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THE REVOLUTION! 1968 YOUNG SOCIALIST CONVENTION



Delegates at Young Socialist Alliance convention at University of Illinois declare 1969 the "Year of the Antiwar GI." See page 1,090.

Ernest Mandel:

Crisis of the French Franc

Mexican Students
Back Teachers Strike

Art and Literature
in Cuba

YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE HOLDS CONVENTION IN CHICAGO

By Les Evans

Under the slogan "Year of the Anti-war GI," the Young Socialist Alliance held its eighth national convention in Chicago November 28-December 1. The Young Socialists made extensive plans to involve large numbers of American soldiers in antiwar demonstrations to be called for early next year.

The convention marked a big step forward for the American Trotskyist youth organization on the road to winning leadership of the radical student movement in the United States. Held at the Chicago Circle Campus of the University of Illinois, the gathering was more than twice the size of the previous YSA convention held only last February. The four-day sessions were attended by some 800 delegates and observers, including students from 101 college and university campuses in 25 states.

The attention paid to the convention by the newspapers and television, including Associated Press, was testimony to the importance of the gathering. An interview with Mary-Alice Waters, YSA national chairman, was televised nationally during the weekend; Chicago TV gave daily coverage to the sessions, as did local papers; and a two-hour panel debate was televised in the Chicago area in which Peter Camejo, YSA leader at the University of California at Berkeley, and Paul Boutelle, Socialist Workers party candidate for vice-president in the last election, confronted a reactionary state legislator, who opposed allowing the convention to be held on university property.

The New York Times reported December 1 that the American Legion and the Illinois Manufacturers Association also protested the holding of the Young Socialist convention.

High points of the convention sessions included an international panel with representatives from major student organizations in France, Germany, Canada, Mexico, and Japan; a panel discussion in which six U.S. GI's reported on the spread of antiwar sentiment within the army; and a talk by the Marxist author and philosopher George Novack on the topic, "Can the American Workers Make a Socialist Revolution? -- A Marxist Answer to the New Left Critics."

The convention was preceded by three months of discussion in local chapters of the YSA and in the organization's discussion bulletin. The topics included the major current political questions facing the student movement and the broader sectors of the population, the working

class and the black masses in the United States. The main point on the agenda was the involvement of the youth on an international scale in the struggle against the U.S. aggression in Vietnam.

The convention opened with greetings from Yves Salesse, a member of the National Executive Committee of the Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire [JCR] of France until the JCR was outlawed by the de Gaulle regime in June; and Lothar Boepple, a member of the editorial board of the revolutionary Marxist paper, Was Tun, and national secretary of the German section of the Fourth International. Boepple also conveyed greetings from Rudi Dutschke, leader of the left wing of the German SDS [Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund -- German Socialist Student Union], also on the editorial board of Was Tun.

The report on the international situation was given by Mary-Alice Waters. "We are taking our place beside a new generation of revolutionary youth around the world," she said. "The dominant feature of the current radicalization is the drawing of larger and larger layers of young people into organized resistance to the continued rule of capitalism."

She pointed to the struggle between American imperialism and the colonial revolution, centered in Vietnam, as a major factor in the new radicalization of youth in the advanced industrial countries of the West. The great revolutionary upsurge in France in May-June and the fierce struggle of the Mexican students, she said, constitute striking examples of the shakiness of world capitalism, and could be considered to be precursors of coming explosions in the United States.

The revolutionary movement of Communist youth in Czechoslovakia against the Soviet occupation showed, Mary-Alice Waters said, that the movement against capitalism in the West is closely linked to the struggle against bureaucratic rule in the workers states.

The convention voted to send a telegram to the U.S. State Department protesting the arbitrary denial of a visa to British antiwar leader Tariq Ali, who had planned to attend the gathering.

On the opening evening George Novack, a guest speaker, took up the theory and practice of various currents on the left that deny the working class can play a revolutionary role. The currents ranged, he said, from the reformist

Communist and Socialist parties, who support liberal capitalist politicians, to Herbert Marcuse, the major theoretician of the so-called New Left.

Novack paid special attention to the views of those revolutionary black nationalists who tend, on pragmatic grounds, to deny that white workers can undergo the same sort of awakening to radical ideas that they themselves went through in the not too distant past.

Novack analyzed the objective conditions impelling white workers in the direction of a radical change in thinking. He stressed in particular the effects of antiunion legislation, economic instability, and the actions of black and white revolutionary youth. When he ended with a powerful appeal for the building of a mass revolutionary party to guide the struggle to victory, the youthful audience gave him a standing ovation.

Larry Seigle, a member of the YSA's National Executive Committee, reported on the NEC draft resolution, "The '68 Campaign and Beyond: Socialist Youth Politics in America."

He cited evidence showing that the presidential elections had taken place during a general shift to the left, rather than to the right as many capitalist spokesmen have argued. The Vietnam war was the central issue in the election, yet the capitalist candidates Humphrey, Nixon, and Wallace all supported continued U.S. aggression in Vietnam. There was thus no way for voters to express their antiwar views.

Seigle sharply criticized groups like the Students for a Democratic Society that advocated boycotting the election. Their abstention, he pointed out, constituted a failure to challenge the bourgeois monopoly of political power.

He pointed to the growth of the YSA among high-school -- and even junior-high-school -- students, as a sign of the deepening radicalization. Of exceptional significance to the perspectives of the YSA is the fact that most high-school students become workers when they graduate.

At the opening of the discussion on the Afro-American struggle, representatives of the Illinois Black Panther party were given the floor to present their views. This led to a lively exchange on the problem of building a revolutionary black party.

Derrick Morrison, of the YSA's National Executive Committee, reported on the fight for black liberation. He traced the shift of the civil-rights movement away from reliance on the federal

government since 1965. The growth of black student organizations during 1966 marked a new stage of the movement, although initially many were cultural rather than political formations. Early in 1968, campaigns for the teaching of Afro-American history and for black control of schools in black communities catapulted these student organizations into prominent positions on many campuses. A wave of school occupations on college campuses across the country has been succeeded by similar actions in high schools, where black students constitute a majority in many important cities.

Morrison pointed to the Black Panther party as the strongest revolutionary nationalist organization on the scene. Observers were in the audience from Panther party chapters in several states. In the context of general praise for their activities, Morrison called attention to several issues on which the YSA disagrees with present Panther policy such as the Panthers' alliance with the reformist Peace and Freedom Party, and their disbelief in the revolutionary capacities of the white working class.

An especially significant development, Morrison pointed out, has been the growth of radical black caucuses inside the trade unions. He mentioned in particular the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement [DRUM] in Detroit and the recent strike of black transit workers in Chicago.

Carol Lipman gave the report on the struggle against the Vietnam war. The last six months, she said, have seen contradictory tendencies in the antiwar movement. Among the general population there has been a deepening of antiwar sentiment. In Dearborn, Michigan, the only place in the country where a referendum was held on the war during the November elections, a majority voted for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam. The participation of more than 1,000 active-duty American servicemen in demonstrations called by the Student Mobilization Committee in October marked a new stage of exceptional significance in the development of the antiwar movement.

On the other hand, a layer of reformist and pacifist elements that had been part of the antiwar coalition deserted during the elections, lured by the demagoguery of capitalist "peace" candidates. They were complemented by certain ultraleft grouplets, who were against building mass mobilizations against the war, believing that small bands of heroes can "spark" the masses by immolating themselves in "confrontations" with the police.

Carol Lipman called on YSAers to

devote themselves to building the "National GI-Civilian Antiwar Conference" called by the Student Mobilization Committee for December 27-29 in Chicago. The conference will discuss the feasibility of massive antiwar demonstrations in the spring in which large numbers of U.S. soldiers, sailors, and airmen would be invited to participate.

"We see the GI's," she said, "as citizen-soldiers fighting, as citizens, for the right to free speech. We do not call on them to revolt, disobey orders or to desert, just as we would not issue a call today for workers to stage an insurrection. A conscious, massive movement of GI's against the war has the power to end the war."

A special report was given to the convention by Gary Porter, general secretary of the Canadian Young Socialists/Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes, on the occupation of schools by 50,000 French-speaking students in Quebec during October.

The panel of active-duty soldiers, chaired by former GI Howard Petrick, opened with greetings from Pfc. Ed Glover, a YSA member at Fort Benning, Georgia, who has been the victim of legal and physical attacks by the brass for several months. It had been expected that he would be present. But although all charges and restrictions against him were dropped recently as an outcome of defense efforts, he was arbitrarily refused a pass for the Thanksgiving weekend. Minutes before the panel began, a message from him was recorded via telephone.

"Whatever the brass is dishing out to me," Glover said, "I know I can take it because I am backed up by the Young Socialist Alliance. The GI's know that with the help of the YSA and other antiwar groups around the country they can mount a fight against the war in Vietnam."

Pfc. Joe Cole from Fort Jackson, South Carolina, said, "The majority of GI's don't support the war. The army can make it rough for you, but they can't keep you from speaking. If you stand up to them you can win a victory."

Private Joe Miles from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, said, "I've experienced a growing militancy among the enlisted men in the service. They're no longer intimidated by the lifers and the brassThe GI's are beginning to realize that the antiwar movement has their interests at heart. As a black GI I know from first hand that the army is a racist institution. Black GI's are passed over for promotion. Black nationalist sentiment is very high among black GI's, who are more consciously against the war than white soldiers."

Of special interest was the panel on the impact of the spring revolt in France and the Mexican student strike, in those countries and elsewhere. Speakers included Yves Salesse from France; Lothar Boepple from Germany; Ricardo de la Luz, delegated by the National Strike Council of the Mexican students to tour U.S. campuses on its behalf; Jacquie Henderson, editor of the Canadian Young Socialist Forum; and Ken Hayashi, a Japanese exchange student who was active in the Zengakuren Anti-Imperialist Student Commune until he left Japan four months ago.

A panel on the last day of the convention brought together representatives of oppressed minorities in North America: American Indians, Afro-Americans, Mexican-Americans, and a French Canadian.

