

political affairs

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OF THE GREAT
OCTOBER
REVOLUTION**

LENIN AND TWENTIETH CENTURY POLITICS

V. V. Zagladin

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From the Editors to You . . .

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To these arguments presented by others, let us add: we have proof what a welcome gift it is! Most who become acquainted to the magazine this way go on to renew, and many even begin to give it to *their* friends. It is also, needless to say, a welcome boost to our finances and circulation. So please fill out the attached card or the coupon on the back cover and return to us at once.

* * * *

A special thanks to those who contributed since our last issue was published: L. and B. Diskin, \$5; Wm. Zalesak, \$100; Dr. T. Flordie, \$20; E. White, \$32; B. Pellegrino, \$5; D. Donati, \$25; R. Shoiket, \$5; I. Weissman, \$25; in memory of Sam Gventer, \$25; K. Jones, \$5.

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The October Revolution and the Cause of Peace

EDITORIAL COMMENT

The Soviet Revolution, November 7, 1917, marked the beginning of the modern epoch of history. It is an event whose world-shattering impact was sensed immediately—from the plutocrats occupying the pinnacles of government and economic power in Washington, Paris, London and Berlin, to the millions of workers in thousands of grimy factories, to weary soldiers in the muddy battlefields amidst the unimaginable carnage of the world war which capitalism had spewed forth. The October Revolution carried the message that things would never be the same. For the first time, the disinherited laboring people, the workers and peasants, took the ordering of their destiny into their own hands.

With audacity and vision, and at the expense of sacrifice whose full extent can never be known, the peoples who made that revolution began to form—in molded steel and printed books and cultivated earth—the society which before mankind could only dream of, free of exploitation and tyranny and national oppression. And, not least, they strove to extricate themselves—and all nations—from the scourge of war.

With the formation of a state not based on the drive of an exploiting class to extend its reach over other peoples, peace was transformed from the hope of visionaries into a real possibility. But the realization of that possibility has proven more prolonged, difficult and costly, in both human and material terms, than could have been imagined.

The Second World War, unleashed by fascism, the most aggressive spearhead of imperialism, cost tens of millions of casualties and hundreds of billions of dollars. The main brunt of the defeat of the fascist axis fell to the Soviet Union. Devastating as it was, this conflict was only a pale foreshadowing of what a world conflict would mean today:

- the first, and to date only, use of an atomic weapon against a civilian population by the United States demonstrated that any future nuclear conflict would be a war of complete annihilation of entire peoples.

- the truly global character of the conflict showed that war has the ominous potentiality of engulfing all continents, all nations.

In our time, the main danger of war emanates from the feverish preparation of the United States and its NATO allies for a war against the socialist countries. These war preparations have reached unheard of proportions: there now exist weapons equivalent to 15 tons of TNT for every man, woman and child in the world; NATO has over 5 million men under arms, organized in 70 divisions and with more than 3,000 planes, the U.S. has 8,000 nuclear warheads and 3,000 delivery vehicles *in Western Europe alone*.

Like a cancer, the military economy devours available labor, scientific and material resources, while cities go to ruin, and education, health and other services are gradually starved. This year the U.S. war budget will exceed its previous World War II peak. Documentation could be extended almost indefinitely, but his list suffices to show the appalling scale of the war danger which looms.

Therefore, the front line in the struggle for peace today is the effort to compel imperialism to accept, in practice, peaceful coexistence with socialism; to extend detente to the military sphere; to restrict and reverse the arms race; to ratify SALT II. *This is the acid test*. The wholly-manufactured "Soviet troops in Cuba" minicrisis and the hullabaloo about alleged "Soviet military superiority" are intended to either defeat SALT II or to undermine its significance by accompanying it with an escalation of strategic arms in Europe, by the MX missile, by the Trident submarine, etc.

The offer made by Leonid Brezhnev on Oct. 15 to unilaterally reduce Soviet troops and missiles in Central Europe, to be followed by negotiations on mutual reductions in NATO and Warsaw Pact force levels, is once again a forcetful argument in favor of ratifying SALT II and moving forward toward further and more sweeping agreements.

CPUSA Convention—A Signal Event

ARNOLD BECCHETTI

“This has been the greatest convention in our Party’s history,” declared National Chairman Henry Winston in his summary of the 22nd Convention of the Communist Party of the United States of America, held in Detroit, August 23-26, 1979.

These words expressed the view of the overwhelming majority of the participants, including those who have been in our Party and its leadership from its founding in September 1919.

Further on Winston characterized the main political report to the convention of General Secretary Gus Hall as “most profound,” as “the finest report ever given to a convention” of the CPUSA. Again, he expressed the views of the participants in the convention.

Because of illness, Gus Hall was not physically present in Detroit. However, not only was the 22nd Convention guided by his profound and comprehensive report, but he was also with the convention in spirit, and his thoughts and spirit permeated Cobo Hall during those four historic days.

The 22nd National Convention was indeed an important event in the life of our country. This fact is underscored by the way the mass media, especially in Detroit, reported the convention. It was in the press, on radio and TV in a major way every day. Significant numbers of non-Communist leaders and activists from labor, the peace movement, the national liberation movement and other mass movements were present as guests. Many of the delegates were mass leaders in their own right, and the overwhelming majority had significant mass ties and influence. But the real measure of its importance will become clearer as its impact unfolds in the coming period.

This convention not only analyzed and summarized the developments, activities and work of the period in which we are living, it also projected a winning line of mass struggle for the next four years.

One of the achievements of signal importance

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registered in Detroit was the fact that, for the first time in our 60 year history, the ruling class of our country was forced—due to the favorably changing balance of forces in the world and at home, and by the persistent struggles here and abroad—to admit some 47 fraternal delegates from Communist and Workers’ Parties and national liberation movements from throughout the world. (In the past only our Puerto Rican and Canadian comrades could attend our conventions.) In addition, greetings were received from more than 70 parties and movements.

Heading the list of those fraternal delegates in attendance were the representatives of the great Party of Lenin, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Notable also was the presence of representatives of the Communist Party of Cuba, and those from the Communist and Workers’ Parties of most of the socialist countries, as well as the delegations from throughout the rest of the world, including representatives from the African National Congress and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

All fraternal delegations present gave greetings to the convention; most did so in the special Saturday evening International Night session, where nearly 3,000 joyous, clapping, foot-stomping guests joined delegates in expressing their pleasure at this living demonstration of proletarian internationalism. A book containing the greetings of all who attended the 22nd Convention, as well as those greetings which were sent, will soon be published.

The 22nd Convention displayed not only great enthusiasm, confidence, hard work, unity, commitment and joy, but it was also marked by a high level of maturity and discipline, the stamp of increasingly seasoned fighters in the working-class and general anti-monopoly movement who are guided by Marxism-Leninism in their work.

There were some 400 delegates and alternates, 47 fraternal delegates from 30 parties and national liberation movements and over 300 guests. Sixty per cent of the delegates and alternates were men and 40 per cent were women. Over 60 per cent were 40

years of age or under, and 53 per cent had been in the Party 10 years or less. Over 24 per cent were Black, 4 per cent Chicano, 2 per cent Puerto Rican and others of Latin American background, 2 per cent Native American Indian, and 1 per cent Asian-Pacific peoples, for a total of over 1/3, from the racially and nationally oppressed peoples of our country. Over 26 per cent were industrial workers, and some 45 per cent were trade unionists.

The Convention accomplished an enormous amount of work in 3½ days, and the central focus during that time was the main political report of Gus Hall, which was read to the convention by Mike Zagarell. The deep-going analysis and brilliant projections of the tasks ahead were underscored and elaborated in the other reports, in the discussion, the panels and in the commissions. Significantly the main political report reaffirms and updates the fundamental proposition of Marxist-Leninist science. The report states,

The class struggle is the controlling phenomenon of capitalist society. It determines the nature of all processes. Any attempt to bypass, to forget, to ignore this leads to floundering and going around in circles as if in the woods without a compass.

We must reject any and all attempts to replace or equate the centrality of the class struggle and the working class with any other movement, including the method of speaking about other movements while remaining silent about the relationship to the working class.

We must even reject all ideas that agree with the role of the working class in the period ahead, but do not see it now.

This fundamental concept permeates the whole report and examines the developments occurring within the class and its character. The general shift from the Right towards the Center and the Left which is taking place in the labor movement is also traced within the report. It continues, "Since our convention in Chicago [in 1975—*Ed.*], possibly the most important development on the working-class grass-roots level is the significant growth of a good healthy Left sector. . . we need to give much greater attention to their development."

The report poses the importance of the explosive

growth of the Center forces in labor, which is defined as "breaking with and moving away from the worst features of class collaboration." The importance of probing for the development of organized forms for both the Left and for Left-Center unity, especially at the grass roots, is developed. These are concepts of struggle which have meaning "only within the context of moving workers, leading workers in struggle."

The increased possibilities opened up by the Weber decision in the fight for affirmative action with quotas and enforcement provisions are pinpointed. In struggle it is necessary to master "the art of fighting racism in concrete situations where the self interests of the class and the struggle against racism are complementary and interrelated."

Hall's report also deals with the 1980 election campaign. Two tendencies exist. Monopoly capital is pushing for "an even more direct grip on the government apparatus on all levels." Via their corporate and trade association Political Action Committees they use hundreds of millions of dollars as part of this effort, giving money especially "to incumbents, simply buying access to politicians who as often as not are moderate to liberal Democrats."

They move to defeat those they can't fully bend to their aims, and to close off still more the possibility of independent politics, trying to keep their two-party system as the only possibility before the people.

Nonetheless, fueled by objective developments, the tendency toward independent political action grows, though as yet scattered and unorganized, shying "away from the voting booth." Senator Kennedy's candidacy serves to divert this tendency back into the two-party rut.

"The best path is that of building the house of political independence." This tendency exists and is growing in labor, the Afro-American community, and among sections of the middle class and intellectuals.

The Communist Party, continuing its historic position, needs to step up its activity to work to unify these forces. We need to put forward the approach of serious, winning campaigns based on Left unity and Left-Center unity, especially around working-class candidates.

Our 1980 presidential campaign will help stimu-

late such movements, and point the way to the anti-monopoly coalition and the path to socialism. Our aim is to get on the ballot in 30 states. We must immediately take up the fight for our ballot rights, and to join with all those concerned with the need of keeping open the avenue for independent political action. The fight against the special harassment and laws against the Communist Party is "an essential ingredient of the ongoing struggle to preserve and extend the democratic liberties of all."

Other developments within labor which the report examines include the growing fight for Salt II and the tendency toward independent political action. The growing importance of the working class, and especially its basic industrial core, in its own struggles and in the general democratic and anti-monopoly struggles is unfolded in the context of a deep-going analysis of the worsening economic crisis, the sharpening of the general crisis by the intertwining of the economic and energy crises and the further positive shifts in the world balance of forces.

All of this is giving rise to a qualitatively new situation, one in which the projections of our Party have become majority sentiments and currents which bubble up into coalitions. But these do not yet have roots, and the need for the Party and its role have grown immensely. It is needed to help give organized forms, especially at the grass roots level, to these majority sentiments for Salt II and a cut in the military budget, against racism, for jobs and affirmative action, etc. This calls for seeing the unity of the task of helping to root and build organized forms of anti-state monopoly capital struggle and building the Party and its press.

The objective need for building a mass Communist Party is spelled out in the report because of the "enthusiastic response to our policies and to our ideas. We have never had greater influence." Therefore the moment has arrived for a mass Communist Party in our land.

To do this requires attention to improving the functioning of our Party clubs around the task of "organizing and giving leadership to grass roots formations. A grass roots base is necessary for all mass movements." Leading bodies need to see the clubs as the Party and shape their work based on the tasks of the club. Well functioning clubs related

to mass movements are basic to building a mass Party, as is the fight for a really massive circulation of our press.

The building of a mass Communist Party, so necessary for our class and its leading role in building the anti-state monopoly capitalist coalition, is now on the agenda. It is the only way we can fulfill our duty to our class, and the only way our class, which stands at the hub of all developments, can fulfill its role.

The Convention received the draft of a new Party program from the outgoing Central Committee. It was referred to the 22nd Convention's Central Committee, with instructions to prepare it for discussion by the Party membership. Based on this discussion, a new Party Program will be finalized.

The report on organization, though not delivered in order to save time to help assure maximum time for discussion on the main report, was reproduced and distributed to the delegates and incorporated into the convention record.

National Chairman Henry Winston also addressed the convention, focusing on the call for a crusade to fight for the ratification of the Salt II treaty by the Senate. The timeliness of Winston's remarks is shown by the events which have occurred since it was delivered. The ultra-Right, military-industrial complex has gone on a rampage to try to sabotage, distort and destroy the Salt II treaty and its meaning and importance for the people of the USA. Therefore the development of a crusade for Salt II ratification must be unfolded fully and rapidly. Success in this struggle is essential not only as the key element in the fight for peace, detente and disarmament. It is also a vital element and a basic underpinning to all struggles of our class and our people for jobs, equality and democracy.

One of the highlights of the convention was the adoption of the first basically new resolution on the struggle for Afro-American equality in some two decades. It was presented to the convention in a profound report by Dr. James E. Jackson, National Education Director, CPUSA. It is a resolution which deepens and updates the question, placing it in its relationship to other key questions of struggle today. The resolution spells out the intertwining of the class and national questions, starting from the Leninist propositions concerning the capitalist

ruling-class approach of oppression and inequality among nations, of national bickering and isolating nationalism, and the struggle of class conscious workers for full democracy and equality, with no privilege for any nation or language, in short, for "a world of the unity of the working people of all nations."

The resolution and Dr. Jackson's report point to the fact that the working-class connection is the key to victory in the fight for equality of Black Americans and all other racially and nationally oppressed peoples, while at the same time pointing to the indispensability of the working-class fight against racism as essential to its own struggle for social emancipation. It also places the proposition that the fight against the racist oppression of Afro-Americans is central to the fight against *all* racial and national oppression, and argues against any approach of national competitiveness among the oppressed people of our country.

Another advance on the front of clarifying the national question in our country was made in the resolution on the Native American question. There are more than 115 Native American peoples and nationalities with a total population of one million. The genocidal onslaught, past and present, by U.S. state monopoly capitalism is shown, including the continuing land grab by the monopolies in order to take for their own profits the rich resources which have been discovered on Native American lands. The resolution examines the class question and points the large working class component, as well as the heroic fight-back movements of these nationally oppressed peoples.

The Convention adopted the main political resolution, the new resolution on the struggle for Afro-American equality, a resolution on the Native American Indians, and a number of other resolutions on such questions as the Asian-Pacific peoples, the rights of immigrant workers, youth rights, nuclear energy and on national health legislation.

The Convention proceedings also included five panel discussions, centered on the questions of building the working class and anti-monopoly movements, including building the Party clubs and press building as integral to this task. The panels were on: 1) shop struggles; 2) community struggles; 3) political action and 1980; 4) Salt II ratification,

detente and solidarity with anti-imperialist movements; and 5) the Afro-American community. All panels reported back to the plenary session.

In addition, there were ten commissions which provided for exchanges on the following areas: 1) women; 2) youth; 3) senior citizens; 4) the academic community; 5) cultural work; 6) the Puerto Rican community; 7) the Chicano community; 8) farm struggles; 9) housing and utilities; and 10) taxes and health.

* * *

Immediately following the close of the 22nd convention, was the great People Before Profits mass rally at Cobo Hall, where the first report to the public was given on the convention. It was the largest rally ever held by our Party in Detroit. The audience, estimated at 8,000, was multiracial, youthful and militant. It also included a contingent of auto workers from the Dodge Main auto plant, which is threatened by closure by the Chrysler Corporation.

Gus Hall's fiery speech, read by George Meyers, chairman of the Party's Labor and Farm Department, demanded that Chrysler keep its plants open; declared that people's political power has become a historic necessity; and called for a massive movement of people's committees of action and control around a program that would unite workers and nationally oppressed peoples with women, youth and other sectors of the population.

