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POLITICAL
AFFAIRS

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Hyman Lumer

THE DETROIT GHETTO UPRISINGS
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The Economics of Rebellion

The ghetto uprisings that have spread across the country have been aptly termed "the rebellion of the poor." To be sure, more than poverty is involved. At their root lies also the insistent demand for simple human dignity, for an end to humiliation, degradation and insult. And almost universally they are precipitated by some fresh instance of sadistic police brutality. But at their core is the economic robbery of the Negro—the abysmal poverty, growing worse from year to year, in which he is compelled to live.

"Negro America," says the *New Republic* (August 5, 1967), "is slum country—a foreign country not seen on TV, banished from white consciousness wherever possible." But today the shocking realities of Negro poverty, both in the rural South and in the city ghettos, are becoming increasingly evident. More and more, white America is being compelled to face up to these realities and their grim consequences, not least by the explosive reactions of the Negro people to which they give rise.

Starvation in Mississippi

A year and a half ago, Robert Sherrill wrote in *The Nation*:

The misery of black men of Mississippi is reaching such proportions that the Johnson Administration's conscience could be measured once and for all according to its response to its needs. The Delta Ministry of the National Council of Churches has predicted that between 10,000 and 12,000 Negro sharecroppers will be evicted this winter. . . .

It is hardly necessary to add that these people, most of whom earned no more than \$3 a day during crop time, have no savings, have nowhere to go, have little clothing and no food. Such help as they are getting comes mostly from other Negroes, who have little enough to share. ("The Obsolete Negro," January 17, 1966.)

But the Johnson conscience was apparently little moved. Only in April of this year did the Senate Subcommittee on Manpower, Employment and Poverty undertake a study of conditions in the Delta area. Its findings are truly shocking. Thus, nearly 55,000

Negroes are living on Delta farms with practically no hope of employment there. In two counties, 60 per cent of the poor families get less than two-thirds of what is considered by the National Research Council a "minimum diet." A team of six physicians examined more than 600 Negro children and reported:

We do not want to quibble over words, but "malnutrition" is not quite what we found; the boys and girls we saw were hungry—weak, in pain, sick; their lives are being shortened; they are, in fact, visibly and predictably losing their health, their energy, their spirits. They are suffering from hunger and disease and directly or indirectly are dying from them—which is exactly what starvation means. (*New York Times*, July 23, 1967.)

The situation, moreover, is a worsening one. Pellagra and other dietary deficiency diseases, no strangers to this area, have become more frequent. And the infant mortality rate among Negroes has increased from 40.8 per thousand live births in 1946 to 55.1 in 1965. In contrast, the rate among whites, less than half that among Negroes, has declined.

Mississippi is no isolated case. Other parts of the South are no better. And they also have in common a callous indifference on the part of the authorities to the suffering of the Negro poor.

The southern states offer relatively little in the way of relief (Mississippi has virtually none). Hence the mass of the poor and chronically unemployed are compelled to rely on federal food programs to keep themselves alive—if they are able to get access to them. Large numbers (mainly Negro) live wholly on government surplus foods, which are considered sufficient only as a dietary *supplement*. But many more are unable to obtain even this. Others participate in the federal food stamp program, in which they buy stamps having a considerably higher value at the store. But far greater numbers are unable to do so, either because they lack the cash with which to buy the stamps or because the local authorities have not taken the necessary action to make them available. Nan Robertson, writing in the *New York Times* (July 16, 1967) notes:

In 15 southern and border states, it was found that more than three million persons classified as poor had no access to any federal food program. In counties in states that did have them, only one million out of seven million poor were served by the programs.

The worsening plight of the Negro in the rural South stems from

the ever greater mechanization of agriculture. Its effects have been first to replace sharecroppers with agricultural laborers, hired whenever needed, and second to do away progressively with the need for agricultural laborers. Robert Sherrill writes:

. . . Delta plantation owners will take out of the soil more than a quarter of a billion dollars this year, most of it in tax-supported crops. In the same area, because of newly mechanized farming techniques, government officials estimate there will be between 60,000 and 100,000 unemployed hands by this summer. ("It Isn't True That Nobody Starves in America," *New York Times Magazine*, June 4, 1967.)

For this situation the plantation owners and the racist state and local officials have one answer: "Get rid of them." Field hands, in the words of one planter, have become "as useless as a mule." From a source of superprofits they have become converted into a financial drain. Let them, therefore, go elsewhere.

In late 1965 Representative Joseph Resnick of New York went to Mississippi to investigate the conditions of Negro sharecroppers and farm laborers. What he saw led him to warn that a calculated campaign existed to drive Negroes out of the state. Dr. Raymond Wheeler of Charlotte, North Carolina, one of the six physicians mentioned above, stated in his testimony before the Senate subcommittee:

Frequently throughout the Mississippi Delta we heard charges of an unwritten but generally accepted policy on the part of those who control the state to eliminate the Negro in Mississippi, either by driving him out of the state or starving him to death. At first the charge seemed to me beyond belief. Yet now reviewing all we saw it becomes more and more credible.

Sherrill, in the article cited above, maintains that some southern states have deliberately shifted from surplus commodities to the food stamp plan with this in mind, since the majority have no money to buy stamps. On this point, Richard A. Clowen and Frances Fox Piven write in *The Nation*:

The surplus commodities program has sustained 400,000 people in Mississippi with free corn, meal, flour and lard (the answer to the mystery of why they don't die). But this program is now being suspended in one county after another in favor of the food-stamp program. When a county switches to stamps, participation typically falls off by about 75 per cent. The poor are given a desperate choice: starve or leave. Regular welfare policies, together

with federal agricultural subsidies which reward mechanization by large landholders, drove two million Negroes from southern rural areas between 1960 and 1965 alone. The recent change in food-distribution programs will add to the pressure for flight. ("Starving by the Rule Book," April 3, 1967.)

Such has been the fate of the Negro in the rural South, his growing poverty, hunger and desperation. The sheer inhumanity of his treatment defies description.

Hunger in the Ghetto

The destination of the forced exodus from the countryside has, of course, been the big city ghettos—already crowded to bursting, already afflicted with wholesale unemployment and misery. Small wonder that the situation has come to the breaking point.

Negro unemployment is not only high but rising, at a time when the national average is steady or declining. During the past year and a half the ratio of Negro to white unemployment, as recorded by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, has risen from 2:1 to about 2.4:1. A recent BLS study of nine major cities shows rates of joblessness among Negroes ranging from 8 per cent to 15.5 per cent, or from two to seven times the overall average.

The rate of teen-age unemployment is staggering—and rising. In May of this year, according to the BLS, 34.1 per cent of teen-age Negro youth were without jobs, compared to 29.7 per cent a year earlier. Among white teen-agers, on the other hand, unemployment fell from 12.0 per cent to 10.3 per cent.

But these figures grossly understate the realities of the ghetto areas themselves. In Watts, at the time of the initial explosion, it was estimated that fully one-third of the work force was unemployed, and in a number of other ghettos comparable levels existed. Among teen-age youth the average is well above 50 per cent. Moreover, the unemployment figures alone tell only part of the story. Thus, the *Illinois Business Review* (April 1967) states:

Urban slum unemployment rates are about three times higher than the national average. Moreover, the 10 per cent rate found in a special U.S. Department of Labor study conducted last November does not include the substantial amount of "sub-employment" that exists in the slums.

In order more accurately to reflect the employment figure in ghetto areas, the Department of Labor is issuing a new "sub-employment" report. In addition to the usual unemployment count,

sub-employment will include part-time workers seeking full-time work, household heads under 65 earning less than \$60 a week on full-time jobs, and single people earning less than \$56 a week for full-time work. Also counted will be one-half the number of 20- to 64-year-old men who are nonparticipants in the job market and an estimate of the number of unempolyed men who do not show up through present statistical methods. In the first survey taken, the sub-employment rate ranged from 24 to 47 per cent of the labor force in the 10 urban slums covered.

If we bear in mind the habitual underestimation of these things in government statistics, it is safe to say that the number of unemployed and subemployed in the nation's ghettos range from half to two-thirds and more of the adult population. These conditions are reflected also in the high and growing numbers dependent on relief. Of eight million individuals receiving public assistance today, more than half are Negroes. In New York City, of some 666,000 on the public welfare rolls, fully 80 per cent are Negro and Puerto Rican (*New York Times*, August 8, 1967). That the numbers are growing is witnessed, among other things, by the widespread complaints of welfare agencies about mounting costs.

The horrible conditions imposed on those who receive public assistance—the indignities and humiliations, the deliberate cheating, the arbitrary decisions, etc.—are only too well known, as is the exclusion of millions more from the relief rolls by agencies whose sole consideration is to hold expenses to a minimum.* The impact of such treatment on the thinking and attitudes of those who live in the ghettos is also obvious. The following noteworthy instance is reported by Cloward and Piven:

The practice of summarily terminating people from the rolls without a written reason or an opportunity for a hearing led Boston recipients to stage a sit-in. When the police beat them, the demonstrators screamed out the windows of the welfare department, and rioting erupted in the streets for three nights. ("We've Got Rights!" *New Republic*, August 5, 1967.)

Ghetto housing, bad enough twenty and thirty years ago, has become immeasurably worse. The same rotting, rat-infested dwellings have been increasingly subdivided and packed with human inhabitants. More, even the number of these miserable tenements has

*A graphic—and disturbing—portrayal of the welfare system in our country is presented by Richard M. Elman in his book *The Poorhouse State* (Random House, New York, 1966).

been steadily reduced by urban redevelopment and super-highway projects. The *New Republic* (August 19, 1967) notes:

President Johnson says that there are four million urban families who live in houses which "violate decency." Most of these families are Negroes. For years, the federal government generously subsidized a vast spread of white, middle-class suburban housing, while the black poor of the cities were being ruthlessly bulldozed out of their slums into worse slums, in the great cause of superior highways and urban renewal. Of the huge refugee army of families thus displaced, *more than 70 per cent are nonwhite.* (Emphasis in original.)

With respect to health, Dr. Howard A. Rusk writes in the *New York Times* (August 13, 1967):

For people in economically depressed areas the mortality rate in pregnancy complications is six times as great, the mortality rate in infant diseases of early infancy is three and one-half times as great and the infant mortality rate is twice as great as for people living in other areas..

He cites Herbert Bienstock, regional director of the BLS, as follows:

He pointed out that two Harlem areas in 1964 contained 25 per cent of Manhattan's population. These two areas accounted for 40 per cent of the borough's tuberculosis deaths and 33 per cent of its infant deaths. Bedford-Stuyvesant contained 9 per cent of Brooklyn's population but produced 24 per cent of its tuberculosis deaths and 22 per cent of its infant deaths.

And this situation is getting worse, not better.

Recent government studies show, Victor Perlo notes in a column in *The Worker* (February 2 1967), that 56.7 per cent of nonwhites live in poverty areas, compared to 10.4 per cent of whites. And in cities like Los Angeles and Cleveland, among others, the number of Negroes classified as poor has grown between 1960 and 1965 while the number of whites has declined.

Whatever measure one may use, it is clear that the economic and social status of Negroes in the urban ghettos, bad enough to begin with, has become progressively worse in recent years, and that the gap between Negro and white has widened. More and more, conditions of life in the ghetto have reached the point of becoming utterly unbearable. A *New York Times* editorial (August 7, 1967) sums it up in this way:

. . . Something akin to the depression of the 1930's reigns in many areas where Negroes and similar minority groups predominate, while the rest of the country is at or near the peak of national affluence. It is, to use Disraeli's expression, as though two nations were living side by side, one rich and privileged and the other poor and miserable. No better formula for civil disorder could be devised.

Of course, one may question whether the great mass of white workers can properly be described as "rich and privileged," but of the growing gap between the Negro ghettos and the rest of the country there can be no doubt. The wonder is not that these developments have led the Negro people to rebel; the wonder is rather that their patience has lasted so long.

The Sham War

It is ironic that the deterioration of the economic conditions of the Negro people has taken place particularly in the period since President Johnson, in January 1964, declared his "unconditional war on poverty in America" and called on all men of good will to join in it. Nothing testifies more eloquently to the bankruptcy of this "war."

Begun with great fanfare but with little money, it has remained pretty much on that level. In the fiscal year 1965, some \$800 million was allotted under the Economic Opportunity Act (described by some as not even enough for an initial skirmish), in 1966 \$1.5 billion, in 1967 \$1.6 billion, and for 1968 outlays of slightly more than \$2 billion are projected. All this adds up to less than one month's military expenditures and to less than three months' outlays directly for the slaughter of Vietnamese.

There was talk of considerably increased appropriations—to \$3 billion in fiscal 1967 and ultimately to some \$10 billion a year. This is still not adequate, but even these projected increases have gone by the board, a sacrifice to the war in Vietnam along with other social welfare programs. And there is grave danger that the present meager program will be further emasculated as the war continues to swallow increasing sums of money.

The Johnson program never envisaged a frontal war on poverty. It contained no provisions for large-scale creation of jobs, of central importance in any serious attack on poverty. Nor did it provide for an equally necessary attack on the housing problem. And it totally ignored the special problems of Negro poverty and the ghetto.

Instead it confined itself to peripheral aims and to projects with grand-sounding names but little substance.

Space forbids a detailed exposition of the progress (or lack of progress) of this "war." But it is worth noting that it failed generally to attain even its very limited initial objectives.

For example, the Job Corps program was intended to provide training for some 40,000 youth in its first year and to accommodate a total of 100,000 a year by the fourth year. The inadequacy of the program is shown by the fact that by mid-1965 some 300,000 applications had been received. But the program has fallen considerably short of even the projected totals.

Or consider the case of Operation Head Start, ballyhooed as the most spectacular success of the anti-poverty program. Now it turns out that the gains of the pre-school training are rapidly lost by the children going through it because there is no follow-up program. But an adequate follow-through program would cost far more and produce much less spectacular (though more lasting) results. In characteristic fashion, Johnson has proposed a \$135 million program for this purpose, scarcely enough for even a beginning.

One could go on. An over-all examination would show that a large part of the meager funds allotted has gone to provide jobs at handsome salaries for the party faithful—or for uncomfortably militant civil rights leaders—or to pay substantial profits to companies like General Electric, International Business Machines, American Telephone and Telegraph and others for operating the Job Corps camps. In short, they have served to relieve the poverty of just about everyone but the poor.

Least of all did the "war on poverty" benefit the ghettos. Watts, at the time of its upheavals, had been completely bypassed by it, thanks to a feud between the mayor of Los Angeles and the Office of Economic Opportunity which delayed allocation of federal funds. And in other ghettos the meager, often token programs hardly scratched the surface of the vast need. For most ghetto residents they were little more than rumors. More important, they failed completely to touch the most burning problems, such as jobs and housing.

