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ALGERIA FACES ARMED REBELLION

On September 27 the French government was notified by the Algerian government that the complete nationalization of all lands held by French colons (settlers) was projected. This followed a wave of nationalizations after Ben Bella was voted president September 15 in a one-party election. [See September 27 issue of World Outlook.]

Two days later in the plaza of Tizi-Ouzou, leaders of the "Front of Socialist Forces" staged a rally involving three to five thousand people. They called for the armed overthrow of the Ben Bella government.

Tizi-Ouzou is the capital of Kabylie and most of the leaders of the rebellion were Kabyles. They claimed, however, that they represented overwhelming popular sentiment throughout Algeria and that they expected a "chain reaction" which would bring down the Ben Bella government.

This was on Sunday. Ben Bella's answer was not long in coming. He went at once to the people, calling for formation of "vigilance committees." The following day, September 30, in a radio broadcast, he dismissed the defecting Col. Mohand Ou El Hadj and ordered the troops under his command to refuse any orders but those of the government. He charged that the Moroccan government of King Moulay Hassan had moved troops to "within ten meters of the Algerian frontier" and he accused a prominent opposition leader Belkacem Krim of visiting Morocco within the past ten days to obtain the king's help.

In a second radio address Ben Bella branded the outbreak in Kabylie as a "political adventure." He placed the main blame on Ait Ahmed, but also named Mohand Ou El Hadj. "Boudiaf," he said, "is likewise in connivance with Ait Ahmed and is at the bottom of this crisis."

"It is because Algeria is leaving behind the provisional character it gave the institutions enabling it to build socialism," he said, "that these ambitious people and adventurers dared to rise against the nation and its institutions and ally themselves with the obscure forces of neocolonialism and the counterrevolution."

A mass rally was called for Wednesday October 2. The outcome was "indescribable," a correspondent writes. More than 200,000 people packed into the Esplanade before the Government Palace.

In a fighting speech, Ben Bella traced the socialist achievements of his government, declaring that the poor Algerian peasants now enjoy greater rights than in any other country in the world.

In his attack on the armed rebellion he revealed that official documents proved that one of the principal leaders of the left wing of the FLN [Front de Liberation National] the martyred Abane Ramdane had been "strangled by the commandos of the GPRA" [Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algerienne] in a bitter faction struggle during the war for freedom. The GPRA was the regime put in office with French help that sought to block Ben Bella last year but which finally had to give way in face of support for him by the armed forces.

Ben Bella again pledged before the vast crowd that his government would continue resolutely down the road to socialism.

"Today, my brothers," he said, "I am pleased to announce, in this historic minute, awaited for 133 years -- I announce it before the world -- today, we have taken measures concerning the agrarian reform. From this second, not another hectare of this land of Algeria belongs to a colon. All the land is returned to the peasants."

The measures involve 900,000 hectares [2,250,000 acres], affecting four to five thousand French colons.

Plots under thirty hectares [seventy-five acres] will not be touched, said Ben Bella. Small merchants and artisans were likewise reassured that their property will not be taken.

At a national conference in Algiers of some 3,500 staff members of the FLN the same day, Hadj Ben Alla, a leading member of the Ben Bella government called for the immediate organization of "vigilance committees" throughout Algeria "by areas in the cities, by communities and by hamlets" everywhere.

"The vigilance committees under the control and authority of the National Liberation Front will have the mission of safeguarding and fighting against the counterrevolution.

"We appeal to the people to constitute them and we will arm them if necessary so that they can play their role fully and efficiently."

On October 3 Ben Bella appeared before the National Assembly to ask for "special powers" to deal with the situation. "A criminal counterrevolution is menacing our unity and our territorial integrity," he said. "The very foundations of our revolution are threatened." The special powers were granted at once.

During the week no shooting occurred. Some correspondents called it a "phony" war. However Claude Bucamp, correspondent of the Paris daily Le Figaro cabled October 6 from Algers: "Everything appears calm in Algeria but the powder kegs are in place and an unexpected spark could set off the explosion."

FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE ALGERIAN REVOLUTION

By Michel Pablo

The Algerian Revolution has entered in effect its decisive phase.

While the revolutionary measures in the direction of transforming the country into a state characterized by the fundamental economic and social structures of a workers' state are being multiplied, the internal and external counterrevolutionary threats are becoming evident.

The popular approval of the new constitution and of Ben Bella as the first president of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria, has allowed him to reform his government and to go on to a series of measures announcing the nationalization of agricultural, industrial and commercial properties.

Big hotels, restaurants and cafes, financially controlled by rich Algerians, as well as important factories like the oil works, and the Isolation et Bâtiment factory, etc., have been nationalized and placed under workers management.

In a few days, a law will extend the agrarian reform to the remaining land of the [French] settlers and 300,000 hectares of land possessed by rich Algerians.

On the other hand, all the French newspapers which were vehicles for spreading the neocolonialist policy of French imperialism have been suppressed, and their printshops have been nationalized.

Faced with this acceleration of the irreversible process which leads Algeria towards the structures characteristic of a workers' state, the counterrevolution was unleashed.

French imperialism, through the voice of De Broglie, recognizes that it is powerless to stop the country's evolution, "regrets" this evolution, and announces severe restrictions of its economic and technical "aid," as reprisals against what it considers a blow to the "French interests in Algeria."

The international capitalist press continuously publishes spiteful commentaries about Ben Bella "the African Castro"(1) and his regime, considering it to have resolutely taken the road of socialism and the abolishment of the rights of private property.

Within the framework of the regime itself, the reaction of the Algerian landowners and capitalists, however small their number, has become sharper.

This reaction is reinforced by that of the neobourgeois who have enriched themselves, profiting from the confusion and the insufficiencies which still reign in the field of legislation and in that of structures capable of effectively applying the regime's revolutionary policy. It is also supported by the reaction of potentially bourgeois elements of the administration, of the state and of the economy, who aspire to a bourgeois way of life, in a national neocapitalist framework.

It is highly significant that it is on the eve of the projected extension of the agrarian reform and important nationalizations, including the commercial, industrial and financial field, that the tension in the country as well as at the Algerian-Moroccan border suddenly increased.

In the country itself, there was the open dissidence of Colonel Mohand Ou El Hadj, ex-head of Wilaya 3 (from Kabylie), and commander of the Seventh Military Region, who proclaimed himself a member of the "Front of Socialist Forces" led by Ait Ahmed and called for resistance against the "illegal" government of President Ben Bella.

Kabylie is a poor and overpopulated region, characterized by great unemployment and inhabited by an Arabized Berber population. For several months it has been the scene of active agitation by a series of political leaders, some of whom played a first-rate role during the war of liberation, who have gone over to the opposition for various reasons.

There is no doubt that imperialism is trying to provoke a break between Kabylie and the regime on a racial and regionalist basis, reviving the spirit of "Willayism" and of clans with a feudal political mentality.

That Algerian leaders and militants who proclaim to be attached to socialism are falling into this vulgar trap is certainly no sign of great political understanding on their part.

That the regime on the other hand should fail to take into account sufficiently in its over-all practice the existence of a real national problem in Algeria(2) would likewise be an error. But the regime will not make this mistake, because it is constantly preoccupied with preventing all discrimination towards Kabylie, of according priority of assistance to Kabylie and other disinherited regions of the country, and of fully guaranteeing the particular cultural rights especially of the Kabyle and Berber populations in general.

Outside the frontiers of the country, the main threat against the socialist development of the revolution comes from Morocco, where the feudal-capitalist regime is literally at bay.

It is natural that the progress of the Algerian Revolution should have repercussions in the neighboring countries first of all, especially Morocco where the land is nearly completely in the hands of native feudalists and European settlers.

This explains the savage repression which was brought down recently on all progressive forces in the country in opposition to the dictatorial regime of the king, and who were accused of plotting against that regime in connivance with the Algerian government.

This explains also the repressive measures taken at present against Algerian citizens living in Morocco, who are being robbed on massive scale and driven toward Algeria. This explains also the concentration of important forces of the Moroccan army on the frontiers between Algeria and Morocco.

Behind these activities the hand of French and probably American imperialism shows.

At the moment when revolutionary measures are being extended in Algeria, which is nearing the point where that country will have fundamentally the structure of a workers state, reaction and imperialism throw down the gage of war against the Algerian socialist revolution.

Under these circumstances any refusal by the European left to support this Revolution, or even to adopt a waiting attitude, is tantamount to real treason.

Happily the workers states, with the USSR at their head, are already rushing to the aid of the Algerian Revolution.

Let the European proletariat in turn show its active class solidarity towards the workers and peasants of liberated Algeria which has irrevocably entered the road towards socialism.

Let the mobilization of the European working masses disarm the criminal hand of imperialism which is preparing to strike a blow against the victorious Algerian Revolution.

Let all the working-class organizations without exclusiveness form as soon as possible a powerful united front for the political, material and moral defense of the Algerian Revolution.

The moment has come to act so that the first African, Arab and Mediterranean socialist revolution, in the immediate neighborhood of the centers of the European proletariat, will be able to live and develop.

October 1, 1963

Postscript: At the historic meeting which took place this afternoon before the Government Palace in Algiers, Ben Bella announced the extension of the agrarian reform to include all the settlers' land (2,700,000 hectares) and its administration under workers' management. It should be noted that no workers state at the moment has an agricultural sector of such important extension under the regime of democratic workers self-management.

