

WORLD OUTLOOK

a labor press service

ERNEST MANDEL:

Trotsky's Marxism

Vol. 6, No. 5

February 9, 1968

A New Stage Opens in Vietnamese Revolution



Japanese Students March Against U. S. Nuclear Warship

50c

A NEW STAGE OPENS IN THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

By Joseph Hansen

The world's mightiest imperialist power has been dealt a stunning blow. The blow is primarily political although its immediate military impact is considerable. What has occurred is a sudden upsurge of the Vietnamese revolution; and those who are carrying it forward have written one of the most extraordinary and heroic pages in history.

Fantastic claims have been made by the Pentagon on the casualties suffered by the National Liberation Front. However, they are based on "body counts" furnished by the South Vietnamese puppet forces, who compensate for their lack of energy during battle by their zeal in collecting statistics afterward. Even the U.S. press admits that the compilations are triple if not four times the actual count.

The blow fell on January 30, which was Tet, the lunar New Year, when simultaneous major assaults were made by the freedom fighters on twenty-six provincial capitals, and uncounted smaller towns, airfields and military bases. The surprise was overwhelming despite the Pentagon's effort to make out that it knew long in advance what was in store.

Saigon itself was the scene of heavy street fighting, the American embassy being seized in a dramatic raid by a heroic squad of twenty men, nineteen of whom laid down their lives.

The New York Sunday News, a rabid, warmongering sheet, raised its hands in holy horror over the "betrayal of Tet," although it has not exactly distinguished itself in the past by piety in observing the Vietnamese lunar New Year.

The editors can now better appreciate the feelings of the redcoats over the "betrayal of Christmas" committed by George Washington when he crossed the Delaware and interrupted the festivities and merrymaking of the British colonial forces at Trenton on December 26, 1776.

Fulminations over the Vietnamese "sneak attacks" were all the more misplaced in view of the fact that the Saigon puppet government had canceled the Tet truce in the northern provinces and announced that the air strikes would be continued without interruption over North Vietnam.

The New York Times played down the events. This is understandable from its point of view, for although it has maintained a steady campaign of criticism of Johnson's course in Vietnam, its differences are of a tactical nature and it can

only deplore a defeat for U.S. imperialism. All the more instructive was its assessment February 4 of the reaction in Washington.

"The shock of the Vietcong rampage," it said, "coming on top of the humiliating Pueblo incident, left Washington numb, grim and off-balance last week.

"The Pentagon's quick response was that the enemy losses were 10 times those of the allies. Confirmed hawks like Senator John Tower of Texas called it the Vietcong 'death rattle.'

"But far more typical of Congress was the reaction of the middle-of-the-roader.

"'Good Lord, how did this thing happen?' he moaned. 'I thought we were winning the war.'

"Within the Government, veterans of Vietnam said the assaults were impressive beyond their expectations. A few military men complained anew that this showed American forces in Vietnam -- and Korea, too -- were stretched too thin. A few voices criticized the South Vietnamese authorities for being caught so totally off guard."

Johnson, the Times noted, "took no new major moves" but chose to wait. "It was a time, in one of the President's pet phrases, for "hunkering down like a jack-rabbit in a Texas hail storm."

The truth is, said the Times, that "the facts of life about the war have finally been made unmistakably clear to everyone in the United States, from President Johnson on down.

"Swept away in last week's hurricane of fire were the rising piles of glowing reports of progress in pacification, retraining of the South Vietnamese army, and destruction of the enemy's political and military forces."

In an editorial, the Times spoke even more frankly. It characterized the Tet offensive mounted by the National Liberation Front as "spectacularly successful." It proved that "the bombing of North Vietnam has failed in its purpose." The continued bombing "has reduced neither the enemy's will nor his capacity to fight. Instead, as the bombing has increased, so have the determination and strength of the enemy forces; and so have American casualties."

The Times declared that the seizure of the Pueblo and the Tet offensive "make it imperative for the Administration at last to reappraise rigid policies that have brought this nation and its fighting men unprecedented humiliation and peril."

Columnist James Reston, writing in the same issue of the Times, describes the astonishment and perplexity prevailing in top government circles in Washington:

"Something has happened here in the last few days, some conflict between logic and events. How could the Vietcong launch such an offensive against the American Embassy and the American bases all over South Vietnam? How could the North Vietnamese, who were supposed to be getting weaker, like the Vietcong, gather a force large enough to challenge the U.S. Marines at the demilitarized zone?"

The pundits are offering two answers. First, that the Tet offensive represents a "last gasp"; second, that it is an attempt at a "breakthrough" which, if it fails, will be followed by a retreat back to the jungles and the border.

"Yet neither of these explanations satisfies Washington. The dramatic events of the last few days have given it the feeling of dealing with something wholly alien and inexplicable and therefore with forces entirely unpredictable." Reston then wanders off into musings about the inscrutable nature of the Oriental mind.

Washington's mood is not unprecedented. In fact history teaches us to expect such feelings among ruling circles confronted by powerful revolutionary upsurges, which to them are always "something wholly alien and inexplicable."

The Pentagon, the State Department and the White House have been hypnotized by the military chessboard. No matter with what brutality they may engage in this game, its rules still remain the rules of war. By all the logic of war the Vietnamese should have been smashed long ago. What the Washington strategists left out of account is that the logic of war tends to pass over into the logic of revolution, which supersedes war. This applies all the more pertinently to Vietnam where U.S. intervention was intervention in a deep-going civil war.

Two spectacular facts in the Tet offensive show the altered nature of the situation in Vietnam. The first is that armed action of the National Liberation Front was directed in the main against the South Vietnamese puppet forces. The New York Times noted that the attacks "were concentrated almost entirely against the South Vietnamese Army and governmental installations." With the exception of attacks against airfields and

helicopter pads, "clearly meant to slow the movement of reinforcements, the Americans were simply bypassed." The Times, however, failed to note the significance of this. Even this newspaper, so concerned about the situation is blind to what is happening.

If the South Vietnamese forces are dealt a staggering body blow; if sectors of them begin to pass over in mass, along with their arms, to the NLF side, what happens to the American position? The losses to the NLF entailed by the attacks are quickly recuperated. And the American position becomes still more untenable militarily, not to mention what happens politically both in Vietnam and inside the United States. The Tet offensive, it is absolutely clear, proceeded in accordance with these revolutionary political considerations.

The second spectacular fact is the revolutionary appeal issued by Liberation Radio in South Vietnam. It declares that "the revolution we waited and yearned for has broken out....We must rise up to wrest back power and restore independence, peace, freedom, and a clean and comfortable life...."

"Compatriots, the hour to wash away our national dishonor and to liberate ourselves has come. Everybody must stand up and launch attacks against the hideouts of the Thieu-Ky clique and topple the traitorous and country-selling Government in various areas. We must set up at once a revolutionary government, build various revolutionary armed forces and various patriotic organizations, punish and arrest all the cruel lackeys of the Thieu-Ky clique and foreign nations, and help the revolutionary armed forces fulfill their duties...."

A direct appeal is made to the forces in the other camp. "We exhort the officers, soldiers and the police forces of the Saigon regime to side with the ranks of the people and to give their arms and ammunition to the revolutionary armed forces.

"We exhort all those who have been going astray to quickly wake up. Those who recognize their faults and are willing to accomplish an exploit will be forgiven by the revolution. Those who willingly resist the revolution will be duly punished...."

A direct appeal for sympathy is made to the American troops, to their allies and to the American people.

Coupled with the transfer of struggle to the streets of the cities, and the involvement of the city masses, such a call is of first-rate importance. All the facts seem to indicate that it marks the beginning of a new stage. The turn has already given the Vietnamese revolution fresh power and impetus.

JAPANESE PEOPLE SHOW HIGH SENSITIVITY TO NUCLEAR ALLERGENS

When he appeared before the Diet January 31, Eisaku Sato, the prime minister of Japan, backed up a bit in the course he has been following in hope of overcoming the "nuclear allergy" of the Japanese people. He told the legislators that any visit by a nuclear-armed submarine would be subject to the prior-consultation clause in the U.S.-Japan defense treaty. The implication was that he would veto such a visit.

The slight shift constituted acknowledgment of the strong allergic reaction touched off among the people by the visit of the nuclear-powered Enterprise January 19-23.

As The Japan Times Weekly put it January 27, "The Enterprise's call has been an expensive one to the Japanese Government in many senses. The Police Agency's budget was badly strained by assigning more than 5,000 riot police to Sasebo. The Government was hit for the way its police handled student demonstrators there. Most importantly, the carrier's visit sparked a surge in the opposition movement that has not been seen on the Japanese political scene for a long time. And it is still early to say this is the total political price the Prime Minister will have to pay for his emphasis on realism in defense affairs and Japan-U.S. cooperation."

The editors could have added -- were they not averse to giving it publicity -- that one of the most significant developments at the Sasebo demonstrations was the appearance of a united front in action between the Japan Socialist and Communist parties, the first instance of this in many years.

Other political tendencies also participated, including the Democratic Socialist party and the very conservative Komeito (Clean Government party), which evidently did not wish to be left on the sidelines in such a popular action.

The powerful Sohyo (General Council of Trade Unions of Japan) threw its weight into the scales; and even members of the usually inert Domei (Japanese Confederation of Labor) were there.

The action was spearheaded by the very militant Sampa Rengo (Three Faction Alliance of the Zengakuren, the National Federation of Students Self-Government Associations), which charged into the phalanxes of riot police mobilized by the Sato regime to protect the U.S. naval base. The students suffered many casualties and arrests, but unlike previous demonstrations in recent months, they did not stand in isolation.

On January 19, for instance, Sasebo, with a population of 250,000, served as host to 47,000 demonstrators. Almost in their entirety, the huge crowds were sympathetic to the Zengakuren activists.

On top of this the popular reaction throughout Japan, after scenes of the Sasebo action were shown on TV, was strongly in favor of the students and decidedly against the police, who were not sparing in violence in meeting the protest action against the visit of the U.S. nuclear warship.

Consternation over the broad and massive nature of the protest was visible in top circles of the ruling Liberal-Democratic party itself. Chief Cabinet Secretary Toshio Kimura told a press conference January 22 that "we must take a serious view of the fact that even ordinary citizens joined in Sunday's disorder in Sasebo."

"The Government considers," he added, "that the Enterprise's visit at Sasebo caused a different reaction this time from that in the cases of visits by nuclear-powered submarines."

He stressed that the Sato administration was prepared to welcome continued visits by nuclear warships, since this is one of the obligations of the pact signed under pressure from Washington. But public sentiment must be taken into careful consideration and he was sure that the United States would understand this.

The implied criticism of Sato, however, if only over Sato's ineptness in handling the visit of the Enterprise, was enough to cause some fluttering in government circles.

Sato's first reaction was to "re-affirm" his government's policy. This was done at a cabinet meeting January 23. Considerable publicity was given to remarks by Transport Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone that Kimura's statement might give the impression that the government had become less positive in its attitude toward port calls, and that Kimura's position would dampen the morale of police officers and have an adverse effect on national sentiment. A week later, however, Sato himself found it advisable to shift over to a less "positive" position.

It was indicated in the Japanese press that the visit of the Enterprise was agreed on by Sato when he visited Johnson last November. The Japanese government has been under heavy pressure from Washington for many years to end the stipulations in its constitution against

engaging in war activities. The Japanese ruling class has no disagreement over this, in fact it corresponds with its own imperialist needs to resume its position in the world as a leading military power.

The big obstacle has been the stubborn resistance of the Japanese people to ever again being sucked into the catastrophe of war. They are particularly sensitive to any schemes to arm Japan with nuclear weapons. This sensitivity has been labeled by the Pentagon and Japanese military circles as a "nuclear allergy."

Medical science has found that certain allergies can be overcome, at least temporarily, by injecting the patient with increasing amounts of the allergen. Thus the allergists in the Pentagon prescribed a series of visits at Japanese ports by nuclear-powered submarines.

The visit of the Enterprise was part of the series, but represented a considerable increase in the dosage. The huge flattop, with its eight nuclear reactors, presumably also carries nuclear warheads. Perhaps even more important, it is a key ship in the Seventh Fleet, and is on active duty in the war in Vietnam. (After its call at Sasebo, it went to North Korea to prowler the same waters where the spy ship, Pueblo, was recently caught red-handed.)

This shot of nuclear allergens had the opposite effect to the one intended. It set off a sharp allergic reaction.

As preparations for the antiwar demonstration began, the visit of the air-

craft carrier was delayed a day, from the scheduled Thursday to Friday. It was hoped that this would catch the demonstrators off guard, putting a damper on their action and making it possible for the ship to dock without much flurry.

But the demonstrations began on Tuesday and mounted from day to day until Friday, when the ship dropped anchor, the streets were jammed with 47,000 protesters. On Sunday 23,000 were still chanting and snake-dancing. And on Tuesday when the death ship slunk out of port, a crowd of students and unionists were there to wave their fists in a dramatic display of "good riddance" and "don't come back."

The temper of the people was well indicated when a dozen taxis, carrying sailors from the Enterprise on their way to the "fun" district, were halted by a crowd of some 3,000. Heavy staves rained blows on the roofs and windshields of the taxis and it took large contingents of police to rescue the unwelcome American guests.

Students injured by the police received unusual public sympathy. At the Sasebo Citizens Hospital, a student suffering an eye injury was "showered" by the other patients "with gifts of milk, fruit, toilet paper, underwear and even money as soon as he was hospitalized." These patients had watched the action in the street from their windows. "No gifts are seen in hospital rooms of injured police officers except those from their families and relatives," added the Asahi Evening News of January 24. In the large cities, Zengakuren students collecting contributions in the streets were reported enjoying extraordinary success.

