consulting the workers. The workers are in solidarity with the students who have constituted the vanguard in the struggle against Gaullism. The workers are against negotiations with a scarecrow government which de Gaulle changes as he sees fit.

The provocations do not originate with those who want to carry the struggle forward to the establishment of a workers government. They originate with those who are responsible for trying to bog down the struggle by limiting it to merely economic aims that are quickly outmoded.

The workers will reject Séguéy's decisions. They will strengthen the unity of action between the workers and students and demand the resumption of contacts between the CGT and the UNEF.

Forward Against the Gaullist Regime.

For a Workers Government.

TROTSKYIST GROUPS IN FRANCE SET UP JOINT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Paris

[IP] -- The revolutionary events in France have shaken up all the old political formations and set in motion a process of regroupment affecting the entire spectrum of tendencies.

This includes the various groups that consider themselves to be "Trotskyist."

On May 19 three Trotskyist organizations met together to consider common action. They issued the following statement:

"In view of the developments in

the current situation, which sharply point up the lack of a revolutionary leadership and show how indispensable it is to unify the struggle mounted by the organizations claiming to represent Trotskyism, the representatives of the Union Communiste (Voix Ouvrière), the Parti Communiste Internationaliste (French section of the Fourth International) and the Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire met Sunday May 19, 1968, and decided to form a standing coordinating committee representing the three organizations.

"The committee appeals to all the organizations claiming to represent Trotskyism to join in this initiative.

"The three organizations recommend that their members get in touch with each other everywhere in order to coordinate their actions."

The statement was signed by G. Kaldy and J. Morand, representing the Union Communiste; P. Frank and M. Lequenne, representing the Parti Communiste Internationaliste; and A. Krivine and D. Bensaid, representing the Jeunesse Communiste.

The meeting that set up the coordinating committee was initiated by the Parti Communiste Internationaliste [PCI]. Besides the Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire [JCR] and the Union Communiste [UC], the PCI sent an invitation to the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste [OCI]. This group, which is headed by Pierre Lambert and associated with the Socialist Labour League of Great Britain, did not respond.

The Union Communiste, which publishes the weekly Voix Ouvrière [Worker's Voice], is largely of proletarian composition and about the same size as the PCI.

After the May 19 statement was made public, still another grouping, named Groupes Marxistes Révolutionnaires (headed by Michel Pablo) indicated its agreement on the need for coordinated action among all those proclaiming adherence to Trotskyism and was granted representation on the coordinating committee.

On May 27 the coordinating commit-

tee issued a joint statement condemning the phony agreement which the bureaucrats of the Communist-dominated CGT [Confédération Générale du Travail -- General Federation of Labor] "negotiated" with the de Gaulle regime in hope of duping the workers into confining their demands to the economic level and of bringing their strike action to an end in return for some paltry concessions.

The Trotskyist statement appealed for rejection of the phony agreement, continuation of the strike and occupation of the plants, and continued struggle in the streets. The following demands were suggested:

"Full payment for all the days spent on strike.

"A minimum wage scale of 1,000 francs [US\$200] a month and a sliding scale of wages.

"Immediate reduction of the work week to forty hours.

"A real lowering of the age of retirement. [A widespread demand is to lower the age from 65 to 60.]

"Recognition of workers, trade-union, and political democracy at the plant level.

"Dissolution of the repressive forces of the bourgeois state."

FRENCH EVENTS PLACE GOMULKA REGIME IN QUANDARY

The Gomulka regime appears to be having difficulty in deciding on what line to adopt in explaining the revolutionary events in France to the Polish people. In the May 28 issue of Le Monde, for instance, Bernard Marguerite reported from Warsaw that at first the Polish press sought to dismiss the student demonstrations, describing them as the work of pro-Chinese and Trotskyist elements, if not hippies and beatniks.

After a week or so, the Polish commentators began to shift. The weekly Polityka said that "one of the causes of the subsequent developments was the ineptness of the authorities at the start of the movement."

De Gaulle's seven-minute speech May 24, in which he called for a referendum, surprised the Polish commentators because of its shortness and its vague generalities. They are accustomed to interminable speeches that at least make a pretense at concreteness.

Trybuna Ludu finally decided that at the "origin of the present deep conflict, besides the discontent caused by the economic and social policies of the Fifth Republic, there is the discontent provoked by the posture of the regime, which blocks the working masses of the cities and countryside and their political and union organizations from having any influence on the decisions taken by the state."

Despite the immense events that have shaken capitalist France, the Polish press continues to condemn the actions of the students, blaming them on "madmen" and "irresponsible elements" separated from the masses of university youth, who have justified grievances.

The Polish press also sees the hand of the imperialist West in the trouble wracking France.

The most common explanation is that General de Gaulle is concerned only about

foreign policy and that he has left economic and social policies in the hands of reactionary or incompetent elements.

One commentator, Zakrzewski, who was a correspondent for a long time in Paris, even went so far as to express the hope in a radio commentary that General de Gaulle would utilize the occasion to turn away from those who are nominally called Gaullists in order to seek support among the masses of the people

and the left.

The commentators and political figures fall into two categories. One is concerned about ideological solidarity with the French left. The other is concerned about the foreign policy with respect to the workers states which de Gaulle has followed.

Most often it is concern over France's foreign policy that is considered to be the most important.

THE MAY EVENTS AND THE QUESTION OF POWER IN FRANCE

By Livio Maitan

It is almost impossible to define the magnificent events in France while the struggle is in the midst of development and various outcomes remain possible. It seems proper and necessary here and now, however, to establish some essential analytic data, to try to comprehend the foreseeable possibilities, and to outline some brief general conclusions.

(1) Starting in the first days of May, the French situation evolved at a dizzying pace toward a revolutionary situation unprecedented in the history of capitalist France and indeed of capitalist West Europe (only the late 1918 crisis in Germany can be compared with the crisis now convulsing French society).

The mobilization of the working class which went on strike and occupied the factories is almost total (only marginal groups are excepted) and the life of the country is completely paralyzed. Although economic demands have unquestionably contributed to the scope of the movement, it has nonetheless assumed an unequivocally revolutionary character of opposition to the Gaullist regime and to the capitalist system as such. This is reflected in the level of consciousness of immense working-class strata which ever more clearly manifest their determination to struggle for a qualitative change in the political system.

The student masses, which have now emerged Europe-wide as a very important social and political force (this is a major phenomenon without precedent in the revolutionary experience of the advanced capitalist countries), have mobilized in imposing battles. They provoked the first major break in the equilibrium of the system, opening critical breaches and unleashing the broader movement. And they have been fighting for a month without the least sign of fatigue at a high level of anticapitalist, socialist revolutionary consciousness.

Moreover, this mobilization has drawn broad petty-bourgeois strata into the vortex of the movement; and they resolutely arrayed themselves against the regime and its repressive forces.

At the same time, peasant sectors threatened by the development of big capitalist agriculture in the Common Market era joined the struggle against the regime, deepening the crisis. These peasants often even consciously aligned themselves with the revolutionary workers and students. This is an extraordinary event in the French political battle.

The Gaullist regime has lost all firm social support and the Bonaparte himself -- de Gaulle -- is now sharply criticized by those same sectors of the big bourgeoisie which have always supported him and have been the major beneficiaries of his ten-year rule. The French bourgeoisie has the perspective of facing the critical period of the coming weeks and months without a real political party of its own. Furthermore, it cannot rely unconditionally even on its repressive forces. The communiqués of the police "unions" and a series of very significant episodes (the "dialogue" between the police and the demonstrators in Nantes) clearly indicated that this unprecedented crisis has even affected the so-called forces of order. And it goes without saying that any attempt to use the army, which is based on conscription, as a repressive force would involve the same risks multiplied to the nth degree.

The international context is such that American imperialism and its allies cannot intervene politically in France, and it makes a military intervention highly improbable even in the event of revolutionary advances. Moreover, such an intervention could not be projected without the risk of an enormous international crisis and deep-going repercussions in the United States itself.

If we cannot speak of real dual power in this situation -- at least at this writing -- it is only because there is no united and coordinated counterpower on the regional and national scale. However, the official administration is largely neutralized, and scattered centers of counterpower exist which objectively converge in the opposition to and the assault on the regime.

(2) The ruling class is perfectly aware of the extreme gravity of the situation for it. However, given the relationship of forces, it cannot easily adopt a consistent line of conduct. The alternative of repression -- which at the present stage of the movement would have to be massive and highly violent to get real results -- appears too risky and does not seem likely in the short run. Most of the ruling class seem to have opted for a tactic of winning time in the hope that the movement will enter a phase of decline and begin to show signs of diminishing. And, of course, it is not excluded that important concessions have already been made or projected. The Gaullist referendum maneuver fits into such a scheme. However, things have gone so far that a simple conservative delaying tactic is not sufficient. The bourgeoisie will probably be obliged not only to make important economic concessions but also to accept major political changes.

After all the possible combinations and variants, an alternative solution will be prepared or tried which could lead to the entry into the government of the FGDS [Fédération de la Gauche Démocrate et Socialiste -- Federation of the Democratic Socialist Left] and even of the Communist party.

The international economic problems and the chain-reaction repercussions of the French developments are unquestionably obstacles to economic concessions; and the bourgeoisie's lack of a solidly organized party of its own is an added impediment to their accepting the CP into the sphere of government. But if the situation maintains its present tension and if the danger of a complete collapse of the regime grows, the ruling class will prefer to make big concessions and run great risks rather than lose everything irremediably.

(3) At the point the upsurge has reached there can be no further step forward for the working class but the overthrow of the Gaullist regime by direct revolutionary action. Any policy which does not pose this objective, in whatever forms it may be presented and whatever declarations accompany it, can only give the enemy a breathing spell, give him an opportunity for a salvaging operation, and thus lead to a gradual decline in the movement. It is certainly quite probable that, whatever course events take, the

working class will make economic and political gains on a reformist level. But the problem now posed is not whether reforms are possible or to what extent but whether the question of power is on the order of the day.

An analysis of this situation -- which is characterized by an enormously favorable relationship of forces and the high level of consciousness attained by the worker and student masses -- demands a definite affirmative answer. The strategic objective of the revolutionary movement which began May 3 can and must be the overthrow of the Gaullist regime and the capitalist system. It is hard to say, especially from a distance, whether the overthrow of Gaullism and the overthrow of bourgeois power will immediately coincide, or whether the removal of de Gaulle could constitute an initial stage to be followed more or less closely by a settling of accounts with Gaullism's bourgeois and Menshevik heirs. However, the basic process is clear, and it is with such a revolutionary perspective that one must act. More precisely, it is in the interest of the working class to reject everything that tends to moderate or contain the crisis, and to develop its own organs of dual power.

The essential objective in these days must be the constitution in the factories, the places of work, the universities, the villages, in the neighborhoods, etc., of revolutionary committees. These committees must be democratically elected at the grass-roots level and permanently subject to recall. They must federate and unify on the local and national scale. Any resistance arising from a cult of spontaneity must be resolutely combated. The spontaneous movement has produced all that it can -- and it has made an enormous contribution. But now the problem is to provide the movement with general unified organization and leadership instruments. If this is not accomplished, this necessary and indispensable function will be taken over by the traditional bodies and apparatuses which exist, naturally to the detriment of the revolutionary masses. What is called for here, therefore, is not the discussion of abstract ideological models -- or warnings against all the dangers that even the most democratic delegated assemblies hold -- but concrete, swift and decisive choices without waiting for definitive formulations. The initial experiences of the action committees created by the students in the universities and in the Latin Quarter seem to offer a first concrete indication in this regard.

It must be added that to the extent that a revolutionary countergovernment is organized it will be able to begin taking on the elementary tasks in the organization of day-to-day life, which become increasingly pressing as the country's

paralysis continues. This would be an initial way of getting the people "used" to the idea and practice of workers power.

(4) The great dramatic battle in progress is not only between the ruling class and the working class but also between the revolutionary forces and political and trade-union bureaucracies which are a parasitic growth on the workers movement. This is another essential aspect of the French events, and in this particular phase, the decisive one.