The crowd was brought to its feet several times by the militant speeches of Angela Davis, co-chairman of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression and James Steele, national chairman of the Young Workers Liberation League. Song and music intermittently highlighted the program with performances given by Toccata, a disco rock band from Detroit, blues singer Bobo Jenkins and the Big Star Band, vocalist Gwen Sumpter, Roy Brown and Los Aires Bucaneros, the song trio Rosy's Bar & Grill and vocalist Beatrice Rippy.

Greetings were also given to the rally by Marjorie Boehm, the U.S. President of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Fernando Cuevas, a leader of the Ohio Farm Labor Organizing Committee and a large number of farm workers who marched *en masse* into the hall, as well

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Charting the Path to Equality

THOMAS DENNIS

The 22nd Convention of the Communist Party was historic in many ways. The wealth of ideological content in the main report of Gus Hall, the main resolutions that came before the convention, the contributions of the delegates who spoke and the panel reports all reached a new high.

One profound contribution was the report of Dr. James E. Jackson on the nationality question. This report and the resolution adopted by the convention on the struggle for Afro-American liberation make a lasting contribution toward greater clarity on the meaning of, and the necessity for, an accelerated struggle for full equality for Afro-American people, and to a greater understanding of the nationality question generally.

This Resolution, Dr. Jackson's report and the sections on Afro-American liberation and on racial and national oppression of the Main Report, constitute three parts of a single whole that chart the course for the freedom struggle for the decade of the 80s.

The decisions of this convention placed the Party firmly on the path of the correct application of Marxist-Leninist principles in finding solutions to the complexities of the nationality question in our country. Dr. Jackson declared, "to see a way out for the solution of the nationality question, no matter how complex it is, one must examine the class aspect and approach it from the standpoint of the harmony of interests between the working class in its struggle for class emancipation and the oppressed nationalities in their struggle for freedom."

This understanding is the starting point and foundation for a correct approach in the struggle—both short and long range—for solutions to every aspect of the nationality question. This is especially true in our country because the oppressed nationalities are, in their great majority, an integral part of our multinational, multiracial working class. It is not "only" a question of indispensable allies. It goes also to the even more elemental question of working

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class unity, without which final victory is impossible.

The key aspect of the nationality question in this country is this *mutual* harmony of interest between the two struggles: the working class and the nationally oppressed have a common enemy who deprives both of more and more elementary human needs and rights. The issues and programs that the nationally oppressed are fighting for speak to the needs of white workers also. There is nothing that the working class needs and fights for, or that the nationally oppressed need and fight for, that can not be won through a united struggle. Class unity, that indispensable element for victory, can not be achieved without a joint battle for equality.

Dr. Jackson makes the point that "There is no contradiction between the aspiration and struggle for nationality freedom from all manner of discrimination and unfolding the revolutionary energies of the working class." And further, "there is no dichotomy between the struggle for the solution of the nationality question and the advance of the working class."

Lenin put it this way: "Policy on the national and colonial question should rest primarily on the closer union of the proletarian and working masses of all nations and countries for a joint revolutionary struggle to overthrow the landowners and the bourgeoisie. . . . This union alone will guarantee victory over capitalism, without which the abolition of national oppression and inequality is impossible."

Therefore it is a matter not of tactics but of basic principle for all Communists and progressives, for all on the side of democracy, especially those who are white and who work, to fight against any manifestations of oppression and racism against Afro-American people in the first place, as well as other oppressed peoples. It is a question of tactics how to fight most effectively, how to marshal the most persuasive arguments and to best conduct the struggle. It is not a matter of tactics whether to enter the fight. Hesitation or debate about this is chauvinism, the influence of and capitulation to racism.

Therefore, it is an inescapable revolutionary obli-

gation and a historic necessity to tear down artificial barriers between peoples. This is in harmony with, is indispensable to, and strengthens the fighting capacity of the whole working class for an end to monopoly domination. For revolutionaries in this country, the fight for affirmative action, for real equality and against all expressions and acts of inequality must be a matter of highest principle if solidarity and unity of the class is to be achieved.

Lenin emphasized on more than one occasion that a member of an oppressor nation should not tolerate the least inequality, expression of racism or national chauvinism toward any oppressed nationality.

In *Critical Remarks on the National Question*, Lenin wrote, "In one way or another, by one's attitude or by concession, it is necessary to compensate . . . for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and insults which the government of the 'dominant' nation subjected them to in the past."

Further, "nothing holds up the development and the strengthening of the proletarian class solidarity so much as national injustice; 'offended' nationals are not sensitive to anything so much as to the feeling of inequality and the violation of this equality, if only through negligence or jest, the violation of that equality by their proletarian comrades. That is why in this case it is better even to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency towards the national minorities. That is why, in this case, the fundamental interests of proletarian solidarity, and consequently of the proletarian class struggle, requires that we never adopt a formal attitude to the national question, but always take into account the specific attitude of the proletarian of the oppressed nation towards the oppressor nation."

The Afro-American Resolution, Dr. Jackson's report and the Main Report of Gus Hall all make crystal clear that the struggle against the oppression of the Afro-American people is central to any progress; it is fundamental to the solution of the nationality question in the United States. It is fundamental to the unity of the whole working class, for the victory and building of socialism in this country.

The Resolution on the Struggle for Afro-American Liberation presents the historical and the objective economic, political and social facts that

lay the basis for the conclusion that "U.S. Black liberation is a vital link in a common chain. The liberation cause of Black Americans is inherent in and crucial to the struggle for the democratic realization of the U.S. nation, to peace and social progress, to the democratic, national liberation and socialist goals of the world revolutionary process."

The role of racism was elaborated in the report on the nationality question this way: "The struggle for the solution of the nationality question in the United States is an integral aspect of the struggle for the triumph of the working class over imperialism and the reign of monopolies. The strategic ally of the working class in the United States is, in the first instance, the extraordinarily oppressed, largely working-class in class composition, Black Americans. The Afro-American people in the sphere of the nationality question can be likened to the trunk of the racist tree. The Black Americans can be compared to the trunk and the trunk gives rise to the many branches that in our country are a complex of oppressed nationalities. And if we would liberate the branches from the spell of racism one must fell the trunk of the tree. . . . Therefore, it is not a diversion from the solution of a particular nationality question . . . to address . . . the prime question of the oppression of national peoples in the United States, that of the Black question."

Comrade Hall dealt with the question in this way in his brilliant report to the convention: "First, we should be clear that the struggle against national oppression and racism is of necessity an integral feature of every struggle." Further, "The main root and the sharpest expression of racial and national oppression in the United States is that which is directed against Afro-Americans. All other forms and systems of racial and national oppression are related to and are fed by the racism directed against Black Americans. Any attempt to equate or to substitute this concept with another is a misrepresentation of reality and becomes a divisive concept. . . . When racism against Black Americans abates, the national oppression and chauvinism against all other oppressed peoples will also abate."

Thus it is clear that an accelerated, aggressive and militant fight for full affirmative action programs, for jobs, to narrow the economic gap between white

and Black incomes and for a vast increase in Afro-American political representation at all levels of government, appointive and elective, as well as representation in all leadership levels of the trade union movement, stand at the very top of the struggle agenda of the working class and all who are fighting the power of monopoly capital in this country.

The times and circumstances call for a new drive for full equality. This must be seen as largely in the self interest of white working people. Ways must be found to convince white workers that the crumbs they may occasionally get from racism are a great sacrifice and cost to them—many times more than what the crumbs are worth. They must be shown, from their daily experience, that racism is no bargain, that it is a costly “luxury” they can ill afford, that united struggle side by side with their Black brothers and sisters will get them much more.

White, as well as Black, working people pay the costs of racism in urban blight, especially in cities and areas of concentrated Afro-American, Puerto Rican and Chicano populations, in the destruction of quality public education under racist slogans. Among these are “no busing,” “save neighborhood schools,” and one of the most racist of all, the concept that “Black English” is the obstacle to learning in an integrated school situation. The cost of non-resistance to racism includes acceptance of cuts in government services, inadequate health care, housing priced out of the reach of working people. The new housing market is closed to 85 per cent of the families. And those who can afford these new

houses, usually built as far as possible from Afro-Americans, have to pay extra for this “privilege,” extra which means extra profits for the bankers and realtors.

Such is the heavy surcharge racism assesses on white working people. Monopoly and the capitalist class not only extract super profits from the exploitation and rip-off of Afro-Americans, they also extract an extra level of profit when white people are kept out of the struggle against monopoly or whose clout is seriously weakened by racism keeping them from joint struggle against the common enemy.

No real improvement for whites or for Afro-Americans is possible without unity. The enemy is powerful. Only the united strength of all the oppressed and the working class will have the power to defeat this enemy.

Another important feature of the national question in the United States that is developed in the Afro-American Resolution is that, “The national question, the cause of national liberation, is a major aspect, a strategic component of the world revolutionary process.”

The struggle of the world’s working people for a better life and against oppression and exploitation is against the common enemy of the Afro-American people and of all other oppressed nationalities in the world—U.S. state-monopoly capitalism, U.S. imperialism, the godfather of world reaction. They are different fronts in the total world revolutionary process and in the cause of socialism.

Lenin and Twentieth Century Politics

V. V. ZAGLADIN

The contribution of Lenin and Leninism in the development of political thought in our epoch is a vast, vast subject. Because the creative activities of Lenin occurred during an extremely complex and crucial period, a period full of sharp turns and fractures in social development, they embraced a huge sum of the most different problems, including the most complicated ones. The solutions put forward by him proved, in the overwhelming majority of cases, to be realistic in the sense, first and foremost, that they could be implemented into political reality; that they were implemented into the achievements of peoples in many countries, into the practical achievements of millions of people on various continents.

Therefore it is not surprising that for many social forces and political organizations, groups, currents, and first of all for the revolutionary wing of the working-class movement, the relation to Lenin's ideas and his cause has become an important criterion of political consciousness, an indicator of their devotion to the cause of social progress, of their readiness to actively fight for the true interests of mankind.

At the same time, it is common knowledge that a number of ideas put forward by Lenin caused and continue to cause heated discussion. One can say without exaggeration that at present the debates about Lenin's creative activities, about Leninism, have become even more lively than at any time in the past. In our opinion this fact is important proof of the viability of Lenin's ideas, of their truly unfading power.

Clearly it is much easier for Communists, the supporters of Lenin's ideas and actions, to take part in such debates today than 50 or 60 years ago: today his ideas, his cause have materialized in tangible, quite convincing achievements of world socialism, of social and national liberation movements. Without, of course, attempting to undertake exhaustive development of arguments testifying to the significance of Lenin's creative political activity as a

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whole, let us try to state a number of considerations concerning the main, most important points characteristic of Lenin's contribution, of the contribution of Leninism, to the development of political thought in our century.

I

Before speaking about the contribution of Lenin himself to modern political thought, one should dwell upon a question more general in character, namely the question of the *historical significance of the very fact of the emergence of Leninism* as the continuation and creative development of Marxism.

Let us recollect that the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries are marked by the development of competitive capitalism into monopolistic capitalism—imperialism. There had been accumulating prerequisites—both objective and subjective—for the revolutionary overcoming of the old system. In order to use these prerequisites properly a qualitative leap forward was needed in the development of revolutionary theory and practice, in methods and forms of revolutionary action of the working class.

And it was exactly during that period when those who headed the leading social-democratic parties of the West to all intents and purposes abandoned revolutionary Marxism and stepped on the path of denying its functional tenets. Eduard Bernstein, who undertook the role of being the first "overthrower" of Marxism, began at the end of the 1890s denying the necessity or even desirability of socialist revolution.

In new features of capitalism's development—the emergence of joint-stock companies, cartels and trusts—Bernstein (as opposed to Engels, who considered these features as convincing proof of the correctness of Marx' theory about the role played by the concentration of production during the process of its socialization and, consequently, the preparation of the prerequisites of socialism) saw the evidence... of capitalism changing its nature, overcoming by it the anarchy of production, the

emergence of possibilities for “partial implementation of socialism inside the framework of the existing bourgeois society.” (See *International Labor Movement; Questions of Theory and Practice*, 1976, Vol. 2, p. 310.)

Having acquainted himself with Bernstein’s views, Lenin stated: “It is unbelievably weak theoretically—more repetition of someone else’s ideas. There are phrases about criticism but no attempt at serious, independent criticism. In effect it is... unbounded opportunism and possibilism...” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 37, p. 281.)

In another place Lenin characterized Bernsteinism as an attempt “to narrow the theory of Marxism, to convert the revolutionary workers’ party into a reformist party.” (*Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 170.)

In other words, leaders of the social-democratic movement of the end of the nineteenth century such as Bernstein and his followers not only stopped developing the great revolutionary heritage left to the working class by Marx and Engels—as was required by the interests of the proletarian class struggle at its new stage—but they also began distorting and later destroying this heritage. The working-class movement gradually lost through their actions an important source of its strength—links with revolutionary theory.

In practice it meant ideologically disarming the working class in the face of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Social-democratic leaders of Bernstein’s type, Lenin wrote, “have not taught the proletariat any new methods of struggle; they have only retreated...preaching to the proletariat, not the theory of struggle, but the theory of concession—concession to the most vicious enemies of the proletariat, the governments and the bourgeois parties who never tire of seeking new means of baiting the socialists.” (*CW*, Vol. 4, p. 170.)

At the end of the nineteenth century reformism had gradually won one after the other West-European social-democratic parties; gradually, but increasingly evidently it was joining in their political line nationalism and chauvinism. The highest expression of this betrayal was, in the end, the support by the leaders of social-democratic parties of the West of “their own” imperialist governments during the First World War. This step turned out to be the real downfall of the Second International, its

ignominious end.

One should remember that later, after the October Revolution, after the emergence of Communist Parties and the Comintern, the Right-wing leaders of the socialist-democratic movement many a time tried to put on Marxists-Leninists the blame for the split in the labor movement. In reality such accusations are false through and through. It was the leaders of the opportunists who at the end of the nineteenth century declared war against revolutionary Marxism and the forces of the working class and thereby commenced a split in the labor movement, and set up a revisionist, reformist current.

The expectations of the opportunists were, of course, much wider: they attempted to strangle revolutionary Marxism, the revolutionary labor movement as such. If they had managed to implement this, Western Europe would have become the preserve of “class peace.” The labor movement, “tamed” to accept compromises with the bourgeoisie in the framework of the notorious “market economy” and integrated into the system of the monopolies’ domination under the pseudonym “pure democracy” and “free play of parliamentary forces,” would have lost any ability to achieve anything more significant than the protection of their economic needs and minimal social rights. The question of the revolutionary transformation of society and the liquidation of the system of class oppression would have been removed from the agenda for a long time to come.

Of course sometime, somewhere, in some country, there would inevitably have taken place another shift. There would have emerged there again a revolutionary workers’ party which would have taken Marxism as its weapon. But it is, of course, very difficult to say when and where it would have happened.

But this plot of opportunism, supported in all possible ways by the bourgeoisie, failed. It was frustrated, and the decisive role in this was played by Lenin, by Leninism.

It goes without saying that in the social-democratic parties of the West there also existed an opposition to the Right wing. In a number of causes this opposition was quite active.

At the border of the two centuries, at the border of the two historic epochs, the importance of a

political leader in the development of the labor movement was demonstrated with particular force. But it was the importance of a leader who was not an anarchistic individual set off against the current of life, and who was not an enlightened dictator, who having mastered the laws of development, would not try to use these laws as a racehorse called upon to bring him to the height of personal glory. At that period there became prominent the role of a political leader who—having creatively realized the expediency of the movement of history—was capable of putting himself wholly at the service of this expediency—the expediency of social progress. There is no doubt that the most outstanding of political leaders of not only the labor movement but on a broader scale—of leaders of human society at that period—was Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.

Lenin and his associates came forward decisively against revisionism, reformism and opportunism—both in Russia and on the international arena. Theirs was not only a verbal protest; far from it, there was a deep theoretical development of problems in close connection with the practice of revolutionary struggle. Lenin's arguments in support of Marxism were accompanied by tireless organizational work inside the country to create a revolutionary, truly Marxist party, capable of coping with the demands of the approaching revolutionary epoch; it was also accompanied by work on the international arena in support of revolutionary Marxism and its followers, internationalists.