With this the country passes through a decisive phase of its structural transformation. As in the case of Cuba, the offensive of reaction and of imperialism can only accelerate the socialist progress of the Revolution.

(1) See, among others, the September 9 editorial of the Journal de Genève "Ben Bella Has Won."

(2) We indicated the importance of this question in August 1962.

AIMS OF THE ARMED REBELLION IN ALGERIA

PARIS, Oct. 8 -- The forces that have taken up arms against the Ben Bella government are singularly reticent about specifying their economic and social aims. Violence of language is offered as a substitute for program. The epithets thrown at Ben Bella include "dictator," "fascist," a "Batista," and "worse than the French."

Like the Cuban counterrevolutionists they speak much -- and very vaguely -- about "democracy" in general. Like their Cuban counterparts who seek the downfall of Castro, they accuse Ben Bella of "betraying the revolution."

Through such propaganda, the counterrevolution seeks to take advantage in Algeria as it did in Cuba of the absence of the formal institutions of bourgeois democracy and the concentration of power in a single figure. (That this concentration of power is dangerous and a sign of weakness in the Revolution is apparent to every revolutionary Marxist.) The reluctance of the leaders of the armed rebellion to speak about specific aims makes their cause highly suspect. However, a few indications available in the press here do indicate enough to show more positively what a deadly danger they represent for the Algerian Revolution.

On September 29, the day that the call went out for open armed rebellion, a French reporter Jean-François Steiner happened to be in Tizi-Ouzou, the capital of Kabylie where the leaders of the counterrevolution staged a mass rally. Steiner claims that he had received a tip in Algiers that something would be up; thus he was the only reporter of the outside press to be present.

With the exclusive pictures which his photographer took, the weekly Candide claimed a scoop. Candide happens to be a right-wing Gaullist sheet which is far from reliable. However no denials from Tizi-Ouzou have been issued up to now on what Steiner reported.

Mourad Oussedik, an attorney, was one of the main speakers. He claimed that abstentions in the September 15 election had showed the Algerian people voted no "to the oriental despotism and its neo-fascist instruments."

Calling the government a "police state" that had broken the unions and all national organizations, he declared the government to be "illegal."

He appealed for the use of "all means" to bring it down and ordered the followers of the "Front of Socialist Forces" for which he was speaking to go into "decisive battle."

Steiner was granted an interview with Hocine Ait Ahmed, who is considered to be the principal political figure of this grouping. Ait Ahmed denied that his movement is particularly Kabyle or confined to Kabylie. If the insurrection broke out there, "it is because we have received a mandate to unleash and animate the struggle against the government as we did during the previous war."

Ait Ahmed boasted that the "Front of Socialist Forces" is everywhere in Algeria. The desertion of the Katiba (a company of soldiers) in the Medea region, on the eve of the elections, was a political act. The guerrillas of Orleansvillais and the Aurès are in touch with us."

Asked how far they intend to go, Ait Ahmed responded, "Up to the fall of Ben Bella and his regime of terror."

"By all means?"

"By all means."

In response to a specific question on what kind of democracy he envisages for Algeria, Ait Ahmed replied:

"No other country in the world suffered as much as ours to defeat an enemy who was also a brother. So why do you want us to copy other countries which we don't resemble? Algeria is unique: economically underdeveloped, she is nevertheless an evolved, Eastern country that was Westernized for a hundred and thirty years. Her war of independence was carried out in a terrible way against a brother country. Don't forget that independence was an alternative solution after the failure, long ago, of integration. That's Algeria. That's why she must invent an original democracy, which, while being genuine, will not hobble the revolution."

In this entire evasive reply not a word is said about the development of workers democracy on the basis of the self-management committees already established under Ben Bella. Instead a thinly veiled appeal is made for sympathy from the "brother" against whom the Algerians had to fight for independence.

This pitch is even clearer in the following passages on the kind of relations Ait Ahmed envisages with France:

"Algeria must be politically independent of France, but the Evian agreement must be respected in both spirit and letter. First of all, because the agreement is a good one, next because one's word is a sacred thing. It is because Ben Bella perjured himself that we are fighting him. It is because he perjured himself that his regime is bankrupt.

"His dishonesty plunged him into a course from which he has no way out. After having broken the popular enthusiasm following independence, he was obliged, to maintain himself, to resort to demagogy. Thus it was that he betrayed France and his friends. He could not keep the promises he made, so he was condemned to reinforce the police regime."

On the nationalizations undertaken by Ben Bella, Ait Ahmed was reported to have said: "Algeria must carry out the revolution, but the nationalizations provided for in the Evian agreement must be the result of frank and valid negotiations with France. We must end the unilateral acts of the present regime in which the 'nationalizations,' in quotation marks, are nothing but spoliations."

The attempt to maintain a "revolutionary" and even "socialist" mask conflicts with the evident need of this spokesman of the "Front of Socialist Forces" inside Algeria to indicate his real aims to forces outside Algeria that have no need for such a mask. His message is nonetheless clear enough, as is the sympathetic handling which Candide gives to the armed rebellion.

Another repellent note, repeatedly sounded in the propaganda of the Cuban counterrevolutionists, stood out prominently in a "proclamation" issued by Ait Ahmed and Mohand Ou El Hadj:

"The Algerian Communists know that Algeria is sinking into chaos. They count on disintegration. They are helping Ben Bella only to use him later." (Le Figaro October 7.)

Ait Ahmed claims that he stands for socialism. It is a most questionable variety as may be gathered from the following declaration:

"Ben Bella's error was to believe he could repeat the October Revolution. But Algeria is not Russia. What he wants, him, is Stalinism. As for me, I am for socialism, but by stages and without reducing the country to unemployment." (Paris-presse l'intransigeant October 8.)

Mohand Ou El Hadj also displays a "socialism" that leans heavily in the direction displayed by the former neocolonialist government, the GPRA, which was ousted last year and replaced by the Ben Bella government. "Mr. Ferhat Abbas, who was president of the GPRA and then president of the National Assembly, is treated like a traitor today because he dared criticize the Constitution." (Le Monde October 8.)

The colonel said this in explaining why he was prepared to "shed blood" if "obliged to" in trying to overthrow Ben Bella.

BRITISH LABOUR PARTY CONFIDENT OF VICTORY

By A. Adair

SCARBOROUGH, England, Oct. 6 -- More than 1,200 delegates flocked into this small seaside resort to attend the Sixty-second Annual Conference of the British Labour party. It turned out to be more of a pre-election rally full of pep talks than an occasion to thresh out party policy.

Nevertheless it was an impressive display of working-class power.

Some 69 trade unions with a membership of more than 5,500,000 workers were represented by 626 delegates. Of these, 585 delegates came from as many Labour party constituency clubs. Fraternal delegates, observers and visitors were present from 34 countries. Two refugees from South Africa, an organizer of the current miners strike in Spain and a delegate from the underground socialists of Portugal won long applause.

It is almost a foregone conclusion that the next general election (due within the next months) will see the present Tory government kicked out of office and the Labour party established by a large majority. A Gallup poll taken earlier this summer gives the Labour party a lead of more than eighteen per cent -- the biggest any party has held in twenty-five years of public opinion polls in this country.

The atmosphere around Scarborough this week was charged with confidence, enthusiasm and the expectancy that drastic changes will be made when the Labour party assumes power. Delegates did not speak in terms of "if we are elected" but "when. . . "

Most participants did not question how the party was to achieve what chairman D.H.Davies called the "good society in a dawning age of plenty." They accepted, and expected that the Labour party will automatically win it.

The 1960 party conference held in this same town saw the left wing decisively defeat the leadership (headed by the late Hugh Gaitskell) on their attempts to pull the long standing nationalization clause out of the party constitution. At the same time the left won the party to unilateral disarmament.

The conference this year was quite different. There was no struggle over policy. In fact the traditional leaders of the broad left fell in line behind the appeal of Wilson and Brown that this is an election conference, and the public image of the party must be unity behind the policy agreed to in the past. That is the formless unity of compromise between left and right which Wilson as the new leader personifies.

Lena Jeger speaking at the Tribune meeting (Tribune is the weekly paper of the left centrists) stated how odd it was to be at such a conference and find herself for once in agreement with the policies of the official leadership. So successful was the unity appeal that the leaders could keep most of the controversial issues off the agenda altogether. Only fifty hands were raised opposing the motion presented on the first day of the conference. This weak show of opposition foreshadowed the behavior of the left for the rest of the conference. Everyone was hesitant to "rock the boat" or be accused of "playing into the hands of the Tories," especially as television took the debates into millions of homes, day after day.

Nevertheless, a few notes of militancy were sounded. One came during the discussion on the new economic policy and planned economy. This resolution included the clause that the Labour party, when elected, will fight for "An incomes policy to include salaries, wages, dividends and profits and social security benefits." There was some confusion as to whether this clause meant a wage freeze or not.

Delegate Peter Gibson of Croydon claimed the resolution could mean all things to all men. Some of it he said was "just flannel." He went on to question, if it did not mean a wage freeze, what did it mean? "We have got to acknowledge, and come clean about it, that there is no such thing as control of profits. Under these circumstances, let there be no control of wages."

Ted Hill, chief spokesman for the Boilermakers union said, "We all know that in a capitalist society you cannot freeze dividends and if you cannot freeze dividends do not ask us to freeze wages. . . but I say this resolution does not mean a wage freeze," and indicated his support for the motion with this understanding.