The great revolutionary movement began with big student mobilizations which were initially sharply opposed and vilely denigrated by the bureaucrats, and the CP and CGT bureaucrats most of all. It is an established historical fact, no matter how these events develop, that without the student movement, and thus without the persistent and courageous preparatory work of the "grouplets" (including in the forefront the Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire [Revolutionary Communist Youth], which has a well-defined revolutionary Marxist orientation), the French revolutionary May would never have happened.

And it is now no less clear that young workers taking an initiative completely independent of -- and objectively antagonistic to -- the logic and interests of the apparatuses played a decisive part in key plants in the unfolding of the impetuous movement of strikes and factory occupations, which surprised the bureaucratized parties and trade unions no less than the capitalists.

But after a certain point, the traditional parties and unions and above all, given their weight, the CP and the CGT gained entry into the movement, seeking to take it over. To a certain extent they succeeded.

The all-too-evident aim of the bureaucracy of the workers organizations has been to contain and "moderate" the movement by diverting it from the open sea of revolutionary struggle onto the shoals of reformist parliamentarianism. With a carefully articulated scale of tasks, the CGT has been endeavoring to keep the workers' objectives on the level of economic demands.

Meanwhile, the CP has done everything possible to incorporate the whole movement into its perspective of entering the bourgeois state, even at the cabinet level -- by preference, on the basis of a neopopular front formula. All the bureaucracies' partial demagogic left turns and all their shameless maneuvers of adapting or pretending to adapt to the pressures of the rank and file have not and will not change the substance of their policy. The bureaucracies reject the revolution-

ary perspective. They do not want the overthrow of capitalism through direct action. They look to a reestablishment of the bourgeois-democratic system accompanied by economic concessions to the masses and an increase in their own specific weight and their direct participation in the state apparatus.

In a situation in which the bourgeois state has been convulsed by an unprecedented crisis and has lost all support, in which the ruling class does not even command a political party worthy of the name, in which even the petty-bourgeoisie is radicalized, the last hope of conservatism has come to rely on the activity of the bureaucracies of the working-class organizations to block and divert the revolutionary movement. The mechanism is so transparent and the stakes so decisive that this emerges clearly even from the press organs of the French and international bourgeoisies themselves. They no longer conceal their desperate hope that the CP and CGT will be successful.

Even a simple listing of the misdeeds of the Séguys and Waldeck-Rochets would be too lengthy. It is enough to note the slanders against the student movement and against the revolutionary elements in general, the massive exertion to prevent collaboration between the workers and students, the denial of solidarity to Cohn-Bendit, a victim of repression, the denunciation of the mass demonstrations as "provocative," the call for a boycott of the May 27 mass demonstration, and the attempt to force the miserable compromise of the morning of the same day on the masses. It is enough to note this to give an idea of the degradation proper to these bureaucrats who are terrified that a mighty revolutionary upsurge will also upset their positions of power and privilege.

The action of the young workers who took the initiative in the factory occupations, the ever broader participation of workers in common demonstrations with the students, the courageous opposition of local and national CGT leaders, and finally the clamorous rejection of the capitulationist Séguy by the union assemblies in the major French factories are all extremely important signs that the struggle between the bureaucrats and the revolutionary masses is not yet decided. Of course, in the last analysis, the bureaucrats still have considerable resources at their command, and they will certainly not hesitate cynically to avail themselves of support from the bourgeoisie and of the repressive apparatus itself.

Moreover, the likelihood that they can succeed in their game is all the greater because the mass movement is critically handicapped by the lack of a revolutionary leadership able to unify it politically

and lead it to victory, to the seizure of power. In other words, the absence of a revolutionary party threatens once more to be the decisive negative factor. But the fact remains that conscious revolutionary forces have been maturing in these days on a vastly greater scale than in the past and that a basic clarification is taking place in deeper strata of the proletariat. Whatever the immediate outcome of this fluid situation, a new phase has opened up in the crisis of the bureaucracy; and the hysterical articles of the Pravda and Izvestia reactionaries supporting their Parisian cohorts cannot hide it.

(5) The historical importance of the revolutionary events in France needs no demonstration. They represent an extraordinary experience which will enable the revolutionary movement to draw a whole series of lessons and general conclusions. Here and now we can discern the following general points, among others.

The French May has passed a summary and final judgment on all the theories or pseudoscientific theories about the cooption of the working class in the most advanced capitalist countries and its exhaustion as a motor force of revolution. Arguments adopted with varying degrees of seriousness by men like Marcuse, Sweezy, or Mallet -- not to mention many others -- have been swept away irrevocably.

Socialist revolution by the working class, the class which is intrinsically antagonistic to the system, is back on the agenda. It is back on the agenda even in the countries where this advanced capitalism exists which was supposed to relegate the basic criteria and concepts of Marxism and Leninism to the junk heap. And experience indeed has shown that in these countries, in the present phase of the world crisis of imperialism, an explosive revolutionary crisis can break out almost without warning, due to the convergence of a whole series of domestic and international factors, the differing weights of which must be evaluated with updated criteria.

A new social and political force

has come into play -- the broad student masses -- which is capable of playing an anticapitalist role, of developing a high level of revolutionary consciousness, and, under certain conditions, of being a driving force in revolutionary movements. In certain cases, vanguard student elements can play a prime role in exposing the reactionary function of the bureaucracy.

Once again it has been seen that petty-bourgeois can be drawn into revolutionary struggle for socialism, not by parliamentary maneuvers or moderate "democratic" formulations but by direct revolutionary action. And thus moreover the historic truth that the opportunists regularly ignore will be confirmed: that reforms are gained primarily as a by-product of revolutionary mobilizations.

Certain tendencies and theories widespread in substantial sectors of the revolutionary movement, which, basing themselves on spontaneity, seek to deny the irreplaceable role of the revolutionary party by means of arbitrary analogies and misinterpretation of certain experiences, emerged seriously compromised from the test of the French events. While spontaneous action is indispensable to break up incrustations and sclerosis, the final solution -- seizure of power -- is not possible without a revolutionary leadership which can create political unity, that is, without a party of the Leninist type.

The French crisis has aroused and gripped even the most abstruse and inert strata of the society; it has touched off a release of intellectual energies the significance of which can still scarcely be comprehended. It is, however, doubtlessly laying the basis for a great leap forward in revolutionary culture.

Marxism, liberated from the sterile schema of bureaucratic deformation, will come to express its inexhaustible creative potential at every level of science and contemporary culture.

May 27, 1968

STUDENTS BATTLE POLICE IN PERU

Striking students in Huaraz, the capital of the Ancash district, attempted to seize the Justice Department and Provincial Council building in that city on May 16, while other students blocked access to the city with rock barricades.

This battle was one in a series in which students and local people, demonstrating to force the government to build

a technical university in the area, clashed with police. These clashes, reported by Prensa Latina, extended over the period May 15-17.

One person was killed and fifty-six injured, including four police, in the escalating struggle which led the regime to formally suspend all constitutional rights in the region on May 17.

CRISIS OF REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP IN FRANCE

By Pierre Frank

[Pierre Frank is a leading member of the French section of the Fourth International and a member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, the World Party of Socialist Revolution founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938.]

* * *

Paris

To influence the mighty mass movement sweeping France and assure its victory it is well to begin by placing it in historical perspective. The crisis of French capitalism, which from the second most powerful in the nineteenth century dropped to a second-rate status, has taken the form of gigantic convulsive swings from left to right from 1934 to the present. The dates are well known: 1934, 1936, 1940, 1945, 1958, and now 1968.

On the right, the French bourgeoisie has never been strong enough to achieve a fascist solution, not even when Hitler's armies occupied the country. On the left, the masses have never lacked energy, but the leaderships -- reformist, Stalinist, or post-Stalinist -- have so far by their default and betrayals blocked the socialist solution to the crisis, the creation of a socialist republic of France. This is still more apparent in the May 1968 upsurge than in previous ones.

The present movement is at least as strong numerically as those of 1936 and 1945-47 but on a much higher political plane. Let us sum up the evidence which testifies to this. Each time, the mass mobilizations and notably the factory occupations came in the train of events which played the role of detonator.

In 1936, it was an electoral victory -- the victory of the Popular Front. In 1945-47, it was the military victory over Nazism. This time, the role of detonator was played by the vanguard movement of university teachers and students, and high-school students, which culminated in the barricades of May 10. That is not all.

In 1936 and 1945-47, the masses followed the leaderships with confidence. In 1936, it was the Socialist party and the Communist party; and in 1945-47, primarily the CP. At present, these leaderships, including the CP, no longer enjoy their former prestige and authority. This does not mean, however, that the people no longer follow them, for at the moment there is no alternative leadership. Un-

questionably, the student movement's prestige is great and the sympathy of the workers for it is real, but it cannot take the place of a leadership -- even a minority leadership -- emerging from the workers movement.

And these are not all the changes which have occurred on the leadership level. In 1936 and 1945-47, the revolutionary groupings were not only numerically weak (they are not much more numerous now), they were quite isolated. They were then literally "grouplets," whose essentially propagandistic activity elicited no response. Today these groupings have gained a response from a minority which is neither numerically nor qualitatively inconsiderable -- quite the contrary. The overwhelming majority of the university youth, a great majority of the high-school youth, and a growing number of young workers have followed the lead of these "grouplets," or "dozen or so wild men," depending on whether you pick the term used by l'Humanité or that of the minister of education.

And this is not a transitory response. This part of the youth has become conscious -- its demonstrations show this -- on a series of essential political questions: the need for a socialist revolution; the hopelessness of peaceful and parliamentary roads; the harmfulness of the "peaceful coexistence" policy; the need for democracy and struggle against bureaucracy in the workers movement.

The break between this vanguard and the CP leadership has proved very deep. The present upsurge has made it starkly clear to this vanguard that the basic problem for the victory of socialism in France is to rid the working class of the ultrareformist CP and CGT [Confédération Générale du Travail -- General Federation of Labor] leadership. In pursuance of paltry maneuvers, this leadership has adopted formulas placing it to the right even of the FGDS [Fédération de la Gauche Démocrate et Socialiste -- Federation of the Democratic Socialist Left -- an amalgamation of petty-bourgeois democrats and right-wing Social Democrats] and the CFDT [Confédération Française et Démocrate de Travailleurs -- French Democratic Labor Federation -- the former Catholic trade union].

This vanguard clearly lacks the organizational forms which would enable it to multiply its effectiveness. It is now seeking such forms. It is striving to promote committees in the plants on

the model of those created in the universities, elementary schools, and high schools, which represent in embryonic form a type of organization similar to the soviets of 1917 in Russia. It is also striving to break the bureaucratic straitjacket imposed by the CP and CGT leadership, which is still stifling workers democracy in a revolting manner.

And finally there is the problem of the revolutionary party, whose solution depends primarily on the Trotskyist movement. This movement at the time this mobilization developed was divided essentially into three organizations (the Parti Communiste Internationaliste [Internationalist Communist party], the Union Communiste [Communist Union] and the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste [Internationalist Communist Organization]). Two youth organizations were under its influence: the Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire [Revolutionary Communist Youth]; and the group around the journal Révoltes.

In the course of the upsurge, the OCI and the youth organization under its sway had a disastrous political line. However, the others carried out spontaneously converging actions and have now created a permanent coordinating committee. It may be hoped that this step forward will further the reunification of the Trotskyist movement without undue delay.

* * *

These general considerations make possible an understanding of the conditions in which the new period of working-class upsurge began, a period which cannot halt even with the end of the immediate thrust. It will certainly bring other days of sharp battle. However far this immediate thrust goes -- which still depends on many unknown and unforeseeable factors -- it will certainly not go to the point of the decisive solution of a seizure of power by the workers, as a result of betrayal of those leaderships which today have a decisive influence over the working class.

In this article, which does not propose to answer the questions arising day by day (it is the business of daily leaflets to deal with these questions), I want to point out some important points which have already emerged in the course of the current mobilization.