The creation of a revolutionary workers' party of a new type by Lenin was the decisive practical proof of the fact that *the revolutionary Marxist line in the world labor movement was saved*. The emergence of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party and later of Communist Parties in other countries (which happened in the period after the October Revolution) has become, in reality, the rebirth of a truly revolutionary labor movement, the movement that placed itself at the head of the struggle for radical social transformation of the life of mankind.

II

While studying the question of the place of Lenin in history, many Western researchers attempt to separate, to divorce his creative activities from Marx' activities. It is stated quite often that while

Karl Marx devoted his attention to the theoretical aspects of the problem of social development, Lenin was first of all a *practical leader*. Correspondingly it is emphasized that if Marx considered the *objective* prerequisites and factors of struggle for socialism as having the decisive importance, Lenin allegedly gave preference to the *subjective* factor—the role played by classes, parties and first and foremost the revolutionary party of the proletariat.

In these statements, often expressed very categorically, the truth and its opposite are connected in accordance with the principle "a spoonful of truth in a barrel of untruth." It is necessary to touch upon this problem, at least in general, because we speak here, among other things, about the relative place of theory and politics in Lenin's creative activities.

Yes, it is true that Marx devoted a great deal of attention to the theoretical substantiation of revolutionary struggle for socialism, to the analysis of the objective prerequisites and factors of this struggle. And it happened, naturally, not only by force of personal qualities and inclinations, but first of all by force of the features of that historic epoch during which Marx lived and worked.

The objective prerequisites and factors of the struggle for socialism, which were the subject of the debate, were far from being ripe (this fact was often mentioned by Marx himself as well as by Engels). Socialist revolution, therefore, could not be implemented. But it was approaching, and it was necessary to prepare the working class for it. At that time the most important parts of this preparation were, understandably, the development of the theoretical aspects of the problem, *theoretical justification* of the necessity of socialism; the proof of the historical inevitability of elevating society to this step of its development; and clearing up general conditions for the implementation of this process. These were the *greatest scientific discoveries* of Marx and Engels, a veritable revolution in the development of social sciences achieved by them.

But can one say that Karl Marx was a kind of pure theoretician? A simple acquaintance with his biography easily demonstrates the groundlessness of such an assumption. Practical revolutionary activities took a significant place in his life—suffice it

to point out that it was he, together with Engels, who was the founder and the leader of the first two revolutionary organizations, two revolutionary political parties, one can say, of the proletariat—The Communist League and the International Workingmen's Association. One can also mention in this connection the direct (and very active) participation of the founders of Marxism in the 1848-1849 revolutions, and in the organization of an international campaign in support of the Paris Commune, etc.

Thus we have the *organic unity* of scientific-theoretical and revolutionary-practical work, the study of objective prerequisites of the struggle for socialism and the closest attention to the subjective factor of this struggle—to the working class, its political party. This was the actual content of the life and activities of Marx. And precisely the same was the content of the life and activities of Lenin.

Of course it would be naive to deny that there were differences between the creative activities of Marx and Lenin. There were differences, but they were determined by the fact that the two great revolutionaries—both in science and in politics—lived and worked in different historical epochs.

To Lenin's share it fell to live and work, as was already mentioned, during the epoch of transition from capitalism of free competition to monopoly capitalism, when the question of socialism as a theoretical question had become a burning practical issue, when the revolutionary, socialist transformation of society had become a topical question for the proletarians of Russia, and later for the proletarians of other countries.

Therefore it was only natural that Lenin had to devote his attention to the preparation of the solution, and later to the solution itself of this question. Lenin became the founder and the leader of the first modern revolutionary party of the working class, which resolutely set course towards the implementation of socialist revolution; he was the organizer and the leader of this revolution, the head of the government of the first socialist state in history. That is why he is often referred to as predominantly a practical leader, a political leader and not a theoretician—and on this basis some oppose him to Marx.

But is such characterization just and is this con-

trapolation correct? Suffice it—as in the case of Marx—to read with attention Lenin's biography, his works, in order to realize the incorrectness of both these descriptions.

In point of fact the solution of the tasks of both *preparation* and implementation of revolution demanded, as a necessary precondition, vast scientific-theoretical work, deepest studies in practically all the main spheres of social sciences. During the new epoch the simple repetition of old truths and conclusions relating to a different period—though they were one hundred per cent correct at that time—could have resulted in serious difficulties. More than that, the revolutionaries at the beginning of this century were faced with a vast number of new questions, which had never been raised before—such “simple” ones, for instance, as whether it is possible to implement a revolution in one country only? It was necessary to give a theoretical answer to these questions also—an answer correct, carefully prepared, taking into account all aspects of the problem.

Lenin's deepest scientific studies in the fields of philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism, his discoveries concerning the essence of the new epoch about to begin, of the essence and historic features of imperialism, of the character and specific features of the revolutionary process during the first decades of the twentieth century etc.—all this is acknowledged by the contemporary scientific world and not only by Marxist scientists as an outstanding contribution by V.I. Lenin to the development of fundamental problems of social sciences.

But if such a multitude of radically new theoretical problems faced Lenin during the period of preparation and implementation of revolution, imagine how many more have arisen after its victory! It would be appropriate to mention here the words of Lenin himself, “All that we knew, all that the best experts on capitalist society, the greatest minds who foresaw its development, exactly indicated to us was that transformation was historically inevitable and must proceed along a certain main line, that private ownership of the means of production was doomed by history, that it would burst, that the exploiters would inevitably be expropriated. . . We knew this when we took power for the purpose of proceeding with socialist reor-

ganization; but we could not know the forms of transformation, or the rate of development of the concrete reorganization." (*CW*, Vol. 27, p. 410.)

Immediately after the revolution Lenin, with the great energy characteristic of him, began detailed development of the problems of socialist society. And the first large theoretical question he encountered was the question of the formation and development of communist society.

Lenin substantiated the historic necessity, determined socio-political framework and specific features of the *transitional period* from capitalism to socialism—the period of revolutionary transformation of society, the replacement of capitalist private property of the main means of production by the communal ownership, the liquidation of the exploiting classes and the overcoming of social antagonisms brought about by their domination.

Theoretical and practical studies by Lenin devoted to the brief period of military communism and later, transition from the methods of "Red-Guard attack on the capital" to the methods of New Economic Policy (NEP); the idea of the NEP itself—a policy aimed at defending the revolution, saving the country from economic dislocation and hunger, at building the foundation for socialist economy, at gradually ousting and liquidating capitalist elements, and finally, the idea of the development and implementation of the unified all-state plan for the development of economy—the State plan for the Electrification of Russia (GOELRO)—the first in the world practiced—all this constitutes even today a great property of revolutionaries, of all those who for the first time set about the implementation of transition from capitalism to socialism or plan to implement it.

The contemporary conditions—both in the West and in the East—differ greatly from those in Russia. But Lenin's studies contain such a wealth of ideas and proposals concerning forms and methods of struggle for socialism, that they could provide guidance under any conditions and in any country. All the rest—the concrete ways and details of the great work of "implementing socialism"—each revolutionary party, each people must do independently.

For understandable reasons, in our day Lenin's thoughts about the natural passage of socialism, as

the first phase of communist formation, through qualitatively different stages (the construction of socialism in general and the developed, mature socialist society) are of great interest.

Of great theoretical significance (and at present of increasingly great practical significance as well) was the continuation by Lenin of the teachings of Marx and Engels concerning two phases of communist formation concerning the ways of transition from the first phase to the second.

While evaluating Lenin's gigantic work on the study of the regularities in the development of socialism, one should always remember, L.I. Brezhnev emphasized, "how great should be the depth of his mind, how wide should be the outlook and how brave his thought in order to retain the clarity of orientation in the havoc and confusion of Russia, caused by war and revolution, in the complex interlacing of socio-political trends, political forces, contradictory views and sentiments, to discover and present in theoretically irreproachable form the main fundamental directions of movement towards socialism." (L.I. Brezhnev, *By Leninist Course*, Vol. 2, p. 565.)

Lenin did all this. Though it is only natural that many elements, in the course of the construction of the new society developed by him in the 1920s, were shaped by the requirements of the concrete situation at that time. Lenin's works of that period contain principles of socialist economics and politics that retain their significance at present as well.

If we speak about economics, among them one could list, for instance, the idea of combining centralized planning with the development of working people's initiative; of commodity and money relations; material stimuli and labor; joining the interests of each separate worker. If we speak about politics, among Lenin's principles of socialism which retain their significance one should list the idea of the necessity of implementing "full democracy" (without it, Lenin said, "victorious socialism is impossible") in the interest of, first of all, involving millions of working people in the process of conscious, historic, creative activities in the management of society and the state.

"To teach management to masses" Lenin saw as a most important political task and at the same time as the highest manifestation of socialist democracy.

Lenin's ideas about democratic centralism as the basis for the activities of the socialist system of government, about the necessity to further strengthen socialist law and order and to observe their norms are equally still in force.

It is impossible to overestimate the significance of Lenin's ideas about the growing role of the party and the principles of its policy during the period of the construction of socialism; about the relationship of party and state activities, between the activities of the party and mass organizations of working people; about the unity of the party and the people as the basis of the socialist society.

While developing all these most important theoretical problems, Lenin had to approach them at the same time as a political leader, as the head of the socialist state in the first country to take the road to a new society. Just discovered theoretical conclusions were immediately put into practice, implemented into concrete actions, checked in practical activities, more exactly defined and developed. That was a gigantic amount of work which could have been handled only by a genius. And this work has been brilliantly performed.

Lenin liked to repeat one thought: the important precondition of the success of the fighters for socialism is combining revolutionary theory with revolutionary politics. And he was always true to this principle—the same principle which Marx had followed all his life.

Here we come to an important conclusion: because he was the one to continue the great scientific and political exploits of Marx and Engels, was their true follower and, at the same time, a great scientist and political leader in his own right who creatively developed and enriched the heritage of his teachers, Lenin succeeded in becoming the organizer of the first victorious socialist revolution in the world, the founder of the first socialist state.

The scope of Leninism's contribution to the development of political thought of the twentieth century is determined by the fact that Leninism has become the ideological-theoretical and political basis for the preparation and implementation of the breakthrough of the world capitalist front, liquidation of the monopoly of imperialism, and the opening of the road to socialism for mankind.

It meant, among other things, that *Leninism suc-*

ceeded in achieving a combination of the labor movement with revolutionary theory which enabled the working class to rise to the level of a hegemonic power in social development, to the level of the creator of a new social system.

In other words, the most important element of Lenin's contribution, of Leninism, to social development is the theoretical, practical and organizational preparation for the implementation of the beginning of the transition of mankind from capitalism to socialism, or, using a classical expression, from its prehistory to its true history.

III

Another element of the contribution of Leninism to the contemporary social development—including, among other things, the development of contemporary political thought, which has a truly historic significance—is the development of a prospectus concerning the problems of non-capitalist development of former colonial and dependent countries towards socialism.

When we speak about this problem it is worth mentioning that Lenin always—and in particular during the years after the October Revolution—devoted a great deal of attention to both theoretical and concrete-political consideration of fundamental problems of the world revolutionary process.

Now we will consider his approach to questions of non-capitalist development and the significance of this approach from both general-historic and political points of view. Later we will touch on the question of Lenin's approach to the problems of socio-political development in advanced capitalist countries. We call attention to both questions simultaneously because Lenin and Leninism in general are often reproached for their "excessively Russian" character.

Allegedly Lenin's conclusions concern only Russia and are valuable only for Russia and other countries similar to her. But Russia was a country with a middle level of socio-economic development. The ideas of Lenin which we will discuss now concern countries with either a low, or, on the contrary, extremely high level of development. Does this not mean that the above-mentioned reproach of Lenin and Leninism is a reproach in the wrong direction?

But let us return to the non-capitalist road of development.

One should for a start recall that the forces of old colonialism did their best to retain their hold on the enslaved peoples of Asia and Africa, to keep them, so to speak, outside history. Picturing itself as a "benefactor" of these peoples, the bourgeoisie of the colonial powers tried to prove that they supposedly contributed to the colonial peoples' "education" and "enlightenment," to their "preparation for independent civilized life in the future." And in the meantime, under the cover of these bombastic explanations there continued a merciless exploitation of the colonies. Fabulous riches were extracted from the land; a golden river of profits flowed into the coffers of financial and industrial monopolies. And any attempt of the colonial peoples to cast off their fetters with which foreign "masters" bound them was immediately crushed by force: do not interfere with us "preparing you for the future free life."

To all intents and purposes social-democracy at the beginning of the twentieth century joined the apologists of colonial slavery. Contrary to the ideas of Marx and Engels branding the colonizing activities of European capital and demanding that the proletariat render assistance to the struggle of enslaved peoples for their liberation, there appears in social-democratic documents at the beginning of the twentieth century, (and later become firmly established) the idea of a kind of "non-resistance to the evil" of colonialism, of justifying such evil.

For instance Van Kol in his speech at the Amsterdam Congress of the International (1904) claimed that colonial expansion was historically initiated and absolutely insurmountable.

Justifying colonial expansion, Van Kol repeated imperialist arguments about the impossibility of "abandoning half of the world to the mercy of the peoples still in their infancy." The apotheosis of his discourse was a thesis in accordance with which the contemporary states would not be able to live without colonies even after the socialist revolution.

As far as the colonial peoples themselves were concerned, they, in Van Kol's opinion would hardly ever be able to form a "conscious proletariat." Only after the peoples of the East had gone through the Calvary of capitalism would they be able to

achieve civilization. From this followed that it was almost a revolutionary duty of social-democracy . . . to assist in spreading capitalist slavery in the colonies. (*International Labor Movement. Questions of Theory and Practice*, Vol. 2, pp. 538-539.)

In other words, not only the bourgeoisie of the colonial powers and their ideologists, but also the leaders of social-democracy practically excluded any possibility of the national liberation of colonial peoples in the foreseeable future. Their free and independent development was put off indefinitely. If, for instance, the peoples of colonial and dependent countries had been forced to follow the historic road proposed to them by the leaders of the Second International, they would have had to postpone for many decades, if not for centuries, the implementation of their dream about even minimal social progress, to say nothing about the creation of the society of social justice.

Lenin approached the national-colonial problem as a part of the common problem of the new historic epoch when the *world system* of capitalist domination was *on the whole ripe for revolution*, though in some of its links (in particular in the colonial countries of the Orient) such ripeness was still lacking.

From the very statement of the question there follows a most important principled conclusion about the close, objectively determined and to a considerable extent new, deeper interrelation during this epoch of two directions of revolutionary struggle—proletarian, spearheaded against the domination of capital in general, and anti-colonial, directed "against the capitalist colonial system, i.e., a system of enslavement, plunder and violence." (*CW*, Vol. 15, p. 182)

Further developing these ideas, which were first expressed after the 1905 Revolution under the influence of anti-colonial upheavals that broke out in a number of Asian countries, Lenin later formulated his famous conclusion (completely borne out by the whole subsequent course of events) to the effect that a world socialist revolution "will not be solely, or chiefly, a struggle of the revolutionary proletarians in each country against their bourgeoisie—no, it will be a struggle of all the imperialist-oppressed colonies and countries, of all dependent countries, against international imperialism."

(*CW*, Vol. 30, p. 159.)

But *how* would the development of revolutionary processes in the countries of the Orient proceed? The preponderance of pre-capitalist relationships is still the main determining feature in these countries, so that there can be no question of a purely proletarian movement in them." (*CW*, Vol. 31, 242-243.) On the other hand, when the ruling class is victorious in one or several large countries and comes to power there, the peoples of the colonial Orient, relying on the support of this working class, will be able to begin their movement towards socialism without waiting until they pass through the "capitalist Calvary," without waiting until the bourgeoisie will boil them in the "factory caldron." "It will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development." (*CW*, Vol. 31, p. 244.)