Before concluding, the convention heard a report on the state of the YSA by Charlie Bolduc, YSA organizational secretary. The convention, he said, registered the YSA's increasing rate of growth. At the convention held last February there were 400 members in the organization. On the first day of the present convention, Bolduc said, there were 725 members. During the convention 60 people applied for membership. They were from 30 cities, including 10 new areas.

Since October 1, about 200 persons had joined, not counting those at the convention.

Bolduc announced the launching of three expansion drives: to bring the membership to 1,000 by the beginning of summer; to raise a fund of \$25,000 by April to expand the national office; and to increase the circulation of the monthly magazine Young Socialist to 10,000 in the spring. The press run of the Young Socialist is presently 8,500.

It was announced that national chairman Mary-Alice Waters would leave the YSA after the convention for assignment in the adult revolutionary movement, in the Socialist Workers party. She was given a standing ovation for the work she did during her years in the YSA.

The convention closed with the singing of "The Internationale."

The delegates met after the public sessions for the election of the new National Committee. A brief plenary meeting of the incoming National Committee followed which elected the National Executive Committee and the national officers. These are: national chairman, Charlie Bolduc; national secretary, Carol Lipman; national organizational secretary, Larry Seigle; and field secretary, Derrick Morrison.

MEXICAN STUDENTS BACK TEACHERS STRIKE

By Ricardo Ochoa

Mexico City

Despite the big campaign in the bourgeois press to start a "back to classes" movement, the students decided by overwhelming majorities in assembly after assembly November 4 to continue their strike until their demands are met.

For all those who had doubts about the authority of the Consejo Nacional de Huelga [CNH -- National Strike Council] among the students, the decision was the clearest possible demonstration of its standing on the campus.

During the week of November 11, debate was reopened on the question. The sector of students more or less influenced by the Partido Comunista de México [PCM -- Communist party of Mexico] started a furious campaign for a return to classes. Those who opposed any hasty re-evaluation of the situation demanded that the teachers be taken into consideration. They were planning a twenty-four-hour work stoppage in the Federal District for November 12.

The prevailing view in the CNH was that the striking teachers ought to be supported. Thus, on November 13, the CNH issued a statement declaring:

"The elementary school teachers in the Federal District have begun a movement for their economic demands and in support of our student movement for democracy....We students firmly support the teachers movement because it marks an important step in the struggle for democracy; because in raising their economic demands independently they are at the same time beginning a struggle against the corruption of the trade unions and their venal leaders....Our fraternal and militant support has been shown by the participation of the student brigades in the popular assemblies held yesterday and in our backing for the work stoppage by the Comité Coordinador de Lucha Magisterial [the Teachers Struggle Coordinating Committee]."

The strike involved 12,000 teachers in 240 schools -- approximately 40 percent of the elementary school teachers in the Federal District.

That same day, the Movimiento Revolucionario del Magisterio [Revolutionary Teachers Movement] headed by Othón Salazar, who follows the PCM line, declared: "The MRM took no part in the strike some teachers carried out yesterday, and if it is mentioned as the promoter of this action that is for the purpose of subject-

ing its members to repression."

He added that the MRM did not think the strike could achieve any gains. He said that strikes were a good means for obtaining certain ends but that this was not a propitious time to utilize this method. Finally he said that, as had already been stated publicly, the MRM was not against the student movement, but the teachers strike was a different question.

The "Communist" faction among the teachers was so clearly exposed that the MRM found itself forced to partially rectify its stand the following day. It was quite obvious that the PCM's desire was to isolate the student struggle from that of the teachers.

According to Salazar the present struggles of the students and the teachers are "different questions." The PCM's treacherous policy could not be more clearly expressed. While the revolutionary students have sought to extend their struggle as broadly as possible to other sectors of the people, the PCM has done what it could to block everything tending in this direction.

If the conditions created by the student movement are not propitious today for linking up the struggles of all sectors of the Mexican people, then such conditions will never exist in Mexico.

The government dropped its charges November 13 against thirty-five students, most of whom had been arrested on October 2 [the day of the massacre in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas].

In addition to the question of the teachers strike, the students in the CNH and the assemblies have deliberated at length on the perspectives of their own struggle and what course to take.

One thing began to emerge clearly -- the treacherous position of many representatives from the schools under PCM influence. On November 14 at a heated general assembly in the Escuela Nacional de Economía [National School of Economics], the students were on the point of recalling two of their rotating delegates to the CNH -- Guillermo Fernández and Carlos Schaffer, who had voted on November 12 to resume classes.

The two argued, in defense of their position, that "the strike was no longer any political or practical solution." They also pointed to the recent poor attendance in the schools and finally to the decline of the student propa-

ganda brigades. The assembly disregarded these arguments and voted to support the CNH.

Furthermore, Marcelino Perelló, who is the PCM's authoritative voice in the CNH, also found himself in difficulties. The students at the College of Sciences, who elected him to the CNH, disavowed him at another heated assembly.

It all began with the reading of a letter from Gilberto Guevara, the school's former CNH delegate, who is being held in Lecumberri prison. Guevara wrote of "Perelló's treacherous attitude," and of a series of "acts committed by Perelló which out of political ethics were better left unmentioned."

It was obvious that the PCM was floundering after its monumental error of failing to support the student strike and not linking it up with popular struggles. Moreover, the PCM members in the CNH were unmasked, not because anyone forced them to expose themselves but because they boastfully declared that they were following the PCM.

Perelló made his position still more provocative when he declared publicly that he had voted against the strike, although there was a tacit agreement among the members of the CNH that once a position was decided on, all would publicly defend it.

Now that the student movement has reached a decisive stage, the political struggle within it is sharpening. The PCM is trying to find a way to prevent the CNH from becoming a permanent student organization, among other reasons because its own organization, the Central Nacional de Estudiantes Democráticos [National Federation of Democratic Students], would find itself faced with a serious challenge from the left. Furthermore, the PCM's prime policy is to destroy anything it cannot control.

The need became apparent, however, in the face of the government's evident determination to hold firm against the students' demands, to begin to find new methods of struggle. It is true that thirty-five students were released, but their places were soon filled by others.

On November 13, two Canadian journalists, Peter Churchill and Richard Quin, were deported. In a bulletin, the Secretaría de Gobernación [Ministry of the Interior] said: "Early this month they established contact with some groups of students with whom they began filming scenes pretending that some youths were tortured by what were purported to be police." These journalists in fact came for the Olympic Games.

Arrested with them were the Mexicans Héctor Castro y Bailleres, Guillermo Stahl Cepeda, and Arturo Flores Durán. The government sent them to join the ranks of the political prisoners in Lecumberri.

Also on November 13, sixty-five leaders of the teachers strike were fired.

On November 18, the university council published a shameful declaration equating the "extremist" forces among the students with those repressing them. The council sought to stand in splendid neutrality although in reality it supplied material to the most reactionary forces who talk about the "great risk the university is running."

Pointing to the example of the governor of Sinaloa, who canceled the appropriation to the state university, Secretary of the Interior Luis Echeverría made veiled threats that this might happen to the UNAM [Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México -- National Autonomous University of Mexico].

The final tip-off as to the tack the government proposes to take toward the student movement was given by, of all people, Fidel Velázquez, the secretary of the CTM [Confederación de Trabajadores de México -- Labor Federation of Mexico], which covers the overwhelming majority of the unionized Mexican workers.

In a speech November 15 before a thousand Federal District union leaders, he said: "Today's papers report that the so-called Consejo Nacional de Huelga recently decided to push the strike so far as not to gain its demands but to raise others...It decided to call together only the group behind the movement because it realized that the majority of the students were opposed to continuing the strike...as the students have shown every time they have met in their colleges or schools..."

"The so-called student movement never had any justification on any occasion or at any time, because it did not raise educational-type demands...at present this movement is unjustified however you look at it, and not only unjustified but criminal, because it constrains the freedom of the majority of students to devote themselves to preparing for their profession...."

And, continuing in his own peculiar way of talking, he added: "In keeping up the strike, the Consejo Nacional de Huelga people also announced yesterday that they were going to try to redouble their work to make the government knuckle under, that they were going to put on the heat for support from the workers for their movement, from the elementary school

teachers, and from the other universities in the country. They said they were going to do this to build up their movement and extend it to other parts of the population. So, it is very likely in the days to come that the working class will again be besieged by this movement's promoters. Therefore, the CTM thinks that the directives given up to now, which were given only to defend the unity, the discipline, the rights, and the gains of the workers, aren't enough anymore to prevent the infiltration of enemies into the ranks of the working class.

"Up to now the CTM hasn't resorted to violence on any occasion to stop the so-called student movement. It has combated it with ideas and it is ready to keep on fighting with ideas because we think we can beat these so-called students anywhere they want to take us on. But if the students mess with us, if they try to harm the union organizations, if they try to undermine the unity of the organization, break discipline, forcibly detract the workers' rights, we want to warn the workers that while we've got to be ready to argue with ideas we've got to likewise answer violence against the workers organization."

At this point the "union" delegates rose to pay tribute with thunderous applause to Fidel Velázquez' threats against the student movement.

Later on, he added: "There is no need to defend the government because the government can stand up for itself; there is no need here to sing the praises of the president of the republic, Dr. Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, because his personal dignity remains intact and is much too great for the attacks of these people. What is in question pure and simple is defending the unity of the workers movement which the promoters of the subversive student movement are out to break up. They know and they have realized in these months that they have to struggle, that without the help of the workers the conditions won't ever be propitious for getting anywhere with their ends; but they have realized it too late, after trying their luck and thinking naively that they could tear down our trade-union institutions with nothing but a student plot.

"Now they are changing their tactics. They are looking for the support of the trade-union movement; they admit that without it they're not going to have any luck in getting what they're after. They want to capture the minds of the workers at all cost. But the workers have a clear understanding of their historical mission, of its content in the struggle, of their well-defined aims which will lead them to assuring their rights and gains. They are

not going to be suckers for crooks or boobs, because if they fell for this the gains, the rights, the unity, the discipline, and everything that the workers have built with their strong and vigorous hands would go down the drain. Therefore, they have confidence in us, and so the CTM has confidence that the workers will never be suckers for these people, who don't offer the least practical program for workers. And even if they did offer one, they wouldn't be able to put it over because they don't have the means or the weapons that the workers movement in our country has."