To be sure, efforts were made to take advantage of Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act, which provides for maximum possible participation of the poor in community action projects. But wherever they began seriously to do so, or wherever a program ran afoul of the interests of the local politicians (representing the local business interests), it was scrapped. A pilot program in Syracuse, which set

up committees of ghetto residents to conduct a fight for some of their immediate needs, was dropped at the end of the first year after vehement complaints from the mayor. In Mississippi a highly successful Operation Headstart program conducted by the Child Development Group was scrapped by Sargent Shriver after a prolonged assault by the state's Dixiecrat officials. The California Center for Community Development was refused a renewal of its grant when its active involvement in the Delano farm workers' struggles angered the local congressmen. And so on.

All this has not been lost on the Negro people in the ghettos. The increasingly patent hypocrisy of the "war on poverty" has contributed in no small measure to their cynicism and their anger. It has helped to convince them, if help were needed, that no one seriously intended to do anything whatever about their problems.

Containing the Ghetto

In his State of the Union message last January, President Johnson barely mentioned the question of civil rights legislation. He did, however, devote considerable attention to promoting a program of federal subsidies to state and local governments to improve crime prevention. (And where, in official eyes, does crime most need to be prevented if not in the ghettos?) This was indicative of the Administration's shift from war on poverty to war on the Negro people. It was indicative of a shift to a policy of forcible containment of the ghettos—a policy whose full implications are only now becoming clear.

To be sure, President Johnson has continued to protest his devotion to fighting poverty, but this has become patently little more than lip service. This is noted by James Reston in a column appearing in the *New York Times* on March 15, 1967. After speaking of the President's previous eloquence on the subject of poverty, he continues:

This sense of both outrage and apprehension comes through very briefly in his latest disjointed poverty message to Congress, but something odd has happened. On Capitol Hill the war on poverty has become a political slogan to many members and a nuisance to many more, and even the President does not match his words with adequate funds.

In the two years and three months since this program was started the Office of Economic Opportunity has spent less than \$100 on each of the Americans regarded by officials here as living below the poverty line.

This defective sense of scale is clear throughout the message.

The problem is defined; the programs all have vivid names; the machinery, new and still imperfect, is nevertheless in place; but the funds are lamentably inadequate to the gigantic scope of the problem.

Nor has Johnson shown any inclination, since the uprisings, to depart from this line and to seek at least added funds for emergency ghetto programs. On the contrary, despite the recent calls by Vice-President Humphrey for "Marshall Plans" for the ghettos, he has confined himself to asking Congress to restore cuts in his "model cities" program and to act on other measures, including the \$2-billion anti-poverty program, on which it had been sitting since the opening of the session. As for new, expanded ghetto programs, according to the *New York Times* (August 17, 1967), "the President is said to have concluded that such programs might be construed as a 'reward' for violence. . . ." In short, Johnson's policy is one of going along with a Congress whose mentality is indicated by its defeat of a \$40-million appropriation for rat control on the grounds that this is a "local problem."

It is a Congress whose prevailing mood is one of "remedying" the conditions of the ghetto by punishing its inhabitants for rebelling against them. The Republicans, with the vociferous support of such Dixiecrat stalwarts as Senators Eastland and McClellan, are charging that it was poverty workers who initiated and led the uprisings and that the whole anti-poverty program is nothing but a "subsidy for black power advocates." Accordingly, the GOP has called for scrapping the OEO and the Job Corps, and for replacing the latter with local vocational training school programs in cooperation with industry.

The readiness of the Administration to give in before such attacks is shown by Sargent Shriver's recent action in cutting off funds to the Appalachian Volunteers in Kentucky at the demand of the governor of that state. The demand was based on the agency's refusal to fire one of its field representatives, Joseph Mulloy, who had been arrested on charges of sedition along with two others, Alan and Margaret McSurely. The character of the charges is demonstrated by State Attorney Thomas Ratliff's statement that a truckload of "subversive literature" taken from them included a "white paper" on how to "take over Pike County from the power structure and put it in the hands of the poor." (Louisville *Courier-Journal*, August 13, 1967.)

Clearly, the policy of containment continues to prevail. And any further protests are to be met with increased violence and terror, plus a new wave of "sedition" frameups.

What Needs To Be Done

If the rebellions show anything, it is the burning need for a program genuinely designed to meet the problems of the ghetto—to provide the jobs, the housing, the schools and the health and recreational facilities required to eradicate the shameful conditions which led to revolt. Moreover, such a program needs to be instituted *now*, not over the next decade or two. It must be a program designed to accomplish nothing less than the transformation of the ghetto. And not least, it must be a program conducted by the people of the ghetto themselves.

What would such a program cost? There have been various estimates of the cost of an adequate anti-poverty program. Professor Seymour Melman of Columbia University, for example, places it at \$20 billion a year over a period of years. The "Freedom Budget" proposed by the A. Philip Randolph Institute requires an estimated outlay by the federal government of \$185 billion over the next ten years. Other estimates similarly fall somewhere in the neighborhood of \$20 billion a year. But what is needed now, in our opinion, goes even beyond this. Previous conceptions must be telescoped into an immediate program costing on the order of \$50 billion in the first year.

True, such a sum sounds astronomical. And in the face of present Administration policy it sounds impossible. But it can be effectively fought for. What is required is that the mass movements and organizations in this country take up the cudgels for it and put it at the top of their agendas as a program in the interests of all the American working people and not Negro Americans alone. First of all, the trade unions must be brought into the forefront of the battle. In addition the peace movement, religious bodies, community organizations, political action organizations and others must be won for aggressive support to it and for all-out opposition to the policies of brutality and terror which now prevail. Furthermore, victory in this struggle is intimately bound up with victory in the struggle to end the war in Vietnam—a victory which would release the funds needed for such programs.

Such are the responsibilities of white Americans today, above all of progressives and Communists.

The Detroit Ghetto Uprising

"The forces of Government are making 1967 the Year of the Club"
—An OPEN LETTER to President Johnson.

The "Year of the Club" came to Detroit on July 23.

The policy of promises and pledges, the "carrot policy," was abandoned.

The Detroit and Michigan authorities adopted the policy of "force first."

President Johnson stated the official policy of suppression and punishment, as "lawlessness," of the rising tide of militant Negro struggles.

While asking Congress to pass a 10 per cent surtax to pay part of the mounting cost of the immoral and inhuman war in Vietnam, Johnson slapped down Vice President Hubert Humphrey's suggestion for a domestic "Marshall Plan" to alleviate some of the problems of the ghettos.

This is the tragic unfolding of the new stage of governmental policy. It was dramatically revealed in the Detroit ghetto uprising.

When the uprising began in the early hours of Sunday, July 23, all of the repressive powers of the state—police, troops, courts—were brought into action. The Constitution was set aside; legal, safeguards won during centuries of people's struggles were brushed aside. Terror was enforced. This was all done in the name of securing "law and order"! An all-pervasive racism tainted every move made by the Establishment.

The police were used first, then the riot squads were joined by the "commandos" (the Tactical Mobile Force hated by labor and Negroes) in crash helmets, face protectors, carrying bared bayonets glittering in the sunlight like streaks of lightning. The 4,400-man police force is virtually lily-white; only 5 per cent is Negro.

These forces were augmented by state troops, and 7,000 National Guardsmen in Detroit and nearby, who later were federalized. The National Guard is lily-white. Of the 9,881 men in the Army National Guard, 127 are Negroes—1.29 per cent. There are 18 Negroes in the 2,093 strong Air National Guard—0.9 per cent.

The "Club" Policy in Action

On July 24, Federal troops were ordered to Detroit. The Presidential order was the first in 24 years (since 1943, when troops were sent to Detroit because of a white pogrom against Negroes). Of the 4,700 paratroops assigned to Detroit, 40 per cent had served in Vietnam, where the Johnson administration had used them to "pacify" another colored people. Now they were in Detroit, assigned to "pacify," with tanks, machine guns, bayonets and rifles, an uprising of home-grown rebels.

The use of Federal troops was a new factor in the policy of the "club."

When the Newark explosion occurred, shortly before the Detroit uprising, Johnson took the initiative on the second day to suggest to Governor Hughes that he would be glad to consider any request for troops, but Hughes rejected the offer.

Governor George Romney of Michigan, a leading contender for the Republican nomination for the Presidency, was less reluctant. He requested the troops, even though it meant that he had to declare that a "state of insurrection" existed which was beyond his control.

The pressure of big business on Romney to request the troops was more than the would-be presidential candidate could withstand.

Johnson followed this repressive action with a midnight television address, in which he seven times referred to Romney's inability to "bring the situation under control."

Johnson also enunciated his "club" policy. He declared that the events in Detroit were not a civil rights struggle but a criminal action. This was a coverup for the use of forcible measures against so-called "lawlessness." Johnson declared:

We will not tolerate lawlessness. We will not endure violence. It matters not by whom it is done or under what slogan or banners. It will not be tolerated. This nation will do whatever is necessary to suppress and to punish those who engage in it.

The President made no pledge to do anything about the basic problems which have led to the explosions in Watts, Newark, Detroit and more than 50 other cities, and which have brought about a *qualitatively new stage of the Negro liberation struggle*. He did not even make a promise to consider them.

In his July 31 press conference, Johnson went further, declaring that there would be no "reward" or "bonus" for violence in Detroit or other cities.

Johnson has refused to designate Detroit as a "disaster area," despite the requests of the Michigan Congressional delegation. This is also part of the "clubs not carrots" policy.

The Michigan and Detroit authorities also adopted the "club" policy. The "insurrection," as Romney termed it, must be "ended," that is, suppressed, crushed, *first*, and then talks about conditions might be held afterwards.

Romney's position was very firm. The Detroit uprising was primarily the work of "lawless and criminal elements"; it was an "insurrection" against established order, he said. The *Detroit News*, organ of Detroit's Establishment, wrote (July 30) that what had happened in Detroit "was not a race riot but lawlessness perpetrated by both whites and Negroes in senseless acts of terror, thievery and destruction."

However, it should be noted, that, while Romney remained firm, the opinions of others did not. Mayor Cavanagh made a number of remarkable statements in a "Meet the Press" interview on television, in which he blamed the failure of Congress and the Administration to pass legislation needed by the Negro people as a fundamental cause of the Detroit uprising. He then destroyed the value of his analysis by later suggesting that the federal government should establish a permanent national police force to deal with such civil uprisings as occurred in Detroit. In effect, Cavanagh also subscribed to the "club" policy.

At the same time, the two-sided aspect of this situation must be noted. Not only Cavanagh, but many others swung between a gathering understanding of what was really involved in the Detroit ghetto uprising and their prior views, prejudices, commitments, and pressures from the Establishment. The end result is not very happy yet; but this fact of a glimmering of understanding must be recognized and evaluated.

Attempts were made on July 23 by Negro community leaders to get the crowds milling around on Twelfth Street to disperse, without success. By 2 P.M. such efforts had been abandoned. It was obvious by then that there was a gap between the ministers and other leaders and the "grass roots people" (a term widely used in the Negro community nowadays) which could not be bridged by conventional appeals.

Bottles and stones were thrown even at Representative John Conyers, a consistent champion of civil rights and the needs of his constituents, in whose district the Twelfth Street ghetto lies, when he

said that he was trying to have the police withdraw and urged the people to return to their homes.

Baffled, Conyers commented that here were people who have "stored up more bitterness and resentment in their hearts *than most of us ever thought possible or can understand.*" (My emphasis—C.K.)

But even while Conyers and the other leaders were pleading with the crowds to disperse, the main decisions for use of force were being made downtown at the command posts set up by Governor George Romney and Mayor Jerome Cavanagh.

The big business interests were afraid that the uprising would spread throughout the city and hit their big stores downtown, the New City Center, a shopping and office area where General Motors has its headquarters, and similar key areas. In a summary of the historic week's events, the *Detroit Free Press* wrote (August 6):

Downtown had at last taken control, and from then on the peacemakers of Twelfth Street would have to spend most of their time discovering and implementing decisions that others would make for them.

The Establishment, the Man, as the Negro community puts it, was in control. The Negro leaders were pushed aside.

Congressman John Conyers, relegated to the sidelines like other Negro leaders, spent the rest of his time trying to restrain the excesses of the white Establishment. Conyers devoted night and day to the fight to restore the Constitutional guarantees and legal safeguards of which the nearly 6,000 arrested had been deprived.

There was no attempt by the city or state authorities to find out what grievances lay behind the uprising which had begun on that fateful Sunday morning.

The first recourse of the authorities was not to gather spokesmen for the rebels, but to rely on businessmen on Twelfth Street who were being wiped out, and on discredited Negro trade union leaders who had dragged their feet for so many years that young people were resentful. When a meeting was held at 5 P.M. on July 23 of residents of the erupted areas, only three youth representatives were present to speak for the rebels—and their views were ignored, including their complaints and others' of police brutality.

A lone statement, made by the author of this article to the august assemblage of the Mayor, Commissioner of Police, Superintendent of Schools, two Congressmen and other notables, that nothing had been offered at that meeting except the negative, self-defeating policy of

forcible use of the National Guard to crush the rebellion, and that efforts should be made to propose a program that would meet the needs and demands of the rebels, was brushed aside with the remark that "We have to settle the riot first."

Reign of Terror

The policy of "force first" was in full swing. This policy included a declaration of a state of emergency, a curfew from 9 P.M. to 5:30 A.M., an almost complete shutdown of all businesses for a number of days, restrictions of bus service, a limit on gas sales, and similar measures which were intended to have a psychological impact on the white community, to frighten and alienate it from the Negro struggles.

The reign of terror in the Negro community was widened to include many white persons as well. "Several *Free Press* reporters had harrowing experiences with jumpy police and nervous National Guardsmen," George Walker reported in that paper (July 27). "They had guns poked in their backs and were forced to lie on the streets." (Like the Negroes!)

Walker wrote that "Associated Press reporter Justinas Bavarskis reported that a Detroit policeman held a rifle to his back while his fellow policemen shouted 'Shoot the — — —! Go on, kill him!'"

The incident occurred in the storeroom of the Herman Kiefer Hospital, which had been converted into a command post for police and National Guardsmen. Bavarskis was forced to stand with his hands, palms flat (against a wall, feet spread apart *before some 200 policemen*, none of whom questioned this kind of barbarism. He said that he did not dare move because if he had, "I would be shot. In the back."

A white pastor, Rev. John Pipe, minister of education at the First Baptist Church in Royal Oak, told his parishioners in a sermon (August 13) that when he spent eight or nine hours in a precinct police station with the intention of counselling the prisoners, he "ended up counseling the men who were to keep the law."

"The hatred of some of these men was unbelievable," Rev. Pipe said. "They knew I was a clergyman, yet they said what they did."

It could be seen in the statistics also. Forty-four persons were killed, 35 Negroes and nine whites. The nine include one policeman and two firemen. Some 2,000 persons suffered injuries, according to estimates.

The police are accused of most of the killings and of the reign of terror, with the lily white National Guard in second place.

Some 6,000 persons were arrested (the latest official figure is 5,572 plus some hundreds "being processed"). These are almost all Negroes.

This is the largest number of arrests in one city in the history of the United States. The widely denounced Palmer raids of 1920 netted 10,000 persons in 10 cities.