In the conditions of the new epoch, Lenin said, in the conditions when the world was split into two systems, with the assistance of the victorious working class there became possible the non-capitalist way of development toward socialism for the economies of underdeveloped countries, which was later characterized as revolutionary-democratic.

And this was in essence not only a theoretical conclusion: Lenin checked it in practice, making a great contribution, including a personal one, to the socialist reconstruction of the national outlying districts of the former Tsarist Empire. The experience of the Soviet republics of Central Asia, and later of the Mongolian People's Republic, which managed after the briefest historic periods to rise from medieval backwardness to the contemporary level of development proves, with terrifically convincing force, the correctness of the theoretical conclusions drawn by Marx and Lenin about the non-capitalist road of development towards socialism.

The significance of the conclusions and ideas of Lenin concerning the non-capitalist road of development of formerly colonial countries for contemporary theoretical and political thought can not be overestimated. In point of fact, Lenin discovered and theoretically substantiated a *new direction of social progress* and developed political principles concerning the onward march in that direction.

IV

It is well known that the most important argument of Leninism's supporters, with which they prove the correctness of their teaching, is the fact that theoretical and political proposals put forward by Lenin have been successfully implemented already in countries on several continents, which resulted in their socialist transformation. In turn, one of the main arguments of those who expressed doubts about the validity and effectiveness of Leninism's conclusions concerning revolutionary transformation of society lies in stating the equally obvious fact: such transformation has not yet embraced the most advanced countries of Western Europe, America and Japan.

It is obvious in our view that the first argument is considerably more convincing than the second one. Really, during a period of only a little longer* than six decades the implementation of the political line inspired by Lenin's teachings resulted in a radical change in the way of life for one^(f) third of mankind. More than that, as it was mentioned above, many countries shape their development at present with a view of implementing, in the end, similar changes in their way of life. And while doing this they are guided by the political line inspired by Leninism's teachings. There was not a single social system in the world in the past that succeeded in winning positions at such a rate as socialism!

It is true socialism has not *yet* triumphed in all countries—including the developed countries of the West. But there is no basis for doubts that it will triumph in the future. Even those who oppose Lenin's ideas are increasingly acknowledging: contemporary Western society *can not* continue in its present form; it *has to* undergo changes. What kind of changes? Those who speak about changes themselves often call for a kind of "synthesis" of two political systems—socialism and capitalism. Despite all utopianism (and reactionary, utopianism at that) of these and similar projects they still contain an interesting confession—the confession that certain views of the advocates of scientific socialism, even according to its enemies, are quite reasonable and should be taken into account. This is symptomatic enough!

One should note, however, that, while analyzing the problems of the development of capitalist society Lenin made a number of keen observations

and arrived at interesting conclusions, containing a profound explanation of the main causes of the relative delay in the revolutionary transformation of society in the developed countries of the West. Without going into detail (there are many such references in his works which are worthy of serious attention, including the attention of Western colleagues) we would like to recall the main points which are important for understanding the essence of Lenin's political thought and for evaluating his contribution to the development of the problem under discussion.

Deeply penetrating the essence of the dialectic of imperialism, Lenin demonstrated that its achievement of a high level of economic and social development means, on the one hand, the ripening of the preconditions of socialism, but on the other hand, the emergence of new and very substantial obstacles on the road of struggle for socialism.

Lenin emphasized that the imperialist bourgeoisie in the countries of Western Europe, America and Japan is very experienced, has learned a lot from class battles, and is aware of many tricks. This bourgeoisie, while plundering the whole world, secured reliable sources of force and means with which it can, alongside of terror tactics, use different methods: bribery, economic enslavement, corruption of certain groups of working people. The split of the labor movement into separate, opposing political groups—this is the objective result of the activities by the bourgeoisie. "We say that it is easier for the movement to start in the countries that are not among those exploiting countries which have opportunities for easy plunder and are able to bribe the upper section of their workers." (*CW*, Vol. 26, pp. 471-73.)

Thus the ripening of objective preconditions of socialism peculiarly combines in the developed countries of the West with very considerable additional objective and subjective difficulties of struggle for the implementation of socialist revolution. From this follows a conclusion: struggle for socialism in capitalist countries "judging by its beginning, will continue for many years and will demand much effort." (*CW*, Vol. 30, p. 160.)

Revolution in these countries, in Lenin's opinion, will not consist of the even "ripening" of socialism; on the whole it will proceed in a much more com-

plex way, taking into account the conflicting relations inside the capitalist world, the fact of exploitation of some capitalist countries by others, combined with the exploitation of the colonial world.

"Objective conditions make it the urgent task of the day to prepare the proletariat in every way for the conquest of political power in order to carry out the economic and political measures which are the sum and substance of the socialist revolution." (*CW*, Vol. 24, p. 460.)

Answering the question about *how* to prepare, Lenin emphasized: each country should find its own solution of the problem. At the same time, in his opinion, there existed also some common principles, important for all countries and proceeding from the very essence of imperialism.

While analyzing the practical development of class struggle in the countries of developed capitalism, Lenin singled out, first and foremost, a particular depth of contradiction between imperialism and democracy in general, and consequently he emphasized the decisive significance of struggle for democracy as the main direction of the class struggle of the proletariat in these countries. Many a time he forcefully emphasized the indissoluble and strengthening organic connection between struggle for democracy and struggle for socialism.

At the same time Lenin convincingly demonstrated, in particular in his works of 1917 and subsequent years, the radical difference between the struggle for democracy in the conditions of premonopoly capitalism and the struggle for democracy under imperialism. He emphasized that if in the first case the struggle had a bourgeois-democratic character, in the latter case the struggle had a revolutionary-democratic character. In this connection he put forward a brilliant hypothesis to the effect that the struggle against the domination of monopolies, for the deep democratic transformation of society, could result in the emergence of a specific transitional stage in the struggle for socialism—the stage during which a transitional revolutionary-democratic state would be set up in which the basis for the domination of large capital would be radically undermined. "This will *still not* be socialism, but it will *no longer* be capitalism. It will be a tremendous step towards socialism."

Thus struggle for democracy, for its all-round

deepening and development, is a most important aspect of the struggle for socialism. It is in the struggle for freedom and democracy that the proletariat becomes battle-hardened, goes through the school of political training, creates better preconditions for further struggle and finally wins over to its side large allies.

At the same time one should not forget—Lenin never tired of repeating—that neither democracy nor freedom solve anything *in themselves* and they do not change the system; more than that, *they themselves* inevitably remain curtailed, limited, until they are based on a socialist foundation. Therefore the struggle for freedom and democracy, while constituting an important, even a most important part (in particular under contemporary conditions) of the struggle for socialism, can not replace, nor, more than that, abolish *the whole*—the main task: the task of *socialist reconstruction of the whole society* from the basis to the superstructure, i.e., in the final analysis, the task of implementing socialist revolution in one of its forms.

These ideas of Lenin have been fruitfully developed by his followers and disciples, first of all by A. Gramsci, M. Toretz, P. Togliatti, J. Diaz, W. Foster and others. Today these ideas are part and parcel of the political arsenal of the international Communist movement.

Lenin's discoveries concerning the conditions and the main directions of class struggle under imperialism belong to the greatest achievements of the political thought of the twentieth century. Alongside his ideas concerning the main forms of the contribution of socialism to political progress and the methods of struggle for national and social liberation of colonial peoples, these discoveries constituted the foundation for Marxist views on the question of the ways of social progress in the twentieth century, the basis of revolutionary strategy, the implementation of which contributes to the deepest rejuvenation of the life of the whole of mankind.

V

In conclusion one can not but touch upon one more sphere, to which Lenin's contribution is widely acknowledged by the broad public: the sphere of international relations both in the narrow and in the widest sense of the word.

Lenin considered the world, human society, as a single, integral system. He, following Marx and Engels, considered internationalization of the economic as well as the whole of social life to be the leading trend in the life of society, reflecting the community of the laws of the history of society, the community, in the final analysis, of the destinies of the whole of mankind.

Such an approach enabled Lenin already in the beginning of this century to notice the emergence of a number of economic, social and political problems that would have to be solved by their joint efforts. Thus, for instance, touching upon the problem of energy even before the First World War, he emphasized that the solution of this problem would require the efforts of the whole of society, it would require the development of new technology. At that time he spoke, for instance, about the importance of more effective, more economic utilization of coal (the problem of underground gasification of coal, etc.).

But while seeing the emergence of problems affecting the destinies of the whole society, Lenin was categorically against non-class, abstract approaches to their consideration. He categorically objected to the calls to bury in oblivion the necessity of class struggle and socialist revolution under the pretext of the existence of such problems. On the contrary, the solution of the emerging gigantic problems important for all mankind is conditioned by the social climate, it depends on *which class* undertakes to solve it and in whose interests.

While continuing his reflections on energy, on the utilization of coal, Lenin showed here that the real obstacle on the way to the truly effective solution of the emerging problems was not technology, not the insufficient level of its development, but the way it was used, whose interests it served. "On all sides, at every step one comes across problems which man is quite capable of solving *immediately*, but capitalism is in the way. It has amassed enormous wealth—and has made men the *slaves* of this wealth. (*CW*, Vol. 19, p. 389.)

Already at the beginning of the century Lenin considered the problem of war and peace to be a problem of global character. Scores of times he emphasized that war was a phenomenon alien to the interests of peoples, that it was bringing them only

disasters and sufferings. The first world imperialist war—its vast scale, the destructive force of weapons used by the belligerents, the damage suffered by the peaceful population of these countries as a result of the war, the dislocation of their economies—all this caused Lenin to come to the conclusion that such calamities “undermine the very foundations of human society. Because it is the first time in history that the most powerful achievements of technology have been applied on such a scale, so destructively and with such energy for the annihilation of millions of human lives.” (*CW*, Vol. 27, P. 422.)

Truly scientific understanding of the trends in the development of technology as a whole and military technology in particular enabled Lenin to come to the conclusion (formulated by him during a conversation with Krupskaya) that there will come the time when the development of military technology will make war virtually impossible.

This conclusion by no means meant that Lenin hoped that war would cease spontaneously, by itself, as mankind would realize its perniciousness. No, he emphasized, wars emerged as a result of the domination of exploitative social relations, and while these relations exist, wars can not “disappear.” Those who want to achieve concrete results in the struggle against wars must fight against imperialism, for socialism.

The working class is the class, the social force, which is capable of effectively fighting against imperialism and aggressive, reactionary wars caused by it. “Only a proletarian socialist revolution can lead humanity out of the impasse which imperialism and imperialist wars have created.” (*CW*, Vol. 29, p. 103.)

It is well known that the first decree of the Soviet power was the decree on peace written by Lenin. It contains an appeal to solve the task “of saving mankind from the horrors of war and its consequences . . .” (*CW*, Vol. 26, p. 252.) Some time later Lenin, characterizing Soviet foreign policy, categorically emphasized “all our politics and propaganda, however, are directed towards putting an end to war and in no way towards driving nations to war.” (*CW*, Vol. 31, p. 470.)

But what are the ways for solving this problem?

After the October Revolution the world split into two opposing social systems—socialist and capital-

ist. It was clear that under these conditions the problem of war and peace to a large extent would be resolved depending on the relations between states belonging to these two social systems.

In these conditions Lenin put forward the idea that was to become one of the guiding tenets of political science in the twentieth century: the idea of peaceful coexistence of states irrespective of their social systems. Already in 1919 the Congress of Soviets adopted a resolution written by Lenin that solemnly proclaimed: “The Russian Federative Soviet Republic wishes to live in peace with all peoples and devote all its efforts to internal development . . .” (*CW*, Vol. 30, P. 231.) Later, in connection with the 1922 Genoa Conference, Lenin put forward a proposition of “peaceful co-living”—or, as we say at present—peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems on the basis of accepting the equal rights of the two systems of ownership, on noninterference in the internal affairs of each other.

The necessity of such an approach followed, in Lenin’s opinion, from the fact that socialism needed peace for the successful solution of constructive tasks it faced. At the same time this necessity proceeded from the acceptance of the fact that wars were contrary to the interests of all peoples, that the mission of socialism is to save from the threat of war not only the peoples of the countries already building a new society, but all peoples irrespective of where they live.

The possibility of peaceful coexistence followed, according to Lenin, firstly, from the strength of socialism, from its ability to defend itself; secondly, from the existence of socialism’s reliable allies—the working class, working people—in the capitalist countries themselves; thirdly, from the objective impossibility for capitalism to cease economic relations with the countries that entered the road to socialism, to exclude these countries from world community, and thus to proceed contrary to the ever strengthening tendency to internationalization of the world economic life.

Of course, Lenin emphasized, social systems in socialist and capitalist countries were opposite to each other. True, constant struggle between socialism and capitalism is inevitable—struggle in

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Vito Marcantonio—From Republican to Radical

SI GERSON

The late U.S. Representative Vito Marcantonio was widely regarded as the most radical congressman of this century. Elected initially as a Republican in 1934 from his working-class East Harlem district, he was elected in his last term in 1948 on a third party ticket, the American Labor Party.

Marcantonio's fighting career was traced at a symposium of the American Institute for Marxist Studies on Oct. 15 at the Community Church, New York, marking 25 years since his death in 1954. We publish below the text of a paper on Marcantonio's political evolution and teachings delivered by Si Gerson, co-chairman of the Communist Party's Political Action Department.—Ed.

My theme tonight is Vito Marcantonio, the progressive politician, and how he managed to survive in the political jungle. I emphasize not his policies—which were consistently and courageously progressive—but his political guerilla techniques both inside and outside the two-party system.

This necessarily involves some discussion of the struggle for independent politics in general and the problems of Marcantonio in particular, and how he developed a strategy and set of tactics that made him an effective people's politician. Marcantonio was no theoretician but his practice of people's politics was based on a profound insight into the American electoral system and the real forces at work.

Let us at the outset clear up one myth. Marc—as he was known to everyone—did not spring forth from the brow of Zeus as a political independent. He evolved. While there are some reports that he had socialist leanings as a youth and was involved in tenant struggles in the working-class district where he was born and lived all his life, the fact is he emerged as a political figure out of the old party system. It may be a matter of wonder to many of the current generation, but the truth is that Marc began his political life as a Republican!

* * *

To understand this one must recall something

about New York politics and especially ethnic politics in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The Democratic Party and its Manhattan organization, Tammany Hall, controlled New York politics, serving as the loyal and corrupt flunkies of the big banks, utilities and contractors. Irish Catholics were the dominant element in Tammany Hall. Famous Tammany leaders of those days were Croker, Murphy, Sullivan, et al. And a strong influence within Tammany was the hierarchy of the Catholic Church whose cardinals and archbishops were almost invariably Irish.

There are, of course, historic reasons that explain the Irish Catholic dominance dating back to the great waves of Irish immigration in the nineteenth century and the struggles of the Irish against fierce bigotry and No Nothingism. Those were the days when want ads said bluntly: "No Irish need apply." This, after decades of struggle, was largely overcome.

When Italian immigrants arrived here at the turn of the century they found both Tammany and the Church virtually closed to them. Hence, many of them, especially those who wanted to become politically active, registered as Republicans. (A few associated themselves with the Socialist Party or anarchist grouplets.)

That explains why people like Fiorello LaGuardia, predecessor of Marcantonio as East Harlem congressman, became Republicans. As Jay Frank-

lin wrote in his biography, *LaGuardia*:

From the practical point of view, LaGuardia had to be a New York Republican—and an irregular one, at that—if he were to get anywhere in a political career. Where the Democrats had cornered the Irish vote, the Republicans had won a majority of the Italian vote throughout the nation, and with a Fusion Administration on the way in the city it would have been folly for the young Western lawyer to identify himself with Tammany Hall. (*LaGuardia*, Modern Age Books, New York, 1937).

That, of course, was an utterly pragmatic decision by LaGuardia, but it is an historic fact. It explains why LaGuardia, far to the left of the Republican leadership, was nevertheless elected from his largely Italian working-class East Harlem district as a *Republican* (except in 1924 when he was elected as a candidate of both the Socialist and the LaFollette Progressive parties). A maverick, cordially hated by the GOP leadership, LaGuardia teamed up with progressive Republicans to harass Republican Administrations. He worked with Senator George Norris of Nebraska to fight government strikebreaking and won passage of the now famous Norris-LaGuardia Anti-Injunction Act.