James Callahan, Labour party finance spokesman in Parliament was forced to admit that he found a great gap between economists like himself and the trade-union negotiators. He also pointed out that the employers were not talking in terms of limiting profits but on the contrary had issued a declaration opposing all restraints.

Only after several prominent trade-union leaders, including Frank Cousins of the powerful Transport and General Workers union, had assured the gathering that this resolution did not mean a wage freeze but a "planned growth of wages" did the motion carry by an overwhelming majority.

In his major speech on "Labour and the Scientific Revolution" Wilson said, "The problem is this. Since technological progress left to the mechanism of private industry and private property can lead only to high profits for a few, a high rate of employment for a few and to mass redundancies [unemployment] for the many, if there had never been a case for Socialism before, automation would have created it."

In the same speech he stated, "Allowing for the fact that [automation] here will be later and slower, we have to be ready to create ten million new jobs in Britain by, say, the mid-1970's."

On the arms race, Wilson correctly pointed out that the "advanced capitalist countries are maintaining full employment today only by virtue of vast arms orders and panic would be the order of the day in Wall Street and other stock markets the day peace breaks out."

Wilson posed many of the problems facing the British working class but failed to put forward any real anticapitalist solutions. The essence of his "new thinking" was that the Labour party has to plan the economy. But just how this planning is to be brought about without disturbing the profit system he did not specify.

In the brief period nationalization did come up for discussion, the motion calling for the nationalization of the building and construction industry submitted by the Amalgamated Union of Building Trades Workers went down to defeat. A similar fate was given to a motion urging public ownership of the land. The leadership knocked them down on the plea that they didn't want to be tied down to specific commitments.

It is interesting to note, however, that in a TV interview with Wilson and former Labour party Prime Minister Attlee, Attlee replied to a question as to what advice he would give Wilson when he came into power, "Take action on the big and controversial issues first." That's what experience had taught him he said. He was clearly referring to the nationalization of steel which was delayed until the last year of his government. Wilson nodded in agreement. What this means concretely remains to be seen.

The question of the three members of the Young Socialist National Committee, expelled for alleged tie-ups with Trotskyist organizations, came up during a closed session. An appeal handed out at the conference door urging their reinstatement found little support from the floor. It was reported that four members had been suspended and since then had been given a chance to explain their actions before an "inquiry." Only one did, and the others were expelled.

Miss June Lester argued that it was scandalous that young people should be treated in this way. In trying to explain away the fact that the three had been expelled without having received formal charges, Bessie Braddock, a Member of Parliament, claimed that this had not been done because the "inquiry" simply wanted to find out if the members concerned had views compatible with membership in the Labour party.

What was the outcome of the conference? According to the Guardian reporter, the Labour party is supporting policies "which have striking similarities with those of the Liberals," and "a socialism to satisfy both Right and Left, especially in an election year."

The Tribune drew the opposite conclusion. Under the headline "Planning: Labour Moves to the Left," the author ends his article with "Expanded public ownership, industrial democracy, purposeful planning -- all the ideas that some people tried to throw out of the back door only a few years ago, have now stormed

in again at the front. Labour is regrouping itself to the left of centre."

The fact of the matter is that each comment has a grain of truth in it. Actually the 1963 conference saw the Labour party merely "mark time." It neither moved to the left nor to the right in the pre-election setting. As one rank-and-file observer put it, this was a pre-election conference where everyone agreed not to disagree.

When Labour takes office the problems of unemployment, the fight against speed ups in the factories, the threat of an atomic war and the drive by the employers to reduce the living standards of the workers will have to be met with a sharp anticapitalist program.

The big contradiction is that the Labour party is not equipped with such a program although many of its supporters are expecting the results such a policy would bring. The 1963 Scarborough conference only stalled the time when the fight to equip the party with such a program will take place.

For the fight to be successful a left wing with a Marxist program will be necessary. The job of building such a left wing still remains to be done.

HIT 1,518 TIMES A DAY

The average American is hit by 1,518 advertising messages a day, according to executives of General Foods, one of the giant corporations of the world's richest country.

In an article in the September 22 London Observer, Paul Ferris states that it costs $12,500,000,000 a year or $66 a person to achieve this remarkable firepower.

Among the successes of novel packaging and million-dollar advertising in the United States, Ferris cites the case of aerosol whipped cream which comes in a can loaded with high-pressure gas. It costs 175 per cent more than heavy sweet cream. An "individual and disposable" package of common table salt costs 467 per cent more than the product in the old-fashioned carton that has not yet benefitted from the ingenuity of the advertising experts.

"The American advertising scene is thick with success stories," Ferris reports, "yet riddled with doubts. Why did the new-product man end by saying: 'One of the things that gives you faith in the necessity for living this way is that even in Russia they're trying out advertising'?"

CASTRO OUTLINES INDEPENDENT POLICY ON TEST-BAN PACT

In a speech September 28, Fidel Castro outlined the independent policy which the Cuban government proposes to follow in relation to the treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union on banning nuclear tests in the atmosphere. The treaty has come under heavy criticism from Peking as being directed mainly against China's efforts to join the U.S., Great Britain and the Soviet Union as a nuclear power.

The key paragraphs in Castro's speech, as released by the Cuban embassy in Paris, are as follows:

"We are still under the influence of the imperialist blockade and we will continue to resist, because our revolutionary banner will never be lowered; we will face the necessary risks as long as we have to, because we assume full responsibility for our conduct, for our history and for our Revolution.

"While tension is diminishing in other parts of the world, the Yankee imperialists are tightening their grip around Cuba and making the blockade more implacable.

"In recent months they have again accentuated this policy. This situation determines our conduct. We will never tranquilly accept a situation in which tensions diminish while for us they increase. We are very happy that tensions are diminishing, but we cannot consider ourselves at peace with the imperialism that tries to strangle us a little more each day.

"This situation determines our international conduct which is not a policy in favor of war. It's a policy in favor of peace, but we are not responsible for the war waged against us.

"As a country under attack, against which is practiced a policy of undeclared war and pirate attacks, the infiltration of saboteurs to kill us, a complacent smile cannot be expected from us toward our imperialist enemies; they are our enemies, and we must understand that we are their enemies. This situation will determine our attitude in the UN and everywhere else, and will determine our attitude toward the nuclear pact and toward the proposals to ban nuclear tests.

"The position of Cuba is defined as follows: first of all, anti-imperialism. Our line is based essentially on Yankee anti-imperialism.

"Our line of conduct is to struggle against this enemy who is harrassing us, imposing a blockade on us and threatening to destroy us. This line of conduct, which is cut out for us, corresponds to the concrete conditions in which the Cuban Revolu-

tion was born and to the specific conditions of the area in the world where they appeared; flowing from our nearness to Yankee imperialism and to our fraternal relationship with a continent exploited by this imperialism."

"HOY" BACKS CASTRO IN TEST-BAN POLICY

Referring to the Sino-Soviet dispute and the independent position taken by Castro in his September 28 speech on the test-ban pact, the Cuban Communist daily Hoy declared October 2 that "The Cuban position is beyond all controversy: 'from head to foot' Cuba is part of the socialist camp."

Hoy said that the "master intriguers of North-American imperialism have sought to speculate on the Cuban position concerning the treaty partially banning nuclear tests." The newspaper castigated these efforts and justified Cuba's abstaining from signing the pact, pointing to the "particular realities and concrete conditions" in which the Cuban Revolution finds itself.

"Cuba is in favor of peace, but the Cuban reality demands that this country, if it is not to be once again the victim of an open invasion, must nevertheless act in face of the infiltration, the parachuting of arms, the pirate attacks and the most shameless espionage."

Hoy stressed the effort of the Cuban government to maintain friendly relations with both sides in the Sino-Soviet dispute: "Cuba wants to maintain its fraternal links with the whole socialist world and will not permit itself to be estranged from this or that country that takes sides and this or that country that grants it solidarity and support."

NEW REVOLT IN COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

NEW DELHI -- Since the "great march" staged here September 13 under leadership of the Communist party of India, a new revolt has broken out against the Dange leadership, led this time by the "centrist" A.K.Gopalan.

Leader of the Parliamentary Group of the CPI, Gopalan addressed a mammoth rally at Calcutta September 28 presumably organized by the allegedly "pro-Peking" leftists in defiance of an official party directive advising all members not to associate with it. The rally and an earlier demonstration in the city were held under auspices of the "Democratic Convention," an organization sponsored by the West Bengal CP "leftists" to demand the release of political prisoners and to protest the Nehru government's "antipeople food price and tax policies."

The National Executive of the CPI charged Gopalan with "violation of the party's discipline"; and a meeting of the National Council has been convened for October 14 to discuss the situation.

Another charge lodged against Gopalan is "deliberately defying the party executive directive during the presentation of the 'great petition' to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha" [Lower House of the Indian Parliament] on September 13. Gopalan had protested against the non-inclusion of a demand in the New Delhi march for release of political prisoners.

Although Gopalan and Niren Ghosh (another CP member of Parliament), who addressed the Calcutta rally, denied reports that they were heading for "a split in the CPI," the Dange leadership appears to be determined to head towards a showdown. In West Bengal itself the Provisional Organizing Committee of the state unit set up by the Dange leadership is being openly defied by the majority of the members. The leftists now accuse Dange of trying to split the party.