DON'T PAY THE POSTMAN THAT SIX CENTS

We have received a number of letters from our readers in the U.S. reporting that the postman has been demanding six cents "additional postage" before he will deliver World Outlook. The contention of the postman is that postal rates have been raised and therefore there is not sufficient postage on World Outlook.

With the recent increase in postal rates, we have had to put six cents on our envelope instead of four cents. But the new rate is not twelve cents.

Call the postman's attention to the printed line on the envelope reading "Third Class." World Outlook is

not being sent first class (which would require twelve cents postage).

If the postman is in doubt, ask him to open the envelope and take a look. World Outlook is "printed matter" and takes a corresponding rate.

Incidentally, the new rates have hit us in another way. For every copy returned to us as "nondeliverable," we must pay eight cents. If the post office supplies a forwarding address, this costs an additional fifteen cents, or a total of twenty-three cents.

MORAL: Send us any change of address well in advance of your move.

MORE ON THE NEW WITCH-HUNT IN PERU

[As previously reported in World Outlook (see the issues of January 26, p. 55, and February 2, p. 83), the Belaúnde government has initiated a new nationwide witch-hunt. A bank holdup in Lima, staged by some youths, allegedly to obtain money for guerrilla efforts, was utilized by the regime as an "excuse" for the new wave of repression.

[Further information about the holdup and subsequent events appeared in the January issue of Solidarité Pérou, the monthly bulletin of the French Committee of Solidarity with the Victims of Repression in Peru. The following is a translation of the article.]

* * *

On December 5, 1967, the Magdalena district branch of the International Bank of Lima was raided by a group of six young men, who made off with 800,000 soles [38.46 soles = US\$1]. One of the attackers, Marcos Benavidez, was killed by the police and two others were gravely wounded. According to latest reports, all but one have been arrested.

The police claim that the assailants were members of the ELN [Ejército de Liberación Nacional -- Army of National Liberation] and that their operation was aimed at financing the establishment of a new guerrilla action in Puno in the south of the country.

The chief of the PIP [Policía de Investigaciones del Perú], Campos Montoya, made an immediate public accusation in the papers that Hector Bejar, a leader of the ELN, who has been held in prison for two years, was the instigator and organizer of the holdup; he demanded that Bejar be handed over to the PIP for interrogation (the consequences can be easily imagined).

In the meantime, the PIP is continuing to question its young prisoners, one of whom, Gerardo Benavidez ("Chingolo") is badly wounded. His mother, his wife and six members of his family have been arrested on the same charge and have been confined in the dungeons of the PIP for a month. The doctor and nurse who gave first aid to Benavidez have also been locked up.

On January 1, Marcos Benavidez, who was killed at the time of the assault on the bank, was buried. His coffin was followed by four agents of the PIP -- his murderers -- his father and the lawyer. The fear was so great that no one dared show up...

However, two members of the group

escaped (according to the official police statements). The PIP was hunting them. But now the body of one, Alfredo Choque Chirinos, has been discovered under peculiar circumstances in the outskirts of Lima. The police recovered 360,000 soles attached to his belt.

Our correspondent in Lima described the circumstances of this "discovery" in this way:

"...Yesterday, the police (the Civil Guard) announced that they had "found" the body of Alfredo Choque Chirinos ("Suche") dumped in a field of cotton near La Molina with 360,000 soles attached to his belt; the body showed four bullet holes, with two large holes in each breast. The body was found by a tractor driver on the farm, who reported it to the police.

The explanation which the PIP has given is that Choque was murdered by his accomplices in a fight over the loot, or else by robbers who killed him for the money...The question comes to mind, logically, why, if his murderers knew he had the money on him, didn't they take it. Why did they leave it on the body?

I think the truth is that the police arrested Choque Chirinos some days before but did not announce it, that they subjected him to "severe" questioning and he died under torture. After he had been liquidated, they threw him in a field so that someone else might find him "by accident."

These methods are as familiar as they are crude. A few months ago, a similar case occurred in Callao when a taxi driver accused of theft succumbed under torture and was "found" the next day in a street near the port.

Choque Chirinos may have been killed in a gun battle with the police or been wounded and finished off afterwards. But the question is still unanswered why his murderers did not take the money. What is clear is that the police had a hand in this murder and the whole story of the attack and fight is nothing but a cover up.

What is most serious in all this is the implications of such an act. Unquestionably this means a turn toward tougher methods. Up until now all the murders of revolutionaries have taken place in the provinces where such things could be more easily hushed up and concealed. This is the first murder to be perpetrated publicly right in the capital itself.

Another ominous symptom is the fact that there have been changes in the top echelons of the state security division. César Livia Alva has been made one of the top-ranking chiefs of this body. He is an exchief of the criminal brigade, notorious for his mastery of torture, his expertness in a thousand forms of "physical pressure." This means then that the "peaceful" and "courteous" methods which the Lima police (not the provincial police) have used up until now have been dispensed with.

In the meantime, the police have unleashed a veritable manhunt to find

Dante Cunti, the leader of the pro-Chinese Communist party, whom they accuse of being the author and leader of the bank assault as well as the instigator of a so-called wave of terror throughout the country.

Camilo Valqui Cachi, a leader of the students of the University of Trujillo, has also been arrested along with four other students at that university and accused of making bombs; they have been transferred to Lima without their names even having been made known by the police.

PERUVIAN POLICE SEEK TO TRANSFER HECTOR BEJAR TO TORTURE CELL

[The following letter, written by Hector Bejar in one of Lima's jails (the Carceleta de la Prefectura), last December 21, has been translated from the January issue of Solidarité Pérou.]

* * *

To the Colonel Presiding Judge
of the Military Tribunal of the
Army Second Judicial District

Colonel:

The recent statements by the chief of the PIP [Policía de Investigaciones del Perú], Javier Campos Montoya, which have been published in the Lima press and not denied, accuse me of having had a so-called part in the attack on a bank branch.

It is ridiculous to suppose that a prisoner like myself, who has lived for a year in absolute isolation from other prisoners, whose visitors are meticulously searched, checked and photographed by PIP agents and the Republican Guard, whose conversations with his friends and relatives are attentively listened to by an underofficer, a sergeant, a corporal and two guards, and whose wife and relatives are under constant surveillance,

could direct an assault on a bank from his cell.

This grotesque accusation would be unworthy of notice if it did not reveal a sinister intent. It is obviously a maneuver to shift me out of the jurisdiction of the courts and again put me at the disposal of the police so that they can inflict the reprisals which I was spared by the timely resort to legal measures and mobilization of public opinion here and abroad when I was arrested by the PIP two years ago.

The precedents set by such maneuvers less than a month ago against other prisoners do not augur well. Edwin García Miranda, Luis Zapata Boderó, Enrique Amaya Guintana and Carlos Valderrama are dead in the dungeons of the PIP and the army secret services and these bloody deeds have yet to be explained and punished.

Through this open letter, I loudly and openly deny the accusations hurled by Campos Montoya. I demand guarantees for my person and I hold him responsible for any reprisals against me or my family.

Respectfully,

Hector Bejar Rivera

KHALIL TOUAME STILL HELD IN ISRAELI JAIL

The fifteen-day sentence given the Israeli Arab student leader Khalil Touame has been extended for another fifteen days. Touame, a member of the Israeli Socialist Organization [ISO] and a well-known Arab student leader, was arbitrarily arrested on January 8 [see World Outlook, February 2, 1968]; his imprisonment comes in a wave of repression against the Arab population of Israel and the occupied territories. Accused of hiding a re-

sistance leader, he has been denied bail.

Touame is threatened with a trial before a military court, where the accused have few legal rights and from which a heavy sentence may be expected.

Such prominent figures as Bertrand Russell and Jean-Paul Sartre have already responded to appeals for worldwide support in fighting this victimization.

EXCERPTS FROM LITVINOV'S LETTER ON BUKOVSKY CASE

One of those who figured most prominently in support of four dissident Soviet writers, sentenced January 12 to prison terms ranging up to seven years, was Pavel M. Litvinov, the grandson of Maxim M. Litvinov, Stalin's one-time foreign minister. [For text of Litvinov's statement on that trial, issued jointly with Larisa Daniel, wife of the imprisoned Soviet writer Yuli Daniel, see World Outlook, January 26, p. 69.]

Litvinov first came to prominence as a voice supporting dissident, antibureaucratic writers only a few weeks before the January trial, when an open letter issued by him appeared in the world press.

The open letter pertained to an earlier trial of three literary rebels which took place last August. The chief defendant in that trial was Vladimir Bukovsky, who was sentenced to three years imprisonment for leading a demonstration for free speech in January 1967 in Moscow.

Litvinov's letter reported a conversation between himself and a secret police officer named Gostev, in which Litvinov was warned not to make public the transcript of the Bukovsky trial, as they knew he was preparing to do.

The Soviet bureaucracy has not only failed to make public the proceedings of its trials of recent years aimed against political dissidents. It has also carried out reprisals against anyone making that information public. It thereby shows its own guilty conscience and fear of its repressive actions becoming known.

The real "crime," for example, for which the four young defendants were sentenced in January was not that they were "foreign agents" (as the obvious frame-up claimed). It was that they had compiled and published the transcript and other materials relating to the 1965 trial of anti-Stalinist writers Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel.

The following excerpts from Litvinov's letter give some flavor of the obstacles Soviet citizens have to contend with in their struggle for realization of the socialist democracy supposedly assured by the Soviet constitution. After the police officer Gostev's initial warning, Litvinov contended he was doing nothing illegal. The conversation continued as follows:

"I: ...What kind of slander could there be in recording the hearing of a case before a Soviet court?"

"Gostev: Well, your notes will be a biased distortion of facts and a slander of the court's actions and that would be proved by the agency competent to handle such cases.

"I: How can you possibly know that? Instead of starting a new case, you yourself should publish the record of this criminal trial and in this way kill the rumors circulating in Moscow.

"Gostev: And why do we need to publish it? It is an ordinary criminal case of disturbance of the peace.

"I: If so, it is all the more important to give information about it, to let all the people see that it is really an ordinary case.

"Gostev: Vecherniaia Moskva of Sept. 4, 1967, gives all the information about the case. All that has to be known about that trial is in there."

Vecherniaia Moskva, a Moscow evening paper, ran four short paragraphs on the case, stating that all three defendants had pleaded guilty. Litvinov pointed out that Bukovsky had not pleaded guilty at all. Gostev's reply was, "What does it matter whether he pleaded guilty or not? The court found him guilty. Consequently, he is guilty."

Further on, the conversation went as follows:

"Gostev: ...And in general, Pavel Mikhailovich, have in mind: Vecherniaia Moskva has printed all that the Soviet people should know about this case and this information is completely true and we warn you that if not only you, but your friends or anybody makes this record [public], you specifically will be held responsible for it. You understand very well that such a record can be used by our ideological enemies, especially on the eve of the 50th anniversary of Soviet power.

"I: But I do not know of any law that would prohibit the dissemination of a nonsecret document only because it might be misused by somebody. Much critical material in Soviet newspapers might also be misused by somebody."

NEW REGIME MAKES CONCESSIONS TO DISSIDENT CZECH WRITERS

By George Novack

One of the major factors in the removal of Antonin Novotny as head of the Czechoslovak Communist party on January 5 [see: "Dissatisfaction in Czechoslovakia Leads to Ouster of Novotny," World Outlook, January 12, p. 8] was the widespread opposition among the writers, intellectuals, professionals and students to his regimented regime.

Their insistence upon greater freedom of thought and expression was so strong that, just before his eclipse, even Novotny had to make verbal obeisance to it. In his New Year's address, he declared that everything "progressive," including ideas originating in the West, would be permitted in Czechoslovakia as long as they proved useful. "I do not mean only in the economy, engineering and science," he added, "but also in progressive culture and art."

Before the people had a chance to find out what this promise in his political swan song really meant, Novotny was replaced as first secretary of the party by Alexander Dubcek in a drastic reshuffle of top personnel. The intellectual community then eagerly waited to see in what way the new team would seek to lessen the tension in the cultural atmosphere. The rebel writers had some ground for optimism since Dubcek had disagreed with the Central Committee majority last fall when it branded Literarny Noviny, the liberal weekly of the Czechoslovak Writer's Union, as "an organ of opposition political views," instigated by anti-Communist exile groups.

Last September, under Novotny and his cultural commissar, Jiri Hendrych, the editorial board of the union's magazine was reorganized and the publication placed under the direct control of the Ministry of Culture. Four of the most outspoken critics among the Communist writers were expelled from the party and others who sympathized with their views in whole or in part or opposed harsh moves against them were deprived of their posts.

A significant test of the Dubcek government's attitude toward the dissident intellectuals came with the first meeting of the 45-man Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Union of Writers late in January. After two days of heated discussion and hard bargaining, the committee took a set of decisions which represented a compromise between the moderate majority and the more radical wing. The committee is made up of a minority of hard "party-liners," a majority of "neutrals," and a vociferous group of "revisionists."

Professor Eduard Goldstuecker, a rehabilitated victim of the Slansky purge and an authority on Kafka, was elected president. He had told the students at a ten-hour protest meeting against police brutality in the Faculty of Philosophy auditorium at Charles University November 21 that the country was in an irreversible democratization in which the students should have a role. However, he cautioned that "wild demonstrations can only slow down this trend."