The police terror exercised during the uprising and after has even alarmed the Establishment. Frank Angelo, managing editor of the *Detroit Free Press*, wrote (August 6) that only "an uneasy calm" exists in Detroit. He continued:

A major reason is the growing talk of "police brutality." . . . The fact is that Negroes in Detroit feel intensely about their treatment, real or fancied, at the hands of the police. . . . So, while Negroes in Detroit *may have been walking a bit taller last week*, it can also be reported that an undercurrent of doubt became apparent. . . . (My emphasis—C. K.).

In addition to the dehumanized, racist brutality of the police, every major Constitutional guarantee of civil and democratic rights was brutally violated. The Interfaith Emergency Council charged (August 4) *that the judicial system had completely broken down.*

The Council criticized Recorder's Court for a "withdrawal of basic rights" and "a repeal of every basic right." Bishop Dwight E. Loder, bishop of the Methodist Church in Michigan, criticized the police and courts for "inadequate" feeding of prisoners, overcrowding of prisoners, and the "search and seizure still going on in the riot areas."

He also charged that judges had, in public statements, declared that the persons arrested were "automatically presumed guilty" and that *judges were acting as an "arm of law enforcement agencies" instead of protecting the rights of defendants.*

The list of grievances of the Negro community is very long. It covers the full spectrum of rights. The Establishment was fully aware of what was happening, from the Mayor and Commissioner of Police to the City Council, from the big corporations to satellite businessmen. Protests, appeals, delegations hit a stone wall. The word was out: the policy would be "force first."

"The Constitution was suspended last week," said Louis Simmons, president of the Wolverine Bar Association (composed of Negro lawyers). "I don't know even the words to describe the inhuman bigotry shown by both white and black policemen."

Simmons cited the following provisions of the Bill of Rights which have been violated:

Article IV, the search warrant provision, which says that "the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause. . . ."

Article V: "No person shall be . . . deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law. . . ."

Article VI: "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial. . . ."

Article VIII: "Excessive bail shall not be required. . . ."

Police Atrocities

In fact, excessive bail, ranging from \$10,000 to \$200,000, was levied. Prisoners were held without benefit of counsel; they were denied the right to speak to their families or lawyers. They were held up to seven days, under the most inhuman conditions, without arraignment. They were brutally mishandled and starved. *Police brutality reached a Nazi-like level.*

Arrests, searches and seizures were conducted wholesale in the Negro communities, without warrants, without reason, and in a brutal manner. Searches were conducted on a house-to-house basis as by an occupying force. A policy of terrorism prevailed. Habeas corpus, one of the major legal safeguards against brutal Establishment rule, was suspended.

The breaches of the law and Constitutional guarantees were officially sanctioned.

Something new was added by the "do-it-yourself" concentration camp hastily thrown up by the authorities in the bath house of Belle Isle, a recreation spot. More than 400 "prisoners" were held there from July 30 to August 5. Almost every one of the inmates told a story of police brutality, like the rest of the nearly 6,000 prisoners held in police station garages, cells, out-of-town jails, buses in blistering heat—wherever they could be packed.

The police not only committed violence against the rebels of the Detroit ghetto uprising and the entire Negro community. They also played a provocative role in heightening tension. The police have been accused of looting, fire-bombing and cold-blooded murder, in addition to the reign of terror they instituted, which victimized white persons as well as Negroes, who were the main victims of this institutionalized rule of force.

Representative Conyers stated on July 29 that evidence brought to him showed that there had been "clear-cut cases of excessive force,

mass invasion of homes, looting and fire-bombing by the Detroit police."

Among the many victims of this wave of police terrorism there are some who have become symbolic figures.

There is Tonia Blanding, a four-year-old who was killed by a fusillade of machine gun bullets fired by a National Guardsman. Her aunt, Mrs. Valerie Hood, was wounded by the blast. After the shooting the police and National Guard lined up the occupants of the house on the street while they searched it, despite pleas that Tonia was dying. When the family was finally permitted to take her and Mrs. Hood to the hospital, Tonia was declared "dead on arrival."

Her official death certificate reads that she died as the result of homicide. According to the report, the fatal injury was inflicted by a sniper's bullet. But the Negro community knows she died because of a racist attack on her home by the "upholders" of "law and order."

William N. Dalton, 19, was shot in the presence of several policemen and National Guardsmen by an officer who ordered him to run. Fatally wounded, Dalton lay suffering for nearly two hours on the sidewalk, while several cars of policemen and National Guardsmen stopped to look at him. When he was finally taken to Northwest General Hospital, he too was declared "dead on arrival."

The atrocities committed are legion. They include the massacre in the Algiers Motel, where three Negro youths were murdered by Detroit policemen in a racist fury.

Another atrocity was the fire-bombing by police of Vaughn's Book Store, a center of militant Negro activity. Councilman Nicholas Hood told the City Council that he has evidence that policemen fire-bombed the store two times.

This was truly the rule of the "club"!

A People's Rebellion

According to a *Detroit Free Press* survey, the persons arrested are mostly young, the average age being 25. Among them are many teenagers. The uprising was primarily a "young people's war," the reporter commented. Most had a tenth grade education and had lived in Detroit for many years or had been born there. So much for the "outside conspirator" nonsense—a continuation of the "foreign agents" trickery of McCarthyism.

Among those arrested, as a group of 18 student attorneys discovered when they talked to the 1,200 prisoners who had been sent to Jackson State Prison, were persons with histories of steady employment for as

long as 15 years at the Chrysler and Ford plants, college students, and other persons considered "stable" by racist and bourgeois standards.

Also among the arrested were many unemployed youths and adults who had no perspectives, whose hopes had been dulled by clashes with the racist reality of discrimination.

The statistics show how widespread the uprising was. It included the jobless youth, jobless adults, workers with jobs and the masses of the dissatisfied Negro community. Thus the statistics unwittingly reveal the national character of the uprising in Detroit.

The fact is that there was broad support in the Negro community for the aims of the uprising, ranging from the unemployed to the fully employed (i.e., those earning union wages at regular jobs).

This was not a "lumpenproletarian" action as Daniel Patrick Moynihan has charged, and as Bayard Rustin has agreed (*New York Times Magazine*, August 13).

Unemployment in the Negro community does not declass the Negro people, but stirs them to rebellion, as the events not only of this summer but of summers before have demonstrated. The Moynihan thesis is a submission to the racist policy of the Johnson Administration.

The *Free Press* survey showed that some of the persons arrested as so-called "looters" were earning an average of \$117 a week. The *Wall Street Journal* pointed out (August 1) that "a sizable percentage" (of the "looters")—"perhaps as much as 50 per cent—are unemployed or partly employed." (My emphasis—C.K.)

The *Detroit News* (August 10) pointed out editorially that unemployment among all youth between 16 and 21 is 13.4 per cent, but among Negro youth it is 24.8 per cent. These figures fall far short of reality. Negro youth unemployment is about 35 per cent.

The unemployment figure is not the only index of frustration and despair. The real impact of the unemployment figures on Negro youth and the Negro community as a whole can be understood only when it is viewed in relation to the refusal of the Establishment to change the situation. This is where rebellion finds its nourishment. *Without opportunities for advancement, frustration bursts containing walls.*

One of the features of the Detroit uprising is that it was a rebellion of the have-nots, Negro and white, who fraternally aided one another in helping themselves to goods in stores. The first person killed was a white man, Walter Grzanka, 45. He was shot by a store owner.

The "carnival," festive character of the sharing of the goods in the stores was universally remarked.

Another aspect was the absence of "racial" conflicts, except for the

terrorism of the police and National Guard.

Nonetheless, the comment of Dr. Broadus Butler in the *Michigan Chronicle* is generally true and a specific feature of the Detroit situation. Dr. Butler wrote that "There were no person-against-person fights, no gangs chasing either Negro or white persons, no racial encounters—and no general diminution of interracial communication and social intercourse at any level in the community. If anything, one became suddenly conscious of a heightened degree of interracial cooperation throughout the community."

The situation was far from that of 1943, when whites hunted Negroes like animals.

Negro Oppression in Detroit

In the eyes of many, Detroit was a town where there was more integration in jobs, housing and social life than in others. Only a few months ago, Mayor Cavanagh boasted that Detroit had the best Negro-white relations in the country.

The fact remains that the Negro community nonetheless suffered the same kind of oppression Negroes are subjected to elsewhere in the United States. The statement of the Michigan Communist Party points out, on the basis of the report of the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission, that in Detroit:

Only 2.4 per cent of the skilled tradesmen in the auto industry are Negroes.

Negro males comprise only 1 per cent of the auto industry's professional, technical and sales employees.

In the construction trades, Negroes are practically excluded from the plumbing, electrical, sheet metal and iron worker trades, and apprenticeship schools have only 1.7 per cent Negro enrollment.

There is grossly inadequate representation of Negroes at all levels of government decision-making bodies which deal with matters affecting the daily lives of Negro people.

Urban renewal in Detroit, as elsewhere, has meant that Negroes are deprived of housing. Cavanagh says that Detroit needs 7,500 low cost, single family housing units, and this is a serious underestimation of the real need. Existing housing is overpriced and shamefully dilapidated.

Ghetto schools are tragically ill-equipped, poorly staffed, overcrowded and segregated.

Gouging by storekeepers and landlords is a constant feature of Negro life in Detroit as elsewhere.

Unemployment in Detroit among Negroes follows the national pattern of being more than double that of whites. Even the inadequate Labor Department figure for Negro unemployment in the Central Woodward Avenue area is 10.1 per cent.

Discrimination extends beyond high unemployment. It means that Negroes are denied jobs for which they are qualified. They are frozen into low-skill and low-paying jobs. Francis Kornegay, executive director of the Detroit Urban League, has pointed out that employers are just beginning to put Negroes into white collar jobs "and there's a long way to go."

Negroes have been angered by the tearing down of many blocks of homes to make way for expressways, expansion of Wayne State University, a medical center, and other projects which have squeezed more people into fewer ghetto buildings. Large areas have been purged of their Negro population and turned into upper-income housing sites.

Far from being quiescent, the Negro community has been active in the struggle for its rights. Detroit was the scene of the largest mass demonstration for civil rights (250,000), prior to the historic March on Washington. Since then there has been a series of demonstrations, clashes and struggles. Last summer there was a grave situation in the Kercheval area which bore all the aspects of a frameup of militant Negro youths. There have been demonstrations, picketing, sit-ins and clashes in connection with housing. In one of these incidents on Hobart Street, Representative Charles Diggs himself turned on the electric power which had been shut off.

The school situation led to a militant strike of students at Northern High School and to the organization of the Inner-City School Committee, now headed by Norvell Harrington.

Governor Romney's refusal to provide more state funds for education "is a tragedy and mistake," Detroit Federation of Teachers' President Mary Ellen Riordan stated in announcing that the union will increase its demands for "quality, integrated education." Union contract demands, she said, may include such matters as integrated textbooks, more integration of teaching staffs and changes in test procedures which now are discriminatory in regard to Negro students from inner-city schools.

Of the five largest cities, Detroit gets least in federal funds for schooling of children, \$516 per student. At least \$300 to \$500 more

is needed. In the coming year, Detroit will receive even less, Funds from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act will be reduced by \$3 million. These funds go mainly to the inner-city schools.

Another grievance, particularly among youth, is the failure of unions and employers to develop apprentice and other training programs. Even when unions and employers have been forced to undertake a program in this field, discriminatory practices make it difficult for Negroes to be accepted or to pass the tests.

These are some of the problems underlying the seething unrest in the Negro community which erupted in the ghetto uprising of July 23. There are many more.

A New Stage of Struggle

The Negro community wants a completely new deal. *The general feeling after the events of July 23-29 is that a bridge has been crossed, a new stage of struggle has been opened.* This feeling grips even many of those who are not in sympathy with the methods and tactics, strategy or views of the most militant participants in the uprising.

This feeling that a new stage has been opened was clearly apparent when 1,200 persons packed the auditorium in the City-County building on August 9 for a City-Wide Citizens' Meeting for Soul Brothers and Sisters. It is also clear in the clamorous demand that the grass-roots people of the ghettos have the final word about the future of these areas and in the many proposals put forward for changes.

A sign of the times is the statement of Albert J. Dunmore, Managing Editor of the *Michigan Chronicle*, in a lead article (August 5) in which he declared, "We can't return to the status quo." Dunmore would not have said this before July 23. He continued:

In face of all the appeals from Governor George Romney, Mayor Jerome Cavanagh and other federal, state and city officials for a "return to normalcy," it is generally agreed that this is the great danger which will undergird the fear already paralyzing much of the community.

Last week's six days of hell can't be repeated. And it will be repeated if we return to "business as usual."

Throughout the community there is a growing desire for change . . . change that will dig deep down into the root causes of the explosion that not only rocked our city but rocked the nation and the world.

Clyde Cleveland, chairman of the Detroit chapter of CORE, speak-

ing at the Soul meeting, declared, "We are resolutely opposed to going 'back to normal.' If there is to be rebuilding of the city, we will decide what will go where."

This is the new mood which dominates the Negro community.

In the early days of the uprising, the Communist Party of Michigan issued a statement outlining "first steps toward correcting some of the grievances of the Negro people." Among them are the following:

1. That the mayor and governor call on the auto and other corporations to undertake the recruiting, training and employment within a six-month period of at least 2,000 Negro youth for skilled and technical jobs in their plants and offices.

2. That the mayor, the governor and the federal agencies involved announce that, effective immediately, no city, state or federal funds will be spent on any project that does not specifically include active and substantial hiring of Negro workers.

3. That all unions involved in apprenticeship programs be required to submit to the State Civil Rights Commission by Labor Day specific plans to guarantee that 50 per cent of all apprentices will be Negroes, or else face prosecution.

4. That the federal government make available, from funds now being allocated for the war in Vietnam, \$1 billion for reconstruction of Detroit's ghetto areas. This will provide a comprehensive, planned and fully integrated community including low-rent public housing, parks, playgrounds, swimming pools and other recreational facilities, as well as new schools and other educational facilities using the most advanced techniques.

5. That a Presidential executive order be issued immediately, declaring that all restrictions on equal housing opportunities are henceforth illegal and that violators will be vigorously prosecuted.

6. That Detroit's police force be composed of at least 50 per cent Negro personnel at all levels, including policy-making and advisory positions. Policing of predominantly Negro areas must be placed immediately under the command of Negro officers.

7. That election of the City Council be conducted on a district rather than a city-wide basis, to guarantee full proportional representation.

8. That Negroes constitute 50 per cent of all city policy-making and administrative bodies.

9. That the federal government immediately authorize emergency housing in hotels and provide all other necessities for families and individuals displaced by the fires, until such time as the government can provide them with adequate housing financially within their means.

Alliance of Anti-Imperialist Forces in Latin America

1.

The fight against imperialist domination and against the oppression of local oligarchies, tense and arduous, diverse in form but single in content and ultimate aim, is gaining momentum in Latin America.

Latin Americans are on the road to national and social liberation, democracy and socialism. Their fight for freedom is conditioned by the need for social progress; their ship is sailing before the wind of history.