At the Calcutta rally, Gopalan said that the move to divide the "Communists as pro-Peking and pro-Moscow groups" is a "bourgeois device to throttle mass movements against the government's antipeople measures." He also said that "revisionism" is the main danger facing the CPI today.

Niren Ghosh, explaining why the "Democratic Convention" was formed, said that it was needed as an "expression of mass resentment against the government's antidemocratic policies" and that it would exist so long as the "people's leaders" remain in jail.

(The governments of West Bengal and Maharashtra are still holding a large number of leftists while most other state governments have freed them. Last week the West Bengal government released the veteran CP leader Muzafar Ahmad on health grounds. He at once publicly associated himself with the demonstration held in Calcutta.)

Meanwhile a document submitted by E.M.S.Namboodiripad, former general secretary of the CPI now undergoing "medical treatment" in Moscow, is being circulated among the leading members of the party. In this document, Namboodiripad, known for his "centrist" position in the Sino-Soviet conflict (he criticizes both the Moscow and Peking lines) says that "the real Communists are in a minority in the CPI." He also says that the "vices of bourgeois parliamentarism have penetrated deep into the party, which threaten the very existence of the Marxist-Leninist party."

Namboodiripad has also charged the party leadership with having failed to "proletarianise all party members who joined the

party from outside the ranks of the working class." According to him, the party's coming into position as a "leading opposition group" in Parliament and "power in Kerala" has "brought into the party certain corrupting influences." He further contends that post-independence intellectual activities of landlords, the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie conditioned the mode of thinking of "even the most advanced representatives of the working class."

The document by Namboodiripad, head of the former CP Ministry in Kerala and an influential figure in the CPI, has stirred a big storm in party ranks.

Namboodiripad's background is not completely Stalinist. In the thirties he wrote a pamphlet explaining how he became a Marxist under the influence of Trotsky's brilliant History of the Russian Revolution. Subsequently he recanted.

In a recent article about the Sino-Soviet conflict he referred to the "great debate" between Trotsky and Stalin in the twenties. He said that Trotsky was "mistaken" in his political positions as against Stalin.

The internal crisis of the Communist party of India is now breaking more fully into the open. Along with this a certain realignment of leftist and centrist forces is occurring. Against the Dange leadership, the centrists seem to have spearheaded the revolt, supported by the leftists, ostensibly with the object of saving the "unity of the party." In their general evaluation of the internal situation in India, the centrists are closer to the leftists but they support the Dange leadership in condemning Chinese "adventurism" on the border question.

TOGLIATTI CLAMPS DOWN ON THE "PRO-CHINESE"

ROME, Sept. 30 -- During the past two months, the world press has circulated news about the "pro-Chinese" groups active in Italy. The source of this information is undoubtedly the allusion made in the text of the July 14 statement of the Communist party of the Soviet Union [CPSU] concerning allegedly "factional" activity inspired by the Chinese in Italy and centering mainly around a group of members and leaders in the Padua federation.

The truth is that a left oppositional grouping appeared in this city well before the Sino-Soviet conflict reached its present tension. The Chinese, it can be stated with assurance, had nothing to do with this. The initiative came from the rank and file as a result of their own experiences.

It should be evident that a leftist criticism of Togliatti must necessarily appear analogous to the criticisms lodged by the Chinese. But this holds not only for the Padua group but also for all the Communist groups and organizations of the left that appeared long before the outbreak of the Sino-Soviet conflict.

The real situation can be briefly summarized as follows. Many small groups now exist, most of them composed of a few militants and most of them without any solid organizational structure. Among them are the two groups in Padua who, after a period of division, appear to have reunited (these are the militants referred to in the CPSU letter); a group of militants in some of the towns of Sicily, partly in and partly out of the CP; a third group in Rome composed of CP militants under the influence of a leader of the Italy-China Association who was recently expelled from the CP, and finally a small group in Milan which calls itself "antirevisionist."

The latter group has published Italian translations of certain documents of the Chinese and maintains contact with them for this purpose.

The leader of the group in Rome is in complete agreement with the views of the Chinese and visited Albania last summer.

The two groups in Padua, which appear to have fused, are considering starting a publication. There is no evidence up to now that the Chinese have either approved or sought such a venture. They seem instead to favor an attitude of cautious waiting. It is not excluded that the Albanians rather than the Chinese are pushing the idea.

The Sicilian group is for critical support of the Chinese positions. They disagree with the Chinese rejection of de-Stalinization. They, too, are considering bringing out a publication.

It should be observed, in addition, that some of these groups, along with members holding Trotskyist views, have supported the Italy-China Association which was founded toward the end of last year.

After waiting some months, the Togliatti leadership launched a violent offensive against the Italy-China Association, formally banning CP members from participating in it (up until then the majority of members of the Association belonged to the CP).

Real provocations have been organized in hope of discrediting this Association and the Chinese. Grotesque as some of the provocations have been, at least one was taken for good coin by a paper as serious as the Paris Le Monde. Any "juicy" items that may appear currently in the capitalist press concerning the

Association and Chinese partisans in Italy should be viewed with considerable suspicion.

Within the Communist party, the Togliatti leadership has organized a very vigorous offensive against the Chinese with the evident aim of blocking formation of any kind of pro-Chinese opposition formation. At the July meeting of the Central Committee, Pietro Secchia, who was dropped from the party Secretariat in 1955 for indulgence toward leftist elements, made a long speech, demanding in substance that the party not participate in the conflict. Togliatti immediately responded in a violent way. His speech was never reported by the party press.

Discussion is occurring among different party bodies but the atmosphere is often different from what it was in 1956 and again in 1961 after the Twentieth and Twenty-second congresses. In those instances the Togliatti bureaucracy was on the defensive. Today it is carrying the attack in a relentless way.

In consequence, the pro-Chinese elements, who do not want to risk a break, do not take the floor. Militants hesitate at speaking although they are not convinced by the Khrushchev line. There are quite a few of them.

Nevertheless in certain instances very good discussions have occurred with the open participation of Trotskyist elements. Among the youth, Chinese sympathies are quite pronounced and some branches have come out openly in favor of the Chinese.

Rather well-founded rumors have been circulating concerning the pro-Chinese attitude of certain former leaders of the Milan federation who were removed by the "de-Stalinizers" who now head this important party sector. Up to now, however, they have initiated nothing although they are certainly hostile to the current Togliatti course.

UNEXPECTED BACKFIRE

While making an inspection tour during his recent visit to Vietnam to gather first-hand information for Kennedy about the situation there, Defense Secretary McNamara was shown a cache of weapons captured from the Vietcong guerrilla forces. One impressive-looking weapon is reported to have caught his eye. "Oh! Oh! Chinese materiel!"

"Sorry, Mr. Secretary," replied the interpreter, "that's a recoilless American canon."

MORE LAND NATIONALIZED IN CUBA

On October 4 Cuba's revolutionary government lowered the ceiling on the amount of land which may be held privately from 970 acres to 193 acres. Some 7,500,000 acres were affected.

Experience proved that the former ceiling was too high. The bigger landowners, said the decree, have been working "against the best interest of the working people, obstructing food production, speculating with products or using high income obtained from exploitation of workers for antisocial and counterrevolutionary purposes."

Exceptions to the nationalization decree were provided for farmers who have "shown a complete desire to co-operate with the government" in planning production.

FORWARD TO LENIN!

-- Not Back to Stalin in the Fight Against Khrushchev

By E. Germain

The article "On the Question of Stalin," published September 13 by the joint editorial boards of the Peking People's Daily and Red Flag as the second in a series of answers to the "Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU," [Communist party of the Soviet Union] is undoubtedly the worst contribution of the Chinese Communist party [CCP] in the present discussion in the world Communist movement, the one which does most damage to the favorable reception given up to now to the CCP and the one which most seriously hinders the progress of Communist cadres and militants towards revolutionary Marxism insofar as it is being advanced by this discussion.

Full of factual errors and distortions, it is also loaded with contradictions either within the article itself or with other important documents of the CCP or recent declarations made by Mao Tse-tung.

But the most striking aspect of the article is its complete divorce from reality. Nobody with the slightest knowledge of the opinions or aspirations of the masses inside the Soviet Union or the East European workers states can take seriously a statement like this: "This great majority of the Soviet people disapprove of such abuse of Stalin. They increasingly [!] cherish the memory of Stalin."

Any attempt by the leaders of the CCP to build their tendency within the world Communist movement on such a line can only lead to rapid and increasing isolation, greatly facilitating the efforts of the Khrushchevite tendency to re-establish monolithism and some kind of central bureaucratic control over the greater part of the world Communist movement.

We are convinced that the leaders and members of the left-wing oppositional tendencies inside the CP's of the colonial and imperialist countries will also rapidly discover this through their own experience. We are convinced that they will warn their Chinese comrades with increasing insistence that a fight against right-wing revisionism that at the same time attempts to revive the cult of Stalin is doomed from the beginning. We are convinced that they will raise the slogan, "In the fight against Khrushchev's revisionism, let's not go back to Stalin but move forward to full-fledged Leninism." And we are convinced that with the help of experience and fraternal discussion, this slogan will find increasing echoes within the Chinese CP itself, including its leadership. For that reason, we think it worth while to submit the article "On the Question of Stalin" to much more searching criticism than it intrinsically deserves in hope that it will help speed the process of clarification among left-wing Communists, in China as well as everywhere else.