The new vice-president is Jan Prochazka who was expelled from the party's Central Committee last fall for interceding on behalf of the most outspoken oppositionists among the Communist intellectuals. He had taken a defiant stand against the party high command in his closing address at the Writers' Congress last July.

On that occasion Prochazka affirmed that writers would persevere in their struggle for the right of expression "to the last writer, the last ruler and the last reader in this world" and would refuse to be subordinated "either to doctrines or dogmas." Describing literature as a "restless voice," he urged his listeners not to worry about what had been said, since "the useful would last and the superfluous, vanish. What had gone unsaid will find expression; ideas are indestructible forces."

In a reply to Hendrych's blasts, Prochazka declared: "To pass any judgment at the close of this congress is not only beyond the power of a writer, it is beyond anyone's power, because our congress now...is history and subject to deeper and more lasting judgments."

Prochazka and his supporters were partially vindicated. The organ of the Writer's Union, it is reported, will be allowed to appear under a new name, Literni Listy, around March 1 and Dusan Hamsik, its original chief editor, who was ousted with the rest of the old board, will resume the same post with the new weekly.

In a further concession to liberal sentiment, the union appealed for clemency for Jan Benes. He is a 31-year-old writer who was condemned to five years' imprisonment for sending written material to an exile organization in the West.

At the same time Jiri Hendrych, who, on behalf of the party Presidium, initiated the punitive measures against the rebellious writers, and who is thor-

oughly detested by them, is still kept in charge of cultural affairs.

These compromises in the literary field are a tip-off to the predicament of the post-Novotny regime. On one hand, it must make concessions to the pent-up forces of discontent in many areas which has put the new team in power. Yet its leaders hesitate to jettison all the dis-

credited policies and personnel of the Old Guard for fear of doing irretrievable damage to the already shaken authority of the party.

It remains to be seen to what extent its temporizing course will succeed in appeasing the deep dissatisfaction among the intellectuals and the masses.

RESURGENCE OF GUERRILLA STRUGGLE IN PHILIPPINES

[The following article appeared in the January 15 issue of Laging Una, a newspaper of the Filipino people published in Los Angeles, California.]

* * *

Resurgence of the Huk guerrilla movement in the Philippines is indirectly helping the fighters of the National Liberation Front in Viet Nam in their resistance to the armed might of U.S. imperialism.

President Ferdinand E. Marcos admitted as much on his return last month to Manila from Australia, where he attended a memorial service for the late Prime Minister Harold E. Holt and held a meeting with President Johnson.

The Manila Times, reporting Marcos' arrival, said the president "pointed to the Huk resurgence in Central Luzon as one of two reasons why the Philippines cannot extend additional aid to the allied war effort in South Viet Nam." The other reason, he reportedly said, was lack of funds.

The president indicated, however, that the 2,000 Filipino troops now in South Viet Nam will not be brought home. To keep them there, the Congress must vote a sustaining fund of about \$35 million for the coming fiscal year, which it is expected to do.

Manila observers believe that Marcos was pressured by Johnson, as he was during the Manila "summit" conference, to commit more troops to Viet Nam. But anxious as he was to accommodate the president of the United States, Marcos felt unable to make any additional commitment.

Marcos' concern over the Huk revival reflects the nervousness of the propertied classes. At his direction, the Philippine Constabulary [PC] has deployed sizeable numbers of troopers in

the Central Luzon provinces of Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan and Tarlac in an effort to round up the armed dissidents.

PC intelligence places the number of actual fighters at just 153, backed by a "combat support group" of 345. More ominous, from the government point of view, is the fact that these guerrilla warriors have a "mass base" of 26,000 in the four provinces. This is at best a guess. The number may be far greater.

In an editorial Dec. 26, the Manila Times struck a note of extreme urgency, saying that "the danger in Central Luzon is real and immediate and calls for the use of all possible resources -- both in the line of military operations and of rural services which are now being provided by special construction and health units of the armed forces."

A few days later (Dec. 29) the same paper decried a PC prediction that the Huks would be "eliminated" by June of this year. It declared: "The last time a similar assessment was made was about ten years ago when the situation in Central Luzon was even more favorable, with the top Politburo leaders and Huk commanders either dead or in jail. But the Huks have since come back...and new Huk commanders have risen to take the place of those who have fallen."

Directing the military drive against the Huks is Brig. Gen. Emilio Zerrudo, 1st PC Zone commander. In a directive issued from Camp Olivas, Pampanga, Dec. 9 he ordered his men to "show no mercy" to the dissidents.

Judging by the experiences of the anti-Huk campaign in the early 1950's, this iron-fist order foreshadows a campaign of military terror in which villagers will be the main victims. This will increase popular hatred of the government and its minions and most likely swell the ranks of the dissidents.

A NEW GOVERNMENT CRISIS IN ARGENTINA?

[The following article has been translated from the January 22 issue of La Verdad (The Truth), a weekly newspaper published in Buenos Aires.]

* * *

It is characteristic of our country that in the summer months [it is summer now in the Southern Hemisphere] the bosses and the bureaucrats take vacations and put off their projects, intrigues and brawls until more comfortable weather. The writers on the bourgeois dailies then find themselves in straits to come up with startling news to electrify the public mind.

Despite this general law, which is still being observed, the last fifteen days have brought two events to the forefront: the attack on Krieger Vasena by the liberal [old-line capitalist] group in the government, which is headed by the Alsogaray brothers; and the jailing of General Cándido López for his demonstration in Salta. In this article we will take up only the first item.

We all remember the signs of joy displayed by the employer class when last year's crisis ended with the ouster of Salimei and his replacement by the limp Vasena. Almost all the sectors favoring the regime began to cherish renewed hopes that the country would be set back on the path of "order."

Most of the measures taken by the new minister of economic affairs (devaluation of the currency, free trade, the wage freeze, rationalization in the state enterprises, complete submission to the economic dictates of imperialism, etc.) drew applause from these elements.

What has happened, in roughly a year's time, for the stock of this typical oligarchical expert to have fallen so low that he is coming under a steady barrage from such an unimpeachably progovernment organ as Correo de la Tarde?

We gave our answer months ago in the general statement that "neither Salimei or any other representative of the bosses, however capable or brilliant, is going to solve the country's chronic crisis." Structural problems demand revolutionary measures.

All that the different agents of the various capitalist groups who succeed one another in the command of the economic life of our country can do is to try palliatives and soothing syrup and kowtow more submissively to the ruler of the capitalist world -- Yankee imperialism. Krieger Vasena did everything the Inter-

national Monetary Fund asked; but the sought-for capital investment, for which Alsogaray has got down on his knees more than once, has not increased.

With the failure of their campaign in Europe and the United States to raise the money necessary for investments to revive the economy, and their failure to win the collaboration of native capital, the only virtue retained by Krieger Vasena and his group was the fact that they favored putting the screws on the working class and the people.

The picture is completed if we add the discouraging background in international trade. England's decision to suspend imports of Argentine meat on the pretext of an epidemic of hoof-and-mouth disease has had a decisive impact on the trade balance; it was already in decline relative to other years, to the extent that in September, for the first time in three years, there was a deficit of 13,100,000 pesos [350 pesos = US\$1].

These are the key reasons for the drop in popularity of the current minister of economic affairs. Underlying these political and ideological differences is a more important cause which in the last analysis determines the superstructural events in question. Those capitalist sectors whose interests are not satisfied begin to lose patience and decide to open fire on the current capitalist representative. The country's hopeless position is what causes these recurring government crises.

Needless to say, the working class and the people must not echo the differences among the various capitalist sectors or side with any of them. But it is important for us to understand their positions in order to better prepare ourselves to fight them.

The "liberal" [old-line capitalist] wing, which shares control of the government, is starting to attack Krieger Vasena for having "abandoned" his former policy and yielding to the "nationalist" group [the other wing which favors government intervention]. The two points on which they are centering their attack are the announced budget and price controls.

This sector of the Argentine bourgeoisie feels that the budget shows alarming signs of a statist [state intervention in the economy as opposed to pure competitive capitalism] orientation in allocating 300,000,000 pesos worth of projects to government enterprises. Its view is that these projects should have been left to private enterprise.

The other point, price controls, is an abstract one, since with or without "controls" both retail and wholesale prices have risen in complete disregard of the half-hearted government measures.

Along with these proposals, the "liberal" current demands a speedup of the rationalization projects in the state enterprises.

It is on the basis of these factors that the union bureaucracy is seeking a new accommodation. Some openly and others -- the majority of the union leaders -- in a veiled way, are trying to justify their contemptible sellout attitude by seeking the support of the sector of the government which is disposed to negotiate with them.

The leadership of the light and power union which hobnobs with the International Monetary Fund representatives and gets warm accolades from them, heads the list of these sellout artists; but leaders like Vandor and Framini, who are trying to maintain an in-between position, are also playing at "participationism" [collaborationist politics] by their friendly relations with the scoundrel San Sebastian.

At the present juncture there are no tractable or "more progressive" wings in the government from which the workers movement can hope for a solution to its problems. Only disgraceful sellout artists like the present CGT [Confederación General de Trabajo -- General Federation of Labor] leadership can place any hopes in the present dictatorship.

The workers movement and the people can have only one proper objective -- struggle to the death against the Onganía gang. The strategic objective must be the fall of this government, not just of this or that minister; and this aim is indissolubly linked to the establishment of a government of the workers and the people. Any variation can only be grist for the mill of the capitalist forces, even if they change their insignia.

Today the perspectives of the struggle have changed. In the past -- before the defeat of the workers movement caused by the bureaucratized union leaders, and especially before the establishment of the present military regime -- there were opportunities for significant victories on minimum demands. Now even the struggle for a mere increase in emergency raises [raises granted as a temporary solution for pressing problems, such as a sudden sharp rise in the cost of living] means in fact battling the government.

This defensive phase, which has deepened since Onganía's coup, makes the

organization of resistance to the government's offensive a vital necessity. Blocking layoffs, firings or increased exploi-



LT. GEN. JUAN CARLOS ONGANÍA

tation through harsher and harsher rationalization schemes requires more than ever a granite organization.

Unfortunately, the totally bureaucratized union leaders cannot be counted on for anything. On the contrary, they are the best agents that the bosses and the government have.

From this analysis of the overall situation, our party, the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores [Revolutionary Workers party] has drawn the conclusion that a slogan must be launched which can serve to guide the preparation for the struggle against the bosses. It is "Resistance Committees" in the factories and the unions ready to employ all means necessary. How intensively these committees employ the strongest means will hinge on the general level of consciousness and maturity.

This analysis also leads us to warn that armed confrontations are already in the offing in this country. The events in Tucumán last year and the actions of San José and Bella Vista should make us realize that a struggle going beyond ordinary means is not just an oratorical phrase but is on the order of the day. The task of a revolutionary

party is to find a way to combine these two necessities.

Our party, the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores, recognizes these needs but it is not so foolish as to think that its present members alone will be able to accomplish the historic tasks on the agenda. The Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores realizes that to take on this gigantic task the unification of all revolutionaries is necessary.

Therefore it wholeheartedly solidarizes itself with the position taken

by the Cuban leadership in OLAS [Organización Latinoamericana de Solidaridad -- Latin-American Organization of Solidarity], proposing the creation of powerful revolutionary organizations in every country. This is the reason for our unconditional support for OLAS and our continual urging that it become the real mass leadership which the circumstances demand.

In the meantime, it is possible, by joining our party, to struggle against the bosses, the regime and the imperialists, and for the establishment of a government of the workers and the people.

CORRECTION -- ON JOHNSON'S HAIR SECRET

We have been asked if we did not make a mistake in last week's issue in suggesting that President Johnson, in working up a new public image, has gone so far as to have his hair "marcelled."

The inquiring youth who brought



THE BOUMBAGE

up the question with us wondered if such a word existed.

Our research department came up with the information that the wave known as the "marcel" was very popular back in the thirties, or the twenties -- his memory wasn't sure about this. The marcel was originated by a Parisian hairdresser, Marcel Grateau, famous for his skill and originality with a hot curling iron.

However, it seems that we were wrong after all. Murphy Arseneaux of New Orleans, who was recently crowned in Los Angeles as America's top barber, was reported in the press January 29 as disclosing that the new hair style adopted by Johnson is called the "Boumbage."

The name, Boumbage, he said, comes from "a French term meaning to balloon the hair."

Arseneaux spotted Johnson's new hair style when he saw him on television delivering his "state of the union" message.

Fluffing and waving the hair à la Boumbage, said Arseneaux, has a quite practical as well as esthetic purpose. "It covers up imperfections of the skull."

Up to now, Johnson has made no comment on Arseneaux's revelation, so we are unable to report whether it is really true that he turned to the Boumbage because he actually does have the problem, among others, of imperfections of the skull. Some of his critics, however, would maintain that not only does the president have the problem of imperfections of the skull, but the imperfections go deeper than the bone.

Enthused by the lift given the tonorial art by the president of the United States when he delivered his "state of the union" message, Arseneaux went on to say

that within five years men in the U.S. will be spending as many billions of dollars on cosmetics and other beauty aids as women. He predicted that "within two years men will have cosmetic kits. One of the things being manufactured now is a pancake makeup that blends out harsh colors in a man's face."

Arseneaux is not engaging in a mere flight of fantasy. It happens to be a fact that the cosmetics industry can list Johnson as one of its patrons. It

has been revealed, for instance, that the name of the makeup which the president used for the sake of his appearance on the television screens of the country when he delivered the "state of the union" message was "Man-Tan."