LaGuardia learned quickly that for political survival more than progressive positions were necessary. True, his policies reflected the needs of his overwhelmingly working-class constituency whose people he carefully serviced. But to carry his district, not even progressive policies and systematic constituent servicing were enough. He had to defeat the old party politicians in the New York political jungle.

Thus, LaGuardia became a master in the rough and tumble of precinct politics. While always bas-

ing himself on his own people, building his own district organization, he learned every trick of the electoral trade, frustrating and outwitting the silk-stocking Republican leaders who sought to deny him nomination from the Tammany bandits who tried to steal the elections.

Fiorello fought fire with fire and was not above cutting a corner or two in political fracas. There is a famous story of a Republican committee meeting craftily designed by the GOP leaders to be packed by fashionable ladies and gentlemen who would deny LaGuardia the congressional nomination. Fiorello's friends, however, were equal to the occasion. They printed a duplicate set of tickets, got to the hall early and when the plush dames and lords arrived they found their seats filled with burly workers from LaGuardia's district. (P.S.: LaGuardia won the designation.)

* * *

Marc worked in all the LaGuardia campaigns in the twenties and early thirties, managing some of them, eagerly absorbing electoral lore from the old maestro Fiorello, his political mentor. LaGuardia regarded him as a son—albeit something of a wayward son—and obviously had an enormous effect on Marc's think-

ing. At any rate, it was in this atmosphere that Marc grew up and became politically street-wise, blending a progressive outlook with an earthy awareness of the intricacies of savage old party politics as practiced in America's Babylon.

After LaGuardia was elected Mayor of New York in 1933, Marc became the natural heir to Fiorello in the fight for the East Harlem congressional seat. He ran in 1934 and won both the Republican and City Fusion party nominations and the election by a razor-thin 247 votes, both after bitter battles. (That year, incidentally, Marc had Socialist and



Communist opponents.)

Seated as a nominal Republican, Marc, like Fiorello before him, promptly turned on the GOP leadership and generally supported the New Deal, even at times taking positions to the Left of the Roosevelt Administration. So paradoxical was Marc's political stance that one day a group of left-leaning Democrats led by Representative Maury Maverick of Texas invaded the Republican cloakroom and in a hilarious ceremony "awarded" Marc an elaborate scroll in which the East Harlem congressman was described as "an OFF—COLOR Republican... the said Marcantonio being herein-after described as: THE PINK PACHYDERM OF CONGRESS."

The years 1935-36, Marc's first term, were years of accelerated political growth for the freshman congressman, a time of militant activity and widened horizons. There were new stirrings in the ranks of labor: the formation of the Committee of Industrial Organization (CIO); broad movements for unemployment insurance and social security, and a striving for independent political action that went beyond the New Deal while still maintaining links with it. Marc became deeply involved in the struggles of the jobless; at one point he even got arrested while leading a prohibited unemployed parade—an incident which temporarily strained his relations with Mayor LaGuardia. During those years he also flew to Puerto Rico to defend Puerto Rican nationalist leader Pedro Albizu Campos.

But Marc never forgot the problem of widening his electoral base. As a result, his efforts led to the formation of the All-People's Party in Harlem, stimulated particularly by Harlem Communists and various Puerto Rican groups. Thus, in 1936 Marc appeared on two lines on the voting machine, Republican and All-People's Party. This time, however, he went down to defeat. Marc's old opponent, James J. Lanzetta, swept in by the Roosevelt tide, managed to beat him by 1,560 votes.

However, Marc was undismayed. He increased his district activities and strengthened his ties with progressive forces nationally, becoming counsel to the Workers Alliance, the organization of the jobless, and president of the International Labor Defense. In practical electoral terms, two conclu-

sions were clear:

- First, and above all, to survive politically as a progressive congressman, he must reinforce his independent base. District popularity was not enough; neither was his city-wide alliance with some labor and progressive forces. He had to have a stronger independent electoral formation that went beyond his closely-knit F. H. LaGuardia Association on East 116th Street. He had joined the American Labor Party (ALP), formed in 1936, and he proceeded to speed the building of ALP organizations in his congressional district.

- Second, he had to appear on one major party line on the voting machine, which was still legally possible under New York State election laws. Hence, he never completely cut his connections to the old party organizations despite his open contempt for them. He viewed the two old parties as temporary but necessary vehicles until such time as a third party would become politically viable.

Thus, Marc made his comeback in 1938 by running in all three party primaries. He took the ALP nomination overwhelmingly, captured the Republican primary handily and even garnered 31 per cent in the Democratic contest. He won the general election easily and was again successful in 1940. In each race, it should be noted, the ALP supplied the margin of victory.

By 1942 and 1944, the war years, Marc was unconquerable in his district. He won all three nominations and breezed in as candidate of the Republican, Democratic and American Labor parties.

By 1946 things had begun to change. The first congressional election after World War II saw the beginnings of the cold war. This time Marc had to battle strenuously. He lost in the Republican primary to Frederick P. Bryan (now a Federal judge) and won the Democratic and ALP nominations, but his margin of victory was narrower than in the preceding four elections.

* * *

Came 1947, a crucial year not only for Marc, but for the country and indeed the world. The cold war intensified. U.S. ruling circles, flushed with their monopoly of the atom bomb, fearful of the gains in Europe by the democratic and socialist forces and the rise of the liberation movements in

the colonial countries, developed a new form of foreign intervention—the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. Washington pressure forced Communist ministers out of the French and Italian cabinets. CIA activity to split the European trade union movement and to buy up corrupt politicians was stepped up.

But the Wall Street-Washington assault was directed not only at democracy and socialism abroad. It was also a war waged at home, with the passage of the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act and the issuance of a series of anti-communist, anti-democratic Presidential executive orders.

In New York State this drive of reaction took on two particular forms, one of them in the state legislature in Albany, clearly aimed at Marcantonio, the other in New York City to abolish the system of proportional representation elections to the City Council, the method under which Laborites, independents and two Communists were elected. That was the year, also, when the Tammany-controlled New York City Council refused, in defiance of the City Charter, to seat a Communist to replace the deceased Brooklyn Communist City Councilman Peter V. Cacchione.

In Albany, the 1947 session of the State Legislature by a bi-partisan vote passed the Wilson-Pakula law. (Nominal sponsors were Assemblymen Malcolm Wilson and State Senator Irwin Pakula, both Republicans. Wilson later became Nelson Rockefeller's Lieutenant Governor and briefly Governor after Rockefeller resigned. Wilson is now president of the Manhattan Savings Bank.) The measure was openly referred to in Albany as "the anti-Marcantonio bill."

This bill was actually designed to prevent Marcantonio, an enrolled member of the American Labor Party, from running in the two old party primaries. The Republican and Democratic bosses and their multimillionaire backers knew full well from past experience that Marc had many supporters who were nominal Republicans or Democrats and that he would win one or both of their nominations if he were permitted to enter their primaries. They decided therefore, to quarantine him and force him to run solely on the ALP line. So they fashioned a law—still on the books—that requires permission of the old party leaders

for a non-enrollee to enter their primaries.

This meant that Marc had to run in 1948 only on the ALP line, a situation which in the judgment of the old party bosses and their backers would defeat or certainly minimize his chance for reelection.

Marc took up the challenge. He not only campaigned vigorously as an ALP candidate in his own district, but took a leading part in nominating Henry Wallace for President on the Progressive Party ticket. (The ALP, it should be recalled, was the Progressive Party arm in New York State.) To the consternation of the old party gang Marc won re-election in the three-way race.

Parenthetically, let me add a personal note. It is a matter of deep pride to me that Marc urged the Brooklyn ALP leadership to nominate me for City Council in the special election in 1948 to fill the vacancy created by the death of Pete Cacchione and that I ran on the ALP and Communist lines, receiving 150,000 votes.

* * *

The Wall Street-Washington gang and their old party flunkies did not let up in their savage war against Marc. Yet, he continued to be the most progressive voice in Congress; the man who led the fight against the cold warriors and gathering pre-McCarthyite terror; and the man who unwaveringly defended the constitutional rights of labor, the Black and Puerto Rican peoples and the rights of Communists.

The right wing cabal and the cold war liberals prepared for the 1950 elections under a heavy smokescreen of anti-communism emanating from Washington and disseminated by the commercial media. But they did not rely solely on atmospheric change. This time they organized an all-party gang-up against Marc. Republican and Democratic bosses, now immune from a Marcantonio challenge in the primaries, jointly nominated an obscure Republican hack, State Senator James G. Donovan. To its shame, the Liberal Party leadership joined the cabal and also designated Donovan.

Thus Marc was faced with the ruthless opposition of all three parties and the New York daily press with the honorable exceptions of the *Daily Worker* and *The Compass*. Early in 1950 the

Tammany Hall leadership declared: "The defeat of red Vito Marcantonio should be the first order of business of the Democratic Party in New York County in the 1950 elections." The press heaped calumny after calumny on Marc, especially after he publicly opposed U.S. participation in the Korean War. The *Daily Mirror* editorialized in this fashion: "Marcantonio's principal strength comes from degraded and depraved slums"—a clear piece of racism directed at the increasing Puerto Rican population in Marc's district—and charged that "Marcantonio has been Moscow's man" in Congress. Even singer Kate ("God Bless America") Smith attacked Marc on her nationwide radio program.

Despite a valiant race, Marc lost by over 13,000 votes. Significantly, his total on the ALP line was larger than either the Republican or Democratic totals for Donovan, indicating clearly that he would have won in a three-way contest. He ran strongly in the East Harlem part of his district, losing primarily in Yorkville, which the state legislative leaders had deliberately included in re-drawing district lines with the expectation that Yorkville, with few Italian or Puerto Rican residents, would be enough to bring Marc down.

Marc did not run in 1952 but was preparing to enter the race as an independent in 1954 when he died so tragically of a heart attack on a rain-swept street near his downtown office on August 9, 1954.

* * *

Many lessons can be drawn from the political struggles of Vito Marcantonio. Let me note only a

few.

First is that the ruling class and its old party servants will go to any lengths to drive out of public life a progressive figure they cannot co-opt or compromise. All the rules of their vaunted bourgeois democracy went by the boards in their ceaseless battle to strangle Marc's independent progressive voice.

Second, notwithstanding this fact, it is possible to elect courageous independents like Marc *if*

- there is a fighting program keyed to the needs of the people, and *if*

- a mass independent base is developed, a mass base closely linked to the people's struggles. (By a mass independent base I mean such independent political formations as the American Labor Party and such district organizations as the old F.H. LaGuardia Association in East Harlem.) And *if*

- that independent base is rooted in the labor movement and among the oppressed national minorities, which means in New York above all the Black and Puerto Rican peoples. And *if*

- insurgent movements within the two old parties are not ignored and flexible tactics are employed to unite all independent currents.

Regrettably, Marc never wrote a manual on his political techniques. But tracing his struggles inside and outside the two-party swamp we can discern the pattern of a winning strategy that can help this generation develop a giant anti-monopoly coalition and form a mass-based anti-monopoly party that can effectively challenge the corporate-controlled two old parties.

The Politics of Morality

PATRICE JOHNSON

What is the relation between politics and morality? What role do moral principles play in political life? In this article, we examine why the answers to these questions depend on which class's standpoint one takes as the basis of analysis—the working-class standpoint, or that of the bourgeoisie. The answers are radically different in these two cases.

Revolutions are brought about by the social movement of masses of people; Ethiopia and Iran illustrate this universal feature. The masses move, first, not because of an understanding of revolutionary theory, but because they see no other way of securing the basis for a prosperous happy life: "Peace, land and bread." People struggle and sacrifice to bring about fundamental changes because they can no longer go on living as they have been; because they feel and understand the boundless power of their united numbers; because they know that a better life is possible and is rightfully theirs. They couch their demands for change in politics and economy in terms of what "should be," what "is right." This is the moral element. Revolutionary upsurges, arising from the frustrated need of the masses, persist and are victorious only when in addition a theory adequate to the situation plays a leading role—when a Marxist-Leninist party is in the leadership position. The point here is that the demand, say, for a guaranteed, secure job, at union wages, in safe working conditions, is a political demand, but it is also a moral challenge to the system which creates unemployment and a declaration against the injustice of the policies of monopoly capital.

To put the question in this way is not an exercise of "poetic license" nor an arbitrarily "broad" view of the substance of politics. It is a recognition—simple but decisive—that politics, which is an organized expression of class struggle, is a creation of human beings, the result of the activity of the masses of people. This is an elementary proposition of *scientific* politics, and the only real basis upon which a program for the revolutionary transformation of society and the daily fight to

improve the peoples' conditions of life, can be effectively advanced.

The opposed view, in which politics is merely "the affairs of government," "the art of statecraft," in which "political questions" are "aired in public" every other November, betrays the style and approach of those who control the nation's economic resources and exercise power now—the U.S. corporate magnates and their representatives. This is the spirit of the back-room politicians, the political racketeers of monopoly. That this spirit pervades American politics is an indication of how basically *undemocratic* the Democratic and Republican parties, the whole two-party system are. That many people accept such a view ("Oh, he's apolitical!") is itself a critique of the practice of present-day bourgeois politics in which carbon-copy candidates of big business try to outdo each other in inanities, in avoiding the issues. Politics *a la* Madison Avenue, attempting to cover the inability of the big business candidates to offer real solutions to the deepening crisis of living, turns people away from the "political arena" as it is traditionally defined.

To be "apolitical" under these conditions is most often not a sign of contentment, but of revulsion and disgust. Marxist-Leninists diagnose these symptoms accurately, and Communists move to cure this disease by living their politics. Only politics which is lived can be both responsive and responsible to reality and to the people, ignite their enthusiasm and ultimately bring the state and society's economic resources, now dominated by monopoly corporations, under the control of the people. For Communists, politics is the nerve center of life itself—sensitive to and ultimately impacting on all actions and reactions of people in society.

Communists and all class-conscious workers understand that under capitalism life is propelled by the blunt, direct confrontation of social classes and ideologies, never far below the surface. Every side of life is determined by this struggle.

Traditionally bourgeois thinkers have been oblivious to this fact. Their moral theories have, with some exceptions, been based on speculations about "man" in general or "human nature," rarely taking note of the basic facts concerning the existence of the masses of humanity. The bourgeoisie's self-delusions—the refusal to accept their own historical transience and the arrogant elevation of bourgeois life to a universal value—account for its barrenness. It is the needs of the bourgeois individual for a theory of "The Good Life" and a justification of his existence as an "autonomous individual" (read: parasite) that bourgeois morality attempts to supply. It does this by grounding moral theory on the circumstances of the "individual" lifted out of society. Activity, *real* social activity, is forgotten; the needs of the individual become everything.

Actually, of course, this view stands things on its head. "[T]he first premise of all human existence and, therefore, of all history . . . [is] that men must be in a position to live in order to be able to 'make history.' But life involves before everything else eating and drinking, housing, clothing and various other things." (Marx-Engels *Collected Works*, Vol. V, p. 41-2.) And in class society, especially under capitalism, the successful pursuit of these is ultimately, for the masses of people, a question of politics, specifically, of waging an organized united struggle against their class enemies. The system of values and ideals which arises in the course of this struggle of the workers, of the masses generally, to improve the quality of their lives, to advance their interests, has many diverse expressions, on various levels. Its most conscious, consistent, significant expression is working-class politics substantiated by a scientific, revolutionary theory—Marxist-Leninist politics.

In the life of society it is the real social activities of men, and that means first of all the production of the vitals on which human life is based, to which all ideas and ideals ultimately refer and give meaning. "You show me where a man gets his corn pone, an' I'll tell you what his 'pinions is," as Mark Twain had it. For the people, the fight to better their lot is not an application of eternal moral principles, but the very core, the daily acti-

vity of their lives. The lives of the working class are lives of struggle. For the youth of the cities, the ghettos, survival is a struggle. But the struggle is not just for survival, but for the conditions of happiness, for happiness itself. But increasingly that means conscious, antimonopoly struggle.