Was Stalin Right -- Against Lenin?

Some of the arguments advanced in the article "On the Question of Stalin" are so self-defeating that they seem almost naive. The authors write:

"Khrushchev has maligned Stalin as a 'despot of the type of Ivan the Terrible.' Does not this mean that the experience of the great CPSU and the great Soviet people provided over thirty years for peoples the world over was not the experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but that of life under the rule of a feudal 'despot'?. . . Khrushchev has maligned Stalin as a 'fool.' Does not this mean that the CPSU, which waged heroic revolutionary struggles over the past decades, had a 'fool' as its leader?"

They seem to forget a detail. The Soviet people and the CPSU have been led for nearly ten years now by a group headed by Khrushchev whom this very same article denounces as a slanderer, a maligner, a falsifier of history, a fool, a coward, a splitter of the world Communist movement, an objective agent of revisionism that serves as a bourgeois agency within the working-class movement. Other CCP documents have compared Khrushchev and his group to the social-patriots of 1914 whom Lenin termed "bourgeois agents within the working-class movement." Yet these repellent figures have been at the head of the CPSU for some ten

years and have been part of the top leadership of the Soviet Union for thirty years! Why should this be assumed to be a self-apparent absurdity in the case of Stalin and yet be taken as perfectly logical in the case of Khrushchev?

The authors of the article "On the Question of Stalin" say that Khrushchev maligned Stalin in his secret speech at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU when he admitted that Stalin had murdered the main cadres of Lenin's Bolshevik party. They dare to say that this admission is a "distortion of historic truth." But facts are facts! Let the leaders of the Chinese CP answer these questions:

Yes or no, did Stalin execute the majority of the members of the Leninist Central Committee that led the October Revolution, founded the Soviet state and the Third International, and won the Civil War?

Yes or no, were these great Communist leaders murdered under the vile slander and absurd accusation that they were "spies and agents of fascism and imperialism" not only from the moment they opposed Stalin but even before the first world war?

Yes or no, did Stalin murder not only thousands of Communists in the political opposition but also the majority of delegates to the Fifteenth and Sixteenth party congresses of the CPSU; i.e., the majority of Communist cadres who had supported him against the Trotskyist Opposition but who were still too much tied to the old Bolshevik tradition to accept the monstrous Moscow trials and the systematic use of lies, slander and physical violence to "solve" inner-party discussions?

We venture to predict that the authors of the article "On the Question of Stalin" will not attempt to answer these questions. No honest answer is possible but "yes." Yet if the answer is "yes," then it follows that Khrushchev did not "malign" and "slander" Stalin in his secret speech at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU. What he did was to admit part of the historical truth and reveal some fresh details. Against this truth, sophisms evaporate like snow in the sun.

The authors of the article even dare to approve an old speech made by Khrushchev in January 1937 in which the present first secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU said of those who opposed Stalin, "In lifting their hand against Comrade Stalin, they lifted it against all of us, against the working class and the working people!"

Have the authors of the article forgotten that the first one to "lift his hand" against Stalin was no one but Lenin himself? Have they forgotten Lenin's testament, in which the

founder of Bolshevism advised the Central Committee to remove Stalin from his post of general secretary? By making this judgment of Stalin, calling for his removal, did Lenin "lift his hand against the working class"?

The leaders of the CCP fall into another glaring contradiction when on the one hand they try to defend Stalin against Khrushchev's "maligning" him as a murderer and a despot while on the other hand they themselves state:

"On certain [!] occasions and on certain questions, he [Stalin] confused two types of contradictions which are different in nature, contradictions between ourselves and the enemy, and contradictions among the people, and also confused the different methods needed in handling them. In the work led by Stalin of suppressing the counter-revolution, many counter-revolutionaries deserving punishment were duly punished. But at the same time there were innocent people who were wrongly convicted, and in 1937 and 1938 there occurred the error [!] of enlarging the scope of the suppression of counter-revolutionaries."

What was the scale of this "error"? Zinoviev, first head of the Communist International, was shot as a counter-revolutionist. So was Bukharin who succeeded Zinoviev as the leading figure of the Comintern. So was Kamenev, member of the Leninist Political Bureau. Trotsky, founder of the Red Army, was murdered by an agent of Stalin. Rykov, another member of the Leninist Political Bureau and former chief of the Soviet government, was executed as a counter-revolutionist. Piatakov, Radek, Sokolnikov, Rakovski, Smilga, Serebriakov, I.N.Smirnov, Muralov and many others were similarly liquidated.

Do the leaders of the Chinese CP believe that all these Communists, these comrades-in-arms of Lenin, the majority of the members of the Central Committee in which Lenin sat from 1917 to 1923, were really counter-revolutionaries? Do the leaders of the Chinese CP believe that the top staff of the Red Army, executed after a secret mock "trial" in 1937, were really counter-revolutionaries? Do the leaders of the Chinese CP believe that the majority of the delegates of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth congresses of the CPSU were really counter-revolutionaries?

Their dilemma is insoluble. If they say "yes" then the only possible conclusion is that the Soviet Union was founded by counter-revolutionaries and Lenin himself guided the Communist party and the Soviet Union until he died with the help of a majority of "counter-revolutionists, spies and fascist agents." In that case, by the logic used by the leaders of the Chinese CP, he was a fool if not worse. The banner must then be raised for the "rehabilitation" of Lenin against the authors of the article as apologists for the crimes of Stalin!

If they say "no," if they decide that these slaughtered comrades were innocent victims of Stalin's purges, "innocent people wrongly convicted," then how can they reduce this mass slander and mass murder, often accompanied by mass torture, of thousands of old Bolsheviks and the majority of Lenin's closest collaborators to a mere "error" and react indignantly when someone speaks the truth and calls Stalin what he was, a despot and a murderer?

"Personality Cult" and "Contradictions within the People"

The authors of the article "On the Question of Stalin" declare: "Khrushchev has maligned Stalin as 'the greatest dictator in Russian history.' Does this not mean that the Soviet people lived for thirty long years under the 'tyranny' of the 'greatest dictator in Russian history,' and not under the socialist system?" By stating the question in this form, the authors only prove that they have not yet learned how to distinguish between the socio-economic foundations of society and its political superstructure.

In the history of capitalism many different forms of state and government have appeared, from the extremes of autocracy and fascist dictatorship to what Lenin called "the most advanced forms of bourgeois democratic republics" (including those in which citizens keep arms in their homes as in Switzerland or nineteenth-century America). In the Soviet Union, capitalism was overthrown by the October Revolution and has not been restored since. Property relations remain those of socialization, of a transition towards socialism. The bourgeoisie has completely disappeared as a class. But just as political counterrevolutions proved possible after the decisive victory of the bourgeois revolution and the definitive establishment of capitalist property relations (for example, the Restoration of 1815 in France) so, experience has shown, a political counterrevolution can destroy the political power of the working class after the destruction of capitalism without qualitatively modifying the socialized property relations.

Such a political counterrevolution occurred in the Soviet Union under Stalin. The social layer that dispossessed the Soviet proletariat in the exercize of political power was the bureaucracy. That there exists a deep antagonism between this bureaucracy and the proletariat is not a "Trotskyite" invention. In his last years Lenin had deep misgivings about the increasing power of the bureaucracy and he was constantly warning about it and preparing for the coming struggle with it. In the final codocil to his testament, which was published for the first time in the Soviet Union only two years ago, Lenin proposed that several hundred workers should be brought into the Central Committee while remaining on the job. The majority of the Central Committee decided not to act on this advice. They completely misunderstood or underestimated the danger of the bureaucracy as a social formation. Unwittingly they thereby facilitated Stalin's destruction of Soviet and party democracy and the establishment of his bureaucratic dictatorship. When they finally

grasped the danger it was too late. For this mistake they paid with their lives.

It will remain the eternal merit of Trotsky and the Left Opposition to have correctly understood the gravity of the danger from the time of Lenin's death. They correctly defended a policy of industrialization and the maintenance of Soviet democracy. Success in this could have limited the bureaucratic deformation of state and party. Although they suffered defeat, their struggle saved the honor of Bolshevism and the program of communism, making it possible to transmit these precious assets to a new generation. The cause of the Left Opposition became the cause of the Fourth International. It is the cause of revolutionary Marxism today, the cause of Leninism.

Khrushchev and the ruling strata of the Soviet bureaucracy, it is true, are trying to transform Stalin into a scapegoat for the collective crimes committed by the bureaucracy and the leadership of the CPSU in the thirties and later. When the authors of the article "On the Question of Stalin" recall Khrushchev's declarations in 1937-38, when they refer obliquely to Khrushchev's own role as a butcher of Ukrainian Communists and intellectuals during the Yezovtchina, they do well, be it for obscure reasons of their own.

They write, for instance: "Why does Khrushchev, who was in the leadership of the party and the state in Stalin's period, and who actively supported and firmly [!] executed the policy of suppressing counter-revolutionists, repudiate everything done during this period and shift the blame for all the errors on to Stalin alone, while altogether whitewashing himself?"

This scores a good debating point and at the same time serves the more serious purpose of warning Khrushchev that if the fight becomes rougher, the Chinese, or people allied to them, might at a certain point begin disclosing specific crimes committed during the period of the purges by Khrushchev and other associates of his now on the Praesidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU.