The role of the high-school students cannot be overstressed. These 14- to 15-year-old youths have shown a remarkable courage and most of all a political maturity which has astonished older militants. Nothing has ever been seen like it. The origins of the high-school movement date back to the end of 1967 and

it offers the brightest promises of a vibrantly developing vanguard in the next years in which the decisive battles of the period beginning in spring 1968 will be waged. It is the greatest hope the French revolutionary movement now has.

I leave aside here the international repercussions of the current movement, but it must be mentioned that it has helped to revive the struggle for proletarian revolution in Europe. This struggle has been paralyzed, frozen, since the end of the second world war, to such an extent that a defeatist attitude toward the workers in the economically developed capitalist countries had become dangerously widespread in politically advanced circles. This mobilization, which has immediately had powerful reverberations in all of West Europe, will sweep away the pessimistic "theories" based on this defeatist attitude and will give new impetus to the spread of revolutionary Marxism to much broader strata than ever before. Moreover, this movement has exhibited an internationalist spirit of a very high order. If l'Humanité ever made a monstrous "mistake" it was when it used the expression "the German Cohn-Bendit" in the attempt to discredit a man who has more than honorably served as one of the leading spokesmen of the Paris students. On May 22, l'Humanité hurled infamous slanders against him, and the same day the government expelled him from France. Here also, the CP leadership has entered into complicity with the government against this young revolutionist.

It can be counted on also that this movement before long will have reverberations beyond West Europe. It will certainly be understood in the Soviet Union and East Europe that this movement is very different from the picture of it presented in the bureaucratic press.

The CP and CGT leadership has shown a frantic fear of attempts at a worker-student rapprochement not under its control, or, in fact, of any rapprochement going beyond generalities. This leadership knows that such a link-up would revolutionize the workers movement and break its control over it. All the doubts which have been developing for years among the militants would be more than reinforced; they would go over into a merciless critique of the neoreformist policy conducted in the postwar period.

The action which the CP has launched to prevent this linkup, to prevent papers and leaflets, and most of the student delegations, from getting into the factories, has been the most intense part of this organization's

operation during the upsurge.

At Renault, on Friday, May 17, a column of students who had walked about six miles from the Sorbonne to the factory arrived to find the gates more vigilantly barred by a handpicked team of CP marshals than by the plant guards in normal times.

Here is another example: When UNEF [Union Nationale des Etudiants Français -- French National Student Federation] organized a demonstration on May 22 to protest the government's expulsion of Cohn-Bendit, the secretary of the CGT, Séguy, called this decision (not the government's move) a provocation and broke off the CGT's relations with UNEF.

Thus, the post-Stalinist leadership prefigures the role that the bourgeoisie will expect it to play when it turns the government over to it -- a role that it is ready and willing to play, the role of policeman, the role of a Noske.* But in the conditions which have developed in the course of this mobilization, an element is taking shape which though it cannot change the nature of this leadership can weaken its power -- in the course of this upsurge itself, which is still on the ascendant as I write these lines and in which new leaps could occur.

Criticisms of the leadership's default have begun to arise in the rank-and-file CP bodies, of its delay, its failure to understand the student movement, its hostility towards it, its chauvinism. This is happening while the party members are applying themselves to their daily tasks, which are more numerous than ever.

It would be surprising if on the outcome of this mobilization, these criticisms were not repeated and raised to the level of a challenge to the CP's general policy. It would be surprising if they did not culminate more or less rapidly in a crisis in the CP of completely different dimensions than those which proceeded from the "de-Stalinization."

Two principal elements are tending to produce such a crisis. First is the bankruptcy of the CP policy toward the youth. For more than six years, first at the time of the Algerian war and then in the campaign for Vietnam, this leadership has driven any sort of "leftist"

out of the organizations and demonstrations which it controlled. It has used its marshals' squad against them, which has not fought against the police for many years.

And now these "leftists" are returning at the head of tens of thousands of youth, after vigorously confronting the forces of bourgeois order in the streets. The CP leadership's policy on the youth has resulted in a bankruptcy identical to that of the Gaullist government in the same sphere.

Moreover, a number of CP and CGT militants cannot be insensible to the widespread feeling that the mobilization in progress poses the question of power, that the problem of the seizure of power could be easily solved if the leaderships wanted to do so. Indeed, in these days when an unproclaimed general strike is in effect, it would be possible to force de Gaulle's departure and to impose a CP-FGDS government by nonparliamentary but peaceful means. For, indecision now reigns among the forces of order. The police themselves are considering going on strike. There is news from the army of ferment in the ranks. The fascists, backed by the Gaullists, have only been able to mobilize tiny groups of demonstrators who want primarily to make trial runs in preparation for the future.

At a time when everyone can see that "the power is in the streets," these CP and FGDS leaders are calling on the National Assembly -- this discredited parliament, most of whose members are a motley crew of opportunists elected on de Gaulle's coattails -- to censure a government which de Gaulle must considerably change anyway if he wants to stay in power.

Many CP and CGT militants see here also their leadership's incapacity to seize on a situation still more favorable than the Liberation. It cannot even point now to the presence of American troops on French territory -- there are only Yankee diplomats negotiating with the representatives of victorious Vietnam. And this is the second essential element of a profound crisis in the CP in what cannot be the too distant future.

* * *

At the time of this writing, this mobilization must be pushed as far as possible. It cannot go too far. The gains achieved will serve as the point of departure for succeeding waves. Repression will only become a serious threat later, on the occurrence of a decline. It will be aimed primarily at the vanguard (with the tacit complicity of the CP and FGDS

* [Gustav Noske (1868-1946). A leader of the Social Democratic party of Germany. He became Minister of War in 1919. He was responsible for crushing the Spartacus uprising, killing 15,000 in nine months. He played a key role in the murder of revolutionary leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.]

leaderships). But if this vanguard has a clear view of the situation, of the relationship of forces, of the relationship between the vanguard and the masses and between the masses and the leaderships, if it demonstrates the political capacity to keep one or two steps ahead of the masses, without getting too far ahead, such a repression will neither be able to decapitate it nor make any deep inroads into it. To the contrary repression might act as a stimulus and enable the vanguard to reinforce its mass influence.

We are out of the stagnation. The class struggle has entered a period of battles to be fought. The conditions at the outset are much more favorable to the vanguard than in the past. For the first time, the vanguard has real opportunities. The majority of the Trotskyist movement is off to a good start.

The road before us will be rough and filled with pitfalls, but we are confident that we will follow it to the end.

May 22, 1968

FROM REVOLT AGAINST THE BOURGEOIS UNIVERSITY TO REVOLT AGAINST CAPITALIST SOCIETY

By Ernest Mandel

[The following speech by Ernest Mandel was given at a meeting of the Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire (JCR) in the great hall of the Mutualité in Paris on May 9, the eve of the night of the barricades. The meeting was attended by between five and six thousand student militants and revolutionary youth.]

[Ernest Mandel is the editor of the Belgian socialist weekly La Gauche and author of the scholarly two-volume Traité d'Economie Marxiste ("Treatise on Marxist Economics") soon to be published in English. The transcript is from a tape recording, and has been edited for minor corrections in style. The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

Any analysis of the student revolt must start from one basic consideration: the university explosion. A new social grouping has emerged from the very vitals of neocapitalism, from all that it considers its essential "achievement": the higher standard of living, the advances in technology and the mass media, and the requirements of automation. There are six million university students in the United States, two and a half in West Europe, and over a million in Japan. And it proved impossible to integrate this grouping into the neocapitalist system as it functions in West Europe, the United States, or Japan.

The Weakest Link in the Chain of Neocapitalism

The students have not found the necessary material facilities for their studies in the universities. They have not found the kind of education they were looking for. And above all when they leave the universities it is getting harder and harder for them to find the kind of jobs they rightly expected when they started their university education.

Here I must reply to a certain person claiming to be a representative of the Jeunesse Socialiste SFIO [the SFIO Young Socialists -- the youth group of the right-wing Social Democratic party]. This individual wrote the other day in a column in the "Libres Opinions" section of Le Monde [this is a guest feature column for the expression of differing viewpoints which appears regularly in this Paris daily] describing "our" society as a "society of abundance," a society in which "everyone" is now guaranteed full employment and a steady rise in his standard of living.

He did not put his glasses on when he read the West European unemployment statistics. He did not see that in the last two winters there were three million unemployed in Western Europe. He did not see that the number of unemployed in France itself topped a half million -- and this in the midst of a government-proclaimed economic expansion. He did not notice the large number of young people in this mass of unemployed -- to say nothing of the still larger number which the statistics don't include. He did not see that the unemployment rate among the youth in the black ghettos of the United States exceeds twenty percent -- which explains a lot of things.

In brief, what he, like innumerable devotees of neocapitalism, failed to see is that this system, far from solving all economic and social problems, has not even remedied the basic evils of nineteenth-century capitalism, while it has added a series of new contradictions that have proved more and more insoluble.

This neocapitalism confronts the student youth with insoluble contradictions not only in the university but also in the economy and in bourgeois society, which is in permanent crisis. [Applause.]

Some people have talked about the

inadequacy of the universities and, like good reformists, called for university reform. Therefore, when the students turned their backs on this reform of the bourgeois university, they accused them of rejecting dialogue. But what the students in revolt rejected was in fact dialogue within the preestablished and supposedly immutable framework of the bourgeois state, of the bourgeois governments in West Europe and Japan.

The students have been told: "The budget isn't large enough to guarantee all of you the university buildings, professors and assistants, restaurants, dormitories, and above all the high quality education you demand right away. You have to be satisfied with gradually changing the existing situation, which we all agree is unsatisfactory." And when the students are told this, they are a thousand times right to answer: "Stop this bilge about the appropriation for education and the resources of the public bodies. Talk in terms of the economic resources available in this society. Admit that while there isn't enough money for the universities, there is more than enough for advertising and superfluous gadgets. Admit that the reason you can't find the billions needed for a university system fit for the twentieth century is because you're squandering billions for your 'force de frappe' [France's nuclear striking force]. Admit that you are stifling in embryo immense productive, technological, cultural, and intellectual forces because you prefer to create destructive forces." [Long applause.]

In this sense, and rightly, the students "reject dialogue" and reject "university reform" in the context of bourgeois society. For, they have understood the nature of this society. And this awareness in combination with their special situation in society has made them the weakest link in the neocapitalist chain today, the first to crack throughout the Western world.

A New Revolutionary Productive Force

What the student revolt represents on a much broader social and historic scale is the colossal transformation of the productive forces which Marx foresaw in his Grundrisse [Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy]: the reintegration of intellectual labor into productive labor, men's intellectual capacities becoming the prime productive force in society.

This is still embryonic and is unrealizable within the framework of capitalist society but it is already powerfully announcing itself. In speaking of a third industrial revolution, of a scientific revolution, many bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, or Marxist sociologists and

economists have had a presentiment of this. But they have not always drawn the obvious social conclusion about the place of intellectual workers in society.

When we hear pseudo-Marxists talking disdainfully about the students as "bourgeois youth" and "future bourgeois" we see a threefold error.

First of all, they fail to understand the university explosion which has made these "bourgeois youth" a small minority today in the student world (as the children of workers are also still a tiny minority today). Next, they do not understand that as a result of profound changes in intellectual employment the majority of university graduates will no longer be bosses, or professionals, or even direct agents of the bosses with strictly supervisory functions, but white-collar employees of the state or industry, and thus part of the great mass of salaried workers. Finally, they do not understand the specific character of the student milieu as a special social stratum, into which students from bourgeois backgrounds often assimilate, breaking their ties with their family environment without yet being integrated into the social environment of their professions-to-be.

And underlying this threefold error is their unwillingness to understand, or accept, a fundamental fact -- that man's chief productive force will be his creative intellectual power. [Applause.] This intellectual power is only potentially productive today because capitalist society beats it down and stamps it out as pitilessly as it beats down the personality and creative impulse of the manual workers.

There is then at the base of the student revolt a high consciousness of a new dimension which neocapitalism has added to the classical alienation of labor produced by capitalist society, produced by all societies based on buying and selling. [Applause.]