It blended out the harsh colors in his face. The result was a bit of a climb in his popularity rating. Unfortunately the same could not be said for the message itself which was received rather sourly by the American public.

THE "PEACE AND FREEDOM PARTY" IN CALIFORNIA

A new indicator of the depth of popular sentiment in the United States against the Vietnam war is the emergence of the "Peace and Freedom Party" in California. The new electoral formation made national headlines the first week in January when it won a place on the California ballot for the presidential elections.

This new organization, though overwhelmingly student and middle-class in composition, reflects a genuine widespread desire among opponents of the Vietnam war and those sympathetic to the black struggle to find an electoral alternative to Lyndon Johnson.

Each state has laws restricting the right of parties other than the Republicans and Democrats to appear on the ballot. California, the most populous state, has among the harshest requirements. The organizers of the effort succeeded in getting 104,000 people to register "Peace and Freedom" to win a place on the ballot.

The "Peace and Freedom Party" is not really a party in the accepted sense of the word. At this point it is restricted to a single state, although organizing committees are beginning to spring up in some other areas. It was built primarily by a group of left-wing Social Democrats loosely allied with some independents.

The Communist party initially opposed the effort, counterposing its perspective of finding an acceptable candidate within the Democratic party, such as Senator McCarthy, or pushing for a "third ticket" that would save them from having to support Johnson in 1968 but not interfere with politicking in the Democratic party at other levels. When the PFP won ballot status in California, the CP reconsidered and is now supporting the formation with the rather transparent aim of turning it to account in wheeling and dealing inside the Democratic party.

Another element in the PFP is a significant grouping of procapitalist liberals who have no intention of founding a third party (whether openly capitalist or

masked as "labor" or "socialist"). Their aim is to use the PFP for bargaining with the Johnson faction in hope of obtaining a more palatable image of the Democratic party in relation to Vietnam.

The fundamental weakness of the PFP is its perspective of remaining within the framework of capitalist politics while protesting against U.S. involvement in the civil war in Vietnam. The new formation is appealing to vastly disparate political elements on the basis of opposition to the Vietnam war. But unity on this issue among people of opposing views on many other key issues can be maintained only in specific actions, such as mass demonstrations against the war and for immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops.

But Johnson took the U.S. into Vietnam, as Truman took the U.S. into Korea, in furtherance of imperialist objectives. These can be successfully opposed only by opposing capitalism as a whole. A united front of action against a specific war is not required to adopt a program on the character of the system. But a political party aims to win political power. For it to offer political support to capitalism, or to maintain shamefaced silence about it, serves to castrate opposition to its wars. It would be a betrayal for socialists to support a "party" that has not broken with the capitalist system and which lacks any mass base in the labor movement.

The success of the PFP in getting on the ballot offers fresh evidence of the mounting dissatisfaction among the American people with the two-party system. It also offers fresh proof of the way the leaders of the trade-union and black liberation movements are defaulting politically. If such a small, financially weak, and poorly organized group as the initiators of the PFP could succeed in meeting electoral requirements as difficult as those in California, it can easily be seen what could be accomplished by the labor movement and the black people if a determined effort were made to break out of the blind alley of the capitalist two-party system.

DEFENDING "DEMOCRACY" IN GREECE AND SOUTH VIETNAM

Washington's announced "resumption of normal diplomatic contacts" gives a big boost to the military junta that seized power in Greece last year. Reports from Athens say that the government of Colonel Papadopoulos felt "enormous relief" at this "official recognition" January 23.

The Johnson administration would have preferred to see constitutional normality restored under the monarchy which would have erected a pseudodemocratic scaffolding around capitalist rule. On this account it refrained for a time from according full recognition to the dictatorship of the colonels. However, U.S. relations with the Greek government have never been severed and American officials have been regularly dealing with the regime.

After the fiasco of Constantine's counter-coup, and his flight to Italy, the State Department had no further cards to play. Washington's king had been taken by Papadopoulos' ace. The State Department diplomats decided to throw in their hand. After all, the colonels can be counted on to support NATO, uphold capitalism and suppress any popular movement which rekindles the revolutionary ardor of the early 1940's and threatens to overthrow imperialism in Greece. Even the haughtiest superpower cannot always get whatever it prefers in this imperfect world.

The U.S. move to prop up the Greek junta is one more proof of the hypocrisy of the claim that its foreign policy is designed to defend "democracy" against dictatorship." The regime of the colonels

which has filled the concentration camps, which tortures political prisoners, and which has destroyed the most elementary liberties is the most reactionary and repressive in Western Europe today.

When the great majority of the Vietnamese people organized against a ferocious military dictatorship, Washington did not hesitate to intervene in the Vietnam civil war on the pretext of safeguarding "freedom" there. But when democracy was abolished in Greece by a handful of military conspirators who have set up a dictatorship of the same type as General Ky's, its would-be saviours avert their gaze. Then, as soon as circumstances permit, they come to the rescue of the colonels.

If the Greek freedom fighters should rise up and launch an armed struggle to regain their democratic liberties and head toward socialism, Johnson would find many reasons for the prompt dispatch of his Mediterranean fleet and forces to the scene to prevent this part of "the free world" from being overwhelmed by "Communism."

Just as the puppet regime in Saigon could not last a week without American money, matériel and men, so the colonel's junta would collapse overnight if Washington withdrew all its military, financial and diplomatic support. The two dictatorships survive solely because they serve the objectives of the American strategists who are far more concerned with the promotion of their global imperialist interests than the preservation of the most minimal democratic liberties.

WEST GERMAN STALINISTS TAKE UP CUDGELS AGAINST CHE GUEVARA

Echoing Moscow's opposition to the revolutionary line of the Cuban leadership, West German Stalinist circles are advancing "ideological" refutations of the Cuban position -- Che Guevara's in particular.

The Hamburg weekly Blinkfeuer [Spark], which faithfully reflects the viewpoint of the illegal West German Communist party and which has published major Moscow-line documents in the past, offers a scholastic contribution to the current polemics in its December 21 issue.

The Blinkfeuer article is an interview with Professor Joseph Schleifstein, one of the coeditors of the East German de luxe edition of the collected works of Karl Mehring; he is described by Blinkfeuer as having "become well known as one of the most prolific Marxist scholars."

The section quoted below is the professor's answer to a question on the strategy of "many Vietnams."

"That is an appeal to the unknown. It sounds very revolutionary but it basically amounts to wanting to prescribe forms and methods of struggle for revolutionaries and socialists in other countries. But no one has that right. That is the affair of the revolutionaries and socialists in each country, who must be considered the best judge of the conditions of their struggle.

"It is equally unjustifiable for someone who does not share in the least way the Soviet government's responsibility for world peace and the fate of the Socialist countries to ask the Soviet Union to be readier to assume risks."

ITALIAN TROTSKYISTS PUBLISH NEW MAGAZINE

The Italian Trotskyist movement has launched an attractive new magazine, Quarta Internazionale [Fourth International],* as the quarterly theoretical organ of the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari [Revolutionary Communist Group], Italian section of the Fourth International. The appearance of this journal follows the Italian Trotskyists' recent expansion of their paper, Bandiera Rossa.

Introductory articles commemorating the death of Che Guevara and the October Revolution set the tone of the first issue, linking a long revolutionary tradition with the revolutionary struggles of today.

The principal article is an analy-

* The subscription price is 1,000 lire [US\$1.75] for one year. Subscriptions may be obtained from Quarta Internazionale, Via Cavour 96, 00184 Rome, Italy.

sis of the cultural revolution in China by Ernest Germain. It is an extensive and detailed study of the issues, the forces involved and the economic background and implications.

Another major article, by Joseph Hansen, discusses the OLAS [Organización Latinoamericana de Solidaridad -- Latin-American Solidarity Organization] conference and the continental strategy of the Latin-American revolutionaries.

Also included in this issue are Leon Trotsky's discussions with some of his followers on the revolutionary potential of the black people in the United States.

Important layers are breaking with the traditional reformist parties and seeking a revolutionary road in Italy. They will find much to attract their interest in Quarta Internazionale. The substance and lively format of its first issue are promising.

WORLDWIDE STUDENT STRIKE AGAINST VIETNAM WAR CALLED FOR APRIL 26

Chicago

The largest and most representative conference of American students opposed to U.S. aggression in Vietnam met here January 27-29. The conference voted overwhelmingly to call an international student strike against the war in Vietnam for April 26.

The more than 900 students and young people at the conference urged student organizations around the world to participate in the strike through teach-ins, demonstrations and other actions in solidarity with similar activities in the U.S. on April 26.

The conference was called by the Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, which played a key role in organizing the mammoth demonstrations April 15 in New York and San Francisco, and the confrontation at the Pentagon October 21.

Students from more than 150 colleges and high schools in 27 states took part in the conference. In addition to the student strike, the conference voted to call for 11 days of student antiwar action April 20-30, and planned student participation in an international day of protest on April 27 (demonstrations are being called in every major city for that date).

A nationwide all-black antiwar or-

ganization was formed during the Chicago conference. Black members of the SMC, who were functioning as a black caucus of the organization, decided to form the National Black Antiwar Antidraft Union, which would maintain fraternal relations with the SMC and participate in common actions with the student group.

The international student strike was planned as a political strike to protest the war. It was voted that each campus decide its own tactics and activities during the strike. All those taking part in campus antiwar action April 26 anywhere in the world would be counted as part of the strike. Organizers expected hundreds of thousands of students to participate in the U.S. alone, even if few schools were closed by the strike.

A majority of the young people present at the conference were affiliated with the Student Mobilization Committee or were members of independent antiwar committees. There was also a significant representation of young members from a broad spectrum of political organizations. These included Students for a Democratic Society, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, University Christian Movement, Young Socialist Alliance, DuBois Clubs, Socialist Workers party, Resistance, Communist party, and Committee for Nonviolent Action. The Maoist Progressive Labor party opposed the strike and moved to dissolve the SMC. They walked out when this demand was overwhelmingly rejected.

TROTSKY'S MARXISM: AN ANTI-CRITIQUE

By Ernest Mandel

[The New Left Review, in its July-August, 1967, issue (No. 44), published an extensive article by one of the members of its editorial committee, Nicolas Krassó, that sought to draw a balance sheet on Leon Trotsky as a Marxist. In Krassó's opinion, Trotsky failed to measure up.

[In the current January-February issue (No. 47), the editors have provided equal space for a reply by Ernest Mandel, the editor of the Belgian weekly La Gauche and author of Traité d'Economie Marxiste, a study that has won the author a considerable reputation in the European left as a Marxist economist. (An English translation is now on the press.)

[Mandel's reply is of unusual interest, in our opinion, in view of the level on which he approaches the issues raised by Krassó. We are therefore making it available by reprinting it from the New Left Review.

[For those not familiar with the New Left Review, it is a lively socialist bimonthly devoted to theoretical questions. It has shown special interest in problems of the Latin-American revolution and is decidedly "pro-Cuban." A subscription is 39 shillings, or US\$5.50, for one year and the address is 7 Carlisle St., London, W.1, England.]

* * *

Nicolas Krassó's critique of Trotsky's political thought and activities, which appeared in issue No. 44 of the New Left Review, provides a welcome occasion to unravel some of the misconceptions and prejudices about the historical role of the founder of the Red Army, which still haunt a large part of the 'non-engaged left intelligentsia. The roots of these misconceptions are easily discovered. The public admission and denunciation of some of Stalin's worst crimes by the present Soviet leaders is by no means accompanied by an adoption of the policies for which Trotsky fought during the last 15 years of his life. Neither in the internal organization of the 'socialist' countries, nor in their international policy (with the single exception of Cuba), have their leaders gone back to the principles of Soviet democracy and revolutionary internationalism which Trotsky defended.

But historically, the very fact that Stalin has been thrown down from his pedestal, and that many accusations launched against him by Trotsky are now accepted as correct, represents a tremendous historical vindication of the man whom Stalin's agent murdered on August 20th, 1940 in Coyoacan.

Anyone who remains unengaged in the struggle to bring about the final triumph of Trotsky's programme—his complete political vindication—will therefore tend to rationalize his abstention by looking for faults, mistakes and weaknesses in that programme. By doing so, he cannot repeat the gross distortions and falsifications of Stalinist henchmen of the 'thirties, the 'forties and the early 'fifties: that Trotsky was a 'counter-revolutionary' and an 'agent of imperialism'; that he wanted to, or objectively tended to, restore capitalism in the USSR. He has thus to fall back on the arguments which the more sophisticated and cleverer opponents of Trotsky advanced against him during the 'twenties: that he was essentially a 'non-Bolshevik', a 'left social-democrat', who had not understood the peculiarities of Russia, the *finesse* of Lenin's theory of organization, or the complex dialectics of successful proletarian class struggle, in the West and the East. This is exactly what Krassó is doing today.

I. Classes, Parties and the Autonomy of Political Institutions

Krassó's central thesis is quite simple: Trotsky's original sin is lack of understanding of the rôle of the revolutionary party, his belief that social forces can directly and immediately mould history, that they are, as it were, 'transportable' into political organizations. This prevented him from ever understanding Lenin's theory of organization, and led to crass 'sociologism' and voluntarism. From his rejection of Bolshevism in 1904, to his rôle in the October revolution and in building up the Red Army, his defeat in the inner-party struggle of 1923-27, his style as a historian and his 'futile attempt' to build a Fourth International,

sociologism and voluntarism constitute a single nexus. Trotsky's Marxism thus 'forms a consistent and characteristic unity, from his early youth to his old age', Krassó claims.