If this approach is pursued, two possibilities are open. One is to whitewash Stalin which also whitewashes Khrushchev and the whole Soviet bureaucracy. The other is to indict Khrushchev and the rest of his colleagues for their joint responsibility in Stalin's crimes. The Chinese leaders seem -- for the time being -- to have adopted the first course. This leads away from the truth, away from Leninism, away from the Soviet masses. As for us, we prefer the other course.

The authors of the article under examination satisfy themselves with denouncing the completely un-Marxist theory of the

"personality cult," without attempting to offer a Marxist, dialectical materialist explanation of the contradictions of Soviet society. Indeed, they even maintain that these contradictions are essentially nonexistent and that all that is involved is the "interrelationship of leaders, party, class and masses."

This is all the stranger in view of the fact that Mao Tse-tung himself, as late as 1957; i.e., after the Hungarian Revolution, in his speech entitled "On the Contradictions within the People," came close to a "Trotskyist" -- that is, a Marxist -- analysis of these contradictions. Mao's view was quite different from Khrushchev's divagations on the "personality cult," which cannot be taken seriously by any Marxist. (A cult that dominated society completely, yet had no roots whatsoever in its infrastructure!) Mao's view was different, too, from that of the authors of "On the Question of Stalin" with their vulgar platitudes about the "leaders" and the "masses." In his well-known speech Mao reduced the basic contradiction "within the people," in the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the contradiction between workers engaged in production and "administrators." (We prefer the term used by Marx and Lenin, "bureaucrats.") From this analysis it is but a step to understanding the crimes of the Stalinist era as resulting from a temporary defeat of the workers by the bureaucracy under specific conditions of isolation of the revolution, backwardness of the country and lack of understanding by the "subjective factor" (the party) after the death of Lenin.

Instead of taking this step forward in the direction of Leninism, the Chinese leaders seem today to be taking a step backward to an absurd denial of social contradictions "within the people" during the dictatorship of the proletariat, to an absurd denial of the crimes of Stalin. The stream of history is moving in a direction opposite to these new errors!

It is in the light of this same contradiction between the workers and peasants on one hand and the bureaucracy on the other that the working-class uprisings in East Berlin and East Germany July 16-17, 1953, and the demonstrations in Poland and revolution in Hungary in October 1956 must be viewed. The contradiction between the social forces in these countries was rendered all the more violent by economic exploitation and national oppression practiced in these countries under Stalin. In their first article of reply to the "Open Letter" of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the editors of the People's Daily and Red Flag implicitly recognize this fact, for they state: "By moving up troops in an attempt to subdue the Polish comrades by armed force, it [the leadership of the CPSU] committed the error of great-power chauvinism."

The authors also reveal (a fact widely known in Communist circles) that the leaders of the Chinese Communist party strongly opposed Kremlin intervention in Poland and thereby probably saved the Polish working class and Gomulka from a repetition of the Hungarian tragedy. All the more astonishing is their pride in having pressed for counterrevolutionary intervention against the Hungarian workers: "We insisted on the taking of all necessary measures to smash the counter-revolutionary rebellion in Hungary and firmly opposed the abandonment of socialist Hungary."

The main social force in rebellion in Hungary was the working class. A couple of facts prove this to the hilt. After Soviet troops smashed the Nagy government, the workers organized one of the longest and most solid general strikes in the history of the international workers movement. The freely elected leadership advanced the following purely socialist demands: "We state expressly that the revolutionary working class considers the factories and the land as property of the people. . . We ask for free elections, but only those parties should be allowed to participate in them who recognize and have always recognized the socialist order."

Stalin's "Errors" in the International Communist Movement

The authors of "On the Question of Stalin" did not, of course, compose a pure and simple apology for Stalin, as some people have incorrectly assumed. They note many "errors" committed by Stalin in many fields. Among other things they censure Stalin for "also giving some bad counsel in the international Communist movement. These mistakes caused some [!] losses to the Soviet Union and the international Communist movement."

When the authors turn to their own country and their own Revolution, this heavy veil of discretion and understatement is replaced by a thinner curtain. We learn that "in the late twenties, the thirties and the early forties, the Chinese Marxist-Leninists represented by Comrades Mao Tse-tung and Liu Chao-shi resisted the influence of Stalin's mistakes. . . "

In other words, in Chinese affairs, Stalin was wrong for twenty years! A slight error, of course, especially if you happen to know, as the article admits for the first time -- at least by implication -- that the right-wing errors that led to the tragic defeat of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 were directly inspired by Stalin's "bad counsel."

Instead of repeating the tired phrases about "Trotskyites, Zinovievites, Bukharinites and other bourgeois agents," the leaders of the Chinese Communist party would do better to make an objective study of the real positions held by L.D.Trotsky and the movement founded by him, both in the past and at present. Thus

they would discover that Trotsky correctly opposed both the "rightist" and "leftist" errors of Stalin and the Comintern leadership up to 1932, even before Mao Tse-tung felt that something was wrong.

Surely the leaders of the Chinese Communist party must know that the Trotskyists everywhere in the world have been the staunchest defenders of the great Chinese Revolution and the great People's Republic of China against the attacks of Nehru's capitalist regime and its apologists. Surely they must know that these same Trotskyists everywhere in the world defend the Chinese Communist party against the slanders of the Khrushchevites who have suddenly discovered that it is Mao Tse-tung and his comrades and not the American imperialists who are "warmongers" and people desirous of "provoking nuclear world war." At a moment when the Chinese CP is under a constant barrage of slander of the purest Stalinist type; at a moment when Khrushchev and his henchmen are labeling the Chinese comrades "splitters" and "wreckers" because they dare introduce their Communist literature into the Soviet Union, even printed -- what blasphemy! -- in the Russian language, it is scarcely a good example of proletarian morals for the Chinese comrades to employ the same kind of slanders against the Trotskyists. Please don't do to others what you don't want done to you, comrades! When Izvestia devotes a half page to proving that the Fourth International favors the side of the Chinese CP on some important points in the dispute with Moscow and hence a "bloc" exists between Peking and the Trotskyists, shouldn't it prove embarrassing to the leaders of the Chinese CP to claim that these supporters are "bourgeois agents"?

But Stalin's "bad counsel" was not limited to Chinese affairs. Let us recall a few examples. Isn't it well known that Stalin opposed the Yugoslav Communist party's fighting for power from 1943 on, as in 1946 he opposed Mao Tse-tung's turning toward the struggle for power? Isn't it well known that he advocated the same capitulationist line for Vietnam? How do the Chinese leaders judge the fact that every revolution that achieved a dictatorship of the proletariat by its own independent force in Stalin's time had to do so against his opposition?

Some of Stalin's "errors" happily did not prevent final victory. But what about the more disastrous "errors" that continue to bear consequences to this very day? Do the Chinese leaders believe today that Stalin was right in the criminal line he advocated in Germany from 1929 to 1933, according to which not fascism but the social-democracy was the main enemy and the main target to be attacked by the German Communist party? Do they approve of the class-collaborationist, right-wing, opportunist line applied by Stalin in Spain in 1936-39 which strangled the Spanish social revolution and thereby greatly facilitated Franco's military victory? And what about participating in and upholding capitalist

governments, aiding in reconstructing the bourgeois army and the bourgeois state apparatus in France and Italy after the second world war, a course carried out by the Communist parties under direct instructions from Stalin which ended up by destroying highly favorable conditions for the victory of the working class in Western Europe?

The balance sheet of these "errors" is indeed staggering. Repeated over such a long period, in so many countries, can they still be called just "errors"? For a Marxist, wouldn't it be more correct to call it a fundamentally wrong policy? And in that case, isn't it necessary to probe for the social roots of Stalinist opportunism, just as Lenin probed for the social roots of reformist opportunism?

The Bureaucratic Impasse and the Way Out for Communists

It is true, as the authors of the article claim in passing, that the leaders of the Chinese CP succeeded in correcting or preventing some of these "errors" and essentially kept their own counsel. They were able to do so and finally lead the Chinese Revolution to victory because of the feebleness of Comintern control due to their relative geographical isolation. But they know that Stalin intervened directly in the leadership of the Chinese CP several times to try to put people in charge whom he considered sufficiently subservient to himself. It is scarcely cause for wonder then that in most Communist parties, ruthless intervention by the Stalinist international apparatus succeeded in eliminating from leadership genuine revolutionary figures, rooted in the labor movements of their own countries. The Kremlin replaced these revolutionists by servile, spineless executors of Stalin's orders, no matter how contradictory or how they subordinated the interests of the international revolutionary movement to the diplomatic maneuvers and passing needs of Soviet foreign policy.

But Stalinism, as a system of centralized control over the international Communist movement, serving the Soviet bureaucracy, could be established only under certain specific objective conditions characteristic of a period of deep retreat and heavy defeats for the world socialist revolution. When these conditions changed, the crisis of Stalinism was precipitated. This has now become irreversible. Two processes have struck deadly blows at the system and ideology of Stalinism. One is the upsurge of world revolution since the victory of the mighty Chinese Revolution. The other is the economic progress of the Soviet Union which has completely changed the relationship of forces between the Soviet proletariat, the Soviet peasantry and the Soviet bureaucracy.