We can say that this intellectual labor power is doubly revolutionary and productive today. It is so because it is conscious of the enormous wealth it promises, which could lead us rapidly to a classless society, to abundance. It is so because it is conscious of all the contradictions, injustices, and barbarities of contemporary capitalism, and because the results of its becoming conscious are profoundly revolutionary.

Anti-Imperialist Consciousness and Anticapitalist Consciousness

The development of this consciousness occurred first of all among the students for a very simple reason: because the traditional organizations of the work-

ers movement are profoundly bureaucratized and long since coopted into bourgeois society. When the workers movement does not erect multiple barriers against the penetration of bourgeois ideology into the working class, most of the workers succumb, at least in "normal" conditions, to the preponderant influence of bourgeois ideas -- as Marx and Lenin never failed to repeat.

However, in the student milieu, a larger minority, precisely because they are in a more privileged social and intellectual situation than the workers, can free themselves by individual thought from the constant manipulation and mental conditioning of the great public-opinion molding instruments in the service of bourgeois society and capitalism. [Applause.]

It is an unquestionable fact that the revolt against the dirty imperialist war in Vietnam arose from the students and youth in the United States. It was these American students and young people who set in motion a powerful movement against this war, eventually drawing in masses of adult black workers and now beginning to affect the white workers also.

Essentially the same process has also taken place in West Europe and Japan. From among these students and youth emerged the most powerful mass mobilization against the war in Vietnam, which at its outset went beyond the absolutely opportunist and capitulationist phase of movements "for peace in Vietnam" or "for negotiations." We have seen young revolutionists by the tens of thousands go into the streets of Paris, Berlin, London, Copenhagen, Rome, Amsterdam, and Brussels to launch the only valid slogan -- the slogan of full and complete solidarity with the Vietnamese people, the slogan of victory to the Vietnamese revolution. [Applause.]

In its revolt against the bourgeois university and against the imperialist war, the student vanguard has begun to become conscious of the necessity of rising up against bourgeois society in its entirety. Now it is drawing logical revolutionary socialist conclusions from its development of an anticapitalist consciousness: it is preparing itself for the socialist revolution. For, without a proletarian socialist revolution, there will be no overthrow of the capitalist system, not in West Europe, nor anywhere in the imperialist world. [Applause.]

Another comment must be made on this subject. The "revolutionary" concept, in the proletarian, Marxist sense of the term, has always implied another idea, "internationalism." When -- in the epoch when an Argentinian, Che Guevara, fought in the forefront for the victory of the

Cuban revolution, then went to die for the victory of the Bolivian revolution -- when -- in an epoch when even the technocrats are talking about the need for a united Europe -- a secretary of the French Communist party dares describe our friend Danny Cohn-Bendit as a "German anarchist," then I say it is Cohn-Bendit who represents proletarian internationalism [long applause], and the CP secretary who personifies petty-bourgeois nationalism. [Long applause.]

Unity of Action in the Vanguard and Relations with the Broad Masses

The description that Comrade Bensaïd has given us of the way in which the March 22 Movement was organized should remind the comrades present here of a striking parallel -- the way in which Fidel Castro and Che Guevara began to organize the armed struggle in Cuba. They also began by saying: "We are going to put aside the tactical differences which divide the different tendencies in the revolutionary movement. Once we agree on the essential thing, on the action to be initiated, on the way to break from the stagnation and backwardness of the traditional movement, on the way to initiate struggle against imperialism and the oligarchy in Cuba by the armed road, we will little by little create a process which will gradually accelerate by its own internal logic, which will make it possible to classify and reclassify the different tendencies by experience." [Applause.]

This attitude is a completely healthy one for all who want to free themselves from the empty verbalism which has done so much harm. After a certain point, the movement can only progress through action, and the absence of action condemns it to sterility and permanent division.

As all the comrades who have spoken before me have said, there is an urgent task to be done of reintegrating the student movement into the workers movement. Yes, the workers movement must win back the student movement, most of all inasmuch as the students are workers. But this reconquest of the students cannot be accomplished through the ossified and bureaucratized structures of the traditional workers organizations. It is within the working class, rising up in spontaneous struggle against the capitalist system, creating its own new leadership, its own committees, that this reconquest will take place, through action and in action, in their mutual interest and in the interest, the supreme interest, of the revolution.

It will not take place in the traditional organizations, in view of the spirit which today inspires this magnificent new rising young revolutionary vanguard. And if we fight for this reunion -- if we fight for this alliance and this convergence between the student revolt and

the struggle for the proletarian revolution in Western Europe, it is because we know very well that neither by virtue of their numbers nor by virtue of the place which they hold today in society, can the students alone overthrow bourgeois society in the West.

They can and they must play a powerful role as a detonator. By playing this role within the working class, above all through the intermediary of the young workers, they can free in the working class itself enormous forces for challenging capitalist society and the bourgeois state. [Applause.]

A Worldwide Movement of Revolutionary Challenge

Today we see on a world scale the rise of anti-imperialist and anticapitalist forces, an authentic new world revolutionary ascent.

The heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people against American imperialism, the Cuban revolution, the struggle of the courageous guerrillas in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and the struggle of the black masses of the United States for their racial and social liberation are all basically one and the same struggle.

And this struggle of the most oppressed masses, of the masses of the countries of the third world and of the black masses in the United States is beginning today to get a significant response in the imperialist countries. This is the mass mobilization in these countries against the dirty war in Vietnam; it is the mass mobilization of the student movement; it is the mass mobilization of the young workers in very arduous strikes and demonstrations in Le Mans, Caen, Turin, and in Bremen and Essen against Springer.

An integral part of this struggle is the struggle of the student and intellectual vanguard in the so-called socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the USSR. Here we send particularly warm greetings to the students and workers in the vanguard of this struggle.

For, as much as we are on the side of the Soviet Union and the "socialist camp" in any confrontation with imperialism or the bourgeoisie, we are on the side of our comrades Kuron and Modzelewski, we are on the side of the courageous vanguard workers and students of Warsaw and Poland in their fight against bureaucracy and for real soviet democracy, which can only be a democracy of councils [long applause], a democracy based on workers, students, and poor peasant councils as Lenin taught us. [Applause.]

When this worldwide struggle that is already in progress makes it possible to draw in the adult workers against the incomes policy, against the économie concertée [union-government agreement to hold down wages], against the revival of unemployment, against job insecurity, against the integration of the unions into the bourgeois state, against the more and more marked evolution everywhere in Western Europe toward authoritarian, "strong states," against NATO and the Atlantic Pact, for a revival of the workers movement going over into workers struggles challenging the capitalist system itself, then we can transform today's vanguard into a mighty revolutionary party, marching at the head of the masses.

Then, all together, we will be invincible. Then, all together, we will complete the great work begun fifty years ago by the October Revolution, the victory of the world socialist revolution! [Long applause.]

FROM THE BANKRUPTCY OF NEOCAPITALISM TO THE STRUGGLE FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

By Ernest Mandel

[The following article has been translated by Intercontinental Press from the Brussels weekly La Gauche.]

* * *

The workers of Belgium may well claim the honor of having been the fore-runners. Everything that characterizes the powerful revolutionary tide presently sweeping over France was already present in our general strike of December 1960-January 1961: the sudden extension of the movement from a minor and regional conflict; the elemental force with which it spread; the defiant challenge it hurled at the bourgeois state and capitalist

economy; the barricades that reappeared in the Borinage and in other working-class areas.

Even the furious outburst of the young workers of Liège, which expressed itself in the attack on the Guillemins station, was a preview of the street battles now taking place all over Paris, Lyons, Nantes and elsewhere.

After the event, the learned sociologists momentarily had the advantage. "You think this strike a sign of the times? You're way off base," they pontificated. "You are mistaking an echo from the past for a presage of the future. This strike

is only a reflection of the outmoded economic and social structures of the Walloon area, which are not neocapitalist but pre-date neocapitalism. The neocapitalist Walloon area of tomorrow will no longer experience such romantic outbursts."

Then along came Greece, which in June-July of 1965 experienced an uprising of the masses outstripping anything seen in that country since the very beginning of the working-class movement. But, once again, the skeptics had a ready-made explanation: "Greece, an underdeveloped country, is an exceptional case in Europe. It can, at most, serve as a model of what will happen in Spain and Portugal, but never as a model for what lies in wait for the most industrially advanced countries of the continent."

Yet here we find the same events repeated in France, that very France with a large nationalized sector, whose "strong state" represented, until a little while ago, a model of stability, the country that typified enlightened and rational neocapitalism. And, irony of ironies, the revolt did not burst forth from some underdeveloped region, some mining area where unemployment is rampant, from the most poorly paid or peasant levels, but precisely from the very towns around Paris that had become the prototype of the "consumer society," from the top-wage Renault plants, the Renault plants of skilled toolmakers and machinists -- hardly "prisoners of starvation."

This time it will be absolutely necessary to bow to the logic of events -- or else stand guilty of deliberate distortion. It has now been proved that a neocapitalist regime, which eliminates starvation and the most abject poverty of the proletariat -- at least in the imperialist metropolis -- and which succeeds in avoiding the most catastrophic economic crises (at the cost of constant deterioration of its monetary system), cannot in any way eliminate the basic sources of proletarian revolutions.

Remaining intact at the very heart of the regime are all the contradictions of capitalism analyzed by Marx, to which have been added new contradictions. The accumulated explosive materials are such that periodic explosions are not only possible but even inevitable.

The task of every socialist and communist who really wants the overthrow of the capitalist regime is to prepare himself for those days of reckoning, to work patiently and with perseverance so that those opportunities are not lost and so that after the explosion everything doesn't fall back into the same pattern in exchange for a few reforms.*

For the other aspect of the realities of the situation is just as striking as the elemental strength of the mass movement.

Sure enough the fighting spirit of the students and vanguard workers, the occupation of factories, railroad stations, electric power plants, the red flags flying everywhere over these strategic points, all express the desire of the masses to have done with the capitalist regime and to take power. The calls for "Workers Power!" "All Power to the Workers!" "A Socialist Republic!" have been taken up a thousand times at meetings and demonstrations all across France. But there are also objectives, foisted on the movement by its official leaderships, that make every effort to bring the movement back into the framework of a "refurbished" capitalist society.

At this point it is necessary to puncture a myth. The leaders of the French CGT, the Séguys and the Benoît Frachons, talk as if the "leftists," the "anarchists," the "Trotskyists," in short all those who launched this remarkable struggle, scorn the immediate demands of the workers, i.e., wage increases, reduction of the workweek, repeal of the laws curtailing social security, etc.

This is utterly false. The criticism leveled by the Left at the CP, the CGT and the social democratic Federation is aimed, not at these perfectly just demands but at the act of limiting the objectives of this irresistible tidal wave to such immediate demands.

Anyone with an iota of political sense has been able to perceive the confluence of the efforts of the Gaullist regime and those of the CGT to reduce the general strike (for which the CGT continues to refuse to issue a call, just as did the national FGTB [Fédération Générale des Travailleurs de Belgique -- Belgian General Federation of Labor] in Belgium in December 1960) to a simple movement for immediate demands.

The tougher Pompidou is with the "rioters," the harder he pushes for negotiations with the unions. The more the union leaders disassociate themselves from

odious explosions of general strikes can be predicted -- such as the strikes of June 1936 and December 1960-January 1961 -- in the principal countries of Western Europe in our study, "Une stratégie socialiste pour l'Europe occidentale," which appeared in the May-June 1965 issue (No. 9) of the Revue Internationale du Socialisme. Interested readers may obtain a copy by writing to E.D.I., 29 rue Descartes, Paris 5, or to the Revue's offices at Via della Dogana Vecchia 5, 00186 Rome.

* We analyzed in detail the reasons peri-

the student "provocateurs," the more those leaders seek to accelerate the liquidation of the movement by an agreement negotiated with the Gaullist regime.