Nobody will dispute that Trotsky rejected the essence of Lenin's theory of organization before 1917.¹ We shall not dispute either that the party, the ideology and the psychology of social classes can gain a certain degree of autonomy in the historical process, or, to quote Krassó, that Marxism (not only Lenin's Marxism but any adequate interpretation of Marx's doctrine) 'is defined by the notion of a complex totality, in which all the levels—economic, social, political and ideological—are always operational, and there is a permutation of the main locus of contradictions between them'. But this is a very meagre basis to substantiate Krassó's thesis. When we try to analyse Trotsky's real thinking and its development through nearly 40 years, we encounter at every step evidence of the incompleteness and the inadequacy of Krassó's picture.

In the first place it is incorrect to say that, when rejecting Lenin's theory of organization, Trotsky borrowed his own model of a social-democratic party from the German SPD, as a 'party coexistent with the working class' (p. 66). Historically, it would be much more correct to argue along opposite lines, i.e. to show that Lenin's theory of organization was to a large extent borrowed from the theoreticians of German and Austrian Social-Democracy, Kautsky and Adler.² Trotsky's mistaken opposition to Lenin's theory, at least in its rational kernel, was based upon his distrust of the Western social-democratic *apparatus* as an essentially conservative one. Krassó himself admits a few pages later that Trotsky already in 1905 was more critical of Western social-democracy than Lenin (p. 68). How could he then mould his party model on that social-democracy?³

¹ In justice to Trotsky it must be added, however, that before 1917 Lenin likewise rejected the necessity of adopting as the strategic goal for the coming Russian revolution the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The victory of the October Revolution resulted from a historical combination of Lenin's theory and practice of the revolutionary vanguard party, and Trotsky's theory and practice of the permanent revolution.

² The *Hainfelder Programm* of Austrian Social-Democracy states unambiguously in 1889: 'Socialist consciousness is therefore something which has to be introduced from outside into the proletarian class struggle.' Kautsky devoted an article in the April 17th, 1901 issue of *Die Neue Zeit* ('Akademiker und Proletarier') to the problem of the relationship between revolutionary intellectuals and workers, in which he formulated most of Lenin's organizational concepts. There is no doubt, given the date of publication, that this article (one of a series of two) directly inspired Lenin's *What is to be done?*

³ One should add that Trotsky's instinctive distrust of dilettante intellectuals penetrating a workers' party stemmed from Marx and was entirely shared by Lenin, a

In the second place, it is completely untrue to insinuate that Trotsky continued to misunderstand or to reject Lenin's theory of organization after he had recognized that Lenin had been right on that issue, in 1917. There is no proof for this assumption. Lenin himself declared emphatically that, after Trotsky had understood that unity with the Mensheviks was impossible, 'there was no better Bolshevik than Trotsky'.⁴ All Trotsky's writings after 1917 insist on the key rôle of the revolutionary party in our age. At each turning point of his career, in 1923 with *Lessons of October* and *The New Course*, in 1926 with the *Platform of the Left Opposition*, in his critique of the Comintern's disastrous policies in China, Germany, Spain and France, in the 'thirties in his *History of the Russian Revolution* and in his political testaments, the *Transitional Programme of the 4th International* and the so-called *Emergency Conference Manifesto*, he tirelessly stressed that the problem of building revolutionary parties is the key problem of this epoch: 'The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership.'⁶ A queer way, indeed, to 'forget' the rôle of the vanguard and to believe that social forces can directly and immediately mould history. . . .

It is true that for Trotsky, a revolutionary vanguard was not just a cleverly built and well-oiled political machine. Such an idea, born from American bourgeois politics which, as is well known, are often undistinguishable from gangsterism, was completely alien to Lenin, Bolshevism or, for that matter, the entire international labour movement, until Stalin introduced it into the practice of the Comintern. For Trotsky, as for Lenin and any Marxist tendency, a revolutionary vanguard party should be judged objectively, in the first place in the light of its *avowed programme and its actual policy*. If and when the best-functioning and strongest party starts to act against the interests of the revolution and the working class, a struggle has to be led to put it right. If and when its actions become consistently and for an entire epoch contrary to the interests of the proletariat, it cannot be considered a revolutionary vanguard party any more—and then the task of building a new one immediately arises.⁷

Of course neither Lenin nor Trotsky ever *identified* a revolutionary party only with a correct programme. Lenin explicitly stated that the correctness of a policy could prove itself in the long run only by its ability to win over a significant part of the working class—in fact, the majority.⁸ But both elements are the indispensable complements out of which a revolutionary vanguard party is built. Without a correct programme and policy, a party can become objectively counter-revolution-

point which Krassó adroitly forgets. Cf. Marx-Engels: Circular letter to Bebel, Liebknecht, Bracke and others of September 17th-18th, 1897 (pp. 455-6, in Marx-Engels: *Ausgewählte Schriften, Band II*, Verlag für fremdsprachige Literatur, Moscow, 1950 and V. I. Lenin: 'One step forward, two steps back,' p. 270, in *Selected Works* Vol. I, 1947, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, where Lenin heaps scorn upon the 'bourgeois intellectuals who fear the discipline and the organization of the proletariat'. As for the 'supreme irony' which Krassó discovers in the fact that Trotsky, at the end of his life, had to discuss with 'salon intellectuals', which he had always detested and despised, of the Burnham-Schachtman type (p. 84), Krassó forgets that Engels had to discuss with Dühring and Lenin with Bulgakov, who were certainly not superior to Burnham or Schachtman. It is Krassó who does not understand here the *party-building function* of such educational polemics—well understood by all the masters of Marxism.

⁴ As the text of Trotsky quoted by Krassó clearly indicates, Trotsky understood that 'unity with the Mensheviks was impossible' from the moment that the Menshevik conciliatory policy in the 1917 revolution became clear to him.

⁵ Isaac Deutscher: *The Prophet Armed*, p. 259, Oxford University Press, 1954.

⁶ *The Founding Conference of the Fourth International*, published by the Socialist Workers Party, New York, 1939, p. 16.

⁷ Already in November 1st, 1914, Lenin wrote: 'The 2nd International is dead, overcome by opportunism. . . . The 3rd International has the task of organizing the forces of the proletariat for the revolutionary onslaught upon the capitalist governments.' (Lenin-Zinoviev: *Gegen den Strom*, p. 6, Verlag der Kommunistischen Internationale, 1921).

⁸ Already in 1908, Lenin writes: 'The fundamental precondition for this success was naturally the fact that the working class, whose elite had created social-democracy, is distinct from all other classes of capitalist society, for objective economic reasons, by its organizational capacity. Without this precondition, the organization of professional revolutionaries would be only a game, an adventure. . . . The pamphlet *What is to be done?*, underlines again and again that the organization of professional revolutionaries which it proposes has a meaning only in relation with 'the really revolutionary class which arises elementarily for struggle' (V. I. Lenin: 'Zwölf Jahre', in *Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. XII, p. 74).

ary, whatever its mass influence in the working class may be. Without in the long run winning mass influence in the working class, revolutionists armed with the best programme will degenerate into a sterile sect.

So we see, in the third place, that far from solving the problem by stating the 'autonomy of political institutions' which Trotsky is said to have misunderstood, Krassó has only posed a question without furnishing an answer. For the problem is precisely that of understanding at one and the same time the autonomy of political institutions, and the *relative character* of that autonomy. After all, it was not Trotsky but Marx and Engels, who said that all history is in the last analysis the history of class struggles!⁹ Political institutions are functional bodies. When they become divorced from the social forces which they are supposed to serve, they very rapidly lose all efficacy and power—except when they are used by other social forces. This is precisely what happened to Stalin and his faction inside the Bolshevik party.

Krassó says that Trotsky's 'constant underestimation of the autonomous power of political institutions became his nemesis' (p. 76). In reality, Stalin's belief in the autonomous possibilities of 'power politics' became his 'nemesis', because it transformed him into an unconscious tool of social forces whose very existence he did not seem to notice till the end of his life. Had Stalin been convinced, in the early 'twenties, that by following the course he had entered upon he would have to kill three-quarters of the Old Bolshevik upper and middle cadres, to liquidate the Comintern,¹⁰ to introduce forced labour into the factories and to establish one of the harshest labour codes in modern times, he would probably have recoiled in horror: after all, he was at that time a Bolshevik of some sort.

'Pure' power politics, which Krassó seems to admire so much, degrade their actors precisely to the point where they lose all control over their own actions. The links between conscious purpose and objective consequences of these actions fade away. In opposition to this, Marxists give a premium to *conscious* action; and consciousness implies consciousness of the decisive role of social forces, and the limitations which this role inevitably imposes upon any individual's action. Krassó's lack of understanding of this dialectical inter-relationship between party and class, his unawareness of the problem, is the basic weakness of his essay.

The class cannot triumph without a vanguard party. But the vanguard party is in turn a product of the class, although not only of the class. It can only play its role if it has the support of the most active part of that class.¹¹ In turn, without favourable objective conditions, the class can neither produce such a vanguard party, nor can the vanguard party lead the class to victory. Finally, without conscious understanding of these problems, no vanguard party will arise, even under favourable conditions, and opportunities for victory of the revolution will be irretrievably lost for a long time.

Trotsky understood this dialectical inter-relationship perfectly after 1916, and applied it to a variety of concrete conditions in such a master-

⁹ It was precisely Marx who first discovered the law according to which all historical struggles, whether they were conducted on the political, the religious, the philosophical or any other ideological plane, are, in fact, only more or less clear expressions of the struggle between social classes, a law in virtue of which the existence of these classes, and consequently also their collisions, are in turn conditioned by the level of development of their economic situation, by their mode of production and mode of exchange. . . . (Engels, Preface to the third German edition of 'The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', p. 245, in Marx-Engels: *Selected Works*, Volume I, Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958.)

¹⁰ One of the most pathetic documents of the 'twenties is precisely Stalin's pamphlet *Questions and Answers*, written in 1925, in which he states that a degeneration of the Party and the State are possible, 'provided' that the Soviet government's foreign policy abandons proletarian internationalism, divides regions of the world into spheres of influence with imperialism, or dissolves the Comintern—eventualities which he, of course, completely rules out, but which he was to realize himself 18 years later.

¹¹ In *Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, Lenin stresses the necessity for the Communist vanguard to win the support of 'the whole working class', of 'the broadest masses', before it can victoriously conquer power (*Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 573, Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1947).

ly fashion, that it is really preposterous to state, as Krassó docs, that he 'failed to see the autonomous power of political institutions' (p. 66). Krassó himself defines Trotsky's essays on German fascism as 'the only Marxist writings of these years to predict the catastrophic consequences of Nazism and the folly of the political policies of the Third Period of the Comintern towards it' (p. 85). But how could Trotsky succeed in achieving such a correct analysis of the evolution of German society between 1929 and 1933 without a minute examination and understanding not only of social classes and groupings, but also of their parties? Are not these brilliant writings documentary proof of his capacity to provide a correct assessment of the importance of parties, above all the parties influential in the working class? Was not his whole warning summarized in the Cassandra call: 'Either the communist and social-democratic *parties* will fight together against Hitler, or Hitler will crush the German working class for a long period'? Was not this call precisely based upon Trotsky's understanding of the *inability* of the working class to tackle the threat of fascism without a coming together of these *parties*? Was not this whole analysis fitted together with an equally minute study of the evolution of bourgeois political institutions, which allowed him to discover the universal value, in our epoch, of Marx's category of Bonapartism? In the light of all these facts, what remains of Krassó's contention that Trotsky 'underestimated the autonomous power of political institutions' till the end of his life?

2. 'Struggle for Power and Social Conflicts in the Soviet Union 1923-27'

When studying the 'struggle for power' inside the Soviet Communist Party between 1923 and 1927, Krassó is torn between two conflicting lines of thinking. On the one hand he argues that Trotsky committed mistake after mistake, because of his underestimation of the autonomy of political institutions. He refused to make a bloc with the Right against Stalin and thereby made Stalin's victory certain; for the only way to prevent that victory was to ally all the Old Bolsheviks against Stalin. On the other hand he argues that Trotsky had no chance of winning anyway, because 'virtually the whole Old Guard of the Bolsheviks' united against Trotsky in 1923 (p. 75); 'in effect, Stalin was already organizational master of the party by 1923' (p. 76). Surely these two lines of thinking are self-excluding. In the first case, Stalin's victory was the result of the mistakes of his opponent. In the second case, it was inevitable.

The weakness of Krassó's analysis appears clearly from the fact that *both* versions do not offer any *explanation*; the facts—or rather Krassó's partial misreading of them—are just taken for granted. We are not told *why*, according to the first version, not only Trotsky but all the Old Bolsheviks misread Lenin's warnings about the importance of Stalin and ganged up with him against Trotsky, instead of joining Trotsky in his fight against Stalin. We are not told *why*, according to the second version, Stalin had suddenly become master of the party as early as 1923, while Lenin was still alive. Was all this just due to his clever inner-party manoeuvring, to his 'capacity of persuading individuals or groups to accept the policies he advocates' or even to his 'great patience' (p. 73)? But if this is so, then Stalin arises as a real giant among dwarfs, and even Lenin is hopelessly outmanoeuvred by the crafty General Secretary. . . .