After dealing with "the lugubrious portrait the nation presents in the economic and social fields," Fidel Velázquez exhorted the assembled bureaucrats to undertake more resolute action: "You can't fight the enemy just with words, and you can't satisfy the workers organization with empty offers...We do not agree with those sectors who think that you can defeat our enemies while emasculating the revolution, and emasculating the working class, and hanging on to obsolete institutions."

Having accused the students of being "crooks," this bureaucrat had to make a show of defending the interests of the masses. Thus he took a slap at the "management sectors." However demagogic his words were, they spoke volumes about what is going on deep within the working class: "The management sector, which still enjoys innumerable privileges...is running greater risks by its attitude than we could run. But it is hanging on to the past...There has never been such a large proportion of rich men as today in Mexico. There are more than a hundred multimillionaires with a capital of more than a billion pesos [12 pesos = US\$1]. Not even in the time of the [Díaz] dictatorship, when everything was going right for this sector, did it manage to pile up so much capital..."

If any doubts still remain about the impact which the student movement has had on the whole political and social web in Mexico since it began July 26, let me end by quoting these apprehensive words of Fidel Velázquez: "From now on, if we want to survive this new stage we are witnessing, the labor unions must demonstrate that they are really and truly effective defenders of the working class."

If you use the correct term "union bureaucracy" where Velázquez says "labor unions," you get an idea of the situation in which this group, which constitutes part of the underpinning of the regime, finds itself as a result of the overall challenge mounted by the student movement to an utterly corrupt society.

"WHEN THE WAR ENDS: A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES"

[If anything has been revealed by the Paris "peace" negotiations, it is the reluctance of the U.S. government to get out of Vietnam. Johnson's bombing "halt" notwithstanding, the American negotiators have made it plain that the U.S. will do everything in its power to protect the corrupt Saigon dictatorship from the revolutionary Vietnamese masses.

[Why have the White House, State Department and Pentagon proved so stubborn about staying in Vietnam? According to their propaganda, their interests are solely altruistic. They want to help a weak little nation that is being picked on by a rapacious neighbor. They sent U.S. troops there to defend freedom and democracy.

[The article below, rather notable for its frankness, would indicate that they have less noble motives. It appeared originally in the February 1968 issue of Nation's Business, the official publication of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Representative Richard T. Hanna of California found it so "thought-provoking" that he placed it in the Congressional Record (May 27). This is the source from which we have taken this enthusiastic and illuminating prospectus.]

* * *

It is almost axiomatic in history that businessmen and traders follow behind the bayonets and bullets. Not to battle on misery, but to foster the civilized pursuits of industry and commerce.

The vast growth of American business in Europe followed World War II and the revival of a peaceful and prosperous continent.

Earlier, British businessmen poured into India, Africa and a hundred other places in the wake of British Tommies and the Royal Navy. Rome conquered most of the known world and Rome-directed commerce immediately sprang up behind the legions.

Certainly creation of trade and commerce has not been the motive of warfare, but the laying down of arms and the rebuilding and reappraisals that come with peace inevitably seed the fields for business opportunities.

Now, another such opportunity is near -- a time when business will tap the rich expanses of Southeast Asia.

The best thinkers on the subject in business and government agree that magnificent business opportunities await in Viet Nam, Thailand, Laos, Indonesia, Ma-

laysia and Singapore. As the military situation in Viet Nam improves, they expect the flow of business to double, triple and quadruple.

There are dark spots and danger areas, of course, but nothing is foreseen that would keep Southeast Asia from becoming an industrial-business outpost of the first water.

Danger areas are Cambodia, Burma and the Philippines where foreign investment -- and oftentimes specifically American private enterprise -- is either not encouraged or actively discouraged.

Dark spots include the lingering uncertainties of the Viet Nam war, difficulties of doing business in areas that Americans know little about, proximity of Red China and the necessity of dealing with foreign bureaucrats.

The Administration's actions to improve our balance of payments by restricting dollar-investments abroad were not to reduce investments in less developed areas.

The President's plan could even increase investments in Southeast Asia because they are curtailed in other developed areas.

Of great concern, now that investment and business opportunities appear on the rise, is how slowly Americans are moving. They might be beaten to the draw by Japanese and Taiwanese businessmen.

More Japanese and Taiwanese than Americans are looking for business, exploring trade outlets, seeking assembly sites, signing up Asian partners, plunking down money and pouring talent into investment opportunities.

Many well-known American businesses are in Southeast Asia, even in Viet Nam -- Bank of America, and Chase Manhattan Bank, Foremost Dairies, Caltex, Esso, American Trading Company, Landis Brothers and Co., Inc., Brownell Lane Engineering Co., American Chemical and Drug Co., U.S. Summit Corp., Raymond International, Morrison-Knudsen, Brown and Root, J.A. Jones Construction Co., Getz Brothers and Co., Layne Wells International, Inc., National Cash Register Co., Pfizer, Sterling Drug International and American International Underwriters, to name a few.

But that's only a handful compared to the number that could be there, Agency for International Development people insist, especially in view of the protection provided for American investments

and the concessions offered by Southeast Asian governments to get foreign business.

Herbert Salzman, a former businessman who is now Assistant Administrator for Private Resources for AID, says: "Southeast Asia is a challenge to the U.S. government and an opportunity for U.S. private business. AID is making great efforts to use its people and money to help in the adjustment of the traditional societies to the pressures of the modern world. But government efforts can only lay the foundation.

"It's up to private organizations to build on that foundation.

"The U.S. government encourages by eliminating some of the risks.

"Today we are seeing the development of multinational companies after we have already witnessed the development of the vertically integrated and the diversified companies.

"In Southeast Asia there is a tremendous surge in purchasing power as a direct and indirect effect of the U.S. presence.

"This creates markets and an effective demand for products, many of which could and should come from the United States.

"Yet Japanese investment is sharply increasing. Why shouldn't our business share in the profitable investment opportunities? Although American investors are increasing, many firms which would be sharing in these markets are holding back -- afraid to do what they are in business to do, to take risks and earn profits."

The American businessman calling on AID or the Department of Commerce for information on doing business in Southeast Asia meets a snowstorm of facts, figures, reports of feasibility studies, situation reports, estimates and suggestions.

Eager for American Investments

Forming the backbone of the effort to get U.S. business into the area are investment protections offered by the federal government and inducements to invest offered by most Southeast Asian governments.

Viet Nam, for example, offers these various exemptions:

No taxes on profits or dividends for five years.

No tax on real estate, mines, quarries, land and royalties for three years.

No tax on rural property and loan contracts for two years.

There are no import duties planned on spare parts and equipment and there is a 25 percent tax exemption on reserves built up from retained earnings if they are used for expansion.

The American businessman moving into the Viet Nam market is protected 100 percent by the federal government against expropriation, inconvertibility of currency and war risk. He is protected up to 75 percent of his debt capital on extended risk, including commercial risk, and 50 percent of his equity investment.

Another incentive provided by the federal government allows a company to go into a high risk foreign country like Viet Nam on a management contract with little initial investment. It also provides the opportunity to buy into the foreign company later.

If he decides to make a prior survey of his business chances in Viet Nam and subsequently finds the market not worth the candle, AID pays half of his expenses. This includes costs the businessman incurred in sending representatives abroad, their hotel, food and incidental expenses.

The Rand Corp. has gone into the prospects of getting profits out of Viet Nam and says: "Many of the new industrial investment projects launched within the past five years experienced rates of return of the order of 20 to 40 percent; and capital recovery in two or three years has not been unusual."

Healthy Business Climate

In addition, the federal government is one of the major contributors to two projects which are expected to go a long way toward making Southeast Asia a healthy place for American business. They are the Asian Development Bank and the Mekong River Basin Development.

The Asian Bank is modeled after the World Bank. It makes loans with money supplied by contributing nations for a wide variety of betterment projects. The United States plays a large hand in control of the bank by virtue of being the major contributor, along with Japan, though the bank is run on a day-to-day basis by Asians.

The Mekong Basin plan is under way though the pace is slow.

The project is expected eventually to include 14 dams along the Mekong and its tributaries in Laos, nine in Cambodia and five each in Thailand and

South Viet Nam.

Hydroelectric power and flood control would be provided for most of the 150 million people who live within 1,000 miles of Saigon. The new source of power would benefit both agriculture and business.

The war in Viet Nam is changing the country down to the grass roots. What the long-range effects will be, no one can say. But it is already evident that there is a growing taste for Western goods and facilities. American business methods are showing up in all-Viet companies. They have nearly completely replaced French and traditional Vietnamese methods.

American businesses being established in Viet Nam, through investments, acquisitions, partnerships or subsidiaries, will find an expanding network of communications, highways, waterways, docks and airports, every one of which could be useful to industry or commerce.

In the past few years, six new deepwater ports have been built, eight shallow draft ports, eight jet air bases with 12 new 10,000-foot runways, 80 smaller fields, scores of bridges and hundreds of miles of roads, oil tanks and pipelines, storage and maintenance facilities and housing for 325,000 soldiers, much of it convertible into housing for industrial workers.

Each month thousands of Vietnamese receive industrial and business training, either elementary or advanced, and they go into a manpower pool which can be useful to American private business someday.

Fighting has not stopped a huge construction program of private and community facilities. These projects will be useful to businesses locating in the area when the fighting is finished.

Projects include water systems, road and canal extensions, schools, hospitals, warehouses and civil aviation.

The Rand Corp. goes so far as to say: "Looking at the general conduct of industrial activity in Viet Nam today, we do not get the impression that this activity is in fact directly hampered by the war, industrial installations appear to operate without interruption and Viet Cong molestations are trivial. The problem of military insecurity appears to be much more psychological than an actual hurdle."

In the past 12 months there has been a big increase in the number of Vietnamese entrepreneurs who have money of their own and want to invest it, often in agricultural cooperatives.

What they want is to form partnerships, with the Americans supplying managerial and technical expertise.

The Governor of the Vietnamese National Bank said recently, "Don't send me your money, send me people who know how to do things."