"It is not a question of what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat, at the moment *regards* as its aim. It is a question of *what the proletariat is*, and what, in accordance with this being, it will historically be compelled to do." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 37.) The historical mission of the proletariat is posed to it first of all by the conditions of its daily life.

That the bourgeoisie is, fundamentally, blind to this elementary fact, can be attributed to at least the following three reasons: 1. The ideologists of this class have, until recently, on the whole, never bothered to concern themselves about, and never had to worry about, where and exactly how they got their "corn pone" (or anything else.) 2. Those that have, such as, for example, David Ricardo, the founder of classical political economy, have come embarrassingly close to seeing the realities of exploitation and class struggle. It is this reality which the bourgeoisie as a class has always avoided seeing, and has more and more desperately tried to cover up. 3. It is so much more comfortable and convenient to linger in the fantasy realm of ethereal, eternal truths, where even a parasitic class can hope to discover some glorious, divine *raison d'être*, can search, ever hopeful, for the historical fountain of youth.

Even the terminology is revealing. Morality provides the "ideals of conduct" (as in, "Shall we conduct ourselves into the parlor, dear?"), while politics is concerned with the "control of men in society" (as in Riot Control or perhaps Pest Control). Witness here the classic dichotomy which operates throughout bourgeois thought—on the one hand the bourgeois is always an *individual*, who is able to conduct himself as such only to the extent that he regulates or controls society, on the other hand are the masses of people who are never individuals like him but are always indistinct parts of the mob.

This same distinction can be seen operating in the current human rights campaign: by human

rights is meant not the fundamental rights of human beings in the world today (e.g. the rights to peace, security, productive employment and an unpolluted natural environment), but the rights which bourgeois and other basically *asocial* individuals see as necessary for their own "right conduct," for maintaining "control of men in society." Viewed in this way, it is seen for what it is—a screen for attempting to perpetuate and extend the rule of the U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie.

Of course, this dying, morbid class was once youthful; it emerged from the Middle Ages fighting for its own ascendancy, storming the forts of power of the ruling feudal nobility. It succeeded in this because it brought with it new social relations which were more responsive to the new realities of the productive life of society; because its antagonists were sufficiently weakened and isolated by chronic social crises; because the ideal it espoused and the political demands it put forward offered prospects of relief and improvement of the life of the masses of people.

The ideas of the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, as the theoretical expressions of the social movements of the bourgeoisie, struck at medieval concepts and ideas, and rang true relative to them. "As Copernicus's discarding the medieval concept of the qualitative inferiority of the earth's movements as compared with those of the heavenly bodies helped revolutionize astronomy, so Jefferson's Declaration revolutionized political science by discarding the medieval—feudal—concept of the qualitative inferiority of earthly life as compared with eternal heavenly bliss." (H. Aptheker, *Political Affairs*, July 1954.) But this "political science" spoke, and gave battle, in abstract terms—and so was not scientific. It was abstract because it was universal in form but in fact represented the standpoint and interests of an exploiting minority whose umbilical cord bound it to money-capital and the existence of "the free market."

As capitalist society developed, and as the masses of people became more and more threatening, as society became more and more hostile to the bourgeoisie, that is, as the contradictions within capitalism posed themselves more and more sharply, the gap between the actual political prac-

tice of the capitalist class and the ideals it claimed to represent widened. Ideals are abstract—they can be interpreted and then reinterpreted. But the reinterpretation of ideals by a reactionary class gives way historically to their renunciation. The optimistic ideals can no longer be stretched to hide the growing barbarity of capitalist society. Attempts of their resuscitation are blatantly hypocritical, and more and more molded around the Big Lie propaganda technique. Such is Carter's so-called human rights campaign. The final stage in this process of disintegration is either *despair*, "typical of the classes which are perishing" (Lenin), or suicidal self-delusion: Jonestown.

On a grander scale, this is also the sentiment of National Security Adviser Z. Brzezinski, who, according to an interview printed in the *New Yorker* last May, thinks of opposition to thermonuclear devastation as a manifestation of what he takes to be humanity's "egocentrism." This reckless, irresponsible approach is a clear expression of the true "morality" of a class for whom war has become a way of life. It is such a morality which extinguishes thousands of lives in the name of "punishment"! It is frightening to imagine what "punishment" Mr. Brzezinski has in mind for humanity. In every part of the world, dramatic events signal the ceaseless disintegration of the rule of monopoly capital. The shrinking horizons of capitalism are seen by its spokesmen as the horizons of humanity itself.

As we noted above, bourgeois moral consciousness proceeds theoretically from the standpoint of the *abstract* bourgeois individual. This conception is abstract not because bourgeois individuals do not exist, but because it does not reveal the real historical sources and limitations of the bourgeois world and personality.

As the class struggle becomes sharper, focused on the question of who will control state power, more the struggle of *one class* as a whole, united with its allies, against *another class*, as more and more strata of society are drawn directly into this great struggle, the perspective of a bourgeois individual as such becomes intolerable. The self-image of the bourgeois individual centers around his own supposed classlessness—being "his own man," his uniqueness and individuality lies in "in-

dependence"—the autonomy or self-determination which precludes identification with class. His position in society is purely self-willed, or so he thinks.

When open class confrontation takes place, those class battles which forge the future of society also destroy the ideological basis of individuals detached from class identifications. To side with the capitalist class is, for the bourgeois individual, to acknowledge consciously his own class limitation and, unconsciously, the historical limitation of that class. To shun this class affiliation, in horror and revulsion, to maintain this fraudulent individualism at all costs, is to consciously condemn capitalism and unconsciously exile oneself from the real root of one's own bourgeois existence. Only by consciously siding with the working class, by fully and openly adopting the standpoint from which the people wage their struggles for progress and happiness, can one consciously begin to create the basis for oneself as a whole personality; can one move to unlock the gateway to the future and claim the possibility of *true individuality* which lies within. But such a choice the morality of bourgeois individuality almost completely precludes.

History has long since passed its judgment on capitalism. Since 1917 the peoples of the world have fought for the execution of the sentence. The increasingly hysterical and rabidly jingoist ideologues of the U.S. monopolists—more and more adopting a "Moynihan mentality"—cry of their "victimization" by the so-called power brokers of the third world. This is but an echo of earlier cries of "world Communist conspiracy." This process, this hysteria, is actually a reaction to the recent achievement of the centuries' old struggles of the world's peoples to end their own oppression and victimization by colonialism and imperialism, for the security and abundant well-being which they know their own labor can make possible.

The revolutionary transformations of society since 1917 include the growing conscious role of the masses of people in history because they increasingly are conscious of the sources of their misery and the path toward its elimination. This is particularly true in the contemporary socialist societies where, to an extent and with results beyond the wildest dreams of either the utopian socialists or the "social contract" political

theorists, whole societies of men and women work out, consciously and collectively (in accordance with scientific principles of management) their way of life and social objectives. This also is shown, since the last part of the nineteenth century, in the formation of workers' parties waging a sustained and principled revolutionary struggle based on the needs of the people.

The working-class movement has given rise to many theories and ideologists but—until Marxism came upon the scene in the 1840s—there was no adequate theoretical reflection of the struggle of the working class, no analysis of the socio-historic roots of its struggle capable of not only justifying but explaining and guiding this struggle. Early on in this decade, even before he had "come to Marxism," Marx characterized his own activity in a letter to Ruge: ". . . we do not confront the world in a doctrinaire way with a new principle: Here is the truth, kneel down before it! We develop new principles for the world out of the world's own principles. We do not say to the world: cease your struggles, they are foolish; we will give you the true slogan of struggle. We merely show the world what it is really fighting for." (*Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 144.) The ultimate result of this program was the development of a new theory of society and a new political program, approach and practice. This world outlook saw in broad outline the features of the society—socialism—which capitalism carries in its womb, that society which is alone capable of fulfilling the aspirations for freedom and dignity of the world's peoples. But Marxism only foresees this human future because it reveals the real human basis of history. Communism is above all a real movement of the people. This is the humanism at the core of Marxism, and its practical orientation: to understand the present circumstances of life, and to help transform them.

Real humanism, humanism which is not afraid to confront the social realities, which is not "afraid of conflict with the powers that be," must inevitably embrace a political program of revolutionary struggle. The decisive link between these two is *science* and this is what Marx meant when in 1847 he described himself as a "theoretician of the proletarian class." (*Ibid.*, Vol. VI, p. 177.) It is because Marx was the fearless humanist that he

was that he was able to enunciate a revolutionary political program which was at once supremely liberating and prophetic, true, and realistic, conceived amid the fires of the people's struggles. In early 1844; before he had developed the scientific political economy enunciated in *Capital*, and four years before the epoch-making *Communist Manifesto*, Karl Marx wrote that "the weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism by weapons, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses." About five lines later, in the same remarkable paragraph, the young Marx asserts that, "*man is the highest being for man, hence . . . the categorical imperative to overthrow all relations in which man is a debased, enslaved, forsaken, despicable being. . . .*" (*Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 182.) In this surprising juxtaposition of ideas, Marx affirms that *human liberation* must be the basic aim and premise of all revolutionaries' social and political activity (compare with the legalistic, abstract slogan "human rights") that is, liberation from all relations which oppress, debase and enslave. But in the same breath he affirms as well that there is a main link in this process—namely to overcome the oppressive apparatus of the old system of exploitation by organizing and mobilizing a revolutionary force out of the masses of workers, of the people. The force of revolutionary theory and organization can crystallize a victorious social movement out of the anger and scattered protests.

When Marx wrote the paragraph quoted above, his ideas had not yet congealed into the theory now known as historical materialism. He was just beginning to develop criticisms of the humanistic atheism of Feuerbach, which was itself the outcome of a long development of German classical philosophy. But it is not hard to see, in the formulations above, which combine the general concept of man (what has been called abstract Man) with the idea of the centrality of masses as movers of history, that Marx was moving in the direction which would bring him and Engels to the position, presented in the *German Ideology* in 1846, that, "The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from

which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions of their life, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity." (*Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 31.)

This is politically a more potent form of humanism. This position is clearly more down-to-earth, more realistic, and therefore pregnant with more far-reaching *actual* consequences than that which speaks of man generally: traditionally the sort of theory at the basis of bourgeois liberal theory. This abstractness of bourgeois theory hides an ambiguity or vacillation in substance. It is precisely the "real premises" which, among other things, give Marxism its scientific character. Scientific theory, and scientific humanism also, not only reflect the world, but are capable of reacting upon it, and changing it, in a radical way. The specific nature of Marx's humanism—its empirical, realistic basis—has basic consequences for the politics which is its consummation and ultimate expression.

Marx saw very early that the consciousness and understanding of the masses of people are a decisive force in the successful revolutionary struggle. But theory does not become a force automatically: ". . . theory can be realized in a people only insofar as it is the realization of the needs of that people." (*Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 183.) Revolutionary leadership—which is the core of Marxist politics—must be rooted in intimate and living contact with the real individuals making up the working class and people which is the source of Marxist humanism. This rule of Marxist-Leninist politics can only be understood if we can see, in the diverse and unexpected actions of people, in all the mass phenomena of daily life, the expression by people of their own needs.

That many people supported the Proposition Thirteens of the last year testifies not only to the demagoguery and slickness of the New Right, but also to the pressing problems which confront masses and from which they urgently seek relief. For us humanism is not simply a theory or idea, but in fact it is the living reality of our politics—to translate the innumerable miseries, demands, strivings and dreams of the peoples into united political action. We do not have all the answers,

but the outlook, the approach and the class standpoint which is capable of supplying answers. Basic to this is the ability to listen to and to learn from the people.

Considerations like these indicate the sense of Lenin's statement that "to a Communist all morality lies in this united discipline and conscious mass struggle against the exploiters. We do not believe in an eternal morality, and we expose the falseness of all the fables about morality. Morality serves the purpose of helping human society rise to a higher level and rid itself of the exploitation of labour." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXXI, p. 294.) We have argued that bourgeois ideology, because of the historical conditions of its development and the obsolescence of the class whose interests it reflects, defines the relation of politics and morality ambiguously, allowing for bourgeois interests within ideal phrases, and in a basically idealist way. This initial ambiguity becomes more and more of a chasm, corresponding to the growing antagonisms between social classes, that, ultimately, bourgeois morality is powerless in the face of the amorality of bourgeois politics.

In contradistinction to this, the morality of the masses of people in capitalist society, which is in the first place an expression of the aspirations for justice and dignity, shows itself in diverse ways, often without self-awareness or developed social consciousness, as a protest against the immorality, barbarity and futility of life under capitalism. The ultimate and most consistent form of such protest

is conscious political struggle. By channelling the anger into organized forms, based on a strategy of social emancipation through political revolution, and by adding life and substance to the ideals and strengthening the convictions upon which people act, class conscious politics based on Marxism-Leninism forms the main link, the pivotal point around which the struggle for the program of scientific humanism—the struggle for *human liberation*—must proceed.

The struggle against disease means the struggle against the Carter military budget, against the enforced decay of the cities. Political struggle is always a two-pronged process: the struggle to *humanize* the conditions of life, to advance the interests of the masses, as well as the struggle to advance the consciousness and organization, the political maturity and social ideals of the working class and its allies among the people.

"In revolutionary activity the changing of oneself coincides with the changing of circumstances." (Marx, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 214.) This is the historical perspective of scientific humanism. It is this perspective which is being consciously realized for the first time in the struggle for the transition from capitalism to socialism, in the struggle for the building of advanced socialism. Communists, the organizers and front-fighters of this process of transformation, must give their political activity this broad historical content which it in fact expresses.

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as Father William Hogan, a peace activist from Chicago and Leo Fenster, a founding member of the UAW.

The 22nd Convention was the concentrated theoretical expression of the many-sided struggle of our class and people against the brutal problems imposed on them by U.S. state monopoly capitalism. It points up the lessons of that struggle, and it projects a winning strategic and tactical line. It is impossible in a brief article to do more than touch upon some of the highlights of such a momentous event. The richness and importance of the Cobo Hall Convention can only be grasped by reading

and studying its key documents, starting with the main report. This report is being printed in 100,000 copies, with lesser numbers for the other reports and resolutions.

The effort to circulate this material, starting with the report and Gus Hall's speech at the mass rally is the first step in the fight for the implementation of the line of the 22nd Convention, a line of anti-state-monopoly victories.

That will be the beginning of the larger job before us: measuring up to the promise and potential of this moment in history, so brilliantly pointed up in that convention.

A Look at Educational Discrimination in Florida

CAROLE COLLIER

The recently adopted resolution on Afro-American struggle, which appeared in draft form in the July *Political Affairs*, makes a great contribution to understanding the main focus and crucial trends that must be dealt with in the struggle against racism and towards equality.

An examination of the Florida educational system opens up concrete areas where anti-state monopoly struggles can be waged. The fight for affirmative action is the key to moving towards integrated quality education in the schools of Florida.

This educational system demonstrates the refinement and concealment of racial and national oppression at the present stage of state monopoly capitalism. While school authorities argue that they have complied with the Supreme Court ruling of 1954 to desegregate the schools, racism and the resulting inequalities are blatant.

Racism has been well described as an octopus with tentacles. And in Florida, as in the nation, we must examine the new tentacles and pursue a proper course of action for their elimination.

Education in Jeopardy

The reactionary attempt to overthrow the gains made by the 1964 Civil Rights Act, epitomized in the Bakke decision and in the growing trend to re-segregate schools, has its impact on the Florida school system. The crisis in the educational system of Florida received national coverage when a Florida parent placed an ad in *Time* magazine demanding that the state of Florida give his newborn son a decent education. Florida ranks below the national average in per capita educational expenditures (36th); average teachers' salaries (39th); per pupil expenditure for elementary and secondary education (24th is still below the national average) and per student expenditures for higher education (43rd). The poor condition of higher education in the state causes many students to leave Florida.

Carole Collier is the District Organizer of the Florida district, CPUSA.