Beyond a doubt this regime's days are numbered. It could have been toppled in the streets had the bureaucrats of the CP and the CGT so desired. But that is not the nub of the question. The real question is knowing what to put in the regime's place. If worse comes to worst, a popular front government could be substituted for the de Gaulle government through elections (just as Eyskens was replaced by Lefèvre-Spaak a few months after the 1961 strike). But the capitalist regime will never be overthrown by electoral or parliamentary means.

Now this overthrow, this taking of power, is objectively possible today. The reason it does not take place is that there is not yet a sufficiently influential, organized, unified vanguard, to the left of the CP, that could lead the masses to victory immediately.

Under these circumstances, the aim today must be to seize the greatest possible number of guarantees and key positions -- as insurance that this magnificent struggle isn't sold short for a paltry change of bourgeois governments and doesn't lead to a terrible disillusionment of the toiling masses -- a disillusionment that would open the way to a dictatorship whose ferocity, as in Greece, would be in proportion to the fear now shaking the bourgeoisie.

It is here that the strategy of "anticapitalist structural reforms," transition demands, assumes all its validity. The masses cannot seize power in the factories and neighborhoods; that calls for a new and centralized revolutionary leadership that does not as yet exist. But the fact that the masses are not yet in a position to seize power does not at all imply the impossibility of winning, right now, demands over and above wage increases.

The workers hold the factories and nerve centers of the nation. These are powerful key positions that cannot, given the present relationship of forces, be snatched from them. They must immediately establish a de facto power that the bosses and the state cannot cancel out once "calm" has been restored, regardless of whether the elections or the referendum take place, or whether a "leftist" government replaces the "rightist" government.

This de facto power consists in democratically elected committees which establish workers control over all production; which regulate hiring and firing; which forbid all factory shutdowns; which

open the company books; which eliminate secrecy in banking; which bare all the mechanisms of capitalist exploitation; which calculate and expose the real rate of profit; which uncover hidden profits or profits camouflaged as "amortization," investments camouflaged as "overhead" or as "repairs and maintenance."

These committees should decide which enterprises would begin operating again, and to what end -- that is, exclusively to fill the needs of the working population. They should have veto power over every investment project. They should join together locally, regionally and nationally, in congresses that will begin to construct a plan of economic development for socialist France, along consumer lines very different from those of neocapitalism.

These committees should establish picket lines and armed workers defense guards against the violence of the CRS and of the fascist bands of the "Occident," which must be systematically exposed and broken up.

It is thus that dual power will be born -- an inevitable step toward a socialist France in the present situation, in view of the inadequacy of the revolutionary leadership in the present stage.

Thursday evening [May 23] the workers who set type for the reactionary paper Le Parisien Libéré refused to permit a mendacious headline to appear. This headline made exaggerated claims about a large back-to-work movement. It was a deliberate effort to demoralize and to mislead, and the workers refused to execute it. There we have a concrete beginning of workers control!

Tomorrow these same workers should open the doors of all the big bourgeois printing plants, so that all revolutionary tendencies may print their papers and their pamphlets and thus finally get opportunities equal to those of the big capitalists to spread their ideas on a large scale. There we have the embryo of socialist democracy!

It is because neocapitalism has made these needs for fairness, justice, equality, liberty still sharper than in the period when the workers of the West were crushed by hunger; it is because neocapitalism is totally powerless to satisfy these elementary needs of the student and worker masses -- administration of the factories and universities by those who work in them, by the abolition of all privileges of wealth and academic standing; it is because these needs can be met only by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, that the bankruptcy of neocapitalism, which accounts for the explosions of 1960-61 in Belgium, of 1965 in Greece, and of May 1968 in France, leads inexorably toward the socialist revolution.

DECLARATION OF THE JCR TO WORKERS AND STUDENTS OF FRANCE

[Following is the full text of a declaration issued as a leaflet May 21 by the Jeunesse Communiste Revolutionnaire (Revolutionary Communist Youth). Tens of thousands of copies were distributed throughout France.]

[The declaration came two days after representatives of the JCR met with representatives of the Union Communiste (UC), and the Parti Communiste Internationaliste (the French section of the Fourth International), and formed a permanent coordinating committee for their three organizations, agreeing to unite in common action all the forces calling themselves Trotskyist in France.]

* * *

WORKERS, STUDENTS

The red flag of the workers flies over the schools and factories. Millions of workers are occupying the factories. The so-called "apathetic" working masses are now on the march.

On May 13, 1968, they became aware both of their enormous power and of the government's essential weakness. During the ten years of the Gaullist regime, they have seen how impotent are the traditional forms of struggle inherited from the Fourth Republic. Parliamentary skirmishes, piecemeal symbolic walkouts, uninspired marches, the "National Days of Action" [one-day strikes called by the General Federation of Labor], have washed ineffectually against the ramparts of the police state.

Only direct and resolute mass action can force the Gaullist state to yield -- this is the lesson that millions of workers have drawn from the victorious struggle of the students. They have spontaneously and massively applied it in tackling their own problems.

Today the center of gravity of the struggle has shifted from the universities to the factories. The challenge to the bourgeois university has been transformed into a challenge of capitalist society. For, make no mistake: the workers have not occupied the factories just to win wage increases. The question of power is posed in the factories and in society. The fate of the system hangs in the balance.

The bosses and the state are stunned. The terrified bourgeoisie is beseeching "the workers' representative organizations" to get the situation back in hand. It knows that in a period of profound social crisis, the reformist working-class leaderships represent the

best and last bulwark of the capitalist system. Mired in parliamentarianism and scrupulously respectful of bourgeois legality, these leaderships know how to divert the fighting spirit of the masses and direct them toward objectives compatible with the survival of the system.

The ruling class is ready to make temporary concessions to preserve its power. It knows how to wait for the upsurge to recede in order to take back with one hand what it gives with the other. The young workers and students in the forefront of the battle do not want their struggle to end like the movements of 1936 and 1945. The mobilization "of unparalleled breadth" today sweeping France must not merely give birth to a mouse.

IT MUST GO ALL THE WAY! WE ARE OCCUPYING THE UNIVERSITIES, THE OFFICES, THE FACTORIES. WE MUST STAY THERE!

We must not let bourgeois or social democratic politicians, Mitterrands or Guy Mollets, trade a return to "law and order" for a ministerial easy chair!

We must not let the union leaders trade a return to work for a few concessions -- which even if considerable would quickly be eroded by inflation and speed-up.

We must take advantage of the relationship of forces that we have established. We must get guarantees and seize key positions:

- We must create rank-and-file Strike Committees in the factories and Action Committees in the universities and neighborhoods that will encompass all the workers in struggle!

- We must force nationalizations of the big occupied factories and their democratic operation by workers committees.

- We must establish workers control over vocational training, the organization of work on the job, and the management of the plants!

- We must open the companies' books for inspection!

- We must construct in our places of work, committees of popular power counter to and independent of the state and the administrations of the bosses!

- We must force de Gaulle's withdrawal and the establishment of a workers government.

The government we want is not simply a leftist government in place of a rightist government.

The government we want has nothing to do with parliamentary deals among bourgeois and reformist politicians.

The government we want must institute direct socialist democracy based on

grass roots committees in the plants and in the neighborhoods.

The government we want must spring from the strike committees and action committees of the workers and students.

STUDENTS, WORKERS, WE HAVE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY. WE MUST NOT LET IT ESCAPE!

MASSIVE BOYCOTT OF DOMINICAN ELECTION SHOWS OPPOSITION TO BALAGUER

Santo Domingo

Time magazine, in its Latin-American edition for May 24, stated its opinion of the May 16 Dominican municipal elections in an article entitled, "Dominican Republic, A New Stability." The article said in part, "yet, in the end, the election still came down to a vote for or against Balaguer. A heavy turnout of 1,000,000 voters gave his Reformista party and other pro-Balaguer independents an estimated 90 percent of both the 77 mayoralties and 488 city council posts that were at stake. An even bigger victory for Balaguer -- and for his country -- was the honesty of the elections and the absence of any widespread violence."

Time continued, "Pleas by Wessin, Bosch and other opposition leaders for a heavy abstention on voting day were largely unheeded by the electorate."

This Time article has aroused sharp criticism from a wide range of the political spectrum in Santo Domingo. Many point to the fact that the Associated Press, among others, reported more than 300,000 abstentions.

Jottin Cury, parliamentary deputy of the PRD [Partido Revolucionario Dominicano -- Dominican Revolutionary party, the party of Juan Bosch, which called for the boycott], charged that the government had inflated the number of voters in order to conceal the effect of the abstentions.

The legislator made the charge on the May 19 "Tribuna Democratica" radio program ["Democratic Tribune" -- sponsored by the PRD]. He asserted that 785,797 citizens had abstained from voting in the May 16 municipal elections.

According to Cury, the government is trying to obscure the fact that "almost 800,000" persons abstained, because of the "enormous repercussions this would have both within our frontiers and beyond."

Cury expressed his suspicions that the government did not expect such a

large number of abstentions, and that the suspected maneuver of adding fake votes was done "hastily" toward the end of the vote counting.

The conservative newspaper El Listin Diario said in a front-page story May 18, "The number [of votes] made known by a source (at the Central Electoral Board) represents 631,201 votes less than were cast in the previous elections, in 1966, which amounted to 1,345,404 votes."

Listin Diario said this indicated at least 785,797 citizens had stayed away from the polls, as the voting population now amounts to a million and a half.

Cury declared, "the Dominican people, through its million and a half voters, have demonstrated their hatred of the present regime."

The liberal evening paper El Nacional said editorially May 19, "Political circles have evaluated the elections of last Thursday as a defeat for the government. This judgment was already anticipated by this newspaper, because it understood that even though the party in power might win, the abstention of the legal organizations was a negative factor for which Dr. Balaguer and his collaborators bear the blame."

Santo Domingo has 3,700,000 inhabitants, with over 500,000 unemployed. Its gross national product increases by less than one percent annually, while its population grows at a rate of three percent or more each year.

Against the background of economic stagnation, the repudiation of the regime shows that the Dominican masses retain a strong will to resist.

The task in Santo Domingo is to build an adequate political leadership and develop a transitional program to advance the socialist revolution. The country is paying for the mistakes of the reformist leadership of the PRD, and the revisionist and petty-bourgeois leaderships of the pro-Peking and pro-Moscow parties of the left.

TARIQ ALI ON THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Speaking to an American newsmen on May 17, Tariq Ali, a prominent leader of the British anti-Vietnam-war movement, denounced the McCarthy and Kennedy U.S. presidential candidacies as "clever diversions on the part of [a] frightened ruling class which is being defeated on the battlefields of Vietnam." At the same time he declared his support for the presidential and vice-presidential candidates of the Socialist Workers party as "the revolutionary alternative" in the American elections.

Ali gained wide national attention in Britain as one of the main leaders of the March 17 mass demonstration against the Vietnam war in Grosvenor Square, London. This demonstration of thirty thousand people was the largest and most militant yet in Britain against Washington's war.

Noted for his revolutionary views, and popular among British youth, Ali's opinions on a whole range of issues have become a subject of interest to the mass-circulation press. When asked by Karl E. Meyers, a Washington Post correspondent who has been testing British opinions on the prospective U.S. presidential candidates, Ali replied:

"You ask me who I would vote for if I were an American. I tell you that I

am a black man -- and one who believes in revolutionary socialism. My place would be with the black people of America; I would work side by side with Stokely Carmichael and the Black Panthers. I loathe capitalism in all its forms and I think that McCarthy and Kennedy represent clever diversions on the part of [a] frightened ruling class which is being defeated on the battlefields of Vietnam.

"However, if I had to vote, I would vote for the candidates of the Socialist Workers party -- Fred Halstead and Paul Boutelle -- as the only revolutionary alternative. I would also demand that the Establishment accede to Halstead's request to visit some of his constituents in Southern Vietnam!

"So don't ask me to choose from Humphrey, Kennedy, Nixon or Rockefeller; they are deceivers and we mean business!"