Viet Nam is beyond doubt one of the prime investment points for American know-how in Southeast Asia. But there are others.

Other Opportunities

Thailand -- This is one of the most promising underdeveloped nations in the world. It should become increasingly so as the Viet Nam war draws toward a close. The government is dictatorial but it is effective and stable and so is the economy. GNP goes up 7.3 percent yearly. The population of 31 million is leaping ahead.

Thais generally applaud U.S. military actions in Viet Nam -- for obvious reasons. They would be the next likely target for communist aggression.

The country has a big windfall from U.S. military spending in both Viet Nam and Thailand. Foreign business is encouraged in a variety of ways by the royal Thai government. Among the best bets for success are businesses involving agriculture, fertilizers, cotton processing, manufacturing, zinc and tin mining, tourism.

On the other hand, insurgents are in the Northeast, Red China is close by and a shaky Laos is just next door.

Laos -- This is a small country of three million people with limited market possibilities, but there is a need for nearly everything. The government is neutralist with a western slant. Its hold on the country is tenuous. However, it has survived many upheavals. North Vietnamese and Viet Cong invade Laos on the way to and from South Viet Nam but so far little has been done about it. The Vietnamese war could lap over someday.

The government actively seeks foreign business investment and offers many concessions. One American firm is looking into getting lumber out of Northeast Laos and shipping it to U.S. forces in Thailand.

Indonesia -- This can be the great sleeper for U.S. business when the Vietnamese shooting dies down. Indonesia can also become the giant of Southeast Asia.

There are 160 million Indonesians, and after the debacle of the Sukarno years Indonesia, like Laos, needs everything.

Banking institutions and creditor nations keep Indonesia afloat with renegotiated loans until wild inflation can be tamed. It is being tamed and this is necessary for business. In 1965, the year Sukarno and his communists were overthrown, inflation reached 2,000 percent. In 1966 it was 650 percent. Last year it was 75 percent.

The military government of General Suharto seems set for a long run, Indonesia has rejoined the UN World Bank and Asian Development Bank. The people want nothing so much as time and peace to develop their fantastically fertile islands and get business started again on a profitable basis, usually privately oriented.

There is a good private investment law and it is to be improved this year. Many an American business expropriated by Sukarno is being restored. A half dozen of the largest U.S. chemical and mining companies are either setting up operations in Indonesia or completing feasibility studies which generally indicate the country is worthwhile as an investment site. Four American banks have recently moved in.

Best bets are in minerals, forest products, oil, tourism, manufacturing, agriculture and agri-business.

Malaysia and Singapore -- These are different countries, but they can be treated together because of their joint British heritage and because they occupy an Asian peninsula which American business is finding attractive.

Britain's victory over Malayan communists 20 years ago set the stage for an improving economy.

As the British pull out of their old possessions east of Suez, the Yanks move in. This includes business influence, especially in Singapore.

Furthermore, if Hong Kong slips in influence because of pressure from Red

China, then Malaysia and Singapore will grow still more in importance.

Singapore, with a population of two million, is well governed and strictly western oriented. The people are literate; they have a growing money supply and desire for American products. A New York office has been opened to promote investments. Main objectives are to increase light manufacturing facilities, cut down on imports and reduce unemployment.

Malaysia is an excellent place for private investments. There is a good investment law and Malaysian money is strong. GNP goes up six percent yearly. A large bond issue was recently floated on the New York market.

Several American companies have moved into a new industrial park near Kuala Lumpur. Three American banks have branches in the country along with American chemical companies, paper manufacturers and agri-business concerns.

Taiwan -- Business followed the bayonets during and after the Korean war 18 years ago. This was the making of Taiwan, home of the Republic of China, an island nation which American school kids were taught to call Formosa. The big island is getting another economic shot in the arm because of Vietnamese fighting.

Taiwan already is heavily industrialized and getting more so as American businesses move in and as Chinese businesses increase and grow. GNP goes up a fast-paced 9.7 percent yearly. In 1960, exports were \$164 million; in 1966, \$536 million. They should hit \$1 billion in less than 20 years.

The list of U.S. companies already on Taiwan and those coming to the island reads like a New York telephone book.

Taiwan has such U.S. investment potential that AID ended its programs there -- Taiwan can take care of itself.

NEW ZEALAND SEAMEN REFUSE TO SERVICE U.S. CARRIER FROM VIETNAM

The Seamen's Union in Wellington, New Zealand, refused to bring U.S. soldiers ashore from the carrier America November 18. They also refused to service or supply the vessel as a protest against the Vietnam war.

"In line with Federation of Labour and Labour Party policy," the union said in a statement to the press, "...our efforts since the onset of the war and in particular since New Zealand's involvement, have been aimed at the withdrawal

of United States, New Zealand and all aggressive troops in Vietnam. Our refusal to man Union Steam Ship Company tugs to supply stores and ferry men to and from their recreation is a further indication of our stand in operations."

The Wellington Harbour Board and U.S. government agencies were forced to rent tourist launches from the nearby town of Picton to ferry the military personnel ashore. The seamen stood firm in their antiwar action.

THE CRISIS OF THE FRENCH FRANC

By Ernest Mandel

The Death Agony
of the International Monetary System

Three storms in three years' time, that is what the barometer of the international monetary system reveals. There was the devaluation of the pound in November 1967, the dollar crisis in March, and now we have the crisis of the French franc which threatens to extend to all the European currencies, except the Deutsche Mark [DM] (and secondarily the Swiss franc and the Dutch florin). Even the dollar is threatened. The future of the system created at Bretton Woods is more than somber. This system is sick. It has entered into its death agony. This death agony may be long, and it takes no Cassandra to predict that the longer its death agony is, the more excruciating it will be.

The bourgeois commentators single out -- each according to his taste -- as the chief cause of the crisis either the May events in France, speculation, floating capital, or "hot money." They overlook the main item -- the worldwide crisis which is inexorably undermining the buying power of all the capitalist currencies. The capitalist world could escape this inflation on only two conditions. It must either stop spending for arms and wars or accept the risk of an economic crisis of the 1929 type. Capitalism cannot accept either of these two conditions. If they were accepted it would only mean that the international bourgeoisie had chosen a quick death over prolonged suffering. Thus, inflation will persist and with it the crisis of the international monetary system.

Doubtless a temporary resuscitation is possible. The expedients proposed to achieve this are well known -- raising the price of gold; creating a "central bank currency"; pooling all the exchange reserves of the West European countries (beginning with the reserves of the Common Market countries) in a "Eurofranc" (with or without fusion with the pound) which would serve as a new international reserve currency. The latter presupposes a new stage in the economic unification of capitalist Europe, a decisive advance, because a common currency entails a common government, that is, a common state. The technicians have no lack of choices.

All these solutions are theoretically possible in the context of the international capitalist economy. None of them would undermine the foundations of the capitalist mode of production. But each of them entails considerable sacri-

fices for sections of the world bourgeoisie, in some cases the sacrifice of interests and immediate profits, in some the sacrifice of sovereignty, and in some political prestige and power. This means that the new world monetary conference which the Nixon administration will doubtless call next year seems fated to be difficult and that even these expedients will not be easy to apply.

None of these expedients, however, cease to be what they are -- devices to gain time, to postpone a new monetary crisis without dealing even remotely with the fundamental cause. I wrote seven years ago that neocapitalism is caught in a vise from which it cannot escape. International exchanges and payments -- on which capitalist "prosperity" is increasingly dependent -- require a stable currency. But a policy aimed against crises, recessions and business cycles requires a flexible currency. The one goal cannot be obtained without sacrificing the other.

Thus the successive tempests which have shaken all these currencies prove that "modern," "technocratic," "managed" capitalism has by no means succeeded in overcoming its fundamental contradictions. The defeat of the pound, the franc, and the dollar is a triumph for Karl Marx, that is, a blatant demonstration of the incurable sickness of the capitalist system. The ability to sell 200,000,000 television sets and 100,000,000 cars, thanks to constant inflation of the volume of money, may have suggested that prosperity had become permanent. The crisis of the capitalist currencies is a harsh reminder of the reality. This "prosperity" is a house of cards that can be toppled by any gust of wind.

Working for the King of Prussia*

Luck would have it that it is Schiller's turn to be the minister presiding over the "Club of the Ten" which includes the ten major imperialist powers of the world. The club meeting called to decide the fate of French finances was therefore held in Berlin. Chance is often responsible for many things. It made possible a spectacular demonstration of the change in the relationship of forces in capitalist Europe which had actually already occurred years ago. As the November 28 London Times observed with both

* A French expression meaning to work for little or nothing. The early kings of Prussia were notorious for penny-pinching. -- I.P.



IN THE PAY OF KING OF PRUSSIA

No. 1 United States satellite in Europe," or at least Washington's "most favored ally." This is an oversimplification of a much more complex relationship.

It is true that the West German bourgeoisie, deprived of all real military power, could reconstruct its industrial power only under the Pentagon's nuclear umbrella. But it is still more true that its revival expresses economic realities independent of all foreign aid -- an industrial production far exceeding that of any other European power, an export boom, a technological level and advance toward automation ahead of the rest of the continent.

Even more can be said. Bonn's industrial and financial expansion -- the solidity of the Deutsche Mark is the result of an enormous excess of exports over imports which expresses a competitive power unrivaled in Europe or in the world -- today frightens American imperialism. It frightens the American imperialists to such an extent that they have been concentrating all their efforts on getting a revaluation of the DM, which would limit German exports, beginning with those to the USA (in the first six months of 1968 these increased 48 percent over the corresponding period in the previous year!). Schiller's "no" was not so much a "no" to de Gaulle or Wilson. It was a "no" to Washington. At that moment something fundamental changed, not only in the relationship of forces in Europe but in the relationship of forces between Germany and the United States.

realism and a certain bitterness, this crisis may represent the turning point in the development of power relationships in Europe. The German Federal Republic has emerged as the main power of capitalist Europe.

I also predicted this at the time de Gaulle precipitated the first crisis in the Common Market. The only possible counterweight against the West German bourgeoisie's clear superiority in capitalist Europe would be the entry of Great Britain into the Common Market and the acceleration of the trend toward the interpenetration of capital in Europe.