(*Public Policy in Florida: A 50 State Perspective* by Professor Thomas Dye.) The following letter appeared in the *Miami Herald*:

Like the jail, our schools, too, are grossly inadequate and overcrowded. While . . . the jails are 50 percent over capacity, our junior and senior high schools are 100 percent overcrowded, making double shifts a necessity. The elementary schools in my area are at least 50 percent over capacity making it necessary to start serving lunch at 10:30 a.m. The school yards are marked by termite infested portables being used as classrooms; however, there are no extra restrooms provided for the hundreds of extra children in these make-shift classrooms.

In Dade County alone—

- School officials predicted that 10.4 per cent of students in kindergarten through the sixth grade will fail.
- Approximately 22.6 per cent of the eighth grade enrollment are expected to fail.
- And thousands, close to 50 per cent of all 11th graders, fail literacy tests.

Failure in the elementary and middle grades is based on whether the child sufficiently meets specific achievement levels in basic reading, writing and mathematic skills to advance to the next grade. This is a county school system whose enrollment is 42 per cent Black, 39 per cent Hispanic and 19 per cent white. Commenting on the obvious crisis in the educational system—on pupil performance alone—school board member Holmes Bradhaven has acknowledged that “A lot of these problems are a product of segregation.”

Court Challenges

Most of the students failing the literacy test are either poor, Black or other oppressed national minority students. Among the many challengers of the validity of the literacy test is John Ryor, president of the 1.6 million member National Education Association. Most challenges are based on the fact

that the tests cover so-called survival education (how to make out a check and do comparison shopping) rather than real education, that which is presumably taught in the classroom. Tampa High school students and the NAACP recently won a court suit, challenging racism on the literacy tests.

There are also challenges being raised regarding discrimination and racism that have to do with the fact that Florida educators are predominantly white and male (in higher education). At Florida International University, Miami, the Black Employees Faculty Association, headed by Dr. Vandon E. White, charged in a recent report that,

- There "seemingly" is no commitment to enforce federal and state laws for affirmative action and equal employment opportunity as is required by the 1964 Civil Rights Act and mandates from the State University System's Chancellor's Office.
- Equal employment for Blacks and minorities at FIU doesn't exist, in fact institutional racism is growing worse.
- No fulltime Black faculty member with a doctoral degree has been hired in any of the university's academic departments in more than two years.
- Key committees used to evaluate and appoint top faculty members to key administrative posts remain lilywhite despite the frequent complaints expressed by Blacks and minorities to be let into the policy-making apparatus.
- A white male with less qualifications was appointed vice president for academic affairs over a Black with better qualifications.
- Different methods exist of appointing Blacks to interim or acting positions than for whites.

At Tallahassee's Florida State University, Associate Professor Laura Jepson is suing the Board of Regents in the U.S. District Court, claiming sex discrimination, saying she would earn \$18,000 to \$20,000 instead of \$13,900 if she were a man. She also challenges failure to promote her to full professor of English after she published an internationally acclaimed book in her field. The head of the English department has hired 10 times as many men as women in his term and promoted several men teachers, but no women.

A recent study at Florida Atlantic University found that 15 women members of faculty or staff received \$30 to \$1,300 less annual pay than men

with parallel backgrounds and responsibilities.

Florida state universities were recently ordered to correct salary discrepancies caused by sex discrimination (required as a provision of the Appropriations Act, from which public universities receive state funds).

Teaching Conditions

Florida teachers are organized into the Federated Teachers Union and the National Education Association. As might be expected in a so-called right to work state, the unions are weak and generally inactive.

The largest recent struggle by Florida educators was made by Dade County public school teachers who threatened to go on strike. They receive, on the average \$2,000 less annually than teachers in other large metropolitan school systems. If fringe benefits are counted, their salary lags as much as \$5,000. Overall there has been a decline in real teacher pay. However, their main struggle was against a plan (which was implemented) to increase school periods from 5 to 6, thus increasing the number of students for each high school teacher from 150 to 200 students. This made it mandatory for teachers to arrive at school as early as 6:15 a.m. in order to have a planning period which previously was part of the school day.

According to the executive director of the Florida Education Association, Don Cameron "the amount of money allocated for education is still woefully inadequate."

Gov. Bob Graham proposes to raise state funds but to reduce local contributions by rolling back the amount of property taxes that can be leveled by school districts for education, thus reducing the amount of money available for schools. Funding for Florida's schools has decreased 14 per cent in the last 4 years according to Cameron.

Due to low pay and insufficient funds there are not enough teachers or other personnel.

In Hillsborough County, class scheduling starts between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. because there are too few buses to get all the children to their schools at the same time.

Resegregation Efforts

After a long and continuing struggle to imple-

ment the 1954 Supreme Court decision to desegregate schools, there is a deliberate policy to reverse this. A quarter century after the decision forbidding segregated schools, Florida has a growing number of racially separated school districts.

In 1954 the Supreme Court held that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal," (*Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* decision), urging that desegregation be accomplished "with all deliberate speed." Yet, the great majority of Afro-American students still receive inferior education in inferior, segregated educational facilities.

Florida schools made some strides towards equal education after the order to desegregate. But recently the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights concluded that the Dade County Public Schools are becoming resegregated. As early as 1977 this deliberate plan to turn back is illustrated by the Brownsville Junior High and Miami Springs Jr. High. In 1970 the difficult task of desegregating was started when Miami Springs (then predominantly white) and Brownsville (then predominantly Black) were paired for two-way busing. There were racial incidents, lawsuits threatened, etc. However, seven years later leaders at both schools pointed to the full classes, few discipline problems and interracial friendships.

Then it was announced by top administrators that Springs-Brownsville would return to the way they were in 1969. Pairing would be dissolved.

Eldrige Williams, the school system's director of equal educational opportunity, cited improved education as the reason. Although the U.S Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans ordered the pairing in 1970, school officials believe the courts today would sustain their decision to dissolve the pairing.

Loopholes of many kinds have been used. According to Superintendent Jones, if Dade were required to "racially balance" all the schools in the county, it would require 72 per cent of the Black students to travel by bus, but only 28 per cent of the white students. This of course would be in reverse proportion to the Black percentage of the total school population.

To involve white students to the same degree that Black and Hispanic students are involved would require extensive busing programs due purely to the demographics of the county. Whether such should occur is under consideration of the court and board

of education.

Lessons to be Learned and the Fightback

The fact is that public education in the South was first established under post-Civil War Reconstruction governments. This system of public education was established as a direct result of initiatives by the Freedmen's Bureau. In Florida, Josiah T. Walls was one of the Black congressmen who helped pave the way for a new democratic approach to education. However, after the defeat of Reconstruction, the Southern school system wiped away many gains, rewrote textbooks and laws, and reinstated segregation.

All vestiges of a dual system have not been eliminated. Therefore we need to guarantee, through affirmative action, a unitary, desegregated school system in faculty, staff, transportation, facilities, extracurricular activities and student assignment. Our fight should be for quality schools in Black and white communities, servicing Black and white children.

The decision for integration was a key advance in the struggle for equality and quality education. How to hold on to those gains and win new ones are the questions to be answered today.

Some approaches to affirmative action in education in Florida include the following:

- William Dandy, superintendent of the North Central area of Broward County school system 10 years ago wanted to assign two Black teachers in each Broward school. This move for affirmative action was deemed too controversial.

- In 1977 he moved to bus white students from affluent West Broward to Dillard High School, formerly an all Black school in the heart of Fort Lauderdale's Black community. (The Dillard plan also is considering a similar situation at Ely High in a predominately Black area of Pompano Beach which faces a similar situation of needing to maintain racial balance and to relieve overcrowding.) Here, as elsewhere, it has been Broward's 30,000 Black children who have boarded the buses while Black schools have been closed. School Board Chairman Wright, the board's only Black member says she believes the "buses should run both ways."

In Palm Beach county the struggle for desegregation has been an ongoing fight. However, forces

who would like to "turn back the clock" are busy at work, trying to find a loophole through which some school officials believe the Supreme Court decision of 1954 won't have to be strictly enforced.

Ten Black students in the Hillsborough County School system who failed the literacy test, filed suit in federal court last October. U.S. District Court Judge George Carr ruled that the suit would be a class action for all Black 12th graders in the state.

In part, the suit charged that the test:

- Unfairly punished Black children who attended inferior, segregated schools
- Contained material that was never required to be taught by state and local officials and may never have been taught
- Forced Black students into compensatory education classes that stigmatized them as failures with their peers and caused emotional harm
- Limited the employment opportunities of Blacks who received a certificate of attendance

We must work to multiply our successes as was done at the Middlebrooks school. There, Black

students were not able to participate in afterschool activities because their buses left right after school. Middlebrooks convinced the school board to fund special activity buses to carry students home long after the regular school buses had left. The program was an overwhelming success.

There has been some activity by parents and educators to try to save the schools but not nearly enough to fight reaction, confusion and to gain affirmative action programs.

Further desegregation of the schools is a must. We cannot let reaction turn us back. The fight for affirmative action is the only way we can make headway for a truly integrated, quality school system. The fight for affirmative action in education is a battle that must be waged by all progressives, the trade union movement, and all forces interested in the welfare of children. This fight is not just in the interest of Black and other minority children. It is a fight to ensure the future wellbeing of all children.

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political, ideological and economic spheres. One can not exclude a possibility of a war breaking out between them—imperialism's aggressive circles, true to their nature, can not abandon attempts to solve arguments by military means.

All the same, Lenin emphasized, even in the conditions of the inevitable struggle between socialism and capitalism there exists a possibility of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. As the forces of socialism grow, as socialism becomes stronger, turns into a force of world development, the objective basis for peaceful coexistence will expand and consolidate.

This conclusion, expressing one of the main principles of the foreign policy of socialism, has become, without any exaggeration, a historic contribution of Lenin, of Leninism, to the development of human society.

* * *

From the above, evidently, follows a natural conclusion: during the briefest—from the point of view of history—period of time, hardly more than a quarter of a century, Lenin, developing the teachings initiated by Marx and Engels, made a truly unsurpassed contribution to the development of human political thinking.

One might agree or disagree with Lenin; one can be his follower, his supporter or his opponent—but it is impossible to argue with the fact that Lenin's ideas were a continuation and development on the new spiral of world history of the ideas of Marx and Engels, and that they enriched social development in many ways. The fruitfulness of these discoveries has been confirmed now by the experience of several generations of people. Leninism was and is at present the reliable ideological and theoretical basis of contemporary social progress. It is, if you wish, the symbol of political wisdom in our stormy revolutionary times.

San Francisco After Proposition 13

MOLLIE GOLD and JOHN BURKE

San Francisco today is one of the most ethnically and nationally diverse of all major U.S. cities.* No longer dominated by its port, the city's main economic activities are the tourist industry and "Wall Street West"—office headquarters for giant banks, insurance companies, and corporations such as Bechtel, the construction and development firm that is San Francisco's largest private employer. Unemployment, is roughly 11.4 per cent citywide by official figures and is nearly 50 per cent among Black and other nationally oppressed youth. There has been a decline in the number of jobs in highly organized sectors such as transport, manufacturing and construction, with a corresponding growth in the clerical and service sectors where organization is weak or non-existent. Public workers—federal, state, county and city—make up some 20 per cent of the workforce, of whom roughly one-half are employed by the city and county.

Housing in San Francisco has reached full-blown crisis proportions, with a slow decline in the city's population more than matched by demolition of older and low cost units to make way for commercial development. Rental vacancy rates are below 2 per cent, while rents have risen at a rate 50 per cent higher than the statewide average. Undeveloped land is scarce and real estate speculators have helped fuel a 97 per cent increase since 1974 in single-family home costs—the average cost of a single family home in San Francisco was \$88,300 in 1978. Average property tax assessments rose from 18.8 per cent from 1976 to 1978, but some assessments of commercial property have actually declined to provide their corporate owners with yet another tax break.

San Francisco Assessor Sam Duca recently

Mollie Gold is chair and John Burke is a trade union member of the Political Action Committee in San Francisco County.

*The 1970 Census reports the San Francisco population to be 57 per cent white; 14 per cent Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Pacific Islanders); 14 per cent "Latin"; 2 per cent other national minorities. There is evidence of serious underreporting in several of the nationally oppressed groups. There have also been some shifts since 1970.

reported that whereas before Proposition 13 property tax assessments were split 50-50 between residential and commercial properties, the first year after Jarvis-Gann it was 52 per cent residential and 48 per cent commercial, with an estimate that within the next few years it will be approximately 65 per cent residential. This is due to the fact that commercial property is almost never transferred, while in 1978, 15,000 to 20,000 transfers took place in San Francisco. Under Prop 13 when a property is sold it can be reassessed at the present market rate.

In 1975 the traditional alliance between San Francisco labor and the Democratic Party began to show serious signs of strain. As the 1974-75 economic downturn worsened, certain city officials launched an attack on public workers and their unions (with some success), charging demagogically that \$17,000-a-year streetsweepers—who never existed—and other public workers were to blame for rising taxes and deteriorating services. The political struggles that ensued revealed that the shift in the city's economy and labor's tailing policies in the past had eroded much of the unions' once-dependable constituency. Thus labor was faced simultaneously with strong pressures toward greater political independence and with the need to seek new alliances, especially with the nationally oppressed communities.

City Elections of '75 and '76

The 1975 city elections saw the victory of liberal mayoral candidate George Moscone over an ultra-reactionary opponent, and the defeat of a crude union-busting ballot measure sponsored by then-supervisor (now mayor) Dianne Feinstein. But minority representation on the 11-member Board of Supervisors remained limited to one Black and one Chicano supervisor. Moscone and the Board remained on good terms with the powerful coalition of downtown business and real estate interests that had long dominated city politics. One sign of things to come was the last-minute and perhaps decisive mobilization of rank-and-file public workers to de-

feat the Feinstejn anti-union measure.

Our Party's participation in that 1975 election was limited to issuing some 10,000 copies of our platform in our own name, which dealt with issues such as jobs and affirmative action, taxes and the war budget, housing and rent control, etc. Much of this work was assisted by the County Political Action Committee which we set up to provide information and make recommendations to the County and the District leadership and the Party as a whole, as well as to prepare the Party's electoral material.

The year 1976 proved to be a turning point in more ways than one. Earlier efforts by a loose coalition of reformers—overwhelmingly white and middle-class—to reform the system of electing city supervisors had been defeated, though supporters argued that election by district rather than at-large would weaken "downtown's" grip and give neighborhoods greater weight in city government.

In 1976 organized labor, which had opposed District Elections in the past, got behind a better-drafted version, as did a broad section of the nationally oppressed and their leadership. District Elections passed by a comfortable margin in November, aided by a large Democratic turnout for Jimmy Carter and also for the Farmworkers' Rights initiative, which failed statewide but carried easily in San Francisco.

Voting patterns clearly showed that the strongest support for District Elections came from the city's Black, Latino and Asian neighborhoods. The District Elections campaign stimulated the growth of electoral coalitions uniting labor, the nationally oppressed communities and other progressive forces. It opened the door to a host of first-time candidates who emerged from neighborhood or issue-based organizations and represented a further step toward political independence on the part of labor.

Nineteen seventy six was also a watershed year for our Party. All-out mobilization of our forces, together with some from outside our ranks, led to the collection of 25,000 signatures in 60 days as our contribution in the statewide total of 150,000 to qualify our national candidates, Gus Hall and Jarvis Tyner, for the California ballot. The effects of this dramatic achievement were far-reaching. We

gained rapidly in visibility and credibility in San Francisco's political life. We ourselves gained immeasurably in confidence from the positive public response to the petition drive. The campaign helped to differentiate us in the minds of many from the swarm of Maoist, Trotskyist and ultra-Left sects. And the petition campaign led to wider acceptance of our Party as a full, open participant in broad coalitions.

Electioneering in '77-'78

This acceptance, of course, has not been immediate or automatic. In 1977, for example, we joined a citywide coalition formed to block repeal of the new District Election system. When some raised objections to listing the Party by name on coalition literature, we registered our protest at this undemocratic concession to anti-Communism, but continued to function in the coalition in the interest of unity. This principled position won us new respect and further clarified the distinction between our methods of work and the splitting tactics of the ultra-Lefts. Significantly, this year, in a coalition comprising some of the same forces and many broader forces, our open participation has been accepted almost unanimously, with several of the forces that formerly viewed us with suspicion defending our right to equal participation based on our proven contributions in the past.