Ever since the Tito crisis of 1948, and more especially since Stalin's death in 1952, this world crisis of Stalinism has continued to deepen. In order to save what they rightly consider

to be the essence of their rule -- economic privileges and a monopoly of politics -- the Soviet bureaucrats have been forced to make one concession after another to the Soviet masses as they press for restoration of Soviet democracy. The abandonment of the Stalin cult in 1956 at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU was the most important of these concessions, the one that created the most contradictions within the international Stalinist apparatus itself.

Today no objective basis whatever exists, either in the Soviet Union or in the East European workers states, for a return to that cult. The Soviet masses are not much interested in Byzantine speculation about what Stalin said or really meant by this or that statement about the party and its cadres. But they are extremely interested in preventing any return to the system under which workers could be condemned to hard labor for being as little as twenty minutes late to the job. They are extremely interested in preventing a return to a system under which their standard of living was ruthlessly sacrificed in the name of an industrial "giantism" in which heartbreaking waste occurred due to bureaucratic mismanagement. They are very interested in overcoming the inhuman housing shortage that began in Stalin's time. They are more and more interested in participating directly in control and management of the economy and state -- rights, the exercize of which was utterly destroyed under Stalin.

When they hear the Chinese leaders say, "Long live Leninism!" they think of Lenin's teachings on socialist democracy, on the highest functions being exercized by simple workers, on the dictatorship of the proletariat being the first form of the state destined to wither away from the moment of its creation. On all these great themes of Lenin's work State and Revolution, the Chinese leaders are, however, strangely silent.

Faced with this deepening mood of the masses, no sector of the Soviet bureaucracy that keeps in touch with reality dares to play with the "defense of Stalin," for this would be the most certain way of cutting themselves from the rank and file of the party and the masses of workers and peasants, and most likely precipitating an immediate violent political crisis in the country. For the same reason, any policy geared to "rehabilitate Stalin" bars a "bloc" with any part of the Soviet bureaucracy. It is a sterile attempt to make an alliance with the shade hanging over the bureaucracy in opposition to all the real social forces of the Soviet Union, including the bulk of the bureaucracy itself. To seek such an "alliance" can lead to nothing but isolation and utter failure. In the same way, no objective basis exists today for the creation of an international faction in the world Communist movement that would prove subservient to the Chinese state or any other state. The Yugoslavs found this out at some cost to themselves.

On the other hand, it is perfectly true that ever since the Twentieth Congress, a dual process has been affecting the leadership of the world Communist movement. Parallel to the so-called "de-Stalinization" process a more and more pronounced right-wing orientation has appeared among the leaderships of nearly all the Communist parties in the capitalist countries, imperialist and colonial alike.

Because they rightly criticize the neo-reformist, neo-Bernsteinian theory and practice of a "peaceful, parliamentarian road to socialism through gradual structural reforms"; because they condemn the criminal policy of trying to convince the American workers and Negroes that they should support the Democratic party, which also happens to be the party of the most rabid Jim Crow Southern Bourbons; because they violently and correctly condemn the shameful capitulation of the Dange leadership before the Indian bourgeoisie; because they advocate that the Latin-American masses should follow the road blazed by the Cuban revolutionists; in brief because they in general advocate in most capitalist countries a more leftist policy -- albeit often not a completely correct revolutionary Marxist one -- and defend the ABC's of Lenin's teachings on the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Chinese Communists have already won much sympathy among the rank and file of the world Communist movement and they can win more.

But the rank and file of these parties are well aware that it is utterly impossible to advance the cause of socialism by "defending Stalin." They can only feel embarrassment over anyone who tries it. To try to "rehabilitate Stalin" will neither help them win Communist militants to the Chinese position nor facilitate the task of winning stronger positions among the masses of their respective countries. This line also cuts them off from the genuine left-wing Communists in the workers states, who are against Khrushchev, not because he has carried out "de-Stalinization" but because he doesn't go far enough with it! Since the elements most sympathetic to the Chinese CP are generally the most independent-minded in all these Communist parties, the strange "campaign" advocating a "return to Stalin" stead of a "return to Lenin" insults their intelligence, clashes with their class consciousness and proletarian instincts and arouses an opposition which they will most certainly express.

The bureaucratic maneuver of speaking up for Stalin thus only leads into an impasse. In China itself, the Communists who come to understand this will increase in number from month to month. In the case of China, as has already been shown in the case of the Soviet Union, the effort to build an international faction will have important consequences through the introduction of strong pressures and contraditions within the movement of those who start it. It is very important to have a correct program!

For Chinese Communists the choice today is very clear: either backward to Stalin, to complete isolation from the masses in the "socialist" camp and growing isolation from the advanced militants and left Communists of the capitalist countries; or forward to Lenin, to full restoration of Leninism in correspondence with the needs and aspirations of the great majority of Communists in the workers states as well as the capitalist states and in correspondence with the objective needs of the world socialist revolution today.

September 29, 1963

A SOVIET ARTIST SPEAKS HIS MIND

At the beginning of 1963 the process of de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union suffered a sharp reverse in the field of art and literature. The Khrushchev regime, it appears, became frightened at the extensiveness of the trend toward liberalization which followed the fresh moves against Stalinism at the Twenty-second Congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union. The intellectuals held many meetings, some of them illegal, to discuss problems in the light of the new developments. Demands were expressed that by implication challenged party monolithism in the cultural field.

Khrushchev warned the intellectuals that freedom in the arts would not be tolerated. What was on his mind can be judged from a reference he made to the "Petöfi" circle of intellectuals in Hungary whose discussions foreshadowed the attempted political revolution in October 1956.

At one of the meetings of intellectuals in the Soviet Union during this period (December 1962), M.I.Romm, the internationally famous movie director took the floor. From the stenographic report of the meeting a record of what he said became available. So far as we know, it was not published in the Soviet Union or anywhere else. The translation which appears below is the first to be made available to the press. We consider it an instructive example of the new current of thinking that is now evident in many fields in the Soviet Union.

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M.I.Romm has the floor. (Applause.)

I have decided to come here, before an audience to which I am unaccustomed -- composed of half theater people and half scientific research workers -- because I thought that the time has come to understand clearly what is happening in our country.

The subject of the report "Traditions and Innovations" offers an occasion to talk about such serious things. The Voronezh theater director, Comrade Dobrotin, spoke before me very well and with much passion. He vehemently protested against the remnants of Stalinism in the field of consciousness.

He told us the story of those leaders in a province who -- after a drunken party -- started a fire on the terrace of a sanatorium and imposed disciplinary measures against the person responsible for cultural affairs at the sanatorium because he tried to protest. This is a significant example!

At the same time, however, Comrade Dobrotin advised that Comrade Leonov should be called before the CC [Central Committee] and told to write a comedy. And if Comrade Leonov has other wishes? If at the moment he doesn't feel like working for the theater? In accordance with Dobrotin, if the party's CC asks it, Leonov will start writing, obediently, and turn out a good comedy. Are there no other means? You don't seem to understand, Comrade Dobrotin, that this way of thinking also stems from the old methods, that it resembles a bit starting a fire on a terrace. (Applause.)

During your speech you let yourself go about the modern ballet. You expressed regret that on New Year's Eve your actor Popov did a Western dance. I have never danced in my life; simply because I can't dance, be it the waltz, the mazurka or the pas de patineur. But it seems to me that in a small hall it is preferable to do a Western dance rather than the mazurka because for that the hall would be too small.

For many years we tried to invent a real Soviet dance. Finally it was invented. It is called the "Promenade" and requires a lot of room. On putting it on television, the explanations concerning certain steps of this dance took four sessions, but no spectator understood all its finesse. On the other hand Popov learned how to do his dance at once. Evidently it was a simple dance. I should like to know if, performing this on New Year's Eve, Popov did much harm and what the harm was exactly.

Comrade Dobrotin also let himself go on singers without voices. For myself, contrary to him, I like singers without voices. I prefer Bernes and, in general, those who talk instead of sing, their mouths wide open, emitting trills. Of course, the aria Perdona, Celeste Creatura must be sung by a well-trained voice. On the other hand the song The Little Girl Goes toward the Fields needs other qualities. In the field of art, I like everything that is expressive. (Applause.)

In our country, however, certain methods were imposed against which it is necessary to fight. I'm ready to fight against my own

shortcomings still remaining from the past. Precisely because of that, before we take up traditions and innovations I should like to clarify the problem of certain traditions which were imposed in our country. There are good ones and there are very bad ones; for example, the one of playing the Overture of Tchaikovsky's symphony 1812 twice a year.

Comrades, as I understand it, this Overture expresses a very clear political idea -- the idea of the triumph of orthodox religion and autocracy over revolution. It's a bad piece of music written by Tchaikovsky on command. It's a thing Peter Ilyitch was himself ashamed of at the end of his life. I'm not a specialist in the history of music, but I am convinced that this Overture was composed for passing reasons, with the very clear aim of pleasing the church and the monarchy.

Why should the Soviet power humiliate The Marseillaise, the marvelous hymn of the French Revolution, by drowning it out with the noise of church bells? Why should it celebrate the triumph of Czarist ideology, the ideology of the "Black Hundreds"?

But to play this Overture has become a tradition. After the October Revolution, this Overture was played the first time during those years when the expression "cosmopolite without a fatherland" was invented to replace that other expression "dirty Jew."