There would have been no West German hegemony in the giant multinational companies owned by the German, British, French, Italian, Benelux, Swiss, and Swedish capitalists. When de Gaulle blocked Great Britain's entry into the Common Market and tried to defend "French sovereignty" over the factories in France, the German drive for hegemony became irresistible. The general was working for the king of Prussia.

The origin of this hegemony and its limits must be understood. In Eastern Europe they like to consider Bonn as "the

Since Bonn refused to revalue the DM, de Gaulle was confronted with a clear ultimatum -- either devalue the French franc or apply a severe austerity policy. The "Ten" forced this choice on him, the same way they imposed the "incomes policy" on Wilson last year. If he had not done one of these two things, he would not have gotten the two billion dollars in credit which would make it possible to stop up the breach opened by speculation. He delighted Washington and London by choosing austerity instead of devaluation. Any new devaluation would have immediately undermined the stability of the pound and subjected even the dollar to a harsh test.

The policy of the imperialist powers today is a dialectical unity of two opposites -- interimperialist competition and imperialist solidarity against common enemies and dangers. In November as in May, the feeling that "we are all in the same boat" quickly took the place of Schadenfreude [enjoying the misery of others]. They were very happy to see de Gaulle's prestige seriously damaged, but a collapse of the French currency threatened to rock the entire international monetary system. Still, within the

framework of the solidarity which played the fundamental role, competition did not lose its claims. The main center of decision making in Europe moved from Paris to Bonn.

The next move is up to the German bourgeoisie. They can play it in one of two ways. They can give immediate economic interests priority or they can favor their long-range political interests. The first orientation would mean giving fresh impetus to the Common Market, putting pressure on de Gaulle to drop his veto of Great Britain's entry, accelerating the interpenetration of European capital, creating a common European currency. The second orientation would mean giving priority to the establishment of a "European striking force," that is, secure the access to nuclear weapons which the West German bourgeoisie have coveted for fifteen years. This would bring the military relationship of forces into line with the relationship of economic forces. It would at the same time open up an international crisis of extreme gravity in Europe, because it is unlikely that the Soviet Union would stand by passively in the face of the nuclear rearmament of the principal capitalist power on the continent.

From the May Revolution to the March Meeting

From the technical standpoint, the cause of the crisis of the franc was different from the cause of the downfall of the pound. The latter was precipitated by a chronic deficit in the balance of payments, the expression of the structural crisis of British imperialism. The cause of the crisis of the franc was a speculative flight of capital which in the space of a few months drained away almost half of France's exchange reserves.

However, all those, from de Gaulle to Fowler, the American secretary of the treasury, who say that the French economic situation remains "fundamentally sound" pass over an essential aspect of the franc crisis.

In order to absorb the revolutionary crisis of May-June 1968, the French bosses and government had to concede wage increases which raised labor costs by 15 percent and cost prices by at least 5 percent. French industry's competitive capacity, already reduced as a result of German (and in some sectors Italian) technological superiority, and damaged by the devaluation of the pound, was struck another blow. French imports already exceed exports by 6 percent. The more rapid rise in prices in France than in Germany, Great Britain, or Italy, could only accentuate this disequilibrium. The speculators, by anticipating a future gold and

currency drain caused by a worsening of the balance-of-payments deficit, obviously precipitated this development. But they did not cause it. It was inherent in the logic of the Grenelle agreements.*

The Gaullist economic policy has now been stamped with the seal of total incoherence. Logically there are two alternatives for absorbing the rise in production costs -- expansion, that is a rapid increase in productivity (it has been estimated that almost 30 percent of productive capacity was unutilized on the eve of the revolutionary upsurge of May 1968!); or devaluation, that is, restoring competitiveness, compensating for increased costs in francs by cutting the cost of the franc in terms of foreign currency. The Couve de Murville cabinet has constantly vacillated between expansion and deflation.

By playing the deflationary card now -- because that is what austerity comes down to! -- it is accelerating the rising cost of living still more (in the guise of the charges for public services) while slowing the increase in productivity (by reducing investment, the rate of utilization of the productive apparatus, or even aggregate demand, if unemployment rises rapidly). Thus, it is making inroads into the competitiveness of French industry on both sides. Export subsidies will not change much in this regard unless imports are taxed at the same time to a point that would break up the whole Common Market.

But this economic incoherence has a striking social meaning. In the grip of the "great fear" of May, when socialist revolution was beating at the door, the French bourgeoisie wanted to save the essential thing, that is, its class power. It rallied behind its supreme savior and was ready to pay the bill. But once the fear receded, they became their old selves again.

De Gaulle had the outlandish idea of levying some small taxes on large incomes and inheritances in order to limit inflation. Immediately a mutiny broke out. What a "psychological blunder"! What "an Invitation to the Waltz," that is, to a flight of capital! Putting a knife to the throat of the French government, in a couple of visits to the Zurich and Frankfurt banks, big capital forced it to change its economic and social policy from top to bottom. The workers themselves will pay the bill for May. The wage earners will take the beating instead of the speculators. That is the logic of the capitalist system.

* The agreements with the unions which ended the May-June general strike.

Now all these nice people are unmasked and the spectacle is not exactly an attractive one. Patriotism is good for sending soldiers to be killed, or, in a pinch, for stampeding the electorate. But above all, don't let anybody ask us to sacrifice our hoards in the interest of the country. When it is a question of winning or losing 10 percent, the national borders disappear.

The general's nationalist rhetoric is good for naive television viewers or for André Malraux's anthologies. But when the speculators crack the whip, de Gaulle cringes like any undersecretary of state of the Fourth Republic. Put revolutionary students in prison, right away! But neither prison nor confiscation will touch the profits -- to say nothing of the fortunes -- of big capital which is trying to bring down the franc. They prefer to freeze wages. That is obviously easier.

What a comedown, what a revolting comedy! But also what an object lesson for 10,000,000 French workers. In May they had power within their grasp. On the advice of misleaders, they let it go in exchange for two illusions -- the illusion of parliamentary elections, which in an imperialist "democracy" cannot help but be manipulated; and the illusion of wage increases, which big capital can absorb rapidly by price and tax increases. This will no doubt be completed by the beginning of 1969.

It is true that the patriotic refrain is already being heard again. And, in the wake of a three-billion-dollar capital flight organized by the French

bourgeoisie, a paper like Le Monde* was not ashamed to write: "The French people are no less all in the same boat." (November 26.)

Are they really in the same boat? Will the costs be distributed "equitably" after an "equitable" distribution of the profits? Where is the tax on capital which would confiscate all the profits of the speculators? Where is the opening of the books and the elimination of banking secrecy which would make it possible to track down all these profits and show that a part of the capital sent abroad was made up of state credits accorded to businesses? Where is the workers control which would deprive the employer-speculators of the power to impose their will like a divine right on the workers in the plants when they have lost all moral credit?

This is what the workers will remember at the March meeting, when the accounting will have to be made. This is what must arouse them to an energetic defense of their June 1968 economic gains. This above all is what must arouse them to aim higher than their trade-union leaders did in May and June -- to set their sights on power in the plants and power in the state, without which no gain can be consolidated. In taking the option of a frontal attack against the jobs and wages of the workers, de Gaulle has ensured a singular hastening of the next social explosion in France.

* The French daily, equivalent in standing to the New York Times or the London Times. -- I.P.

ELDRIDGE CLEAVER BACKED BY TARIQ ALI, BERTRAND RUSSELL, STEPHEN SPENDER

Bertrand Russell, antiwar leader Tariq Ali, and the poet Stephen Spender were among the signers of a letter published in the November 25 London Times demanding that U.S. Black Panther party leader and author Eldridge Cleaver not be imprisoned for an alleged violation of his parole.

"Eldridge Cleaver," the letter said, "...was released on parole in 1965 after serving nine years in prison. In April this year he was arrested following a confrontation between the racist Oakland police and a group of armed Black Panthers patrolling their own neighbourhood. No police were hurt on this occasion, but 17-year-old Bobby Hutton was shot and killed by the police as he walked from the house with his hands up. In this confrontation Mr. Cleaver was wounded and held in gaol for two months without a hearing."

In response to appeals from Cleaver's defenders in the U.S., the letter called on people to "write to American publications and American Embassies and to circulate the petition demanding the continuation of Eldridge Cleaver's parole. Telegrams and letters should also be sent direct to Henry Kerr of the California State Adult Authority, Sacramento, California, and to Governor Ronald Reagan..."

The authors of the letter described Cleaver's book, Soul on Ice, as "one of the most important statements on the situation of the black man ever written." They announced the formation of the International Committee to Defend Eldridge Cleaver, 7 Carlisle Street, W.1., London. Signers of the letter were Tariq Ali, Michael Foot, Clive Goodwin, Christopher Logue, David Mercer, John McGrath, Adrian Mitchell, Julian Mitchell, Stephen Spender, and Bertrand Russell.

THE SMALL FARMERS IN CUBA

[This is the last of three articles on the situation and perspectives of the small independent farmers in Cuba which appeared in PEL (Panorama Economico Latinoamericano), a weekly bulletin of Prensa Latina, the Cuban news service. Its original title, as published in PEL No. 223, was "State Aid to Private Farmers." We have renumbered the tables referred to so that they follow the tables cited in the first two articles consecutively.]

[The first of the series was republished in the April 19 issue of Intercontinental Press (p. 357); the second in the May 20 issue (p. 449).]

* * *

In general, and from a historical viewpoint, Cuban agriculture has been based on a single crop. Since the second half of the eighteenth century, sugarcane has been the foundation of Cuba's agriculture. It was a sugarcane island with all the implications of a single crop and single export system. Industry also followed suit, through the hundreds of sugar mills spread over the island. Between 1961 and 1963 sugar accounted for somewhat more than 11 percent of the national material product and 85 percent of the export trade. Table No. 5 shows us the structure of the material product from 1961 to 1963.