History then becomes completely incomprehensible for social science, just an arena for 'power politics' in a social vacuum. The millions of victims of forced collectivization and of the *Yeshovshina*; the conquest of power by Hitler; the defeat in the Spanish civil war and 50 million victims of the Second World War are due essentially to some genetic accident when Joseph Djughashvili was conceived. Here we have the ultimate result of the insistence upon an absolute autonomy of political institutions, divorced from social forces, and of the refusal to view political struggles as reflecting in the last analysis the conflicting interests of social forces. Marx, in the Preface he wrote to the second edition of *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, noted that Victor Hugo, by considering Louis Bonaparte's seizure of power as an act of force by a single individual, 'aggrandizes him instead of diminishing him, by attributing to him a personal strength of initiative without precedence

in history'.¹² How small appear the consequences of Louis Bonaparte's seizure of power, compared to those of Joseph Stalin's!

The correct method of *understanding and explaining* what happened in Russia between 1923 and 1927, or more correctly between 1920 and 1936, is that which Marx suggests in the above-mentioned Preface: to show, 'how the class struggle created the circumstances and a situation in which a mediocre person' could appear as a hero and a dictator.

In that context, what is significant about Krassó's non-Marxian method is not merely the fact that he sees the inner-party struggle as 'focused on the exercise of power as such' (p. 75), i.e. in a certain separation even from the political issues involved. It is above all that he completely refuses to connect the political struggle, and its expression in a struggle over certain divergent ideas and platforms, directly or indirectly with social conflicts. Here the idea of autonomy of political institutions is pushed to the point where it becomes incompatible with historical materialism as such. In fact, when Krassó reproaches Trotsky with having written that 'even episodic differences in views and nuances of opinion may express the remote pressure of distinct social interests' (p. 77, we underline), he reproaches him for being Marxist! For what this sentence states is not, as Krassó seems to assume, a possible 'identity' between parties and classes, but simply the fact that parties in the last analysis represent social interests, and cannot be understood otherwise historically than as spokesmen for different social interests. This is, after all, what Marx showed in great detail in *Class Struggles in France 1848-1850*, and in *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, not to speak of his lesser works.

Small wonder that, under these conditions, Krassó does not mention even once the social grouping which makes the whole Russian history of the 'twenties understandable in socio-historical terms: the bureaucracy. One should not consider it Trotsky's personal idiosyncrasy to stress and overstress the role of the bureaucracy as a social force with separate interests from those of the proletariat.¹³ Marx and Engels first drew attention to the danger that a bureaucracy could dominate a proletarian state as early as 1871, in their writings on the Paris Commune, and they enumerated a series of simple rules in order to prevent this danger.¹⁴ The mature Kautsky, in his best period, when Lenin considered himself to be his pupil, formulated this danger in an uncannily prophetic way, in 1898.¹⁵ Lenin, in *State and Revolution*, and in the first Bolshevik programme after the October Revolution, underlines the seriousness of the problem.¹⁶

One might have expected that an author like Krassó, who considers himself a great admirer of Lenin, would have at least paid a little attention to what became Lenin's main final battle, a preoccupation which in fact grew into an obsession during the last part of his life: the struggle against bureaucracy. Already in 1921 he rejected a definition of the Soviet Union as a workers' state, and stated instead that Russia was 'a workers' state with bureaucratic deformations'. His apprehension and worry grew from month to month, and we can follow it graphically

¹² Marx-Engels: Selected Works, Vol. I, p. 244, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow 1958.

¹³ Not completely separate however—in the same way as the fascist bureaucracy can never completely separate itself from monopoly capital. But in both cases the defence of common historical interests of the class (collective property in the first case, private property in the other), are combined with a thorough political expropriation of that same class, and even with great individual hardships for many of its members.

¹⁴ K. Marx: *The Civil War in France*—Fr. Engels: 'Preface to *The Civil War in France*', pp. 516-9, p. 483, in: Marx-Engels: Selected Works, Vol. I, Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958.

¹⁵ Kautsky: *Der Ursprung des Christentums*, 13th edition, Dietz, Stuttgart, 1923, p. 499.

¹⁶ In Lenin's speech on the Party Programme, before the VIIIth Congress of the CPSU (March 19th, 1919), he returns again and again to the subject of bureaucracy: 'The lack of culture of Russia . . . debases Soviet Power and recreates bureaucracy. . . . The bureaucracy camouflage themselves into communists. . . . To fight bureaucratism till the end, till complete victory, is only possible if the whole population participates in the administration of the country. . . .' (Lenin: Selected Works, Vol. II, pp. 447, 450, Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1947).

from article to article, in all his last writings, till they reach the sombre premonitions of his last essay and of his Testament.¹⁷

Surely Lenin saw the concrete interplay between the social process—growing political passivity of the working class and growing strength of the bureaucracy in the state apparatus and society, accompanied by a growing bureaucratization of the party apparatus itself—and the inner-party struggle. Surely Trotsky, following the same method, understood—after a certain delay—the same interplay and acted upon that basis.¹⁸ The tragedy was that the other leaders of the Bolshevik Party failed to see in time the danger of bureaucracy, and of Stalin mounting to absolute power as representative of the Soviet bureaucracy. All of them ended by seeing the danger at some time or other, but not at the same time, and not early enough. This is the basic explanation for the apparent ease with which Stalin conquered power.

There is no doubt that Trotsky committed tactical mistakes in the struggle—which are especially apparent today to authors such as Krassó, endowed with that unique source of political intelligence which is called hindsight.¹⁹ But so did Lenin too. After all it was Lenin who had built the party apparatus which now suddenly started to degenerate. It was Lenin who had failed to oppose Stalin's election as general secretary. It was Lenin who had put his personal authority behind a series of institutional and organizational measures which greatly helped the victory of the bureaucracy, and which as we know today—again with hindsight!—could have been avoided without destroying the Revolution: the rule of personal authority of the factory manager; over-reliance upon material incentives; the exaggerated identification of party and state; the abolition of the remnants of Soviet parties or groupings other than the Bolshevik party, at a moment when the Civil War was over (and while these same groupings had been tolerated during the Civil War, provided they did not collude with counter-revolution); the suppression of the traditional right of the Bolshevik party members to form factions.²⁰

¹⁷ Examples: 'We see this evil (bureaucratism) rise before us in a clearer, more precise and more threatening way' (April 21st, 1921); 'the recourse to strike struggles, in a state in which political power belongs to the proletariat, can be explained and justified only by the bureaucratic deformations of the proletarian state . . .' (January 17th, 1922); 'But if we consider Moscow—4,700 responsible communists—and if we consider this bureaucratic machine, this mountain, who is leading and who is being led? I doubt very much that one could say that the communists are leading that mountain. Truly, they are not leading; they are being led.' (March 27th, 1922); 'Bureaucracy exists in our country not only in the Soviet institutions but also in those of the Party.' (March 2nd, 1923) In the third codicil to his Testament, drafted on December 26th, 1922, Lenin proposes that several tens of workers should enter the Central Committee, but not chosen among those who have worked in the Soviet apparatus, because they are already infected with the bureaucratic virus.

¹⁸ It is untrue to say, as does Krassó, that Lenin, in his Testament, 'evinced no special confidence in him (Trotsky)' (p. 75). The Testament presents Trotsky as the most capable member of the Central Committee. It underlines, to be sure, what Lenin considers to be his weakness, but predicts also that a sharp conflict will break out between Trotsky and Stalin, and proposes to eliminate Stalin from his central organizational position. The implication is obvious.

¹⁹ Krassó's record of these errors is inaccurate on numerous issues. He wrongly attributes the idea of 'militarization of labour' to Trotsky, whereas in reality it was a collective party decision adopted at the IXth congress of the CPSU. He alleges that Trotsky did not fight for the publication of Lenin's will; in reality, Trotsky on this point was defeated in the party leadership and did not want to break discipline, for reasons which we shall go into further on. Trotsky 'utterly failed to see that Stalin was determined to evict him from the party', states Krassó. This may have been true of 1923—but at that time nobody saw this, and Stalin himself had probably no intention of going to that extreme. But Trotsky recognized earlier than any other Bolshevik leader the gravity of the situation in the party and the state, which, combined with Stalin's specific character, would lead not only to expulsions but even to bloody repressions. Krassó writes that Trotsky did not pay any attention when the trioka Stalin-Zinoviev-Kamenev broke up. He forgets to add that out of that break-up the United Left Opposition between Trotsky and Zinoviev-Kamenev was eventually formed, and that this united front was broken in 1927–28 not by Trotsky and his friends, but by the Zinovievists.

²⁰ In fairness to Lenin one must add that, while making these mistakes, he also tried to introduce a series of safeguards which were intended to put a brake upon the process of bureaucratization of state and party. The 'trioka' system in the factories effectively limited the authority of the managers. The rights of the trade-unions were extended (on that point, Lenin was correct in his criticism of Trotsky's trade union proposals). The principle of 'maximum income' for party cadres was upheld. While factions were abolished, the right to form tendencies was consolidated and Shlyapnikov received the promise that his oppositional views would be printed on hun-

One can say in a more general way that after the end of the Civil War and the beginning of NEP, Lenin exaggerated the immediate danger which would arise out of loosening of discipline in the Party, and underestimated the danger that suppression of civil liberties for non-Bolshevik Soviet tendencies, and reduction of internal democracy in the Bolshevik party, might hasten the process of bureaucratization which he rightly feared. The root of this mistake lay precisely in a certain exaggerated identification between Party and Proletariat, a belief that the party autonomously defended the conquests of the proletariat. A few years later Lenin understood how mistaken this belief had been—but it was already too late to nip the danger of bureaucratization of the party apparatus in the bud.

Krassó is completely mistaken when he thinks that Trotsky underestimated the autonomous power of political institutions during his critical struggle inside the party, between 1923 and 1927. The very opposite is true. His whole political strategy of that period can be understood only in the light of his understanding of the peculiar dialectical inter-relationship between the objective conditions of Soviet society in a hostile capitalist environment, the relationship of forces between social groupings in that society, and the autonomous role of the Bolshevik party in that particular period and under these concrete conditions.

Because Krassó does not understand this strategy, and perforce wants to explain Trotsky's attitudes in the light of his alleged original sin, he has to throw up his hands in despair and claim complete incoherence on behalf of the founder of the Left Opposition: 'Trotsky had never concretely envisaged the problem of the political implementation of his economic policies' in the 'twenties' (p. 83). These economic policies, according to Krassó, were only the results of his 'gifts as an administrator of the state', and not elaborated and correct political policies towards the different social forces in the USSR. Furthermore they were divorced from his theory of the permanent revolution which implied that 'socialism in one country was not practicable', because it would succumb to 'subversion' through the world market and military collapse before a foreign imperialist aggression (pp. 79–80) . . . Confronted with so many historical distortions, one wonders whether the incoherence which Krassó imputes to Trotsky does not exist in his own mind.

It is, in fact, incoherent to oppose Trotsky's immediate economic programme for the Soviet Union to his concept of 'permanent revolution'.²¹ How is it possible that a Marxist, who gave such preponderance to ideas, and related them—according to Krassó—in such an 'immediate' way to social groupings, could at one and the same time struggle for the accelerated economic growth of the Soviet Union, and say that everything depended on immediate international revolution, without which the Soviet Union would collapse? Does not the second assumption make the first struggle meaningless? This is a contradiction implicit in the falsified version of the theory of permanent revolution, which both his Stalinist critics of past and present, and some of his foolish ultra-left pseudo-followers, never could explain away. The mystery is easily solved when the problem is posed in correct terms: all Trotsky stated in the third 'law of the permanent revolution' was the fact that a fully fledged socialist society, i.e. a society without classes, commodities, money and state, could never be accomplished within the boundaries of a single state (which was more backward than the most advanced capitalist countries, at that).²² He never for a single moment disputed the need to start the job of building socialism, and to achieve an increased tempo of economic growth for this purpose, precisely as long as the Revolution remained isolated within a single country. It was he, after all, who had first concretely proposed a policy for increasing the tempo of industrialization.

dreds of thousands of copies. But history has shown that the more the proletariat became politically passive and the more the power of the bureaucracy became all-pervasive, the greater became its possibilities to sweep away these safeguards by a few swift strokes, as it did in the late 'twenties and the early 'thirties.

²¹ Krassó characterizes the formula 'permanent revolution' as 'an inept designation which indicated the lack of scientific (!) precision even in his profoundest insights' (p. 68). He seems to ignore that the formula was coined by Marx himself.

²² In a chapter of his critique of the *Draft Program of the Comintern*, Trotsky shows in great detail that Stalin and his allies deliberately confused the question of the pos-

But if the whole argument only concerned the abstract theoretical problem of *achieving* a final stage of socialism (as distinct from Communism, characterized by the withering away of the social division of labour), why then all the heat of the discussion, one might ask? Did not Trotsky make a grave tactical mistake by involving himself in such a battle which could not be understood by the overwhelming majority of the party membership?

The truth of the matter is that it was not at all Trotsky who raised the question, but Stalin and his faction. Undoubtedly, this was a 'clever' tactical move, tending to isolate Trotsky and his followers from the more pragmatically minded Bolshevik cadres. But it so happens that on precisely this issue, most of the Bolshevik Old Guard, including Lenin's widow, sided with the United Left Opposition, and that Zinoviev and Kamenev in particular threw themselves into a full-fledged battle. Trotsky's opposition to the theory of achieving 'socialism in one country' thus became the basis for his closest collaboration with the Old Guard since the Civil War.