Ali's militancy and outspoken opposition to the Wilson government's complicity in the war in Vietnam have earned him the hatred of the British ruling class and its "liberal" and "Labour" lieutenants. Robert Mellish, chairman of the London Labour party and a minister in the government, has demanded that he be deported to his native Pakistan [see Intercontinental Press, May 27, p. 480], where he would certainly be imprisoned.

CZECHOSLOVAK REGIME POLLS POPULATION ON REFORMS

[The following article appeared in the May 29 Canadian Tribune, weekly publication of the Communist party of Canada.]

* * *

The present changes being made in the political life of Czechoslovakia will lead to a strengthening of socialism, say 76 percent of 1,476 persons questioned in an opinion poll carried out by the Institute for Public Opinion of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences.

Six percent think that the changes will weaken socialism and 18 percent had no opinion; 67 percent think that the changes are permanent while 14 percent believe that in time everything will revert to what it was before.

Developments in Czechoslovakia will strengthen democracy according to 88 percent of the persons questioned, while one percent holds the opposite view.

Ninety-one percent agree that citizens unlawfully penalized in the 'Fifties

should be rehabilitated while 7 percent remarked that "it would be better to forget."

Fifty-eight percent hold the view that those who share responsibility for the unjust conviction of fellow citizens should be brought to trial and 37 percent insist that they be relieved of public functions.

Asked for suggestions on improving political conditions in Czechoslovakia, 46 percent called for a further expansion of democracy (civil liberties, free elections, criticism of existing shortcomings), 28 percent wanted more political parties (22 percent of them expressly demanding an opposition party), 26 percent called for full equality for nations and nationalities.

One and a half percent of persons questioned think that political conditions would be improved by restoration of private enterprise, and 1.9 percent demanded a change in Czechoslovak foreign policy with regard to the Soviet Union (greater independence).

Report from the Bolivian Underground

NEW REVOLUTIONARY FERMENT IN BOLIVIA

La Paz

After the victories which the army and the government scored over the guerrillas it seemed that revolutionary opposition had been wiped out for a long time. However, this estimate, which was made above all in official and imperialist circles, has proved entirely false. The first quarter of this year was rich in events which show the stirrings of a new mass upsurge. In subsequent months this ferment will develop and produce a crisis.

The victories over the guerrillas have turned out to be very partial and ephemeral ones. Both the government and the people, from different points of view, expect the renewal of guerrilla warfare, sustained and supported by popular discontent.

An Insoluble Economic Crisis

Bolivia has been undergoing a grave economic crisis for many years. Far from mitigating this crisis, the present military dictatorship has aggravated it. As in the previous years, the government budget has run a deficit. After seven months, negotiations for increased loans from the U.S. to balance the budget have failed. Imperialism demands that its puppet government raise taxes and duties, rationalize manpower, and save on the exorbitant costs of the high state bureaucracy.

Taxes had already been raised prior to this, touching off resistance among the people, who are ultimately those most affected; and heavier taxes would step up this resistance to the brink of an explosion. Moreover, reducing the purchasing power of the great mass of the people, who have had their wages frozen for ten years, also affects industry and commerce by endangering their sales. Under pressure from the imperialists and the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, the government is floundering in real crisis.

Decrees have been issued to suit one or another of these interests, but they have proved ultimately ineffective and have satisfied no one.

The drop in the price of tin below the cost of production has brought this situation to the point of desperation. The tin industry, let us remember, is the country's only productive industry and source of foreign exchange. Feeling itself caught in a vise by this worsening of the economic situation, the Barrientos regime has had recourse to harsher

repression of the masses and blackmailing imperialism.

In the same way that Cao Ky in Vietnam strikes anti-American poses, Barrientos proclaims himself an anti-imperialist. The restrictions in American credits have led him to announce that he will establish diplomatic relations with the USSR and negotiate a hundred million dollar credit for oil with that country. The blackmail is obvious.

On the other hand, by way of demagoguery for home consumption, he issued a decree suspending all negotiations [with foreign companies] of new concessions of oil fields on oil-bearing areas while the state share of profits, and its royalties, are revised. (Established by the Petroleum Code, these do not exceed thirty-five percent.) Suspending these concessions while the richest fields are already in the hands of Gulf Oil -- and when these are not touched -- amounts to establishing a monopoly in favor of this imperialist concern. Here also there is an obvious aim to deceive the masses by trying to pose as the defender of the national resources.

It is the government's desperation which dictates these contradictory and at bottom extortionist moves.

Meanwhile the hunger among the people has reached inconceivable extremes. Last year, agricultural production, especially of corn and potatoes, declined considerably, making necessary imports from Argentina. This year it is wheat and flour which have failed to cover the needs of popular consumption. Masses of workers and unemployed, whose staple is bread, because their resources do not permit them to consume other foods, have stormed the bakeries and food stores (the first week in May).

Not only does a wage freeze in the midst of constantly rising prices increase the poverty of the people but this poverty is magnified by a food shortage. The crisis in all aspects of production, the high cost of living, low wages, and raging unemployment are the stigmata of decaying Bolivian capitalist society.

Massive Repression

Capitalism in Bolivia is prolonging its agony by means of imperialist military and economic aid. A ferocious repression is rampant throughout the entire country. For a country with a small population, with small cities, and where the

largest city (La Paz) has barely 400,000 inhabitants, imperialism and the puppet government have erected a monstrous repressive apparatus commanded by CIA agents.

Informers, spies, police, etc., are trained in special schools in Cochabamba and turned out by the hundreds. Overlapping repressive bodies are piled one on another: the Servicio de Inteligencia del Ejército [the Army Intelligence Service], the secret services of the government palace, the ministry of the interior, the American embassy, the Guardia Nacional [National Guard], the Dirección de Investigación Criminal (DIC) [Criminal Investigation Bureau].

These are all led and advised by the CIA, which censors the mails, over-sees the telephones, questions and tortures; which orders persecution and arrests. Only under these conditions can the military dictatorship maintain itself.

The judicial branch and the State Security Law are the pseudolegal instruments veiling the most brutal repression in the history of Bolivia. By means of this law those who hold political or trade-union meetings, distribute leaflets, criticize the government, etc., are arrested. The jails are full of political prisoners and trade-union leaders. The concentration camps in the jungle and on the snow-covered heights of the Andes continue functioning. The last raids were those in April to prevent the commemoration of the anniversary of the revolution of April 9, 1952, and to stop the celebration of May Day. About fifty persons were sent to the concentration camps for attempting to organize marches on these dates!

The POR [Partido Obrero Revolucionario -- Revolutionary Workers party -- the Bolivian section of the Fourth International] and the PCB [Partido Comunista Boliviano -- Communist party of Bolivia] are still outlawed. But members of PRIN [Partido Revolucionario de la Izquierda Nacionalista -- Revolutionary party of the Nationalist Left] and the MNR [Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario -- Revolutionary Nationalist Movement] are also persecuted, although these parties are permitted a measure of legal activity.

The Masses Reorganize Themselves

In spite of all this brutal repression, which has successively engulfed whole trade-union leaderships, the masses remain on a combat footing. They are in turn reorganizing themselves through their open and underground unions. At present, a new mass thrust can be seen, partly expressed in the unions.

Having been unable to suppress trade-union activity, the military dictatorship has undertaken to intervene in union affairs with paid factions trying to gain control of the union leaderships. Where these factions try to seize control by violent means and with the aid of the army and the police, the masses abstain and expose these ridiculous groups of agents. Where a measure of freedom exists, they defeat them. But it does no good to elect a trade-union leadership because either it is decertified by the Ministry of Labor or the leaders are jailed. But the masses are finding ways to provide themselves with underground leaderships of their own, which function from behind the scenes.

Despite this situation, the fighting spirit of the masses is continuing to mount. This was demonstrated on May 1. Since the COB [Central Obrera Boliviana -- Bolivian Labor Federation] was decertified and its leaders imprisoned or prosecuted, a Workers Defense Committee [Comité de Defensa de los Trabajadores] was organized shortly before. The greater part of its members (twenty leaders) were arrested and sent to concentration camps a week before May 1. It continued to function, however, and called a demonstration and rally for this date. The masses responded and came into the streets.

On May 1, a militant, anti-imperialist, and antimilitary mass meeting was held under vigorous radical slogans. It openly condemned the Barrientos dictatorship. In the major cities -- Oruro, Cochabamba, Potosí, Santa Cruz -- there were similar demonstrations. In Cochabamba, the district prefect, General Reque Terán, who commanded the Fourth Division of Camiri against the guerrillas, appeared at the demonstration backed up by force. He tried to speak to the crowd, but they did not let him. There was a violent reaction from the workers, who shouted: "You murdered Che!" "Imperialist lackey!" "Gorilla!" He had to retreat in the face of the general clamor.

Besides the militant slogans indicated, there were shouts of acclaim for Che and the guerrillas in these urban demonstrations. The government massed all its forces, police, the national guard, the army, the air force (Mustangs buzzed the demonstrations in La Paz to frighten the demonstrators), but it did not dare break them up. The junta was cowed and retreated. It is clear that more than expressing the new ascent and militant spirit of the masses, the May Day demonstrations were a victory against the government.

Even without leadership, the masses went into the streets ready for a fight. It was clear that the spirit of the masses was to incorporate into their mobiliza-

tions the lessons left by the guerrillas. The masses set their struggle within the framework of the armed-struggle line. In every city, the guerrillas were present: in the slogans, on the banners, and in the spirit of the masses. The masses went out on May Day encouraged and with greater confidence.

A general movement is in progress for increased wages and salaries. The miners are proposing restoration of the old wages and return of all trade-union property. The immediate conflict is over the teachers' demand for a salary increase from 470 to 900 pesos [11.88 Bolivian pesos = US\$1]. The government rejected this request. The teachers met in a national convention and approved various tactics of struggle leading by stages to a general strike. Among these were work stoppages graduated by districts, lightning meetings, blocking streets, etc. The government is preparing to suppress this movement; it has already accused it of being part of a subversive scheme.

In the cities the teachers' strike will stir discontent among the middle class, whose small merchant and craft sectors, grouped in the Confederación de Gremiales [Crafts Federation], are in a steady state of irritation and are facing a forced collection of higher taxes and license fees. This sector of street merchants and craft workers is quite numerous. The unemployed from the factories, the countryside, and the mines have moved into this activity to find means of subsisting. The factory workers also converge with this group.

In the mines, hatred of the government is strikingly evident. Peace is kept there only by army occupation and the terrorism of the Policía Minera [Mine Police].

In the countryside, in spite of the presence of the army in the most densely populated centers (Ucureña, Achacachi) and the existence of a bureaucracy* converted into armed agents of the government, conflicts have begun to appear, which must reflect the existing temper of the ranks of the peasantry. The opposition in the countryside is being expressed in armed clashes among the bureaucrats, who follow Ovando or Barrientos.

* [The bureaucracy referred to is that of the Peasant Confederation and the departmental federations, the only legal organizations in the countryside. Rank-and-file peasant unions that existed formerly have been suppressed. The bureaucracy of the Peasant Confederation is based on peasant artisans in the pay of the dictatorship. With the help of the army they punish rebellious peasants with arson, expulsion from their land, or even death.]

The government has declared that these clashes are inspired by the "extremists." Modern automatic arms have appeared in the countryside.

The Political Parties

Barrientos, despite periodic frictions and conflicts, has been able to keep unity among the small parties which support him and with which he governs -- the majority of which were created by the government itself. In reality, these parties serve as a civilian façade for the military government. The PRA [Partido Revolucionario Auténtico -- the Authentic Revolutionary party] of Walter Guevara, which was excluded from the cabinet, nonetheless remains in the official front. Guevara was made ambassador to the UN.