In 1977 the voters threw back the downtown-sponsored drive to repeal District Elections and elected the first new Board under the District system. A key development was the creation by the Labor Council's political arm (COPE) of a citywide rank-and-file based Labor Operations Committee, with subcommittees in each of the 11 districts. These committees drafted platform planks, recommended candidates for official COPE endorsement, and mobilized union members in the campaign on election day. Several hundred unionists responded to the Operations Committee's call, with city workers again playing a leading role, taking the campaign directly into scores of offices and workplaces by means of rank-and-file committees. In some districts labor groupings established close links with community formations.

Party forces played an active role in both the labor groupings and the district coalitions, particu-

larly in sharp platform struggles around affirmative action. Yet, although the citywide Operations Committee Congress overwhelmingly endorsed a strong plank on affirmative action with quotas, COPE's ultimate pursestring control had the last word; the Operation Committee's advanced platform was never publicized or distributed, and most voters remained unaware of it. The campaign also revealed a serious organizational weakness: union membership lists, some 95 per cent out of date, proved almost worthless in canvassing and get-out-the vote drives.

The large field of candidates, many of them relative newcomers to politics, confused some voters and gave better-known incumbents a certain edge. In some districts, liberal or progressive candidates split their voter base and allowed conservatives to win. Only two labor-endorsed supervisors were elected—a Black woman trade unionist and an Asian attorney, both closely allied to the Liberal Democratic Mayor Moscone, himself moving cautiously toward the Left on some issues. Overall, the new Board was generally more progressive and more responsive to the voters. But the same election also saw the voters pass a number of "austerity" measures aimed at city workers—an ominous warning of the Jarvis-Gann debacle that was to come.

Despite the unprecedented media ballyhoo, San Francisco voters rejected Jarvis-Gann (Proposition 13), as well as a bloodthirsty capital punishment measure (which passed statewide) and an anti-gay initiative (the latter two were sponsored by ex-FBI agent, State Sen. John Briggs). The heaviest votes against Proposition 13 (Jarvis-Gann) came from the city workers and the nationally oppressed communities, where voters in the main saw through the tax-cut demagoguery to the service-slashing, with its racist edge, beneath. City workers opposed to Proposition 13 also formed ad hoc groupings such as Filipinos Against Prop 13, and carried the campaign to thousands.

Within weeks after the June 6 passage of Proposition 13, renters—70 per cent of the city's population—realized that landlords had no intention of sharing their tax savings with tenants in the form of rent reductions. In fact, rents in many instances were increased. A rent rebate movement formed rapidly and qualified an initiative for the Fall city

elections. However, one serious weakness in the measure was that it made no distinction between large and small landlords. And a number of Black and labor leaders opposed the measure on the grounds it would penalize working-class and Black families with one or two rental units as harshly as giant land companies. Real estate interests raised a \$350,000 publicity war chest as compared to a total of \$18,000 raised by the coalition, which undoubtedly assisted the citywide defeat of the measure by a vote of 53 per cent to 47 per cent.

Also in 1978 a tiny ultra-Left sect began a push for a referendum "Resolution of Intent" calling for federal arms budget cuts and transfer of these funds to social needs. The response was overwhelming, and though the original group virtually abandoned the campaign—actually closing their election office three weeks before the election—the measure was taken up enthusiastically by labor and other progressive forces, including Party forces, and won a 61 per cent to 39 per cent victory.

1979—After Proposition 13

In this, the Year One A.J. (After Jarvis), the city is still suffering the effects of Proposition 13. Health services, senior programs, childcare centers and other vital services have been cut back or eliminated. There is a stepped-up drive by city government to contract-out city workers' jobs to private, non-union employers. Perhaps the biggest bombshell was the announcement last winter that the School Board would lay off some 1,200 teachers, teachers' aides and other education workers. Because the layoffs will be by seniority, over half the victims will be Black, Latino, Asian and other nationally oppressed workers and young—all hired within the last ten years. There are also disturbing signs that some politicians are attempting to pit different nationally oppressed groups and special-interest constituencies (seniors, youth, etc.) against one another for a share of those funds left by Proposition 13.

A few officeholders are lining up in favor of the "school voucher" plan seeking to dismantle public education. Many "liberals" are also backing away from opposition to a statewide "anti-busing"—more accurately, resegregation—measure this November in a statewide special election. Public

schools, and the fight to preserve quality integrated education, are shaping up as a major political battlefield in the city. These attacks have also put fightback forces into motion. A Coalition for Quality Education, initiated by Black parents, led a march to Sacramento of some 2,500 to 3,000 parents, teachers, students with all nationally oppressed groups as well as a large number of white people represented. This same coalition has organized several workshops on the teacher layoffs, the anti-busing initiative, the voucher system, etc. It is an integrated coalition and includes some labor forces. And there is another coalition being organized specifically on busing with a branch in San Francisco, of the statewide coalition, initiated by the American Civil Liberties Union (A.C.L.U.), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.) and such leading Black political figures as Congressman Dellums, State representative Willie Brown of San Francisco, Diane Watson of Los Angeles, and others.

In view of the sharp education battle now taking place and shaping up for bigger battles, our Political Action Committee has recommended to the County Committee that the Party field a candidate next year for the San Francisco Board of Education.

The housing crisis is another major area of struggle. Rent control supporters have reorganized and are aiming at the Fall elections with a program that includes a Tenant's Bill of Rights, restrictions on condominium conversions, anti-speculation section, and an exemption for small landlords owning three units or less providing the owner lives in the building. This coalition is also setting up committees in each district of the city and our Party is actively involved through official representatives both citywide and in some of the districts. In this coalition, as well as in others, we have fought against racism as it manifested itself. In the housing coalition, for example, Party forces have constantly raised the question of nationally oppressed representation, including on the paid staff, as well as the need for all literature to be bilingual. And recently a Black woman was hired as an outreach person.

Throughout the period surveyed, our Party has

played a growing role in progressive electoral struggles. We were active in the District Elections campaigns, in both rent control drives, in the 1978 Jobs with Peace campaign, in some of the anti-Proposition 13 coalitions, and in the labor-led Operations Committee around District Elections. Our Political Action Committee—despite a certain tendency to relegate electoral work to the Committee and its members—has helped to raise the Party's level of understanding and activity around these questions. As a result, more comrades have recently become involved. Besides our role in coalitions, we have issued Party leaflets at each of the elections, explaining our positions and our perspectives for a broad anti-monopoly people's movement, as well as our commitment to socialism. Individual comrades have also been active, frequently as open Communists, in campaigns of progressive candidates.

Yet we have not fully won the Party membership to a recognition of the necessity for the Party to run its own candidates, although the Hall-Tyner campaign and its effects were a clear confirmation of the correctness of this outlook.

We can also see how continuing weaknesses in industrial and community concentration have affected our ability to influence political trends. We were unable to halt COPE's retreat from the advanced Operations Committee platform in 1977 or to push effectively for a stronger role of labor and nationally oppressed communities in the 1978 rent control drive. While we still have much to learn about how to link concentration work with electoral activity in a practical way, the need for such links is clear. Our practical experience and our assessment of the present situation also confirm the centrality of the struggle against racism in all the broad democratic movements around education, housing, taxes and other issues.

As Gus Hall has observed, the new expanded role of the state in the worsening economic crisis widens the possibilities for greater independence of labor and other antimonopoly and progressive forces. We will continue to join with other progressives in helping to build the broadest principled unity of the people against racism, against the monopolies and for a better life.



BOOK ENDS



How to Solve the Housing Problem?

MORRIS ZEITLIN

Housing in the Public Domain: The Only Solution by Peter K. Hawley, revised and expanded edition, 1978. Metropolitan Council on Housing, 24 West 30th Street, New York, N.Y. 10001, \$3.00 + 45¢ for postage and handling.

Housing in the Public Domain is a thorough analysis of housing problems in the U.S., a hard-hitting expose of what and who causes it, and a bold plan to solve it. This book should be an eye opener to the majority of the nation bearing the real estate/banking combine's assault on their homes.

In the real estate/banking combine the banks are the major partners and masterminds. Hawley demonstrates and *proves*, that the combine draws exorbitant profits from trading existing housing stock and collecting government subsidies, even more than it does from rents, and more than from building new housing. It therefore limits new housing construction and uses the consequent housing shortage to drive up prices and rents.

Real-estate propaganda pleads for public sympathy, citing rising expenses and building abandonment as proof of its "plight." In reality both are used as vehicles for making fabulous profits. This book methodically explains the seeming paradox by exposing the dirty tricks of the real estate/banking game with clear examples and step-by-step, easy-to-follow calculations. It demonstrates, for example, how real-estate speculators, investing only 5 to 10 per cent of the market price of a building, can earn, with the aid of a bank mortgage for the rest of the price, a profit

of 100 to 200 per cent within two years.

We've heard, ad nauseum, the whining of landlords about increased maintenance, fuel, and other costs intended to soften us into accepting rent increases. *Housing in the Public Domain* reveals the lie of their histrionics. It shows that the increases in such expenses "have been more than offset by the relentless increase in rents each year under rent control or with each new lease under rent stabilization." Moreover, the expenses landlords claim they cannot meet without higher rents are either exaggerated or outright frauds. They claim taxes, for example, which they do not pay; services and maintenance they do not provide; interest or mortgages which is compensated by the federal and state governments as a tax deduction; amortization of the mortgage which is not an expense at all but an equity build-up in the property; and depreciation which, too, is government reimbursed as a tax write-off.

In one of the most astounding exposures of the real estate/banking racket, Hawley explains the bizarre phenomenon of premeditated abandonment and destruction of sound buildings in a housing shortage. Debunking the landlord's familiar rhetorical question: "Would you throw away a good washing machine or automobile unless it was no longer useful?" he proves that abandonment is not just landlords walking away from non-profitable buildings; but, on the contrary, that its a profit-making process, set in motion by banks' decisions to "disinvest" in low-profit bearing areas and shift the extracted capital to maximum-profit

yielding areas or ventures. The landlords then follow the banks, cutting service and maintenance, withholding taxes, and reaping enormous profits until the buildings have been milked dry. Exploding the myth that rent controls cause abandonment, Hawley illustrates with examples of abandonment economics that the real cause lies in real estate/banking greed.

The book reveals how every government scheme to supposedly supply new housing for low- and moderate-income people "was actually designed to make great profits for the banks, developers and builders, while only incidentally providing housing for a small percentage of the population."

Finally, the book shows that the private enterprises of the real estate/banking business can not and will not build housing for the low- and moderate-income majority of the nation. Therefore, it concludes, housing must be taken out of the private domain and placed in the public domain.

This is where the most liberal of writers on housing stop. But Hawley goes on to blaze a trail for a new people's housing politics by showing how housing in the public domain can be financed and managed. Drawing on the experience of successful tenant building management during rent strikes, he shows how housing in the public domain can be managed by the tenants themselves. He rejects the preposterous argument that this nation can not afford to house its people in low-rent decent homes. To the hypocritical anti-public housing cry from real estate/banking apologists "Where will the money come from?" Hawley

responds with a thoroughly documented chapter titled "Sources of Available Funds" showing whence vast sums of money can be raised for people's housing.

Forty years ago, proposals for social security, unemployment insurance, the Wagner Labor Relations Act, and public housing were considered "subversive" acts against the private-enterprise system. The people's struggle

made them the reality of our time. "Housing in the public domain," states the Metropolitan Council on Housing, the publisher of the book, "is an idea whose time is now." Amen!

The working class owes Peter Hawley a gratitude. The fight for decent housing has long needed a clear expose of the deception practiced by the charlatans of the real estate/bank-

ing game. Hawley removes the camouflage from that cabal, those hit-and-run pickpockets who wrap themselves in the mantle of an "industry" and plead "poverty" when called to justice. Tearing down their wraps and baring their hidden assets, Hawley makes these fast operators a more clearly visible enemy in the class struggle.

Communications

A Note on the S.F. General Strike

Dear Comrades,

In George Morris' article, "Sixty Years of Trade Union Work" (August-September issue), there was a very important omission from his too brief reference to one of the most outstanding struggles in our labor history, the historic San Francisco general strike in 1934. The general strike, an outgrowth of the bitterly fought longshore strike, was triggered by the killing of two pickets in the bloody "Battle of Rincon Hill": Howard Sperry and the Communist Party member, Nick Bordoise,

who was a cook, a member of the Culinary Workers Union, and worked in the strikers' soup kitchen. Forty thousand workers participated in the funeral march! Comrade Bordoise was only one of many Communists who fought side by side with the longshoremen.

One indication of the role and influence of our Party in the longshoremen's strike (also not mentioned in the article) was the fact that the weekly "Western Worker," official organ of the Party at that time

(forerunner of the daily "Peoples World") published a special twice weekly baby "Western Worker" edition which spoke for the striking longshoremen. This was done in spite of the fact that the composition shop was set on fire and the editorial office had been completely wrecked by vigilantes.

Incidentally, an excellent account of the longshore and general strike is given in Mike Quin's *The Big Strike* which has just been republished.

LEAH SCHNEIDERMAN

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by GUS HALL

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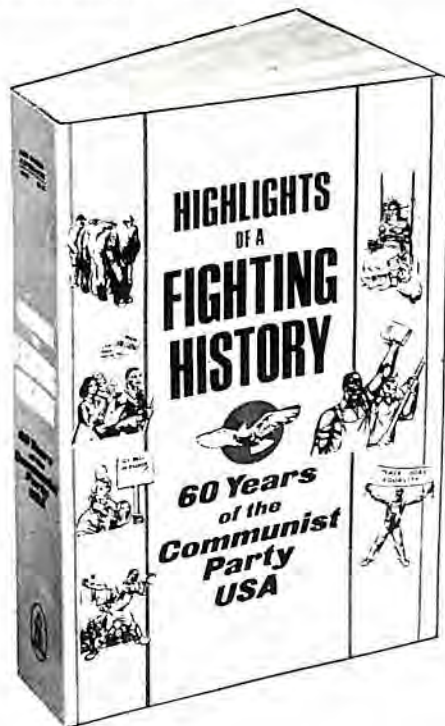
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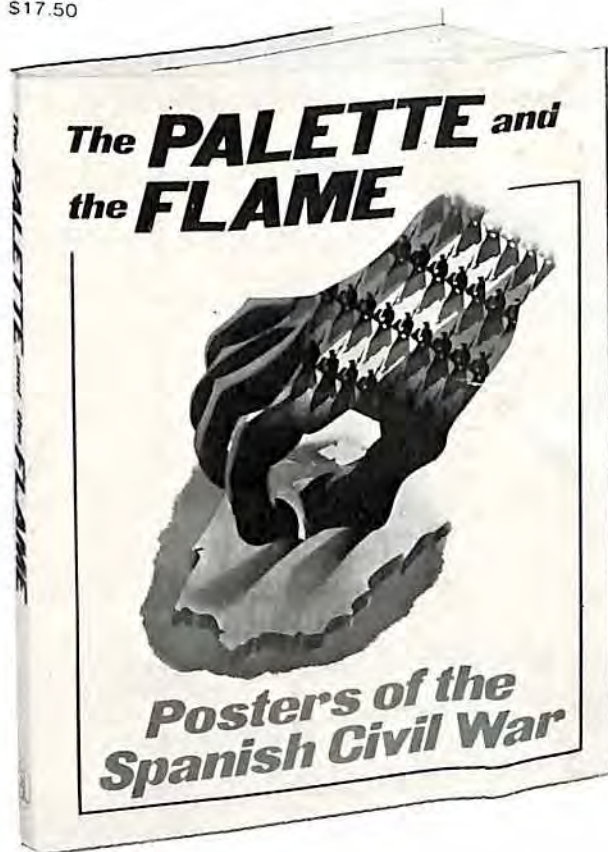
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