Table No. 5

Cuba: Material Product
(In %)

<u>Sector</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963</u>
Agriculture	17.1	16.6	15.3
Industry	29.7	30.2	29.0
Construction	7.2	6.8	6.4
Transport and Communication	9.4	7.7	7.3
Others	- -	1.8	1.7
Subtotal	63.4	63.1	59.7
Sugar	14.9	10.2	8.5
Subtotal	78.3	73.3	68.2
Commerce	21.7	26.7	31.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total agriculture including sugarcane	26.7	23.4	21.1
Total industry including sugar	34.9	33.5	31.8

Source: JUCEPLAN (National Planning Board) for 1961. For 1962 and 1963: ECLA estimates; The Cuban Economy during the 1959-63 period (Economic Report of Latin America, 1965).

Within the food sector, the group of products called viandas (root vegetables, plantains, squash) is one of the most important and one of the staples of Cuban diet. The variety of this production -- quite poor -- had to be complemented by imports. Unfortunately these imports were available only to certain urban social sectors.

The Revolution rebelled against this state of things. It rebelled against the cultivation of a single crop -- sugarcane -- and its results, submission to a market that controlled the island politically and economically.

Cuban agriculture began to be diversified and other agricultural and livestock crops began to be developed for export. In a certain sense, sugarcane was looked down upon as a symbol of a forgotten past. During this process, state farms attempted to diversify their production; each productive unit became a mosaic of tropical products.

Everybody worked to replace imports with products that Cuba could produce easily: rice, beans, oleaginous seeds, etc.

To a degree, the country had to pay for its inexperience: sudden diversification of agriculture was not possible and instead led to a decrease in sugarcane production. Keeping in mind that these years were characterized by adverse climatic conditions, Cuba had in 1963 one of the smallest cane harvests in recent history -- 3.8 million metric tons of sugar as against 6.8 million produced in 1961.

From that time on the government began to restudy the problem. While agricultural-livestock diversification is a sound principle at which the country should aim, at the same time this diversification cannot be successful if applied to each farm, to each productive unit. On the other hand, diversification should be carried out from a regional viewpoint, that is, certain regions due to different factors -- soil and climatic conditions, supply of manpower, etc. -- can specialize in certain crops. In other words, certain crops should be the fundamental activity of a region. Other crops may be cultivated, but on a small scale, for example, for the region's own consumption. This is the road presently being followed by the Revolution. The policy of diversification is maintained and applied today more than ever, but under a much broader concept, one that is more feasible and advantageous.

The Revolution also reconsidered its policy toward sugarcane and the sugar industry, since in any case, cane was still the country's chief source of for-

eign exchange. Cane, through the foreign market, signifies diversification of agricultural production in terms of the availability of products. At the same time cane constitutes an industry for the means of production, for eventual industrialization, etc. The cane industry should not only be maintained at its present level, but also increased until Cuba can produce around 10 million metric tons of sugar, as against the more than 5 million it has been averaging in the past.

Cuba believes that the single crop system, or better said, the predominance of one crop over others, is not an evil in itself, unless trade relations with the world are of an imperialist nature, that is, where the interested parties are composed of a colony and a metropolis and by virtue of this relationship one country gains political and economic control over the other. This was the case of Cuba before the Revolution. Today, the situation is quite different: diversity of markets, principally a socialist market in which authentic relations of mutual advantage exist for both parties; absolute respect in the political field and willingness of the developed socialist countries to aid the socioeconomic progress of the backward countries. Cuba's relations with the countries of the socialist camp are a typical example of this harmony.

In short Cuba has defined its field of diversification of agricultural-livestock production and at the same time, its fields of specialization. In fact, the state sector has undertaken this road and attempts are being made to put the private sector on the same path, as far as possible.

Some ideas of Prime Minister Fidel Castro, expressed during the Third ANAP [National Association of Small Farmers] Congress held in May 1967, give a clear picture of the goals of the Revolution regarding diversification and specialization of agricultural production, and as to what is expected from the small farmers.

"There is a series of principles that must be applied to peasant agriculture. First, the peasants everywhere should not be producers of everything. We shall explain this. One of the most terrible things we see when we tour the countryside is a lack of specialization among the small farmers. These farmers should specialize in one, two or three products, but chiefly in a single product.

"In short, the peasant who has traditionally planted tobacco, should continue to grow this crop, improving his technique, increasing productivity. The peasant who has been growing coffee should continue doing so; if he is growing pasture, raising cattle, he should

continue; the peasant producing vegetables should continue producing vegetables; the peasant producing rice, rice; the peasant producing potatoes, potatoes....

"The peasants of Velasco have done very well. We spoke to them, we gave them facilities, and all are once again producing beans and all are enthusiastic about their bean production and the struggle to increase per unit productivity.

"Naturally, it is not enough to simply establish a policy, to establish a correct line of prices, to give the guidelines. It is not enough to tell the peasants of Velasco: No, stop producing papaya and start producing beans again. No. We must go there, we must talk to them, ask them: What do you need? How many machines, how much fertilizer? We are going to apply fertilizer; we can also apply irrigation so that they can produce during the dry season; we are going to build a dam here, we are going to get irrigation equipment. We must go to the small farmer with the resources.

"Thus, we believe that the tobacco growers should strive to apply organic matter, to apply fertilizer, to use irrigation. We have an entire tobacco program -- construction of small hydraulic works to increase considerably tobacco production, doubling or tripling yields by use of organic matter, fertilizers and irrigation. We have a tobacco plan and a coffee plan. This is what we must do in regard to the country's basic crops.

"Obviously, the small farmer will want to produce other things for his own consumption. Very good. Is the small farmer a coffee producer, and does he also want to grow things for his own consumption? Very well. I assure you that according to what I have been able to find out, what I have been able to see in all the fields, that with a few cordeles* -- well tended and fertilized -- any peasant can produce all he needs for his family. In other words, each peasant can grow a principal crop -- tobacco, coffee, vegetables, or raise cattle -- and at the same time use part of his land, if he wants to, to produce what he needs for himself.

"However, many times they use too much land to grow what they need for themselves because of low yields. Many times they use 40 cordeles to get what they need for themselves when they could do it with 10 cordeles applying fertilizers.

"Naturally, this must be accompanied by a policy such as the one now being followed by the Revolution, namely, distrib-

* One cordel is equivalent to 414.4 square meters.

uting fertilizer for all crops. Sometimes we have the case of a region that grows plantains -- 6,700 hectares of plantains -- and suddenly we come to a place and there we find a thicket. 'And that thicket?' -- we ask. 'Oh, that, it belongs to a small farmer.'

"Or we find a potpourri of crops there: some mandioc, some corn, plantains over there, hogs here, a cow there. Gentlemen, why doesn't this peasant grow plantain, if this entire region grows plantain? He could still have a plot of land to plant for his own needs -- to plant mandioc, if he wants to; some corn, if he wants to, or whatever he wants to; and he could plant plantains over there, so that if the airplanes pass overhead and cropdust, if the airplanes pass by and fertilize, they will fertilize his plantain also....

"That is, we should see to it that the peasants, as they have done up to now, specialize in certain crops. In some cases we have advanced much, for example, in coffee production. In the mountains our policy will be different: we hope to give the peasants, thanks to the communications network now being built, all they need from the lowlands, so that they won't have to plant part of their land to plantains, corn, and twenty other similar things....

"Is it right for the peasants in these mountains, after Hurricane Flora barely left topsoil, to plant plantains when thousands of hectares of land with irrigation are being devoted to plantain in the lowlands? There are more than 6,700 hectares of plantain land in the Cauto Valley; next year there will be 26,800 hectares of land planted to plantain in the Cauto Valley. It will be perfectly easy to supply the peasants in the mountains with all the plantain they need, and tell them: Don't grow plantain, grow coffee.

"That is, we have not had a correct policy in this respect, we have encouraged the cultivation of plantain in the mountains. And we have been talking to the groupings, asking them to select lands to grow mandioc. There is the idea that mandioc must be grown in the mountains when this root vegetable can be grown perfectly well in the lowlands. We are looking for good mandioc land so as not to ask the peasants to plant mandioc in the mountains.

"In other words, we are going to follow the policy of supplying the peasant in the mountain with everything he needs, even vegetables, so that he can grow coffee on his land.

"Now that coffee is being planted in rows we advise that gandul beans be

planted between the rows. These beans should not be raised as a cash crop but rather as a plant to protect the soil from erosion. Besides, this crop is suitable for human consumption or for use as chicken or hog feed....

"This is the correct solution: don't plant corn in the mountains; plant another type of crop that will be easier to cultivate and not destroy the soil."

The Process of Disseminating Education

Once the financial and material resources are available, the prime obstacle hampering the socioeconomic development of a country is the insufficient number of skilled workers, ignorance in general, ignorance of modern techniques, the lack of theoretical bases to implement these techniques.

From the very beginning the Revolution was aware of this problem; and today it is mindful of this problem more than ever before. Scarcely had the Revolution triumphed when the military fortresses were converted into schools. This fact was a symbol: the Revolution broke the stamp of oppression and ignorance. In 1961, after a gigantic campaign, illiteracy was wiped out in Cuba. At the end of that year, scarcely 4 percent of the population was illiterate, people who could not learn to read and write for reasons of age, illness, mental incapacity, etc. Hundreds of thousands of teachers participated in the campaign -- from the colleges, universities, trade unions, etc. Fundamentally, it was a task carried out by Cuban youth. Immediately after, the Cuban government began a campaign to raise the educational level of the great masses of people to sixth grade.

In short, education has been the prime task of this revolution, technical education holds a prominent place; that is, future skilled workers are now being trained in the classroom and in field work. Table No. 6 shows the magnitude of the revolution's educational programs.

Within this panorama, technical agricultural education is of extraordinary importance, but even more, the prospects for the future are truly spectacular. In this respect Major Fidel Castro told the small farmers:

"I'm explaining all this to you so you'll understand why the child of a peasant entering the Technological Institute and later graduated from this Institute, will have the possibilities of studying at the university and will say: 'No, I'm not going to do the work of an ox.' And he will not return to the minifundium. There is no doubt that he will not return, and this is correct.