In the opposition there must be distinguished:

(1) A legal opposition, which is permitted, accepted, and in a certain measure financed by the government. It is constituted by the FSB [Falange Socialista Boliviana -- Bolivian Socialist Phalanx], which has deputies and senators who have been accepted into the state apparatus. Many of its leaders have enriched themselves under the cover of the military dictatorship. It has two sectors: a collaborationist wing headed by Gonzalo Romero, the second in command of the FSB, which wants to associate itself with a presidential perspective for Ovando; and the sector led by Mario Gutiérrez, the head of the FSB, which proposes a more direct confrontation with the government, which is trying to disassociate itself from it in order to avoid being besmirched with its guilt. This second sector is maneuvering to separate the army from the present government, that is, from Barrientos and Ovando. It projects an FSB-army government. The opposition of both sectors is verbal, parliamentary, and connives at winning sectors of the army for fanciful coups. Seeking to lead the entire opposition, it has adopted a more left language.

In this legal opposition, we may also mention the Christian Democratic party [Partido Demócrata Cristiano -- PDC] which formed a cabinet with the military junta, taking the ministry of labor post.

(2) The semilegal opposition with the MNR, PRIN, and the Bolivian Communist party (pro-Moscow). These parties are permitted to meet; their present leaders circulate normally. The MNR has a few deputies. Despite this, however, whenever a conflict arises their members are persecuted, imprisoned, and confined.

These parties are conducting a democratic-national opposition. They criticize the Barrientos government and seek

to mobilize the unions to pressure it into granting some concessions. Occasionally they connive at coups d'état, placing hope on some officer whom they call a "Nasser." The left wing of these parties talks about mass insurrection "in the abstract," and many of them are sympathetic to guerrilla warfare; but they are terrorized by the repression. The right wing of these parties is trying to win its way back into the good graces of Yankee imperialism and curbs all radical expressions.

This opposition can be characterized as reformist, and lacks cohesion as well as ideological and organizational strength.

(3) The illegal opposition. This opposition is made up of the ELN [Ejército de Liberación Nacional -- National Liberation Army], fiercely persecuted since the start of the armed struggle in Nancahuazú, the POR, and the pro-Chinese Communist party. These parties have all been outlawed, subjected to persecution and driven completely underground. Warrants are out for the arrest of Hugo González Moscoso and Oscar Zamora, respectively the leaders of the POR and the pro-Chinese party.

These political forces are identified as supporting armed struggle (guerrilla warfare), and their influence over the masses can be measured by the general sympathy existing for guerrilla warfare. Their perspectives are likewise bound up with the fight for power by means of armed struggle.

High-School and University Students

The university and high-school students have made a turn to the left and today constitute one of the strengths of the revolutionary opposition. The students of the La Paz Student Federation are notable for their radicalism, and the others follow behind. No party controls this movement. The leadership emerges from a de facto united front, in which there are at times important internal struggles.

The parties exercising an influence on the university student leaders are the pro-Chinese, the Trotskyists (POR), the pro-Soviets, and the left wing of the PDC. In the high-school leaderships there are also independent, Castro-

ite revolutionists. The prevailing tone among both the high-school and university students is a radical left one. The university student federations are in the front rank of the struggle against the dictatorship; they are spokesmen of the persecuted, the imprisoned, and the confined.

The Immediate Perspectives

Neither the Barrientos government, nor any capitalist government, can allay the economic crisis and the discontent of the masses, whose urgent needs must be met. Therefore, there can be no stability, no enduring social peace. In this period capitalist governments can only maintain themselves by means of repressive force.

On the side of the masses, there is a conviction which is unshakeable because it is based on previous years of experience, that they can expect no concessions, no reform. Their demands are met with repression. Their slightest struggle endangers the government and it resorts to the gun. There is no possibility of a reformist period of legal struggles, of a return to traditional trade-union activity. These are luxuries that the military regime cannot afford.

Therefore the perspective opened for the Bolivian people is one of direct struggle to oust the military from power and build a workers and peasants government which would begin a reorganization of the country on socialist bases. This struggle can only be undertaken by armed means -- by guerrilla warfare in the countryside, the mines, and the cities. This is the real, concrete perspective. All others are utopian and can only lead to the defeat of the masses, even in the hypothetical case of a change of rulers.

The guerrilla struggle is certain to be very arduous. It has already cost Che's murder. But it is the road which must be traveled to win victory. While it is certain that this struggle is a struggle to the death, it can now count on greater popular sympathy than when Che began the guerrilla war in Nancahuazú on March 23, 1967.

The first week in May, 1968

ETHIOPIAN REGIME FEARS NEW STUDENT REVOLT

Students closed down all schools in Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia, in a month-long strike that ended the first week of May. Now authorities fear it may break out again, and mobilize other oppo-

sition groups in the country.

Already peasant demonstrations in the provinces against new taxes have occurred in the wake of the student action.

THE QUESTION OF SOCIALIST UNITY IN BRITAIN

[The current upsurge of racism in Britain has led some groups in that country to consider the question of getting together, the better to fight this ugly development with its sinister implications.

[The group around the magazine International Socialism, for instance, recently issued a leaflet proposing the unification of all the socialist forces into a single organization. This move by the organization which is especially distinguished by its view that the Soviet Union is not a workers state but "state

capitalist," touched off considerable discussion.

[The International Marxist Group, which supports the Fourth International, the World Party of Socialist Revolution founded by Leon Trotsky, replied to this initiative with a statement on the problem which they, too, distributed as a leaflet. This is now being discussed among those interested in this problem.

[For the information of readers of Intercontinental Press, we are publishing these two documents below.]

* * *

The Urgent Challenge of Fascism

The outburst of racist sentiment and activity since Enoch Powell's Birmingham speech marks the beginning of a new phase in British politics. A section of the ruling class (although not yet by any means the dominant section) is resorting to the crudest forms of prejudice in order to confuse, divide and divert workers from the real struggle. It does so in a situation where British capitalism is forced to cut real living standards, keep unemployment at a relatively high level, and raise rents and prices, while fearing that its rule is no longer guaranteed by the mass complacency of the fifties and early sixties. Powell thinks he can overcome these problems by developing a mass following on a racist programme.

The ready response to his speech has revealed the prevalence of racist ideas among workers, which have been inculcated by centuries of capitalism and imperialism. Paradoxically it also indicates the extent to which people are fed up with existing society. They are disillusioned with established politics and have lost faith in the succession of leaders who have betrayed their trust. But instead of blaming actual enemies and looking for the real source of their frustrations, they blame the immigrants.

The traditional organisations of the left have totally failed either to offer real, socialist alternatives to capitalism or to combat the racist upsurge. The Labour Left has completely lost touch with the mass of workers. The Communist Party, despite its many individual militants, responded to the racism too little and too late. Internationalist propaganda did not immediately appear. Counter-demonstrations were not organised. As for the bulk of trade union officials, with a few honourable exceptions, their chief concern seems to have been to avoid any responsibility, hoping that the upsurge would die of its own accord.

The events of the last few weeks have exposed the extreme isolation and fragmentation of genuinely anti-racist forces. Many a militant in industry found himself quite alone when confronted with the racist tide, despite his success in leading purely economic struggles in the past.

An urgent reorganisation of these socialist forces is necessary if the onward march of racialism is to be checked and any long-term fascist development fought against. (Previous differences have to be subordinated to the struggle against the common threat.) Socialist alternatives to frustrations and anxieties created by capitalism must be presented and linked to systematic anti-racist propaganda on a massive scale. A single organisation of revolutionary socialists is needed to fight these new and urgent battles.

We invite all those who agree with the following programme to come together in trying to build this:

(1) Opposition to imperialism; for the victory of all genuine national liberation movements.

(2) Opposition to racism in all its forms and to controls on immigration.

(3) Opposition to state control of trade unions; support for all progressive strikes.

(4) Workers' control of society and industry as the only alternatives to fascism.

If you are interested in discussing possible sorts of action contact International Socialism at the addresses overleaf. [These consisted of the addresses of local groups, the London address being: Socialist Review Publishing Co. Ltd., 36 Gidlen Road, London, NW5, England.

International Marxist Group Statement on Unity

In the past year several initiatives to bring about a unity of the fragmented forces on the left have been undertaken. A year ago the May Day Manifesto Group issued a call for a new socialist organisation and recently the International Socialism Group issued an appeal for a single organisation in Britain of revolutionary socialists to "meet the urgent challenge of fascism."

It is no coincidence that these moves come at this time: there is an increasing frustration because of the impotence and paralysis of the traditional left in face of the continued evolution to the right by the Labour Government. As the statement, published in January, 1967, of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International declares, we are approaching a decisive turning point in British history; one in which the old political structures and formations are "going into the melting pot." It is up to the Marxists to ensure that out of this process there emerges the nucleus of a revolutionary party.

This process, however, requires thoughtful analysis. While not minimising the perils of the present situation, it is, in our opinion, incorrect to talk of an immediate fascist danger. To speak in this language is to obscure the real meaning of the dockers' demonstration in support of Powell's reactionary views. In our opinion the growth of racist sentiment among organised and militant unionists is symptomatic of a defeat which the working class has suffered under the sustained attacks on its living standards by the Labour Government. This frustration is exploited by the enemies of the working class. The danger before all of us is that the working class may be polarised around multi-class reactionary demands instead of demands to improve its general conditions of life. The danger we see is that of the emergence of a "strong" state in Britain (probably based upon a Conservative Government with a huge majority) which could use the legislation and demoralisation caused by the Wilson Government to force a rationalisation of British capitalism by making even more savage attacks on the working class. Should such a development go unchallenged (and a challenge presupposes effective militant leadership) by the working class, it would mean a major historical defeat from which it might take years to recover. Then the danger of fascism would be very real.

The International Marxist Group, which supports the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, thinks that both the initiatives for unity among socialists by the May Day Manifesto Group and the International Socialism Group are

positive developments. The discussion they have stimulated counters the general process of the left becoming more and more divided. We believe that the process of building the revolutionary party in Britain will inevitably involve a process of regroupment, unification and realignment of revolutionary groups. In our day-to-day activities we have always tried to put this policy into practice. We have always striven to create united front committees of struggle. It is with this perspective we have played a leading role in the creation of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and the Workers' Control Movement. We believe that the success of these movements -- against a background of the decline of most other left-wing formations -- has justified this general policy. We consider that the sectarians who have criticised the united front orientation of the I.M.G. in the past have been proven disastrously wrong.

In considering the problems of unity it is useful to distinguish between the concept of "regroupment" and that of the "united front." These two processes should be complementary to each other; not be seen as alternatives. To counterpose one against the other is not at all helpful. For our part we are for the creation of a "united front" type committee on issues other than Vietnam. This should not be seen as an alternative to the formation of a unified socialist organisation but, depending upon the agreements arrived at, an important step in that direction. To refuse to support the immediate creation of a united front type committee on the grounds that immediate fusion is first necessary would be to misuse the very healthy desire that now exists on the left for unity. in a factional manner.

The four points suggested by the International Socialism Group, while being the basis for a united front type committee, are clearly inadequate for the formation of a new revolutionary organisation, which requires a more rounded out programme which has a theoretical basis. Should the four points be accepted as providing the basis for coordination and collaboration among socialists, we propose that they be re-drafted, to make them offensive rather than defensive slogans. They need relating to the upsurge of the world revolution as evidenced by Vietnam, France, Germany, the United States, etc.

Before we could participate in such a process we would have to see a fifth point added: solidarity with revolutionary Cuba. The Cuban revolutionary state is under siege by United States imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucrats are attempting to blackmail it; yet it stands

firm on a general policy of world revolution. All revolutionaries are duty bound to solidarise themselves with the Cuban Revolution.

Regarding the May Day Manifesto Group's proposals, we consider that they have made a very valuable contribution so far as analysis is concerned. Their diagnosis of modern British capitalism and the development of the Wilson Government is extremely useful for left forces. However, their weakness lies in the vagueness of their proposals for action and regroupment. We hope that this group will emerge with more concrete suggestions in the near future.

In stating that we do not think that the four points of the International Socialist Group are an adequate programme for a revolutionary organisation we are not rejecting the idea that Marxist groups should unite. On the contrary we want such a fusion to be a success. We agree that regroupment should be seen as a matter of urgency, but we want any fusion which takes place to be on a basis that will not break down or gloss over real differences, leading to the paralysis of the activity of the new group.