Among other things, and in certain instances, the latter expression was even printed. On the cover of the [satirical] magazine Crocodile a cartoon appeared during those years presenting a "cosmopolite without a fatherland" of clearly Jewish type, holding a book in his hands on which one could read in big characters the word "GID." [In Russian the words "Gide" -- meaning the French writer Andre Gide -- and "Jid," dirty Jew, are pronounced exactly alike.] Not "André Gide" but simply "Gid."

Neither the cartoonist nor any of those responsible for this scoundrel's joke have been condemned by us. We have preferred to keep quiet, to forget all this, as one could forget that dozens of our best theater and movie people were declared "cosmopolites without a fatherland"; for instance, comrades Yutkevic, Leonid Trauberg, Sutyrki, Kovarski, Bleiman and others present here. They have been authorized to work again, some in the party, some in their particular union. But is it really possible to heal the wounds, to forget what one has suffered for many years, when you were trampled on and covered with mud?

And those who directed this shameful campaign with joy and pleasure, who racked their brains to invent other things and to drag other people into the mire, have they been made to pay for what they did? People don't even reproach them, holding that this would show lack of tact!

The magazine October, edited by Kocetov, has recently become interested in motion pictures. From January to November it published articles smearing all the progress achieved by Soviet films, expressing suspicion towards the critics of the great artists of the older generation and even the new one. These articles were inspired by the same persons who led the campaign of denunciation of "cosmopolites without a fatherland." It seems to me, however, that we should not forget all that happened.

Today many writers are starting to do scripts for the theater or motion pictures denouncing the Stalinist epoch and the cult of the personality. This is because it has become possible and necessary, while three or four years ago it was still thought that Nikita Sergeyovich's speech at the Twentieth Congress was sufficient. A more or less leading official told me this clearly: "Listen, the party has shown infinite courage. Study Comrade Khrushchev's speech, and that's enough. Why stick your nose in this business?"

Today it has become definitely clear that it was not sufficient, that it is necessary for us to think for ourselves, to speak and write for ourselves.

It is very important to unmask Stalin and Stalinism, but the heritage left by Stalinism is not less important. And it is not less important to look around at what surrounds us and to formulate a judgment on events that occur in the social life of art.

Our meetings are conducted in a calm, tranquil, academic tone. In the meantime a very energetic group of rather bad writers hits out viciously in the magazine October against the new literature and nobody answers them in this arena. On the other hand, the very moment Yevtushenko published his poem Baby Yar, this group printed a reply in the journal Literature and Life [Literatura i Zhisn].

Not long ago I happened to be in Italy and America, and I should like to say that what was considered to be a scandal in the West was not Yevtushenko's poem, but the response to it. The local journalists asked me, "What do you think of the new wave of anti-Semitism in the USSR?"

I asked with perplexity what they were talking about. They mentioned Starikov's article and Narkov's poem.

That issue of the journal Literature and Life was shameful, as are the latest issues of the magazine October.

Since the articles in October are aimed at me, it is difficult and embarrassing for me to reply. Difficult but necessary.

The attacks against films carried in October began in the January issue with an article on the picture Peace to Him Who Enters, an article written in an absolutely inadmissible tone of political denunciation. The only error in calculation made by the editorial board was that they failed to name anyone specifically in their denunciation. Ten years ago, after such an article, somebody would be put in chains, forbidden to work, sent to faraway regions. But it is a fact that times have changed and that this denunciation probably wasn't even read. But the denunciation remains!

Then came the attack on the films The Letter that Wasn't Sent, When the Storks Take Their Flight, If This Is Love, Nine Days in a Year. The themes of the accusations were not new. For Nine Days the hero wasn't "positive." The same thing applied to When the Storks Take Their Flight. In The Letter that Wasn't Sent, a decadent pessimism is to be found. Reisman's heroes show moral deficiencies and amorality is decadent.

In the past, one was severly punished for such shortcomings. Today denunciations like these haven't had any consequences, simply because the authorities in charge don't read them or don't even exist any more. That is why neither Kilatozov nor Reisman nor myself were hunted out of the movies, and the magazine became very angry. In the first and second issues of that magazine some terrible articles were published, containing general accusations against everything and everyone. Only the word "cosmopolite" wasn't used. For the rest there was a surprising resemblance to articles published fifteen years ago.

The author of the article that appeared in number two of the magazine October writes among other things: "Whereas the Italians themselves recognize that neorealism is dead, Romm continues to praise it." (I quote from memory.) In fact neorealism is dead. It died with the help of the Vatican and the capitalist censorship. The artists of Italian neorealism created films like Germi's The Railwaymen, di Sica's The Bicycle Thief, Two Coins in the Fountain, Rome 11 O'clock in the Morning and other really great and unforgettable masterpieces.

Never has the film industry under a bourgeois regime created such work before, in any case not as a group and with such unity. All forces were mobilized against Italian neorealism -- the censorship, bribery, threats, sabotage or distribution, violence of all kind. All this in order to destroy, to break, to crush this group of artists. World reaction as a whole went into action against Italian neorealism. At that time a single article was published in our country, unfortunately signed by Polevoi, a man I respect. In that article, Polevoi also attacked Italian neorealism. I was ashamed of that article, a reaction common to all of us. That happened six years ago. We didn't encourage this cur-

rent, which was very close to the Italian CP. They were strangling neorealism and we attacked it! And it was only recently that Solovieva finally wrote a book on neorealism. She wrote it when it was necessary to treat the subject on a historical plane.

Three years ago I ventured to intervene in favor of Italian neorealism. And even today people who insist on the importance of remaining loyal to tradition recall this sin. How did I dare intervene in favor of neorealism? But in my opinion, neorealism has had an influence on the youth. It must be admitted. If this influence existed, it did exist! You have to decide then whether this influence was positive or negative. I know our youth. I know the impression created by the Italian films. I can underline that this influence was real!

Why should we bow in all fields to what is called "the first" as we had to do in the past? I am not at all certain that this "first" is always a good thing. Let's suppose that a lone American genius invented the phonograph and that we developed the invention. Who then should be proud of it? In my opinion we should, because genius wasn't recognized in America while we developed the phonograph. We, to the contrary, make it appear that we invented everything, the cinema, the phonograph, the electric light and the telephone while in fact it was the Americans who developed all these good things. There is no reason why we should be proud of this!

We are combing history hunting for someone who invented the locomotive before Stevenson although we know very well that we didn't build one at that time. We should give ourselves airs because of our lack of efficiency, our backwardness! Those who built the first locomotives, who made the first flight, they were right. We should be proud of being the first to fly into outer space, of having the biggest power stations in the world, and not about what occurred two hundred years ago, about the man who said "E" for the first time, whether it was Dobchinsky or Bobchinsky!

By defending and sometimes inventing this claim to be "the first" at all costs, it's impossible to say how far you can go. Only ten years ago, we tried to cut ourselves off completely from Western culture -- and this, too, was covered by the word "tradition."

I was very happy today to hear Yutkevic speak about innovations and about spending much time in the West. We have lost the habit of considering that something also exists in the West. And this in Russia, the country in the world where more foreign literature is translated than anywhere else. One of the strong points of the Russian intellectuals was precisely the fact that they read all of world literature, that they stood at the top in knowledge of world culture. This, too, is one of our traditions. An excellent tradition which we needn't be reminded of today.

For many years it was the opinion that the only thing wrong with Italian neorealism was that it came from the West. But the neorealists themselves studied at the Experimental Center for the Center -- under fascism -- under the guidance of an underground Communist. They saw Soviet films, studied those films, were taught by a Communist leader. Many of them became Communist directors who -- immediately after the downfall of Mussolini's regime -- took up the banner of Italian progressive art, closely related to ours.

At that time we were in the worst phase of Stalinism. We were denouncing the "cosmopolites without a fatherland" and trying to keep Italian neorealism away. This did us a lot of damage for many years. Let us recall at least this truth in order to understand what world we are living in.

And today when this same gang that condemned to civil death those "cosmopolites without a fatherland," the gang named Kocetov, Sofronov and colleagues, perpetrate an obvious diversion by attacking everything that is good and progressive in Soviet films, I think that to maintain an Olympian calm, or to wait and see what's going to happen is not the correct attitude. (Prolonged applause.)

The first attack was directed against films; but I'm certain that it will touch many other artistic fields if we don't compel these people to keep quiet. As for me, I don't approve of indifference in these matters. And I think it is stupid and unbecoming for a Soviet citizen to maintain an Olympian calm.

Some persons reason like this: "Anyway they don't arrest people any more; and as long as Khrushchev is alive they won't arrest anybody." (Applause.)

This is perfectly plain! They won't arrest anybody; they won't prevent anybody from working; they won't drive anybody away from Moscow and they won't touch your income. And, in general, there won't be bad trouble as in the past. Let's therefore let Kocetov and company act like hooligans! Our leaders will straighten things out!

But such an attitude is in fact also a vestige of the period of the cult of the personality. We can't allow fires to be started on the terrace of a house. But it's precisely a fire that has been started on the terrace of our house!

What we have is a small insignificant group which, however, is unrestrained and following a line clearly different from that of the party.

For the time being nobody is concerned about the problem. We are left with the right to clear it up ourselves. N.S.Khrushchov said more than once, "Do it yourself!" That's why we must get to the bottom of these events. Enough silence!

I ventured to take the floor only in order to make this declaration; and not for any other purpose. (Prolonged applause.)

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