Both Stalin's reckless game with ideas and the Old Guard's resistance to it were not accidental. In the theory of achieving 'socialism in one country', the bureaucracy expressed its incipient consciousness of its own power, and arrogantly turned its back upon elementary Marxist-Leninist theory. It was 'emancipating' itself not only from world revolution, but also from the whole theoretical heritage of Lenin, and, incidentally, from any reliance upon an active and conscious working class, both inside the Soviet Union and on the world arena. By opposing this jettisoning of elementary Marxist theory, the Old Guard expressed its basic qualities. It was willing to go along with Stalin in order to 'safeguard the unity of the Party' and 'not to upset the safety of the dictatorship of the proletariat'. It was reluctant to go beyond a point where open antagonism with basic tenets of Lenin's theory became apparent. As said above, the tragedy of the 'twenties is in fact the tragedy of that Old Guard—that is, of Lenin's Party without Lenin. But Stalin paid it the supreme homage of wholesale physical extermination, thereby clearly indicating his conviction that it was by its very nature 'irrecoverable' for the sombre bureaucratic dictatorship of the 'thirties and 'forties.

Where Krassó divides Trotsky's thinking in the 'twenties into unrelated and incoherent bits and pieces, there is in reality dialectical unity and coherence. Trotsky was convinced that Soviet society, in transition from capitalism to socialism, could not solve its problems gradually in the framework of the NEP. What he opposed was the idea of peaceful coexistence between petty commodity production and socialist industry inside the USSR, which was just the other side of that well-known coin, 'peaceful coexistence' between capitalism and the workers' state on the world arena. He was convinced that sooner or later the conflicting social forces would arrive at a point of conflagration, nationally and internationally. His policy could be summarized in the formula: favour all those tendencies which, nationally and internationally, strengthen

sibility of a victory of the socialist *revolution* in one country, which implied the necessity of a *beginning* of socialist organization and construction of the economy, with the question of the *final* victory of socialism, i.e. the establishment of a fully developed socialist society (*The Third International after Lenin*, pp. 24-40, Pioneer Publishers, New York, 1936). It is interesting to note that as late as 1924, in the first Russian edition of his *Lenin and Leninism*, Stalin himself wrote: 'For the final victory of socialism, for the organization of socialist production, the efforts of one country, particularly of such a peasant country as Russia are insufficient.' Interpreted confusedly by Krassó (pp. 79-80), the economic reasons given by Trotsky for the impossibility of 'socialism in one country' become perfectly reasonable when one looks at them from the point of view of 'final victory' and not of 'beginning to build'. Obviously, a fully-fledged socialist economy must have a higher productivity of labour than the most developed capitalist economy; on this, even Stalin and Bukharin agreed. Trotsky simply argued that in an essentially autarchic economy, it would be impossible to reach a higher productivity of labour than that which the imperialist countries achieve thanks to their international division of labour. He nowhere alleged that this would lead to an inevitable 'subversion' of the planned economy inside the USSR. He only stated that it would be a source of violent conflicts and contradictions, which would not enable the Soviet Union to achieve a classless society. Historical experience has completely confirmed this prognosis.

the proletariat, its numerical and qualitative strength, its self-confidence and revolutionary leadership; weaken all those tendencies which, nationally and internationally, tend to divide the working class or its capacity and will to defend itself.²³

Looked at from that point of view, everything falls into place and there is no longer any puzzle. Trotsky favours industrialization, because this is indispensable if the proletariat is to be strengthened inside Soviet society. He favours gradual collectivization of the countryside, because this is indispensable for weakening the rich peasants' pressure against proletarian state power and their threat of blackmailing the city by sudden withdrawal of grain deliveries. He favours a combination of accelerated industrialization and gradual collectivization, because it is necessary to create a material-technical infrastructure for collective farms in the form of tractors and agricultural machinery²⁴—without which collectivization becomes an adventure which could lead to famine in the cities. He favours a course towards increasing Soviet democracy, in order to stimulate the political activity and consciousness of the working class. He is in favour of abolishing unemployment and increasing real wages—for industrialization accompanied by a lowering of the standard of living of the workers would lessen and not heighten the political self-activity of the proletariat.²⁵ He favours a course of the Comintern which would profit from all favourable conditions to achieve proletarian victory in other countries, in order to ameliorate the international balance of forces in favour of the proletariat. A combination of all these policies would not have avoided a first trial of strength with the enemy; but it would have allowed it to take place in much more favourable conditions than it in fact did, in 1928-32 inside Russia, and in 1941-45 internationally.

Was this programme 'unrealistic'? No, in the sense that the *objective* conditions for its realization did exist. No unprejudiced student of history can doubt today that, had this alternative course been followed, the Soviet proletariat and people would have been spared innumerable avoidable sacrifices and hardships, and mankind would have avoided, if not a World War, at least the scourge of victorious fascism spread all over Europe and dozens of millions of dead. Yes, in the sense that the *subjective* conditions for its implementation did not exist. The Soviet proletariat was passive and atomized. It viewed the programme of the Left Opposition with sympathy but, at a time of exhaustion, without the necessary militancy to fight for it. Contrary to what Krassó seems to think, Trotsky at no time had the slightest illusion about this.

To leave the Bolshevik party immediately, to proclaim a new (illegal) party, was to rely exclusively upon a working class which was becoming more and more passive. To rely upon the army, to stage a *coup d'état*, meant in fact to substitute one bureaucratic apparatus for another and to condemn oneself to become a prisoner of the bureaucracy. All those

²³ We believe that history has born out the correctness of this basic conception. Even today, after a victorious war against Nazi imperialism, and after the complete liquidation of the kulaks as a class—two violent collisions which Trotsky considered inevitable from the early 'twenties on—the fate of the Soviet Union continues to depend upon the outcome of current and future social conflicts, nationally and internationally. In the final analysis, its fate—as well as the fate of all mankind—depends upon the capacity of the toiling masses of the United States to disarm the rulers of that country, before they reach the final stage of power-mad lunacy and, by unleashing a nuclear world war, demonstrate in practice that they accept the slogan 'rather dead than red', as Hitler did under similar circumstances, in 1944-45.

²⁴ This is but one example of the fact that Stalin did *not* take over Trotsky's programme, but only parts of it, without their necessary inner logic. The Opposition had struggled from 1923 on for the building of a tractor plant in Tsaritsyne. The principle was accepted. It was not acted upon before 1928. If tractors had started to be produced from 1924-25 on, and *kolkhozes* had been built up gradually, with poor peasants voluntarily joining them on the basis of a higher productivity of labour and higher peasant income in the co-operative sector as compared with the private one, the combination of industrialization and collectivization of agriculture would have led to a situation completely different from the tragedy witnessed in 1928-32, from which the Soviet Union continued to suffer till the late 'fifties.

²⁵ The Opposition proposed as alternative sources of accumulation, compared to the ruthless lowering of the standard of living of the workers and peasants as practised by Stalin, a special tax levied upon the rich peasants only, and a radical reduction of administrative expenses, economizing one billion gold roubles annually. The goals of the first Five Year Plan, spread over eight or ten years instead of over five years, could have been reached with much lower sacrifices in consumption by the mass of the people.

critics of Trotsky who reproach him for having avoided either the first or the second of these avenues open to him do not understand the situation in terms of basic social and political forces. The task of a proletarian revolutionary is not to 'take power' by any means, under any conditions; it is to take power in order to implement a socialist programme. If 'power' can be won only under conditions which drive one away from the realization of that programme, instead of bringing one nearer to it, it is a thousand times preferable to stay in opposition. Non-Marxist admirers of abstract 'power', presumably floating in the air and detached from social reality, think this to be a 'weakness'. Any convinced Marxist will understand this to have been Trotsky's supreme strength and gift to history, instead of a 'flaw' in his armour.

Was Trotsky's struggle in the 'twenties then only a 'pose' for history's sake, in order to 'save the programme'? Let it be said in passing that even from that point of view it would have been completely justified. Today it should have become obvious that the reappropriation of genuine Marxism by the new revolutionary vanguard in the world is greatly assisted by the fact that Trotsky, almost alone, saved the heritage and continuity of Marxism during the 'black 'thirties'.

But, in reality, Trotsky's struggle had a more immediate purpose. The Soviet working class was passive—but its passivity was not mechanically predetermined for a long period. Any upsurge of the international revolution, any shift in the inner-Soviet relationship of social forces, could have brought about an awakening. The immediate instrument for these shifts could only be the Comintern and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Trotsky fought in order to have the party act as a brake upon the process of bureaucratic degeneration, as Lenin had called upon him to do. History has shown *a posteriori* that the party apparatus had already been bureaucratized to the point where it acted as a motor of, not a brake on the process of political expropriation of the proletariat. *A priori*, the outcome of this struggle depended upon the concrete political options of the CPSU leadership—the Old Bolsheviks. A correct shift at the correct moment could have reversed the process—not to the point of eliminating the bureaucracy altogether (this was impossible under the conditions of a backward country and capitalist environment) but to reduce its malignancy and awaken the proletariat to renewed self-confidence. Trotsky's 'failure' was thus indeed the failure of the Old Guard—which understood too late the real nature of the monstrous parasite to which Revolution had given birth. But this very 'failure' underlines Trotsky's understanding of the intricate and complex relationship between social forces, political institutions and ideas in the 'twenties.

3. Was International Extension of the Revolution Impossible between 1919 and 1949?

We now reach the third tier of Krassó's critique of Trotsky's Marxism, in a certain sense the decisive one, and obviously the weakest link in his chain of reasoning: his critique of Trotsky's 'expectations' of international victories of the revolution after 1923.

This whole part of Krassó's essay is dominated by a strange paradox. Krassó started out by accusing Trotsky of underestimating the role of the party. But Trotsky's hope of successful revolutions in the West, Krassó now states, was based upon his failure 'to understand the fundamental differences between Russian and Western European social structures' (p. 81). In other words, *objective conditions* made world revolution impossible, at least between the two world wars. In opposition to Trotsky's alleged 'voluntarism', Krassó here defends a position of crude socio-economic determinism: as revolutions have not won (yet) in the West, this proves that they could not have been victorious, and if they could not have been victorious it was because of the 'specific social structure' of the West. The role of the party, of the vanguard, of the leadership, the 'autonomy of political institutions', is now completely eliminated from the picture—by Krassó himself, and in polemics *against* Trotsky. A strange somersault indeed. . .

But what about Lenin? How does Krassó account for the fact that Lenin, who, to quote Krassó, 'theorized the necessary relationship between party and society' (p. 84), was as fervently convinced as Trot-

sky of the necessity of building Communist parties and a Communist International? Does Krassó consider this 'futile voluntarism' on Lenin's behalf? How does he explain the fact that, years after Brest-Litovsk (Krassó here commits a historical distortion by insinuating the contrary on p. 78), Lenin continued to think that an international extension of the revolution to the West and the East was unavoidable?²⁶

Krassó can only try and construct a difference between Lenin's and Trotsky's position on the dialectical inter-relationship between the October Revolution and the international revolution, by attributing to Trotsky three mechanistic and childish ideas: the idea that revolutions were 'imminent' in Europe (p. 81); that capitalist conditions were everywhere, at least in Europe, equally ripe for revolution without any difference between specific nations (p. 81); and that the victory of these revolutions was 'certain' (pp. 79, 81). Needless to say, Krassó will find it impossible to substantiate any of these allegations. It is easy to find overwhelming documentary proof of the contrary.

As early as the Third Congress of the Comintern (1921), Trotsky, together with Lenin (both were 'at the right wing' of that Congress), stated unmistakably that, after the first wave of post-war revolutionary struggles, capitalism had now gained a breathing-spell in Europe. What was on the agenda was not 'immediate revolution', but the preparation of the Communist parties for *future* revolution, i.e. a correct policy to win the majority of the working class and create a cadre and leadership capable of leading these parties to victory when new revolutionary situations occurred.²⁷ Criticizing Bukharin and Stalin's 'Draft Programme of the Communist International', Trotsky stated explicitly in 1928: 'The revolutionary character of the epoch is not that it permits the accomplishment of the revolution, that is, the seizure of power, at every given moment. Its revolutionary character consists in profound and sharp fluctuations and abrupt and frequent transitions from an immediately revolutionary situation, that is, such as enables the Communist party to strive for power, to a victory of the Fascist or semi-Fascist counter-revolution, and from the latter to a provisional régime of the golden mean (the "Left bloc", the inclusion of social democracy into the coalition, the passage of power to the party of MacDonald, and so forth), immediately thereafter forcing the antagonism to a crisis again and acutely raising the question of power'.²⁸ In his final writings, he again and again characterizes our epoch as a swift succession of revolutions, counter-revolutions and 'temporary stabilizations', a succession which precisely creates the *objective conditions* for building a revolutionary vanguard party of the Lenin type.

Here indeed is the nub of the question, which Krassó does not even pose and obviously cannot answer for that reason. What is the basic assumption which is at the bottom of Lenin's organizational concepts? As Georg Lukács so aptly characterized it, it is the assumption of the *actuality of the revolution*,²⁹ i.e. the conscious and deliberate preparation for conquest of power by the proletariat when revolutionary situations occur, and the profound conviction that given the objective laws of motion of Russian society, such revolutionary situations *had* to occur sooner or later. When Lenin wrote his book on *Imperialism*, under the influence of Hilferding's *Finanz-Kapital*,³⁰ and when he drew up a

²⁶ Just two quotations: 'The first Bolshevik revolution has pulled the first hundred million human beings on earth out of the grip of imperialist war, the grip of the imperialist world. The coming revolutions will pull all mankind out of the grip of these wars and that world.' (October 14th, 1921). 'You have to learn in a special sense, in order to really understand the organization, the building, the method and the content of revolutionary work. If this happens, then I'm convinced that the perspectives of world revolution will not only be good but be excellent.' (November 15th, 1922.) (Lenin: *Sämtliche Werke*, Band 33, pp. 37 and 418 of the 1966 edition, Dietz Verlag, Berlin).