True, they have to contend with imperialism's aim of maintaining its grip on the continent and with the aim of the oligarchies to perpetuate their privileges. So the inevitable conflict between the two forces is in full swing. The time of grand battles has come, battles which will be won despite all the vicissitudes.

North American imperialism is resorting to undisguised intervention. Its system of military pacts and missions, anti-guerrilla training centers and units of "green berets," "black berets" and Rangers is a form of armed aggression. President Johnson has stated he will stop at nothing to prevent any other country from following Cuba's example. The imperialists are prepared to sow death and destruction in town and village, flouting international law as they did at Playa Giron and Santo Domingo, and as they are doing every day in Vietnam.

The independence of every Latin American country is in jeopardy. The road to salvation, to a happy future, is that of battle.

The Latin American peoples must unite in defense of their sovereignty and right to self-determination. As pointed out by the Thirteenth Congress of our Party, "the supreme task, the task of tasks, is to frustrate the aggressive designs of the imperialists. The fight for revolutionary reconstruction and people's rule blends with the fight against U.S. intervention, for sovereignty, self-determination and peace."

The historical mission of the proletariat is to abolish capitalism and build socialism, while the specific tasks may change in accordance

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with changes in the international situation. In the 'thirties,' when Hitler Germany was the center of world reaction, the task was to rally all forces against fascism in defense of freedom. Now that U.S. imperialism is the main reactionary force, the task is to enlist all forces against the imperialist policy of war and aggression, for the liberation of colonial, neo-colonial and dependent countries, for peace and peaceful coexistence, fusing these efforts with the fight for the social reconstruction imperative in every country.

One or another specific aspect of the world wide struggle against imperialism comes to the fore, depending on what the adversary is doing in the particular area at the particular moment. Yet every area of battle is part of the single historical movement.

The October Revolution in Russia, the 50th anniversary of which we celebrate this year, marked the beginning of the end of capitalist domination. It ushered in the socialist era, the time of the liberation of the working class and of peoples oppressed by imperialism.

Today, socialism is being built in Cuba on American soil. Social conflicts have engulfed our continent, which is an important theatre in the world wide battle against imperialism, for democracy, peace and socialism. Imperialist plunder, coupled with the tyranny of the feudal oligarchies, is visiting poverty and suffering on millions of Latin American workers, peasants and Indians, and prejudicing the interests of students, white-collar workers, intellectuals, tradesmen and industrialists, who are joining the social struggle in growing numbers. And they will gain in political awareness and extend their anti-imperialist action as they fight in common for common aims against the aggressive interventionist policy of the Yankee imperialists. The fight against U.S. imperialism and the local oligarchies, their common enemy, is bringing the Latin-American peoples closer together. So are the imperatives of solidarity with the other peoples of the world, particularly of Vietnam and Cuba, and with the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal movements on our own continent, especially those forced to resort to armed struggle (in Guatemala, Venezuela, Colombia and Bolivia) or to function underground.

The Latin American wars of independence in the past century were continental wars. When Bolivar, Sucre, San Martin and O'Higgins fought for the independence of their countries they were striving also for the freedom of the other American peoples. No national states and no geographical frontiers existed on our continent in those days. The borders of the various colonial possessions were rather indistinct, and the independence armies fighting for the liberation of their people counted in their ranks officers and soldiers from other colonies.

It was not until independence was won and capitalism began to develop that the national states came into existence. But, as before, the peoples of Latin America had a common destiny, common problems and common enemies. Still, they could not and did not escape the effects of the law of the uneven development of capitalism and capitalist society. Against the present general setting of backwardness, there are appreciable disparities between the countries in levels of economic, political and social development. This gives the revolutions a national complexion and conditions their variety in form and discrepancy in time.

For this reason, the present situation differs from that of the past century. However, Washington is pursuing its policy of aggression and intervention throughout the continent, which, as the Cuban Communist Party stressed in its statement of May 18, "internationalizes aggressive wars, in which soldiers of different nationalities are engaged, as in the Korean War and now in South Vietnam where North American, South Korean, Thai, Filipino, New Zealand and Australian troops have been committed, and as in Santo Domingo, where soldiers were shipped from Brazil, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Paraguay; furthermore, imperialism is trying through the OAS to build up an international armed force for use against Cuba and the liberation movements on the continent."

This necessitates joint action by the Latin-American peoples and imparts an all-continental complexion of outstanding international importance to their struggle.

Working hand in hand with the local oligarchies, imperialism spurns the principle of non-interference and the sovereignty and frontiers of the Latin American countries. It espouses the so-called doctrine of ideological frontiers, which revolutionaries have to counter with the utmost solidarity. Among other things, this presupposes direct participation in the liberation struggles of fraternal peoples wherever this is warranted by necessity, provided it is done under their leadership.

In some cases, as in the anti-fascist war in Spain, revolutionaries of different nationalities may participate in large numbers, with marked political and historical effect. However, the most important contribution revolutionaries can make to liberation and working-class victory on a world scale is struggle in their own country and their moral and material support to revolutionary battles in other countries.

In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels, the founders of Marxism and of proletarian internationalism, stressed that "though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each

country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie."

In this national struggle it is the revolutionaries in each country who determine the various aspects and concrete tasks of the revolution. They know the home situation better than anybody else and are in a far better position to define the aims and the methods of attaining them. They may err, but are less likely to do so than others. In any case, revolutionaries in their respective countries are best equipped to assume full responsibility for working out the right course of action after a preliminary review of their own experience, their successes and setbacks. Needless to say, this does not rule out exchanges of opinion and, in some cases, fraternal counsel.

The Cuban revolution is proof of the fact that reality plays havoc with preconceived assumptions, serving as a reminder of the folly of generalizing the singular features of this or that experience. This is not to say, however, that the specific features of one revolution, say that of the Cuban, will not recur elsewhere (at least in a somewhat different form). We believe, therefore, that in some Latin-American countries revolution may be sparked off by a guerrilla movement, as was the case in Cuba.

For this to happen the courage and determination of a group of revolutionaries, though an important, sometimes even decisive factor, is not enough. Much more essential are favorable general conditions. To be sure, we hold that they need be neither absolutely favorable nor completely mature, but they must be in the process of maturing with a clear prospect of becoming fully ripe.

Certainly, it is not easy to define the place and the exact time for guerrilla or some other form of armed action. Lenin warned against reckless ventures which, as a rule, cause a senseless waste of lives and end in retreat. On the other hand, Leninism has always been creatively bold, infused with the desire to advance the revolutionary cause. It would be wrong therefore both to reject out of hand or blindly accept any specific form of struggle. The main thing is to embark squarely on the path of struggle, size up the situation to the best of one's ability and decide on the most propitious course of action. The revolutionary must be ready to take the offensive at any moment, to retreat when necessary, and to perceive situations favorable for revolution.

2.

Many trends—men, women and youth of varying political views and social backgrounds—have joined the liberation struggle. The important thing is to extend the anti-imperialist front and engage against

the common enemy all sections of the public, including those who may not be admirers of the Cuban revolution and revolution in general, but who have taken a stand in behalf of Cuba's right to build socialism and the right of all Latin American peoples to opt for the system of their choice.

Any attempt to impose the Communist view on the other anti-imperialist forces, and similarly any attempt by the latter to impose their views on others, can but hamper unity of action and narrow the struggle against the common enemy.

This is why the accent should be on the specific tasks that all agree need to be carried out—that is, on what unites, rather than divides, the revolutionary movement. We believe that the Organization for Latin American Solidarity (OLAS) and the respective national committees should concentrate on extending and coordinating international solidarity and joint action. What is needed most is for all revolutionaries, all anti-imperialists and all popular movements on our continent to thrash out a common revolutionary standpoint. This, however, is inconceivable before a certain process of development runs its course. We may accelerate the course, but cannot as yet consider it completed. If, therefore, we were to try and impose a standard approach, entirely unnecessary difficulties would arise. The best way to facilitate unity in defense of the Cuban revolution and the fight against imperialism and its agents is to promote joint action and to accentuate what unites us, while rectifying whatever disunites us.

It is no secret that Latin American revolutionaries have differing viewpoints on some problems. This tendency made its appearance after considerable numbers of new fighters from the less politically developed sections of the proletariat and petty bourgeoisie joined the Latin-American revolutionary movement, and after differences of an international order obstructing the struggle broke out among the revolutionaries.

The allusion here is to problems bred by the development of modern society, the emergence of new extremely complex social phenomena, the disparities between objective conditions from country to country and to the growth of the revolutionary forces.

Lenin pointed out that any growth of the working-class movement and appearance of new fighters and new sections of working people "is inevitably accompanied by vacillation in theory and tactics." And he called attention to the fact that "the yardstick of an imaginary idea" will get us nowhere and that vacillation should be regarded as "a practical movement of ordinary people."

In other words, what we are dealing with are growing pains that

cannot conceivably be removed overnight. But it is also a cogent fact that imperialism benefits from differences arising between the revolutionary forces, and especially from differences in the Communist parties. It is our duty, therefore, to prevent differences from obstructing united action against the common enemy. Differences arising between Communist parties should not impede mutual understanding any more than differences between Communists and other revolutionaries should impede their common fight against imperialism.

Experience has shown that open polemics results in senseless name-calling and in arbitrary judgments. It serves no useful purpose and only aggravates the difficulties. Sometimes, it is true, a party has no choice but to express its opinion publicly. We have nothing against this. But we are sure that direct contacts, bilateral and multilateral meetings, a tactful fraternal dialogue and, most important of all, steadfast unity of action, are the best way to further mutual understanding.

The driving force of the revolution in Latin America comprises the working class, peasants (the majority of whom in many countries are Indians), students, middle strata and some sections of the national bourgeoisie. There are contradictions between them, but common interests in the fight against U.S. imperialism and the oligarchies predominate. This offers a serviceable basis for unity and calls for closer bonds. Our policy of united action by all anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic forces builds on the belief that an alliance of workers and peasants, of the proletariat and the non-proletarian elements is the best possible basis for an enduring and militant united front. To make headway, mutual understanding between proletarian and petty-bourgeois revolutionaries is absolutely essential.

The proletariat, the most powerful social class on our continent, is still growing. As many as 40 million people (of whom one out of every three is a factory or farm laborer), or more than half the gainfully employed population between the Rio Grande and Cape Horn, earn a livelihood by selling their labor power. In five countries, that is, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile, with nearly two-thirds of the total population of Latin America, the proletariat is relatively strong, and not in numbers only.

Communist parties exist in all Latin American countries. Like the fraternal parties elsewhere in the world, irrespective of their degree of development, they expound ideas that strike terror into imperialism, of which they are the most relentless enemies.

They are the bearers of the finest revolutionary traditions of their peoples and have acquitted themselves splendidly in the important

work of disseminating Marxism and socialist ideas, and moulding the scientific socialist outlook of the foremost workers and intellectuals. Cultivation of proletarian internationalism among the working class is one of their accomplishments. In brief, it is they who are forging the class consciousness of the Latin-American proletariat and the anti-imperialist awareness of the peoples.

In all the countries of Latin America the Communists have been subjected to persecution at one time or another. But they have never flinched in face of the terror campaigns. Thousands have seen the inside of prisons and concentration camps, thousands have been manhandled and tortured, and many leaders have paid with their lives for their convictions. Staunch and experienced fighters emerge from this ordeal.

Some Communist parties, entrenched among the masses, constitute an influential and at times even the decisive, political force. Others are still small and lack some of the requisites of a vanguard. However, international experience has shown that small parties can become large revolutionary contingents, at times virtually overnight. Just before the Second World War, for example, the Italian Communist Party numbered only 15,000 members in a country with a population approaching 50 million. Yet after Mussolini's downfall towards the end of the Second World War the Party grew into a powerful force of millions of members. Early in 1958, at the time the Pérez Jiménez dictatorship was overthrown in Venezuela, the Communist Party had a mere 300 members; soon, however, its membership numbered tens of thousands, making it in a matter of months the biggest political body in Caracas.

Communists organize the workers in trade unions, fight for the economic and social demands of the people and safeguard working-class unity by inspiring a new, anti-imperialist patriotism.

The most advanced section of the working class and the best of the Latin-American intelligentsia have joined the Communist parties. These parties have their sources in the proletariat of their respective countries, in the October Revolution, in the victory of Leninism, of revolutionism over reformism.

This consolidation of the Latin-American Communist parties is a great gain of the revolutionary working class. Their path has not been strewn with roses. They have had to withstand the assault of their class adversaries and other petty-bourgeois trends in their own ranks.

The founding of Communist parties brought about the fusion of Marxism with the working-class movement. This was an historical imperative so that the working class, to use Marx's words, should not

be only a class in itself but a class for itself, and that its fight for emancipation should be a conscious fight.

Pernicious tendencies and sectarian views, isolationism, passivity, adventurism, conformism and time-serving occur now and then in the Communist parties regardless of whether they are functioning legally or underground. None of these can be combated effectively, unless a continuous fight is waged for the party line through criticism and self-criticism and hard daily work among the masses.

These pernicious tendencies, which we Chilean Communists know all too well from our own experience, are a hindrance to party development. But small parties grow into big ones by virtue of their vanguard position in the social struggle; for as the proletarian masses gather experience they range themselves alongside the Communists. This we want to make absolutely clear. However, we should not lose sight of another objective factor, namely, that not only the politically conscious workers but also a considerable section of the petty-bourgeoisie are adopting a revolutionary attitude and fighting for the liberation of our continent with the aim of building socialism. This became doubly evident after the socialist revolution in Cuba.

Some of the petty-bourgeoisie join the Communist parties or become friends and followers, exerting an influence of their own for a certain length of time. However, a more considerable part forms its own parties or joins the Left wing of other movements.

This trend often engenders sectarianism. In Chile, for example, Communists campaigned for a time for the dictatorship of the proletariat and for Soviet power. This approach did not help our Party to grow. (Upon abandoning this sectarian line, we defined the Chilean revolution as a bourgeois-democratic revolution but realized in 1945 that even this non-sectarian definition had been rendered unsound by reason of the worldwide changes—advance of the working class, the content of the new epoch and the decline in the revolutionary ardor of the bourgeoisie.)

In any case, the rise of revolutionary tendencies among the petty-bourgeoisie can be traced to the struggle waged by the proletariat, to the years of work put in by the Communist Parties, to the entire modern development of history, influenced chiefly by the steady growth of the socialist system.

Objectively speaking, the revolutionary mood of the petty-bourgeoisie is a welcome fact. It is a manifestation of progress and should not be regarded as merely a posture or as an act of desperation, an act which the petty bourgeoisie admittedly often commit. Under no circumstances should we under-rate the revolutionary potential of

the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie. While the Latin-American bourgeoisie is no longer capable of heading revolutionary processes (though some sections of it may participate in them), the petty bourgeoisie is still a revolutionary force and one that may even play a leading role in countries where the working class is weak numerically and lacks the needed political weight.

The Cuban revolution has demonstrated that the petty bourgeoisie has a potential of revolutionary courage in battling for national liberation and socialism.