Table No. 6

Cuba: Evolution of Education
from 1957-58 to 1965-66

	<u>1957-58</u>	<u>1965-66</u>
School registration	818,945	2,020,231
Primary school	729,463	1,321,483
Normal school (intermediate level)	9,291	38,998
General Secondary education	69,403	148,991
Technical and professional education	21,000(a)	38,976
University	15,157	26,149
Adult education	82,190	550,877
Special education	(b)	4,378

Source: "Cuba, una educación de masa para las masas," OLAS, Havana, 1967.

(a) Approximate figure.

(b) Education in private centers, with something more than a hundred students.

"What does this mean? That society is advancing, that the time will come when every farmer's son, without exception, will be a technician. The best proof of this is that the technological institutes will take in 40,000 students this year (1967); in 1970 there will be 100,000 students in the technological institutes. Ten more years and there won't be a single young person in the rural areas of this country without a junior high school diploma and a specialized skill.

"Do you see that this is the path? Do you see why we have to wait 10, 20 or 30 years?..."

"Today's farmers are today's reality, and tomorrow's reality will be your children; tomorrow's reality will be technicians such as those about to graduate from our technological institutes and enter the university.

"They will be richer than you, of course, because they will produce 8, 10, 15, 20 times more than you, with only one-tenth the effort you use. They will use airplanes on a wide scale, machines, the most modern technology. The rural areas will be completely electrified. Instead of ox-power, it will be horsepower -- the horsepower of the tractors, of electric motors....

"Some day all our rural areas will be electrified. Some day all our rural areas will be full of towns with running water, electricity and gas stoves. Children won't have to walk two kilometers; they will go to school in the morning and

they'll have breakfast, lunch and dinner there. They will spend the day in school and will return home at night. There will be no more washtub, no more carrying water, no more candles and lanterns. Children will be a thousand times better off and women will be incomparably better off.

"But who is going to live like that? You? No, your children. It will be your children because they are the ones who will be adjusted to that way of life. They will understand all the advantages of a different mode of production.

"And what will become of today's farmers? Today's farmers will continue to live as they do now, though not as badly, of course. There will be resources to improve their living conditions. They will have better communications; there will be many more schools; there will be many other things....

"There are still tens of thousands of workers who live in barracks with their families, tens of thousands of workers living in single rooms. Building efforts must logically be aimed at creating better living conditions for those workers.

"It is true that farmers still have very bad housing, but the farmer has had many problems solved that are still affecting the worker on the cane plantations; and those workers are making a considerable contribution to the economy with their labor. It is logical and I think you realize that it is very fair -- that the bulk of materials be invested at present in improving the living conditions of the workers on the State farms.

"Now you will say: Well, those are problems of the future. And the problems of the present? The present picture? What is expected of us? How are we going to produce? How can we make our efforts more productive, the best possible? How can we make our lands serve both our families and country to the maximum? These issues of today are, of course, the ones that are of most interest: what we expect of the small farmers, how we view the process of development of our agriculture.

"A few years ago the State farms were a disgrace because too many inexperienced people -- as we have explained on other occasions -- often with little more than goodwill to recommend them, kept production on these farms at a low level. These farms had, of course, the advantage of maximum resources, not in order to grant them privileges over and above the farmers, but because they included the greatest extensions of unproductive land, of brush and briar, and besides, speaking frankly, the production of foodstuffs on these farms was much more assured than in the case of the small farmers.

"We have great faith in the peasants. We think we understand the psychology of the peasants. We know of their devotion to the revolution, the loyalty of the peasants to the revolution. And the revolution will always have the same attitude toward the peasant. The Revolution is educating the children of the peasants. The revolution is converting the children of the peasants into technicians, agronomists, civil engineers, doctors, skilled workers. This process of social development, the development of education, will continue to grow.

"As I have already told you, the technological institutes alone will train several hundred thousand youth -- many of them will be children of peasants -- from now to 1970. The number of schools in the countryside will also increase, in the zones of Las Villas, Guane, Escambray and a whole series of places -- we are going to build more schools and elevate scholarship. More than 80,000 students will be graduating from sixth grade....

"We plan to continue developing our educational plans. We believe that there is no place left in the country without a school. We are sure that there are teachers in every part of the country. There are some places where school installations are very bad, that is, they are huts. We are also going to work to improve things in this respect and we are going to continue to develop hospital programs in the interior of the country. In other words, we have the resources to bring progress to the countryside even more rapidly than we have being doing so far."

Taxes on the Peasant Sector

In general, the idea of taxation in a socialist system bears almost no resemblance to that which prevails under a capitalist system. Under the latter, the State is practically supported by taxation and in the long run these taxes are paid by workers. The structure of the capitalist State is maintained thanks to the taxes paid by the workers. The system of repression -- the police and the army -- are financed with the product of the efforts of the working class. The instrument that oppresses the workers is financed by workers. It is an incredible paradox, but one that is known and felt by all.

Under capitalism, taxation plays a secondary role as an instrument of economic guidance. Its favorite tool is the price system in a market which is or has a tendency to be monopolistic.

Under socialism, the problem of taxation takes on a completely different aspect. In reality, it does not play a decisive role. Rather, it tends to disap-

pear; it continues in the measure that the private sector continues, economically speaking. Nevertheless, the socialist state is light years away from a taxation system.

In Cuba, before the Revolution, the worker was trapped by taxation imposed by the State and more directly trapped were the peasants, especially in their relations of work and payments of one-half, one-third, etc., of their production, since this peasantry did not own the land it worked. This is a problem existing in all Latin-American countries.

A socialist system is primarily interested in production in order to achieve abundance. There are no limits imposed by a market. At the most, the limits are imposed by production capacity, but once this is overcome, there are no holds barred for the full satisfaction of the population's needs.

If the tax system becomes an obstacle to the productive process, the tax is abolished. In any case the socialist system was adopted to smooth the way to development and to bring well-being, not the opposite, to the people.

In Cuba, the peasantry, by which we mean the private agrarian sector, does not have to pay any taxes. They are completely free of such burdens; in return the State expects them to produce to the maximum. This is the keynote of the Revolutionary government's recently introduced policy. Let us look at the following declarations made by Prime Minister Castro during the Third ANAP Congress:

"From force of habit, an incredible thing has been happening here. According to the comrades of the ANAP, the only farmers who pay taxes in this country are the cane growers, because even the coffee growers, who paid some taxes, are exempted. Therefore, the Government has drafted a law whereby the cane growers will be exempt from paying taxes. The fact is that cane is extremely important for the economy: it produces sugar, molasses, bagasse, cogollo (fodder for cattle). Cane is extremely important and it is also difficult to cultivate. It is not as easy as other kinds of cultivation and it turns out that the only tax-paying farmers are the cane growers!...

"Of course, these taxes remained because they were on the books. If this problem had been raised before, it would have been solved. Now, as I was saying, from this year on, that tax is suppressed; that is, you will not have to pay any tax on the cane you have cut this year.

"This has to do directly with what I was telling you about incorrect policies. This was one of those incorrect things

that still persisted. Here we are working to raise our cane production in order to reach a harvest of 10 million tons, and we find that the small cane growers, responsible for almost 25 percent of our cane production, were paying taxes that were already on the books. And what used to be paid? Formerly, rent was paid in addition to the tax. Rent payment was abolished, but the tax stayed on....

"We believe that all workers, without exception, should have the right to retire without having to resort to a capitalist method. What is important is that the small farmers produce and in order to produce, they need modern agricultural techniques, machines, fertilizers, resources and guidance.

"Our national economy is not at all interested in these taxes. Therefore, we will study the question of retirement as a right of every farmer....

"We believe that the solution is to give all the farmers who have been farmers, who have been workers, who can show that they are honest, that they have not taken part in 'deals,' speculation and things of that sort, the right to retirement.

"And those taxes -- do you want to know what they result in? Bureaucracy! Red tape!...

"Then it is evident that the still existing anachronism is going to be eliminated with those taxes. Would the sugarcane farmers be willing to make a supreme effort to fertilize their crops and apply technology in production? (Shouts of YES.) Resolving all that, can we count on your 100 percent cooperation in the plan for 10 million tons of sugar in 1970? (Applause and shouts of YES.)

(Someone from the audience shouts to Fidel: "Listen, Fidel, in spite of all the taxes, we, the workers and farmers, were ready to surpass the goal of 10 million tons!")...

"Interest on credits? I'm going to tell you something. That's a lot of rubbish in the double sense of the word, in amount and ideology. We should not collect any interest, because that is capitalistic. Let's be frank -- it's bureaucratic and doesn't even amount to enough to pay the expenses that the paper work involves....

"What interests us in the light of our own ideas is that a farmer, instead of producing 7,500 cwt. of cane on 13 hectares, produce instead 15,000 or 20,000 cwt. What is of interest in the light of these new, really revolutionary ideas is that a farmer produce 600 cwt. instead of 300 whenever possible; that instead of 2,000 cwt. of bananas he produce on the same land 4,000, 6,000 or even 10,000; that instead of 10 lean cows on 13 hectares, he have 35 to 40 fat cows; that an orange tree produce 1,500 instead of 500 oranges, because this is what people eat, this is what is distributed....

"In the light of these ideas, a low interest tax that spawns bureaucracy does not solve anything...in the light of these ideas, taxes like the 11 percent one, and all such things in a sector like cane that is of such importance to the economy...in the light of these ideas that are increasingly revolutionary, of a Revolution that aspires one day even to replace money by offering to the people all that they need, as today they are offered education, hospitals and all the other things -- all those ideas seem like anachronisms; they seem really out-of-date....

"To grab off a peso and, moreover, fail to raise production is deception. The farmers should obtain larger incomes when they produce more because increased production means that the people will have more of all those things that the farmers can produce. I think anyone can understand this."

GADEA TRIAL SCHEDULED TO OPEN DECEMBER 17

Peruvian authorities have announced that the trial of the guerrilla leaders Enrique Amaya Quintana, Ricardo Gadea, and others involved in the 1965 armed struggle will open December 17.

The new military junta's decision to pursue the prosecution of the unjustly imprisoned revolutionists exposes its reformist promises and anti-imperialist pretensions, the Comité de Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (CODDEH) [The Committee for the Defense of Human Rights] de-

clared on November 27.