²⁷ A typical example of 'underestimation of the autonomy of political institutions', no doubt. . .

²⁸ L. Trotsky: *The Third International after Lenin*, pp. 81-82, New York, Pioneer Publishers, 1936.

²⁹ Georg Lukács: *Lenine*, pp. 28-29, F.D.I. Paris, 1965.

³⁰ Rudolf Hilferding: *Das Finanzkapital*, Verlag der Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, ends on p. 477 with a final paragraph characterizing finance capital as the accomplished dictatorship of Big Business, and predicts a 'formidable collision of antagonistic (social) interests' which will finally transform this dictatorship of Big Business into the dictatorship of the proletariat.

balance-sheet of the significance of the First World War, he correctly extended that notion of actuality of the revolution to the entire imperialist world system: the weakest links would break first, but precisely because they were links of one chain, the entire chain would be broken up progressively.³¹ This was his justification for calling for the formation of a Third International. This was the programmatic foundation of the Comintern.

Now this is a central concept with which you cannot dally frivolously. Either it is theoretically correct and confirmed by history—and in that case not only is the 'third law of permanent revolution' adequate, but the main responsibility for the working class defeats of the 'twenties, the 'thirties and the early 'forties can then be put squarely at the door of inadequate leadership. Or Lenin's central concept after August 4th, 1914 was incorrect, and experience has shown that objective conditions were not ripe for the periodic arising of revolutionary situations in the rest of Europe—and in that case it is not only Trotsky's 'third law of permanent revolution' which was a 'theoretical error' to quote Krassó, but all of Lenin's endeavours to build Communist Parties, organized with the purpose of leading the proletariat to the conquest of power, then stand condemned as criminal splitting. Is not this, after all, what social-democrats have been claiming for more than 50 years, with the same basic argument about 'socio-political conditions' in the West being 'unripe' for revolution, and Lenin 'failing to understand the fundamental differences between Russian and Western European social structures'?

The balance sheet can be drawn up very quickly, at least on the level of historical experiences. Leaving aside minor countries, there was a revolutionary situation in Germany in 1918-19, in 1920, in 1923, and a great possibility of turning a successful defence against the threat of nazism into a new revolutionary situation in the early 'thirties; there was a revolutionary situation in Spain in 1931, 1934 and 1936-37; there was a revolutionary situation in Italy in 1920, in 1945, in 1948 (at the moment of the attempted murder of Togliatti); there was a revolutionary situation in France in 1936 and in 1944-47. Even in Britain, there was something called a general strike in the mid-twenties . . . Ample literature, including writings of non-Communist and non-revolutionary sources, attests to the fact that in all these situations the unwillingness of the masses to tolerate the survival of the capitalist system, and their instinctive drive to take society's fate in their own hands, coincided with wide confusion, division, if not near-paralysis among the ruling classes—Lenin's definition of a classical revolutionary situation. If we extend the picture to the whole world, with the Chinese revolution of the 'twenties and the Vietnamese uprising of the early 'thirties blending at the end of the Second World War into two powerful revolutions which stimulated a worldwide revolutionary movement of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, then, surely, the definition of this half century as 'the age of permanent revolution', which Isaac Deutscher and George Novack chose as the title for a paperback selection of Trotsky's writings³², is an adequate summary of historical experience.

Krassó now comes to the most extraordinary statement of his essay: the defeats of the European revolution in the 'twenties, the 'thirties and the early 'forties prove that 'the superiority of Stalin's perspective over Trotsky's is undeniable' (p. 79). Because, you see, Trotsky foresaw victorious revolutions, while Stalin 'discounted the possibility of successful European revolutions'. But wasn't it precisely the opposite? Trotsky did not believe at all in automatically victorious revolutions, neither in Europe, nor anywhere else. He only tirelessly fought for a *correct policy* of the Communist Movement, which would enable it eventually—if not the first time, then the second or the third one—to

transform revolutionary situations into revolutionary victories. By advocating *incorrect policies*, Stalin contributed heavily to the defeats of these revolutions. He taught the Chinese communists to put their trust in Chiang Kai-Chek and, in a public speech held at the very eve of Chiang's wholesale massacre of the Shanghai workers, expressed his firm belief in the executioner as a 'faithful ally'.³³ He taught the German communists that social-democracy was their main enemy, and that Hitler would either be unable to conquer power or would be unable to stay in power more than a few months: they would be the real victors very soon. He taught the Spanish communists to stop their revolution and to 'first win the war', in alliance with the 'liberal' bourgeoisie. He taught the French and Italian communists to build a 'new democracy' which would not be any more 'entirely' bourgeois because of a few Communist cabinet ministers and a few nationalizations.

All these policies ended in disaster. Yet when Krassó draws up the balance sheet of the disasters, he concludes . . . that Stalin's perspective was undeniably (!) superior to Trotsky's, for, you see, he 'discounted the possibilities of successful European revolutions'! Perhaps the Stalin course of the 3rd International, the transformation of the Comintern from a tool of world revolution into a simple aid to diplomatic manoeuvres of the Soviet government, and the theory of achieving the building of socialism in a single country, had something to do with the absence of successful European revolutions? Or would Krassó go so far as to impute to Stalin the intention of deliberately organizing these defeats . . . just to 'prove' the 'superiority' of his perspectives over those of Trotsky?

As Marxists, we have to pose a final question. Stalin's 'mistakes' in the realm of the Communist International cannot be explained away as accidental results of his 'lack of understanding' or 'Russian provincialism', any more than the disastrous results of his policies inside the Soviet Union can be explained by the thoroughly unMarxist formula of the 'personality cult'.³⁴ His 'mistaken' tactics in no way corresponded to the interests of the Soviet or of the international proletariat. They cost millions of deaths which could have been saved, decades of avoidable sacrifices and years of terrible sufferings under the iron rule of fascism. How then can one explain the fact that Stalin systematically opposed or sabotaged all attempts by Communist Parties to take power, outside of the realm of the Soviet army, anywhere in the world, for nearly 30 years.³⁵ Surely, a *social* explanation must be found for this astonishing fact. Such a systematic policy can only be explained as the expression of the *particular interests of a special social grouping* inside the Soviet society: the Soviet bureaucracy.

This grouping is not a new class. It does not play a particular and objectively necessary role in the process of production. It is a privileged outgrowth of the proletariat after its conquest of power under objective conditions unfavourable for the blossoming of socialist democracy. Like the proletariat, it is fundamentally attached to collective ownership of the means of production and opposed to capitalism:

³³ It is in deliberate travesty of historical truth that the Maoist leadership of the Chinese Communist Party continues to make the leader of the CCP of the 1925-27 period, Chen Tu Hsui, mainly responsible for these mistakes, and hides the fact that he was only acting upon the direct and pressing instructions of the Communist International, and in the first place of Stalin personally.

³⁴ But wasn't Stalin's policy vindicated by the USSR's victory in the Second World War, ask many people, and as Krassó also insinuates (p. 80)? To see things like this—completely passing over in silence the tremendous price paid for that victory, and the innumerable avoidable victims and defeats (including during the war: a whole literature has sprung up in the Soviet Union around this theme!)—is to present a distorted picture of reality. A man on the fifth floor refuses to take the elevator or even to switch on the light, but wants perforce to descend a narrow staircase in the dark. He slips, as could be expected, falls down the stairs, but thanks to his robust constitution does not break his neck but only both arms and legs, and is even able to walk on crutches again after four years. This is obviously proof of a strong constitution; but does it argue against taking the elevator?

³⁵ As we know today, Stalin also tried to influence the Yugoslav and Chinese communists against conquering power. He instructed the Vietnamese CP to stay inside the French colonial empire, rechristened the 'French Union'. The party he had educated obstinately refused to engage upon Fidel Castro's road towards a victorious socialist revolution in Cuba for several years. Don't these facts need a *sociological* and not a simply *psychological* explanation?

³¹ The pamphlet 'The Collapse of the IInd International', written by Lenin in 1915 (Lenin-Zinoviev: *Gegen den Strom*, pp. 129-70), is centered on the idea that a revolutionary situation is developing in Europe, and that revolutionary socialists have to act in order to stimulate the revolutionary sentiments and actions of the masses. His contributions to the two first Congresses of the Communist International extend this analysis to all colonial and semi-colonial countries.

³² Laurel Edition, Dell Publishing Company, 1964, New York.

that is why Stalin finally crushed the *kulaks* and stood up against the Nazi invasion. It has not destroyed the basic socio-economic conquests of the October revolution; on the contrary, it has conserved them, be it by means which enter more and more into conflict with the basic goals of socialism. The socialized mode of production born from the October revolution has withstood successfully all assaults from outside and all undermining from within. It has proved its superiority to hundreds of millions of human beings. This is the *basic* historical trend which, incidentally, also explains why world revolution, instead of being definitively thrown back for decades as pessimists assumed, could so easily rise again and conquer momentous victories after the Second World War.

But unlike the proletariat, it is basically conservative in outlook, afraid of any new upsurge of world revolution, because it feels that this would trigger off a new stage of workers' militancy inside its own country, which would threaten its own power and privileges. The theory and practice of 'socialism in one country' in the 'twenties and 'thirties, like the theory and practice of 'peaceful coexistence' in the 'fifties and 'sixties, are a perfect expression of the socially contradictory nature of that bureaucracy. It will certainly defend itself when threatened with extinction by imperialism; it will even try to extend its 'zone of influence' when this can be done without upsetting the social equilibrium of forces on a world scale. But it is basically attached to the *status quo*. American statesmen have found this out, in the long run. Krassó should show at least their awareness of this *rationale* of Russian foreign policy since Lenin's death, and he should try to find a social explanation for this consistent behaviour. He will find no other than the one which Trotsky elaborated.

The bureaucracy and its apologists can, of course, try and rationalize

that policy, stating that it was merely concerned with the defence of the Soviet Union against the threat of all capitalists ganging up against it, if 'provoked' by revolutions elsewhere. In the same way social-democrats have consistently argued that they oppose revolutions only in order to defend the working-class organizations and conquests which would be crushed by reaction, if the bourgeoisie was 'provoked' by revolutionary activity. But Marx taught us precisely not to judge parties and social groups on the basis of their self-rationalizations and self-proclaimed intentions, but on the basis of their objective role in society and the objective results of their actions. In that sense, the true social nature of the Soviet bureaucracy is reflected in the sum total of its actions, in the same way that, according to Lenin, the true social nature of the trade-union bureaucracy and the petit-bourgeois top echelons of social-democracy in the imperialist countries *explains* their consistent opposition to socialist revolution.

Here we are again at our starting point. Marxists understand the relative autonomy of political institutions, but this understanding implies a constant research into the social roots of these institutions, and the social interests which they serve in the last analysis. It also implies that the more these institutions rise above the social classes which they first were said to serve, the more they succumb, independently of their own will, to a tendency towards self-defence and self-perpetuation, and the more they can enter into conflict with the historical interests of the class from which they arose. This is the way Marx and Lenin understood the problem. In this sense, Krassó's charge that Trotsky, 'underestimated' the possibility of autonomy of 'parties' and 'nations' is just an accusation that he was a Marxist and a Leninist. We are sure that Trotsky would have been willing to carry the cross of that sin with stoicism and not without satisfaction.

In this issue

	<u>Page</u>
A New Stage Opens in the Vietnamese Revolution -- by Joseph Hansen	98
Japanese People Show High Sensitivity to Nuclear Allergens	100
Don't Pay the Postman That Six Cents	101
More on the New Witch-Hunt in Peru	102
Peruvian Police Seek to Transfer Hector Bejar to Torture Cell	103
Khalil Touame Still Held in Israeli Jail	103
Excerpts From Litvinov's Letter on Bukovsky Case	104
New Regime Makes Concessions to Dissident Czech Writers -- by George Novack	105
Resurgence of Guerrilla Struggle in Philippines	106
A New Government Crisis in Argentina?	107
Correction -- On Johnson's Hair Secret	109
The "Peace and Freedom Party" in California	110
Defending "Democracy" in Greece and South Vietnam	111
West German Stalinists Take Up Cudgels Against Che Guevara	111
Italian Trotskyists Publish New Magazine	112
Worldwide Student Strike Against Vietnam War Called for April 26	112
Trotsky's Marxism: An Anti-Critique -- by Ernest Mandel	113

Reba Hansen, Business Manager,

P. O. Box 635, Madison Sq. Station,

New York, N.Y. 10010



EDITOR: Joseph Hansen. CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, George Novack. WORLD OUTLOOK specializes in weekly political analysis and interpretation of events for publications of the labor, socialist, colonial independence and black liberation movements. Signed articles represent the view of the authors, which may

not necessarily coincide with those of World Outlook. Insofar as it reflects editorial opinion, unsigned material expresses the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism. TO SUBSCRIBE: For 26 issues send \$7.50 or 2/15s. or 37.50 francs to: World Outlook, P.O. Box 635, Madison Sq. Station, New York, N.Y. 10010. PARIS OFFICE: Pierre Frank, 21 rue d'Aboukir, Paris 2, France.