Concretely we propose:

(1) An immediate meeting of all Marxist tendencies and groups thought likely to support the minimum programme, consisting of the four points plus our point on Cuba.

(2) That discussion should be initiated immediately toward the establishment of a liaison committee which will be open to all tendencies on the left which accept the five points. This committee should initiate a public discussion on the whole question of regroupment and the building of a revolutionary organisation in Britain.

If these steps were carried out immediately we think that a modest beginning could be made towards a general regroupment and the establishment of a revolutionary party. It would be the height of folly to believe that acting more hastily, without proper preparation, would solve any problems. Almost certainly it would hinder the process of regroupment.

Finally, we would propose the following programme for discussion as the basis for a unified revolutionary socialist organisation:

(a) The recognition of the need to build a mass revolutionary party if the British working class is to overthrow capitalism and create a democratic socialist Britain based upon workers' power. This party should be oriented towards

building a world revolutionary party.

(b) The need to fight for workers' democracy in industry, workers' organisations and social life generally. This means the rejection of all bureaucratic models.

(c) Support for all oppressed and exploited minorities and the recognition that socialists should support their efforts to create their own organs of struggle. This means unconditional support for such movements as the Black Power and Student Power organisations.

(d) Active support for those in the forefront of the world revolution for social advance. This means special campaigns in support of the Vietnamese and Cuban revolutions. Socialists must see this kind of activity as a priority because the outcome of these struggles will determine the process of world revolution in the immediate future.

(e) International solidarity with those struggling against oppression and for national liberation. This means support for all national liberation movements, the anti-Stalinist forces in the Communist world and workers and students struggles in the capitalist world.

(f) The strategy of building the mass left in the labour movement. This means the rejection of anarcho-syndicalist attempts to build new organisations outside the framework of existing ones. New unions, etc., will only be built when the masses create them -- small groups of socialists are entirely misguided if they attempt this task themselves.

(g) The tactic of building the united front around transitional demands. The new organisation should reject the reformist line of the minimum programme and the sectarian demand for a maximum programme as the only basis for struggle. A transitional programme which is anti-capitalist in content and yet puts forward slogans which are in keeping with the consciousness of workers should be worked out by the new organisation after it has been established.

We would be very glad to hear from individuals and groups which agree with our approach on unification. We invite those who are not already in revolutionary organisations and who agree with our political line to join to help us in the process of building the revolutionary party.

Published by International Marxist Group, 4 Dane St. Alfred St. Central, Nottingham.

(We will be happy to enter into correspondence about any of the above points.)

MANIFESTO OF NEW ALLIANCE AGAINST SAIGON REGIME

[Printed below is the full text of the manifesto adopted by the founding conference of the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces of Vietnam, held "at a locality near the Saigon-Cholon area" April 20-21. (See Intercontinental Press, May 20, p. 441.)

[The Alliance is a national structure for the many local revolutionary committees formed during the Tet offensive at the end of January. The new organization appears to represent a bridge for elements who are ready to desert the Ky regime, but not yet ready to join the National Liberation Front. The Alliance is reportedly taking part in the armed struggle in the Saigon area. A communiqué accompanying the manifesto declared: "The Alliance undertakes to coordinate actions with the National Front for Liberation so as together to win back national independence and sovereignty and restore peace in the country."]

* * *

Fellow countrymen,

For nearly a quarter of a century, while many countries in the world were living and building in peace and freedom, we, South Vietnamese, have been subjected to one foreign aggression after another, and have not enjoyed a single day of tranquility. From across the Pacific, over half a million troops of the United States have massively poured into South Vietnam. Together with their allied forces and over half a million troops of the Saigon stooge administration, they are waging a war of aggression with a cruelty unprecedented in our history.

This prolonged war has seriously affected all aspects of the material and moral life of our countrymen, and caused so much suffering, from rural to urban areas.

Bombs, shells and toxic chemicals have devastated villages, dwellings, fields, gardens, towns, destroyed so many families, and caused so many deaths and mournings.

The economy is at a standstill and is falling off: agriculture has seriously declined, industry stagnates, currency unceasingly depreciates, life is extremely hard, unemployment is rife....we South Vietnamese are in dire misery.

On top of that, social evils and a dreadfully depraved culture, prostitution, hooliganism, theft, rape...are daily and even hourly destroying the present life and undermining the future of our nation. For any person having some sense of con-

science and national spirit left these distressing occurrences are a cause for sorrow and concern.

The presence of foreign troops, which brazenly tramples upon our national sovereignty, heavily hurts the self-respect of our nation, a nation endowed with a tradition of heroism that has sworn "rather to sacrifice everything than to lose independence and accept slavery," and that has recorded so many glorious feats of arms in its history of struggle against foreign invasion.

Meanwhile, under the rule of the U.S.-rigged up Saigon puppet administrations, all strata of the people in the towns and cities are living an extremely suffocating political life, all democratic freedoms are suppressed, any propensity to independence is quenched, the voice of patriots is silenced.

Fellow countrymen,

The war unleashed by the U.S. government in our country is becoming ever fiercer. The Vietnamese who have independence, democracy and peace at heart, have no other choice but to unite and stand up against aggression.

While the country's survival is at stake, the successive puppet administrations, from Ngo Dinh Diem down to Nguyen Van Thieu-Nguyen Cao Ky, have put themselves in the service of the foreign invader, selling out the Fatherland and pushing our people into misery and slavery.

Conscious of the dangers inherent in the present situation and our responsibility before history, before the present and future generations, we, who eagerly love the country and earnestly desire independence and peace for the Fatherland, have rallied in the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces, and not held back by our little ability, boldly take up our obligations to all countrymen.

South Vietnam must be independent.

The South Vietnamese people must enjoy democratic freedoms.

South Vietnam must enjoy peace.

Such is our most eager aspiration.

True to this purpose, we solemnly proclaim to all countrymen and all countries in the world that our position is: to unite all patriotic forces and individuals, to resolutely fight against foreign aggression, to completely overthrow the Nguyen Van Thieu-Nguyen Cao Ky puppet

regime, to set up a national union government, to win independence, democracy and peace.

Once national sovereignty has been regained, the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces of Vietnam will constantly unite with the patriotic forces and individuals to heal the wounds of war, carry out national construction, and build up an independent, sovereign, democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous state.

The programme of action of the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces of Vietnam includes the following main points:

(1) To bring the war to an end, restore peace, and regain national independence and sovereignty.

(a) The South Vietnamese people eagerly desire peace, but a peace in honour and freedom. The Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces of Vietnam stands for the recovery of South Vietnam's independence and sovereignty. It demands that the U.S. government bring the war to an end, withdraw the U.S. and allied troops from South Vietnam, dismantle the U.S. military bases, and respect the independence and sovereignty of Vietnam as provided for by the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam. The national independence and sovereignty and territorial integrity of South Vietnam must be recognized and respected by all governments in the world. The Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces of Vietnam is prepared to enter into discussions with the U.S. government on the above-mentioned problems.

(b) The South Vietnam National Front for Liberation, a patriotic force which has made great contributions to the mobilization, organization and direction of the fight against foreign aggression during the past years, cannot be absent in the settlement of any problem in South Vietnam. We are for joint action and discussion with it for the purpose of striving together to regain national independence, to restore peace, to build up the country and to bring about a free and happy life for the entire people.

(2) To build South Vietnam into an independent, free, peaceful, neutral and prosperous state.

(a) The political regime of South Vietnam...[must be] a republican regime in which the people enjoy genuine democratic freedoms. The democratic freedoms such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of belief, freedom of movement, freedom of meeting, freedom of organization, freedom to go abroad, etc., are [to be] guaranteed without any dis-

crimination. All organs of state power are [to be] elected by the people through free and fair elections. All people's strata, men and women, all nationalities, all religious communities are [to be] represented in these organs. All Vietnamese citizens are [to be] equal in all respects. The interests of the overseas Vietnamese are [to be] protected, the legitimate interests of foreign nationals in South Vietnam are [to be] respected.

South Vietnam's economy must be an independent, self-supporting and prosperous one. To this end, it is necessary to develop agriculture, encourage the growth of industry, commerce, communications and transport with a view to promoting the prosperity of the country; the interests of the labouring people and all other social strata must be attended to. South Vietnam will carry out a program of fair and reasonable land reform in order to create a basis to develop agriculture, to raise the living standards and the purchasing power of the peasantry thereby contributing to the development of the national economy as a whole.

As an immediate step, after peace is restored, South Vietnam, with a view to healing its war wounds and rebuilding and developing its economy, will call upon all countries to extend it an assistance, with no political conditions attached, in capital, technique and specialists.

Vietnam is a country with an age-old culture. South Vietnam will make every effort to do away with the sequels of depraved culture and to enhance to the utmost the fine traditions of our long-standing national culture. South Vietnam will do its best to care for social welfare and the system of education and examination, to attend to the life of national minorities, to attend to the life and health of old people, children, women, disabled and sick army men, and infirm civilians.

(b) South Vietnam will be an independent and fully sovereign state which pursues a foreign policy of nonalignment and maintains good relations with all nations irrespective of political system, provided that they really respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Vietnam. South Vietnam attaches particular importance to friendship with its neighbours -- Cambodia and Laos.

(3) About national reunification.

National reunification is the eager aspiration and sacred obligation of our entire people. At present, there are actually two different political systems in North and South Vietnam. National reunification cannot be achieved overnight. Therefore, the two zones, North and South, should enter into discussions and negoti-

ations on the basis of equality and respect for the specific features of each zone with a view to advancing towards peaceful reunification. Pending reunification, it is necessary to establish relations between the two zones in the fields of economy, culture, correspondence, movement, etc. The South Vietnamese regrouped to the North will be free to return to South Vietnam in accordance with their wish, and reversely, North Vietnamese evacuated to the South will also be free to return to their native places.

Fellow countrymen,

The present situation is very serious and requires the union and joint action of all members of our society.

The Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces of Vietnam is confident that its goodwill and national salvation policy will be approved and actively supported by all countrymen.

The Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces of Vietnam earnestly

calls on all fellow countrymen at home and abroad to close in their ranks, to bring into play their mighty force, to stand up together and strive to defeat the foreign aggressors and regain our national independence and sovereignty, freedom, democracy and genuine peace.

The Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces of Vietnam sincerely thanks the heads of state, intellectuals, personalities, political and religious figures, and peace-loving people in all countries, including the United States, who have shown their constant interest in, and their support for, the Vietnamese people's just struggle. It eagerly hopes that this support will become more and more active and vigorous.

Fellow countrymen! Unite and bravely stand up with the firm resolve to achieve an independent, democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous South Vietnam!

Glorious victory will be ours!

April 1968

In this issue

	Page
PHOTO: At the Sorbonne	521
The French General Strike Continues -- by Les Evans	522
Workers Control Put into Effect in Brest Electronic Equipment Plant	524
A Retirement Fund?	524
PCI Condemns Negotiations of CP Union Bureaucrats with de Gaulle Regime	525
Trotskyist Groups in France Set Up Joint Coordinating Committee	525
French Events Place Gomulka Regime in Quandary	526
The May Events and the Question of Power in France -- by Livio Maitan	527
Students Battle Police in Peru	530
Crisis of Revolutionary Leadership in France -- by Pierre Frank	531
From Revolt Against the Bourgeois University to Revolt Against Capitalist Society -- by Ernest Mandel	534
From the Bankruptcy of Neocapitalism to the Struggle for the Socialist Revolution -- by Ernest Mandel	537
Declaration of the JCR to Workers and Students of France	540
Massive Boycott of Dominican Election Shows Opposition to Balaguer	541
Tariq Ali on the U.S. Presidential Election	542
Czechoslovak Regime Polls Population on Reforms	542
New Revolutionary Ferment in Bolivia [Report from the Underground]	543
Ethiopian Regime Fears New Student Revolt	546
The Question of Socialist Unity in Britain: The Urgent Challenge of Fascism	547
International Marxist Group Statement on Unity	548
Documents: Manifesto of New Alliance Against Saigon Regime	550

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