There is, then, a distinct bond between the revolutionary trends of the proletariat, on the one hand, and those of the petty bourgeoisie, on the other. There is much that unites them, but also much that divides them. Petty-bourgeois revolutionaries tend at times to under-rate the workers and the Communist parties, to gravitate towards nationalism, recklessness, terror and, at times, even anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. Also, they are more susceptible to despair and subjectivism. But they are revolutionary all the same and the proletariat must put the accent on unity with them rather than on fighting their mistakes. The two trends are competing for leadership of the movement; to a certain extent, their rivalry is ideological. But if anything is done to accentuate this rivalry and precipitate a "fight for the destruction" of either trend, the sole beneficiary will be imperialism. That imperialism and its agents are concentrating precisely on intensifying the rivalry should be enough to bear this out. The national bourgeoisie, too, which seeks to maintain its class positions, is also eager to see the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie part ways. So today, mutual understanding, cooperation and united action by the proletariat and the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie is a matter of the first magnitude.

The Latin-American Communist parties are aware of the need for understanding with the other Left forces, above all those espousing socialism. However, this does not apply to anti-Party groups and splinter parties, who represent no one and who live off factional activity and dissent.

The militant cooperation of the working class and the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie need not stop short of founding united revolutionary Marxist-Leninist parties wherever they have parties of their own today. In Chile this cooperation has crystallized into socialist-communist unity within the People's Action Front. The Socialist Party, like the Communist, has deep roots in the working class, though those of the Communist Party are deeper. Both wield considerable influence also among the petty bourgeoisie, with the Socialists holding an edge. The

petty-bourgeoisie do not comprise a special group in the Communist Party, whose leadership derives chiefly from the working class.

The mutual understanding of Chile's Communists and Socialists comes up against snags from time to time, but the alliance is sufficiently strong to make a split highly improbable. It draws its strength from the will of the people. As Comrade Galo Gonzalez pointed out at the Tenth Party Congress in 1956, whenever Socialists and Communists worked together "*the working class has gained and whenever we parted ways or quarrelled the enemy benefitted.*" We are strong when we stand together, and weaker when we do not. The people of Chile will not win political power unless Socialists and Communists are allies. Neither Communists nor Socialists can claim sole leadership. We need each other.

Some sections of the petty bourgeoisie and of the working class while gravitating towards revolution have not yet taken a definite stand. Most of them support the Radical or Christian Democratic parties.

However, since the municipal election last April the more advanced groups in the Radical Party, who gained considerable ground, have been working for an understanding with the Socialists and Communists. Their leader, Alberto Baltra, maintains that "*the objective interest of the proletariat and the middle sections are similar,*" that "*the world is moving inevitably towards socialism*" and that "*a socialized alternative is perfectly conceivable, paving the way to effective planning, replacement of the capitalist system, abolition of the monopolies, decline of imperialist influence and to accumulation and mobilization of the considerable resources required to expand national capital and, hence, the rate of Chile's development.*" Baltra described people's unity as "*a process of joint action by Radicals and other Left forces.*"

Some deputies and many members of the Christian Democratic Party, too, are calling for "concentrated fire on the oligarchy" and for joint action with the People's Action Front. Most have expressed themselves in favor of socialism.

To be sure, their idea of socialism differs substantially from that of the Socialists and Communists. But the important thing is their desire to reach an understanding with the People's Action Front.

The most important factor in Chile today is the desire for change. Thanks to Communist and Socialist efforts, the people are beginning to realize that the old economic structure must be radically altered. The national bourgeoisie represented by the Christian Democratic Party is acutely conscious of the advances made by the revolutionary

working class and of the possibility of a major shift in public sentiment, which could bring the working class to power. Consequently, large sections of the national bourgeoisie have declared themselves in favor of change, offering reformist solutions within the Alliance-for-Progress framework. To stem the tide, the oligarchy, too aligned itself with the Christian Democrats in the 1964 presidential election, thus enabling the latter to win.

The 30 months of the Christian Democratic government have been enough to disenchant the people who had believed in bourgeois reformism. Most of them turned to the Popular Action Front and now seek revolutionary change.

Needless to say, this reaction was not spontaneous. It was brought about by the work of the Communists who have consistently urged joint action by all partisans of change, regardless of whether or not they are against the government.

The shift in favor of the Communists and Socialists was reflected in the results of the April municipal elections. The Communist Party polled 354,000 and the Socialist Party 322,000 votes. Some 120,000 electors who previously voted Christian Democrat sided with the Communists and Socialists, who polled 30 per cent of the vote. Meanwhile, the Christian Democratic Party, which formerly collected 42 per cent, slipped to 36 per cent. The Socialists and Communists are on the upgrade, while the Christian Democrats have entered a phase of decline.

The future of the Radical Party, which represents some 16 per cent of the electorate and consists chiefly of middle class people, will depend on its eventual understanding with the People's Action Front.

In the circumstances, the People's Action Front is becoming a center of contact for all the democratic forces in the country.

The election was a serious setback for the Christian-Democratic Party and for President Frei's administration. It was a setback for the reformist alternative and the Christian Democratic variety of the pilot experiment offered by the U.S. imperialists to some of the Latin American countries. The election also showed that the Communist effort gradually to win over the masses from the Christian Democrats, delivering them from bourgeois influence and rallying petty-bourgeois support for the People's Action Front, is bearing fruit. This Communist policy holds out good prospects for the people's movement in its advance and in combating the enemy on other fronts in the event of Chile being affected by the present epidemic of "gorillism."

Doubtless the situation in the country is a singular one. But elsewhere in Latin America, too, mutual understanding between prole-

tarian and revolutionary petty-bourgeois groups is being forged in various forms, drawing the middle sections into the fight for change with the ultimate aim of sparking off anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolutions.

It is up to the revolutionaries to find the way to mutual understanding between the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie. And clearly, in each country the choice rests with the local revolutionary forces, which makes it doubly necessary to disseminate Marxist-Leninist ideas and implant proletarian ideology.

4.

The argument most frequently used by the enemy is that the Communists' united action policy is simply a tactical maneuver to strengthen their hand, to absorb real and possible allies, use them to the fullest and then abandon them and to go on to achieve a Communist one-party empire.

It would be a sheer waste of breath to go into this at length, for it is malicious slander pure and simple. That the Communists will gain in strength is certain, despite all the difficulties. The other progressive forces will also grow in proportion to their contribution to the common struggle, because the march of time favors the exponents of progress, not the reactionaries. In Chile, the cooperation of Socialists and Communists has benefited both parties. They improved their positions in the recent elections, with the Socialists making a somewhat bigger advance this time.

We Communists have always maintained that the working class has two types of allies—permanent and temporary. This is an objective fact. History never stands still. Upon attaining one goal, society begins planning the next. New tasks and contradictions appear, conditioning changes in the political approach, with new alignments, some drifting into the reactionary camp and the majority straining forward. It is not the Communists, therefore, who by malice aforethought part ways with groups that had been their allies.

Imperialist policies of menacing world peace, flouting the right of nations, assailing democratic freedoms and human rights, and prejudicing the interests of all socio-economic groups save those of the monopoly bourgeoisie, evoke the indignation of all social strata, including a large part of the non-monopoly bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the spectacular achievements of the socialist world and its accomplishments, which are in harmony with man's aspirations for freedom, learning, culture and welfare, coupled with its aid to non-socialist countries aspiring to independent development, is making socialism

attractive not only to the proletariat, but also to other classes and social strata.

The development of the Cuban revolution into a socialist one and the socialist orientation of some revolutionary processes in Africa and the Middle East could never have occurred other than in the new historical conditions brought about the October Revolution and then the Soviet victory over Hitler Germany, after which socialism became a world system strong enough to safeguard the new revolutionary states, frustrate imperialist blockades and assist the newly-free countries in their independent development.

In this situation, the problem of our temporary alliances with non-proletarian and non-Communist forces calls for a new approach. Our allies now have much greater opportunities for marching ahead, not of course without vacillation and difficulties. Whatever happens, it is farthest from our minds to use them at some specific stage, only to discard them at another. On the contrary, we could wish for nothing better than to cooperate with them indefinitely.

What we Communists want is a progressive alignment of all champions of democracy and socialism, recognizing the right of every ally to participate in all stages of the revolutionary process and in all governments that the people's struggle may bring into being.

It should be added here that many Communist parties do not consider the one-party system obligatory for socialist society. The matter hinges on specific national conditions and on the existence in many countries of democratic and popular political forces and of objective social realities that condition a multiplicity of progressive trends and parties. The Communist Party of France, for example, does not believe that "the one-party system is essential for the transition to socialism," and the Italian Communists share its opinion.

The Communists in Chile, too, favor a multi-party system. We hold that the Communist and Socialist parties should not only jointly lead the people in the fight against imperialism and the oligarchy but also jointly build the socialist society of the future, and we expect many other groups to participate as well.

The Communist Party of Chile, a working-class party, exercises leadership in cooperation with the Socialist Party, which, as we have noted before, holds strong positions in the country. Many problems faced by our movement are settled by agreement between the Socialists and Communists on the initiative of one of them. We call this joint leadership, which in Chile represents the concrete form in which the Communist Party plays its vanguard role.

It may be that ultimately the Communists and Socialists will form

a united party. But so far the question has not arisen, and is not likely to arise in the foreseeable future, and perhaps may never arise.

As for the other Latin-American countries, it appears that the need for united action by Communist parties and other revolutionary forces fits in with the need for cooperation at the level of joint *leadership* by those revolutionary forces which, in a definite sense, share the function of vanguard.

A vanguard cannot conceivably be built by arbitrary or synthetic means around a leader or a few men, who individually, at least in their own opinion, adopt radical standpoints and prepare for revolutionary action. The exceptions to this rule only bear this out.

A vanguard is the result of the fusion of Marxism with the working-class movement, the moulding of revolutionary thought (above all among proletarians) and the application of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of a country, that is, the result of purposeful activity and of a natural, rather than spontaneous process.

On the other hand, as Lenin said, it is not enough to call oneself the vanguard or the forward contingent; all other contingents must be convinced that we really are in the van.

The Latin-American Communist parties were founded at different times. They function in different conditions and in different social and political situations. Some are going forward from dissemination of scientific socialist ideas to consolidating their bonds with the masses, to organizing mass struggle, to the phase of intensive social and political work which paves the way to the conquest of power, to the rapid development of the Latin-American parties into the guiding force of the revolutionary movement.

However, the Communists do not consider this the only possible perspective. In the name of the proletariat and on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, they are prepared to raise to the highest possible level cooperation and unity with the other revolutionary forces.

Mexican-Americans in the Southwest

A Conquered People

The vast area which now comprises Arizona, California, New Mexico and Southern Colorado was seized from Mexico in the conquest of 1846-48. Texas had been annexed in 1845. After the U.S. Army invaded Mexico City in 1847, Mexico was forced to enter into peace negotiations. Intent upon protecting the rights of its citizens remaining in the conquered territory, the Mexican government drew up the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, guaranteeing the right to their land, property, religion, and political liberties.

President Polk, however, pressed for a weakened version of the Treaty, and threatened to renew the unjust war if it were not signed immediately. He wrote his negotiators that "a vast amount of precious blood and of treasure had been expended in reaching and capturing the city of Mexico." He said: "Should the war be renewed, instead of purchasing at a fair price a portion of the territories *which we have been obliged to conquer* and which are now in our undisturbed possession, and restoring the remainder to Mexico, we shall be compelled to appropriate . . . a just and ample indemnity in Mexican territory for all the expenses of the war. Without peace they must be destroyed." (U.S. Document No. 129, Mexico 1848, pp. 375-376. Emphasis added.)

Mexico, faced with ruin, signed an unequal peace treaty and the inhabitants of the territory she lost met the hardships of a conquered people. Juan Bautista Vigil, acting governor of New Mexico when General Kearny marched into Santa Fe, predicted the sad future in his "welcoming" address:

No one in this world can successfully resist the power of him who is stronger.

Do not find it strange if there has been no manifestation of joy and enthusiasm in seeing this city occupied by your military forces. To us the power of the Mexican Republic is dead. . . . What child will not shed abundant tears at the tomb of his parents?

The years immediately following the U.S. occupation brought a military rule with slight respect for the rights of the conquered people.

In a little over a decade (they) made Mexican a dirty word. The Anglo made it clear he considered the Hispano an inferior, a person fit only to follow along behind as a "greaser" for the wagon wheels. Capital punishment and lynchings were unknown in New Mexico prior to the coming of the Anglo-Americans. . . . The patronizing and superior attitude of the Anglo toward the Hispano, in turn bitterly resented by the Hispano, has had political effects underestimated by many people. (Daniel T. Valdes, *Political History of New Mexico*, University of Oklahoma Press, as quoted in the *Denver Post*, November 6, 1966.)

About 75,000 Mexican people lived in the Southwest at the time of the conquest. Some 60,000 were in New Mexico, 5,000 in Texas, 7,500 in California, 1,000 in Arizona. While states like Nevada and California, where people of Mexican origin constituted a minority of the population, were speedily admitted to statehood, New Mexico (then including Southern Colorado) where they constituted a majority, was not admitted until 64 years later, when an Anglo-American majority was secured.

The basic economy of the area was agricultural. Land ownership in New Mexico and Southern Colorado took the form of small villages whose inhabitants held their water rights and grazing lands in common. With the invasion of land-grabbers and speculators from the East, the Santa Fe Railroad and the get-rich-quick cattle and sheep ranchers took over thousands of acres by methods which today's governor of New Mexico, David Cargo, euphemistically calls "peculiar." In 1877, the Sheriff of Hidalgo County, Texas, sold 3,027 acres confiscated from a "Latin" land grand to an Anglo buyer for fifteen dollars. (William Madsen, *The Mexican-Americans of South Texas*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1964.) The economy of the area was undermined and farmers were in many cases forced to go back to work for the invaders of their own land, or to travel with the crops as seasonal laborers.

Population Distribution

No one knows exactly how many Mexican-Americans there are in the Southwest. Estimates vary from four to seven million. The 1960 Census of "white persons of Spanish surname" counted only three and a half million. But the government has recently admitted that the 1960 Census missed a lot of people—about five million in all, including two million Negroes. The margin of error was even greater when it came to the Mexican-American population, due to a number

of factors, including the inability of most enumerators to speak Spanish and their unwillingness to venture into ghetto districts.

Also, two things must be kept in mind about figures based on "Spanish surnames." First, many persons whose families came from Mexico were originally descended from European groups other than Spanish. These persons, who have the same cultural heritage as others who came from Mexico, do not have Spanish surnames. According to the census, about 6 per cent of those born in Mexico and now living in the five Southwestern states have other than Spanish surnames. Moreover, many people have intermarried or changed their names to escape job discrimination. Finally, as the 1960 figures are now almost ten years old, they are obsolete. Comparison with recent figures of the Department of Agriculture, Commerce and Labor and of local School Boards shows that because of high birth rate and immigration,* this is a rapidly growing population. Today we can safely say that there are six million, and it is estimated that by 1975 there will be twenty million Mexican-American citizens in this country. (Marvin Alisky, "The Mexican-Americans Make Themselves Heard," *The Reporter*, February 9, 1967.)