CODDEH stressed, moreover, that the government's decision to try Amaya "in absentia" could only be an attempt to silence protests against the probable murder of this young revolutionary leader, who vanished mysteriously immediately after his arrest on April 21, 1967. The Peruvian defense committee appealed to world public opinion to send protests to the Presidente del Consejo de Guerra, II Zona Judicial de Policía, Lima, Peru.

ART AND LITERATURE IN CUBA

By George Saunders

Artists and writers in Cuba today enjoy a scope of opportunity immeasurably broader than was ever enjoyed in their country's prerevolutionary past. Their counterparts in advanced capitalist countries would find much to envy in their situation. No longer are literature and publishing dependent on a limited market and the laws of profit. Nor do they, thus far, suffer from the kind of extreme and arbitrary bureaucratic controls and stiflingly close ties to the political demands of the ruling party that exist in Mao's China and the Soviet Union under Brezhnev-Kosygin.*

The above is the general impression one may draw from an account of a visit to the Cuban Book Institute by an American publisher, Andre Schiffrin, editorial director of Pantheon books. Pantheon is a division of Random House, which in turn has been merged into the giant RCA empire.

The willingness of Pantheon's editorial director to travel to Cuba and his interest in Cuban literary affairs are best understood in the light of the growing radicalization in the United States, which has created a market for books on revolutionary subjects, including material relating to Cuba.

Pantheon itself has published In the Fist of the Revolution: Life in a Cuban Country Town by José Yglesias, a novelist whose first works have won much acclaim. (The book is a vivid, sympathetic documentation of the revolution's impact on life and circumstances in a small sugar-mill town of Oriente province.)

Schiffrin's description of Cuban publishing begins with a look at prerevolutionary circumstances, as described by Edmundo Desnoes, a leading editor of the Book Institute. Desnoes gained something of a name in the U.S. in 1967 when his novel Inconsolable Memories was published by New American Library. The novel was widely misunderstood and misinterpreted by "Yankee" critics as being opposed to the revolution.

Actually, Desnoes, a man in his late thirties, is a prominent figure in the revolutionary cultural establishment. The style of his novel is subtle and ambiguous, and it is written in a spirit of revolt against dogmatic concepts of "so-

cialist realism." But it is no less revolutionary for being nonsimplistic. In fact, it contains perhaps the most devastating portrait of the old Cuban ruling class yet written, for it is not a caricature but a careful, even empathetic study of the human material that kept Cuba at an impasse for so many years.

Desnoes, as the author of such a book, has not suffered any loss in influence or important responsibilities. Together with the critic Ambrosio Fornet, he is in charge of deciding what books are translated in Cuba and what books are reprinted in a popular paperback series.

Fornet, incidentally, was mentioned negatively in a description of the Havana Cultural Congress by a Soviet paper last January. He was made to sound like an unreasonable advocate of the position that all intellectuals, following Che, should "become heroes and armed soldiers."

Desnoes, too, has contributed to the explicitly political literature of the Cuban revolution. An example is his prologue to a book on the black liberation struggle in the U.S., which was published by the Institute at the time of the Cultural Congress.

But, to return to Desnoes' brief history of Cuban publishing: Before the revolution only textbooks were published on the island. Writers had to be published abroad and were lucky if some of their work was reimported home; or they could pay for the costs of printing their work themselves.

Now nearly 8,000,000 books a year are published in Cuba, a true "cultural revolution." In 1967, reports Schiffrin, some 600 titles were brought out. Scarcity of paper because of the imperialist blockade limits the number of copies that can be produced, but the priorities assigned are interesting. Educational books come first; books for the general reader are printed with "the broadest list of general titles possible rather than the largest possible editions of a few books. Even the most popular books cannot be reprinted [in larger runs], and readers are encouraged to borrow from libraries and each other."

Schiffrin comments that despite the difficulties, the quantity of books on general subjects is "more than respectable for a country of eight million people." A sale of two or three thousand copies of a first book by a young poet, he adds, "is impressive, even by American

* To be sure, a bureaucratic current in Cuba has attempted to make art and literature hew to a narrow "utilitarian" line, but thus far that current has not gained the upper hand.

standards." The same goes for short story collections by Joyce and Kafka (10,000 each). Truman Capote's In Cold Blood and Stendhal's classic The Red and the Black both got the maximum printing, 20,000.

The various divisions of the Cuban Book Institute -- such as that headed by Desnoes and Fernet -- have a certain amount of autonomy in relation to the Institute as a whole, says the American publisher, likening the situation to his own experience dealing with management and sales people in his giant corporation.

Perhaps the most interesting part of this American businessman's account is his discussion of "editorial freedom."

"As I got to know Desnoes and his colleagues better and realized how freely and openly we would be able to talk, I tried to establish the exact nature of their editorial freedom. The answer: total artistic freedom within the revolution -- anything not counterrevolutionary. Literature could not be used directly to oppose Government policy.

"Yet a work as candid and even critical as Lee Lockwood's 'Castro's Cuba, Cuba's Fidel' was being translated. There is no test for ideological content, and for a Cuban to get his novel or poetry published, he needs only two favorable readers from the appropriate committee of the Writer's Union. The overwhelming majority of new books bear no relation at all to current politics."

Imagine where the works of Sinyavsky, Daniel, and Solzhenitsyn would be today, not to mention many Chinese authors, who criticized Mao, if similar policies were pursued in China and the Soviet Union.

Schiffirin took up the question of homosexuality, to see if there was "sexual censorship," since the policy on political censorship seemed so reasonable. A novel containing some "frank" homosexual scenes had been published in 1967, he was told, and had caused considerable controversy. But, Desnoes had emphasized to him, there was no attempt to remove the book, Paradiso by Lesama Lima, from the libraries.

The vitality and flexibility of Cuba's publishing enterprise is not a chance development, one may conclude from the Pantheon editor's account. "Premier Castro had personally named the Institute's first director, Rolando Rodriguez, a 27-year-old former philosophy professor....Such reorganizations are common in Cuba; shake up the bureaucracy and show what new and untried men can do."

This was in contrast, says Schiffirin, to the "sectarian period," of which

he heard much -- "the years following the Bay of Pigs when Cuba mobilized to defend herself against the United States and had to rely increasingly on help from the Soviet Union. It was as if the two powers had allied to ruin Cuba's revolution and force it into an alien mold. Cuba was inundated with things Russian, its own Communist party became increasingly Sovietized and a cultural line was imposed that has taken years to shake off."

Without mentioning the ouster of Escalante in 1962, of which he may be ignorant, Schiffirin explains that "the intellectuals succeeded in obtaining from Premier Castro guarantees that artists would be allowed to express themselves as they wished as long as they did not oppose the revolution. And, equally important, the party may not decide ex post facto that a given mode of expression threatens to become counterrevolutionary."

The impression of the cultural side of life from walking through Havana is conveyed this way: "In the arts, total freedom reigns; painting and poetry, sculpture and music flaunt their freedom much as the young sport mod clothes. Electronic music resounds down one of the main streets outside the purple, green and red, pink-neon-lined entrance of the pop gallery of modern art (complete with cafe and discotheque). 'Ours is a surrealistic revolution,' I was often told... I had constantly to discard not only my preconceptions, but also my first impressions."

So much for the cliché that socialism inevitably means a drab, gray, dreary style of life.

Schiffirin touches on a more serious problem. While various artistic forms enjoy free reign, the same is not true of political discussion and theory, even within the framework of socialist politics. The situation seems better than in other workers states, but certain limits are obvious from Schiffirin's description.

"Though Russian and Chinese political classics are available everywhere, as are a number of dull Soviet magazines... [serious Soviet] political journals are nowhere to be found, nor are Mao's 'Quotations' or the Peking Review -- a deliberate act of censorship that followed the discovery that the Chinese had been mailing their material to selected lists of party members and military men.

"The fact that Le Monde or even Encounter and other similar Spanish-language magazines that had been sponsored by the C.I.A., are displayed on library shelves while Sputnik or any other Chinese and Russian political journals in English or Spanish are not, shows Cuba's determination to be independent, a

determination shown equally by the publication of such divergent and dissident Marxists as Volpe, Gramsci and Althusser. The rote learning of Marxist classics has been increasingly abandoned in the classrooms....

"The very pragmatic and at times totally unplanned nature of the Cuban revolution has also discouraged the development of new theoreticians other than Castro and Che Guevara, whose works are, of course, available everywhere."

A pertinent and not unfriendly comment by Shiffrin was that "in a society that in certain aspects was so open and experimental, it seemed particularly depressing that there should not be an increasing amount of political discussion, in books and elsewhere, even among members of the Communist party."

In the end, Schiffrin, who had some doubts about making his visit, seems

to have been favorably impressed. The dynamism of the new social order being constructed despite all the difficulties imposed by the U.S. blockade has had a discernible impact on him. This shows up in the ironic and questioning tone of his article in relation to U.S. policy, rather striking in someone who is not a radical. An example is the dig he makes at the State Department in his closing paragraph, where one can also see that he has a certain professional interest in criticizing trade and travel restrictions:

"The State Department people had told me that the reason for restricting travel to Cuba is to discourage Cuban exportation of subversion. I suppose that by demanding a Treasury license for importing a book from Cuba, and urging all Latin American Governments to forbid the importation of Cuban books altogether, our Government feels that it has contained the ideas in the books themselves."

STRIKING CZECH STUDENTS MADE TARGET OF CRUDE FALSIFICATION

A violently anti-Soviet "appeal for help" mailed in the name of the Czech students to "all universities in the world" has been denounced as a crude falsification by rector of the University of Prague, Oldřich Stary.

The purported "appeal" used the term "Soviet imperialism." It declared: "For twenty years our universities were degraded to the primitive Soviet level." It said that in resisting the Soviet occupation, the Czechs aimed at "neutrality."

In a letter to the West German magazine Der Spiegel, quoted in the December 2 issue, Stary cited a number of proofs of the fraudulent nature of the "appeal." He noted, for instance, that the Prague university letterhead used by the forgers was a rough approximation of one withdrawn from circulation in 1960, and was quite different from the current one. Similarly, the authors claimed that the "appeal" was passed at a meeting as a resolution. But the indicated meeting was never held.

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