Eighty-five per cent of all Mexican-Americans were born in the U.S., although the proportion varies from state to state. In Colorado, for instance, 90 per cent of the Spanish-surnamed people have New Mexico or Colorado backgrounds and only 10 per cent come from "old" Mexico. In New Mexico, those Spanish-surnamed people born in Mexico are a bare 4 per cent, whereas in Texas they number 14 per cent, in Arizona 18 per cent and in California 20 per cent.

The states of the Southwest are so huge and divergent that an accurate estimate of the political importance of the Mexican-American people can be arrived at only by studying the counties.

For example, there are six counties in Texas and six in New Mexico where over half the residents are Mexican-American. Of these, Webb County, Texas (larger than the states of Rhode Island and Delaware combined), is 80 per cent Mexican-American. Rio Arriba County in northern New Mexico (larger than Connecticut) is 75 per cent Mexican-American. Of the two million Mexican-Americans in California, over 800,000 now reside in Los Angeles County.

In assessing the weight of the Mexican-American vote, this concentration of population has immense significance. It is to this that a

*Between 1955 and 1965, about half a million Mexicans migrated to the U.S. legally.

senator such as Joseph Montoya of New Mexico and Congressmen like Henry Gonzalez and Eligio de la Garza of Texas and Edward Roybal of Los Angeles owe their election.

The outstanding change in the demography of the Southwest has been the shift to the cities. Denver now has 70,000 "Spanish surname" citizens, an increase of nearly 73 per cent from 1950 to 1960, although Denver's total population increased only 18 per cent. In Jefferson and Adams counties, suburbs of Denver, the Mexican-American population rose 238 and 244 per cent respectively.

In East Los Angeles the proportion has increased from 66 per cent to 76 per cent in the past five years. Many are recently arrived Mexican nationals, about 44,000 a year since 1960.

Does the fact that the Mexican-American is moving to the cities mean that he is no longer engaged in farm work? Emphatically not. Twenty years ago, 65 per cent of farm workers lived on the farm. But today 70 per cent live in cities. ("Residence of Hired Farm Workers," *The Hired Farm Working Force*, U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Report No. 98, 1966.)

Automation has increased farm output per man hour of work more than 3½ times from 1940 to 1963, but farm labor is not being eliminated. Not every process can be mechanized, and not every machine does the job as well as skillful hands. What has occurred is a relative increase in the need for temporary workers and a declining need for full-time workers.

In 1965, the average man who did only farm work was employed for just 104 days and earned \$805.00. He had little chance of finding another job as the employment potential for farm laborers is severely limited. A long series of studies and reports have recommended unemployment insurance for farm workers, who are excluded from this as well as from most other social benefits.*

The overwhelming majority of farm laborers in the Southwest are Mexican-American. "In the rural population, about 46 per cent of the Spanish surname males worked as farm laborers compared with only about 15 per cent of the total rural population of the Southwest." (*Low Income Families in the Spanish Surname Population of the Southwest*, U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Series No. 112.)

*For a full discussion of this question, see Fred H. Schmidt, "Rationalizing the Farm Labor Market," *Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, June 1966.

In California, 15.7 per cent are farm laborers compared to 3.3 per cent of the total population. Nearly half of all men employed as farm laborers are of Spanish surname. ("Minority Groups in California," *Monthly Labor Review*, September 1966.)

The Department of Agriculture study cited above states: "The areas of greatest concentration of low income coincide with those of high density of Spanish surname population."

The worst misery among the Mexican-American people is in South Texas, where more than 37 per cent are living in poverty. Four hundred thousand families have incomes of less than \$2,000 a year.

And what of the "war on poverty"? In Southwest Texas, Mexican names are used as a window dressing to get funds. But the meetings are held in English, excluding most poor Mexicans from participation. The same is true of New Mexico and Southern Colorado. In many of these areas, the county commissioners are also big ranchers, and do not intend to introduce programs that pay a \$1.25 minimum wage to unemployed youth, who would then be making more than their fathers. (The minimum wage set by Labor Secretary Wirtz for agricultural labor is \$.90 for Texas, \$1.05 for Arizona and \$1.25 for California, but it is seldom enforced.)

The Language Question

One of the features marking the struggle of the Mexican-American people most clearly as a struggle for national equality is the fight for their language. In every one of the five states, language has been used as a pretext to deny the Mexican-American his basic civil rights: the right to vote, the right to serve on juries, the right to jobs. The ruling class constantly seeks to suppress the Spanish language. They have fired Denver women who spoke Spanish on the job at the Cudahy Packing Company, fined children for each Spanish word spoken in school in Albuquerque, kept Spanish-speaking people off juries from Colorado to Texas and introduced a law to forbid the use of Spanish in state offices in New Mexico. (It failed to pass, however.)

In Arizona a requirement for voting is to be "able to read the Constitution of the U.S. in the English language in a manner showing he is neither prompted nor reciting from memory. . . ." Texas state election laws do not recognize the Spanish language at the polls, and there is little opportunity for an adult to learn English.

The Constitution of California declares that "All laws, decrees, regulations and provisions which from their nature require publi-

cation shall be published in English and Spanish." But today, 120 years after its adoption, a battle is going on in the California State Legislature over a bill designed to print ballots in both English and Spanish. (*Carta Editorial*, July 28, 1967.)

The Constitution of New Mexico provides that teachers should be proficient in both the English and Spanish languages to qualify to teach Spanish-speaking pupils. But when, in June 1967, State Superintendent of Schools R. L. Chisholm was asked by a Mexican-American state legislator why this provision was not enforced, he walked out of the meeting.

With extraordinary tenacity the people have resisted all the efforts of mass capitalist media to impose the English language. Says *School and Society*: "The Spanish-speaking American was not, and is not today, willing to abandon his ancient cultural and linguistic heritage." ("Few Spanish-Speaking Children in High School in Southwest," November 12, 1966.)

From the Colorado-Wyoming border to Southern California, a decisive section of the working class speaks Spanish. Women whose great-grandparents were born in Colorado still speak it to their children. New Mexico is still legally a bilingual state.

In the San Francisco Bay area there are more than half a million people of Spanish surname, only 2 per cent of whom do not speak Spanish. Some 36 per cent speak Spanish only, while 62 per cent speak some degree of both languages.

"More Spanish can be heard in the center of the *barrio* than 20 years ago," said Arturo Almanza of the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission. "We still speak Spanish and a lot of this is because there is no more fear of our own identity. It's not quite as important to us to be something else as it was before World War II."

"They often accuse us of being divided. But you find this is in Anglo terms. We are much more together than you realize, because we have language in common. . . . There's something about it when we start speaking Spanish together. . . ." So says Ray E. Gonzalez, of the Los Angeles Council on Mexican-American Affairs. (Quoted in *Congressional Record*, May 12, 1966.)

From Los Angeles to Denver, Santa Fe to Brownsville, the radio is the chief means of public communication in Spanish. Music from Mexico, canned serials, advertisements and local news pour forth constantly into thousands of homes and small businesses. Movies are also a great tie with Mexico. In *barrios* a thousand miles from the border the current stars of the Mexican screen shine forth.

Visiting entertainers and musicians "direct from Mexico" make popular appearances in remote towns. Close to the border, Mexican-owned newspapers are widely read, and the Garcia Valseca chain (mouthpiece of the U.S. State Department) publishes editions on both sides of several twin border cities.

Into this Spanish-speaking culture is thrust the U.S. educational system, suddenly placing the child in surroundings where he is punished for speaking his own language in the classroom and even on the playground. As a result, of 30,000 children in New Mexico who started their first year in school in the fall of 1964, 5,000 had to repeat the same grade. This is typical of the Southwest, where such handicaps are placed in the path of the Mexican-American child seeking an education that the average person of Mexican descent has completed only 9 years of school in California, Colorado and New Mexico, 8 years in Arizona, and less than 7 years in Texas. In contrast, the median number of school years completed by Anglos in Los Angeles County is 12.2 and by Negroes 11.1.

Nearly one million Spanish-speaking children living within this five-state area never will go beyond the eighth grade, over half the 1.75 million Mexican-American children in school today. A survey by the National Education Association found that: "The level of education received by these youngsters is well below the level of the total population and even below that of the non-white population."

Texas' record is the worst in the Southwest. The 1960 census showed that 71 per cent of all "Latins" in the state dropped out of school before the eighth grade. The few who make it to high school, says Carlos H. Guerra (*Texas Observer*, September 2, 1966), receive a "preparation for inferiority in social life," being refused admission to recreation clubs, excluded from student government and "private" swimming pools where no Mexican-American has ever swum. "They teach them how to become laundry workers in high school," observed a San Antonio leader.

Job Discrimination

Discrimination in education is an important factor in limiting the Mexican-American worker to low-paid jobs, but it is not the whole story. In Texas, adult males with Spanish surnames and 10 years of formal schooling average \$3,200 in yearly income. Anglos with the same amount of schooling average \$4,768 a year. In some cities the Mexican-American worker earns half as much as an Anglo with the same schooling.

"While the power structure generally denies the existence of 'color consciousness,' Mexican-American community persons . . . are very much aware of it," said Dionicio Morales, director of the Equal Opportunity Foundation. He added that "in places where a fair complected Mexican-American may be accepted, a darker-skinned one will be turned away." (*Congressional Record*, May 12, 1966, p. 9997.)

But color is still not the whole story. Some 800 major national companies in the Southwest with more than 600,000 employees on their payrolls hire *no* Mexican-Americans.

In the cities, the majority of employed male heads of families with Spanish surnames must accept low-paid work as laborers or in the catch-all category called "operatives," that is, bus and taxi drivers, delivery men, laundry and textile workers, fruit and vegetable packers, and so on. The proportion of those employed as laborers or "operatives" averages 30 per cent in the five-state area.

The promised Great Society programs have done nothing to end job discrimination. Attitudes of national superiority flow from the Potomac to the Pedernales. The arrogance of the Johnson Administration brought about a now legendary exodus of 50 Mexican-American leaders from a Regional Conference of the Federal Equal Employment Opportunities Commission in March, 1966. They had been summoned to Albuquerque from all over the Southwest, ostensibly to discuss the severe unemployment problems of their communities, but arrived to find a rigid agenda already set by Washington bureaucrats who did not attend the meeting. So they walked out.

The protest against the Johnson Administration was expressed even more strongly in the elections eight months later when, marking a sharp break with old voting patterns, thousands of Mexican-Americans switched to the Republican Party. Marvin Alisky states in his above-cited article:

. . . In 1966 some 35 Mexican-American precincts in Los Angeles, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, Austin, El Paso, Albuquerque and Phoenix showed an average switch to Republican candidates of 35 per cent from the 1964 vote. . . .

The defeated Texas senatorial candidate, Waggoner Carr, symbolized Texans "who seem unaware of poor housing and poor job opportunities for Spanish-speaking citizens," a LULAC* aide said.

Ronald Reagan drew 24 per cent of Los Angeles' Mexican-American vote, and Republican Governor David Cargo of New Mexico

also owed his election to the Mexican-American voters of the state, a warning to the Democratic Party that it no longer has their votes in its pocket. More County, 83 per cent Mexican-American, went Republican.

In Arizona, the Democratic incumbent lost over the housing issue. He had ignored conditions in South Phoenix and South Tucson where Mexican-Americans live in shanties with no indoor plumbing and unsafe wiring. Thousands of Mexican-Americans in Arizona for the first time voted for a Republican. They were voting against their troubles, said Graciela Alivarez, Arizona director of the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Mexican-Americans and Vietnam

Although Mexican-Americans represent only 4 per cent of America's population, they comprise 12 per cent of the U.S. death toll in the Vietnam war. (Quoted from *Opinion by Vietnam Summer News*, August 4, 1967.) In most areas, the Mexican-American has not been integrated into the general peace movement, but protests against the war are strongly expressed by militant spokesmen. In the 1966 elections, "Remove the troops from Vietnam!" was a central point in the program of Colorado's New Hispano Party.

Rudolph "Corky" Gonzalez, leader of the fight against police brutality in Denver, condemned the war at a meeting of 2,000, as one carried on by "ruthless financial lords of Wall Street for green dollars of profit that do not show the red stains of blood." The crowd cheered, for in Colorado the Mexican-American population, one-tenth of the total, suffers one-half of the war casualties.

In his first speech after being released from jail in New Mexico last month, Reies Tijerina, chairman of the Alliance of Land Grants, declared: "No one can explain why we are fighting in Vietnam. There, they are bombing in violation of law. Here, they tell us to use violence." In New Mexico, Mexican-Americans make up 59 per cent of the draftees, but only 30 per cent of the state's population.

In California, Representative George Brown disclosed that 17.6 per cent of Los Angeles County men killed in Vietnam last year were Mexican-American. "This figure is almost twice as high as the nine per cent of the overall population in the county of Spanish surname," Brown said. (*Albuquerque Journal*, June 19, 1967.)

*LULAC: League of United Latin American Citizens, comparable to the NAACP.

The disproportionate share of Vietnam war deaths reflects the fact that Mexican-Americans, like Negroes, cannot afford the college attendance that brings student deferments. Draft boards, moreover, are manned by members of the ruling class with few or no representatives of national minorities.

A New Leadership

In many areas, apathy and despair are now being overcome, with increased organization and militancy of the people and the emergence of a group of vigorous leaders against whom the traditional weapon—deportation—is powerless because they are U.S.-born.

In California, former community service organizer Cesar Chavez has injected a whole new spirit into the Southwest. The farm workers' strike which he leads has resulted in the first great breakthrough of farm workers. Dolores Huerta, daughter of a farm worker and a miner, experienced community service worker and legislative lobbyist, is also an astute negotiator and brilliant organizer of the Farm Workers Union.

Dr. Julian Nava, first Mexican-American ever to sit on the Los Angeles School Board, the largest elected school board in the U.S., was able to inspire the Negro and Jewish people to join forces with the Mexican-American community to bring about his election last month over a reactionary incumbent.

Rudolph "Corky" Gonzalez of Colorado, former boxing champion, packinghouse worker and OEO official, is now a leader of the Crusade for Justice. "I want dignity and jobs for my people," he says.

Graciela Olivarez, courageous director of OEO in Arizona, recommends a "political revolt" of Americans of Mexican ancestry. Of the boost given to the Mexican-American movement by the victory of the California grape workers, she says: "We know now we can be winners."

Reies Tijerina, born in a Texas cottonfield, has brought the hunger of Northern New Mexico to national attention. "We fight not for land only, but for bilingual education, for jobs and respect for our Spanish-Indian culture. Negroes have become brave in their fight for equality," he says, "and our people are also losing their fear."

These men and women all combine what the *People's World* correctly described as "two powerful compulsions of the age . . . a class revolt for economic justice joined with the revolt of a national minority, the Mexican-Americans . . . for human dignity and civil rights."

People's Organizations

There is yet no recognized voice of the entire Mexican-American community. However, two important changes are taking place: an increased willingness of different organizations to cooperate, especially in the struggle for political representation, and a coming to the fore of working-class leadership with a consequent increase in militancy.

This has pushed some of the old-line organizations into more advanced positions. The LULAC, for instance, traditionally a sort of discreet Spanish-speaking Junior Chamber of Commerce, has today involved its 100,000 members in the fight for federal jobs and against discrimination in education.

Of great significance in the electoral field are MAPA (Mexican-American Political Association) and PASO (Political Association of Spanish-Speaking Organizations). The former is most active and influential in California, the latter in Texas. Together they number 100,000 members.

The G.I. Forum, founded by Dr. Hector Garcia, a Corpus Christi surgeon, began by organizing returning World War II veterans to fight for jobs and decent living conditions. Today it has chapters in every Mexican-American community of any size in Texas, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico.

Throughout the Southwest the CSO (Community Service Organization) is active in registration campaigns, preparing foreign-born for citizenship, etc.

In Colorado the Crusade for Justice was born in the fight against police brutality. It has now branched into social service and civil rights and publishes its own paper. The New Mexico Alliance for Land Grants (now the Federal Alliance of United Peoples) primarily fights for land but has broadened out to include all phases of the fight for first-class citizenship. Both organizations are working-class in membership and leadership.

Throughout the Southwest the courage and militancy of the Negro has been winning the admiration of the Mexican-American community and helping to overcome the racial prejudice that permeates every section of our society.

In California, an Inter-Community Council of our two largest national minorities has been formed to "alter a situation which finds the Negro and Mexican-American at the bottom of California's political, economic and social ladder," and to overcome competition between the two groups for the distribution of anti-poverty funds.

Cesar Chavez has stressed the necessity of unity with Negro farm

workers in their drive for organization in California, and farm workers in Texas were encouraged last year when their march to Austin was joined by a group of Negro workers. In Colorado, the Mexican-American Crusade for Justice and Denver Negro organizations have been holding joint demonstrations against police brutality.

National chauvinism toward the Mexican-American people in the Southwest is the greatest single factor in perpetuating reaction in this area, because it divides the working class and hampers organization. To the extent that Anglo chauvinism is overcome, the Mexican American minority will develop into a powerful revolutionary force. The upsurging national feelings we see today intertwine with the class struggle, influence it and are influenced by it. But if the California and Texas farm workers' strike have taught the labor movement anything, it is that Mexican-American workers can only be organized by recognizing their right to their own leaders, their own methods of struggle, and their own language.

It is not enough to salute the farm workers. Enormous obstacles still stand in their way. It is necessary to muster the material and political support that will bring unionism to hundreds of thousands of unorganized workers in California's fields and beyond.

No legislative program should be endorsed that does not provide for extension to all agricultural workers of the Fair Labor Standards Act, unemployment insurance, and social security.

It is necessary to fight against diversion to the Vietnam war of federal money needed to buy lunches for hungry school children. It is necessary for Anglos to join the fight for job equality for this nation's second-largest minority.

For the Left, the most meaningful approach to the problems of the Southwest is a regional one. Publications for peace, democracy and socialism are vitally needed in Spanish and English, tuned to the level of the Mexican-American community and reflecting its culture.

The 1967 Constitution of the Communist Party of the United States appropriately declares in its Preamble:

The fight of the unorganized to organize, from cottonfield to classroom, from factory to office, is our fight. . . .

Above all, the fight of Negro Americans, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Indians—of all victims of racism, violence, discrimination and anti-Semitism—is our fight.

IDEAS IN OUR TIME

HERBERT APTHEKER

"Those Whom the Gods Would Destroy..."

The fourth President of the United States, and the chief architect of the Constitution, James Madison, warned in the 1830's that in perhaps one hundred years the social order here would be in the grip of a fierce and—so far as he could see—insoluble crisis. Madison based his projection on this contradiction: the social order was dominated by those who owned its resources and means of production but politically popular sovereignty was supposed to prevail; how long before that mass sovereignty moved to revolutionize society and terminate the individual ownership of means and resources?

Few American statesmen have been so astute as Madison; his keenness is manifested in awareness of this ripening dilemma. But to expect this Virginia landowner and slaveowner of the early 19th century to conceive of the solution being applied in the twentieth century would be, of course, to expect the impossible.

Yet, Madison had not only a keen premonition of this intense and—historically speaking—impending struggle; he also sensed that it would produce moral and ethical challenges. It is in this connection, that he expressed his fears and offered his view that if the problem were to be resolved it would require enormous effort and great wisdom.

In the past, crisis has been acute here; notably so in the 1930's—exactly after the ten decades Madison had projected. In many ways crisis has become endemic, with a kind of "relief" possible only because of World War II and its aftermath. But, of course, that relief was most feverish; and new with all the promises of The American Century and People's Capitalism and The End of Ideology, etc., it is no longer only Communist devils who speak of a crisis society, of basic malfunctioning and of a profound structural sickness. No, today the contradictions and antagonisms are so acute—lit up as they are by the atrocious, costly and seemingly endless Vietnam war and the rebellions of the impoverished in the cities—that James Reston, Managing Editor of the *New York Times*, writes in those terms, and the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, J. W. Fulbright, in a speech (August 8) before the

American Bar Association, says: "The Great Society has become a sick society."

Here, then, is capitalism at its most glorious, in its most favored surroundings, in its freshest habitat, with a continent for a home and the (free) world for its booty—domestically undamaged by war and battering through war abroad—and it, *it*, is "sick" by the admission of its most astute and loyal servitors!

It is more criminal than sick; and where there is sickness it is more mental than physical and more ethical rot than material decay (though the latter is not absent, with foul air and polluted water and spreading slums) and above all, is not to be seen as simply and ambiguously societal for it is clearly *class*. There is no denying that the infection has spread into much of the entire body politic, but there is also no denying the source of the infection. The source does not lie among the people who make fruitful our marvelous soil and bounteous our magnificent productive apparatus through their labor and skill; it does not lie in our dark-skinned peoples who battle for dignity, nor in our militant youth who cry out for creativity and fraternity. No, it lies in the crass, brutal, arrogant, racist and provincial Giants of Industry called, more accurately, the Robber Barons.

The evidences of the rot lie about everywhere; we wish here to bring forward a few representative samples and to restrict these to most recent vintage.* Erwin D. Canham, editor of the influential and eminently conservative daily paper, the *Christian Science Monitor*, writes (March 25, 1967):

Everybody knows that in most of the so-called free world the entertainment arts are wallowing in a trough of licentiousness. Many films, plays, novels have descended to levels of outspoken sensuality which have never before been matched in mature human society.

Russell Baker, the "Observer" of the *New York Times*, noted (August 3) that it is a rare evening in watching television that one does not witness as part of the "entertainment," "a whole battalion of victims bludgeoned, machine-gunned, bayoneted, pistol-whipped, gunned down, mashed under tank treads, beaten senseless with fists and otherwise despatched." Here are the words of that same news-

*For evidences of a few years ago, see this writer's "Alienation and the American Social Order," in H. Aptheker, ed., *Marxism and Alienation*, (New York, 1965, Humanities Press), pp. 15-25, and references cited therein.

paper's movie critic, Bosley Crowther (July 4) describing a recent film epic: ". . . violent explosions, bark of guns, the whine of bullets and the spinning bodies of men mortally hit provide the aural and visual stimulation for an excitement of morbid lust."

Joseph Wood Krutch, an elder statesman of literary critics and still rather "old-fashioned" in some of his tastes, writing in *The Saturday Review* (May 6) thought the "emphasis on violence, perversion and nihilism" that characterized much of current U.S. fiction and playwrighting "seemed rooted in contempt for the world."** He offers this view:

Seldom, if ever before, has any of the arts been so dominated by an all-inclusive hatred. Once the writer hated individual "bad men." Then he began to hate instead the society which was supposed to be responsible for the creation of bad men. Now his hatred is directed not at individuals or their societies but at the universe in which bad men and bad societies are merely expressions of the fundamental evil of the universe itself.

Here is part of the text of an advertisement for a novel appearing in the *New York Times* (May 3): ". . . a labyrinth of cruelty, pain, blood, welts, screams, moans, torture, bondage and—delight . . . whippings, cuffings, the ecstasy of contact. . . ."

In *A New Dictionary of Quotations*, published by Knopf, an understandably anonymous New York magazine editor says: "There is no such thing as an independent press. You know it and I know it. I am paid \$350 a week for keeping honest opinions out of print. Our time and our talents are the property of other men. We are intellectual prostitutes." Pre-eminent among the tycoons in this lovely business is Clarence W. Barron, publisher of the *Wall Street Journal*; editorializing in the paper he owns, Mr. Barron wrote:

A newspaper is a private enterprise, owing nothing to the public, which grants it no franchise. It is emphatically the property of its owner, who is selling a manufactured product at his own risk. It is therefore affected with no public interest.

While this degradation is most intense in the United States, it is pervading the free world, as some of the above-cited witnesses did not fail to say. One of the most poignant and incisive cries of alarm

**For an earlier and remarkable analysis of these trends, see Sidney Finkelstein, *Existentialism and Alienation in American Literature*, (New York, 1965, International Publishers), especially, pp. 285-98. The neglect of this book by the commercial press is a fine tribute to its author.

has come from the British novelist, Pamela Hansford Johnson (the wife of C. P. Snow), in her brief book, *On Iniquity* (New York, 1967, Scribner's), denouncing "the flood of sadistic pornography which is making the western world look so hideous (and, incidentally, so absurd)." Mrs. Johnson remarks that where this kind of writing is defended in the name of "freedom" or "facing facts" there is a notable lack of enthusiasm for recording in artistic form "the squalid and terrible facts of hunger and misery over wide areas of the world." Keenly, she insists: "We are encouraging the blunting of sensibility; and this, let us remember, was not the way to an Earthly Paradise, but the way to Auschwitz."

All this is more than condoned and "tolerated"; it is actively pushed and subsidized. It is rewarded with status and wealth and those who oppose it are punished by absence of status, by a conspiracy of silence, by the attempted imposition of a kind of forced self-exile. All this is camouflaged in the name of "freedom" and of "tolerance," but as Herbert Marcuse wrote in a recent acute essay,* "the logic of tolerance involves the rational development of meaning and precludes the closing of meaning" while in the United States and in much of the Free World, in the name of tolerance, irrationalism and brutality are glorified and opposition thereto is, if not treasonous, then at least suspect.

James Baldwin, in his *Notes of a Native Son* (1955), referred to the "rage of the disesteemed" and some of that rage is boiling over now in the streets of "Golden America." Perhaps even more inclusive in our country today is a sense of inhumanity or, better, non-humanity. This damnable system of capitalism, which makes everything into a commodity, tries to do this with human beings, too. But even this system requires *human* beings, if it is to be viable. Increasingly, that is the question: is it viable—for *human* beings, I mean.

President Johnson has given his answer to the uprisings in the ghettos and slums—and it is the historic answer of his class: improve the machinery of repression, raise taxes, and appoint still another "investigating committee"; he has given his answer to the bloody impasse in Vietnam: higher draft calls, additional cannon-fodder and intensified bombings. These answers will not do—quite apart

*H. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," in *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*, by R. P. Wolff, B. Moore, Jr., and H. Marcuse (Boston, 1965, Beacon Press), p. 96.

from their monumental immorality; they will not do pragmatically, and with pragmatic Americans that is a very serious matter.

Since 1946, the United States government has spent over \$900 billions for the military and \$96 billions for all social programs; that is, in the past twenty years, over 57 per cent of the national budget has gone for war and war preparations and 6 per cent has gone for social functions! This priority is an accurate measure of the absolute inhumanity of the present social order in the United States; and even here, in the richest nation on earth, such a policy has eventuated in real crisis.

The late British socialist and historian, R. H. Tawney, aptly wrote:*

The revolt against capitalism has its source, not merely in material miseries, but in resentment against an economic order which dehumanizes existence by treating the mass of mankind, not as responsible partners in the cooperative enterprise of subduing nature to the service of mankind, but as instruments to be manipulated for the pecuniary advantage of a minority of property-owners, who, themselves, in proportion as their aims are achieved, are too often degraded by the attainment of them.

The revolt is under way—though, as yet, hardly a conscious one. It must be added, however, that even the conscious component has markedly increased in the past five or ten years. The interest in Marxism is more widespread and more genuine now in the United States than it has been for thirty years; the alternative of socialism is more seriously discussed—especially among youth, intelligentsia and within the Negro freedom movement—than has been true since the 1930's.

Still, basically, it is not yet a fully conscious revolt; but revolt, nevertheless, it is. For material miseries do abound in this society, with fully 20 per cent living in dire poverty and an additional 25 per cent living in circumstances below minimum standards set by the government. Signs of rebellion abound in the first place among the twenty-two million black people—who, while constituting 11 per cent of the total population, amount to about 20 per cent of the working-class population; they are present also among the Spanish-speaking peoples who together number about seven millions.

The upsurge in the student movement is widely known; not well enough appreciated in that regard, however, are the following facts:

* R. H. Tawney, *The Radical Tradition*, edited by Rita Hinden (London, 1964, Allen & Unwin), p. 139.

college students and faculty now number about six millions; there is a significant percentage—perhaps one-fourth—of those who are working-class; there is a considerable number, in absolute not percentage terms, who are Negro, totaling perhaps 300,000; and there is much greater maturity to this college population than was true in pre-World War II generations. All this makes the campus challenge deeper than before, politically more meaningful and ideologically and morally more threatening for the ruling class.

There is mounting evidence, also, of unrest among women in the United States. That this is especially true of the women in groups facing racial and national oppression is manifest, but the unrest, while deepest there, is not confined to such women. The fantastically pornographic nature of the dominant culture affronts women; the picture deliberately created by the means of communication and the media of advertising is of American women as a kind of harlot incarnate. The indignity of this and its emphasis upon the idea of women as a use-object is arousing more and more dissatisfaction from that half of the population.

In this connection, note that in the United States—basically because of the high cost of living—a larger percentage of women are in the labor force than in any other developed capitalist nation; it is actually over one-third of the total working class. On the average, women earn about half the wages of men; black women earn about half the wages of white women! The general absence of social perquisites in the United States is, of course, well known; this especially affronts women and particularly women workers. Thus, for example, the United States is the most backward of all modern capitalist nations when it comes to child-care and nursery provisions.

Among the nation's farmers, discontent accumulates; some time ago it burst forth in the strike of thousands of milk producers. Now again the temperature down on the farm is reaching the boiling level. The reason lies in two sets of figures; from July, 1966 to July, 1967 prices of the farmers' product went down 4 per cent and in the same period the cost of products bought by the farmer went up 3 per cent. So while the biggest monopolies are making unprecedented profits, the income of the farmers is being sliced by the characteristic price scissors of capitalism.

In the organized labor movement, too, there are evidences of growing militancy. There are significant rank-and-file movements in the auto, meat-packing, steel, communications, maritime and transportation industries; discontent with the pro-Administration, bureau-

cratic, boss-favoring Meany-Lovestone leadership is mounting. New waves of trade-union organization are appearing, especially among agricultural workers in the West and Southwest and among white-collar and professional workers throughout the nation. In the first six months of 1967, there were more strikes, involving a larger number of workers, for more days than has been true in any such period for the past fifteen years. Significant here are worsening conditions of work, plus in the past few months an actual decline in real wages.

Emphasis must be given to the great significance of the growth in the weight of the Negro component of the working class—a trend that certainly will continue. This intensifies class militancy and deepens its social and political comprehension. Likewise the addition of millions of women to the ranks of the working class means that the reality of exploitation in the factory has become an all-family affair, and women bring into the factories and unions a greater awareness of problems of the consumers and of the community—that is, problems such as costs of food, of rent, lack of adequate housing, deteriorating schools, scandalous health conditions, etc.

There certainly are no wartime "benefits" to white-collar workers; but they face rising costs and taxes as everyone else does. In the past ten years an ever-growing number of teachers, nurses, hospital workers, social workers, civil servants, etc., have become aware of themselves as workers, have formed or joined unions and, in numerous instances, have engaged in strikes, sometimes fierce and prolonged.

Opposition to war is a major and mass phenomenon. Increasingly, too, the impact of war upon economics and politics in general is being grasped and the connection is being acted upon; this is especially true in the Negro movement and among youth and women. But it is a basic fact through all categories of the population and already has had and will increasingly have significant impact upon politics.

Polarization of politics proceeds here. The need for breaking the vise of the two-party system never was greater and the possibility of accomplishing it never was more favorable. At the same time, emphasis must be given to the danger from the Right in the United States; in the past few weeks there have been warnings—or, in some cases, threats—of a coming fascism. Of course, this is in no way inevitable; but given the intense monopoly capitalism which makes up the structure of our society and the racism and aggressiveness of its ruling class, there is no reason to depend merely upon "democratic traditions" or the "freedom-loving characteristics" of

the American people for defense from the fascist scourge.

Clearly, we are at a water-shed period, an historic turning point. In the short-term, in which direction the movement will go no one can say with certainty. One thing is sure: intense struggle on every front and of every kind goes on and much more is in store. The American people and the working class that make up its heart has a good tradition; it is a fighting people and class; its militancy has been surpassed by no other people.

The task is one of education and of organization. The Leninist line of mass effort and involvement is the guide. Sometimes, the pressure of reaction—and the action of provocateurs—can induce despair and moods of adventurism or individualism. But such moods are moods of defeat, however “bold” the language may be that camouflages them. Nothing can take the place of mass organization, mass struggle and mass activity. This Leninist principle is inviolate and only in pursuit of it can reaction be beaten and can social progress be achieved.

Let it be added that the function of a revolutionist is not to destroy but to build. It is not revolutionists who are engineers of discord and creators of chaos; this is the caricature of revolution that comes right out of Bismarck’s police agents and the Smith-McCarran Act caricature. The discord and the chaos are the work of the senile social oorder; a revolutionist is affronted by them and lives in order to eliminate them and build a better life.

A revolutionist fights for the well being of the majority of the people; in this sense he fights for the best interests of his nation.

From this principle follows also the commitment to mass struggle. Our struggle, for the first time in history, as the Manifesto announcing its commencement said, is a struggle *of the vast majority, for the vast majority and by the vast majority*. It is in remembering that and adhering to that, in both tactics and strategy, that our ultimate invincibility lies.

August 12, 1967

COMMUNICATIONS

PHIL BART

The Rubber Workers’ Strike

The recently concluded strike of the United Rubber Workers Union produced many new concessions for the workers. Their negotiations began while similar negotiations were proceeding in other industries. In particular, the current negotiations of the United Auto Workers hold the attention of the entire labor movement. In these negotiations the giant corporations are attempting to undermine gains already achieved and prevent the winning of new concessions.

The rubber companies started negotiations with their own “master plan.” They accumulated large reserves of tires in preparation for a long, drawn-out strike. The 76,000 men and women in their plants walked out for over three months in the longest strike in the industry’s history. The walk-out began April 21 in Firestone, Goodrich and Uniroyal. These were joined later by General Tire, while Goodyear continued to operate on a day-to-day basis, joining the strike shortly before it was concluded. The union attempted at first to keep some plants operating while others walked out. This effort did not succeed and before its end the strike took on a general character.

Demands in this industry had for some twenty years paralleled those presented to the auto industry. Agreements reached in the rubber industry were influenced by those obtained in auto. This long established practice is known as “tandem relationship.” Under it, contractual agreements are reached on the basis of the yardstick established in the auto industry.

After two decades the companies tried to change this relationship, with the aim of rejecting demands for wage increases. International president Peter Bommarito stated at the beginning of the strike that “they won’t follow the historical and ‘tandem’ relationship between auto and rubber wage adjustments because it would provide too great an increase . . .” He added that “the major companies used the ‘tandem relationship’ with auto adjustments when it suited their convenience but now, when the rubber workers seek to use the same formula the rubber companies refuse to budge.” Clearly, this change would have hurt the rubber workers in their wage negotiations, and would also have been of help to the auto companies later.

The corporations therefore de-

liberately prolonged the strike. In addition to the objectives of striking a blow against the rubber workers and attempting to influence negotiations in auto, they felt that a long strike would drain the financial resources of the union. Further, they hoped that by including an industry-wide strike they could raise the cry of "national security" and force government intervention to compel the workers to return while long, drawn-out negotiations could be instituted, leading to compulsory arbitration.

With this in mind they prepared an anti-strike "insurance fund." Each company made its contribution, thereby assuring financial backing to the struck firms. Companies whose plants were shut down were assured "compensation" for their losses.

Despite these schemes the strike was solid from the start. The militant spirit and unity behind the union was noted by many "old-timers," some of them founders of the union. Nevertheless a long strike created difficulties, especially for those with large families. The weekly strike benefit was \$25.00, which later had to be reduced to \$15.00. The union took steps to augment this aid where needed.

The major trade unions today are financially sound, and many have substantial funds to begin with. Yet in the struggle against giant corporations, which add "financial strike aid" to their already huge resources, support by other unions becomes essential.

Such solidarity is fundamental in the conduct of a strike. The URW was spending approximately \$1,500,000 weekly. It urged and received support from those still working. The UAW made two interest-free loans totaling \$1,000,000, and contributions came from a host of other unions. The national AFL-CIO also contributed, giving \$50,000, but under the circumstances this sum could hardly be considered adequate support.

Support from internationals and local unions and the involvement of the rank and file are essential ingredients for victory. The UAW in its Administrative Letter of February 8, 1967 places this issue squarely when it calls for the need to "establish and administer a United Defense Fund to provide adequate support for workers under circumstances in which the employer is engaged in an effort to destroy their union or is unwilling to bargain in good faith"

The URW succeeded in answering the challenge and came through with a contract which grants many new concessions. The union summed it up as "a precedent-making settlement." Some of the major gains in the three-year contract are the following:

1. A 43-cent hourly wage increase was won — 15 cents to be paid immediately, 15 cents the following year and 13 cents the third year. The skilled tradesmen received an additional 10-cent hourly increase, bringing their first-year raise to 25 cents.

2. The companies attempted to create a wage differential between the tire makers and other workers. In this they failed. A uniform scale was established for both categories.

3. Improvements in supplemental unemployment benefits (SUB) were won. A laid-off worker is now assured benefits of 80 per cent of his gross hourly earnings whereas the previous contract provided for 65 per cent. The duration of payment is based on seniority in employment.

4. The contract provides for longer vacations and other benefits. It also provides improvements in grievance procedure, which remains an acute problem in many plants.

A noteworthy feature of the strike was the speed with which injunctions were applied against mass picketing. Two such injunctions were issued in Akron, permitting no more than two pickets at a gate. Similar injunctions were applied in other cities. This indicates a danger of a renewed growth in the use of injunctions as strike-breaking weapons.

The support of all democratic forces in the community is essential to the strike. So, too, are efforts to stop scabs from entering a plant. In the rubber plants white collar workers passed through the gates daily and performed duties which belonged to the strikers.

Of course, the increase in wages can be wiped out by additional taxes and a rise in living costs.

The concessions won on the picket line require the added protection obtained through legislative and political activity. This was well stated by the URW when it underscored that the nine-cent hourly increase won in 1966 was wiped out by the rise in living costs that year. And immediately following the signing of the rubber agreements, the corporations announced new price increases despite rising profits. (The profits of the five biggest rubber companies rose from \$316 million in 1955 to \$364 million in 1966.)

In the face of these new attacks it becomes essential to increase activities in the political arena. Akron is now involved in a municipal election campaign. The city administration, which is close to the rubber companies, sought to avoid a head on clash with the strikers. But let no one believe that it would not have used force to help bring in scabs if that became necessary. This opinion was widely expressed during the strike.

The rubber workers' victory is indicative of the mood of the workers. There is a readiness to struggle against the challenge of the corporate giants. Many large unions are now involved in negotiations or will be early next year. Foremost among them are the auto workers, now engaged in negotiations. This victory is a contribution toward their success.

BOOK REVIEWS

OAKLEY C. JOHNSON

Nat Turner's Slave Rebellion

Considered as a book, this new volume* has an interesting history: it is Herbert Aptheker's 20th published work, but it was the first one he wrote. It was accepted as a thesis for the Master's degree at Columbia University in February, 1937, when its author was 21 years old, and only now after thirty years, has it won the book status it all along deserved.

There is of course evidence in this of a change in the times, but perhaps there is a higher significance: It may be that Nat Turner's dream of "liberty" for his people is now not too far off.

In any case, bibliophiles and libraries who are collecting Dr. Aptheker's works will find *Nat Turner's Slave Rebellion* an impressive addition. It looks well on the same shelf with *One Continuous Cry* (David Walker's *Appeal*), *The Negro in the Civil War*, *American Negro Slave Revolts*, *A Documentary History of the Negro people in the United States*, and several others down to the most recent title (his 21st), *Mission to Hanoi*.

*Herbert Aptheker, *Nat Turner's Slave Rebellion*, Humanities Press, New York, 1966. Paper \$1.95.

In the volume under review, *Nat Turner's Slave Rebellion*, there are three main divisions that require comment, aside from the impressive bibliography: The author's brief foreword, the essay proper, and the full text of Nat Turner's so-called "Confessions"—though Nat pleaded *Not Guilty* in the trial itself because, as he said, *he didn't feel so* (p. 149).

I list the four-page foreword, written on the occasion of publication, as deserving of comment because of its revelation of little-known facts about the astonishing paucity of American scholarship on Negro history, and the efforts of Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois to remedy that shortcoming. Intriguing is the thought that, while the present work on Nat Turner by Dr. Aptheker appears in 1966, Dr. Du Bois *wanted* to do a book on the same subject when this century began, and was prevented by a force against which the "Civil Rights Revolution" is still battling: scholarly white chauvinism.

The essay does more than narrate the concrete events of the Rebellion, though that is accomplished too. It analyzes the uprising in respect to the times, de-

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scribes the environment in which it took place, discusses the various theories as to "motivation" (a very obscure subject to Turner's white contemporaries), and points out the effects Turner's revolt had on immediate history and later tradition.

The author begins with a reference to the 1830's, which, he says, was "a revolutionary period throughout the world." It was a time of striving for national liberation. He does not of course attempt conclusions about any possible connection between Poland's desire for freedom and that of the Negroes of Virginia. But both *were* strivings for liberty.

The author does not fail, however, to indicate a very important difference: that while all Americans hailed the Polish patriots, none hailed the Negro heroes. The idea of the innate inferiority of Negroes was already hanging like an albatross around the neck of white liberalism.

The revolt led by Nat Turner took place in 1831 in Southampton County in eastern Virginia. It was soon crushed and its leaders put to death. But it was not forgotten.

The chapter on "The Effects" of Nat Turner's rebellion is, I think, the most perceptive and the most valuable in the thesis as a whole. Aptheker shows that the revolt brought historic social forces to a head. He writes: "The lid which the slavocracy had clamped down upon the press and the rostrums of debate and lecture was blown

off and a shiver slid through the South and reached the North" (p. 57).

From then on until the Civil War it was a confrontation of North and South, slave states and free states, Abolitionists and Slavocrats. "The critical period had begun," Aptheker declares. "Try as many did, there was to be no more effective evasion, no more neutrality, no more indifference—one civilization, one type of social organization was now irrevocably pitted against the other" (p. 58).

The economic basis of white chauvinism is made clear. One blatant example is given on p. 89, in a quotation from a slave-owner's letter to the Richmond *Whig* of April 13, 1832, several months after the Rebellion, which shows clearly why the Civil War had to be fought:

This one thing we wish to be understood and remembered—that the Constitution of this State, has made Tom, Dick and Harry, *property*—it has made Polly, Nancy, and Molly, *property*; and be that property an evil, a curse, or whatnot, we intend to hold it. Property, which is considered the most valuable by the owners of it, is a nice thing: and for the right thereto, to be called in question by an unphilosophical set of political mountebanks, under the influence of supernatural agency or deceit, is insufferable.

Although this Master's Thesis was written thirty years ago, the chapter on "Effects" concludes

with a sentence which might come today from a declaration by advocates of "Black Power": "Nat Turner was one who refused to 'be reasonable,' and it is believed that as the present-day stirrings of the American Negro people grow, the significance of the Turner Revolt as a tradition of progressive struggle will increase" (p. 107).

At the time this Thesis was written, it was not the fashion among historians to deal with the

Negro question in the manner shown here. Indeed, a reader is almost certain to feel surprise at the maturity and originality of thinking displayed by this youth. The explanation seems to be—as was the fact—that already at that time the young Aptheker knew his Marx. It was Marxism that guided his mind and his pen, and enabled him to interpret a neglected but vital historical event with understanding and insight.

AMONG THE BOOKS RECEIVED IN AUGUST

Morroe, *Equality by Statute: The Revolution in Civil Rights*, Doubleday, N. Y., \$5.95.

Ethel Shapiro Bertolini, *And My Heart Was at Home*, DeRusha Lithography, Los Angeles, \$5.00.

Maurice Dobb, *Capitalism and Planning*, International Publishers, N. Y., \$5.95.

Curt Gentry, *Frame-Up*, W. W. Norton, N. Y., \$7.50.

Ivor Montagu, *Germany's New Nazis*, Panther Books, Ltd., London, 5s.

Arthur Niederhoffer, *Behind the Shield*, Doubleday, N. Y., \$5.95.

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Since the opening of our drive for \$5,000 in contributions and subscriptions, we have received \$1,900 in cash and \$350 in subscriptions, making a total of \$2,250 to date. This is a gratifying response so far, but there is still a long way to go. Meanwhile costs keep rising, and now there is the ominous prospect of a very substantial increase in mailing costs. In other words, the balance of the \$5,000 is more urgently needed than ever. So if you have not yet given, we ask you to send us your contribution now. If you have, perhaps you can get a friend to contribute. Or perhaps you can secure one or more subscriptions. May we hear from you?



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We have received a considerable number of replies to our questionnaire on proposed changes in the magazine. We have found them very helpful. Although there is, as one might expect, a great diversity of opinions, there is also a remarkable amount of agreement on key questions. We hope before long to initiate certain changes in the cover and some other aspects of the magazine's makeup.

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